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## Integrating ICTs in Providing Feedback to Students' Writing

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## **Dedications**

*I dedicate this work to:*

*My father and mother*

*Abdellah & Latifa Elhachemi*

*For their constant support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study*

*To my uncle*

*To my brothers and sisters*

*To my beloved nephews and nieces*

# **Abstract**

## Abstract

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The fact that writing is considered as a problem that hinders most students leads the researcher to enquire the effectiveness of ICTs, practice, and feedback in changing students' attitude towards the writing skill. The current study, thus, investigates the availability of integrating informational technologies along with feedback to improve the writing ability of second year English students at the University of Mascara. To reach the predetermined objectives the researcher devises six chapters to fulfill the work. The first one deals with the linguistic situation in Algeria and the teaching of foreign languages including English. It is also devoted to provide a description of the methodological approach used in the investigation, the research questions and hypotheses, the research population and the research instrumentation. The second chapter provides background information about ICTs and the different models fostered to their complicity in education. The third one seeks a general description of the writing skill and the effect of feedback practices and technologies on the whole process. The fourth one deals with feedback provision in the teaching of the writing skill. The fifth chapter includes an analysis of the raw data. It also gives a detailed description and interpretation of the information gained from the three tools employed; the observation, the questionnaire, and the written test. The last chapter is intended to provide strategies that are thought to have a positive impact on students' achievement, their writing ability in particular.

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# **General Introduction**

It is commonly believed that an intimate and inseparable relation between English language and communication across the globe exists owing to the influx of globalization and the need for a de facto tongue that unifies the universe. This makes such a code no more the monopoly of the British or any other rather than a universal language that is required for dealings. Accordingly, the significance of the English language across the globe gains momentum due to its urgent need in different aspects of life including education, commerce, medicine, etc. Thereby, the scrutiny and debate over the acquisition of English becomes essential and manifested along several educational programmes.

Communication among people from diverse spheres of interests is currently thought to be effortless and less demanding because of the evolvement and introduction of new media and technologies. Within the birth of the printing press and the telegraph, the pace with which those means were developed increased, leading people all over the globe to come into contact using a variety of tools. The fact that innovations occupy a number of fields fosters drastic changes in many aspects including education. However, people tend to believe that it is difficult to keep up with Information and Communication Technologies due to many constraints including accessibility in the instructional landscape. For this reason, the inclusion of ICTs in education is one of the most challenging aspects in the digital era.

The changes brought up by the pervasive impact of the new technologies led many to think about the ways of exploiting such tools in informing and refining the process of language instruction. These alterations were based on a shift in educational settings and approaches. Such transformations led to a consideration of the student and his perception of knowledge construction rather than a domination of teachers over the educational environment. From traditional apprenticeship that is based primarily on identifying learners' deficits and information transfer from instructors to the individual student towards a more sophisticated and recent way of learning that stems from a focus on collaborative attainment. The latter urges many educators and researchers to find out the relevant methods that aid reaching instructional goals and technology integration is no exception.

The possibility to connect the teaching of English to reality increases due to the new insights and evolvement in the virtual world. Using software applications, searching for information on the Internet, chatting, and game playing are part and parcel of the lives of

people in the 21st century. The opportunities that digital media provide today's language teachers and learners with are great. Today, it is so simple to bring the world into the classroom and have students use authentic materials and participate in real communicative contexts to successfully gain competence. Competence in language is most often manifested in the acquisition of the four primary skills or what is known as literacy and oracy.

Writing, the last skill to be acquired besides listening, speaking, and reading is often perceived as a productive activity that entails creativity on the part of the writer. It represents a means to an end i.e. writing research papers, letters, etc., not an end in itself. This increases the importance of such a skill to English language students and their opportunities to achievement. Besides communication of ideas, composition requires thorough preparation and mastery of a set of conventions and rules including mechanics and grammar. Teachers and students, thus, have to rigorously and effectively focus on practising writing to achieve significantly their learning goals and efficient outcomes. For this reason, teaching and evaluating or more precisely providing feedback to students' productions is the most challenging in the educational process.

Opportunities for implementing information technologies into the process of teaching composition rose owing to the immense effect that can be brought in the course of using word processing, social networking and others. Thus, the need for investigating the impact of the new media on the students' way of writing increases leading many to enquire such a field. The researcher, on her part, tries to explore the availability of using ICTs as an effective tool while teaching composition to 2<sup>nd</sup> year ELT students at the University of Mascara, or more precisely when providing feedback to what they have produced.

To rigorously explore the effectiveness of the new technologies on the way teachers correct their students and the way students themselves progress, the researcher tend to organize and build her investigation on the subsequent research questions:

1. What do students think of their writing performances in English language and where do their attitudes stem from?
2. How do English language learners perceive their teachers' comments on their productions?
3. To what extent can feedback be used as a practical tool to improve students' productivity?

4. What are English language teachers attitudes and beliefs towards ICT inclusion when teaching writing?
5. To what extent will using ICTs provide better learning outcomes and improve productivity when providing feedback to students' writing performances?

Based on the prearranged research questions, the researcher suggested the following hypotheses upon which the current study rests:

1. Witness the fact that generating ideas and finding out the relevant words to express their thoughts, most of the students think that they cannot reach a good level in composition and thereby are always anxious to write in English.
2. Some learners think that teachers' comments on their writings are demotivating while others see that it is a good way to inform their productivity.
3. Teachers believe that positive feedback, if used continuously, can enhance students' motivation to write accurately.
4. Most language teachers consider ICT, if used appropriately, as an important tool that might have a great effect on the teaching-learning process and writing instruction is no exception.
5. Through the regular and appropriate integration of ICTs and the direct implementation of the necessary methods for its inclusion particularly when correcting or providing feedback to what they have produced, English language learners can write better.

The contributions of the new technologies to education lead many to inquire how best to use them to foster attainment and improve education generally. Thereby, the investigator aims through her study to reach by the end the following objectives;

- a. To explore the effectiveness of ICT in refining English language students' achievement, their production in particular.
- b. To investigate the extent to which feedback can be used as a motivating tool to improve the way students write.
- c. To diagnose the main difficulties faced by learners when they write and to find how such deficits can be overcome.

Accordingly, three necessary tools are employed to ensure a triangulation and to achieve the predetermined objectives. These include an observation based on field notes, a

written test intended to adjust students' composition and to further ascertain the effect of ICTs and feedback on their ability and literacy, and teachers' and students' questionnaires to diagnose and pinpoint their perceptions and attitudes towards the integration of the new technologies into the teaching of writing.

Moreover, the researcher intends to encourage the use of innovations in the process of instruction. Therefore, the present investigation attempts to present some strategies and implications that might have an impact on students' attainment, their writing ability in particular. It aims to suggest further applications for teachers as well to help them adjust their teaching styles and procedures.

The current survey, consequently, is managed into four fold; an introductory chapter that provides the methodology being employed, a literature review to tackle what has been stated by on ICTs in education, writing, and feedback, a data collection and analysis chapter to testify the research hypotheses, and finally advised implications for practice. The intended plan aids the investigator to fulfill her study thoroughly despite the limitations and the encountered constraints.

# **Chapter one**

## **Methodology and the Learning Situation**

### **1.1.Introduction**

This chapter will present a portrayal of the linguistic situation in Algeria in addition to the status and the teaching of languages in general and the English language in particular. Further, it highlights the learning situation and research procedures involved in the current investigation. The researcher will also provide a detailed description of the context of the study, the research instruments utilized and the sample population. The research design and the limitations of the study are also tackled to significantly offer a general description of the whole research.

### **1. 2.The Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

Algeria comes to be considered as the first largest country in Africa. It is situated in its Northern part with a population around 41, 2 million, 25% of them are Berber while the rest inhabitants are Arabs according to the Algerian Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reform survey. Shortly after its independence, Algeria followed a policy named ‘Arabisation’ a process by which Arabic was chosen to represent the Algerian identity as an official and national language. Hence language in education has been divided into two distinct periods, the first one prolonged from 1962 to 1970s represents a bilingual education in Modern Standard Arabic (or MSA) and French, while in the second period instruction is monolingual in MSA from 1970s till nowadays (Baldauf et al, 2007: 27)

Diglossia exists in Algeria at the level of different varieties distributed over the national ground including Eastern, Central, Western, and Southern accents known as ‘Dialectal’, ‘Colloquial’, or ‘Algerian Arabic’. The latter represents the low variety and is considered as the mother tongue of most of Algerians. On the other hand, MSA is the high variety that is used in official, formal, and written contexts.

The remainders of Algerians, nearly about 25% of the total population, speak Berber, an indigenous language that exists even before Arabic. It has been recently supported by the government and chosen as a national language. Besides, French the ex colonizer language holds a high status in Algeria. It is used in studying most of the scientific disciplines as medicine, technology, etc. it is considered as the first foreign language.

### **1.3. Language Teaching in Algeria**

The system of instruction in Algeria starts at the age of five in what is called a preparatory stage. At this level the teacher introduces the alphabetical graphs of the Arabic

language to the pupils that can be used in the first elementary year in reading and composing different useful words in Arabic. After the preparatory year, the first stage (five year span elementary stage) begins and students are required to perform the different tasks in Arabic (the first and basic medium of instruction).

The French language possesses a high status in the Algerian community; hence it is introduced at the third year of the elementary stage. In Algeria, French is the second most spoken language (Negadi, 2015). Learning French lasts ten years so that students can acquire its basic principles. After that whoever decides to study scientific disciplines that are taught mainly in French including medicine, technology, architecture, etc, will find it easy to carry on higher education.

English on the other hand is introduced at the first year of the second stage (the first year at the middle school) to be taught for seven years (it is also taught for three years at the secondary or high school). English is considered as the second foreign language. At university, English is studied as a separate section, besides it is taught as a module in other disciplines especially with the newly introduced LMD system, for instance, biology and economy as a language for specific purposes(LSP).

#### **1.4. The Status of English in Algeria**

Changes and developments in different fields including science, economy, as well as technology enable English to manifest itself as the first language in the world. Thus, an increasing awareness of its importance has been mobilized to the Arab world and Algeria is no exception. In this concern, Cook (2003: 25) points out that:

*“In recent years the growth of English has been further accelerated by starting expansion in the quality and speed of international communication, the rise of international operations, linked to expanding US power and influence, ensure an ever increasing use of English in business, films, songs, television programmes, and advertisement in English are heard and seen in many countries where it is not the first nor even a second language.”*

Owing to the giant importance of the English Language all over the world, Algerian policy makers have decided to establish an English department at each university. Besides, the inclusion of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses in other disciplines gains special concern. To state it differently, English is the language of information and technology that plays a crucial role in widening the sphere of knowledge of the Algerian

students as well as in keeping pace with the neck breaking changes and developments across the globe. Thus, Meliani (2000, cited in Medjahed, 2011: 73) points out that: “The introduction of English is being heralded as the magic solution to all possible ills-including economic, technological and educational ones.”

Meliani (2000) assumes that the introduction of the English language can basically contribute to the improvement of various fields, and education is no exception. It is therefore estimated that such powerful language leads to the development of each nation considers it as a necessary code for communication.

### **1.5.Aims and Objectives of English Language Teaching in Algeria**

As stated by Roumadi, an inspector of English (cited in Meziane, 2011: 33), there are different purposes behind the introduction of English language teaching in Algerian schools. These include:

1. To cope with the scientific, technological, as well as cultural advancements and to ease communication in the globalized world where the English Language represents the first communicative code.
2. To develop the personal identity and to be more open-minded.
3. To achieve the desirable goal of developing different linguistic as well as communicative competencies including grammatical, semantic, critical thinking, etc.

For Hanifi (2012: 20), three main objectives students’ would reach during the learning of the English Language;

1. Linguistic and communicative objectives; being able to communicate fluently and accurately.
2. Methodological objectives; acquiring the skills that help evaluating ones’ progress and to carry on lifelong learning.
3. Cultural objectives; being aware of the cultural bridges in order to establish or deconstruct boundaries or to become cross borders and to tolerate cultural differences.

The contributions of the new technologies to education lead many to inquire how best to use them to foster attainment and improve education in general and the learning of

the English Language in particular. Thereby, the investigator aims through her study to reach by the end the following objectives;

- d. To explore the effectiveness of ICT in refining English language students' achievement, their production in particular.
- e. To investigate the extent to which feedback can be used as a motivating tool to improve the way students write.
- f. To diagnose the main difficulties faced by learners when they write and to find how such deficits can be overcome.

### **1.6. The Context of the Research**

Second year students from the English Language department at the University of Mascara were shortlisted as study subjects. The department was created in 2003. The department is composed of fourteen classrooms and three lecture halls. The English and Translation departments have merged in 2010 and are one single department.

The department staff is composed of thirty permanent teachers and got about four full-time secretaries. There are about nine hundred seventy four subscribed students. We count three hundred fifty first year students, two hundred sixty second year, and one hundred thirty five third year students forming the promotion of the LMD system at the university; and one hundred sixty fourth year English students who are master students.

The English department provides an undergraduate and post graduate education that can fulfill educational objectives and is an institution dedicated to teaching all students how to live, learn, and solve problems in an English context. At the department students have to either accomplish three years (the LMD system) in order to gain a license degree or five years to fulfill their master studies to become teachers of the English language either in the middle or high schools.

At first year, students are taught the mechanics of writing and the way they structure and organize a piece of writing. It is therefore at the second year when students might be able to write effectively, but as far as their level is concerned, they still struggle to write. Moreover, at the third year they are required to accomplish a dissertation to fulfill their Licence degree in English. For this reason, the researcher has chosen second year English students at the University of Mascara as a case study to testify the effectiveness of ICTs

integration and feedback implementation in improving their writing skill; they are about two hundred sixty students.

### 1.7. The Type of Research

There is a consensus that any research is an act of searching knowledge and finding data base related to a particular area or problem. Redman and Mory (quoted in Kothari, 2004: 1) define research as a *“systematized effort to gain new knowledge”*. Thus, the researcher tries to explore the students’ perception of the writing process as well as the utility of feedback along with ICTs in improving the way students write, so she uses the descriptive research in her investigation as defined by Kothari (2004: 2)

*“Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present...The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no control over the variables; he can only report what has happened or what is happening”*

So the role of the researcher here is just reporting what has happened inside the classroom. For this reason quantitative as well as qualitative approaches have been utilized to help reaching the main objectives. The former aims to ascertain data base concerning the way students’ perceive writing and the implementation of ICTs and feedback in the process of teaching writing through the use of structured teachers’ and students’ questionnaires. On the other hand, the classroom observation and the test are concerned with finding out qualitative data including the way feedback and the new technologies are handled and the different opinions provided to improve students’ composition.

The researcher has used in second hand formative experiment. Such an approach provides platforms to address gaps between theory and pedagogy or practice. In a formative experiment, instructional difficulties, obstacles, and even failures are perceived as useful information that can inform instruction and help build pedagogical understanding. Yet, the aim of formative experiment is not to offer reliable and defined solutions to pedagogical needs but to identify the concomitant issues to understand how instruction can be carried out more effectively (Pytash and Ferdig, 2014). Multiple drafts of students are revised to improve students’ productivity through using social networking and word processing software.

### 1.7.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative or what is acknowledged as interpretive or field research has been brought up to education from sociology and anthropology. It stems from views believing that studying humans is so different from enquiring nature that it needs interpretative methodology. Hence, a good deal of light is shed on the way the target population perceives the examined environment. With an intention to discover the similarities and differences between pre-conducted investigations in the field and the current enquiry, the qualitative study develops different concepts and theories (Scott and Morrison, 2006).

Interpretive research on the whole aims to provide an in depth investigation of a given social phenomenon since knowledge is achieved through interactions in society. Such approach relies on inductive reasoning because it seeks several perspectives about the area to be investigated i.e. giving participants the chance to express their views and feelings about a particular aspect (Lodico et al, 2006). Qualitative investigation is primarily *“concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind”* (Kothari, 2004: xv). Accordingly, when conducting any research using such method the researcher is required to inquire the why and how to search for a closer justification to a particular problem.

#### 1.7.1.1. Steps in Conducting Qualitative Research

In their book entitled “Methods in Educational Research: From Theory to Practice” Lodico et al (2006) identified a procedure the researcher goes through to conduct any qualitative study. Such strategy has been employed to fulfill the current investigation and to seek a well-managed work. It includes the following stages:

##### 1.7.1.1.1 Identifying a research topic

According to the researcher’s background knowledge demonstrated from preliminary readings, pre-established observations, and his personal experiences connected with an enthusiasm to investigate the field, a topic is to be identified. The latter can be neatly focused, even if it was set in the first place, before gathering data base. The researcher then tries to probe the utility of feedback and new technologies in refining students’ performances owing to the outstanding role of such a skill in the EFL educational landscape.

### 1.7.1.1.2 Conducting a Review of Related Literature

Having the topic identified, the researcher moves to search for information about the issue under investigation. Consequently, research questions are defined and refined according to the theoretical assumptions provided by experts in the field. Even though the latter would help pin down the topic, qualitative researchers do not prefer too much theory because they believe that it would be confusing.

The enquirer at this stage gathers all possible data related to ICTs and the way eminent figures in the area tackled it. An understanding of feedback practice in the course of teaching the writing skill follows to establish a link between the availability of integrating new technologies in such a process. Reviewing the literature, thereby, aids narrowing and refocusing the ideas.

### 1.7.1.1.3 Defining the Role of the Researcher

The nature of qualitative study necessitates establishing a thorough real standpoint. Accordingly, after identifying a topic and reviewing the necessary data, a participatory role of the researcher should be set. For this, she needs to establish an insider's perception. The latter requires close interactions in the field under scrutiny to gain the necessary information from the target population. Thereby, administering an entry to the field and maintaining good relations and trustworthy communication with the personnel and the informants would be practical to construct potential and reliable data. These data would stand as a corner stone in conducting the investigation.

Once the researcher selects the participants based on the research questions and the literature review, he has to construct what is called foreshadowed questions. ***“Foreshadowed questions are designed by the researcher and are based on the topics or research questions identified both at the start of the study and as the study progresses”*** (Lodico et al, ibid: 266). These help managing data collection tools and instruments necessary to fulfill the enquiry.

Investigators who seek qualitative data collection basically make use of ***“observations, interviews, and document analysis”*** (Lodico et al, ibid) as essential tools used to seek reliable information about the examined aspect. The procedure followed is often called triangulation that is basically administered to ensure quality and validate the outcomes.

The researcher then moves on to analysis through reading and reviewing raw data to further provide an explanation to the results. In qualitative researches interpretations are often needed in addition to establishing a link between the current findings and the precedent investigations in the field.

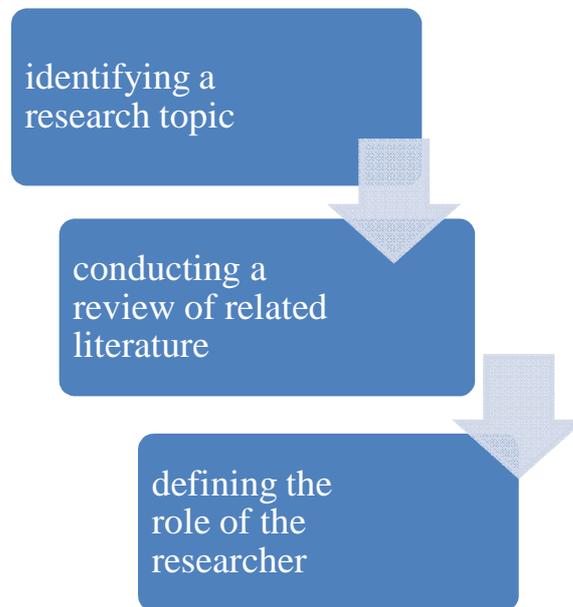


Diagram 1.1. Steps in conducting qualitative research

### 1.7.1.2 Types of qualitative research

Researchers tend to typify qualitative enquiries into distinct taxonomies. On their part, Lodico and her colleagues (2006) suggest a fourfold classification of qualitative researches. These types are thought to be the most commonly used by researchers. They identify ethnography, *“the science of writing about tribes or ...writing about cultural groups”* (267). Ethnographic researchers probe phenomena related to different cultural and societal aspects. The overriding purpose of such enquiry is to construct knowledge about a particular culture and its sole characteristics. Case study another facet of interpretive research is an *“in-depth understanding of an individual, group, or situation”* (269). Both ethnographies and case studies count on specific sampling to draw clear descriptions and precise analyses of raw data.

Phenomenological research on the other hand seeks an understanding of a given phenomenon according to what people think about it and how do they perceive it. A closer look at the participants’ experiences gives the researcher an in depth reflexive reasoning to provide accurate and worldly interpretations. They try to identify the unique trees within

the forest through a sophisticated use of interviews that are thought to ascertain confidential raw data.

Grounded theory, on its own, has adopted its main tenets from the work of Glasser and Strauss (1967). Such method of enquiry relies greatly on ‘constant comparison’ as a key instrument for analysis. The researcher aims thereby, are totally different from those in other fields; he seeks an overgeneralization of findings. Likewise the length of time in conducting the research is so germane and necessary that the analysis of the findings would be more reliable and applicable to other situations.

### **1.7.1.2.1 Case Study Methodology**

Case study the best known method of research has been chosen to fulfill the current investigation. It is the most viable strategy through which the researcher can understand the selected population and consequently interact with them positively. The latter will stand as point of departure in probing the situation to identify certain attributes that would furnish the present survey.

#### **a. Definition of Case Study**

It is universally acknowledged that case study is one of the most practical forms of educational research that implies a *“close examination of people, topics, issues, or programmes”* (De Marrais et al, 2004: 218). Besides, such study requires, according to Scott and Morrison (2006), seeking raw data by answering focused questions with reference to an ordinary real state where the issue under investigation cannot be controlled unlike artificially created cases. It is mainly used to seek a generalization of defined results determined from a particular examined case with an emphasis on two basic variables; the insiders to the case i.e. participants’ voice and the external interpreter i.e. the researcher. In view of that, Adelman et al (as stated in Nunan, 1992:74-75) assert that

*“Although case studies have often been used to sensitise researchers to significant variables subsequently manipulated or controlled in an experimental design, that is not their only role. The understandings generated by case study are significant in their own right. It is tempting to argue that the accumulation of case studies allows theory building via tentative hypotheses culled from the accumulation of single instances.”*

The researchers, therefore, hold that the implications of a case study are often manifested along various aspects including their reliability since they provide qualitative outcomes.

Yet, such a view has been criticized by many experts in the field especially in terms of generalization of findings.

This kind of inquiry is a facet of qualitative research that investigates a specific area of interest *“to gain insight into an in-depth understanding of an individual, group, or situation”* (Lodico et al, 2006: 269). *“It provides a unique example of real people in real situations; enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles”* (Cohen et al, 2007: 253).

According to Scott and Morrison (2006) the use of this research represents a challenge since any enquiry requires a case to be examined and probed. Thus, determining whether a particular investigation is or is not a case study is no longer an easy task. In other words, Smith (1988, cited in Nunan, *ibid*) confesses that the term itself is confusing while Gomm et al (2000, cited in Scott and Morrison, *ibid*) assert that it is universally recognized that *“there is always some unit, or sets of units, in relation to which data are collected and/or analyzed”*. For this reason, Adelman et al (1976, as cited in Nunan, *ibid*) draw a clear cut distinction between case studies and other types of qualitative researches. They declare that CSs focus on a single instance or a bounded system such as a class to a school district. Scott and Usher (2011), on the other hand, differentiate between two separate facets, “either as a set of procedures integral to all types of research; or paradigmatically separate form of research”, owing to which such study might be understood.

To better understand and appreciate what is exactly meant by case study, a collection of definitions is to be afforded. To name but few, Nunan (*ibid*: 75) admits that:

***“Case study research may be initiated in one of two ways. In the first of these, an issue or hypothesis is proposed, and an instance drawn from that class is selected and studied. In the second, a case is selected and studied in its own right rather than an exemplar of a class.”***

Consequently, one can point out that a case study research implies in the first place a sample to be examined that stands as the single unit or what is called a bounded system. The latter links the whole body with the particular entity under investigation so that conclusions can be drawn to ascertain solutions, theories, or generalizations. Besides, case studies are determined by the context in which it occurs and should consider the following (Cohen et al, *ibid*):

1. A sequential description and analysis of the interrelated procedures and observations;
2. A focus on the participants themselves to avoid bias and to understand their perception of events to underline its germane features;
3. A researcher's contributions and reporting of events and procedures.

### **b. Typology of Case Studies**

Researchers strive to categorize case studies under several typologies. Stenhouse (1983, cited in Nunan, *ibid*), for instance, identifies: the neo-ethnographic studies that provide a profound examination of *participant observer* of a single case, the evaluative investigations are meant basically to gauge a given policy or practice, the multi-site studies that are undertaken by different researchers in diverse contexts, and the teachers research or action studies are conducted by instructors in a defined classroom or school to improve a set of identified skills.

Bassey (1999, cited in Scott and Morrison, *ibid*), on the other hand, provides a threefold classification: theory seeking that basically looks for a provisional generalization of findings, evaluative which focus on investigating education in particular to gauge the effectiveness of a given programme, system or project, and story-telling case study that is intended to recount a particular event or story along a given period of time. Yin (1984 as cited in Cohen et al, *ibid*) describes three types of case studies according to their estimated findings: exploratory: that may direct to formulating an educational statement based on several studies, descriptive: it provides description of experiences, and explanatory: is a study that seeks an exploration and understanding of other tested experimentations.

The inquirer, in the current study, makes use of exploratory descriptive action research or what has been named as evaluative case study. The researcher is concerned in finding out “how” do English language students at the University of Mascara think of their writing abilities and performances in different EFL contexts, “why” such particular perceptions are established. The investigator is also interested in figuring out “how” teachers view their students' skillfulness and efficiency, especially their composition. Moreover, she tries to point out “what” teachers think of the infusion of information technologies and feedback to foster students' learning outcomes and productivity. Whilst the researcher has little control over the variables, the interpretations of the findings can be

made through a descriptive perspective and personal experiences to uncover some issues related to the teaching of the writing skill.

### 1.7.2. Quantitative Research

*“Quantitative research was seen to offer a structured and highly regulated way of achieving a macro perspective of the overarching trends in the world, whereas qualitative research was perceived to represent a flexible and highly context-sensitive micro perspective of the everyday realities of the world”* (Tavakoli, 2012, 510)

Quantitative research is a formal, objective, systematic process attempts to find out statistical facts derived from, for instance, surveys and questionnaires in order to deduce reliable numerical information when enquiring a given field. It is assumed to be built “on the measurement of quantity or amount” (Kothari, *ibid*). This research method is used; to describe variables, to examine relationships among variables, and to determine cause-and-effect interactions between variables.’ (Burns & Grove 2005:23)

### 1.8. Data Triangulation

Triangulation has been defined as using more than two techniques to researching human comportment. Social researchers use it as a multi-method approach to map out the complexity and richness of certain behavioural aspects from different standpoints.

Data triangulation is a process that involves the use of multiple data sources to provide reliable and deeper understanding of the issue under investigation for a single method can never shed light on a phenomenon and may bias or distort the whole picture. Qualitative researchers generally use this technique to ensure that an account is rich, robust, comprehensive and well-developed.

It is universally acknowledged that triangulation has countless advantages over the educational research including confidence on the part of the researcher who uses such method to provide neutral and theoretical information. The obtained data from contrasting methods are more reliable and guarantee greater assurance. Moreover, the researchers value the use of triangular methods because qualitative and quantitative approaches when intertwined overcome what is termed as method boundedness as it opens up interpretations and further expectations. (Cohen et al, 2007).

Denzin (1970, as cited in Cohen et al, *ibid*) set up a classification of different types of triangulation. He has identified time triangulation, space triangulation, combined levels of triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and methodological triangulation. The researcher in the current investigation makes use of the methodological triangulation and more particularly the implication of several methods in the same investigation. Three main research instruments have been utilized: an observation, a questionnaire, and written tests i.e. writing assignments.

### **1.8.1. Written Tests**

A test has been defined as a stimuli or questions to be answered by the study sample members for a particular enquiry (Van Horn and Monsen, 2008) . Educational researchers made use of testing documentation because it is the most viable technique. It is thought to be a powerful method of data collection. It is also a reliable and valid tool in assessing students' achievements and aptitudes. Cohen et al (2007) admit that there are certain issues the educational researcher has to take into consideration when using testing as a research tool. To name but a few, the type and purpose of the test is to be defined, whether it is individual or group test, what is tested in particular (achievement, skillfulness, intelligence ...etc), and whether they are norm referenced or criterion referenced.

Tests in educational research have been subject to a good deal of criticism. Some reckon that tests may lead to misleading results; the construct to be testified is to be tightly measured otherwise it would be impoverished and incoherent, last but not least, test takers may reflect different performances that hinder the researcher and thereby misrepresent the study.

Tests have been classified into different taxonomies, yet the best known classification is that of norm referenced, comparing student to another students' achievement and criterion referenced test that provides the exact information about a student and the criteria he is required to fulfill while learning. The researcher, in the current study, will then use the criterion referenced testing to gauge learners' progress and to formatively assess their apprenticeship. Such type of tests aids the investigator to testify the hypotheses, supports the findings, and recommend certain suggestions.

The test employed was in form of writing assignments targeted to measure learner's assimilation of certain written skills. The assignments are corrected and based on the

obtained information a subsequent lesson follows to provide feedback and to show students how to make use of certain software and connectivity materials that may facilitate the writing process.

### 1.8.2.Observational Research Phase

Observation is acknowledged as the most commonly used technique by educational researchers. Since they are guided by particular procedures, scientific observers are thought to “*see what participants cannot*” (Foster, 1996, cited in Scott and Morrison, 2005:168). They therefore “*listen, watch, and record... what informants say and do in specific educational settings and time frames*” (Scott and Morrison, *ibid*: 167). Observational research thereby affords them opportunities to unfold what is obscure and to give certain probed issues different perspectives and interpretations. Researchers then tend to collect vivid data from its genuine context to shed light upon very particular educational areas under investigation (Cohen et al, 2007).

Although the observation as a research tool has many limitations including lack of control over the variables as humans are constantly changing their behaviours owing to their moods, personal lives, or other circumstances, it is usually a valuable way of gathering raw data. “*Since observation enables the researcher to note down what he or she sees as it occurs, observational data are often more accurate.*” (Jupp and Sapsford, 2006: 59).

Concomitant with the purpose of research, several typologies came forth including; naturalistic, participant, systematic, and structured observation (Scott and Morrison, *ibid*). On their part Cohen et al (2007) provided a more comprehensible classification according to several dimensions including the role of the researcher, the methodological framework, and data collection procedures (Scott and Usher, 2011). To name but few, Structured quantitative and unstructured qualitative observation, participant and non-participant observation, overt and covert observation, and direct and indirect observation. Each of the pre-mentioned typologies has its own guidelines that consequently set the yardsticks to data interpretation.

As far as the observational research is concerned, researchers most often classify it into two main types or approaches either structured or less structured observation. Both of them have different aims, purposes, and procedures. Thus, in her investigation the researcher makes use of less structured observation or what has been referred to as

‘ethnographic’ or ‘unstructured’ observation. Since one of the objectives of such an instrument is to produce primary information through recording directly what is seen by the researcher, participant unstructured observation count on the involvement in the area where her engagement changes respectively from complete participant to complete observer (as cited by Scott and Usher, 2011). Jupp and Sapsford (2000: 63) further clarify such an aim when they state that *“the observer participates in some way with the group under study...while at the same time observing the behaviour of group members”*. It requires an understanding of humans behaviours related to different social aspects according to which they interact. Even though unstructured observation is thought to be flexible and less prepared, it provides qualitative and detailed data from the chosen context.

*“Since the greater the number of observations, the greater the reliability of the data might be”* (Cohen et al, ibid: 408), the investigator will adopt an insider’s role in the intended context. Along three years, the investigator has taught and attended written expression courses to second year students at the University of Mascara. She further has tried to testify and record possible information on the viability of teaching such overwhelming task using some of the available technologies in the institution. Besides, she has documented some data about the other ways this module is instructed to construct and establish reliable data related to the probed topic. So as Morrison (1993, as quoted in Cohen et al, ibid: 405) puts it,

*“being immersed in a particular context over time not only will the salient features of the situation emerge and present themselves but a more holistic view will be gathered of the relationship of factors”*

Such full integration in the area would facilitate the description of the interactions occurring along this period of time. This will consequently aid recording; the speech acts, non-verbal communication, timing of events, and the processes involved. That information will be categorized and carefully described.

There is a consensus that interviews, conversations, field notes, and audio or video recordings are used to record observation. The researcher, therefore, uses field notes in her investigation since January 2014, every Sunday and Monday. During such period basic notes have been recorded. So, the following questions, even if it is an extended list, will be adapted and employed from the work of Lecompte and Preissele (as cited in Cohen et al, ibid:405-406) to direct the observational procedure. These include

- Who is in the group and who is taking part?
- How many people are there and what characterize each one?
- How do participants come to be members of the group?
- What is taking place?
- How routine, regular, patterned, irregular and repetitive are the behaviours observed?
- What sources are being used in the course?
- How are activities being described, justified, explained, organized, labeled?
- How do different participants behave towards each other?
- What are the statuses and roles of the participants?
- Who is making decisions, and for whom?
- What is being said and by whom?
- What is being discussed frequently and infrequently?
- What appear to be the significant issues that are being discussed?
- What non verbal communication is taking place?
- Who is talking and who is listening?
- When does the event take place?
- How long does the course take place?
- How is time used in the course?
- How are the individual elements of the course connected?
- How are change and stability managed?
- What rules govern the social organization of, and behaviour in, the event?
- Why is this event occurring, and occurring in the way that it is?
- What meanings are participants attributing to what is happening?
- What are the history, goals, and values of the group?

The aforementioned questions will set the benchmarks to ascertain some information that will be categorized according to Lofland's (1971 as cited in Cohen et al) taxonomy; *acts*: are the set of actions performed by both the teacher and his students, *activities*: last longer to seek better outcomes, *meanings*: how are certain events or acts explained,

participation: what does the chosen group perform, relationships: the different interactions among the group members, and settings: description of the observed local and the interactions taking place.

The Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching i.e. The COLT (as cited in Nunan 1992) developed a refined plan that would enable the educational researcher in the present study to describe neatly what is being observed. Such a scheme is twofold; portrayal of classroom activities and reporting classroom language. The next table highlights the major procedures as occurring in the COLT scheme.

Features	Questions
<b>Part A: classroom activities</b>	
1. Activity type	What is the activity type- e.g., drill, role play, dictation?
2. Participant organization	Is the teacher working with the whole classroom or not? Are students working in groups or individually? If group work, how is it organized?
3. Content	Is the focus on classroom management, language (form, function, discourse, sociolinguistics), or others? Is the range of topics is narrow or broad? Who selects the topic- teacher, students, or both?
4. Student modality	Are students involved in listening, speaking, reading, writing, or combination of these?
5. Materials	What types of materials are used? How long is the text? What is the sources/purpose of the materials? How controlled is their use?
<b>Part B: classroom language</b>	
1. Use of target language	To what extent is the target language used?
2. Information gap	To what extent is requested information predictable in advance?
3. Sustained speech	Is discourse extended or restricted to a single sentence, clause, or word?
4. Reaction to code or message	Does the interlocutor react to code or message?
5. Incorporation of preceding utterance	Does the speaker incorporate the preceding item into his or her contribution?
6. Discourse initiation	Do learners have opportunities to initiate discourse?
7. Relative restriction of linguistic form	Does the teacher expect a specific form, or there is no expectation of particular linguistic form?

Table1.1 Questions Related to the Principal Features of the COLT Scheme (adopted from Nunan, 1992: 99)

Stimulated recall will also be employed in some ways as another observational technique to get some facts related to the issue under scrutiny. Nunan (ibid: 94) contends that such a strategy makes

*“the researcher records and transcribes parts of a lesson and then gets the teacher (and where possible, the students) to comment on what was happening at the time that the teaching and learning took place. Such technique can yield insights into processes of teaching and learning which would be difficult to obtain by other means.”*

In a post session discussions took place. The researcher converse the teacher to get an understanding of what was delivered and the aim behind using certain techniques when presenting the course.

### **1.8.3. The Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is universally acknowledged as the most admired method of collecting raw data open to measurement on attitudes and opinions. Such method allows students to respond freely in an ample period of time to the designed questions. It is also viewed as the ever structured and quicker technique for collecting quantitative data when compared to others as it enables the researcher to pile up information responsive to suggestions and influences. Unlike participant observation and documentation (Nunan, 1992), such an instrument includes “simple but straight forward directions for the respondents so that they may not feel any difficulty in answering the questions” (Kothari, 2004: 114). Questionnaire has been defined in a variety of ways; one can affirm that they refer to

*“The use of questions to elicit responses in self-completion (by electronic or postal means), face to face (survey interviews) and telephone formats in order to generate data that is quantified in a case-by-variable data matrix”* (Marsh, 1982, quoted in Scott and Morrison, 2006: 189)

Questionnaires are generally administered to seek certain concerns. These fall into threefold; philosophy, technique, and politics (De Vaus, 1996 and Burton, 2000 as cited in Scott and Morrison, 2006) that consequently help piloting them. Philosophical interests show that questionnaires are less theoretical as they are based on empirical and scientific model of inquiry which considerably lacks creativity and imagination. Accordingly, they were subject to criticism. Most scholars contend that surveys establish certain link among variables and not causes of the studied phenomenon. So they provide separate rather than consistent outcomes.

Technical concerns, from another point of view, portray the complexities that hinder design and analysis. Yet, advocates of questionnaires support this criticism in case when they are designed inappropriately without any acknowledged purpose. More significantly, they accept the fact that qualitative analysis has to go in tandem with the statistical finding to not open up multiple interpretations. At another, political manipulations lead educational researchers to carry out a thorough analysis of current data sets available in the area. This would prevent any misunderstanding of the outcomes and carefully present them.

It is of importance to look at the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires before adopting them as a research tool. As for Gilham (2007, as cited in Souryana, 2012: 160) the main pros include;

- a. Low cost in time and money
- b. Easy to get information from a lot of people quickly
- c. Respondents can complete the questionnaire when it suits them
- d. Analysis of answers to closed questions is straightforward
- e. Less pressure for an immediate response
- f. Respondents' anonymity
- g. Lack of interviewer bias
- h. Standardization of questions
- i. Can provide suggestive data for testing a hypothesis

While the major cons incorporate

- a. Problems of data quality
- b. Typically low response rate unless sample captive
- c. Problems of motivating respondents
- d. The need for brevity and relatively simple questions
- e. Misunderstandings cannot be corrected
- f. Questionnaire development is often poor
- g. Seek information just by asking questions
- h. Assume respondents have answers available in an organized fashion
- i. Lack of control over order and context of answering questions
- j. Questions wording can have major effect on answers
- k. Respondents literacy problems
- l. People talk more easily than they write
- m. Impossible to check seriousness or honesty of answers
- n. Respondents uncertainty as to what happens to data

### **1.8.3.1. Typology of Questionnaires**

Researchers tend to classify questionnaires into several types, Cohen et al Typology of questionnaires, for instance, includes: structured; are thought to be piloted and refined before handing the final version through the help of the participants. This would ease the analysis and data interpretation and thereby provides reliable outcomes, semi structured; leads to bias since they require less preparation time and rely heavily on theory and research questions as they set the agenda, and unstructured; comprise open ended items that give respondents freedom in providing their views in their own ways.

#### **1.8.3.1.1. Types of Questionnaire Items**

Cohen et al (2007) identified several types of questions researchers use in surveys. For instance, Dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions, rank ordering, rating scales, constant sum questions, ratio data questions, matrix questions, contingency questions are likely to shape questionnaires.

Whatever their type and purpose, questionnaires most often include open ended or closed ended questions. The former is referred to as open ended item in which the researcher pinpoints the possible answers that would be ticked by the participants. The latter, on the other hand, allows the respondents to answer freely.

In order to identify the main hindrances faced by learners when they write, the researcher administered a questionnaire to sixty second year students from the groups where the observation takes place. The student questionnaire includes 28 items; students have to tick the adequate answer. It also includes 3 open ended question aiming to provide suggestions student perceive as important in ameliorating their writing ability.

As to the second questionnaire, it is distributed to twenty four teachers but only seven teachers respond while the others claim that they do not teach written expression. The researcher manages 39 items and 14 open ended questions which purpose is to inquire the availability of integrating ICTs in the process of providing feedback in improving the writing skill. It also seeks teachers' contribution by providing valuable strategies that might improve students' performance.

#### **1.8.3.1.2. Description of the Questionnaire Addressed to Students**

The questionnaire is made up of twenty eight items as we have already mentioned. It is divided into four main sections each devoted to fulfill an aim. The latter include:

pedagogical use of ICTs, writing instruction, the use of technologies in writing instruction, and the use of technologies in feedback provision.

The first section, pedagogical use of ICTs, aims to finding out the extent to which technologies are supported and how their use is fostered in education generally. The items consequently deals with the kind of technological tools available at the institution, students' perception about the IT expertise, and the areas that can be improved through ICT inclusion.

The second division, writing instruction, is intended to ascertaining students approaching of their writing ability and the possible ways such a skill can be improved. The questions included look for, the importance of composition instruction in foreign language acquisition, the difficulties encountered while writing, the processes involved, and the possibility of self assessing progress.

The third dissection, feedback use, deals with the level to which feedback can improve productivity. It considerably seeks an understanding of the type of feedback students receive, the importance of feedback practices, the writing aspects refined by feedback, the type of feedback received, the extent to which feedback improves writing performance.

The last part, the use of technologies in feedback provision, is intended to determine the viability of integrating ICTs in the feedback process. It tackles mainly teacher's use of electronic feedback, the students' use of E-folios in gauging progress, the type of innovation used in self assessment, and finally an examination of learners' perceptions towards feedback practices and teacher' use of the process.

#### **1.8.3.1.3. Description of the Questionnaire Addressed to Teachers**

The questionnaire contrived as part and partial of the current investigation is intended to testify the formulated hypotheses i.e. the viability of integrating ICTs in writing instruction. It is designed to teachers at the University of Mascara to complete the raw data related to the probed phenomenon. As writing is thought to constrain students, the researcher finds it useful to address the questionnaire to writing teachers and teachers of other modules who can provide us with handy information about the actual level of their students and the possible aspects that had to be highlighted so that learners ameliorate their productivity i.e. writing performance.

The questionnaire is headed by an introductory section explaining that it is part of an investigation that is intended to examine the impact of ICTs inclusion on the students writing performances. This part explicates the way teachers are required to answer the items included i.e. either by ticking the right item or giving a full response based on their own experience and expertise.

The survey is made up of thirty nine items that are of different types; open and closed ended questions. It is divided into three subdivisions each with a deliberate purpose. Their names are as follows: “Pedagogical Use of ICTs”, “Writing Instruction”, and “Feedback Use”.

The first division entitled “pedagogical use of ICTs” is meant to find out the extent to which technologies are supported in the institution. It looks for the teachers’ perceptions of technological expertise and the department’s role in fostering IT use. Moreover, it tackles the role of ICTs as management tools. Last but not least, this part enquires the use of technologies in attainment support.

The second part “Writing Instruction” is considerably intended to inquire about the time devoted to the teaching of writing, whether it suffices students to acquire the major aspects of composition, and the problems encountered while instructing such a skill. Besides, it looks for the teacher’s consideration of the students’ needs and the anticipated objectives. In addition to all the forgoing assessing writing and the way it is directed is questioned to find out the teacher’s attitude towards students’ performances. It also includes an enquiry on the use of the process and the product approaches designed on the Likert scale (adopted from Al-Mahrooqi et al, 2015).

The third section “Feedback Use” is designed to ascertain the extent to which feedback is important in refining productivity, the type of feedback provided, the procedures used in error correction, the aspects of writing focused, and the effects of positive and negative feedback. Moreover, it looks for the principles from which feedback practices stem and the time needed to accomplish the desired outcomes. This part comprises a set of questions that are meant the find out students’ perceptions of the process, its effects on progress and the factors that influence the type of feedback employed.

The last part “The Use of Technologies in Writing Instruction” focuses mostly on enquiring the use of electronic feedback to gauge students’ productions, E-folios’ role in monitoring progress, and the types of technologies implemented when necessary to provide feedback.

The collection of the quantitative raw data goes through two stages. In the first go, the administration and the piloting of the questionnaires took place on October 2015. Some questionnaires were distributed to testify their clarity. Shortly after receiving the questionnaires, especially the teachers’ questionnaire, the researcher did some corrections and refined them to be redistributed in April 2016.

### **1.9.Data Analysis Procedures**

This section is devoted to presenting data analysis procedures. It presents thus the statistical and discourse analysis methods to analyzing data obtained from the questionnaire.

#### **1.9.1.Analyzing and Interpreting Quantitative Data**

Cresswell (2013) contends that analyzing the data requires several steps each with an intended purpose and estimated results. First of all the researcher should prepare and organize his data for analysis. The latter consists of scoring the data i.e. assigning a numeric value to each response in the instrument to be used. Then, he has to determine the type of scores to analyze the responses such as: the single item score that is an individual score assigned to each question for each participant in the investigation, the summed score which is assigned to individuals and meant to be compared from one time to another, or net scores that present an obvious difference for each individual. In the current investigation the summed score will be chosen to value the findings into statistics and to compute an overall value for one variable.

Later on, the researcher selects a computer statistical programme that enables her analyze the data. The Excel software will be the most convenient way to clarify the findings. Shortly after the investigator selects the programme to be used, he inputs the data by relocating it from the instrument into the computer file to prepare it for analysis. Analyzing the data is to follow. The analysis has to go in tandem with the research questions and the proposed hypotheses. Quantitative data in particular calls for both inferential and descriptive analysis. The former indicates conclusions about the entire

group based on one variable, tests the null hypotheses, or relates the different variables in the instrument. The latter seeks general tendencies that enable the researcher to gain overall understanding of the data set (Mackey and Gass: 2005).

### **1.9.2. Analyzing Qualitative Data**

It is universally acknowledged that there is no one single method to analyzing qualitative data, yet, the type of the study undertaken takes the lion share in determining the type of analysis to be utilized. A case study, for instance, is written as descriptive narrative with certain issues raised but more importantly with events conforming to chronology.

Cohen et al (2007) provide five ways of organizing and presenting data analysis. The most prevalent methods are those determined by people/respondents, by issue, and finally by instruments. The researcher, thus, is to present and organize data using the participants by presenting their total responses and grouping them according to the issue raised in the research questions. This is very useful because it enables the researcher to preserve coherence and consistency of the material. Besides, data presented from the questionnaires are followed by, as stated by Cohen et al, documentary data and field notes.

## 1.10. Research Design

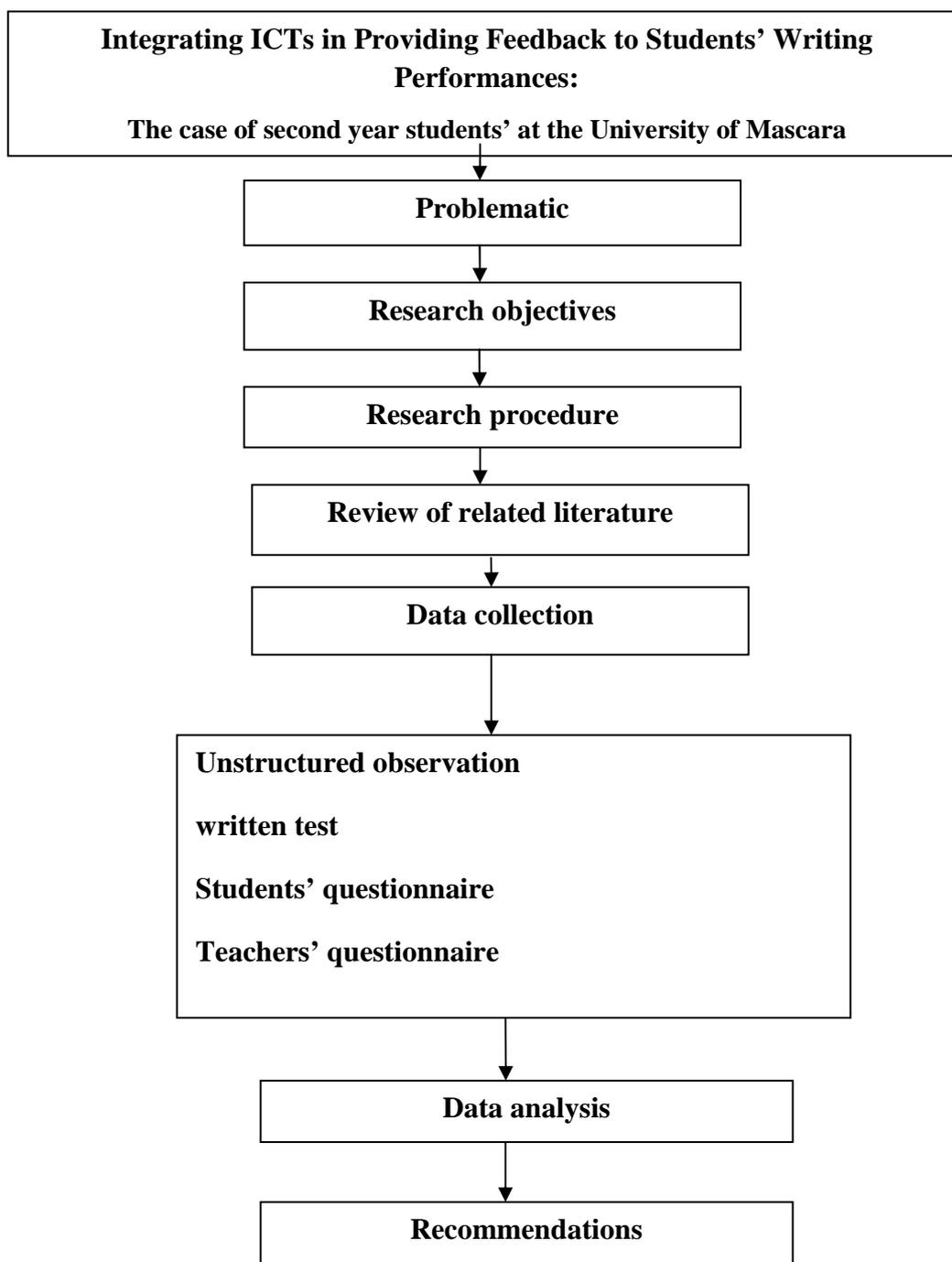


Diagram 1.2. Research Design

The following diagram will further explain the structure of the study. It includes the main steps the researcher goes through to fulfill her investigation. In the first go a problematic was put in focus to direct the whole research. The research objectives are then set to be followed by defining the research procedure employed, a review of the related

literature, data collection, an analysis of the findings, and finally recommendations are suggested for feedback implementation.

### **1.11.Limitations of the Study**

Time has a considerable effect on the fulfillment of the current study. The short amount of time devoted to the writing course for instance constrains the researcher from gaining an accurate understanding of the issues involved when providing or receiving feedback and to increase reliability of the findings. Besides, the poor connection to the internet curtails the possibility of successfully integrate connectivity into the teaching of writing and the provision of electronic feedback, yet, with some students it works only through the use of the social media, more particularly facebook.

The access to the sample population was another constrain that paralyzes the researcher; even its size was noticeably small. Access to some teachers proved difficult and even subject to change. Further, most of them did not hand back the questionnaires or even offer some help due to personal reasons. The case exacerbated by the resignation of the head of the department that put pressure on the staff and severely limited access to the participants.

One more weakness of the research design was the open ended questions included in the questionnaires. Perhaps, due to their limited background, most of the participants left them unanswered. Another limitation is that the researcher and the analyst are the same person that could lead to bias. However, triangulation is used to avoid researcher bias and to ensure validity.

### **1.12.Conclusion**

In this chapter the researcher provided a clear description of the investigation. It has dealt primarily with the research design, its procedures, the sampling, and the limitations of the study. In addition, some information about the linguistic profile in Algeria and the teaching of languages has been provided to offer a clear understanding of the learning situation and the students' background.

# **Chapter two**

## **ICTs and the Writing Process**

## 2.1.Introduction

In this chapter the researcher is concerned with providing a theoretical background related to Instructional Communication technologies ICTs. It includes a definition of ICTs, the motives behind using them in education, insights into the implementation of ICTs in teaching and the stages of ICTs inclusion in education. Besides, it offers a short description of the different models of ICTs inclusion in education, the traditional view of the learning process, and the main theories that support the new view of the learning process.

## 2.2.Definition of ICTs

The use of the term ICT in education as explained by Glen and Anderson (2002, cited in UNESCO report, 2004: 4) stemmed from precedent terms like *information technology* (IT) and *new technology* around the 1970s to represent the tools that are used to directly access information (Jo Tondeur, 2007). They further argue that the link between communication and information technology is basically due to the communicative feature of the new technologies. This has been emphasised by Anderson and Baskin (2002, *ibid*) when they state that: ***“The addition of communication to previous terms such as information emphasized the growing importance attributed to the communicative aspects of new technologies.”***

Anderson and Glen (*ibid*) also define ICT as principally related to *“those technologies that are used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information”*. Besides, Toomey (2002, *ibid*) contends that

***“The technologies could include hardware (e.g. computers and other devices); software application and connectivity (e.g. access to the internet, local networking, infrastructure, and video conferencing).”***

Moursund (2003, cited in UNESCO report, 2004: 4) has further provided a thorough definition of ICT to include

***“the full range of computer hardware, computer software, telecommunication facilities ... the full range of display and projection devices used to view computer output. It includes the local area networks that allow computer system and people to communicate with each other. It includes digital cameras, computer games, CDs, DVDs, cell phones, telecommunication satellites, and fiber optics. It includes computerized machinery, and computerized robots.”***

Moreover Downs et al 2003(ibid) differentiates between educational technology that consists of a variety of tools for “*accessing, presenting, or communicating information such as projector equipment and video and audio technologies including distance education formats such as radio and television*” and ICT in general. To state it differently, these technologies are described as media that are principally used as learning strategies to acquire and deliver knowledge whether they are one-way such as TV and print or two-way as cell phone and video conferencing i.e. *broadcast* or *communicative*. (Nedjah, 2010)

### **2.3.Motives Behind the Use of ICT in Education:**

It is generally believed today that communication among people became the easiest in the world since the evolvment and introduction of new media and technologies. Within the birth of the printing press and the telegraph, the pace with which those means were developed increased, leading people all over the globe to come into contact using a variety of tools. Likewise, Rodgers (1986, cited in Kenning, Ibid: 26, 27) believes that the evolution of the human communication passed through four main epochs along which several devices were used to include: *writing, printing, telecommunication* (telegraph, telephone, radio and television), and *interactive communication*. To name but few, the World Wide Web today is considered as an interesting means of communication and a primary source of information especially after the introduction of smart phones. This affected most areas of life including education and language learning that consider technologies an important aid to enhance apprenticeship.

According to Tondeur, (2007) there are three main reasons that urge teachers and education personnel to infuse Instructional Technologies in the teaching learning process. These include,

1. Economic motives; the implementation of ICT promote improvement in society. It rather helps maintain an experienced work force and experts who know how to solve the problems associated with economy in their country.
2. Social motives; since ICT aid learners to be more autonomous and responsible for their attainment, they will seek and aspire to build a strong and well- informed society.

3. Educational motives; IT is thought to be a motivating and helpful issue in the teaching- learning activity. It is primarily used to support the learning environment and to focus more on learners and knowledge centered processes.

Makkar (1974, as quoted in Abbot, 2001: 67), on his part, identifies a set of reasons for using computer software in education.

- a. Technologies offer an understanding of any topic under scrutiny than is possible with a conventional approach.
- b. Unlike other methods, they are a time saving tools when learning to achieve the same results.
- c. Ease the teachers' task by affording handy techniques for innovative classes
- d. Technologies encourage learner centeredness by giving chance for the students' to exert the different learning tasks
- e. ICTs help ameliorate the teaching process
- f. They offer cheaper ways to carry out learning
- g. Technologies boost up the learners' motivation

#### **2.4.Stages of ICT Inclusion in Education:**

The infusion of ICT in education became the most problematic since it plays a crucial role in motivating students and enhancing their attainment. For this reason, several models have been proposed to appropriately integrate the new technologies into the learning process. In one of the UNESCO's (2003) publications, a model of ICT development in the educational system for teacher-learners has been suggested by a group of experts and that can be relevant to any instructional operation. The latter includes four main stages; *emerging, applying, infusing, and transforming*.

1. The emerging phase: at this level authorities provide the necessary tools that support the physical environment in which learning takes place. For instance, computers are given to the school whilst both of students and teachers can use them and know the basic steps to access and maintain such new machinery. In other words, they should feel at ease and confident to utilize the devices.
2. The applying phase: at this stage, teachers should use the innovations into the area they are interested in to improve their skills and competencies such as languages, mathematics, science...etc. for this, the UNESCO program proposes a

set of attributes that are congruent to the applying stage and any learner aims to achieve. Thus, users will be able to:

- a. know when, where, how, and where will using ICT help attain the pre set aims;
  - b. select the devices that fuel students' desire and motivation towards learning;
  - c. find out and choose the suitable data that help constructing a given idea.
3. The infusing phase: in this stage both of teachers and students incorporate the information Technologies into every single element of their learning i.e. in preparation and management to provide variation and more creativity to the educational process. At this level IT aid teachers to be;

*“Active and creative, able to stimulate and manage the learning of their students, as they infuse a range of learning styles and uses of ICT in achieving their educational goals... they use multimedia themselves, or make it available to their students to present what they have learned.”* (A Programme of Teacher Development, cited in UNESCO, 2003: 27)

4. The transforming phase: at this stage the use of ICT should be extended to encompass all the educational personnel; from teachers to students to administrators... etc. The roles of teachers and students should be altered leading to the consequent change in the learning process into a more learner centred one. Thereby, new views and ways in perceiving the teaching learning processes ought to take place to help construct knowledge authentically and work collaboratively in a flexible environment.

## **2.5.Models for ICT Integration in Education**

Scholars tend to administer a variety of models, based on their perception of ICTs and their assumptions about the teaching and learning of language, for the integration of technologies in the educational landscape. This section thus will deal with the main models generated to the investment and infusion of the available instructional technological tools.

### **2.5.1.The concerns based adoption model (CBAM)**

It has been stated that this model is inspired from the work of Fuller (1969) based on teachers' perception of ICTs and its impact on pedagogy in general. It was published in the mid 1970s to gain attention and foster several other models including the *ACOT* and the *instructional transformation* that help assess and implement the new technologies. It

consists basically of three stages: Stages of Concern “SoU”, Levels of Use “LoU”, and Innovation Configuration “IC”.

According to Hall and Hord (1987, cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 16) at the Stages of Concern one should wonder; “*how teachers or others perceive an innovation and how they feel about it*”. Thereby, it is preferable to think how to determine the status of the ICT in the lives of teachers and students so that one can formulate an idea about the possible use of technologies in a given educational environment.

Moreover, Hall, George, and Rutherford (1986, cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 49) afford a clear description of how to gain a close look at people’s apprehension and appreciation of the tools in hand. They grade from little concern to use the innovation to a focus on exploring the worldly profit that could be reached through the use ICTs and how best they can alter and control more sophisticated tools to lessen their ignorance of the world around them. To further understand what has been stated, the following table offers the stages through which the experts classify the concerns about the IT.

Table 2.1. Description of the CBAM Stages of Concern (SoC) adapted from Newhouse et al (ibid:49)

Stage	Description
Awareness	The innovation is introduced to make its users, the teacher and his students, aware of its different uses.
Informational	A clear relationship between the medium and education is drawn such as its characteristics, effects, and requirements for use to create a obvious atmosphere for learning and to ensure flexible use of the technologies.
Personal	At this stage the users’ roles are defined to identify what is required from each individual. Since they are uncertain with what to do, their duties are neatly devised to avoid inadequacy and problems within its usage.
Management	How best is to use the information and resources through ICTs is the focus of this stage. The tasks and the processes of using the innovation purposefully. Efficiency, organization, management, scheduling, time and requirements are thought to occupy the top of the list in the first go.
Consequence	Any expected consequence out of using the innovation is to be highlighted including the impact of the ICTs on the students’ apprenticeship. The teacher had better evaluate the outcomes and find out the relevance of the tools for the target students and thereby define the requirement for better assimilation.
Collaboration	Coordination and cooperation is needed to share expertise and therefore improve the outcomes.
Refocusing	An exploration of the benefits of the technologies is needed to pinpoint the possibilities of change and using more influential alternatives based on the students’ recommendations and need and inspired from experts in the field.

Besides and at the levels of use Hall and Hord ( ibid: 16) try to find out “*what a teacher is doing or not doing in relation to the innovation*”. In other words they wonder whether the teacher is able to evolve and improve when using the innovation to move from no use to an entire integration of ICTs in their field of interest. They further provide a guiding procedure upon which they could build their assumptions. The following provides a clear description of what they have devised.

Level	Description
Non-Use	At this stage knowledge about the innovation is poor. Even worse, the user may know nothing about the different issues related to the implementation of the technologies in facilitating the teaching learning process.
Orientation	The users start an exploration of the innovation and to acquire the necessary information related to their field of interest and the requirements for its use.
Preparation	Get used to the technologies by putting into practice what they have acquired.
Mechanical Use	In this special step the user focuses on the short range effects while putting his/her needs in focal point. Rather, the users try to master the benchmarks of technologies implementation.
Routine	The use of the innovation is getting steady through its continuous implementation. Little attention is paid to the using the ICTs, more importantly the focus is on reaching the aim.
Refinement	The impact of the innovation on the users’ achievements within short and long term effect need to be defined; especially the estimated changes based on the actual needs and field of interest.
Integration	At this stage the user is to fully integrate the technologies for more achievements. Creativity is required from them to boost up the level of knowledge construction and thereby achieve satisfactory outcomes.
Renewal	An evaluation of the quality of the tools in use to look for more practical alternatives. Besides, at this level, the users seek further positive effect on the outcomes for both the self and the whole system.

Table 2.2. Description of the CBAM Levels of Use (LoU) (adapted from Hall et al 1975 cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*: 49)

At the third level which is the innovation configuration, the researchers focus more on the results that might be gained through the use of ICTs. Hall and Hord contend that this stage “*focuses on describing the operational forms an innovation can take*”. Furthermore, the specialists tried to investigate the possible effect of IT on the teaching process and the possible implementations of the innovation.

Access to computers	Student use of computers in the subject area	Classroom organization	Independent learning	Teacher-student relationship	Learning activities	Nature of task environment
<b>All students use computers at home and in school</b>	Suitable use of computers at home and in many lessons	Teachers make use of computers basically to change his teaching strategies	Students construct their own knowledge themselves through the regular use of computers	Students reach autonomy based on computer use	Teachers design activities that help improve higher and lower order thinking skills. These activities are both exploratory and practical	Students receive regular feedback on motivating and problem solving tasks
<b>All students use computers at home and sometimes in school</b>	Use of computers at home and in some lessons	Teachers most often use computer as an alternative teaching strategy	Students sometimes use computers to acquire sense of what they are learning	Students sometimes rely on themselves to gain knowledge	Teachers design practical activities germane to students experience	Students receive regular feedback on motivating tasks
<b>Some students have computers at home</b>	Students either use computers at home for learning or do not use them at all.	Teachers do not use computers	Students never use computers to learn	Students rely primarily on teachers in the process of learning	Teacher design either exploratory or practical activities to be completed	Students do never receive feedback on tasks that might be motivating

Table.2.3. Innovation Configuration Components and variations for Computers Supporting Learning (adapted from Newhouse, 1998 cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 48)

In the aforementioned table Newhouse (1998) tried to pinpoint the effects of computer use on each of; lessons and learning, classroom organization and the teacher’s style, autonomy in learning, teacher- student relationship, and learning activities and tasks. He reckons that whenever computers are used regularly, both of teachers and students reach a level of autonomy and motivation that could not be reached through other tools.

Besides, learners find themselves more involved and responsible for their own learning when they construct the meaning of what they are attaining by themselves.

### 2.5.2. Instructional Transformation Model

Such a model was fostered from the concerns based adoption model and Rogers's work (1983) to aid educational institutions devise their plans. It is recommended by Rieber & Welliver, Rieber and Marcinkiewicz (1989, 1993, 1994) who inspire from the Level of Use stage a hierarchy for a well established innovation in schooling. The elements that could be included in this hierarchy are: *non use*, *familiarization: the Reiberprocess of becoming acquainted with the notion of computer*, *utilization: teachers make use of the computers for many educational opportunities but are not committed*, *integration: crucial turning point of fully implementing the computer in education... for appropriate activities*, *reorientation*, and *evolution* (Rieber and welliver, 1989, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*: 18). This means that an educator have to pass along six main steps to reach a successful integration of ICT in instruction. To state it differently, Newhouse et al (2002: 18) further explain that

*“... the educator must go through a period of familiarization (entry) representing baseline exposure to technology, utilization (adoption) occurring when teachers try the technology; integration (adaption) beginning the appropriate use of ICT, reorientation (appropriation) where ICT becomes a part of the learning context and evolution or revolution (invention) where there is a change in methods and media to facilitate learning.”*

### 2.5.3. The Stages of Concern with Information Technology Model

It is primarily designed and meant for teachers to evaluate the significant impact of ICTs on their teaching. The stages of concern is perceived as a reform to the proposed CBAM model to include two major projects; PRINT (project on the implementation of new technologies), and PIT (project information technology). The former suggests a model that comprises seven dimensions a teacher should come through to overcome the constraints that detract him from using technologies, especially in instruction. These include; *awareness*: when a teacher has no prior interest or knowledge on the IT, *informational/personal*: the role of the teacher here is to try to improve and get some information on what is really required for using the innovation, *consequence*: at this level the instructor is to find out the importance and the consequent impact of ICTs on the students and their attainments, *management*: the point at which a teacher tries to adopt the

ICT in his classroom, *collaboration*: at this stage a sense of sharing the benefit and generalize the use of ICT all over the school should be considered, *refocusing 1&2*, an attempt to adapt and find other options when using the new technologies ought to be settled to promote creativity. (Vernooy-Gerritsen, 1994, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*)

Project information technology; on the other hand, provides a seven stages model devised by Collis (1993, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*). The model comprises; 1) *Unawareness*, 2) *Information Level*, 3) *Initial Personal Skill Level*, 4) *level of Routine Use of Some Aspects of the Innovation*, 5) *Extended Impact Level*, 6) *Contributor's level*, and 7) *Leadership level*. The pit project endeavors to aid teachers improve to reach the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> level. Collis' aim here is to widen the scope of infusing the technology beyond the adoption stage and to further exploit ICTs to adjust the different educational practices. Moreover, teachers should extend to alter the innovation itself to a more flexible and original use.

#### **2.5.4. Levels of Technology Implementation Framework**

It is another model fostered from the CBAM. Moersch (1997) inaugurated it to analyze teacher's high-tech competence at schools to elaborate a digital, collaborative, critical, and sustainable learning environment or what he calls *computer efficiency*, "***the degree to which computers are being used to support concept-based or process-based instruction, consequential learning, and higher order thinking skills***" (Moersch, 1997, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*: 21). Nevertheless, such an instrument was not supported since it makes use of a less reliable research tool (questionnaire) to find out skillfulness in using ICTs. The model has been developed to form a seven aspects replica for IT incorporation; *non use, awareness, exploration, infusion, mechanical integration, routine integration, expansion, and refinement* (Newhouse et al, *ibid*).

#### **2.5.5. The ACOT Model**

Such a model was carried out in USA to identify three basic levels including; survival, mastery, and impact related to the teacher know-how in technology based classroom. The Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow project emphasizes an imperative need for "high-access-to-technology-classroom environments" (Sanddholtz et al, 1992, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*). While developing such a model, Dwyer and his colleagues (1991, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*) tried to consider a set of alterations affect on the educational programs that apply it. This change follows a five stages process: *entry, adoption,*

*adaptation, appropriation, and invention* paying particular attention to the student himself who is in fact the driving force of the whole process.

In the entry stage, a teacher who is a beginner in using ICTs seeks help from experts and specialists to properly include the innovations into instruction; he is viewed as an apprentice who requires thorough training in the field. Then, a subsequent use of some of the software applications known for the teacher in the adoption stage takes place, for he uses such devices in planning and preparing his courses rather than in teaching. Next, when adapting any device, the instructor needs to implicate ICTs in his traditional classes especially when they attempt to teach writing through the use of word processors and graphics tools to get the students involved in the learning process. In the appropriation level, the teacher is required to use the innovation as a tool to enhance cooperation, and thereby, he has to select, grade, and apply what suits better a class based on learners' needs. Finally, and as the teacher purchased the necessary techniques and acquired the essential knowledge related to the implications of technologies in the way a given aspect is taught, he would then become an innovator who would find out novel ways and tools such as designing new applications and devising creative models of integration.

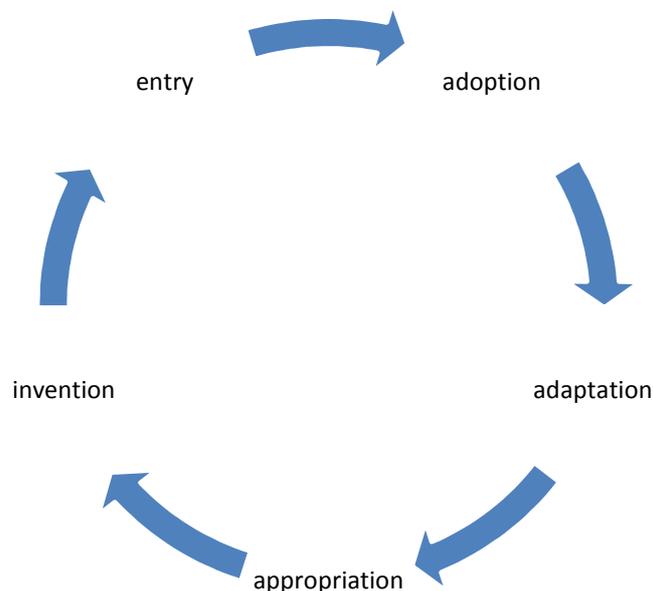


Diagram 2.1. Stages of ICTs integration

Mandinach and Cline (1994, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*) in their project *the Systems Thinking and Curriculum Innovation (STACI)*, on their parts, added an *innovation stage* to the ACOT model to aid teachers reformulate some educational elements such as

the curriculum and the learning activities. They further identify that there might be some constraints that curtails the possibility of purposefully applying such stages, thereby, they can either move progressively or regressively in their way of implementing technologies. For this, Mandinach and Cline (1994) proposed three system models through system thinking concepts and system diagrams to describe computer based curriculum innovation according to three levels: Student Learning Level, Classroom Processes Level, and Organizational Change Level. In the Classroom Processes Model, for instance, five domains should be included, namely: *instruction, curriculum, resources, support, and accountability*. They claim that these aspects have variables that can be either *stocks* or *flows*. The instructional domain for example has two flows including the technology and student-teacher role play and two stocks comprising interactive learning and learner-directed learning. They further make this point clearer when stating that technology can foster interactive instruction which aid reaching learner-directed attainment that is affected by the role changes of teachers and students.

#### **2.5.6. Technology Maturity Model (TMM)**

The maturity model is concerned with the level to which the educational settings are responsible to fulfill within the infusion of ICTs to reach satisfying results. It is thought to be broad and complex since it addresses the innovation's development in the school over a considerable period of time to direct and practise approaches to the processes and products happening in the teaching context. Sibley and Kimball, (1998, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*) believe that this model concentrate on the challenges of technology use and implementation in educational settings in a repeated way over an extended time frame to cover four basic areas. First, the organizational phase that deals with some preparation and programming aspects to appropriately use technologies in a given classroom. Then, the assessment level is primarily meant to gauge the efficiency of what has been planned and the effectiveness of ICTs in instruction and lessons' planning. After, a formulation phase occurs to properly identify a systematic framework upon which the use of the technologies in the target area rests. Finally, the implementation phase takes place. Likewise, an extended plan can be applied to smoothly infuse the ICTs into a given instructional environment.

Moreover, such an approach comprises nine stages to include: *'improvement cycle, planning phases, spiral refinement, concurrent planning and improvement, comprehensive planning, assessment instruments, benchmarks, a plan analysis rubric, and maturity*

*indicators* (this is the most important step since it depicts how further an institution improved in using the innovation). The latter can be measured and filtered through a systematized plan comprises four basic steps that could be gauged through various indicators designed to meet specific aspects. These incorporate: the Emergent Stage; this represents an introduction of technologies into the school that basically lacks support and formal planning procedures from the concerned institution besides minimal support for teachers' preparation, the Islands' Stage; at this level, the school authorities encourage the use of computers through sophisticated procedures and planning to support ICTs implementation in the process of teacher development, the Integrated Stage; the school authorities provide appropriate use of the innovations and more formal and informed plans are administered to ensure efficient implications, and the Exemplary Stage; represents the ideal uses of the ICTs into the teaching -learning process.

The following table that is adopted from Newhouse et al, (ibid), can better illustrate the TMM administrative and curricula filter.

Category	Policy		planning		Electronic information		assessment	
	Type	Behavioural	Resource infrastructure	Behavioural	Resource infrastructure	Behavioural	Resource infrastructure	Behavioural
Emergent	Appropriate technology use is considered, but is informal and inconsistent.	No technology policy exists.	Informal planning process, isolated to projects, and is budget driven.	Informal plan.	Staff and students rarely depend upon electronic resources and use them sporadically	Resources are scarce, limited to materials like electronic encyclopedias. Few students have access	Few staff and no students use technology for assessment of student work.	Electronic tools are rarely used for assessment and are not readily available
Island	Appropriate technology use is formalized but is mostly ignored by many in the school.	Some policy exists loosely articulated and mostly formal with no formal approval.	Formal planning takes place, but is isolated to specific projects with some connections with other planning efforts.	Formal plan with isolated implementation and little or no connection to other planning efforts.	Students and staff are somewhat dependent upon information resources and utilize them often.	Resources are beyond basic, but lack depth and are not available to all areas of the school.	Used by many of the staff and some of the students for the assessment of work and self assessment.	Some assessment and reporting tools are available, with a focus on traditional assessment measures.
Integrated	Appropriate technology use is formalized and embraced in many parts of the school.	Formal policy exists, but is not comprehensive in nature, or has not been approved by the governing body.	School wide comprehensive planning receives informal review, and is connected to other planning efforts.	Comprehensive technology plan that receives informal review and some connection to planning efforts	Students and staff are very dependent upon information resources, and utilize them regularly	Resources are fairly comprehensive providing depth or diversity, but not both. Access is available to most.	Used by most of the staff and many students for the assessment of work and self assessment	Many assessment and reporting tools are available, with tools limited in scope and availability.
Exemplary	Appropriate technology use policy is formalized and fully supported at all levels of the organization	Comprehensive Policy exists and has been approved by the organization's governing body.	School wide comprehensive planning with formal evaluation and connected to other planning within the school and district.	Comprehensive technology plan with formal evaluation and connection to planning in the school and district	Students and staff are heavily dependent upon information resources and use them daily.	Resources are comprehensive providing depth and diversity. All students have regular access.	Technology is an essential part of the assessment process for students, teachers, and parents	Fully integrated assessment and reporting tools are available for student and staff use.

Table 2.4. (Adopted from Newhouse et al, *ibid*), the TMM administrative and curricula filter

### 2.5.7. Typology of ICT Uptake

This model has been deduced from Brundage and McKeracher (1980) and Boud (1988) studies on learning and teaching practices with ICTs infusion. While learners and teachers use ICTs to get knowledge, they find themselves obliged to acquire the data base related to technology. For this reason, such an approach to technologies use is meant mainly to develop a framework that determines the teachers' will, expertise, or more precisely to assess their capabilities and pedagogies through a more sophisticated procedure that includes four stages: dependence, counter-dependence, independence, and interdependence. According to these stages, one can determine the instructors' level of improvement. In other words, the teachers' reaction and feelings towards technology infusion position them on the stage that they have reached.

These predetermined assumptions were based on Bloom's taxonomy i.e. Bloom's head: understandings, heart: feelings and hand: behaviors dimensions to consider the instructors' affective and cognitive appreciation of the innovation and their reflection on the actual use in their classrooms. A typology, thus, has been suggested to discuss the results got from a research done on the availability and efficiency of using this model.

Along the four stages and the three dimensions of Bloom's classification the following outcomes have been induced

Dependence  $\Rightarrow$  counter dependence  $\Rightarrow$  independence  $\Rightarrow$  Interdependence

<i>Survival issues with ICT dominate concerned more with own mastery and learning</i>	<i>Limited local thinking about ICT, teaching Oriented</i>	<i>Directed focused ICT thinking. Teaching and learning oriented.</i>	<i>ICT thinking, usage now second nature; learning oriented; student's focus</i>
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Digrame 2.2. The four stages for learning new material adapted to this model of ICT uptake (Boud, 1988)

### 2.6. Insights into the Implementation of ICTs in Teaching

The pace with which the new technologies affected and changed ways in instruction led many to investigate the perception of people about the possible impact and future implications of such innovations. Researchers agree on the substantial change that has been brought up by the use of ICT in and outside EFL classrooms, on teachers and students and their daily interactions, their motivation and zeal to attain and transmit information, and on the teaching of English language in particular. For this, a good deal of light has been shed

on the views of several futurist applied linguists from several branches as determined by Chapelle (2003) including the technologist, the pragmatist, and the critical analyst.

### 2.6.1. The Technologist View

The futurist technologists at this point are very optimistic concerning the efficiency of computers and its positive effect on teaching especially in the coming years and within the unprecedented evolvement of technological devices. Artificial Intelligence AI, for instance, gains special attention by building novel motive to refine the human being's sense of achievement. This has been further defended by Charniak and McDermott (1985, as cited in Chapelle, *ibid*: 3) when they state that *“the ultimate goal of AI research (which we are very far from achieving) is to build a person, or more humbly, an animal”*. Moreover, Winston (1977, cited in Chapelle, *ibid*) reckons that AI intended objective is *“to make computers more useful and to understand the principles which make intelligence possible”*.

There is a considerable contradiction between those who support AI and the positive impact of computers on humans' thinking and those who argue that it fails to reach and accomplish what was intended. Hogan and Bruce, for instance, point out that technologies go beyond everyday dealings and touch several other aspects, language teaching is no exception. To name but few, word processing programs provide new insights into the world of writing skill since it *“identify words written in English, underline in red unrecognized words, and correct misspelling automatically as the user types”* (Chapelle, *ibid*: 3).

Kurzweil (1999, cited in Chapelle, *ibid*) is one of the futurists who are concerned with predictions of the authentic use of technology in several spheres and education is no exception. He admits that much of the learners' interactions will be on computers or more precisely would be supported through online courses intended to sustain creativity on the part of students. These courses rely on confidential accredited teachers using diverse technologies including: *“selected response questions (such as multiple-choice), multimedia presentation, and computer mediated communication in chat rooms and discussions”* (Chapelle, *ibid*:4). Yet, his views were criticised by social pragmatists who primarily focus on real feasible aspects rather than virtual ones.

### 2.6.2. The Social Pragmatist's View

Brown and Duguid (2000) who support realistic, useful, and more social beneficial issues, see technology as a relevant aspect for language teachers since they are available and at affordable. Yet, they admit that using such innovation might constitute a challenge for English language learners since it is frustrating and its users have no control over the different problems occurring during attainment. They believe that the impact of technology infusion on people's daily life is perceived from technological perspectives rather than real viable estimations. Besides, they reckon that the technologist *“isolates information and informational aspects of life and discounts all else. This makes it blind to other forces at work in society”* (Brown and Duguid 2000: 31). In other words, one is bound by several issues in his community that he cannot get rid of the obstacles paralyzing the flexible use of technologies.

The social pragmatists seek not an opposition to change but rather look for pragmatic solutions to the problems encountering the daily interactions in general and constructing knowledge in particular. For this reason, they (ibid: 213) contend that the

*“Envisioned change will not happen or will not be fruitful until people look beyond the simplicities of information and individuals to the complexities of learning, knowledge, judgments, communities, organizations, and institutions”.*

Based on the fact that a person is tied by a set of conventions established in a given community, a considerable focus should be put on those norms before infusing the innovation. The mechanical, complex, and external factors exceed those internal simple cognitive strategies employed during learning or teaching processes. This is basically due to the poorly informed users and the misguided implementation of the technologies especially within educational contexts.

### 2.6.3. The Critical Analyst's View

The critical analysts doubt the idea that technology integration is a natural, positive, and inevitable advancement that any society needs to adopt as a culturally neutral issue. Although, according to them, information is the mainstream target of people around the world, it is of interest to consider the de-contextualization of the data being retrieved from the internet for instance.

*. . .the Internet could be looked at as one giant garbage dump: people and organizations dump information in bits and pieces;*

*they also retrieve whatever is of use and interest to them. What is found by scavengers depends on where they dig, what is dumped, and what is considered useful or relevant enough to be retrieved.*  
(Franklin 1999: 144)

Rose (2000) contends that educational computing creates a paradoxical split between those who eagerly support the use of technologies as the magic cure for all educational troubles and the angry opponents who sees technologies in a pessimistic light. The latter think that any information must be represented in a strongly built context so as to ensure cultural diversity and thereby empower unity for the secret behind diversity is unity and technologies curtail such a chance. For Rose (2000)

*“The result is an ongoing and often bitter contest between two extremes: those who view technology as the ultimate panacea for all educational ills, and those who cling to traditional values which they argue are being destroyed by the infiltration of digital media into instructional spaces”* (Rose 2000: 2).

English language teachers are also sensibly warned about the inclusion of technologies. Especially, according to the critical analyst, who unlike the pragmatist or the technologist, views ICTs complicity a two edged sword that might be used for other political imperialistic reasons. For this, in the 21st century teachers had better infiltrate and select prudently what to be presented or discussed based on cultural filters.

Although technology in fact enforced itself as an influential means in education, the language teacher is to play a critical role for connecting culture, ideology and technology is not an easy task. It is of importance to envision the impact of the instructional technologies on the future of ELT. An informed vision, thus, based on the contributions of the three perspectives makes one stand on a middle ground so as to purposefully use the innovation in hand.

## **2.7. The Traditional View of the Learning Process**

Teacher centeredness or what is known as the traditional learning process goes back to the twentieth century. At that time, individuals were required to acquire a set of skills in industry and agriculture. Few years later, the process was further standardized to include around twenty to thirty students grouped in a particular class to be taught several aspects in life. According to such a view learning was seen as a linear activity where the teacher is the final authority, the only knowledgeable, and the responsible expert about the teachings.

Scholars tend to describe the traditional model of the learning process with different attributes to establish a thorough understanding. They identify apprenticeship to be hard and extremely difficult. When learners feel comfortable and that learning is enjoyable, they might be considered as not accomplishing any outcome. Thereby, students have to be more serious when the teacher is presenting any instructional material.

Moreover, “learning is based on a deficit model of the student” (UNESCO, 2002: 17). This paradigm endeavors to find out the different deficits students have in apprenticeship. Accordingly, they “are tracked, categorized, remediated, or failed” (UNESCO, *ibid*). Since little has been paid to identify the learner’s strengths, such model relies on *compensatory education*. The latter focuses on treating the problems encountered in schoolings so that learners’ behavior would be changed according to the schools’ requirements. The learning materials, that some lack, are thought to be acquired by all students.

Besides, Bruer assume that very little research has been done to alter teaching with an intention that it can meet their students’ needs, enthusiasm, and the theoretical progress. He (1993, as quoted in, *ibid* UNESCO: 17) believes that teachers often

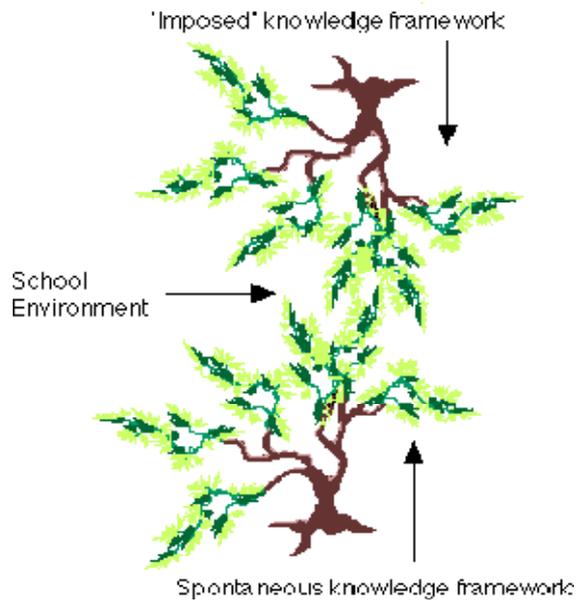
*“Militated against offering them a literacy of thoughtfulness and have favored a low level, atomized, concrete, basic-skills curriculum. The language of that curriculum has been so simplified that it is so boring and artificial. It has been stripped of its richness and context and made fundamentally meaningless, which is to say un-absorbable by normal people, except through memorization, whose effects last only few hours or days.”*

Learning is based on stimulus-response process where all the teachings are done by the teacher while the learner passively receives new data. It is primarily information oriented. In other words, the learner tends to attain knowledge to be reproduced. He is not allowed to produce his own ideas and construct facts creatively. So, teacher centeredness is focused and strengthened because the teacher is the first distributor of knowledge.

## **2.8.Theories that Support the New View of Learning**

Constructivism is one of the most famous pedagogical philosophies that underlie the learning environment. It basically stems from psychology and neuroscience (biological based theory). Its eminent figures are Dewey (1966), Bruner (1962, 1966), Piaget (1970) and Vygotsky (1978). The term has no exact definition, but there is a consensus that, it primarily refers to the acquisition of knowledge or language through the interaction of

individuals in their community. Perkins (1992, cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 7) tries to simplify its notion when he reckoned that people tend to build their understandings of the world around them by: “engaging, grappling, and seeking to make sense of things”.



Schematic of Pines and West ‘vines’ representing the knowledge frameworks imposed by the curriculum and that is simultaneously developed in the school environment by the individual student into a spontaneous knowledge framework. (adopted from Newhouse et al, 2002: 8)

In their diagram, Pines and West, clearly explain how knowledge is often formulated in any teaching-learning activity. Students gain information and therefore acquire knowledge through a conglomeration between what is planned to be learnt and their everyday dealings in their society.

According to what has been stated and in relation to pedagogy, the constructivism is often used to portray how learners tend to attain knowledge. In other words, as Perkins (1992) puts it, there are three ways in achieving data; *Beyond the Information Given (BIG)*, *Without the Information Given (WIG)*, or a mixture of both is employed. In any teaching- learning activity, instructors should act as guides and allow students to construct meanings by themselves and this can be reached easily through the use of the new technologies. In this concern DeCorte (1990, cited in Newhouwse et al, 2002: 8) states that:

*“A powerful computer learning environment is characterized by a good balance between discovery learning and personal exploration on one hand, and systematic instruction and*

*guidance on the other, always taking into account the individual differences in abilities, needs and motivation between students.”*

Here, the expert emphasizes the importance of computers in shaping the learning environment and fostering students' motivation to acquire the foreign language.

### **2.8.1. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory**

The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky avers that the person's interactions in his community play a crucial role in his perception of knowledge of the world around him. He holds that learning is merely a social product since society intervenes in developing the individual's cognition. Vygotsky (1987) thereby developed two basic levels according to which learning can be accomplished. First he emphasized the necessity of interaction with people in one's society to acquire new data and the subsequent cognitive formulation and analysis of these information. He clarifies more this aspect when he states that;

*“Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals.”* (Vygotsky, 1987, cited in UNESCO, 2002: 25)

Accordingly, the individual tends to evolve and construct his awareness and understanding through an organized critical transmission of knowledge from the outer world to the human's mind and later the conceptualization and inner formulation of the pre-gained facts, using various strategies, or what has been named as interpsychological and intrapsychological conception. Further, Vygotsky stresses the role of what he calls “Zone of Proximal Development” in maintaining and improving attainment. The latter is a cognitive area of exploration that humans need to develop in everyday dealings through the use of scaffolding and other techniques such as: modeling, collaborative learning, and discourse for a more advanced thinking and skillfulness.

Experts in ICTs and education from the UNESCO (2002) on their parts highlight the concomitant efficiency of a wealthy social context on learning and students' acquisition of knowledge within peers, teachers, and specialists. For this reason, they favour the use of the new technologies to support education when they contend that

*“ICTs can be used to support the learning environment by providing tools for discourse, discussions, collaborative writing, and problem solving and by providing online support systems to scaffold students’ understanding and cognitive growth”*  
(UNESCO, 2002: 26)

## **2.9. Conclusion**

This chapter provided a theoretical background about the instructional communication technologies. The researcher started with a short definition of the ICTs and the different model of their implementation in the teaching learning process. Different experts’ perspectives about the inclusion of technologies in the teaching process, including the social pragmatist, the technologist, and the critical analyst views were presented. To end up to the main learning theories that support the use of ICTs in education.

# **Chapter three**

**The Writing Skill and the Implementation  
of ICTs**

### 3.1.Introduction

The current chapter will shed light on the most important aspects related to the writing skill including its historical background, the contextual and cultural influences on the process, the definition, the main approaches to the teaching and learning the skill. It will also tackle the different reasons for teaching writing, assumptions about its teaching, and the different purposes of the writing process.

### 3.2.Writing: a Historical Background

Since the dawn of the formal standard education, the power of writing, a process by which people transcribe spoken words into written language, gains special recognition as it provides considerable permanence to the oral culture. Most ancient civilizations developed a system of signs to preserve and pass down their heritage to the coming generations. The latter makes written words a more sophisticated means that transcends time and place to communicate knowledge and record history. This requirement gave writing an everlasting value to the intellectual people and mastering such a skill lies at the heart of knowledge construction (Al-Mahrooqi: 2015). For this, “a hallmark of the educated person is thus partly defined by the ability to write correctly” (Reichelt et al, 2012: 28)

What appears to us is that writing is but a technological means that has figured and recorded human beings’ cultural and intellectual activities. However, it is, “in the strict sense of the word, the technology which has shaped and powered the intellectual activity of modern man” (Ong, 2001: 82).

Writing as a means of communication arisen in Mesopotamia around 4500 years ago in the form of marks and pictures to depict the different activities held in that community. People were keen to develop a coded system of visible marks representing hidden thoughts through which a writer finds out the exact words that best tell the reader what is being conveyed. For this, the development of writing into the current sophisticated system required gradual changes. In the first go people designed pictograph and ideograph, notches on sticks, and scratches on rocks with the intention to record their culture. These intermediary efforts are thought to represent other sorts of semiotic markings, albeit, actually, writing, the truly restructuring means, is a deliberate representation of thoughts or spoken words; it can even surpass the potentials of oral language was indeed a giant leap into modern history. (Ong, 2002)

Writing, in this ordinary sense, was and is the most momentous of all human technological inventions. It is not a simple representation of speech. Because it moves

speech from oral-aural to a new sensory world, that of vision, it rather transforms speech and thought as well. (Ong, 2002: 83)

The creation of cuneiform by the Semitic people led to the foundation of alphabetical letters, whether Hebraic or Ugaritic, Greek or Roman, Cyrilic or Arabic, that has considerably reduced time to space. The alphabet affords a bridge, yet another complexity that can be best depicted, for instance, in the African culture, between orality and literacy. Writing by these means creates an area for critical analysis. In contrast to oral language, the significance of analyzing thoughts is attributable in the first place to written words and that calls for, what Goody (1977) terms as, “backward scanning”. Critical analysis to writing, the most permanent mode of language, fosters new assumptions about the process. Ong (2001) makes this point further clear by stating that

*“All language and thought are to some degree analytic... written words sharpen analysis, for the individual words are called on to do more. To make yourself clear without gestures, without facial expression, without intonation, without a real hearer, you have to foresee circumspectly all possible meanings a statement may have for any possible reader in any possible situation, and you have to make your language work so as to come clear all by itself, with no existential context. The need for this exquisite circumspection makes writing the agonizing work it commonly is.”* (101- 102, Ong)

In the sharply focused sense, writing restructures the human life-world where the state of words in texts is rather special when compared with spoken words. Written words lack the full context and circumstances, such as the paralinguistic, the supra segmental and phonetic qualities. Unlike oral utterances that do not occur in a context of pure words, written words are cut off. Spoken utterances are always modifications of a full context enforced by their natural and real existence for they are told by a real person and addressed to another present person at the appropriate time. Writing is, in effect, a solipsistic self centered process in which the writer is isolated from everyone even the ones who will read him. Writing is a more excruciating activity in which absent and unknown readers can cast themselves.

### **3.3.Contextual and Cultural Influences on the Writing Process**

Writing requires a keen understanding of the target language’s cultural standards for it is the springboard upon which the linguistic activities rest and writing is no exception. “Cultures evolve writing styles appropriate to their histories and the needs of their societies”

Swain's (1995) "output hypothesis" summarizes the basic tenets of the socio-cultural theory based on the fact that the socio-cultural context of writing represents a stage upon which EFL students learn to use the different linguistic forms of the target language and thereby offer practice that enables the learner to transform their competence in a second language into controlled skillful performance. p2 el mahrooqi P18

Society and culture are deeply interrelated to dictate a set of rules individuals have to follow. The sum of conventions that naturally shapes the different activities and processes held in that community, and writing is no exception, affects the way language is learnt. For Sperling (1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, 2002:19) "writing like language in general is a meaning making activity that is socially and culturally shaped and individually and socially purposeful". Accordingly, the practice of writing requires more than learning the structural aspects of the language, more importantly; it entails a keen understanding of the social and cultural components of the target language.

Different assumptions hold that any piece of writing affects and is affected by the social context in which it has been composed and that shapes the worldly aspects of such a process. Consequently, a conglomeration of the context, the audience, and the purpose of writing determine how it can be handled and organized. Hayes (1996, cited in Sara Cushing Weigle, *ibid*) notes that writing is

*"A social artifact and is carried out in a social setting. What we write, how we write, who we write to is shaped by social conventions and by our history of social interaction... the genres in which we write were invented by other writers and the phrases we write often reflect phrases earlier writers have written."*

### **3.4. Writing as a Cultural Phenomenon**

It is often taken for granted that culture have a considerable impact on the way people write while it mirrors and dictates the genre and style to be used. Kaplan (1966, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 20) was the first to investigate the influence of culture on writing through his *contrastive rhetoric*, an analysis of ESL students' productions from different cultural backgrounds. His ideas were further developed by Grabe and Kaplan (1989, 1996) who note that differences in composition are not necessarily attributed to cognitive qualities, yet, they are related to "cultural preferences which make greater use of certain options among linguistic possibilities" (Grab and Kaplan 1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 20).

### 3.5. Definition of Writing

Any foreign language learner has to acquire a set of skills and writing is no exception. Writing the last skill to be achieved in addition to listening, reading, and speaking, as it requires mastery of a set of instructions and rules is often perceived as a cognitive productive process that gains increasing importance. So, what is the nature of writing and how can it be defined?

It is usually agreed upon the fact that in most EFL contexts writing has been neglected and considered difficult for teachers to teach and learners to learn because it is the ever complex of the macro language skills. Walters (1983: 17), for instance, contends that “writing is the last and perhaps the most difficult skill students learn- if they ever do”. According to Raimes (1978 as cited in Nunan, 1999),

*“Until the mid 1970s, writing was seen as a subservient skill, whose function was to support the development of oral language. Pedagogy was therefore communicated by form focused techniques that were in line with the audio-lingual ideology of drill and practice.”*

Widdowson (1983: 35) sees “writing an irksome activity and an ordeal to be avoided whenever possible”. Students usually struggle to write a paragraph on their own. And when they try to produce a piece of writing, they have to recognize how best to integrate ideas with appropriate wording and grammar. Producing a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing is most likely the ever difficult task a learner does because students do not use the target language regularly (Nunan 1999). Further, writing outside school is scarcely practiced when compared with the rest of the language skills where proficiency can be seen quickly.

The writer is simultaneously involved in thinking of what to write, coherence and cohesion of the text, formation and legibility of individual letters, spelling, grammar including punctuation, layout, tone and register, organization and selection of appropriate content for an intended audience (Raison and Rivelland, 1997 ). Writing is considered as both a private and a public aspect among those who share a common interest. A process that entails the individual student to communicate in written words a hidden idea to an intended audience that would considerably receives it with approval or reject it (Broughton et al, 1980).

While writing gains increasing popularity and importance in a variety of areas, it is extremely difficult to define. Writing in English as in first language is firmly attached to

formal education. In other words, it is taught and not acquired when compared to spoken language. In this concern, Grabowski (1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, 2002: 4) states that:

*“Writing, as compared to speaking, can be seen as a more standardized system which must be acquired through special instruction. Mastery of the standard system is an important prerequisite of cultural and educational participation and maintenance of one’s rights and duties... The fact that writing is more standardized than speaking allows for a higher degree of sanctions when people deviate from that standard”*

Accordingly, writing is an important educational activity that deserves much attention and focus on conventions and rules since it is maintained as a standard. It is first and foremost a cultural and social phenomenon through which people accomplish a set of roles in their communities.

The four macro language skills, listening, speaking, writing, and reading can be categorized according to *channel* i.e. *aural* including listening and speaking versus *visual* reading and writing, and, *mode: receptive: reading and listening* versus *productive: speaking, writing, and reading* (which involves cognitive processing and critical thinking that makes a human mind produces thoughts and ideas (Weigle, 2002:14). To offer a clear understanding of what is meant by writing, scholars tend to study it in relation to reading a skill firmly attached to writing and that is mainly perceived as an input and speaking that is a product.

### **3.5.1. Writing and Speaking**

According to different linguistic and mental aspects, writing and speaking are thought to be dissimilar. Kaplan and Grabe (1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 15) affirm that a set of investigation in traditional linguistics and educational psychology find out different assumptions in drawing a relationship between the two skills. On the one hand, linguists hold strongly that spoken language is prior and first to be acquired while writing is merely a reflection of speech. On the other, educational researchers believe that written discourse is more prestigious and should be highly valued than oral language as it necessitates the mastery of a set of conventions and rules. Yet, new perspectives emerged and assume that no medium, either oral or written, is superior to the other. But, there are certain boundaries, including “textual features, sociocultural norms and patterns of use, and the cognitive processes involved in text production and comprehension” (Cushing Weigle, *ibid*), at which distinctions are to be drawn.

In terms of textual differences, Brown (1994, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*) affords a set of aspects that differentiate written language from speech. These patterns are:

*permanence*, written language can last for longer time;

*production time*, writers can plan, review, revise then provide a final piece whereas speakers have to plan, formulate, and then deliver an idea in a short span of time;

*distance*, the listener and the speaker are close to each other when compared to the reader and the writer;

*orthography*, spoken language is characterized by intonation, stress, pausing, gestures that ease communication while writing lacks such aspects;

*complexity*, written language is more complex and characterized by longer sentences and clauses whereas speech is simple and natural;

*vocabulary*, writing contains more sophisticated and rich vocabulary.

Sperling(1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 17) also points out that:

*“To talk about written and spoken language differences is to consider the range of communicative purposes to which either writing and speaking is put. In this sense, broader characteristics \_ such as what gets said and what remains implicit, what is foregrounded and what is backgrounded , and what is stated by whom and under what circumstances\_ implicate the norms and expectations of the range of contexts in which both writing and speaking are produced”* (Sperling, 1996)

Consequently, written and spoken modes differ in terms of textual features, sociocultural norms, and cognitive processes through which such activities are handled. To state it differently, there are a set of characteristics that distinguish and characterize writing from speaking that include; the purpose of both of their productions that will constantly determine the style to be used, whether it is formal, informal, the rules that govern each of them when transforming what is deep and abstract, the context in which they are accomplished, etc.

### **3.5.2. Writing and Reading**

Reading and writing are considered as two similar processes as both of them follow some basic cognitive strategies. Besides, they can be used as important tools to fulfill a set of roles in any society.

It is generally believed that the relationship between reading and writing is reciprocal; the former is regarded as an input while the latter is a consequent output. Thomas Mann (2004) in his famous novella *Death in Venice* contends that: “nothing gladdens a writer more than a thought that can become pure feeling and a feeling that can become a pure thought”. Thereby, he draws a close relationship between writers as

encoders of thoughts and feelings and readers who are merely decoders of what has been transmitted.

On the other hand the novelist Annie Proulx seeks a correlation between reading and writing when she points out that; *"You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page. Writing comes from reading, and reading is the finest teacher of how to write."*

Here Annie Proulx assumes that the writer can only appreciate and understand the art of writing through reading different authentic resources. Furthermore, reading plays a giant role in refining and refreshing the student's ideas and thoughts. Reading enriches vocabulary and cultural knowledge and develops a sense of self-esteem as learners become more aware of the world around them.

One, therefore, can assume that reading lays the groundwork for a well-organized piece of writing. It refreshes the student's mind by providing new ideas and useful vocabulary. Reading also unveils cultural misunderstanding as it is one of the most important sources of cultural and language enrichment. "Reading keeps" the "mind active, introduces new ideas" and "provides specific information" (Sorenson Sharon, 2010:5). It is only through reading that one can refine and improve his writing ability. In fact, good writers are obviously those good readers.

### **3.6.Reasons for Teaching Writing**

Although it is considered as an uninteresting activity, teaching writing is one of the most important courses that are carried out during the process of learning a foreign language. Thus, many reasons are behind the urgent need to master such expertise. Hancock and MacDonald (2000: 1) identify two sets of reasons for studying as well as teaching composition.

Teaching writing might have a considerable impact on the writing skill itself since it is thought to be a strategy that basically provides opportunities for practice and thereby improves students' writing ability through;

- a. Aiding the learners to reach a better level of proficiency and empowering their will and motivation to write more
- b. Giving the writers a sense of achievement and self confidence to carry on their future investigations in other fields

Teaching writing influences foreign language learning since it;

- a. Aids the students to develop their mental activities as it enables them to express and generate the hidden ideas;
- b. Helps learners to master different structures as well as to self assess their language in order to identify the deficits and thereby work out and gain progress;
- c. Writing is a handy and fostering tool to teach grammar and vocabulary.

As for Hedge (1988, cited in Štefanovičová, 2011: 14);

*“the role of writing is little different from its role in any other subject; it allows students to see how they are progressing and to get back feedback from the teacher, and it allows teachers to monitor and diagnose problems.”*

In short, writing instruction is highly valued as it overcomes many difficulties encountered by the learners related to grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc. on the other hand, it can be used to diagnose the progress of students in learning a language, especially foreign language.

One can also assume that writing is a product i.e. a text that comprises an accurate content in terms of grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. related to a given purpose, to inform, to persuade, etc. it is also a process that is concerned mainly with the individual human's competencies that enable learners to compose a coherent piece.

### **3.7. Assumptions about the Teaching of Writing**

According to Urkhart and Maclver (2005) Writing is a recursive process that requires students to learn the necessary strategies for invention and discovery that a language teacher can use to improve content learning. Three interrelated elements including audience, purpose, and occasion dictate the type of writing a writer undertakes to fulfill a set of purposes and to meet the addressees' needs.

#### **a. Purpose**

Purpose is the main point a writer seeks in a given writing context. It differs according to the situation. The purpose of writing will certainly determine the differing ways of presenting the final product. Traditionally Formal academic writing basically concerns

Clarification of an idea or theory or an investigation of a particular problem (expository writing)

Reporting a process, an experiment, or lab results (technical or scientific writing)

Providing an up to date information on a given project at work (business writing)

Convincing the readers to understand a point of view, change their minds, or take action (persuasive or argumentative writing)

As for the less formal and more personal writing, the student usually

Document personal experiences and feelings (expressive writing)

Create an artistic work like plays or short stories (creative writing)

Just like oral interactions, in writing, good writers, in fact, keep their readers in mind at all times. Those readers differ considerably making the task even challenging for writers to achieve a connection between the intended task and the audience needs. Readers do not have the same characteristics. Moreover, they come from different parts, regions, communities, ethnic groups, organizations, and academic disciplines of the world, endowed with specific linguistic and rhetorical conventions that require a writer to adapt to the writing situation. To state it differently, students need to play several roles and to shift from one context to the other according to the audience. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

It is said that teacher, time, technology, assessment, and practical strategies are the four critical and pressing aspects that interweave to shape students learning in general and writing in particular.

#### **b. Time**

Time is the most vital and sensitive aspect a teacher must deliberately manage. Most scholars qualify it to be the learning equalizer if used wisely. Yet, it is the learning warden that constantly paralyzes the whole process and constrains goals achievement. To better understand how to deal prudently with this aspect, researchers tend to categorize it into different types. Marzano (2000), for instance, believes that time can be classified into four fold

1. Allocated time is specifically intended to schooling to perform instructional and non-instructional activities. It has the least impact on the learners' attainment because it encompasses passing and lunch time, pauses, evaluation and tests that considerably constrain the teacher from fully accomplishing the learning outcomes.
2. Instructional time is the portion devoted to instruction and class management activities. It is the allotted time attributed to the teacher officially to direct the teaching learning process.
3. Engaged time is intended to course presentation where the student follows attentively the content knowledge being presented.

4. Academic learning time is the part of the engaged time intended to engage the student in doing tasks related to the content being presented. It is thought to affect the achievement a great deal. Marzano insists on the fact that the learner needs not only writing classes but indeed they must practice and participate in the process for greater benefit so that the teacher can use new knowledge and skills that help the learner understand and considerably transfer what they have learned in new contexts.

Yet, when considering writing instruction in an EFL context, the fact that makes teachers deny their students the chance to tackle important processes is actually another issue to be questioned. (Urkhart & Maclver, 2005)

### **c. Assessment**

Though used interchangeably, drawing a clear cut distinction between measurement, assessment, feedback, and evaluation is most often a controversial issue. Scholars tend to believe that measurement is the broader area of interest that encompasses both assessment and evaluation. While assessment avoids judgments, evaluation judges the students' performances. In other words, Urquhart and McIver contend that, evaluation is merely "writing-to-demonstrate what was learned" and assessment is purely "writing-to-learn", more importantly, they contribute to the improvement of the students' apprenticeship. Besides, they indicate that writing assignments can be used to gauge students' attainment through ongoing assessment.

The fact that writing to learn, since the 60s and 70s, is an accurate assessment of students' achievement is increasingly getting popularity among educators. Ongoing assessment is the best tool to portray the learners' attainment. The obtained results can be used for corrective feedback or to motivate the writers.

Many researchers agree on the positive effect of writing on learning. Sorenson (1991) on her part reckons that writing to learn and learning to write support each other in content learning. Though it is often perceived in a negative light, Sorenson believes that incorporating writing in their instruction helps students to either discover the techniques to understand the content, their retention ability of the content evolves, or their writing improve as far as they practice it. In fact, practicing writing enables the human mind to be active in connecting the newly established knowledge with the prior one. Langer (1986)

points out that the more the student writes the better learning occurs, their performance will certainly improve.

Effective instruction goes in tandem with effective assessment where the teacher's concern is how best the student analyzes, integrates ideas, and applies knowledge. Clarity, variety sound pedagogy, and reliable research are essential traits a good assessment considers. The teacher uses assessment to find out and thereby diagnose a given problem or provide information that will be employed to adjust a lesson to meet students' needs.

"Begin with the end in mind" is important. Setting the goals and then striving to reach them is helpful when designing writing assignments. In *Guidelines for Teaching Middle and High School Students to Read and Write Well* (2000), Langer values the integration of test preparation into coursework claiming that it fosters high student achievement. Even though it sounds like "teaching to the test" that is usually rejected, including assessment this way would be constructing and encouraging. Teachers in any content area should count on:

- The collaborative study of what the standardized tests require.
- Accrediting the skills and knowledge students need to do well on those tests.
- Discussing of the possible ways to integrate those skills into the curriculum. (Urkhart and Maclver, 2005)

#### **d. Technology**

The pace with which technologies entrenched into modern societies is speeding up to an extent that they alter significantly the set of processes people perform. Apart from being useful tools for finding out information, educational technologies brought up great changes to the teaching-learning process. Virtual learning, however, represents a different scenario and interesting area educational researchers are seriously concerned with.

Interests to investigate the impact of technologies in promoting meaningful language acquisition is growing up for students nowadays rely a great deal on the use of internet to perform their learning tasks. Futurists most often contend that educational technologies support project based learning by helping the student to use higher order thinking skills and improve problem solving abilities to engage positively in the learning process. Even more, though contradicting views appear, many believe in the fact that the benefit of using technologies to focus students' learning is everlasting and the need to enquire it is urgent.

Technology's appeal is indeed undeniable and myriad. It has brought up irresistible changes that in fact have transformed traditional classes into new arenas of collaboration

and interaction. Technologies afford innovative ways of dealing with knowledge construction by allowing the teachers to be more creative. Through these means, the teacher can either genuinely communicate traditional topics or introduce new ones that are unknown to the learners. Multimedia capability, information access, and collaboration potential and other attributes have a miraculous effect on expanding and ameliorating the aptitude of student's apprenticeship.

The fact that information is now processed in a variety of ways that it is pleasurable for the student to engage in any learning activity. The computer screen, indeed, offers incredible opportunities for many students who become fluent in using the new technologies to combine both the acquired knowledge and the available skills in creating authentic and interactive productions rather than simply produce boring texts.

In fact, its effect on the teaching learning process is increasingly recognized by many educators. The critical role that technologies play leads proponents to support their place in the educational landscape, more importantly they consider them imperative to literacy. Bringing students in a worldly authentic exploration and analysis of information, in addition to breaching isolation and facilitating collaboration, is a key feature of educational technologies, through which courses can become more interesting, diverse and rich.

It is not necessary however to use the most sophisticated or the latest technology so as to make learning more effective. The teachers who are keen of bringing the real world into his classroom can use simple technologies to explore and solve the encountered problems. Teachers can eagerly integrate writing tasks into real-world situations by asking the students to discuss and write about the recommended solutions to a given problem as it occurs in their community. (Urkhart and Maclver, 2005)

### **3.8.Approaches to Teaching and Learning Writing**

Students, when writing, have to keep in mind that such a process involves basically three interacting components: the text, the writer, and the reader in addition to the social and contextual motives that shape the process.

When teaching students to write, any instructor has to consider a variety of areas namely, linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, as well as sociolinguistics (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006). There is no one approach to the teaching of writing in EFL classes.

Anne Raimés (1983) designed a diagram including the most important issues writers have to deal with and that she deems essential in the writing teaching cycle. She assumes

that the differing teaching and learning styles foster different approaches to teach writing. The following is a diagram adopted from Raimes *ibid*:

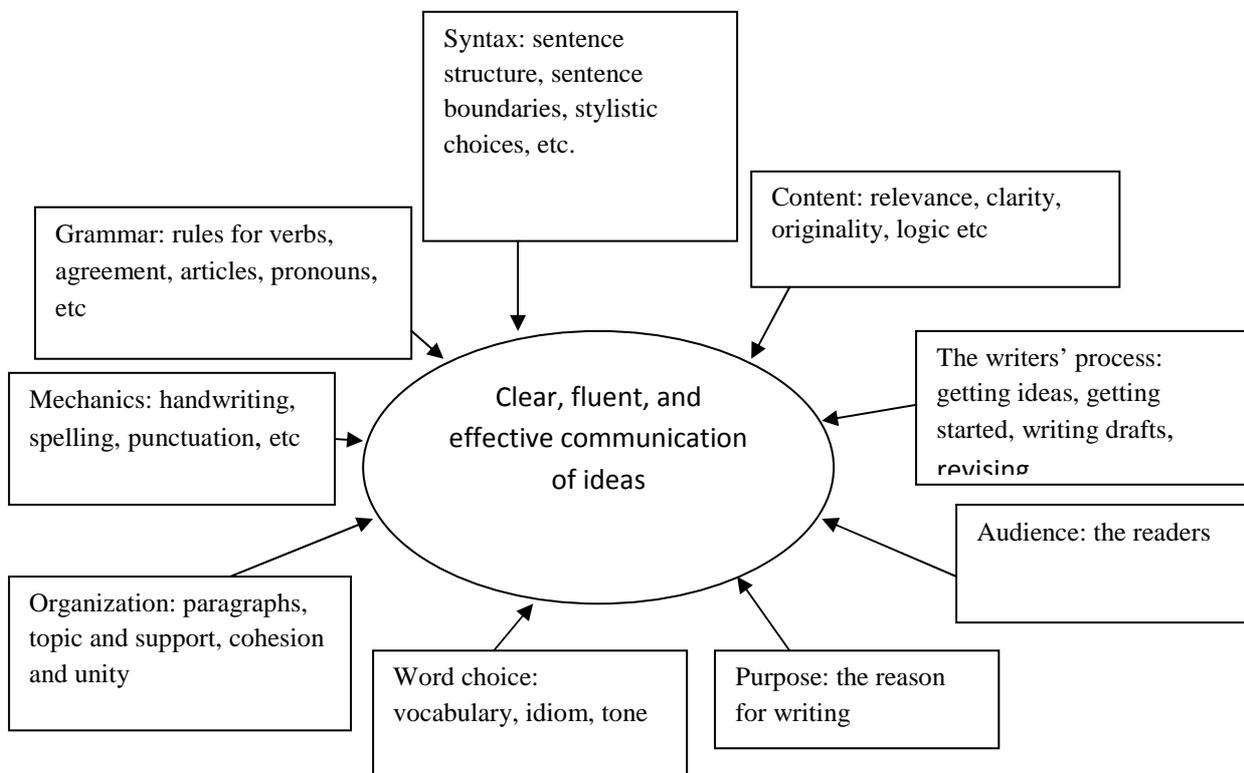


Diagram 3.1. Producing a piece of writing (Raimes: 6)

Therefore, different approaches to the teaching and learning writing have to be concerned including environmentalist, innatist, interactionist, process oriented, and product oriented approaches.

### 3.8.1. The Environmentalist Approach

This approach emerges from environmentalist ideas that considerably neglect the importance of writing. It was believed that language learning is a mechanical process that involves a *stimulus-response-reinforcement chain* i.e. speech and fluency. Therefore, written language is less important and the acquisition of speaking precedes the mastery of writing.

According to such a view, writing is merely used as a tool to maintain accuracy. Moreover, Silva (1990, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, *ibid*) contends that any written text is “*a collection of sentences patterns and vocabulary*”. Teaching composition thereby entails a free-error imitation of certain models and sentences. Such approach was subject to criticism since it is mainly teacher centred.

### 3.8.2. The Innatist Approach

A Chomskyan revolution in linguistics, in the 1960s, shifts attention towards cognitivism and mental processing. Thus, many scholars namely Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer attempt to study the mental process through which a piece of writing is generated. Moreover, Emig (1971, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, *ibid*) was the pioneer to use the think aloud protocol technique to ascertain how learners can generate and write down what is innate. She found that writing is not only a mechanical process but rather a “*recursive and creative*” activity. Kern (2000, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006: 386) makes this idea clear to state that:

*“Writing was no longer seen as simply a way of recording thoughts, feelings, and ideas after the fact, but also a key means of generating and explaining new thoughts and ideas.”*

Therefore, teaching the writing skill basically involves active creative learners who can successfully generate a piece of writing through the use of various systematic innate abilities. This view stresses fluency rather than accuracy, errors are claimed to be natural within language learning whether it is first or second.

### 3.8.3. The Interactionist Approach

The development of discourse analysis, between 1970s and 1980s, has changed basically assumptions and beliefs about language learning. A variety of approaches, mainly interactional and functional theories, assume that language is not merely structural and cognitive but also a product of cultural and social interactions in a given community.

Influential studies in linguistics, particularly formal linguistics, maintain that the composition of a particular text demands an organization of students’ prior knowledge and not only grammar. A research done by Winter (1977) and Hoey (1983) supported such a view. They have distinguished three patterns through which any piece is regulated. First, a problematic is identified and provided with suggested solutions, this is known as the *problem-solution pattern*. Second, the student or writer presents a particular statement or hypothesis that will be either confirmed or rejected i.e., the *hypothetical-real pattern*. Third, in relation to what has been found a generalization is proclaimed and supported within particular examples i.e., the *general-particular pattern*. (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006)

Halliday (1978), on the other hand, develops a set of contextual approaches, within systematic linguistics, which assume that writing is essentially a social phenomenon. In his theory, Halliday highlights two notions genre and register. The latter can only be studied

along three basic variables: *mode* (what can language do), *tenor* (the role of participants, reader and writer), and *field* (the social function). Genre, on the other hand, has been defined by Swales (1990, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor 2006: 387) as;

*“... a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style”*

Swales (1990) claims that genre is, basically, built upon a set of communicative purposes identified by members of particular community. Furthermore, as Connor (1996, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006: 388) puts it “*Language and writing are cultural phenomena*”; 2) “*Each language has rhetorical conventions unique to it*”; and 3) “*The linguistic and rhetorical conventions of the first language interfere with writing in the second language.*” Thus, language is shaped through certain cultural dimensions.

Accordingly, the teaching of the writing skill requires: *modeling*; a good understanding of the genre to be used is provided; *negotiating*, questioning the subject in hands; and *construction*, students start drafting in relation to social and cultural aspects and within teacher’s guidance. (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor 2006)

#### **3.8.4.The Controlled to Free Approach**

Writing in the 1950s and the early 1960s was seen as reinforcement to the mastery of grammar and syntax. The speaking skill was primary because the dominant approach to language teaching at that time was the audio-lingual method. The aim of language teachers then was to generate techniques that foster students’ fluency and speaking competence.

#### **3.8.5.Product Oriented Approach**

It is also recognized as the skills based approach, the most traditional approach that stresses the teaching of mechanical aspects of writing and that is merely teacher-centered. According to this approach, students are engaged in tasks selected by their teachers about writing mechanics as spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence construction. For Nunan (1999): “the product-based approaches see writing as mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language”. Students’ productions have to be precise and accurate to reach the higher level of composition where the focus is on producing grammatically correct sentences.

**3.8.5.1. Stages of implementing the product approach**

Badger and White (2000: 153) devote four necessary stages for the implementation of the product approach in writing classes

**a. Familiarization:**

At this stage the learner is supplied with written models to practice the grammar and lexical points being presented. The focus however is on practicing the mechanics of writing, especially grammar rules i.e. writing is a means to end but not an end itself.

**b. Controlled writing:**

The students practice the grammar rules taught while at the same time explore new vocabulary based on a substitution table to highlight the key points a writer needs in the course. The teacher lays emphasis, at this stage, on vocabulary and lexis to enhance productivity.

**c. Guided writing:**

In this stage the learners generate paragraphs and essays from the composition models provided beforehand using the grammar and the vocabulary aspects presented to them in class. A keen consideration of form, usage and meaning is the aim. Yet, the students do not write on themselves, rather, they are controlled by their teachers.

**d. Free writing:**

In the last stage in the product approach the writers are encouraged to write on their own. The instructor relies a good deal on the language and the use of models so as to enable the writers to produce flawless pieces. Though they can write still freely, the students still rely heavily on the teacher's control and the composition models.

### 3.8.5.2. Advantages and disadvantages of the product approach

Of significance is to consider the product approach as one way to enrich the linguistic knowledge of the students by imitating significant resources to improve attainment. Moreover, the teacher finds it affordable to assess the productions while neatness and form are emphasized. The grammatical and lexical rubric thereby provides reliable results when gauging the students' papers by leaving only comments on the productions (Badger and White 2000). Further, they believe that a focus on forms help to ameliorate the pace with which language is being learned.

This approach, however, has been subject to a good deal of criticism. Some critics claim that it is demotivating as students are more mechanical and constrained when they write. While the writer pays little attention to writing skills and the communication of ideas, the product approach verily neglects the fact that writing is a creative activity that requires an imperative consideration of both audience and purpose.

The product approach suffers considerable shortcomings as it disregards the communicative aspect of the writing skill. According to Nunan (1999) this approach is "bottom up processing" that calls for accuracy and neatness and where lower order choices such as grammar and lexis affect higher order choices, especially the communicative and contextual purposes, and consequently paralyses the development of thoughts and ideas that in fact is the intent of any writing activity. This approach creates a gap between the background knowledge and the newly discovered knowledge rather than using them attentively to develop new ways of thinking. It does neither support the previously acquired skills nor creativity and communication, which are viewed in a pessimistic light; however, a considerable emphasis is targeted towards imitating, copying, or transforming the models provided in class (Nunan 1999).

### 3.8.6. The Process Oriented Approach

This approach is one of the widely used approaches to writing instruction in the ELT landscape that is primarily student-centered. It emphasizes students' creativity and cognitive aspects of writing rather than mechanics. Accordingly, students, when composing, manage the proceeding of their ideas through different stages including primarily *planning*, *drafting*, and *revising*. Its main focus is to engage students in free-writing models since to stimulate their interest and thereby boost up motivation. This approach pays little attention to perfectness and accuracy in writing since its major concern is the processing of ideas and creativity.

It is universally acknowledged that the process approach to the teaching of writing is the most widely used approach in EFL contexts, especially for novice writers. More importantly, this approach helps the learners to initiate writing with more confidence because its major concern is the processing of ideas. For Kroll (2001: 220-221) the process approach

*“Serves today as an umbrella term for many types of writing courses...what the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than a single shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts.”*

Through this approach the teacher aids learners to get integrated recursively into different stages that considerably vary from one writer to the other, and thereby feel confident when writing. By designing activities that enables the learner to start writing at an early stage, unlike in the product approach, the writers can progressively master the skill.

White and Arndt (1991) recommend six procedures along which writers can produce a polished piece of writing.

- a. Discussion(Class, small group and pair)
- b. Brainstorming/ making notes/ asking questions
- c. Fast writing/selecting ideas/ establishing a view point
- d. Rough drafting
- e. Preliminary self-evaluation
- f. Arranging information/ structuring the text
- g. First draft
- h. Group/ peer evaluation and responding
- i. Conference
- j. Second draft
- k. Self evaluation/ editing/ proof reading
- l. Finished drafts
- m. Final responding to draft (Al mahrouqi et al: 98)

The starting session spurs out discussions about the topic either in groups or in pairs where the students are encouraged to brainstorm all that best reflect their reasoning. Successive actions take place. The students should select among the stated ideas the ones

that are interesting and worth mentioning. After that they try to employ them into, sentences, paragraphs or essays, a first draft to be assessed and commented. Through pairing the drafts, the teacher enables the writers to reflect on their peers' productions by correcting errors, editing and proof reading. A final draft is then written and submitted to the teachers for final comment.

Zamel (1987: 267) believes that a major feature of the process approach is that it aids writers to create meaning. Novice writers are in fact not able to generate ideas quickly, so, new thoughts can significantly come to their mind at any time during the process. They can add as many useful ideas as they can since the procedure is recursive. Another advantage of the process approach is that it reduces the amount of errors progressively because the writer, in the first place, lays more emphasis on coherence and meaningful communication of thoughts, mechanics are left to the last go. Zamel, according to his observation of student writers' processing, opines that

*“Final parts of sentences were crossed out and reworded as if authors realized in mid-stream that what they ended up expressing was not what they had intended ... some sentences were totally rewritten so that the relationship between the preceding sentence and the one that followed became more logical and clearer... vocabulary, tense, and punctuation were frequently focused on. Inflections were added where they have been omitted before”* (1987: 273)

The process approach is an effective strategy that aids the writers to review their writing continuously and hence make significant changes to reach accurate composition. The learners are provided with feedback, which is imperative in guiding the process especially when given between drafts, at every single stage to leverage the productions Ozagac (2004). Stanly (2003: 1), on the other hand, reckons that “the process approach treats writing as a creative act which requires time and positive feedback to be done well” for novice writers to generate meaningful productions.

#### **3.8.6.1. Stages of the process approach**

When implying the process approach, learners have to get involved in the following stages;

##### **a. Planning**

Students most often pay little attention to prewriting activities where they determine what they know about the topic through reading, discussing it, asking questions and the likes. They directly start composition disregarding and underestimating the planning stage that guarantees successful writing performance. Teachers, on the other hand, devote a good

deal of the instructional time to the drafting process where writers struggle to put on paper what best reflects their logical reasoning.

Skillful writers significantly devote an important portion of the time planning that apparently reflects the decisive impact of this stage on the whole process. Rather, prewriting offers a springboard that supports content learning and helps students to move smoothly to the drafting phase. Devoting a considerable part of the engaged time to prewriting activities which ultimate goal is to find out what a writer knows about the writing assignment and more importantly to establish, especially through researching and reading noteworthy resources, an understanding of what to be included in the draft.

As already explained, prewriting is an essential stage that should not be taken lightly. The key is thus to allow the time needed. Yet, prewriting activities should be interesting so as to stimulate the students' interests. So, the teacher is to use a variety of prewriting activities such as freewriting, brainstorming, making lists and the like.

At this level students should consider the purpose of writing (why we write?), the audience (for whom we write? Do we know for whom we write?), content (what language and vocabulary is relevant for such activity?), and structure (how will we organize the written piece). These will determine the style we will use, is it formal or informal. The student then prepares to write using his background knowledge and searching necessary data i.e. brainstorming stage. Several activities can be carried to shape the planning stage that includes;

### **1. Reading**

Reading is the finest teacher of how to write as it affects the quality of students' productions. It is also an essential feature to learning and exploring the main ideas about the topic. So the suggestion that "the more you read the better you write" is most often taken for granted as the first step. Reading a variety of resources open up the horizons for learners to discover new ways of thinking and improve content learning. (Urkhart & Mclver 2005)

### **2. Dialogue**

The teachers most often neglect the social aspect of the writing and learning process. So, it is of great importance to think about the suitable ways to engage the writers into positive talk especially when preparing to write. This, in fact, can involve students in purposeful discourse analysis and aids enriching their their knowledge about a topic.

Discussing the topic at hand helps the students prepare for the writing. More effectively, the students discover other prewriting strategies when discussing the topic together for it is one of the social attribute of writing. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

### **3. Inquiry**

Questioning the topic takes a front seat when preparing to write. It gets them to think about several aspects related to the topic. Questions lead to understanding more the other and thereby figure out the students' knowledge. When the students engage in purposeful discussions they are automatically uncovering the necessary strategies to deal with a particular topic or genre of writing. Questions are indeed a normal step towards exploring the world of knowledge and finding out different possibilities to tackle issues. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

### **4. Personal interests**

Most of the time students do not have the opportunity to write about a topic that stimulates their personal interests. For this, successful teachers are in fact those who encourage and motivate their students to write by considering their needs. This, according to writing scholars, can positively impact the time devoted to the drafting and lessening the writers' hesitation. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

#### **b. Drafting**

Drafting is another inevitable step that most teachers glorify, a fact that is often taken for granted. Writing instructors consistently include it into the instructional time since they require their students to begin composition striving to reach one end, writing a coherent essay, getting nebulous thoughts in mind into logically stitched ideas. Further, drafting represents the transitional stage between planning and revising. In a relatively coherent way, writers struggle to put words on paper. Drafting is indeed critical, an imperative step in representing what one knows.

Just like prewriting, when drafting, students need to be free from any constraints. Writers should not be strictly bound with the required rules. They need a considerable amount of time and freedom, the choice of words and the essentials of grammar had better be left to the end. Their chief concern, however, is to transform the deep structure into a surface one i.e. converting their hidden thoughts into evident ideas.

Students are trained, from their past school habits, that neatness counts a lot and submitting a perfect work is their first concern. Yet, in the real sense of the word, drafting

confronts with conventions and flawlessness. So, encouraging students to take chances and making them believe in themselves is an important step for no one's writing is perfect at this stage. Both teachers and students have to believe in the fact that drafting alone, without considering the other steps in the process, would not provide a polished product. Students' writing abilities improve; with sustainable treatment, when the teacher focuses on the whole process eloquently.

At this stage students start to put words on paper keeping in mind that it is only a start where mistakes are natural. In this concern, Brown and Hood (1989) point out that the writer should not care much "*about spelling, grammar, punctuation, or the best wording*". Students therefore might correct what is wrong, drop out what is useless, and add important aspects according to the predetermined purpose and audience.

### c. Revising

Curtailing the writer the possibility to revise their drafts is in fact ignoring a significant stage in the whole writing process that strips their motivation to progress owing to time constraints. "*As freewheeling as the drafting process can be, the central craft or art of writing is revision.*" (Urkhart and Maciver, 2005: 17)

Writers simultaneously reconsider, rethink, and reshape their drafts in the revision stage struggling with what they are intended to say and the words that best depict their mental representation (Lindemann, 1995). To fulfill the intended purpose and reach a polished product, writers tend to cut, rearrange, and add, changing the language and structures.

***"Successful revision results not from the number of changes a writer makes but from the degree to which revision changes bring a text closer to fitting the demands of the situation"*** (Faigley and Witte 1981: 411)

Understanding the purpose of the writing and the addressees helps the writer to successfully reconsider his production. Besides, to identify when to drop the thread of an intended message, the teacher's assistance and other knowledgeable persons is needed to enrich the students' experiences to review their written texts.

Revision is, thus, an indispensable step in the writing process that requires a considerable metacognition on the part of the writer that he finds easier said than done. Writers have to play a reader's role and foresee any confusion within his writing. Schriver (1992) believes that writers usually find revision difficult for at least two reasons: (a) they do not anticipate where their choices fail within the text, or (b) they know where the troubles lie but are not endowed with the necessary tools and strategies to overcome them.

“If writers fail to notice text problems in the first place, no revision occurs” (Schriver: 181). Even when writers recognize textual confusions, they have to identify those that do not confront with the purpose at hand.

Faigley and Witte (1981) found that novice writers’ revisions tend to change only surface aspects including mechanics and word choice. However, skillful writers most often focus on meaning. They always keep in mind the purpose and audience and accordingly they add, delete, consolidate, and redistribute their words, to improve their writing. Consequently, such a problem solving activity requires a considerable amount of time to practice and thinking.

Consequently, giving each stage in the writing process the required time is indeed a challenging issue to most writing teachers. They should learn how well to control the instructional time and devote equal portions to every single step when writing. Further, instructors ought to recognize that the ongoing evaluation of the learners’ productions in order to improve them is not an easy task. It is thought to take a significant amount of time and efficient strategies to gauge the learners’ productions.

Revision is the last and the most important stage where students have to rather focus on the organization of ideas, coherence, and accuracy. Though it is the last step, students should not worry about what they have written because through the teacher’s assessment and evaluation and their continuous practice they will get rid of most of their mistakes. It is generally assumed that any writing activity follows a linear processing. In other words, the student prepares a set of ideas and manages them into a plan, writes them down, and then revises what has been written. Thereby, the use of the three stages is as follow:

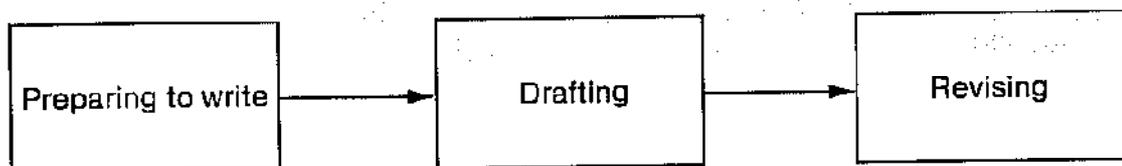
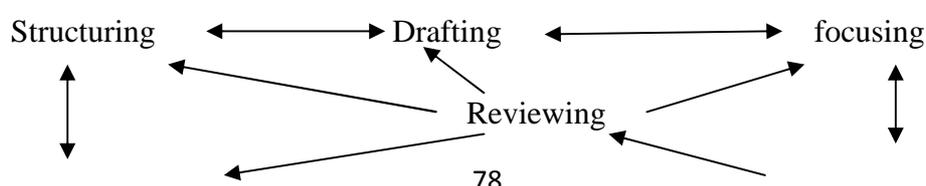


Diagram 3.2. The writing process adopted from Brown and Hood (1989:10)

Since writers perform the writing tasks moving carefully through them, these stages, though appear to be linear, are emphasized to be used recursively.

The following diagram presents clearly the different procedures the students go through when writing



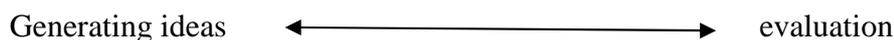


Diagram 3.3. The procedures involved in the writing process (adopted from el Mahrooqi et al, 2015: 98)

Although it is praised to affect the writing skill positively, the process approach has been subject to criticism. This approach to writing instruction focuses in the first go on the processing of ideas while curtailing students the chance to deal with the form and the content being produced. Since the process is the major concern of both the teachers and the students, what is written often takes a back seat. Badger and white (2000: 154) contend that it has “a somewhat monolithic view of writing. The process of writing is seen as the same regardless of what is being written and who is writing”. Besides, the learners may not acquire the skills of academic writing that enable them to succeed in higher education. Just as Nunan (1999) puts it, “if left to themselves, young writers will produce recounts and narratives, but not the sorts of factual writing that they need to succeed in school”.

### 3.9. Writing Purposes

In any writing context three major components should be considered. First, a topic has to be chosen and limited. Second, a purpose or the reason for composing has to be pinpointed. Third, one has to identify the audience that will read what will be composed i.e. the teacher, the classmates, etc. Therefore, the student asks the following questions: what shall I write? Why? and for whom? These will determine: the style, the structure, and the language and vocabulary to be used.

In fact,

***“a piece with strong organization begins with a clear purpose that creates anticipation in the reader. Events proceed logically. Information is given to the reader doses at the right time so the reader never loses the big picture, the overriding sense of what the writer is driving at”*** (Culham, 2003, cited in Ecenbarger, 2007: 14)

Moreover, Weigle (2002: 10) has distinguished between two main dimensions along which the different types of texts can be classified. She determines “*cognitive processing*” and “*dominant intention or purpose*”. To state it differently, any writing process is constrained by a purpose; to inform, to convince, etc, and the mental activity required in composition i.e. whether to *reproduce* or restate what has been already written, to *organize* or *reorganize* a piece of writing, or to *generate* and create a new text through paraphrasing, summery, note taking, etc. The following table illustrates what has been stated;

cognitive processing purpose	Reproduce	Create	Audience
To learn	Copying, taking, and dictation.	Comments on books margins through metaphors and analogies.	Self
To convey emotions and feelings	Stream of consciousness	Reflective writing and personal essays	Self and others
To inform	Quote, or fill in a form.	Expository writing: Definition, academic essays and articles, book reports, commentary.	Others
To convince, persuade	Citation from authority or experts	Argumentative or persuasive writing: Editorial, critical essay or article.	Others
To entertain, delight, and please	Quotation of poetry or prose.	Entertainment writing: Parody and rhymes.	Others
	Documentative discourse.	Exploratory discourse	Others

**Table 3.1.** The general model of writing discourse adapted from Vahapassi (1989, cited in Weigle, 2002: 10)

As far as writing purposes are concerned, John Harris (1993) contends that the most traditional classification of the different types of writing is a fourfold: *exposition*, *argument*, *description*, and *narration*. In his study of the writing context Matt Copeland, on the other hand, distinguishes among eleven purposes that can either be used separately or a combination of two or more is required.

The writer may either: *express* his own thoughts and feelings in words in an informal and creative writing, *describe* by providing a detailed depiction of persons, things, etc, *explore/learn* by unveiling what was ignored and answering various queries, *entertain* by establishing a sense of humor and joy, *inform* to give information and state them in an objective way, *explain* by analyzing and evaluating a set of collected data, *argue* to discover some truth (Lunsfurd et al, 2010: 7), *persuade* when they already know a given idea (Lunsfurd et al, *ibid*), *evaluate* to gauge and judge persons, ideas, beliefs, etc following a set of standards, *problem solving* when persuading the reader to adopt a given

policy or idea, and *mediate* to set an end to disputes and disagreements by providing convincing argumentations.

### **3.10. Conclusion**

This chapter was devoted to providing a theoretical background related to the writing skill, the possible approaches for its teaching, with a special emphasis on the best known ones including the process and the product approaches, and the effect of the technologies on the acquisition of such a skill. The researcher has also tackled the main cultural and social features of writing, the reasons for the teaching of composition and its main purposes.

# **Chapter Four**

## **Feedback, Writing and Information Technologies**

#### 4.1.Introduction:

This chapter will present a theoretical background for feedback and its implementation in the teaching of writing. It starts with a definition of feedback follows to provide a clear understanding. The researcher moves to highlighting the different dimensions that interweave to shape feedback practices. The different modes of feedback and the students' preferences of feedback provision will also be tackled.

#### 4.2.Definition of Feedback

Traditionally, feedback is thought to have two main distinguishable components: assessment and correction. In assessment, the teacher informs the learner about his or her performance and how best he or she has acquired the presented material. In correction, detailed information is supplied on the missing aspects according to the learner's performance either through explanation, provision of alternative strategies, or elicitation of these from the learner. (Ur, 1999)

Researchers have attributed a primary role to feedback as it is thought to be crucial for both consolidating and encouraging learning. Such a process enables teachers to easily promote scaffolded instruction. Feedback is also a key element in improving students' control over writing in EFL classes with product, process, and genre approaches. (Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

According to Tavakoli (2012) the term feedback is frequently referred to as corrective feedback or error treatment. Yet, for Bienes (2010) both notions are used interchangeably but with a preference of corrective feedback for its positive connotation, while the latter is perceived as inhibiting. Most often feedback is provided to students through comments on what they have produced. It is typically used to enhance the students' level of proficiency in acquiring the language skills, composition in particular. To state it differently, it is through feedback and error treatment that teachers help their learners alter the way certain linguistic aspects are being acquired.

In second language writing feedback means “an input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision” (keh, 1990: 294). As for Tavakoli, it is recognized as

*“the information that a teacher provides in response to a learner production (spoken or written) and is most commonly associated with inaccuracy rather than with praising interesting or accurate productions.”* (Tavakoli, 2012:128)

It is universally acknowledged that teachers who consider writing a product most often shed light on mechanical aspects and student's grammatical errors. The instructor sees that he is first and foremost a language teacher who should avoid errors' fossilization (Zemel, 1985, as cited in Lee, 2008). Ohta (2001, as cited in Bienes, *ibid*: 6) contends that "any utterance produced by a teacher or a learner that either initiates repair on a malformed utterance, or contrasts with a learner's malformed utterance" is regarded as any sign used to alleviate a learner's erroneous acquisition of the target language.

Zamel reported that

*"ESL writing teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments ... [and] overwhelmingly view themselves as language teachers rather than writing teachers; they attend primarily to surface features of writing . . ."* (p. 86).

The arrival of the process approach changes the way students' productions are evaluated. Other language aspects gain special concern including the flow of ideas and the communicative competence in delivering the information. Thus a shift from focus on mechanics and grammar to a consideration of rhetorical processing holds the lion share in the realm of composition teaching (Ferris, 1997 as cited in Lee, *ibid*).

Such an advent makes it clear that language instructors should formatively assess students' writings to diagnose their progress in such a process. Feedback, thereby, plays a crucial role in refining the learning through raising standards and motivation towards acquiring the foreign language. It helps to improve students' accuracy and productivity. The continuous implementation of such a practice aids "learners' texts gradually come nearer and nearer to written fluency" (Hamp-Lyons, 1987: 143).

#### **4.3. Feedback as Part of Formative Assessment**

Feedback can drive the formative assessment process if used systematically as it can derail it if neglected. Both students and teachers perceive it as an integral part in the writing process. Black et al claim that (2003:42)

*"An essential part of formative assessment is feedback to the learner, both to assess their current achievement and to indicate what the next steps in their learning trajectory should be."*

Giving effective feedback is one of the skills a teacher should master when formatively assessing students' writings. Good feedback most often addresses the learners'

cognitive and motivational factors since it provides a clear view about the students' actual competence and the required abilities to move on. On the other hand the more students are assessed and given feedback the better they control their own learning. Providing feedback as part of formative assessment weighs a lot. It creates a context in which learning and practice cannot be disassociated. It also gives an intention that feedback is valued and students are given chance to use it constructively. (Brookhart, 2008)

It is worth noting that feedback is one of the most important facets to reform students' composition and refresh the fading motivation to learn a foreign language, chiefly learning to write. Ellis (2009, cited in Hamidun et al, 2012: 1) notes that both structural and communicative approaches to language teaching insist on the viability of feedback in establishing competence and motivation in producing good writing especially for underachievers.

A good deal of researches held by Brophy (2003, cited in Hamidun et al, *ibid*), Glover and Brown (2006, *ibid*), and Simpson (2006, *ibid*) stress that feedback on the content and organization by indicating the strengths and weaknesses is likely to improve the quality of students' writing. Therefore, providing regular, direct, and positive responses might necessarily boost up the level of students' composition. This has been further clarified by Duppenhaler (2002, cited in Hamidun et al, 2012: 2) when he states that:

***“through responding to the content of students' writing and not correcting errors, teachers can...[control] affective variables that affect the writer's motivation.”***

Furthermore, in her proposal, Butler (1988, cited in Black et al, 2004) studies the importance of the way responses to students' productions can be given in improving achievement. So, she urges teachers to try the effect of three different types of feedback; marks, comments, and a combination of marks and comments when assessing their students. Most of the teachers who experience the use of only comments when responding to their learners' productions appreciate the idea. One of them Nancy a teacher in Riverside School (cited in black et al, 2004) reports her experience as follows:

***“My marking has developed from comments with targets and grades, which is the school policy, to comment and target only. Students do work on targets and corrections more productively if no grades are given... my routine is now, in my target class, to (i) not give grades only comments; (ii) comments highlight what has been done well and what needs further work; (iii) the minimum follow-up work expected to be completed next time.”***

In a nutshell, when assessing writing ability, if grades and red ink are employed, students may focus on their ability i.e. bad marks are often attributed to incompetency and low attainment that consequently muddy the waters. Therefore, they may lack self-esteem, confidence, and consequently motivation to learn the language. However, if only comments are used to evaluate achievement, the attention would shift to a focus on improvement and learners are encouraged to make effort to obtain better results. It is understood thus that the constructive criticism and feedback are used positively as part of formative assessment to bring up achievement.

#### **4.4.Contextual Factors that Influence the Feedback Practices**

One of the social activities that is intended to reach certain educational and social objectives is feedback. Such a process is communicated between peoples through a variety of modes in specific cultural, institutional and interpersonal contexts. Researchers most often deem these motives as being a central reason for the unsettled areas of feedback and the controversies to pinpoint its effectiveness in education definitely. For this reason, it is recommended that, research on feedback should go beyond the fact that it is an individual act; it should consider further the influential motives, the choices made, and the learners' perceptions that are shaped by their pre-established habits and their background knowledge including assumptions and beliefs about writing instruction.

Contextual factors are thought to shape the feedback practices and afford data base for its interpretation. Hyland and Hyland (2006) provide three key dimensions of feedback that helps to scrutinize and contextualize the process and offer an understanding of what a teacher does when responding to the students' writings, how he does so and what effects has those responses on the teaching learning process in general. This examination relies on: socio-cultural dimensions, delivery and focus dimensions, and interpersonal and interactional dimensions.

##### **4.4.1.Socio-cultural Dimensions:**

It is generally acknowledged that most of the research on writing is embedded within socio-cultural theories. Within this school of thoughts, scholars assert that learning to write is a process requiring students to interact with each other. It is therefore approved that culture, context and activity interweave to shape knowledge construction and transactional learning through spoken and written language (Pytash and Ferdig, 2014).

The socio-cultural theory is originally associated with the work of Vygotsky on the origin and development of the human mind that is considered as a social entity, shaped and developed in a given cultural, historical and institutional context. Learning results from the internalization of interrelated modes of thinking, feeling and behaving. Accordingly, social communications are internalized from external to internal interactions and thereby into socially constructed dialogism that affects the processing of ideas in the learners' mind.

To analyze feedback, the sociocultural theory developed a set of interconnected concepts including "mediation, internalization, developmental change, and cultural embeddedness" (Hyland and Hyland, 2006: 24). The cultural mediation helps the human mind, through feedback practices, to transform lower forms of thinking into higher forms of thinking where the student shifts from cognitive to metacognitive learning strategies including: voluntary attention, logical reasoning, planning, problem solving ...etc. The succession of developmental processes that takes place in schools' interactions causes a radical change in the nature of information processing. According to Lentolf (2000), Vygotsky has distinguished three forms of mediation that occurs during constructive interactions: mediation by others, mediation by self, and mediation by artifacts. All of them rely on language as a psychological mediating tool. He believes that mediation in the Zone of Proximal Development leads to the possible maturation of certain mental functions. So,

*"An essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's developmental achievement."* (Vygotsky, 1978: 90)

He attributed improvements in the zone of proximal development to the interactions in a particular constructive setting. The fact that communication opens the doors for collaborative interactions helps students to have control over the variables that occur during the writing process.

As for Villamil and Guerrero (2006) teachers should afford students chance to interact with their class-mates to extend the area of *other mediation* and to guarantee the learner's improvement in the Zone of Proximal development. The motives that affect peer feedback, for instance, including: L2 knowledge, role adopted during the interaction, and the likes aid learners to position themselves in different roles i.e. other-regulated, self-

regulated, or object-regulated. Receiving such strategic assistance ensures successful scaffolding and collaborative dialogue.

#### **4.4.2.Delivery and Focus Dimensions:**

For decades, the debate and controversy on the attitudes and approaches towards feedback provision has been the concern of language acquisition and writing instruction researchers. “What a teacher says to a student about writing is saturated with the teacher’s values, beliefs and models of learning” (Anson 1989: 354). While, some believe that correcting all students’ mistakes is crucial for both adjusting learning and improving productivity, others prefer selective and effective corrections of certain mistakes (Ferris, 1995). Conversely, recent contributions of some scholars and ESL writing teachers consider grammar correction as counterproductive and inhibiting (Hyland and Hyland, 2006, Ferris, 2011).

However, error correction in EFL and L2 writing contexts is a must and comments on students’ papers are important, according to Hyland and Hyland (2006), for two reasons. First, in academic and professional settings accuracy and flawless writing is often the glorified dogma that calls for error treatment. Second, students usually claim that they favor the teacher’s interference and they value their writing instructor’s responses on their works that is why they believe that the imperative need for feedback implementation is essential for their apprenticeship.

In a study conducted by Ferris (2006) the role of the teacher, the student achievement, the teacher marking strategies, and the agreement of the linguistic structures with the type of feedback are deemed to have an overriding impact on error correction in student writing. She assumes that providing feedback in intermediate stages of the writing and revision process helps students to progress and attend more positively to the teacher’s corrections. Ferris recommended that teachers had better

1. Provide indirect feedback,
2. Locate errors and not label or code them,
3. Not use a one-size-fits-all strategy to the treatment of errors in students’ writings,
4. Use a small number of error categories in feedback provision. (Hyland and Hyland, 2006: 105)

Electronic feedback and second language writing has also occupied an area in writing instruction owing to the rapid growth of educational technologies. A broad spectrum of techniques to merge technologies with second language writing is reflected in computer mediated feedback. The opportunities that are afforded to writers who are linked to the screen are numerous that it is difficult for writing instructors to choose from the recommended pedagogical approaches in the field. The fact that writing purposes differ and so the uses of technologies made electronic feedback an area that covers a range of approaches to writing instruction and that needs an informed empirically based enquiry.

Ware and Warschauer (2006), on their part, enquire three strands of research on electronic feedback in a variety of research and instructional areas that have a considerable impact on the teaching of writing. First, they scrutinize the effectiveness of software generated feedback and whether it can replace or enhance human feedback. Second they compared computer mediated feedback with the traditional face to face feedback. Third, they studied the socio-cultural and socio-cognitive perspectives of technology based communicative modalities such as online chat, e-mail collaboration and multimedia authoring and their roles in mediating feedback and helping learners become independent writers.

#### **4.4.3. Interpersonal and Interactional Dimensions**

Recognition of the influence of oral and written language on students' writing performance has gained widespread concern among writing scholars and teachers. A central role is often attributed to social interactions and how learners receive and internalize those interventions during the writing process. Researchers within this school of thoughts posit oral language to have a great control over the learners' performance believing that it is the point origin of all language skills. This means that interactions in the field of language learning and in particular writing instruction would leverage acquisition.

Oral brainstorming, collaborative composing, peer revision groups, and tutorial conversations are but an example of the deliberate use of conversational interactions in the teaching and learning of writing. A great deal of research is thus devoted to analyze the role of scaffolding in the teacher's talk and interactions among student writers and oral feedback in writing conferences. Researchers, accordingly, scrutinize the purposes and functions of tutor talk, the ways in which discussions are managed, how it affects the

students' writing, how such conversations are maintained, and the role played by scaffolding in tutors' instructions (Hyland and Hyland, 2006).

Scaffolding or assisted performance (Ohta, 2001) is a constructive approach to learning. As part of the socio-cultural theory, scaffolded instruction is thought to be central to the writing tutorials. It has been defined in a variety of ways, but it is Jerome Bruner who introduced the term in education. He believes that scaffolding is a

*“process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts... it consists essentially of the adult controlling those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learners' capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence”*  
(Wood et al., 1976: 90).

For Donato (1994: 40), scaffolding in an L2 learning context means “social interaction in which a knowledgeable participant can create, by means of speech, supportive conditions in which the novice can participate in, and extend current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence”. It is the verbal support and feedback that a tutor provides to the learner who works on a particular aspect or skill to enable him in improving it. For the tutor to control the *communicative ratchet* and progress considerably, Wood et al identified six stages in the act of scaffolding.

1. Recruitment: in which the teacher or tutor captures the student's attention through deliberate task choice and provision.
2. Reduction of degrees of freedom: where the task is simplified.
3. Direction maintenance: aids the learner to keep on doing the task and stay on track.
4. Marking critical features: the tutor aids the learner to focus on the key aspects of the task at hand and the anticipated solutions.
5. Controlling frustration: the learner is provided with support and a break to reflect on some aspects of writing.
6. Demonstration: useful solutions to certain problems are proposed.

Later Bruner added the seventh stage which is extension where alternative cases to strengthen attainment are recommended to boost up the learning process.

#### 4.5. Principles for Providing Written Feedback

Based on reviewing noteworthy literature and their own experiences in the field, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) suggested a list of principles to address the process of providing feedback to L2 students.

1. The teacher is not the only respondent: *“it is by no means necessary or advisable, however, that all corrections should come from the teacher”* (Broughton, 2003: 140). Peer response intertwined with guided self evaluation may benefit a great deal L2 students who are responsible for their own mistakes. Their experience and ability with writing allow them to interact privately with tutors, peers or experts in an online context.
2. Written commentary is not the only option: the student attitudes and the writing problems he faces dictate the type of feedback that better fits the situation. Writing conferences and audio-taped commentary for instance may be alternative modes for feedback delivery.
3. Teachers need not respond to every single problem student draft: most gifted teachers respond primarily to the development of ideas and postpone comments on language and editing issues to the penultimate draft. They believe that addressing every single aspect in the students’ paper may overwhelm both the teacher and the learners and make the process arduous.
4. Feedback should focus on the issues presented by an individual student and his or her paper, not on rigid prescriptions: as already noted, the controversy of providing feedback on content-related issues or on language errors may be settled according to the individual student’s ability in dealing with the writing. Serving the students’ need would affect positively prose construction along the planning, editing and revising process.
5. Teachers should take care to avoid appropriating or taking over a student’s text. Final decisions about content or revisions should be left to the writer: appropriation of the students’ productions has gained major concerns as most writing scholars consider it demotivating. Misunderstanding of the whole processing of ideas and failure to communicate suggestions sometimes makes the student feels that his work belongs to the teacher. Consequently he struggles to give the teacher exactly what s/he asked for rather than developing his own way of writing. *“In most instances”* teachers *“should (a) be focusing their feedback*

*attention on more pressing issues and (b) not be appropriating or taking over the students' texts by rewriting them"*(Ferris, 2011: 03).

6. Teachers should provide both encouragement and constructive criticism through their feedback: Everyone knows the sensitivity of a student receiving a paper covered with red ink. Such a practice generates a feeling of guilt that makes a learner quit writing. Students most often see feedback as an important tool a teacher uses to leverage their productions. They estimate suggestions for improvement on what they have written interwoven with positive comments. This, they believe, would create a constructive atmosphere where motivation is fueled. The L2 writing teachers' task is, hereby, to build confidence in L2 writers so that they can express their ideas in English freely. So it is recommended that both positive and negative feedback contribute to the development of writers and teachers have to regulate themselves on varying responses.
7. Teachers should treat their students as individuals, considering their written feedback as part of an ongoing conversation between themselves and each student writer: treating students as individuals can be reflected in the formative and continuous reviewing of their writings. The writing teacher must bridge the gaps through personalized feedback –a deliberate process that entails summary endnotes to each student by identifying the lacunas and stimulating progress. (Hyland and Hedgcock: 190-192)

#### **4.6. Error**

It is said that even with optimal instructional conditions there is no perfect learning. The need for remedial work is imperative due to the human being nature that lacks the capacity to retain every single fact being presented. Error remains a contentious and natural aspect at the same time and is most common in EFL classes owing to several reasons. Just as noted by Geoffrey Broughton, 2003 poor teaching is but an example that necessitates remedy. Further, he listed other circumstances that are beyond the teacher's control including; mother tongue interference, the poorly designed syllabus, and the many choices of the material to teach from. Apart from the pre-listed reasons, behaviorists' most often consider the learner as another source of trouble.

Scholars in the field of language acquisition studied error from different perspectives. For behaviorists', error was perceived as a sin that should be avoided at all costs. It was recommended thus to encourage students to produce correct English through

“massive manipulative practice of the language” (134). The mentalists on the other hand gave error another direction stating that it is a sign of learning. Students as beginner language learners are not competent enough to express their ideas correctly. So, they gradually improve as they learn from their mistakes. Corder (1967), for instance, reckoned that in an L1 context an error is a natural developmental sign that learning is taking place. It is advisable thus to not overwhelmingly problematize L2 errors. Williams (1981), on the other hand, argued that in writing classes the teacher wielding a red pen looks for errors to spot them. Those errors in fact are not troublesome but rather are in the eyes of the beholder.

Most recent studies that focus on L2 students counter these lines of arguments in their study of the notion of error by stating that one has to worry about the issue of error fossilization that derails the progress of learning. So teachers had better provide a good amount of feedback and instruction to avoid such a problem. Further, scholars who assert that written errors are but an illusion that a teacher reader imagines may go far away. Proficient users of the target language would identify certain constructions as incorrect though some errors in them seem unnoticeable. These errors are most often global errors that have a dire impact on the communication of the ideas that make the text incomprehensible.

This theoretical framework, according to Ferris (2011: 03), seems to offer a concrete definition of what is meant by error in writing classes though doubtless other ways the term could be defined. “Errors are morphological, syntactic, and lexical forms that deviate from rules of the target language, violating the expectations of literate adult native speakers”.

Certain errors are but blind spots to the learners. It seems, thus, counterproductive to address all errors made. Ferris (2002) suggested a classification of errors to aid teachers prioritize problems in the process of feedback provision based on individual differences and students’ particular preferences (Hyland, 2003).

1. Genre-specific errors – those particular to the current target text-type.
2. Stigmatizing errors – those that most disturb the particular target community of readers.
3. Comprehensibility errors – those that most interfere with the clarity of the writing.
4. Frequent errors – those consistently made by the individual student across his or her writing.

5. Student-identified errors – those the student would like the teacher to focus on. (Hyland, *ibid*: 186)

Broughton, 2003 identified four steps to deal with an erroneous utterance. These stages allow the teacher to spot the mistake before providing the last response to enable his students benefit as much as possible from the remedial work.

1. Establish what the error is

Sometimes the misuse of some grammatical and syntactic structures gives another meaning to what is being communicated. The learner may want to communicate an idea that counters totally what he intended to state. A sentence like “John came to the room” does not convey the same meaning as “John entered the room”. This misrepresentation may present a completely different impression that calls for elicitation techniques such as translation or multiple choice tests so that the teacher can identify the erroneous statement.

2. Establishing the possible sources of the error, to explain why it happened

Finding out the causes of the error means providing an analysis that helps to elaborate the suitable strategy to deal with it. As already noted, error is essentially made due to poorly prepared teaching, badly chosen materials, weak attainment and L1 interference. However, the last two reasons are thought to occupy the top of the list as they are ascribed to the learner, the less powerful side in the teaching-learning process.

3. Deciding how serious the mistake is

The most serious errors call for systematic analysis, especially the least tolerable ones in the eyes of the educated native speakers. Teachers think that an urgent remedy has to be planned to not disrupt the progress of the student but it is preferable to relate the error to its use in the English system i.e. spelling, morphology, syntax, or lexis. The linguistic aspect, for instance, is important. For this, identifying the broken rules that transgress the whole structuring of the sentences is a prior step. Broughton (*ibid*: 137) believes that transformations, tense, concord, case, negation, articles, order, and lexical errors are the gravest ones that have to gain special concern when compared to those that affect parts of the utterance.

4. Correcting the error

For fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Teachers should tread gradually in the feedback process to create a positive friendly atmosphere. The student’s paper is his own property. He most often feels resentful when he receives his paper covered with seas of red ink that they hardly dare to write another time. The teacher must think twice before giving a final decision about the writing escaping too much criticism and appropriation. The

sensitivity of the student and the nature of the task are two salient features that interweave to dictate how much to correct and how often. While an immediate feedback may help to better the productions whether oral or written as it aids the learner to work out the mistake deliberately, delaying some mistakes for another session matters a great deal. Writing teachers need to exercise his responses precisely through a regular review of the students work.

#### **4.7.Modes of Feedback**

For feedback to be effective certain modes are to be adopted and an immediate response and interaction should follow. The best known modes of feedback in the ELT writing landscape are written feedback, oral feedback (writing conferences) and computer mediated feedback (Hyland and Hyland, 2006, Brookhart, 2008)

##### **4.7.1.Written Feedback**

Teacher's written responses on a given piece of work affect the learners a lot. Many researchers in the field of writing instruction see that too much written feedback may harm the process rather than amplifies it. They often lament it as being too vague, authoritarian, pointless and too directive that students misunderstand it. Knoblauch and Brannon (1981:165) suggest that teachers'

*“Commenting on student essays might just be an exercise in futility. Either students do not read the comments or they read them and do not attempt to implement suggestions and correct errors.”*

Despite the fact that written feedback has been subject to criticism, it remains essential in EFL writing contexts and responses on earlier drafts appear to improve the learners' productivity.

Written comments play a central role in most writing classes and hold the lion share in the process of evaluating students' papers since students continue to see it as fundamental to their improvement as writers. They are more than linguistic statements. They have a great impact on the student's perception and interpretation of the feedback and thereby on his proficiency (Brookhart, 2008). For this feedback to be effective, written comments have to consider three basic aspects including clarity, specificity and tone.

##### **a. Clarity:**

The students' understanding of the feedback information as intended is of paramount importance. Most often, the acquired habits and vocabularies and the learners' background and experiences have an influence on their interpretation of the received

feedback. Brookhart (2008: 32) provided an illustration of good and bad feedback practices in terms of clarity as follows

Good feedback practices

1. Use simple vocabulary and sentence structure
2. focus on the student's developmental level
3. Check if the student understands the feedback

Bad feedback practices

1. Use big words and complicated sentences
2. Show what the teacher knows, not what the student needs
3. Take for granted that the student understands the feedback

#### **b. Specificity**

Specifying comments in the feedback a teacher makes matters a lot. It should not be too broad or too narrow but rather right and to the point. Comments like “write more” or “try harder” do not afford guidance. As a result, students may act counterproductively. It is preferable thus to respond more purposely through the use of specific vocabulary. A vague comment “This is great!” is accepted, yet “This introduction is great! It would make me want to read your work” makes the student know what the teacher considered great in the writing and why he thought so and thereby draws conclusions about the choices made in writing that introduction and encourages him to use them another time.

In specified feedback teachers should

1. Use a lot of nouns and descriptive adjectives
2. Describe concepts or criteria
3. Describe learning strategies that may be useful (Brookhart, 2008: 34)

#### **c. Tone**

The tone of the feedback is usually sent through word choice and style to express its quality. The tone may shape the way the comments will be understood. Thereby, feedback wording can either hamper or motivate the learning as they convey an assumption about the students themselves. The feedback is supposed to respect the student as a learner and promote thoughts and curiosity. Besides, the writing instructor should position the learner as an agent who is responsible of the process.

Yet, it is important to note that teachers have to avoid being always positive. Despite the fact that it is appropriate to lighten the way forward, positive remarks may be counterproductive. Constructive criticism requires credibility and reasoning to assist the student positively and to adjust the ongoing changes by telling the student what is going

wrong with his writing and suggesting how to correct it. The students, by this means, will be motivated and feel that they can control their own learning and contribute to improve it.

Brookhart (2008: 34) suggests the ways teachers should communicate good feedback tone. She asks teachers to keep away from being the final authority through using words that reflect that the learner is an active respondent. The teacher had better not tell the student what to do but rather to ask questions to encourage thinking and curiosity. The feedback should not be the final opinion; however, it should share what the teacher thinks about the product.

#### **4.7.1.1.Types of Written Feedback**

It is said that the teacher written feedback may take various forms including: commentary, rubrics, minimal marking, taped comments, and electronic feedback. (Hyland, 2003)

##### **4.7.1.1.1.Commentary:**

Handwritten comments on the student's paper itself is the best known and used of the teacher written feedback techniques. The teacher uses a correction code on the margin appearing on the exact point where the problem appears or at the end where the teacher summarizes the issue by making general observations. Through this method the teacher responds to the written work rather than evaluates it by stating how the reader sees the text, to what extent it has communicated the idea, and how to improve it. The following is a list of correction symbols adopted from Hyland (2003: 181)

- S* Incorrect spelling
- W* Wrong word order
- T* Wrong tense
- C* Concord (subject and verb do not agree)
- P* Punctuation is wrong
- Wf* Wrong form
- S/f* Singular or plural form wrong
- NA* The usage is not appropriate
- PM* Meaning is not clear
- [ ] Something is not necessary
- $\lambda$  Something has been left out



- Peer response and self-evaluation
- Paper is on time

**Your Strengths:**

**Possible Improvements:**

**Grade:**

#### **4.7.1.1.3.Minimal Marking**

Such type of written comments is based on the fact that allocating the students' errors and indicating its type is effective and may stimulate students' response and develop self editing strategies better than correcting it directly (Ferris, 1997). It is an in-text form based feedback where no mistake is identified and no symbol is used. The use of a simple correction code as suggested by Byrne (1988) makes the feedback less threatening and the student can look for the mistake and then correct it. Yet, the use of a more extended code may make the correction confusing and cumbersome. Teachers thus prefer to opt for a more minimalistic approach by focusing on a limited number of general areas (Hyland, 2003).

#### **4.7.1.1.4Taped Commentary**

It is an alternative form of marginal comments where the teacher records remarks on a tape recorder to refer to the mistake identified with a number. It is a time saving technique that enables the student to develop his listening skill as it also suits auditory learners. It reflects better the teachers' point of view about logic and structure, ideas and confusions within the writing. (Hyland, 2003)

#### **4.6.1.1.5.Electronic Feedback**

The development of communication technologies opened up novel and flexible ways to deal with written feedback in the teaching writing cycle. Either via e-mail or through the comment function, the teacher responds to the student's production in a separate window while he reads the word processed text. Such a technique if used conveniently can provide an online explanation or contextual features of some problematic issues through concordance lines to offer the student chance to learn from his mistakes.

#### **4.7.2. Oral Feedback (Writing Conferences):**

Although oral feedback requires specified features, it follows the same patterns and covers the issues that the written feedback takes into account. It is the best used one of feedback modes that considerably varies from individual to group oral responses and from formal well-structured to informal unstructured comments. Yet the questions to be asked are where and when should the teacher send the feedback? Is the student willing to hear

and use it? Besides, one has less time to decide how to say things and make comments; plans therefore are needed to ensure effectiveness ( Brookhart, 2008).

Writing conference is thought to be the extolled formal structured method for L1 researchers which has been adopted by L2 scholars to call for conversing the writer to negotiate meaning and interpretation to ease knowledge construction and provide meaningful outlook of the good and bad points in the student's production. This two-way communication makes use of Vygotsky's scaffolding technique through which the received feedback develops the students' writing abilities as well as their texts. Such a time saving technique allows the teacher to understand the cultural, educational and writing needs as it clarifies meaning and settles misunderstanding through questioning and revision plans. (Hyland 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

Teacher-student conferences provide more detailed, focused and functional commentary than written feedback especially when the teacher makes use of the individual oral feedback. Scholars tend to attribute success to those conferences where the student reacts actively to the remarks and makes a contribution rather than accepting passively the teacher's comments. They believe that it helps learners to develop both their cognitive and communicative abilities and to have lasting effects in improving their writing performances.

Based on the students attitudes and changing mood that detract from positively negotiate meaning and discuss ideas, some tend to express reservations about oral feedback. The setting and the student affect a good deal the process. In some situations the student lacks the ability to interact constructively with his teacher. In others, the learner's culture restrains his informal contact with teachers that consequently result in passive engagement that makes the conversation tedious and ineffective at all. For this, it is recommended that for specialized and constructive interaction to occur further investigation is required on the feedback offered in conferences. (Hyland 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

#### **4.7.2.1. Forms of Conferences**

It is said that writing conferences are interactions between the student and his teacher on his productions; however, they can take various forms according to different factors including time constraints and teacher and students' preferences. The oral conferences may take the form of group work if the discussions are intimidating where peer support is an imperative factor. Teachers can also briefly consult "topics, sources, or outlines,

explorations of strategies for writing or future conferences, or reviews of already completed writing, but more usually they focus on a paper in progress, examining the current draft and ways of improving it.” (Hyland, 2003: 194)

Classes can also be organized as writing workshops where students work on their writing and consult their teacher or classmates when necessary. The teacher can discuss with one of the students on his own work while the rest are engaged whether individually or in groups in activities on computers or on papers. These workshops enable the teacher to easily and quickly review a short piece of work. In other situations, teachers prefer to monthly assess each individual student privately for fifteen minutes to discuss progress. Oral conferences thus should always address doable things to ensure improvement.

### **4.7.3. Computer Mediated Feedback**

The introduction of technology in the field of language teaching and learning gave computers an indispensable role in communicating knowledge and providing feedback. Online courses aided the spread of computer mediated learning and gave students chance to exchange drafts and comments with peers and the teacher easily. Researchers thus insist on investigating how best to use computers and technologies in writing instruction, feedback delivery in particular.

Although its benefits have not been yet demonstrated, it is often claimed that ICTs promote collaborative writing and students’ motivation. Learners are more autonomous and active as they are free to interact whenever they want to. Computer mediated communication raises students interaction with each other while the teacher plays a role of facilitator and mediator in the process. It, therefore, fosters student centeredness and group knowledge. Besides, it aids underachievers to produce well constructed texts through well controlled peer reviewing.

Attempts to intertwine traditional forms of feedback with computer mediated comments appear due to its positive outcomes. This aids significantly the students who do not have an easy access to updated computer facilities. Besides, peer responses may be impeded by the absence of real interactions and time constrains. Therefore, the integration of the advantaged electronic feedback in a real classroom context and traditional face to face communication may impact writing development positively.

The development of software including grammar checkers, e-rater, concordances, Criterion Online Writing Service, Daedalus integrated writing and the likes impacts the approaches to feedback. These programs guide students’ productions in terms of grammar,

usage, style, organization, and development. Yet, their reliable use in L2 instruction remains an area of further investigation. (Hyland 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

#### 4.7.4. Peer Feedback

It is said that the response of peers on writing productions has been adopted from L1 contexts to become an alternative form of teacher feedback in L2 writing classes. Researchers tend to consider such mode of feedback as important for improving students' papers and developing their readers understanding of what constitutes a good piece of writing.

#### 4.8. Types of Feedback

A detailed classification of the different types of feedback has been provided by Lyster and Ranta (1997, as cited in Bienes, *ibid*)

1. Explicit correction: when the teacher notices a student's error, he immediately stops him to correct the mistaken utterance. In this type the teacher not only gives the student the correct form, he also informs him that his statement was erroneous. (e.g. what do mean by she goed to school, I think you had better say she went to school).
2. Recast: it is an indirect indication that the learner is incorrect. This can be done through a repetition of part of the sentence excluding the false utterance so that he can recognize the mistake and thereby corrects it. The teacher reformulates the statement in a totally implicit way and sometimes uses techniques that call for translation when the learner uses his mother tongue or switches to another code. e.g. I have thirteen.

I ..... thirteen.

I am thirteen.

3. Clarification request: the teacher interrupts his student using statements like "pardon" or "excuse me". Likewise he provides an indication that there is something wrong within the utterance that needs reformulation. The teacher then made a request to point out that some clarification is needed.

e.g. T: what is wrong with you?

S: I have hungry.

T: what is wrong with you?

S: I am hungry.

5. Metalinguistic clues: when the learner misuses a given utterance, the teacher gives some information related to the erroneous statement. He may also comments and asks yes/no questions to aid his student draws the right way.
6. Elicitation: the language teacher asks his student to reformulate the ill-formed utterance, otherwise, he can proceeds to the use of questioning to elicit the correct information.
7. Repetition: focusing on the erroneous utterance by repeating it with a special tone may draws the language learner attention towards the mistake. Thereby, he can correct or elicit the right way.
8. Paralinguistic signals

#### 4.9. Student's Preferences of Feedback

It is of importance to consider students preferences and what they want to learn from the feedback provided. Leki (1991: 210), on his part contends that

*“ignoring their request for error correction works against their motivation...It seems at best counter-productive, at worst, high-handed and disrespectful of our students, to simply insist that they trust our preferences”.*

The teacher comments on a given piece are appreciated and valued a great deal by the learner since it brings forth positive feeling and gives an impression that someone cares enough about the writing (Brookhart, 2008). Many researches indicate that the L2 students, especially those from cultures where teachers are constantly directive, prefer teacher written feedback than any other type of feedback including peer feedback and oral feedback. They may even feel resentful if they do not receive comments on their mistakes and lacunas. Yet its significance in developing students' writing is still contentious (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). While many argue that form-focused feedback accompanied with certain instructions may affect prose construction, others such as Truscott (1999) believe that the adoption of a “correction-free approach” in their classrooms is almost a significant incentive to L2 improvement.

Most writers prefer grammar corrections since the professional and academic contexts entail flawless writing. Students then favor neatness and accuracy as an essential attribute of their productions and prefer to be assessed on mechanical aspects. Yet, in other contexts where multiple drafts are assigned and proficiency is the aim, students see comments on ideas and organization as crucial for their improvement and later on grammar is to be corrected. These contradicting views may occur due to the approaches used in the

teaching of the writing skill and more particularly to the product and the process theories. Both approaches may lead the writing teacher to focus considerably on grammar and mechanics as students progress (Hyland, 2003). In other words, for beginners priority therefore is paid to meaning, feedback on errors is thought to be discouraging and helpless.

Student use of the teacher written feedback differs considerably. Some correct their papers following the allocated comments and their major corrections cover grammar mistakes, others see feedback a stimulus for further revisions to write a polished piece of work that follows a given tone or style; as for some students the corrective feedback may cause problems rather than amplifying their productions. The problematic text is then ignored to avoid the identified flaws as they destruct the ideas being presented. So the revisions made can contribute a little to the improvement of the writing skill. Thus it is worth noting that what the learner wants from the teacher's comment matters a lot and that error correction remains a significant factor in refining the writing skill (Hyland, 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006). A comprehensible classroom concordance is then needed to specify and classify teacher responses including error codes and symbols because most of the time students are confused when interpreting comments (Ferris, 2003).

The students' expectations vary significantly in terms of their perception towards the teacher treatment of their compositions. The learners accept positive remarks and constructive criticism (Ferris, 2003) but the teacher's fear of the effect of negative comments leads him to address errors indirectly; yet this may lead to misinterpretation and can contribute a little. Some students value responses to their ideas and want to see all their mistakes identified that makes the task even challenging. For Enginarlar, (1993: 203)

*“What students perceive as effective instructor feedback encompasses: (1) attention to linguistic errors; (2) guidance on compositional skills; and (3) overall evaluative comments on content and quality of writing....When feedback in these areas is provided in a problem-solving manner, students seem to regard revision work as a collaborative type of learning where responsibility is shared by the two parties”*

Since the teacher is responsible to change the attitudes towards error correction, it is preferable then that the writing instructor design questionnaires or dialogues intended to identify the areas on which the received feedback should focus according to their learners' needs, background, and preferences (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). This would create

classroom collegial and trustworthy atmosphere that significantly improves motivation towards learning (Ferris, 2003)

**4.10. Conclusion:**

This chapter summarizes the theoretical data base related to feedback practices. The researcher talked about the notion of feedback, the major social and cultural factors influencing the process, and the different modes of feedback. She also deals with the major types of feedback employed in an EFL context and the students' preferences.

# **Chapter Five**

**Analysis and discussion of the  
findings**

**5.1.Introduction**

This chapter is merely empirical. It deals first and foremost with the description, interpretation, and analysis of the raw data gathered from the research instruments. The researcher will begin with an interpretation of the first data set obtained from the students and the teachers' questionnaires. The second data set results from the analysis of the observation is intended to provide a clear understanding of the context under scrutiny. The third data set is concerned with the analysis of the written test findings so as to validly testify the research hypotheses.

**5.2.Analysis and Discussions of the Questionnaire Results**

The current section is devoted to analyzing the teacher's and students' questionnaires. They were mainly intended to pinpoint the major difficulties both the students and the teachers encounter in writing classes and how technologies and feedback strategies are employed to overcome them.

**5.2.1.The Students' Questionnaire**

The researcher will present an interpretation and analysis of the main findings of the students' questionnaire, especially the use of ICTs and feedback practices in the process of writing instruction so as to deduce how best technologies are implemented in facilitating progress and better achievements.

**5.2.1.1.Pedagogical Use of ICTs**

The first part of the students' questionnaire aims to finding out the quality of the technological support the department is endowed with. It includes three questions; the first ones try to ascertain the kind of instructional technologies used in the institution and the quality of the tools being employed in the teaching of English. The third question looks for the students' perceptions about the inception of ICTs in their classes.

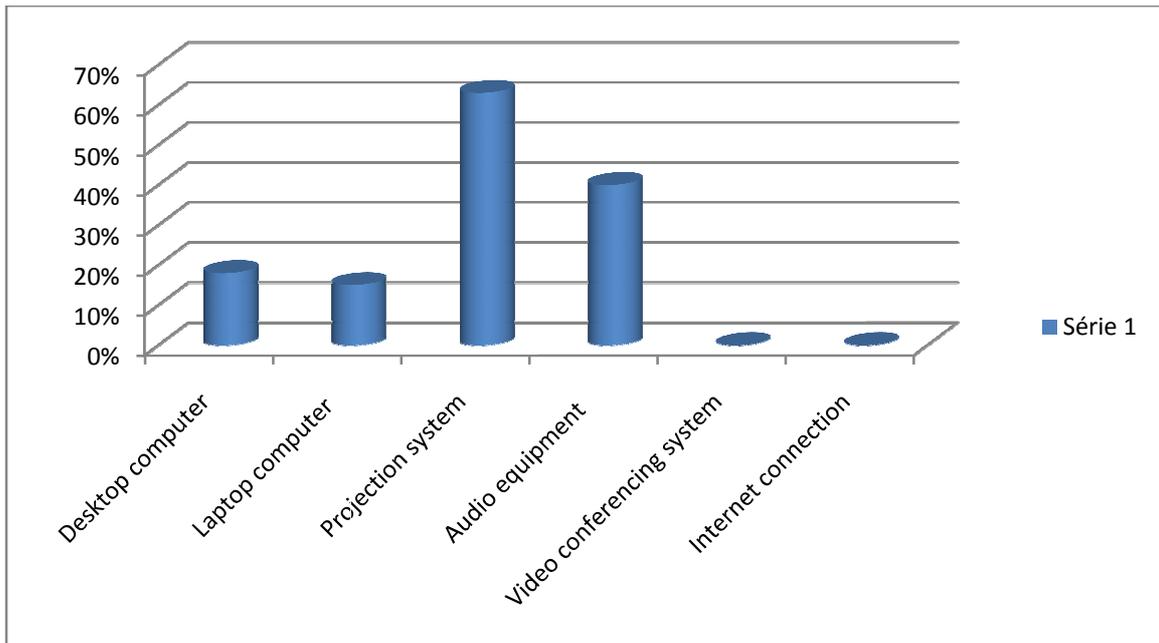


Diagram 5.1. The kind of technological tools that are used in the classroom

When questioning the informants about the kind of technologies available in the classroom they use, 18% replied that they had a desktop computer in the informatics laboratories, 50% answer that the teachers use their personal laptop computers, 63% state that a projection system is available in the amphi-theatres, while 40% of the sample population say that their teachers use audio equipment whenever possible, especially in oral expression sessions. As for the video conferencing system and the internet connection, the respondents respond that it is used only in international conferences to ease as more foreign scholars' contributions and communications as possible.

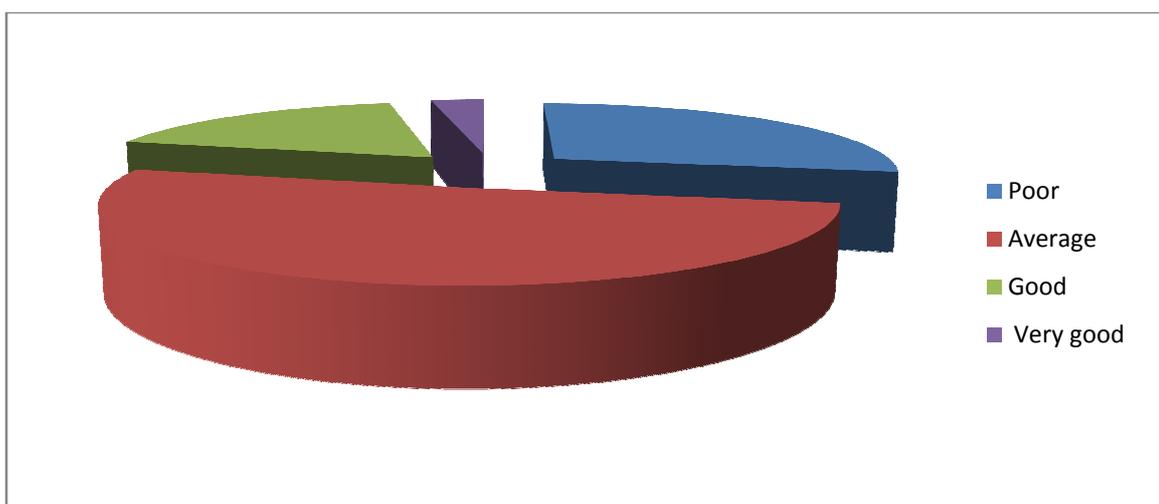


Diagram 5.2. The quality of technological support in the institution

As for the second item that, just like represented in diagram 5.2., aims to find out the quality of the technological support. The result shows that 28% of the respondents believe that it is poor when compared with the rapid growth of technologies in the market place, 51% respond that it is average. This is basically due to the gap between their daily use of the technologies and its actual implementation in the teaching learning process. 18% state that it is good, while only 3% of the whole sample population believe that it is very good for, according to them, the technologies used afford a considerable understanding of the worldly knowledge they have to acquire.

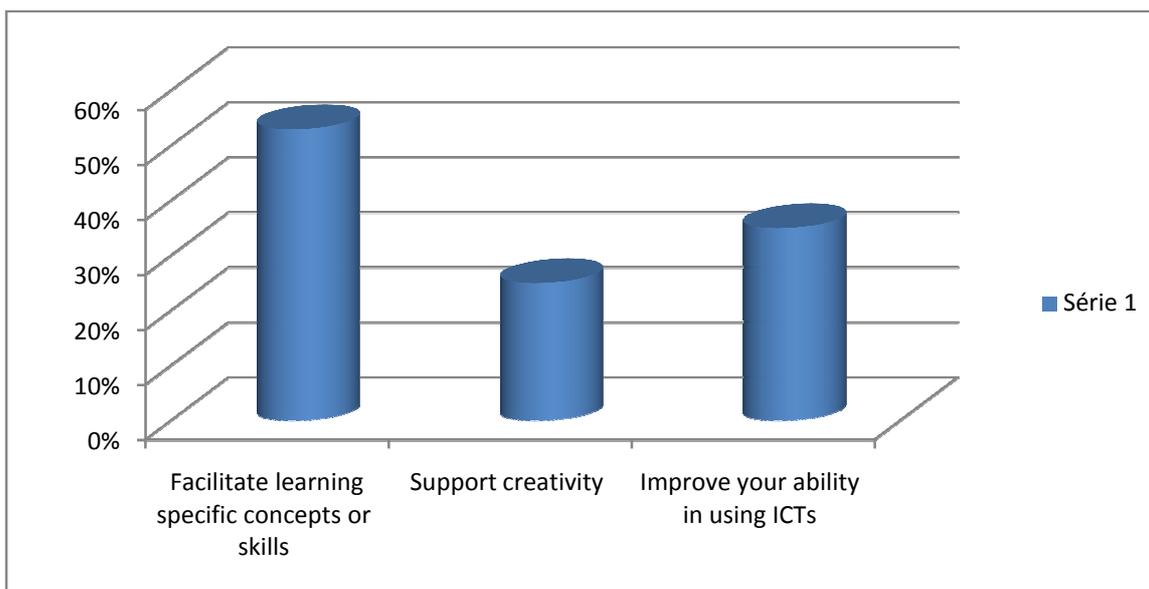


Diagram 5.3. Students' perceptions about ICTs

According to diagram 5.3., the majority of the students and who represent 53% of the whole respondents believe that ICTs are handy means that facilitate learning specific concepts and skills and writing is no exception for they could create their own spaces to learn and record easily what they produced. 25% opine that instructional technologies open up great opportunities as they support creativity on the part of both the teacher and the students that it is impossible to deny the positive role they played since their inception in pedagogy. 35% of the respondents state that technologies improve their ability in using the ICTs. Through their regular complicity they are able to recognize so many aspects related to their use the reason why they are dissatisfied with the level of technological expertise in the teaching of English in general and writing instruction in particular.

#### 5.2.1.2. Writing Instruction

The second part of the students' questionnaire is devoted to determine the importance of the writing skill to EFL students and the appropriateness of the time devoted

to impart it. Further, it aims to find out the aspects the writers find difficult to fulfill when writing, the use of the process approach, especially for beginners, to compose a given piece, the part of the essay the students find difficult when writing, and the use of assessment as part of gauging and informing the students' productions, it also looks for some recommendations the students find useful to ameliorate the writing skill.

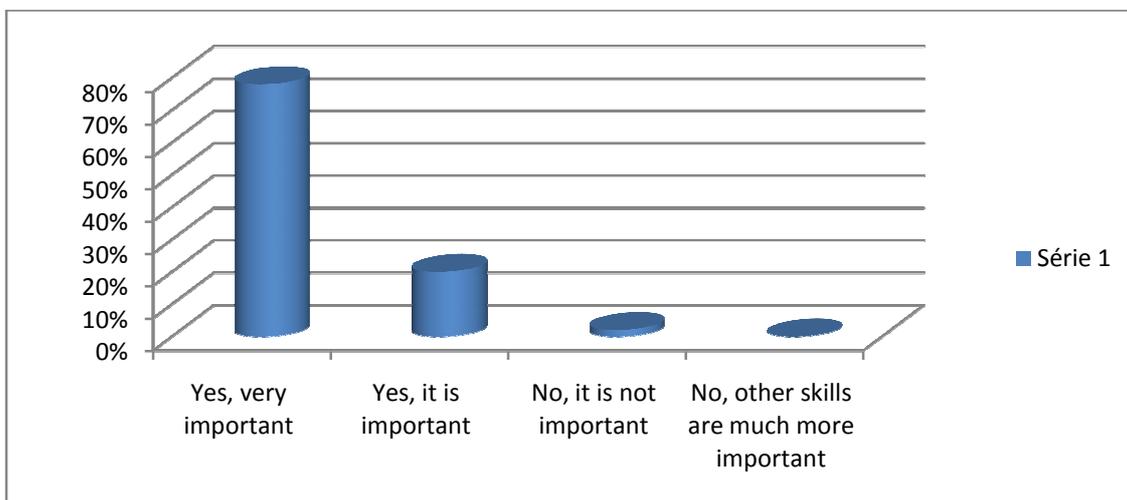


Diagram 5.4. The importance of the writing skill

According to the result of the fourth item, 78% of the respondents believe in the imperative need of the writing skill in the process and acquiring the necessary academic skills to achieve competence and thereby success. 20% of the whole population reckoned that writing is as important as any other skill in achieving success. 2% think that writing is not important when compared with speaking for their major concern is to communicate orally with the target language.

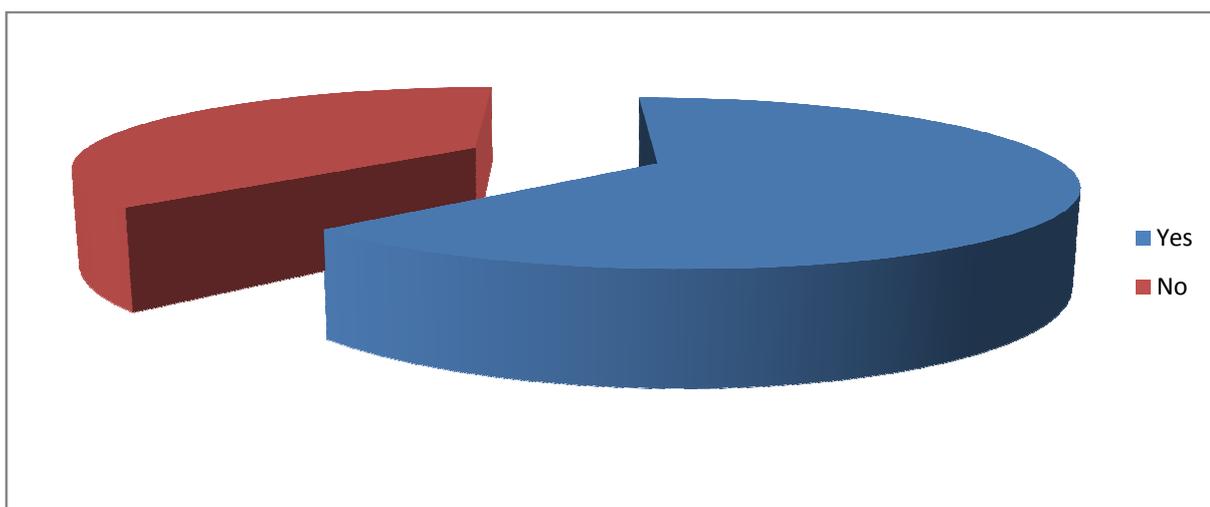


Diagram 5.5. The appropriateness of the time devoted to writing instruction

This item was intended to ascertain the appropriateness of the time devoted to the teaching of writing. While 63% of the respondents state that three hours a week is enough to acquire the necessary aspects related to the skill, 37% of the total think that it is not the appropriate amount of time as they are curtailed any chance to be assessed and consequently inform their performances.

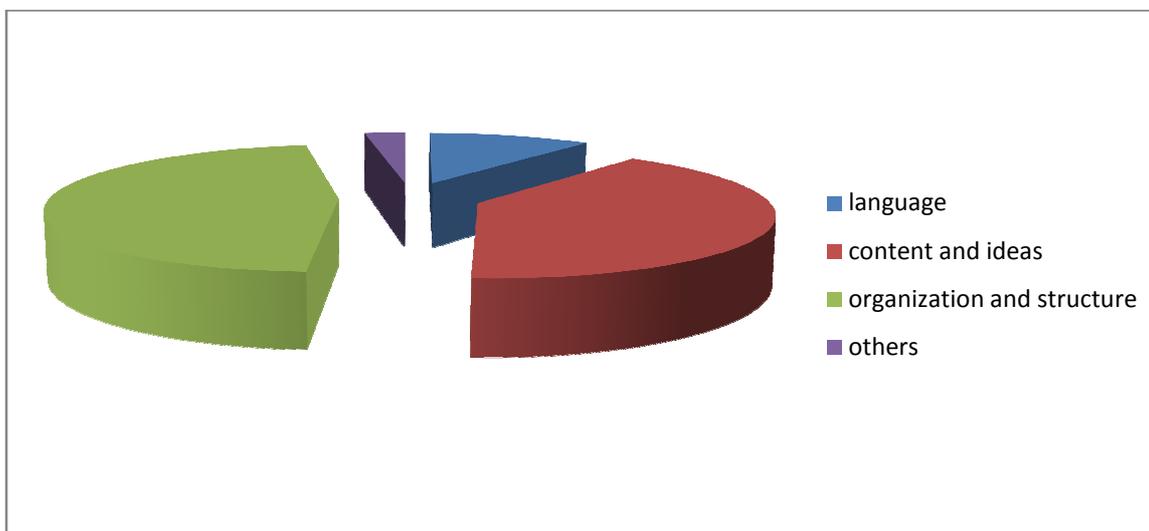


Diagram 5.6. The writing aspects students find difficult to acquire

When the researcher questioned the students about the aspects of writing they find difficult to acquire. 12% of the whole population find language an obstacle, 45% state that the content and ideas hinder their ability to write an essay, 52% say that organization and structuring thoughts is their major worry when writing while 3% of the respondents state that their teacher's strict regulations hamper their writing performances.

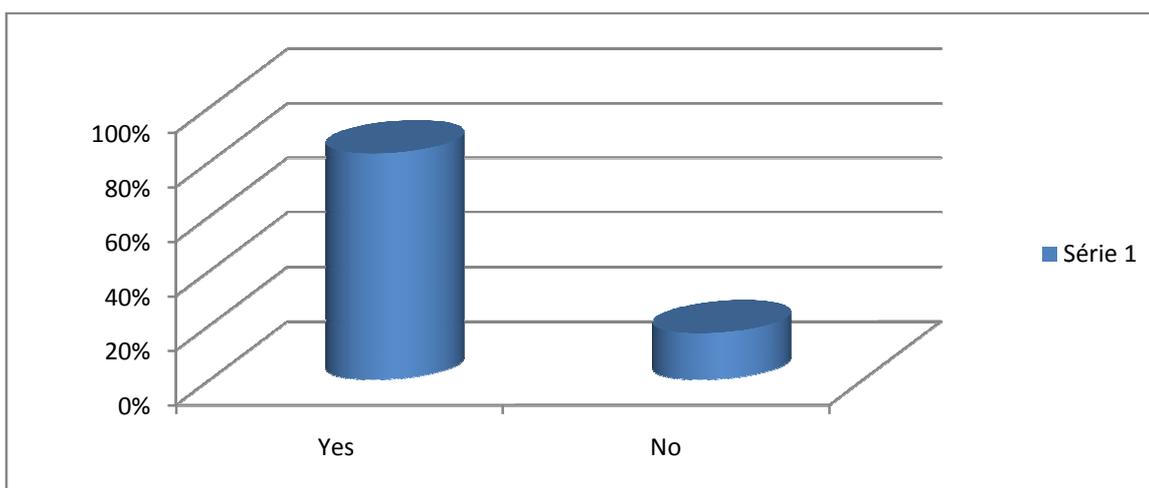


Diagram 5.7. The process approach vs the product approach

This item aimed at finding out the preferred process the students follow when writing. While the majority of the respondents who represent 83% of the whole population

state that they use the process approach because it is the best procedure to be followed especially for beginner writers, 13% answer that making mechanical mistakes reduce the possibility of getting good marks so they prefer focusing on the mechanics of writing, they rather prefer the product approach.

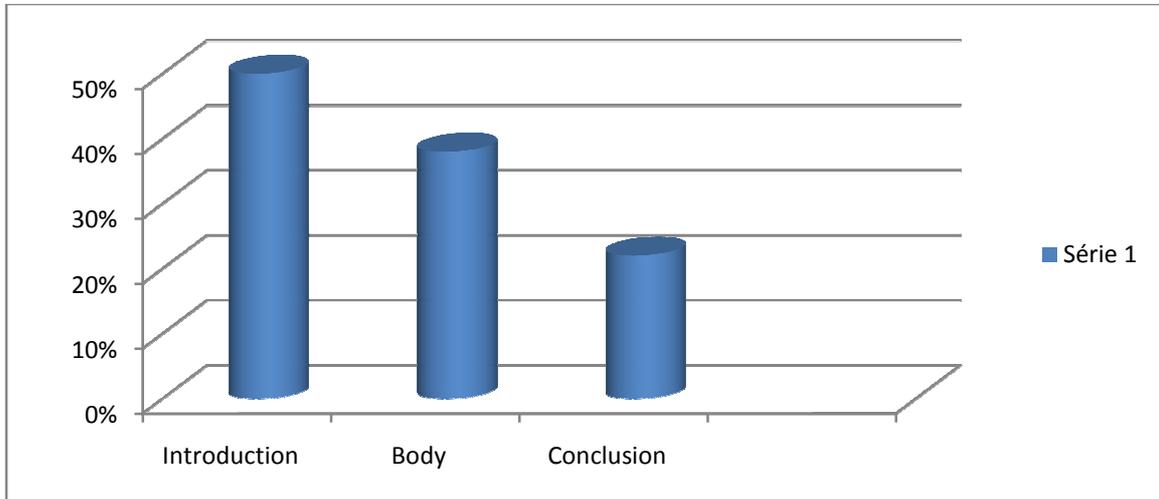


Diagram 5.8. The part of the essay students find difficult

The researcher aimed, through this item, to find out the part of the essay the students see difficult to fulfill. The majority of the respondents and who represent 50% of the whole sample population state that the getting started or the introduction is, according to them very complex since it stimulates the reader's interest. 38% respond that developing supporting ideas into a body is their major worry for this part that provides a hook between the introductory and the concluding idea. 22% of the target population assert that generating a concluding idea is the ever difficult since they give much attention to the first two parts that it is tiresome to end up with a noteworthy idea.

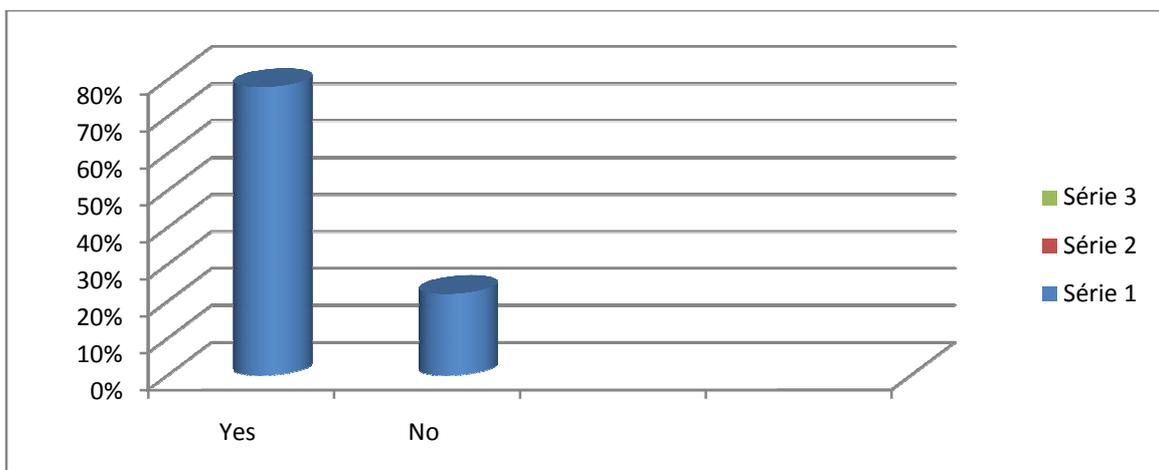


Diagram 5.9. Self assessment to check on progress

When the researcher enquire whether the students continuously assess themselves to check on their progress, 78% of them state that they most of the time self assess their productions while 22% answer that they dare not evaluate their writings believing that the feedback of an absent reader is more objective and reliable.

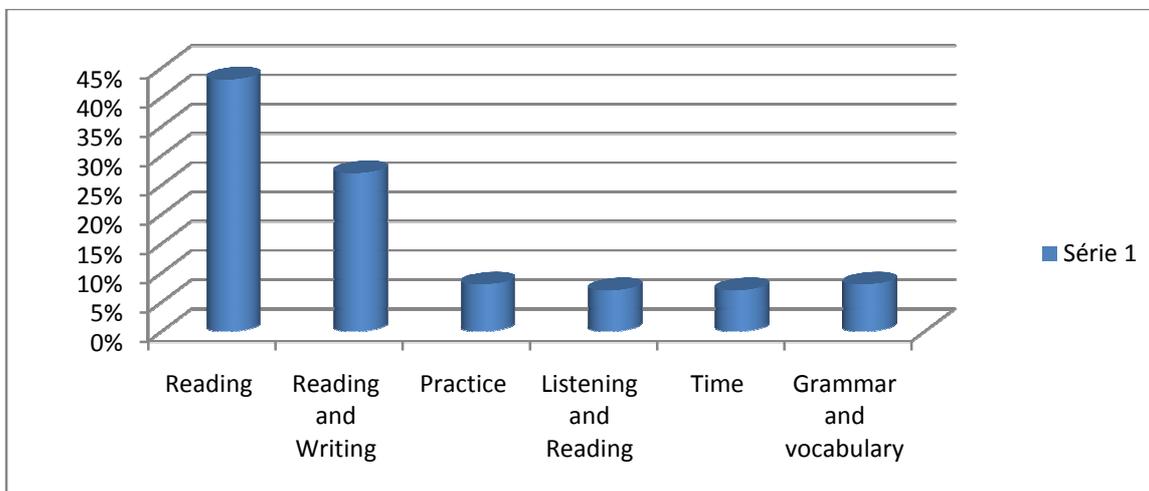


Diagram 5.10. Students' suggestions of what best help them improve their writing

When asked about recommendations for writing improvement, 43% suggest reading because it is the best teacher of how to write better besides it helps the learners to acquire more vocabulary and enriches their cultural literacy; they further believe that reading resources related to the content being taught helps a great deal for their highly sophisticated language used by experts and professional writers enables the novice writer to learn the right way words are arranged.

27% recommended an immersion of writing with reading in the first place to aid the learners imitate noteworthy productions and at the same time learn grammar and morphology i.e. how words are related to each other in a given piece. They suggested the continuous contextual practice as well so as to improve considerably. 8% recommend the practice of writing through diaries, 7% of the population opine that listening and reading are imperative skills in enriching the vocabulary storage and improving grammar. 7% are not satisfied with the amount of time devoted to writing so they think that devoting more time creates a positive atmosphere where the teacher can better leverage his students' productions. 8% of the respondents answer that the learners have to intensify their grammar and vocabulary so that they can feel confident when writing.

### 5.2.1.3. Feedback Use

The third part of the questionnaire deals with the process of feedback provision. It is primarily concerned with finding out the type of feedback used to inform the students'

composition, the importance of feedback provision to the writer and the frequency of feedback provision during the teaching of writing, the aspects that usually the students receive feedback on, the type of comments they receive and the way the writing teacher corrects students' productions

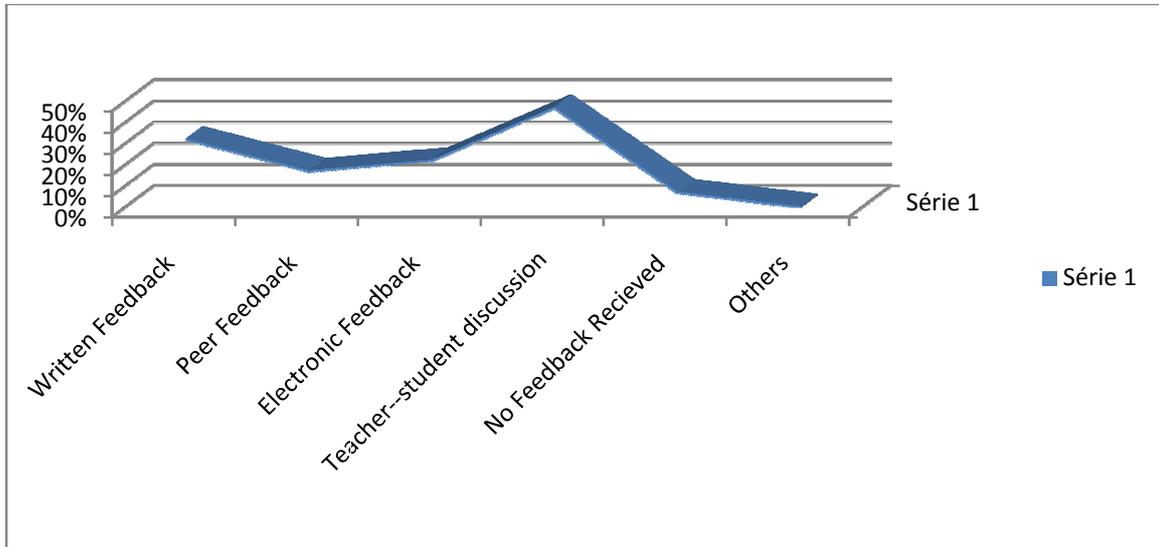


Diagram 5.11. The type of feedback students receive

### The type of feedback used to leverage students' writing assignments

32% of the sample population, when asked about the type of feedback they receive, answer that their teacher provide written feedback every time they produce a given piece of writing in the form of comments. 17% of the informants consider the use peer feedback useful when gauging progress to encourage collaborative work. 22% state that they are provided with electronic feedback, 47% respond that teacher-student discussions is the main technique employed to help them improve while 7% state that they receive no feedback which is contradictory to what has been noticed in the observational phase.

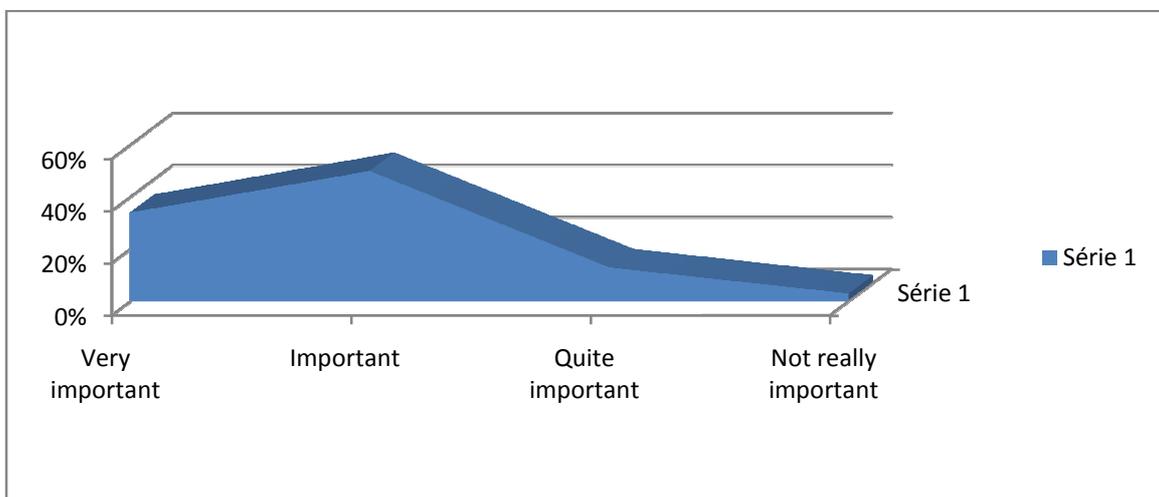


Diagram 5.12. The importance of feedback to writers

This item aims to explore the students' attitudes towards the feedback. 34% of the respondents believe that feedback is very important for it pushes them forward and leverage their performance. 50% state that such a process is important albeit it needs further consideration and systematic implementation to guarantee dynamic communication of thoughts. 13% of the informants respond that in the age of technologies, the teacher's feedback is quite important for they can rely on themselves in improving their skills. While the tiny minority of the population (3%) assumes that feedback is not important at all, especially with the teachers' authoritative comments that demotivate them.

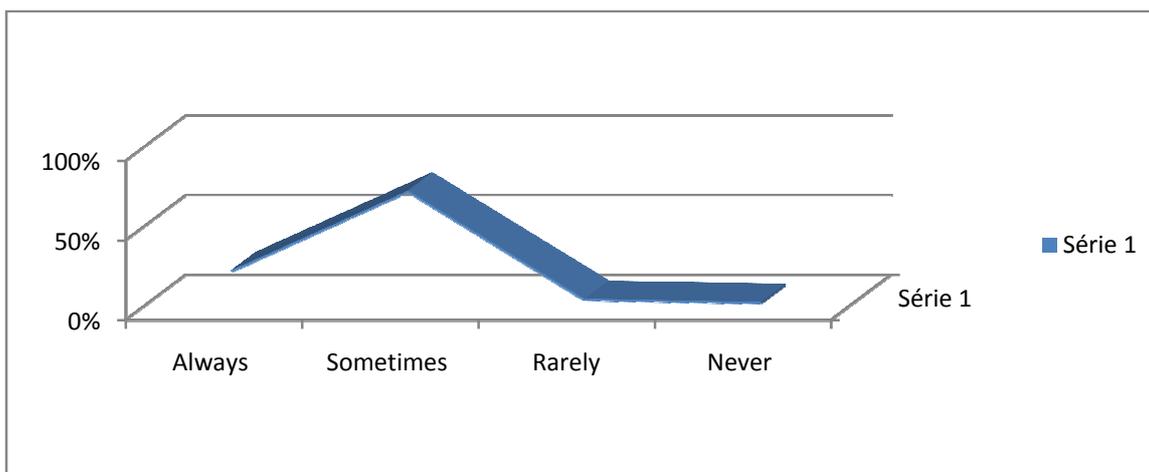


Diagram 5.13. Teacher's provision of feedback

The researcher enquires, through this item, about the regularity of the feedback the students receive on their productions. 22% of the whole sample population respond that they always receive feedback from their writing teacher because they write a lot and need their writing assignments to be evaluated. 72% of the respondents state that they are sometimes assessed for the time constrains the teacher from offering responses to their productions. 4% answer that they rarely receive feedback because they underestimate their writings and do not submit their work for formative assessment while 2% never get responses for they dislike writing.

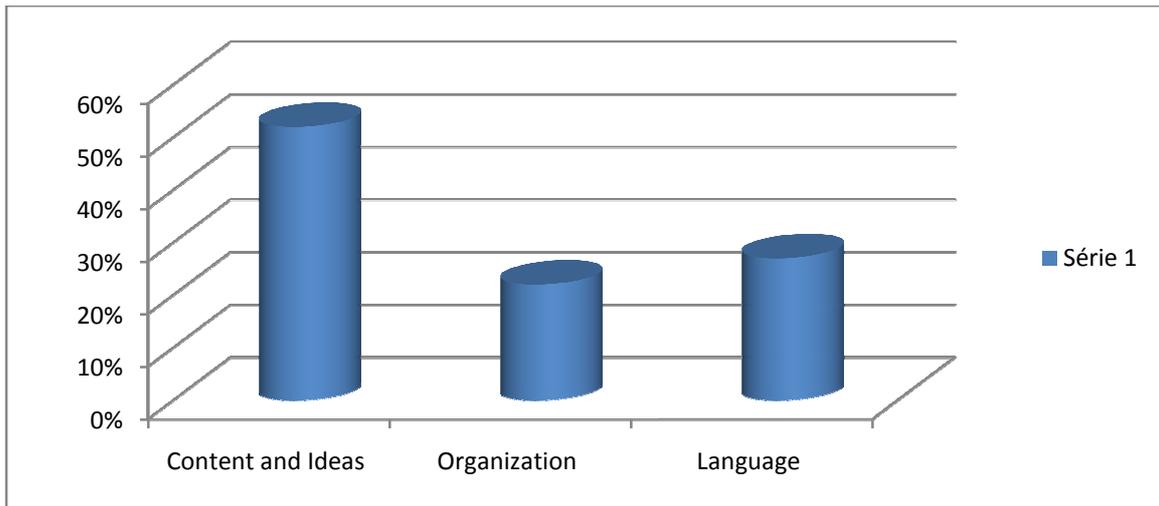


Diagram 5.14. The aspects that usually the writing teacher provide feedback on

When asked about the aspects they usually receive feedback on, 52% of our informants respond that they most often receive feedback on the content and ideas, 22% state that organization is the main concern of their writing teacher while 27% answer that a great importance is given to the language used in expressing the ideas.

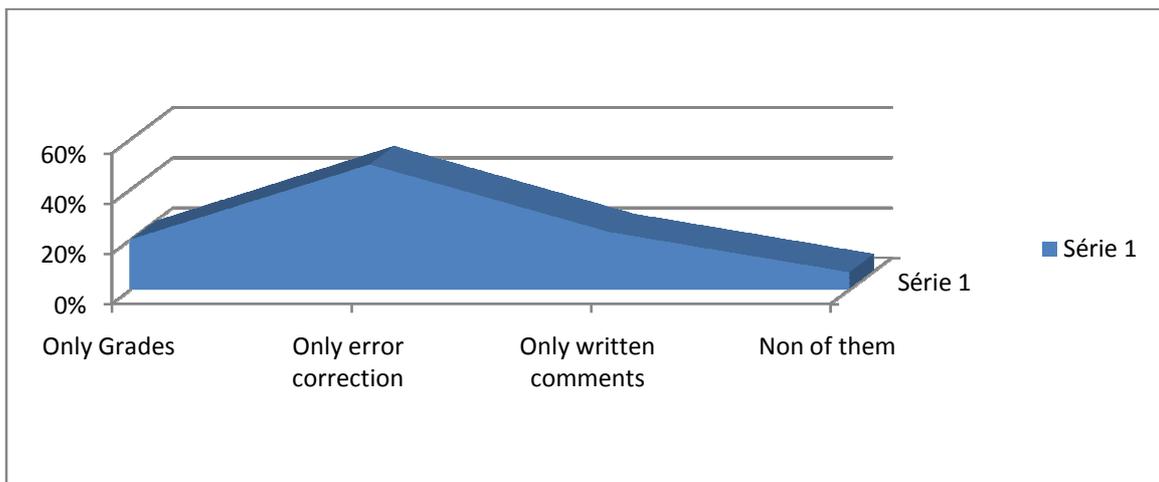


Diagram 5.15. The type of comments teacher's uses

The researcher through this item aims to ascertain the type of feedback the teacher provides to his students. 20% of the respondents state that they receive only grades without any remarks or corrections, 50% respond that they are generally supplied with only error correction, 23% declare that their writing teacher prefers supplying written comments to give them a chance to look for the correct way an erroneous statement is to be presented. 7% of the informants receive oral feedback for they present orally what they have written.

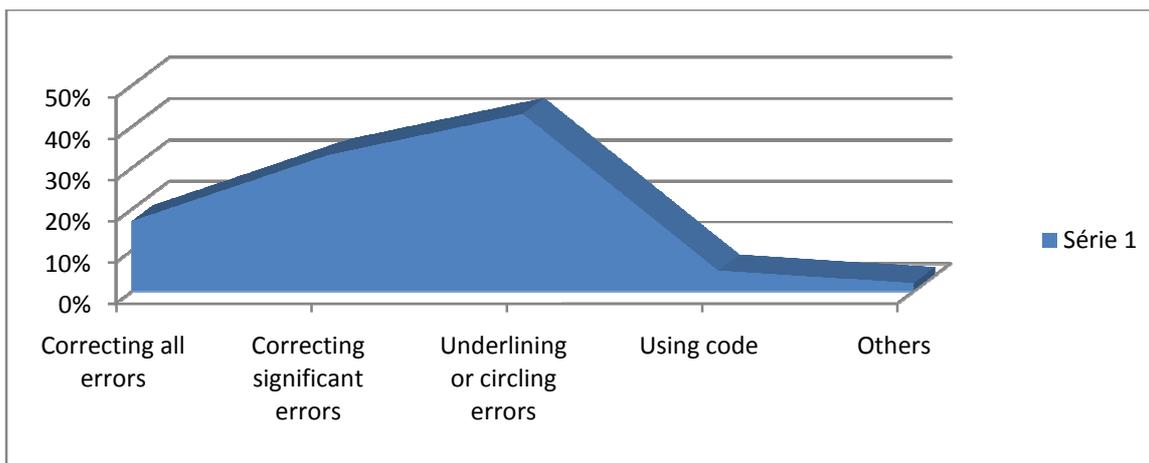


Diagram 5.16. The way the writing teacher corrects students' productions

This item looks for the kind of rubric the teacher follows to correct his students. 17% of the respondents respond that all their mistakes are corrected because their teacher uses an analytic scoring, 33% state that the significant errors are highlighted, 43% declare that the writing instructor usually underline or circle their errors, 5% assert that a code is devised sometimes to comment their writing while 2% say that other technique are employed including oral discussions.

#### 5.1.1.4. The Use of Technologies in Feedback Provision

The fourth part of the questionnaire is intended to find out whether instructional technologies are used when providing feedback to the students' productions. The questions included aim in the first go to ascertain whether the writing teachers use electronic feedback when teaching, the type of technologies used to offer e-feedback, the importance of electronic feedback, the teacher's provision of accurate and complete feedback on errors and the main aspects students learnt from the feedback provided.

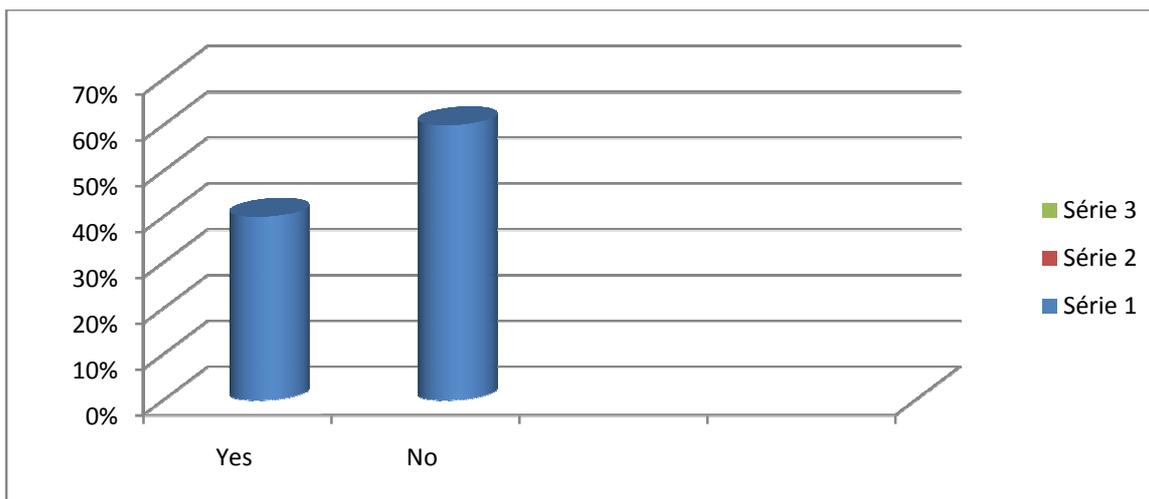


Diagram 5.17. The use of electronic feedback in gauging progress

This item is intended to find out whether the writing teacher uses electronic feedback to gauge the learners writing performances. The result shows that e-feedback can best be employed through emails or facebook though 60% of the respondents deny its implementation especially when they consider the ones who do not have internet connection at home that constitute an obstacle and curtails the writing teacher any chance to implement this strategy in providing feedback to their students' writing.

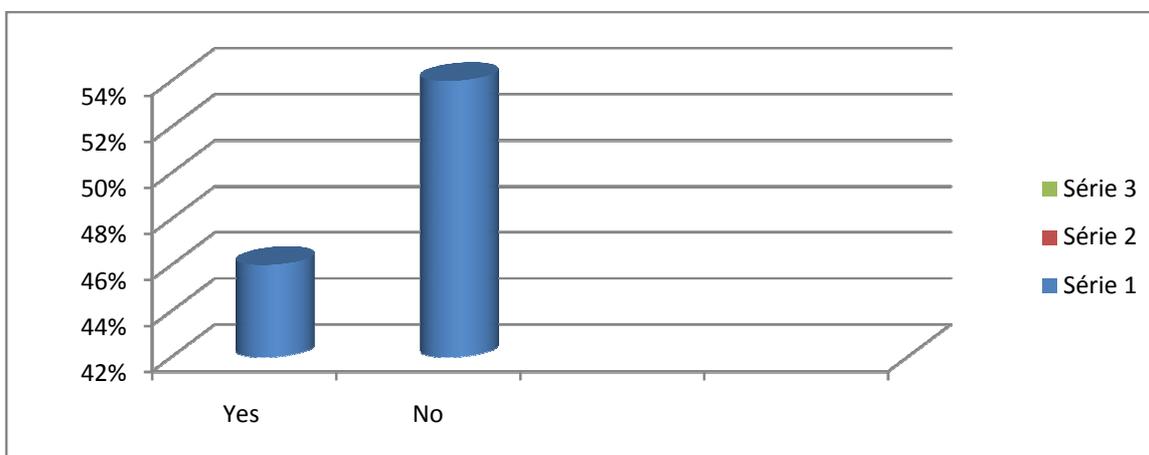


Diagram 5.18. The use of electronic folios to monitor progress

When the researcher questioned the respondents about the possibility of using electronic folios in the feedback process, 46% of them state that they keep copies of their writings in files containing word documents, each with an intended purpose, to see how best their performances change over time. 54% of the informants answer that they prefer using papers and they write only for the sake of exams.

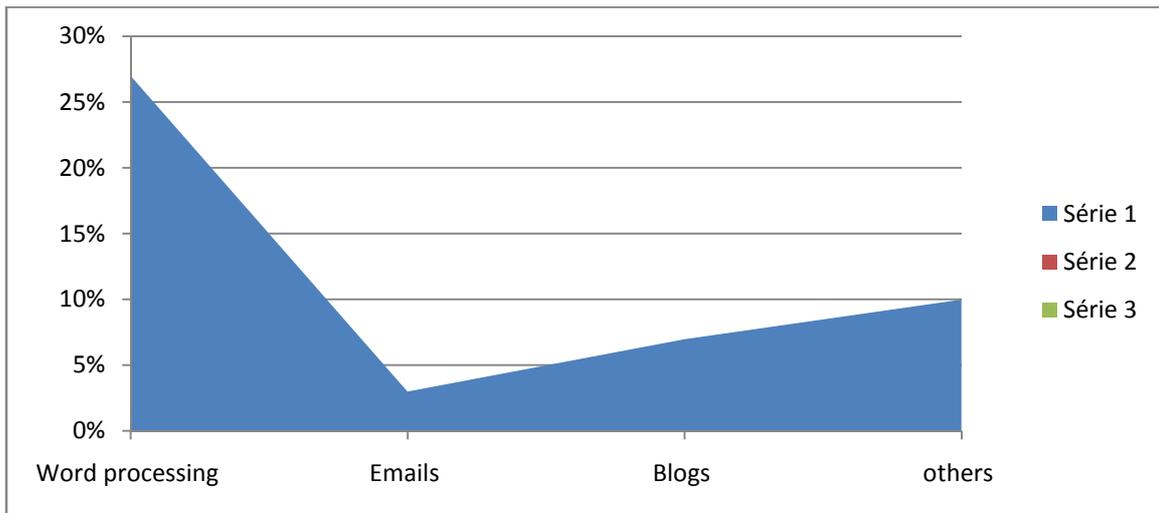


Diagram 5.19. The kind of technologies used in gauging progress

Among the students who keep electronic folios to gauge progress, 27% answer that they use the word processor, 3% use e mails, 7% create blogs while 10% use the social media to practice writing.

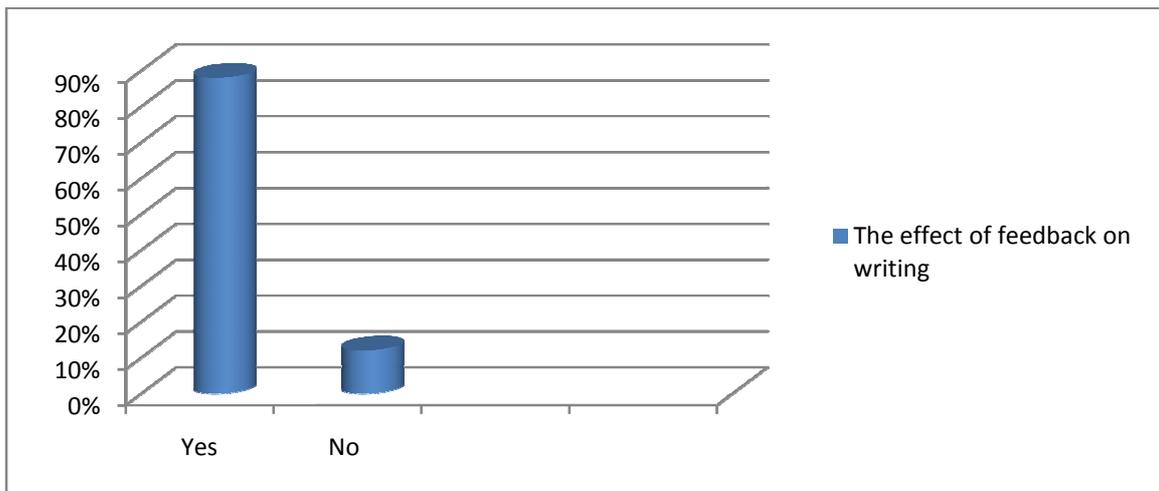


Diagram 5.20. The importance of e feedback

This item aims to find out the students' attitudes towards electronic feedback. 88% of the respondents believe that it is a very useful and sophisticated technique to record the mistakes and thereby find an immediate remedy for the erroneous statement. 12% of the informants think that it is not practical because they are still in need of strategic implementation of such devices.

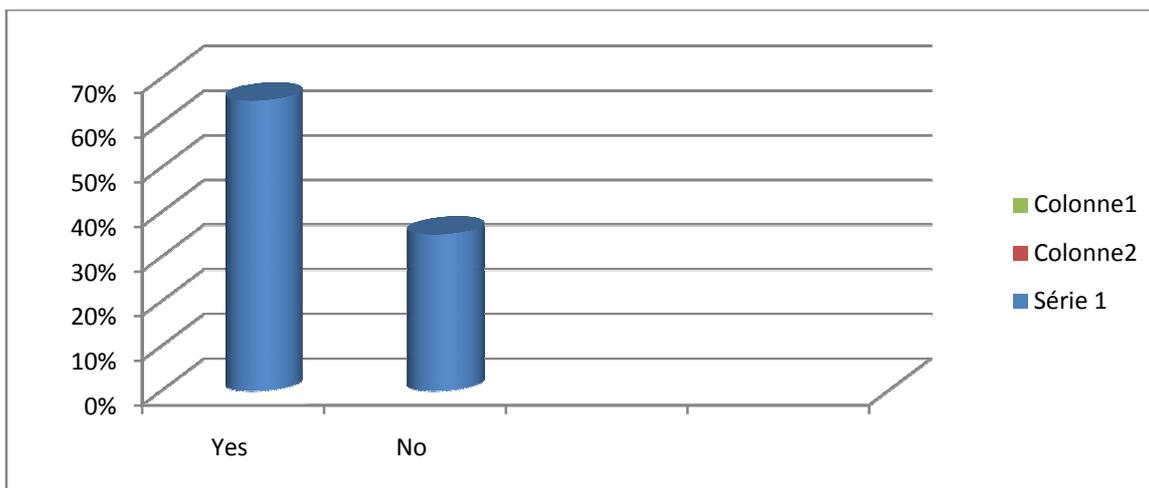


Diagram 1.21. The teacher's provision of accurate and complete feedback on errors

This item looks for the accuracy of the feedback the writing teacher provides. When the researcher questioned the students whether their teacher feedback is accurate or not, 65% of them answer that it is accurate as they are continuously guided by certain instructions whenever they produce a given piece of writing. They think that it helps them to write better by learning from the previously made mistakes. Besides they can resume back and learn the missed aspects to reduce the amount of flaws. The feedback they receive, according to some of the informants, helps them to acquire new strategies to deal with different genres of writing and to write full essays. The remaining of the respondents that represent 35% of the total stated that the feedback is not accurate because it does not follow a defined procedure i.e. the teacher responses are delivered arbitrarily.

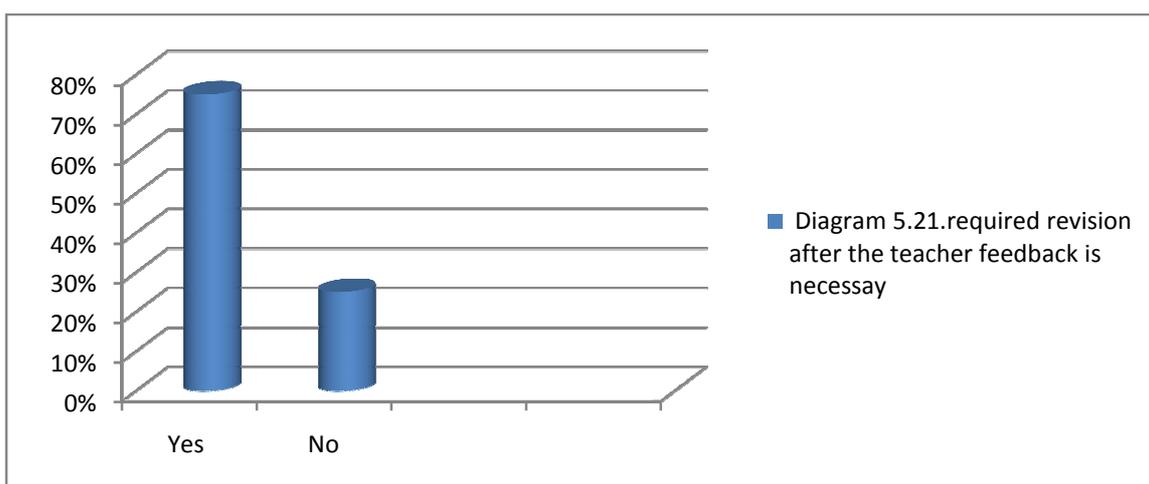


Diagram 5.22.the students' revision after the teacher feedback

The last item in the student's questionnaire was intended to determine whether revision is required after receiving the feedback and to what extent does the latter aid the learners achieve better outcomes. 75% of the informants agree on the fact that feedback helps novice writer by pinpointing their flaws and therefore provides useful insights into how best to present ideas and to improve gradually through learning from the mistakes made. They further believe that feedback is so important in re-assimilating and reacquiring the language aspects they have missed. 25% of them state that such a process is not important at all due to the negative effect that it may have on the writers' productivity.

#### **5.1.1.5. Analysis and Discussion of the Results**

Based on what was presented and the students' responses, one may assume that even though the institution is supplemented with the necessary material needed to cope with the technological advancement, the respondents still find it underprivileged. The implementation of these technologies, according to the results, even if the students believe in the positive impact of the technologies over the teaching learning process, still needs further concern and systematized efforts to aid elevate the level of apprenticeship and thereby promote constructive learning environment.

Just as to what was hypothesized. The result showed that generating ideas and finding out the relevant words to express their thoughts in addition to the language and mechanics make most of the students think that they cannot reach a good level in composition and thereby are always anxious to write in English.

Concerning the learners' attitudes towards the feedback they receive, the researcher found that some learners think that teachers' comments on their writings are demotivating while others see that it is a good way to inform their productivity.

#### **5.2.2. The Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was distributed to more than twenty five teachers since most of the exams the students are required to pass test their writing ability, yet, only five completed it. Its primary purpose is to discover the availability of using ICTs in the teaching of writing and its importance in leveraging the students' productivity especially when providing feedback to inform their writing assignments.

##### **5.2.2.1. Pedagogical use of ICTs**

As clearly shown in the following diagram, one can assume that the majority of the teachers (60%), when they were asked about the technological support available in their classrooms, prefer using their own computers with the department's overhead projectors to

present courses for it was the least they can do to make the course more vivid and that in fact reveal their underestimation and unawareness of the systematic ways of ICTs implementation. 2% use internet connection to create an identical authentic learning environment. Yet, the other tools suggested, no one used them due to their unavailability or time constraints. This reflect an idea that, they still do not welcome the fact that exposing a students to differing types of technologies provide a motivating atmosphere for the learning to take place.

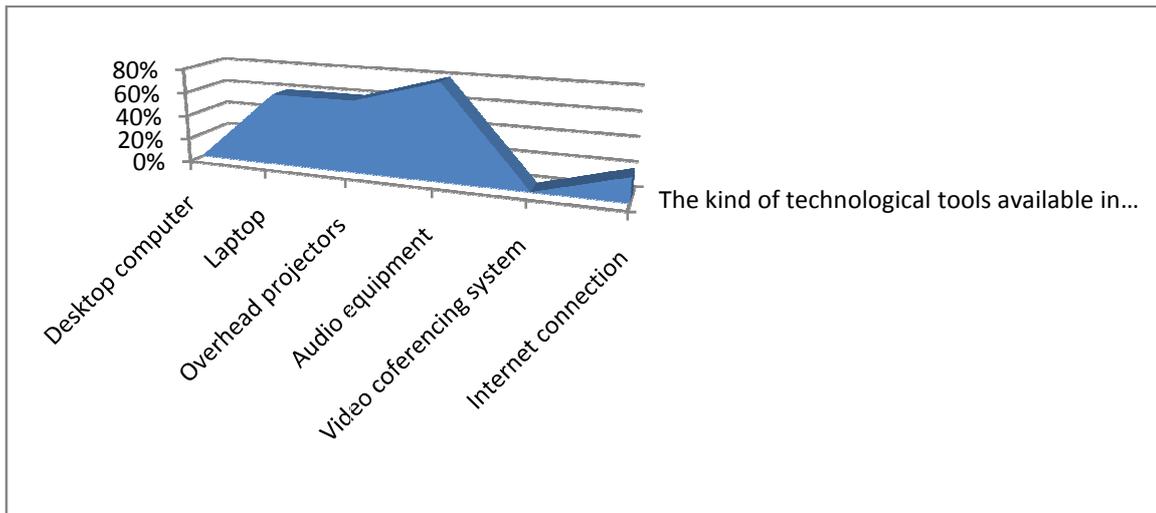


Diagram 5.23. The kind of technological tools available in the classroom

The second item's results in the teacher questionnaire show that 40% of the respondents see the technological support they are provided with in a pessimistic light for they believe in fact that it represent a gap between what the market place offer and the actual technological support. 60% of the informants contradict with what they have stated beforehand. While they believe that the quality of the support is average, their use of the innovation is poor.



Diagram 5.24. The quality of technological support

As for the level of technology expertise in the classroom, just as shown in the following diagram, 20% of the respondents believe in their abilities when using the technologies, 40% are fairly comfortable with the ICTs since they try to keep up with technological advancement, 20% are fairly uncomfortable while 20% are very uncomfortable with the implementation of ICTs owing to the time devoted to their sessions that they refuse to integrate any of the available technologies. This is true to an extent and seems very logical when compared with the observation result.

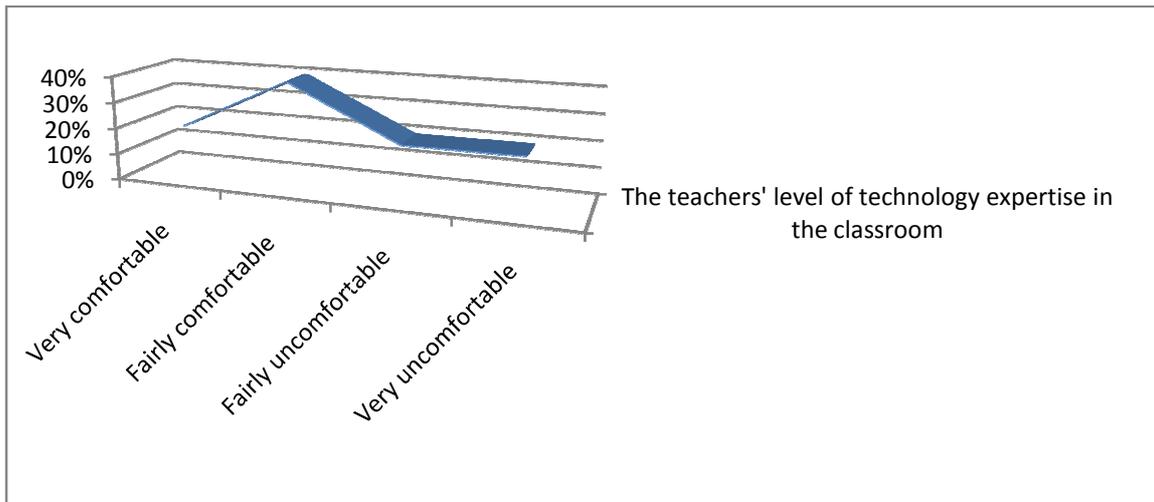


Diagram 5.25. The teachers' level of technology expertise in the classroom

This item is intended to check whether any institutional support for ICTs improvement is planned to leverage their use in instruction. 90% of the informants deny any support the department plans to integrate ICTs in learning. 10% respond that there is a considerable support for several technological devices were brought to the department lately and a module of informatics was devised especially with the implementation of the LMD system.

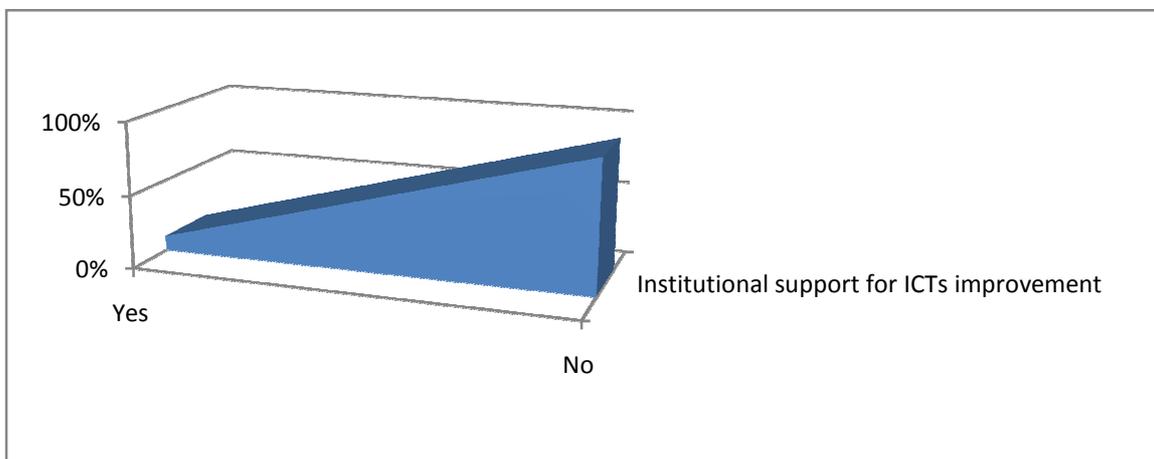


Diagram 5.25. Institutional support for ICTs improvement

The teachers' aims behind using technologies at the university differ significantly. While some find them useful in organizing and keeping records of their work, others use them to select practical teaching resources. The majority of the respondents (60%) use the technologies to organize their work, prepare their lessons, or to find teaching resources. While only 20% use them to design teaching resources so as to meet their students' needs.

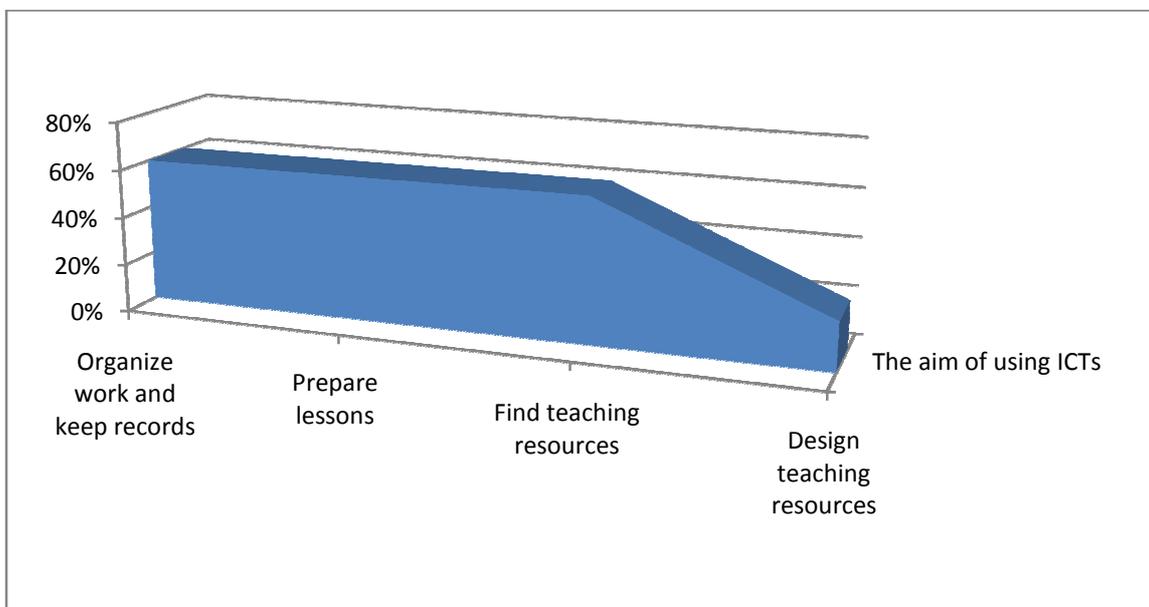


Diagram 5.26. The aim of using ICTs

Just as shown in the following diagram, all of the informants (100%) believe in the fact that ICTs facilitate the teaching of certain concepts and skills by offering access to more authentic data. 40% of the total reckon that technologies support all the learning styles and stimulate the students' attention to involve in the courses and thereby contribute to improve the level of their expertise. 80% state that the innovations encourage creativity on the part of both the teacher and the student while others (60%) respond that the continuous implementation of the ICTs improve the students' ability in using them and thereby promote an autonomous learning environment.

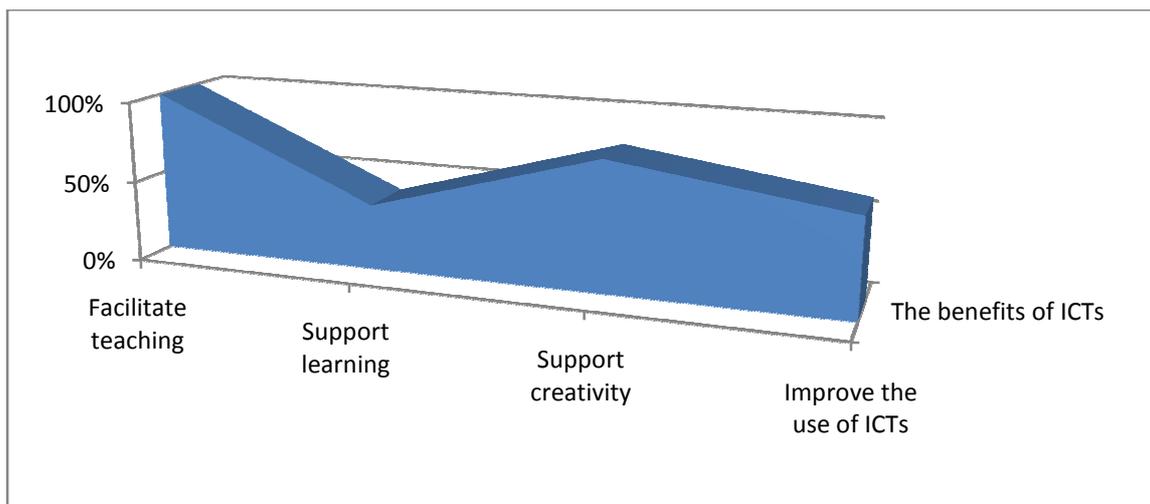


Diagram 5.27. The benefits of ICTs

### 5.2.2.2. Writing instruction

This part of the teacher questionnaire aims to uncover some issues related to the approach the writing instructor follows when teaching writing. The result is depicted in the following diagrams to illustrate the teachers' responses.

The first item result shows that the majority of the respondents (40%) strongly disagree that their students when composing try to view their productions as a piece of art that communicates their thoughts to an intended audience. 20% believe that communicating ideas is the first concern of their students since they are encouraged to logically organize their ideas and forget about any mechanical aspects that might hinder their productivity.

When the researcher questioned the teachers about the possibility of assisting students in understanding that the writing process involves many sub skills, 40% disagree because they think that, especially for novice writers, a special emphasis should be on the macro aspects so as not to confuse themselves at an early stage. The remaining agree to an extent that the learners give equal attention to the sub skills that had better be interwoven to achieve unity within the produced text.

Brainstorming and planning the written work in the writing class is an imperative step according to the majority of the respondents (60%) who strongly agree that without well organized background information about the topic at hand, even a skillful writer could do nothing. While 20% express their neutral view concerning prewriting may be because they think that a second year student at the university could do more with an experience with the English language of about six years.

According to the fourth item, the great majority of the respondents (60%) agree on the idea that group and pair work is the panacea for most brainstorming, planning, making outlines, and revising problems. Yet, 20% of the informants avoid such a strategy for it is a waste of time and a source of troubles where instead of working collaboratively and share noteworthy views, the students' talk about other issues.

After a student produces a piece of writing, peer correction has to be done prior to teacher's correction is a good way to assess the students, according to 60% of the respondents, how to spot mistakes and thereby to offer a collaborative atmosphere where by exchanging drafts they share views and construct knowledge. A teachers' comment is to proceed to direct the discussions and positively inform their students' productions.

When the researcher enquire about the possibility of providing feedback to the ideas presented and their organization, the respondents split on a dividing line between those who agree and those who deride. While 20% agree on the fact that ideas and organization must be given much concern.

40% of the informants agreed on the idea that the students had better write a final draft after peer correction and teacher's correction so as to form a more reliable view about their productions. While some (20%) express their disinterest, others (40%) strongly disagree to waste an important portion of the instructional time on issues that are ranked among the learners' responsibilities. Rather, they prefer to devote the great amount of the time to writing.

As for the last item the researcher found that the respondents prefer to expose the learners to different genres of writing as they will be writing for different purposes so as to succeed in their academic and professional life.

The result shows that the process approach is valued to an extent. Though the teachers focus on certain steps in the process for they think they are important, they still lack the opportunity to significantly apply it. Time always constitutes an obstacle that hinders them and their students as well.

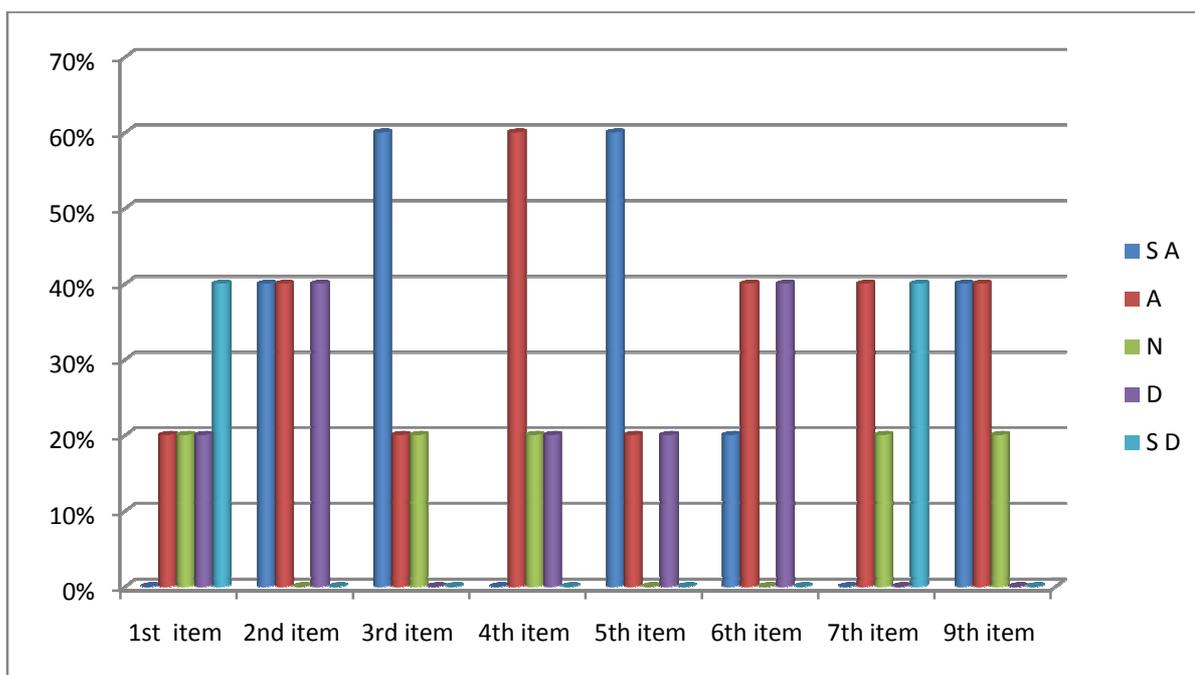


Diagram 5.28. Process approach

### Product Approach

The majority of the respondents and that represents 60% of the whole strongly agree that their students should learn to write correct sentences and build them up into a text from the beginning while the remaining split between those who agree (20%) to an extent that the mistakes made would not mortify the communicating purpose of the text. 20% stated that they should express neutrality concerning this for it is rather unreasonable to receive a flawless piece of writing.

Most of the respondents agreed on the urgent need to pay a special attention to improve grammatical accuracy in writing classes. They think that the mistakes would become more serious when fossilized. For this, writing teachers must never accept them.

The same result was got when the researcher enquired about the possibility of referring to model essay to help the learners understand the way they can compose a piece of writing. 60% of the respondents express their strong agreement. They think that imitating certain models makes the learners recognize how best to arrange the semantic and syntactic structures to successfully communicate their thoughts in a well managed production.

In writing classes, the focus has to be on what students produce at the end of the lesson. This means that the teacher does not assess the procedure a writer goes through to compose a piece of writing. Nearly the majority (40%) agreed that a final draft reflects the

students' reasoning because the continuous intervention interrupts the flow of ideas and hence paralyzes the learner.

It is of importance to consider that writing in the classroom does not help students and it is impossible to make it realistic. The respondents (60%) also support this view. They believe that writing is a time consuming skill that needs much preparation and composing a final draft is not an easy task. For this, it is preferable to introduce the topic and give the students chance to write at home. As for some (20%), holding this idea could cause troubles since academic success rests upon written exams that take place in the classroom. So, the writers had better get accustomed to writing in class and for a defined amount of time.

The sixth item sustain to a great extent what has been stated beforehand. For most of the respondents, it is not worth spending too much time on making the students write in class.

40% of the informants support the suggestion that the students should be left alone to work on the writing activities. As already stated, they believe that the students is the first responsible for what they are intended to fulfill and what ensures success is their endeavor to achieve the goal i.e. writing a well organized piece.

As to the last two items, the writing teacher is seen as a language teacher who must avoid error fossilization. The teachers have to correct all the grammar mistakes that the students make in their writing since the academic requirements call for accuracy and neatness. For this, most of the respondents (60%) hold strongly that all written language can be regarded as formal language, so it should be flawless.

The following diagram summarizes the findings.

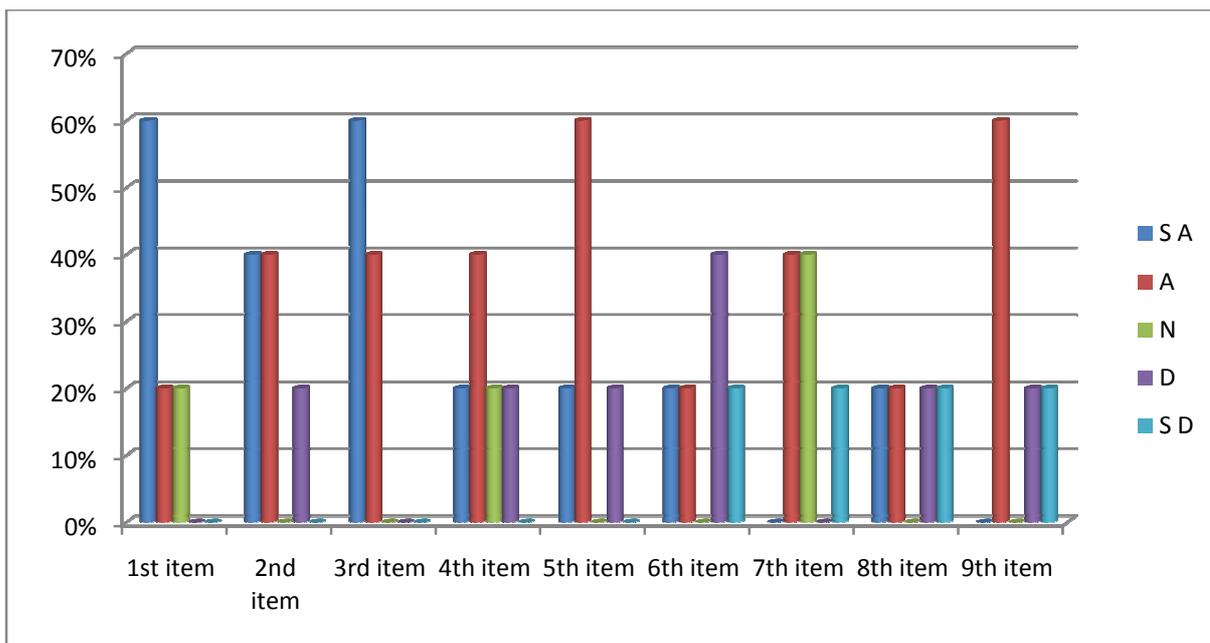


Diagram 5.29. product approach

Just as illustrated in the following diagram, when the researcher asked the teachers about the aspects they rely on to direct their responses 20% state that they focus on the immediate impressions of the writing, 40% state that their comments stem from the students’ abilities to write, while, 20% give much concern to the students’ goals for improvement. The great majority of the respondents (80%), however, focus on the elements included in the curriculum and which the students are studying.

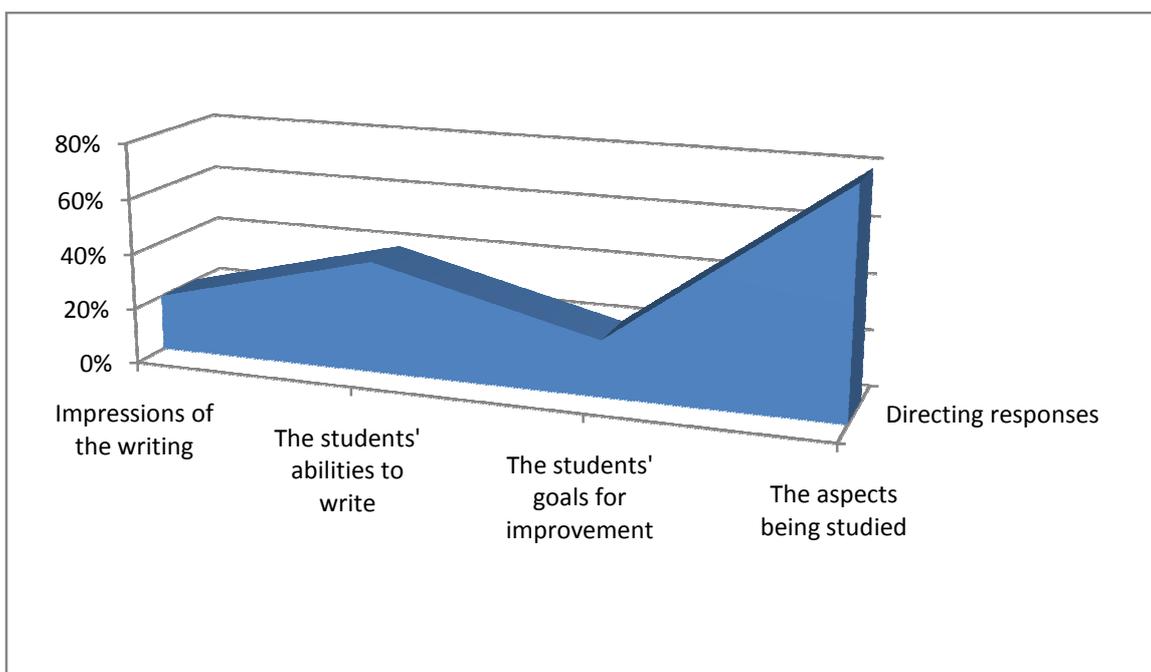


Diagram 5.30. Directing responses

### 5.2.2.3. The use of technologies in writing instruction

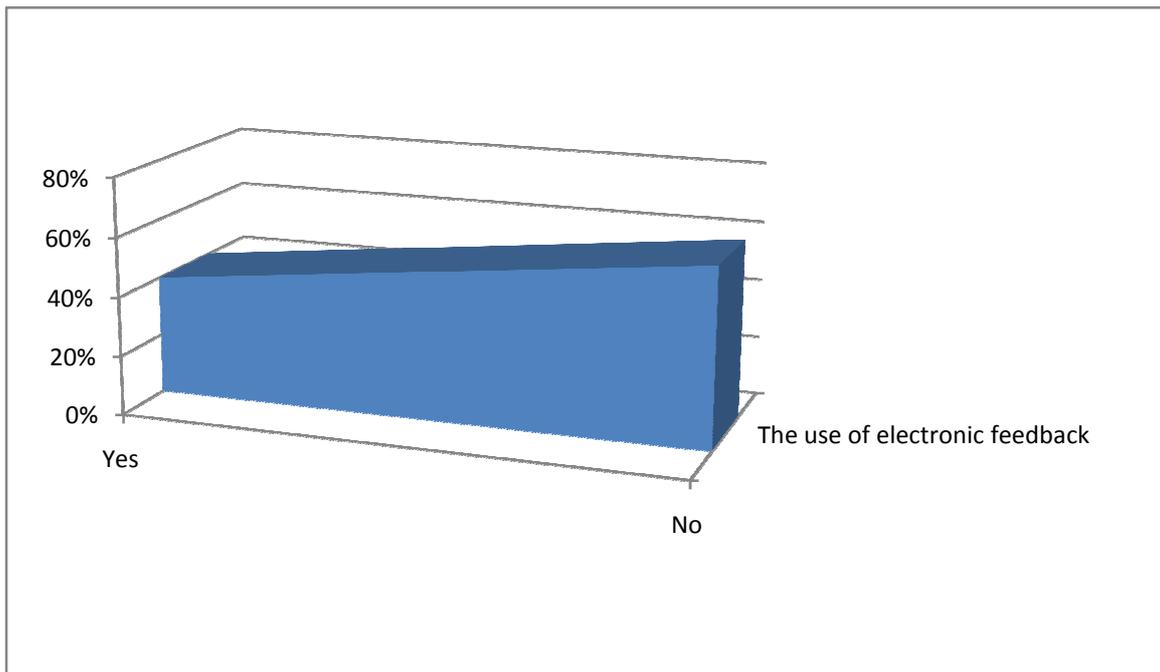


Diagram 5.31. The use of electronic feedback

The researcher through this item wanted to know whether electronic feedback is used to gauge progress. 60% of the informants answer that they do not use such a technique because implementing technologies is far from reality while the remaining state that they comment on students writings using a variety of technological aids to avoid misunderstandings and to facilitate the feedback process.

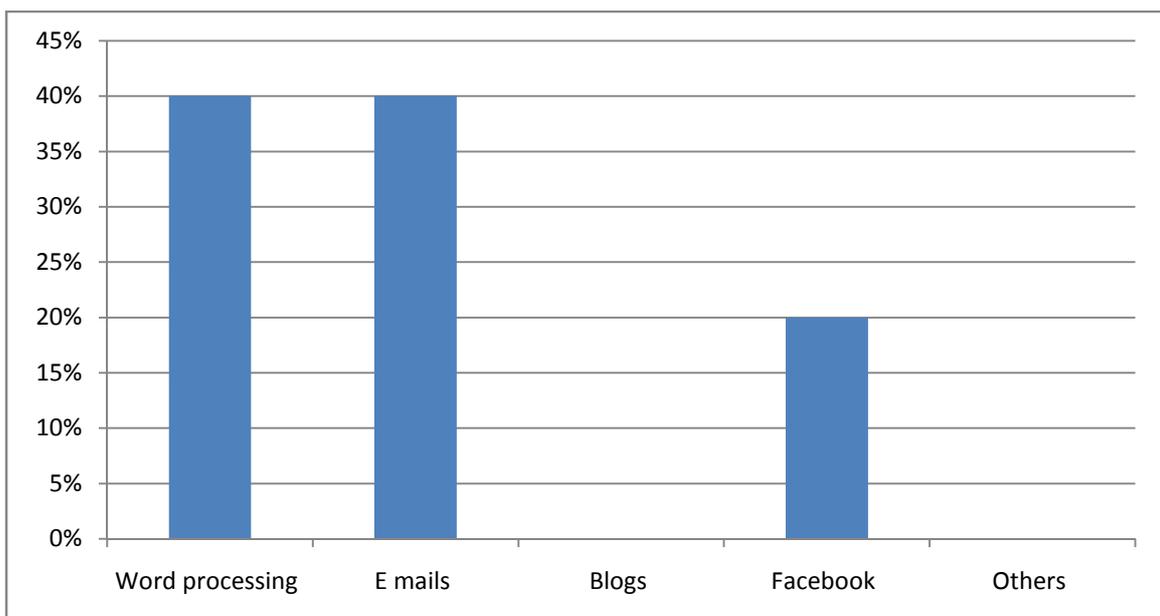
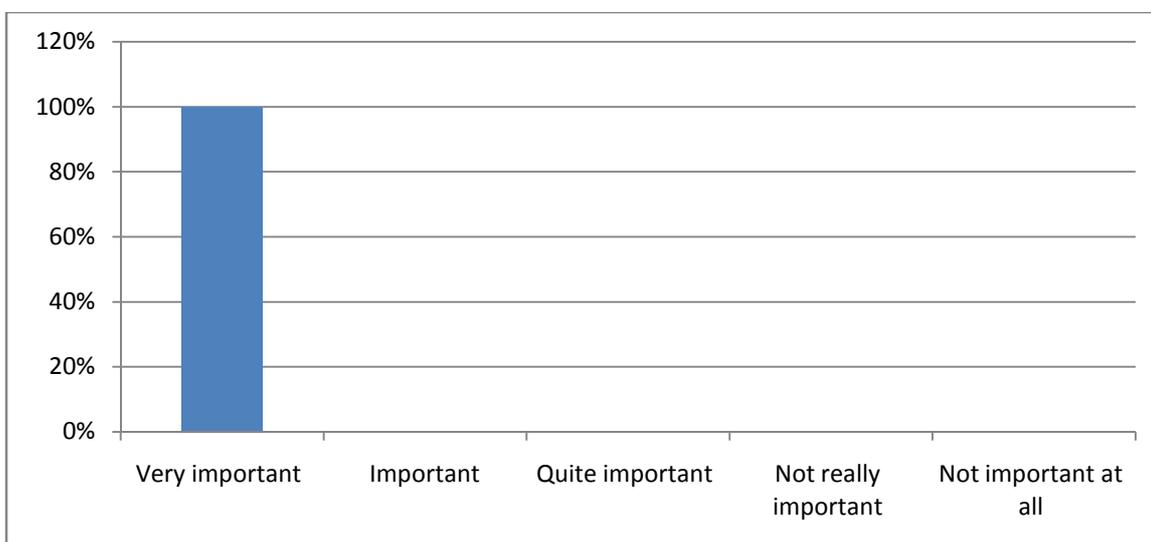


Diagram 5.32. The type of technologies used in feedback provision

When asked about the type of technologies used to offer feedback, 40% of the respondents answer that they use the word processing for they believe it helps the learners easily spot their mistakes as it offers immediate suggestions to correct most of the mechanic mistakes. Others (40%) prefer Emails to facebook, which is used by only 20% of the informants because it preserves the teacher's self-respect by keeping a bridge.

#### 5.2.2.4.Feedback use

All of the informants agree on the importance of feedback in the teaching of writing. They believe that it is an imperative step in leveraging the students' productivity and that should take place whenever possible to inform and direct the processing of ideas when composing.



**Diagram 5.33. The importance of feedback**

Just as shown in the following diagram, 60% of the respondents state that they always provide feedback to assess the students writing ability while 40% declare that time prevents them from continuously evaluating all their students' papers, so most of the time they focus on global mistakes and the possible ways to avoid them. They either re-teach the missed aspects or recommend some learning strategies.

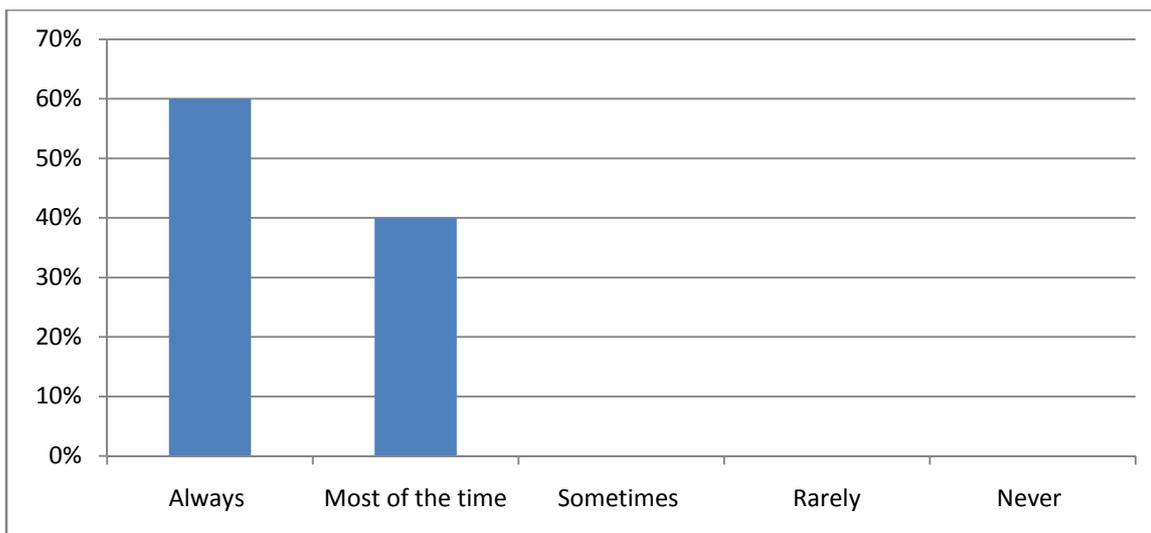


Diagram 5.34. The frequency of feedback provision

60% of the respondents, as shown in the following diagram, use teacher written feedback to assess the students' writing ability. The same result is got for the teachers' use of peer feedback, and oral teacher-students conferences. They hold that, when interwoven, they would have an everlasting positive effect on the writers' productions. On the one hand, peer feedback encourages collaboration among the learners, while, on the other one, teacher-students conferencing opens up great opportunities for the students to strengthen their self esteem when they get involved in the assessment process.

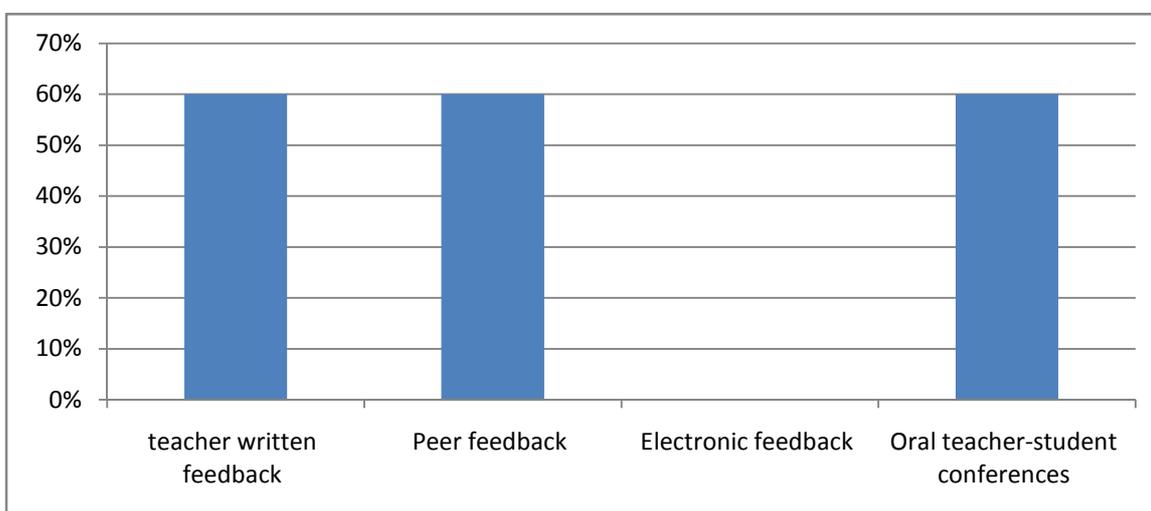


Diagram 5.35. The type of feedback used

Just as shown in the following diagram, the great majority of the respondents (80%) use written comments as a formative tool to inform the students' productivity. Comments, according to them, direct the learners indirectly to find the right way an erroneous utterance must be written. 60% believe that error correction is very influential and limits to

an extent errors' fossilization. Further, correcting the errors directly gives an intention that the processing of ideas relies on the number of mistakes made for too much errors harm the communicative aspect of the writing.

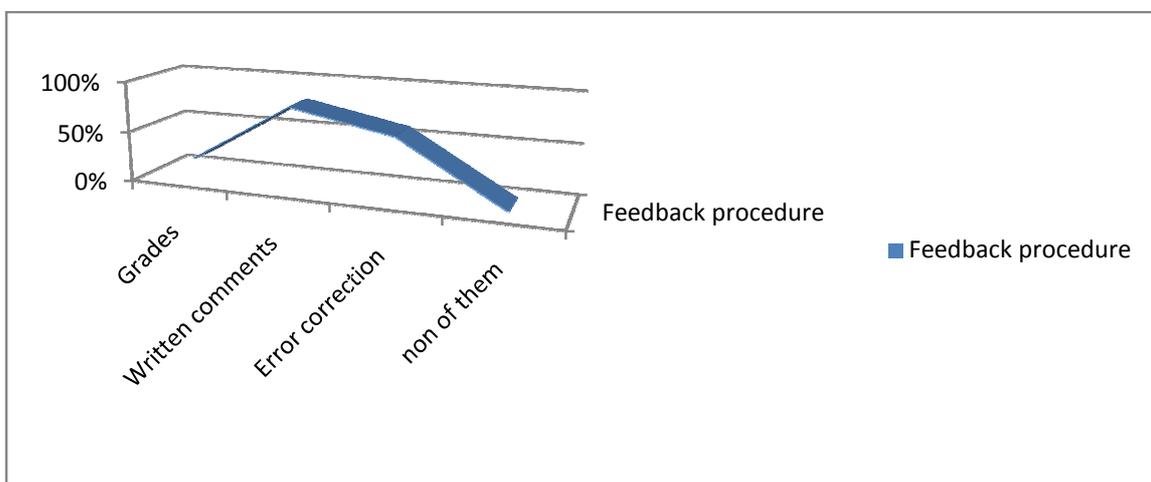


Diagram 5.36. Feedback procedure

When the informants were asked about the writing aspects that should gain much concern, the responses differ considerably. All of the respondents reply that language must take a front seat when assessing students' papers because they think that language errors affect the communicative purpose and lead to misunderstanding, 80% shed light on the organization of ideas since the process matters a lot while 40% focus on the richness of the content and the brightness of the ideas.

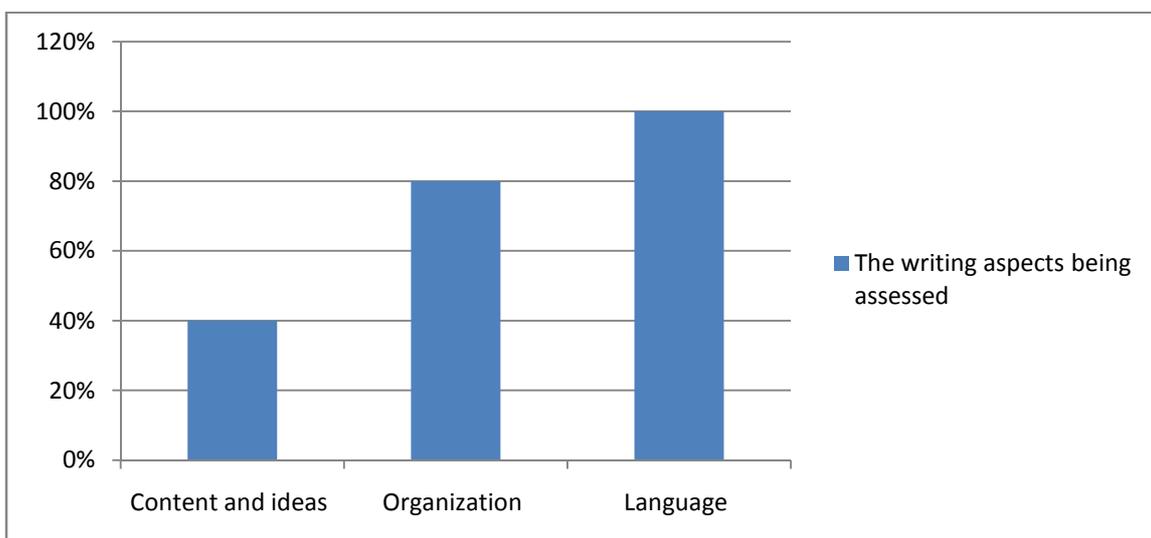


Diagram 5.37. The writing aspects being assessed

The majority of the respondents, as presented in the following diagram, (60%) strive to identify all the mistakes made for they see themselves merely language teachers who are determined to ensure accuracy. 20% of the informants state that they spot only the

mistakes that obscure meaning. 40% concentrate on the frequently occurring mistakes so as to provide a holistic remedy for them. 20% of the respondents, however, give special concern to the coherence and cohesion within the text.



Diagram 5.38. Mistakes identification

This item aims to find out the basis upon which the teachers' feedback practices rest. According to the following diagram, 60% of the respondents follow the institutional guidelines while at the same time rely on their precedent experiences. No one, however, looks for the students' contributions or seeks their suggestions. 20% ask for help from other teachers who are more experienced when it comes to giving the suitable feedback for a particular genre of text.

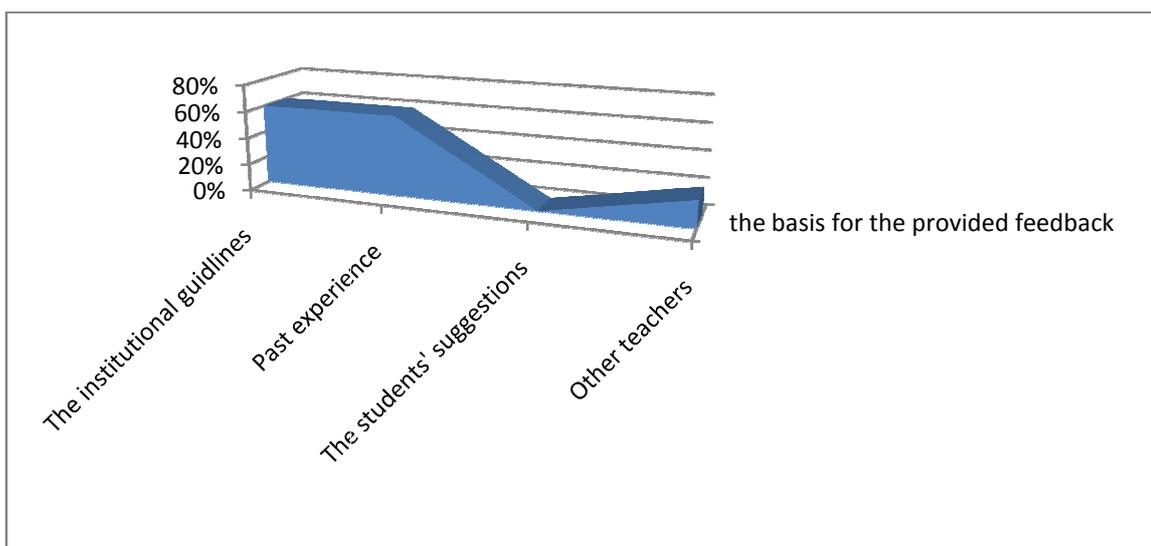


Diagram 5.39. the basis for the provided feedback

When the researcher enquired about the students' attitudes towards the feedback they receive. 50% of the teachers state that most of the time their students underestimate their

comments for they see them demotivating. The students give much importance to the marks, they add. The remaining of the respondents answer that their students value the feedback and sometimes call for more to improve.

As to the feedback mechanisms the students favor most, the respondents views differ considerably. Some state that they prefer receiving indirect feedback for it fosters students' independent improvement by allowing them to fix their errors themselves. For others, All that is important is to be corrected; they do not make any difference of what kind of feedback do they receive. Some of the respondents answer that the majority of the students prefer direct feedback to indirect comments.

The great majority of the respondents, when asked about their attitudes towards feedback and to what extent does it helps achieve better outcomes, some say that feedback may have a great effect on improving the students' writing quality and performance as it also encourages critical thinking and constructive criticism. Others state that it is useless and have no effect over the learners' apprenticeship.

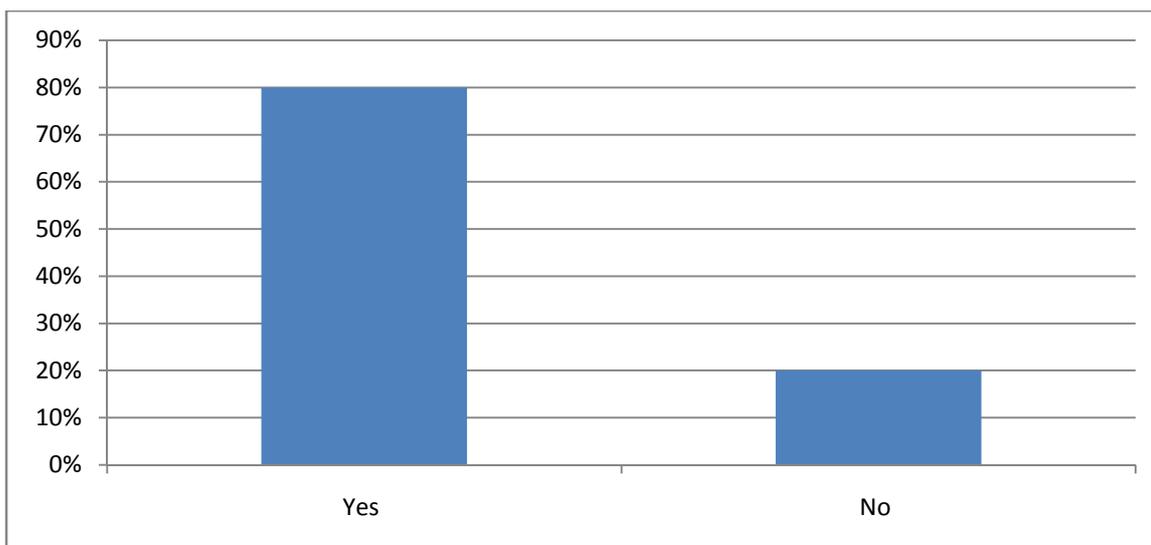


Diagram 5.40. the use of teacher feedback in revisions

The result of this item shows some contradiction to what has been stated beforehand. 80% of the informants declare that their students attend to the feedback they receive and use it for revision. While only 20% answer that the students underestimate the teacher's feedback for they are reluctant to correct and rewrite their essays.

Some of the teachers, when asked about what can help students improve, opine that, apart from feedback provision, other types of classroom intervention such as pre-writing sessions devoted for extensive reading and post writing determined to the teaching of mechanics of writing or the teaching of writing strategies would have positive impact on

the writing assignments. Others suggest an exploration of new lexis instead of providing marks when assessing the students' productions.

When the researcher enquired about the different factors that would influence the feedback, time occupy the top of the list. They said that time curtailed them the chance to tackle as many significant strategies as possible to boost up their students' productivity. Others listed the level of the writing per se impeded the feedback. While the remaining of the informants said that the student's demotivation and unwillingness to practice the writing skill is a major hindrance.

As for the teachers' directions for feedback implementation, some suggested to devote more time to writing instruction and that a feedback session had better immediately follow the writing course to reflect that revision is part of writing. Others insist on revealing that writing is process not a product that needs heavy practice inside and outside classroom. Guided peer-review of student writing and practice the most important issues are imperative. They recommended group work as a panacea for all the writing ills that direct the learners to focus on their improvement and not to intervene in banal issues. Others believe that specifying a whole session to post writing activities where a remedial work is emphasized to pinpoint the major hindrances.

#### **5.2.2.5. Discussions of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

Contrary to the hypothesis which states that most language teachers consider ICTs, if used appropriately, as an important tool that might have a dire effect on the teaching-learning of the writing skill. The researcher found that, however, most of the instructors do not prefer an over reliance on the technologies for most of them keep using the traditional ways believing that ICTs are just a waste of time.

#### **5.2.3. Classroom Observation**

During the first observational session that took place on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2015, the teacher asked his students to write a five paragraph essay about peer pressure and the effect of the internet on behavior. The teacher divided the group into sub group and gave each group a topic to encourage a sense of competition. A discussion was started by asking the learners about the different steps a writer goes through to write an introduction, and then moved to collect as many views as possible about the uses of internet. Shortly after, he asked about the possible ways peer pressure could be defined so as to use the definition as a general statement.

Concerning the teaching aids, the teacher makes use of only poly-cops to aid the students concentrate more. The learners' interventions are encouraged, either by asking question or responding to the instructor's questions, while the teacher mediated the discussions as possible to control time. More interestingly, the students listen thoroughly to each other.

A portion of time was then devoted to the composing stage; the teacher gave the students chance to write an introduction to their essays. When they finished, they read the leader of the group read the writing while the teacher intervene to either correct some mistakes or to provide suggestions for better expressions of ideas. Since, one hour and a half did not suffice, the students were asked to complete the whole essays at home to be submitted for correction.

While the teacher deals with one idea the students follow considerably and consequently kept the threads of thoughts well interwoven. He referred to the poly-cop. Most of the time, the teacher made the decision so as to enable the majority of the students enable students understand the way idea are organized in paragraphs and to reach the main intended objectives.

The next session took place on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. it was about narrative writing and its main characteristics. After explaining what is meant by narrative description, the teacher moves to a debate trying to check his students' acquisition of some aspects of writing especially indentation and paragraphing, and what is meant by unity or coherence; one idea developed within one paragraph.

He gave them a hand outs that presented a detailed explanation of narrative description. After that, they were asked to write on their own a story that happened to them. The teacher then moved to provide feedback and discussed the main attributes a narrative text should possess. When they finished, he appointed some students to read their productions and opened a debate after the performer ended reading.

#### **5.2.4.The Test**

After attending some sessions, the researcher was offered the opportunity to teach a group of second year students each Sunday during 2015. She strived to implicate technologies in the presentation of the courses and in the feedback provision. Among the ICTs the researcher used a data show, internet connectivity, and audio equipment.

The researcher started the presentation of the courses that were primarily meant to explain and uncover some issues related to writing. Later on, the students practiced writing

some essays that are included in the appendices. Each time the students write, the researcher corrected the productions and tried to offer feedback based on a holistic scoring to treat the global errors that basically obscure the meaning of their communications.

The investigator has administered a summative test so that she can diagnose students' main deficits and test the hypothesis. Students were required to write an essay in response to literature. So they were asked to read a novel written by Elizabeth Gaskell *North and South*. Subsequently, they watched a movie version of the work to be asked to write a summary of the story. The productions were then written on the word, sent to the teacher, through a facebook group created for the sake of the investigation, and corrected.

As to what has been noticed from students' productions, the main difficulties that hinder their writing ability are those that are hypothesized including mechanics, generating ideas, and the choice of suitable words to communicate a given idea. Moreover and just related to what has been suggested, students are reluctant to write as most of them did not give back their work written by word processor. Only few students contacted the teachers to get feedback about their writings.

A tangible effect can be noticed after using the technologies to inform the students' writings when formatively assessing the writers by providing useful strategies. The students who received electronic feedback experienced a positive change occurring. After suggesting some techniques to deal with the writings, to name but few, the use of the word processor instead of the pens and the implementation of E dictionaries, their productions improve considerably. Besides, they were greatly motivated to write. The result, thus, validate what has been hypothesized for it confirmed that the systematic use of ICTs when commenting on students performances.

Consequently, through the regular and appropriate integration of ICTs and the direct implementation of the necessary methods for its inclusion particularly when correcting or providing feedback to what they have produced, English language learners can write better.

### **5.3.Conclusion**

This chapter shed light on the result got from the research instruments including the teacher and students' questionnaires, the observation, and the written test. A detailed description and interpretation of the findings was presented and thereby compared with the hypotheses formed beforehand. The findings confirmed to great extent what has been hypothesized.

# **Chapter Six**

**Recommendation for practice**

## 6.1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to provide some useful pedagogical implications related to the issue under investigation. In the first go, the researcher will tackle the integration of connectivity to write different writing genres in EFL classes, the strategic use of feedback, and the avoidance of grammar correction in the assessment of students' papers. It also includes a description of the synchronous and the asynchronous technological tools and their use in the teaching of the writing skill.

### **Assumptions about Writing in the Digital Era**

It is universally acknowledged that young people know everything about computers and are familiar with using the technologies. For this they are most often named digital natives. But the question to be asked is: to what extent is their knowledge about ICTs enough to enable them cope with the neck breaking changes that the requirements of the age imposed on them.

Just as stated by Pystash and Ferdig (2014) one needs to learn the technologies, learn through the technologies, and learn about the technologies and this is mainly the researcher's concern in the current investigation. The following are some recommendations intended to both teachers and learners to best implement the technologies in the teaching learning process in general and in the teaching of the writing skill in particular.

## 6.2. Using the internet in writing instruction

Internet opens up great opportunities for language learning. It offers a massive amount of authentic resources, especially for the learners of the English language. They can indeed surf the whole world by a simple click on the mouse. Further, it is said that the internet is a significant teaching aid in writing classes for it provides a rich context and various writing genres to learn from. The question to be raised, however, is how best to implement such a tool to improve the students' writing and to achieve as much learning outcomes as possible.

Although he does not call for a total rejection of traditional instruction that rely heavily on noteworthy written resources, Jarek Krajka insists on the implementation of technologies as a teaching aid to support writing instruction. Jarek Krajka (2000), based on **web pages, e-mail connection and creating class websites**, suggested a set of ideas to

deal with different genres and make them more interesting through the introduction of the internet when teaching writing to English language students.

### **6.2.1. Writing a letter to a friend**

Email correspondence makes communication with a person of the same age more realistic and practical as it creates a feeling of interest. The students, through the use of emails, can genuinely communicate with key pals from the English speaking countries or with their classmates. The students are likely motivated when they receive real responses and thereby seek further dealings. E-mail interactions generate cooperative learning and real acquaintances that significantly lead to the improvement of cultural awareness to make the learners appreciate other cultures and thereby improve their understanding to the other.

### **6.2.2. Writing a biography**

As recommended, Krajka prefers a pre-session where the teacher presents all the necessary requirements of writing a biography including the structuring and the vocabulary to be used. By laying emphasis on these aspects, the teacher could move on to use the web that constitutes a resourceful area that provides a great deal of information a writer needs to improve and writes better. The learner can, for instance, be directed to the sites that publish biographies and aid the beginners to write them. Choosing and selecting among the range of the recently updated models about persons they know give the students the freedom and autonomy to acquire the strategies that suit his own needs and the techniques that enable him to create his own way of thinking and writing. This is the sole characteristic the internet possesses and is indeed advantageous over other resources.

After selecting the suitable models and reading them thoroughly, unlike the offline lesson, the students will be asked to transform the chosen models into prompted biographies so as they pinpoint and summarize the main features of a biography and to write biographies of the persons they admire. Later on they exchange the drafts using their Emails for feedback and further suggestions to build a motivational atmosphere. Through creating a web log special for that class, for generating a sense of involvement and more authentic and rewarding atmosphere, the students can publish their production after the corrections.

### 6.2.3. Writing a descriptive essay

As already suggested, the key pal connection is the best technique to be used in the teaching of descriptive writing. The students will be asked to describe a well known person in their country and later on exchange it with their key pals. The teacher plays a role of a guide and a supervisor so as to develop an open-minded attitude and a real understanding of the other's culture.

### 6.2.4. Writing an argumentative essay

The emphasis on the structuring of the essay is a must. The teacher is to pay a special attention when presenting the necessary skills a writer needs most when dealing with an argumentative essay. It is suggested that the use of some course books is imperative since they enable the students to attain the essential vocabulary and the modeling of a given argumentative piece.

The teacher needs to highlight certain issues that he thinks can widen the students' knowledge and that constitute an obstacle, especially in persuasive writing on abstract issues. In fact, researching about the topic helps the writers to afford a more serious point of view whether it would be for or against.

Reading and digesting the selected web data are the major concern in the online session. However, researching a variety of websites and evaluating the content they afford sounds overwhelmingly tiresome. Group work is therefore the best technique that encourages collaborative discussions. The instructor thus has to design the lesson in order to meet the students' needs and to achieve more outcomes by assigning one topic to two students. They should weigh the arguments and decide whether the pros prevail over the cons or vice versa. Finally, the students are asked to write the essays in pairs and share their writings with the classmates for feedback and further corrections since it reduces stress and is rather favorable.

After submitting the final draft, and to ensure authenticity and the students' personal touch, the teacher had better evaluate the content, lexis, and grammar so as to encourage the students balance their writing and reduce the amount of mistakes for they impede the communicating purpose of the passage. Shortly after the revisions and the corrections, the essays are published in the class blog to guarantee real contribution in the process and to boost up the learners enthusiasm.

### 6.2.5. Writing advertisements and notifications

The internet is thought to be very useful since it supplies the writing teacher and students with a variety of materials to analyze and learn from in teaching this genre. To name but few, online newspapers constitute a noteworthy source of information concerning advertising and notifications.

The teacher, during the online session, adapts the material so as to enable the learners choose among the advertisements the ones that are of interest to them. They actually find in the web a range of appealing models which provide freedom that the traditional resources curtail. Online newspapers offer encouraging examples that are meant in the first go to advertise for real purposes not only, like ordinary books of instruction, for studying. Online adverts present the necessary vocabulary and structuring that helps sort out the main characteristics and layout this specific genre requires.

Students then move to the subsequent step i.e. writing their own copies. It is said that writing about real things provides a more authentic presentation of thoughts and an understandable depiction. It is advisable thus to encourage the students to write advertisements about the aspects available in the scene for it eases the communication of ideas to the intended audience, more particularly the classmates who will considerably react to the writings, when published in the class website for the students must feel their writing is valued.

### 6.3. Suggestions for appropriate and effective feedback

The choice of the effective way of feedback provision is an imperative step in the planning of a writing course. The teacher had better thus choose among the common ones the most positive methods that consider the student desire in the first place. Besides, the aim of the course is the determining factor that dictates the type of feedback the teacher has to employ in informing his students' performances because the feedback that does not go in tandem with the writing assignment may lead to misunderstanding. For this, the writing teacher has to take into account while preparing the course the goals of the assignment, the stage of the writing process, and the form of feedback to be employed. (Gordon Williams, 2003)

It is recommended that the instructor should create or devise a rubric based on the writing textbooks available for the sake of unifying a standard set of symbols or markings

that also indicate how best the corrections should be made according to each symbol. Besides, Gordon Williams (2003) suggests that raising the students' awareness of the type of feedback employed would influence their performance positively especially when considering form and content.

Properly designing direct and consistent comments and questions is thought to be the best way that focuses the writers' attention on the content and the process of the writing. This, according to them, would create a kind of conversation between the teacher and the student and afford an understanding of the comments so as to use them constructively. These comments will, after training, develop into conferences. The latter will be an excellent way to uncover ambiguity by asking direct questions to each other. (Kroll, 2001)

Gordon Williams (2003) suggested a list of questions a writing teacher considers when giving feedback. The following includes an example, adopted from his work, of commenting on content and form and conferences remarks.

### 6.3.1. General questions

- a. Is the feedback consistent with the goals of the course?
- b. Is the feedback consistent with the goals of the assignment?
- c. Is the feedback consistent with the goals for this phase of the assignment?

#### Form

- a. is the feedback clear and easy for the students to understand?
- b. Did I use the system and symbols that I made the students aware of?
- c. Have I consistently marked the same errors or types of errors?
- d. Have I marked the errors that I told the students I would or that I covered in class?
- e. Have I marked anything not gone over in class? Why?
- f. Will the students know what I do with the feedback?
- g. Did I correct the errors or mark it for the students to correct? Why?

#### Content

- a. Is the feedback clear and easy for the students to see and understand?
- b. Did I use the system and symbols that I made the students aware of?
- c. Have I marked the same errors or types of errors?
- d. Have I made only negative remarks or did I also use positive comments?

- e. Are the comments I made specific to content and the problems we covered in class?

Comments for feedback on content

- a. I like this very much.
- b. This is a good example.
- c. Tell me more about this.
- d. Can you think of another example?
- e. Do you have a personal example about this?
- f. Can you make this clearer?
- g. Can you think of another way to say this?
- h. Why do you think so?
- i. Is this paragraph complete?
- j. Do you think this necessary? Why or why not?
- k. Should this paragraph be deleted?
- l. Is your thesis clear?
- m. You are repeating yourself here.
- n. I am not sure what you mean?

### 6.3.2. Conferences

Pre conference questions for students

- a. Were there any comments or markings that you did not understand?
- b. Were there any comments or markings that you understood but were not sure what to do with?
- c. Were there any other things about the assignment or class that you have questions on?

Pre conference questions for teachers

- a. What aspects of this course/ assignment are the students performing well on?
- b. What aspects of course/assignment do the students need to improve on? How?
- c. Are there any errors that are consistent?
- d. Are there any other points to cover in this conference?

#### **6.4. The role of online tools in promoting EFL writing**

Since their introduction into education, the pervasive impact of the new technologies on writing instruction lead many to enquire how best can such tools improve the students writing abilities to meet the demands of the age. Considerable alterations touched the writing environment and a clear division occurred; conventional writing and digital writing are now the major concern of most writing scholars. Digital writing is thought to create a more spontaneous, purposeful and interactive atmosphere that is often needed to boost up the learners enthusiasm.

It is recommended thus to incorporate online communication in the writing courses so as to enable the students to acquire the necessary strategies for accomplishing his role in the globally digitized world. It is more than a prerequisite to keep up with the requirements of the digital era but rather to positively improve the students' language learning for in online communication they can build up their long term language proficiency.

Al Mahrooqi et al (2015) suggested that electronic writing may be carried through two basic types of digital tools and that the writing instructor might use in their teaching of this interactive skill. Online synchronous tools and online asynchronous tools are the main categories.

#### **6.5. Synchronous (real time) tools**

The best known synchronous tool intended to writing instruction is chatting. Such a facility can be used to create a virtual learning atmosphere where the students can interact positively in a real time communication. Virtual contexts can be established in the computer laboratories or assigned as homework to ensure real interaction and more attainment. (Kue, Wible, & Chou, 2001)

With the age of connectivity, EFL teachers can now easily get his students to use the language they acquired at anytime, anywhere and with anyone. Many sites are designed to meet EFL students' needs and thereby improve their performance in a more authentic setting. To name but a few, SchMOOze University, MOO, the English Club, Clubcooe, are thought to be the most useful chatrooms on the net that are intended for non native English language students and that tolerate even the low linguistic performance to enable the learners ameliorate.

However, the teacher has to supervise the communications by adapting the chatting sessions to meet a given teaching goal and to improve a particular language

structure. Torky (2015) on her part recommended some activities to be practiced through synchronous dealing.

### **6.5.1. Interviewing people**

The students can be asked to interview people from a variety of areas so as to gather as much information as needed to enrich their cultural literacy. The conversations may include information about their customs, food, and traditions. Later on the conversation history will be recorded and submitted for evaluating their accuracy and adequacy.

### **6.5.2. Providing a video streaming**

This activity requires the integration of YouTube or any other video sites. The students will then afford a short report about what they have watched. The report should include a short description, a summary of the content and criticism so as to enable the students to afford their own point of view. They can after that share their writing for further discussion in a group created on facebook. The latter encourages argumentation through the students' justifications afforded in simple sentences for choosing a certain view. (Nur, 2010)

### **6.5.3. Retrospective reflections**

Chatting sessions can greatly affect the students' awareness of the main lacunas in their inter-language system. The teacher can pinpoint the common problem his students face when communication so as he identifies then the missed language aspects. Designing a chatting session may improve the students' performance through follow up comments, back channeling and further questions for reflection.

Although synchronous tools afford spontaneous learning environment, they have been criticized for the type of communication they offer may restrict the students as they lack a planning stage. For this, the integration of asynchronous tools is in fact required, especially for novice writers. Asynchronous tools might offer the students chance to participate with thoroughly prepared writings.

## **6.6. Asynchronous (delayed) tools**

Through this facility, the student can interact with key pals in considerably distinct periods of time. Since they don't have to be present online at the same time, the students have the advantage of planning beforehand their writings. To name but a few, e-mails, blogs, social networking sites, list serves, newsgroups, bulletin boards are thought to

offer delayed comments and interactions. (Perez-Prado and Thirunarayanan, 2002: 193). Email, however, is the best known and used tool among EFL learners.

Al Mahrooqi et al (2015) short-listed the following as the main advantages asynchronous communication possesses.

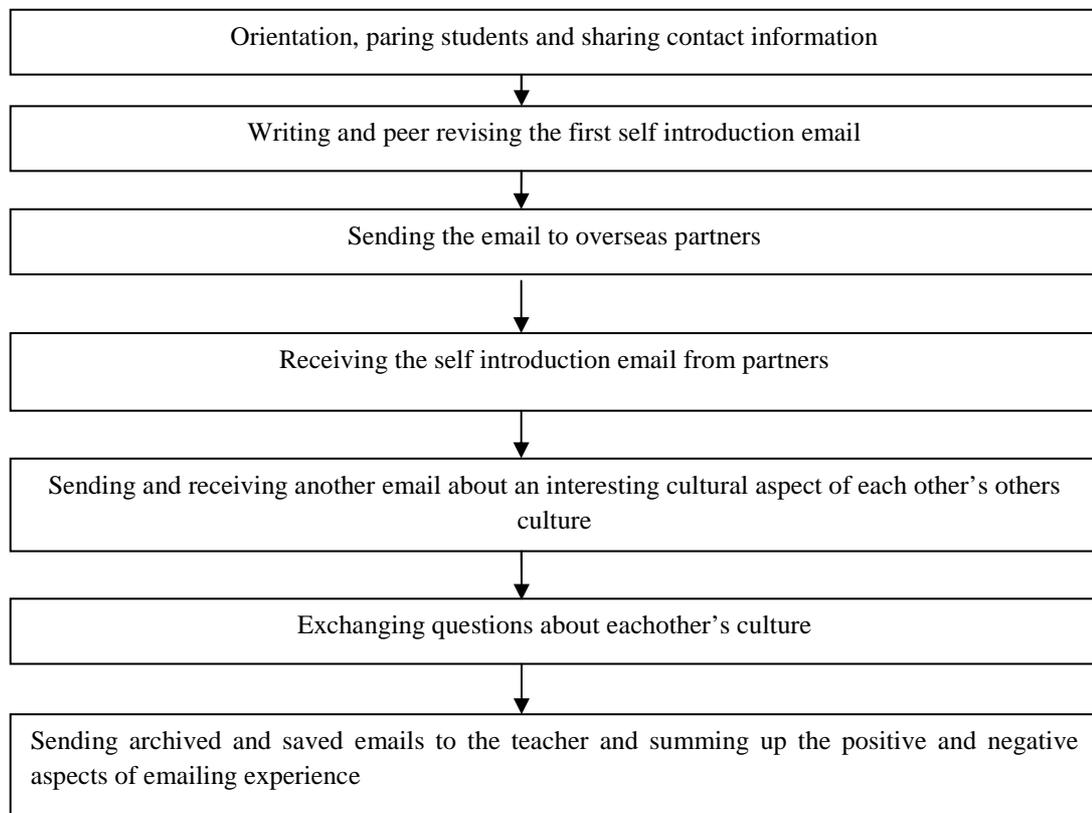
1. Such tools integrate writing with reading by providing a comprehensive input from the key pals and classmates' reading that influence considerably their writing performances.
2. It presents a variety of authentic tasks that stimulate the students' communicative ability.
3. By encouraging peer review, asynchronous tools enable the students to value revision after receiving feedback.
4. Supporting a student centered atmosphere where the students' can do without the teacher who may ignore their voice when present.
5. These tools build the students' self confidence and subsequently improve self consciousness by allowing them to read carefully their peers comments, edit their writings and send the replies only when they feel satisfied with their performances.

#### **6.6.1. Emails – a strategic tool for writing instruction and feedback on writing assignments**

The integration of emails in EFL classes, especially in writing courses, would have lasting effect if used systematically. Email communication enables the students to interact with native speakers and their teachers at the time they feel suitable. So they have more control over the learning process. Besides, the teachers can retrieve their students' writing for analysis and grading when monitoring their progress in the skill.

Email can be used as an important tool to encourage dialoging either between classes to foster reading and writing exchange or between students of the target language and native speakers to raise awareness. It can also be used strategically to ease student-teacher interactions, especially conferencing and feedback on the writers' productions. Emails increase constructive dealings even beyond the classroom since the writing skill needs more concentration and an over reliance on readings. The students' anxiety lessens due to the large amount of time they devote to the writing and the relaxing atmosphere they offer. Further, the teachers can receive the productions, organize them, and basically offer the appropriate evaluation to each student.

The following will present an illustration of a deliberate out of class email communication devised by Torkey (2015: 253)



According to Torkey (2015), emailing sessions can be arranged according to the intended objective of each one. She recommends that the writing teacher plans successive courses for email use in writing classes. The first email should be dedicated to self-introduction where the students get acquainted. In the following session the students are required to present briefly their culture to the recipients. The students will then contact at a more personal level where the teacher does not intervene until the students achieve the communicative purpose. Later on, remedial sessions will be planned to offer the necessary feedback.

### 6.5.2. Listservs

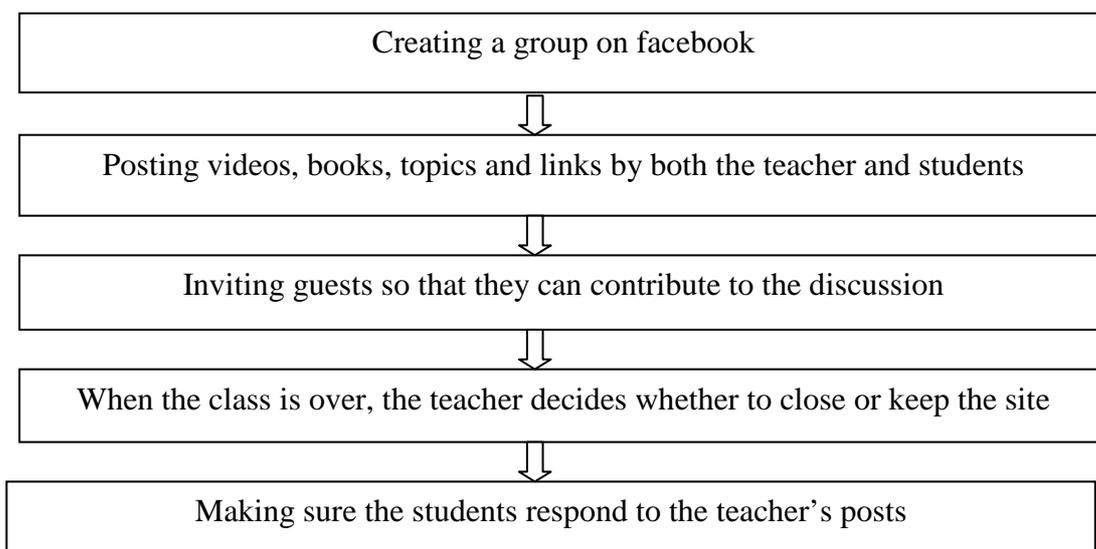
A listserv is defined as *“a system that allows the teacher to create, manage, and control electronic mailing lists on any corporate network or on the internet”*. It can be used to foster offline writing and collaborative learning as it can improve interactivity and audience awareness. It is suggested that the writing teacher should organize his classes into groups each one headed by what Torkey (2015) called a group representative. Each group

will discuss opinions through the representative so as to manage the large volume of the emails sent to the teacher in addition to involving the learners into a motivating atmosphere where they keep active within the group.

### 6.6.3. Social networking sites

Social networking sites enable the students to meet with a large and varied discourse community by making their networks visible. Though these sites do not offer a prolonged discussion to keep the thread of ideas well interwoven, they remain the best tool to lessen the learners' anxiety and promote EFL writing. Facebook and twitter occupy the top of the list of asynchronous communication.

The following diagram presents the main steps followed when using facebook in the teaching of writing as suggested by Torkey (2015: 255)



Many activities can be performed through social networking sites, but it is brainstorming that seems to be the most efficient prewriting activity that motivates the students and involve them interactively in collaborative work. The teacher and the students can share so many strategies including how to prepare for writing through reading, editing, revising and modifying the productions. (Kabilan et al: 2010)

### 6.6.4. Web-blogging

Blogs are thought to have the same characteristics and effect as diaries in an EFL context. They enable the students to regularly post their productions and practice writing more authentically and freely. The teacher is to intervene when necessary to offer positive comments, pick out noteworthy ideas and boost up the students to write better.

**6.7. Conclusion**

This chapter tackled some useful pedagogical implications including the integration of connectivity when teaching the writing of different genres in EFL classes, the strategic use of feedback, and the avoidance of grammar correction in the assessment of students' papers. It also took into consideration how best the synchronous and the asynchronous technological tools can be used in the teaching and evaluation of the writing skill.

# **General Conclusion**

## **General conclusion**

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The possibility to connect the teaching of English to reality increases due to the noticeable development that touches the virtual world. Using software applications, searching for information on the Internet, chatting, and game playing occupy the top of the list of technological tools that can be used to make the learning atmosphere more vivid and original. It is so easy for the language teacher to bring the world into the classroom and have students use authentic materials and participate in real communicative contexts to successfully gain competence that is summarized in what is known as literacy and oracy.

To develop literacy, the language student has to develop his reading and writing abilities. Writing is, thus, a necessity that requires creativity and a good deal of reading for the writer to produce a polished piece. Writing is by no means an end, yet a means to an end since the students' academic success is tied with their performances and how best they transform their thoughts into written words.

Opportunities for integrating and implementing information technologies into the process of teaching composition gain special interest especially within the introduction of software applications that helps the novice as well as the advanced writer. Thus, the need for investigating the impact of the new media on the students' way of writing was the major concern of the study. The researcher, thus, tries to explore the availability of using ICTs as an effective tool while teaching composition to 2<sup>nd</sup> year LMD students at the University of Mascara especially when correcting the students' assignments.

The present research is intended to diagnose the main difficulties faced by learners when they write and to investigate the efficiency of ICTs' infusion and feedback in improving the way students write. Five hypotheses were thought in the first place to answer the research questions. It has been suggested that generating ideas and finding out the relevant words to express their thoughts lead students to think that they cannot reach a good level in composition and thereby increase their frustrations to write in English. Besides, the researcher assumes that teachers and some students consider positive feedback, if used continuously, a worthy means to fuel motivation and inform productivity, yet, others reckon that teachers' comments on their writings are demotivating. Moreover, most language teachers regard ICT as an important tool that might have a great effect on the teaching-learning process and writing instruction is no exception. Therefore, the regular and appropriate integration of ICTs and the direct implementation of the necessary

## General conclusion

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methods for its inclusion particularly when correcting what they have produced aid English language learners to write better.

Three basic instrumentations are utilized to ensure triangulation and to either confirm or reject the expected hypotheses: An observation to discover how ICTs and feedback can be used in the teaching of writing, a questionnaire to second year students, a questionnaire to a group of teachers, and a test to pinpoint the main difficulties students encounter when they compose and to afford opportunities for providing feedback to what has been produced.

The researcher suggests a set of strategies that would enable teachers and students to improve standards and learning attainments. Positive feedback, strategies for providing effective feedback, and the use of internet and computers are to have an impact on the way students write. Furthermore, improving the writing skill does not rest only on employing assessment, practice is thought to provide lasting and significant outcomes.

Teachers are hesitant to integrate ICTs in their teaching, yet, the current study uncovers some of the opportunities the world of technology offers to the EFL classes. Computers in fact provide innumerable chances to make learning more vivid and real.

Due to the limitations that the researcher encounters, it is recommended that;

1. ICTs inclusion in the teaching of languages is of paramount importance that requires special concern and further research
2. The need for systematized integration of the available ICTs requires a consideration of collaborative work of both the students and the teachers
3. Authorities have to encourage educators by planning workshops to ensure professional development in the field
4. Although it is impossible to keep pace with the development of technologies, the writing teacher should exploit the available technologies and create his own environment to involve as much students as possible.
5. It is not necessary however to use the most sophisticated or the latest technology so as to make learning more effective and authentic. The teachers should use the simplest technological means to cure some of the educational ills and to get the learners used to ICTs.

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# Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Chapter 4:

#### “Doubts and Difficulties”

After Mr. Lennox had left, Margaret joined her parents for an early tea. She sat with her head filled with many thoughts, including the walk, the sketching, and dinner. She felt guilty for hurting the feelings of the one man whose love could have been the only one which would ever enter her heart and she was trying to get over everything that took place that day, especially her refusal. Suddenly, her series of thoughts were interrupted by the rough worn out voice of her father, calling her over to talk about an urgent matter.

In his study room, Mr. Hale told Margaret that they were to leave their home in Helstone for good because he could no longer work for the church there. His words were both astonishing and unexpected to her and she kept demanding for explanations to their sudden departure. Mr. Hale was full of grief and despair. His heart was being squeezed from sorrow and his soul was profoundly tormented and Margaret could not help but fall into deep endless agony, watching her old father in pain.

Margaret understood that they were moving to Milton-Northern, an industrial city in the north of England and she despised the place already, even before seeing it. She hated the manufactures, the crowds, the noise and the wild which symbolized the north and were completely different from her marvelous beloved Helstone.

### Appendix 2

North & South - Elizabeth Gaskell

Chapter 3 (The More Haste The worse Speed)

They say that home is where the heart is, and Margaret's home was Helstone. The Helstone's village was like something out of a fairy tale, with squirrels playing and dogs barking out and all that wonderful stuff. In a word, it was a home that no words could describe its charm.

Henry Lennox, the brother's groom has just finished seeing his brother and his new sister-in-law Edith (who is Margaret's cousin). They were off on their way to Greece. On his way home, he decided to stop off at the Hale's house. Henry Lennox is not handsome as his brother. Instead of being a charming prince, he's smart and ambitious. He looks forward to climbing the ranks of London society.

When Margaret ducks out for a moment, Henry glances around. He wants to see if the hamlet of Helstone is really as Margaret has described. Margaret Hale is a proud, young woman filled with some sort of vanity, ego, and jealousy... Eventually Henry admits that Helstone is stunning, he's only surprised at just how modest the Hale's house is. At this point Gaskell tries to add some modest irony to the plot; when Margaret informs the gentleman that they had nothing for supper, except some cold meat.

Until supper, Margaret suggests that she takes Mr. Lennox for a walk to spend the afternoon sketching some of the village cottages.

Mrs. Hale is a woman that complains a lot, and who's hardly happy unless everything is going her way.

Once in nature, Henry can really see why Margaret loves Helstone this much... In other words Margaret isn't like most young women of her time who are afraid to speak their minds, she's so the opposite; especially when she describes to him her village making him changing his mind about this village, that is isn't just a mere village in a fairy tale. So at least u can notice how bossy she can be and sometimes having her wide mouth signifying how much, she likes to speak when she has an opinion.

While they're out, Lennox starts to pay her compliments (the guy starts flirting with the arrogant lady that she thinks no man is good enough for her). As you expected Margaret becomes uncomfortable in his company, sensing that this flirts is leading somewhere.

Luckily, she gets back home before he continues his poetic expressions (though, for a cruel vivid lawyer that had never paid any feminine creature a single attention. But love can turn everyone into a poet in this case).

## Appendices

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After dinner, the two of them go back into nature for grabbing some fruits for desserts. That's when Henry apologizes for saying back in CHAPTER 1 that Margaret made their home village sound like something out of a fairy tale. The poor creature lapses back into an emotional, flattering way of speaking. Unlike any other Margaret feels dreadfully frightened about what he is going to say next.

You guessed it : Henry Lennox wants Margaret Hale to marry him. And she totally turns him down, and he's crushed!!

And guess what!?! The two of them still have to go back to the house and hang with Margaret's parents, so he pretends as if every thing's fine. They come up upon Mr. Hale in the garden & they head inside the house.

As the chapter draws to a close, and once the agony is over Henry Lennox leaves after that Margaret kicked him out into the friend-zone, and it turned out that after all he's not the right guy for her.

In this chapter, if you feel like griping about wedding's issues, u could probably criticize the reaction to fancy-schmancy wedding proposal from Henry to Margaret the snarky strong minded woman that she doesn't know how to place her love in the romantic sense, yet to the natural beauty and exactly to Halstone.

So lengthy, but that's half the fun of these kinds of 19th century big old books just put aside your 21st century need for speed, grab a pot of tea, and settle in like people from Gaskell's era did.

### Appendix 3

Bribery is to offer money or service to anyone who holds invested with power in exchange for an undue induced advantage. In many countries nothing moves works without bribery. Such an unethical practice has spread to reach several aspects including governmental officials and even educational institutions. People often think that corruption and bribery is just a way of life. But every society, sector and individual would benefit from saying no to this crime.

Despite the fact that corruption and bribery is all around us, we cannot give up fighting it because we are naturally thoughtful survivors and we hope to make a difference. So we can fight bribery via following righteous procedures. By setting well implemented system of law we would punish severely and punishing any offence. Besides, educating the public community about that the government's responsibility to be corruption-free refuses requires a total refusal of any participation in any illegal activities. Moreover, to achieve transparency, and make authorities had better make companies sign commitment contracts to not encourage or intervene in any unsavory act.

In a nutshell, bribery may have lasting effects. It leads us to a puzzled area where the problems caused cannot be solved. Thus it is compulsory that people unite to combat this phenomenon. Thereby, If we can when we do our best to keep minds and hearts open, then we'll be a step nearer to fight eradicate this crime.

### **Appendix 4**

Bribery is to offer money or service to anyone invested with power in exchange for an induced advantage. In many countries nothing works without bribery. Such an unethical practice has spread to reach several aspects including governmental officials and even educational institutions. People often think that corruption and bribery is just a way of life. But every society, sector and individual would benefit from saying no to this crime.

Despite the fact that corruption and bribery is all around us, we cannot give up fighting it because we are naturally thoughtful and we hope to make a difference. So we can fight bribery via following righteous procedures. First, setting a well implemented system of law would enable us punish guilty people. Besides, we must promote the idea that the government's responsibility to be corruption-free requires a total refusal of any participation in illegal activities. Moreover, to achieve transparency, authorities had better make companies sign commitment contracts to not encourage or intervene in any unsavory act.

In a nutshell, bribery may have lasting effects. It leads us to a puzzled area where the problems caused cannot be solved. Thus it is compulsory that people unite to combat this phenomenon. When we do our best to keep minds and hearts open, then we'll be a step nearer to eradicate this crime.

### Appendix 5

Some people argue that counterfeiting benefits consumers by giving them access to lower-price goods. This is a totally mistaken claim. To counterfeit means to imitate something, imitated products are fake replicas of the real ones. **In other words, imitating goods is a totally offensive act.**

First, counterfeiters copy anything that turns a profit, without regard to quality, safety or the law. **Secondly**, fraudulent medicines are obviously a health risk to unsuspecting consumers. Sometimes they contain no active ingredients, and even worse, they contain potentially harmful chemicals. **Manufacturers** of fake **consumer** goods **also** are more likely to use toxic dyes or chemicals that have adverse environmental and health impacts. **Thirdly** piracy kills creativity and innovation; those who engage in pirating objects had better **engage in creating design** new things or at least improve the existing ones. Last but not least, counterfeiting **operations** encourage money laundering and promote corruption, **so** because when you buy **counterfeit forged** merchandise you're giving your money to a dishonest person. The seller, **on the other hand**, is committing a crime by selling you the product **since your actions transaction cost effects** the **original** company **making the real product**. **More badly**, you're **are** probably buying lousy product that doesn't last long. **Producers are tired of seeing their products imitated.**

In addition to this fact, counterfeiting has an influence on the reputation of some countries that **would not become the destination of those who look for quality**, **especially economy**. All in all governments should **make** take **controls and** certain measures trying to find solutions to this misdeed.

## Appendices

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### Appendix 6

I am a student investigating the **teaching of writing with a focus on feedback and ICT implementation** and would be extremely grateful if you could take few moments of your time and help in completing this questionnaire based on your experience of teaching writing at the University. It is totally anonymous and the information provided will only be used in my research project.

What kind of technological tools are available in the classroom you use?

1. Desktop computer
2. Laptop
3. Overhead projector
4. Audio equipment
5. Video conferencing system
6. Internet connection

How would you rate the quality of the technological support?

1. Poor
2. Average
3. Good
4. Very good

How do you feel about your level of technology expertise in your classroom?

1. Very comfortable
2. Fairly comfortable
3. Fairly uncomfortable
4. Very uncomfortable

Has your department designed a policy to foster ICT use in education?

1. Yes
2. No

Do you use ICTs as a management tool to

1. Organize your work and keep records
2. Prepare lessons
3. Find digital teaching resources
4. Design your own teaching resources

Do you think that ICTs

1. Facilitate teaching specific concepts or skills
  2. Support various student learning styles
  3. Support creativity
  4. Improve students' ability in using ICTs
- (you can choose more than one answer)*

Writing instruction

Mark the following statements

## Appendices

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(SA for Strongly Agree, A for Agree, N for Neutral, D for Disagree, SD for Strongly Disagree)

### Process approach

Statement	S A	A	N	D	S D
While composing, students think of writing as a piece of communication					
In writing lessons teachers should assist students in understanding that the writing process involves many sub skills					
It helps the students when they brainstorm and plan their written work in the writing class					
It is important that writing activities like brainstorming, planning, making outlines, and revising can be done effectively in pairs or in small groups.					
After a student produces a piece of writing, peer correction has to be done prior to teacher's correction.					
Teacher's feedback should focus on the ideas presented and their organization					
After peer correction and teacher's correction the student writes a final draft					
Teachers should expose the learners to different genres of writing as they will be writing for different purposes					

### Product approach

Statement	S A	A	N	D	S D
Students should learn to write correct sentences and build them up into a written text from the beginning.					
In writing class grammatical accuracy needs to be emphasized.					
Referring to model essay helps learners understand the way they can compose a piece of writing.					
In writing classes, the focus has to be on what students produce at the end of the lesson.					
Writing in the classroom does not help students and it is impossible to make writing realistic.					
It is not worth spending too much time on making the students write in class.					
Students should be left alone to work on the writing activities.					
Teachers have to correct all the grammar mistakes that the students make in their writing.					
All written language can be regarded as formal language, so it should be flawless.					

When you respond to your students' writing, how do you direct your responses?

1. to your immediate, intuitive impressions of the writing

## Appendices

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2. to the student's present abilities to write
3. to their individual goals for improvement
4. to elements of the curriculum they are studying

The use of technologies in writing instruction

Do you use electronic feedback to constantly gauge your students' progress?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, what kind of technologies do you use?

1. Word processing
2. Emails
3. Blogs
4. facebook
5. Others (please list them)

Feedback use

How important is it to provide feedback to students' writing?

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Quite important
4. Not really important
5. Not important at all

How often do you provide feedback on your students' productions?

1. Always
2. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely
5. Never

What type of feedback do you usually use?

1. Teacher written feedback
2. Peer feedback
3. Electronic feedback
4. Oral teacher- student conferences

What procedure do you usually use when correcting student's papers?

1. grades
2. written comments
3. error correction
4. none of them

What aspects of writing do you provide feedback on?

1. Content and ideas
2. Organization i.e. paragraphing, links between ideas
3. Language i.e. grammar, vocabulary, sentence pattern

When correcting mistakes, do you identify

1. All mistakes
2. mistakes that obscure meaning
3. Frequently occurring mistakes
4. Others

.....

Do your feedback practices stem from



### Appendix 7

#### Student questionnaire

I am student investigating the **teaching of writing with a focus on feedback and ICT implementation** and would be extremely grateful if you could help me by completing this questionnaire based on your experience of learning writing here at the University. It should take around 10 minutes to complete. It is totally anonymous and the information provided will only be used in my research project.

Thank you very much for your help.

What kind of technological tools are available in the classroom you use?

1. Desktop computer
2. Laptop computer
3. Projection system
4. Audio equipment
5. Video conferencing system
6. Internet connection

How would you rate the quality of the technological support?

1. Poor
2. Average
3. Good
4. Very good

How do you feel about your level of technology expertise in your classroom?

1. Very comfortable
2. Fairly comfortable
3. Fairly uncomfortable
4. Very uncomfortable

Does your department have designed a policy to foster ICT use in education?

3. Yes
4. No

Do you think that ICTs

1. Facilitate learning specific concepts or skills
2. Support creativity
3. Improve your ability in using ICTs

**Appendices**

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Writing instruction

Do you think writing is important?

- 1. Yes, very important
- 2. Yes, it is important
- 3. No, it not important
- 4. No, other skills are much more important

Do you think that the amount of time given to the written expression course is appropriate?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

What aspects of writing do you find most difficult?

- 1. Language
- 2. Content and ideas
- 3. Organization and structure
- 4. Others .....

Do you use the process oriented approach, i.e. planning, drafting, and revising?

- a. yes
- b. no

When writing essays which part is the most difficult?

- i. introduction
- ii. body
- iii. conclusion

Do you often assess your own writing to check on your progress?

- 1. yes
- 2. no

What do you think can help you improve and write better?

.....  
.....

Feedback use

What type of feedback do you usually receive?

- 1. Written feedback

## Appendices

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2. Peers feedback
3. Electronic feedback
4. Teacher-student discussion
5. we don't receive feedback
6. Others (specify).....

To what extent do you see feedback on your productions important?

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Quite important
4. Not really important

Does your teacher provide feedback on your productions?

1. Always
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely
4. Never

How important is to receive feedback on your writings?

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Not really important
4. Not important at all

On what aspects do you usually receive feedback?

1. Content and ideas
2. Organization
3. Language

What type of feedback do you usually receive?

1. Only grades
2. Only error correction
3. Only written comments
4. One of them

When correcting your work, does your teacher

1. Corrects all errors
2. Correct significant errors
3. underline or circle my errors
4. use a code
5. others

The use of technologies in feedback provision

**Appendices**

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Does your teacher use electronic feedback to constantly gauge your progress?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Do you often use electronic folios to monitor you progress?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes, what kind of technologies do you use?

- 1. Word processing
- 2. Emails
- 3. Blogs
- 4. others

Do you think feedback helps you improve and become a better writer?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Are you satisfied with the feedback you receive?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Do writing teachers give accurate and complete feedback on your errors?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes, what have you learnt from it?

.....  
.....

Does required revision after receiving feedback facilitate progress? Explain

.....

Appendix 8



**Moussedek Sara**

11 juin 2015, 20:24 ·

"Your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others."

Joseph Conrad: Heart of Darkness

Vu par 28 personnes

Grace Misalucha et 2 autres personnes

J'aime

Commenter



**Moussedek Sara a téléchargé un fichier.**

3 mai 2015, 21:17 ·

**Animal Farm.pdf**

Moussedek Sara



Vu par 29 personnes

An Avid Reader

J'aime

Commenter



**Moussedek Sara a téléchargé un fichier.**

3 mai 2015, 21:08 ·

**Achebe\_\_Chinua\_-\_Things\_Fall\_Apart.pdf**

Moussedek Sara



Vu par 29 personnes

An Avid Reader

Appendix 9



**Kheira Charef**



16 avril 2015, 18:09 ·

Chapter 4:

“Doubts and Difficulties”

After Mr. Lennox had left, Margaret joined her parents for an early tea. She sat with her head filled with many thoughts, including the walk, the sketching, and dinner. She felt guilty for hurting the feelings of the one man whose love could have been the only one which would ever enter her heart and she was... [Plus](#)

[Voir la traduction](#)

Vu par 29 personnes



Moussedek Sara

3 commentaires

**J'aime**

**Commenter**



**Kheira Charef**

you're welcome miss

Je n'aime plus · 1 · [Répondre](#)



**An Avid Reader** a téléchargé un fichier.



15 avril 2015, 13:53 ·

**North-South-Elizabeth-Gaskell-Chapter-3-Analysis-.docx**

An Avid Reader



Vu par 29 personnes



Moussedek Sara

**J'aime**

**Commenter**

Appendix 10



**An Avid Reader**

12 avril 2015, 20:55 ·

The only way to do all the things u'd like to do is to  
READ \_\_ Tom Clancy

Vu par 29 personnes

Vous et 1 autre personne

J'aime

Commenter



**Grace Misalucha**

10 mars 2015, 20:26 ·

When to the session of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:  
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,  
And moan the expense of many a... [Plus](#)

Vu par 29 personnes

Moussedek Sara

J'aime

Commenter

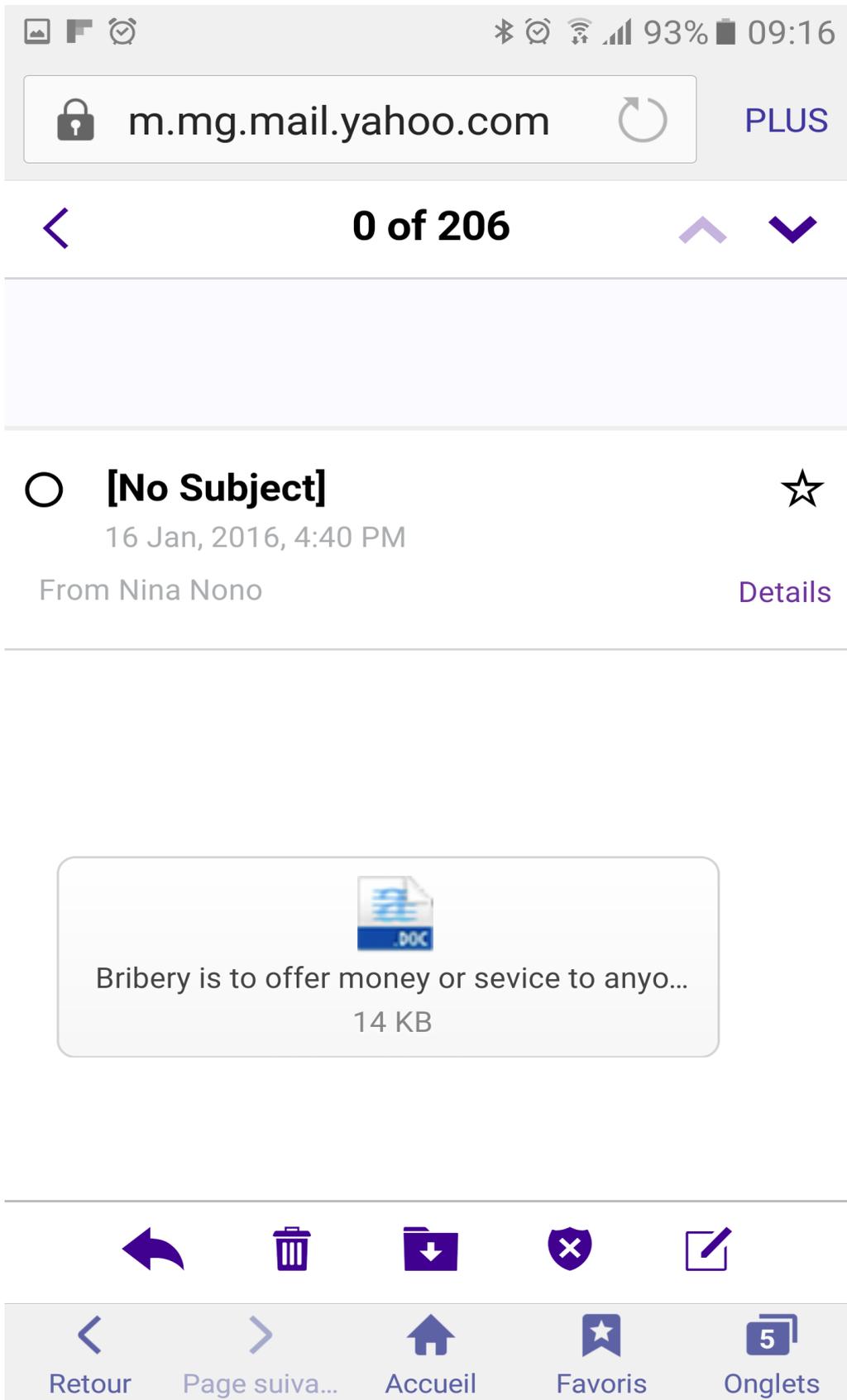


**Moussedek Sara**

7 mars 2015, 12:13 ·

'For joy or grief, for hope or fear,  
For all hereafter, as for here,

Appendix 11



Appendix 12

 96% 09:05

 **Language Students**  
15 juin 2015, 18:25 · 

“I never wish to be easily defined.”  
– Franz Kafka

 J'aime |  Commenter

 **Fatima Zahraa Darcy et 3 autres personnes**

Vu par 29 personnes

 **Khadidja Ch**  
.....nd I'd rather float over other people's minds  
as something strictly fluid and non-perceivable  
!!!just like when you know someone fr sth !  
[Voir la traduction](#)  
Je n'aime plus ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Moussedek Sara**  
great thanks  
J'aime ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Moussedek Sara**  
my dear  
J'aime ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Khadidja Ch**  
warmly welcome 😊  
[Voir la traduction](#)  
Je n'aime plus ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Moussedek Sara**  
well said

Appendix 13

Topic 1:

Ethics is a set of moral values that control our successful work. Yet, our society is full of dishonest people whose primary aim in life is to collect money and achieve gains. Counterfeiting is an example of their illegal and unethical practices.

To combat this cruel practice, people must boycott fake products and medicines, companies should reduce the price of their brands, people must unite to fight counterfeiting through education, raising consciousness, and it's high time the government implemented stringent laws to fight imitation.

To conclude, one can admit that such practices have had bad consequences on a nation, they weaken the country's economy and social relationships.

Appendix 14

Part two:

Corruption is an international phenomenon that organizations or individuals profit improperly their positions in an activity.

We should combat counterfeiting because it's an unethical activity. First, people must boycott fake products because it's unhealthy. Second, companies should reduce the price of their brands because it's very expensive. Third, the government must pass stringent laws to fight imitation.

So, all the governments should combat corruption because it's an improper way to gain profits.

Appendix 15

Counterfeiting is a kind of fraud that should be fought by authorities and citizens.  
The counterfeiting is an international phenomenon, so all the governments and organizations or individuals are responsible of combating the counterfeiting. The people must boycott fake products, and the companies should reduce the price of their brands. The government must pass stringent laws to fight imitation.  
The counterfeiting have more inconvenient refer to the health and environment etc. So it necessary to combat it.

Appendix 16

Ethics is set of morals and values that constitute the basis of any successful work. But our society is full of dishonest people who want to achieve gains and success using any method such as counterfeiting. It is a part of corruption and unethical behaviour that corrupt persons wish to spread in society to possess authority and wealth. For this damages, we should take serious measures to fight counterfeiting.

First, we must boycott fake products because it is not safety and it can be (danger) fake for the health.

Then, companies should reduce the price of their brands for instance officer and all the people.

Finally, the government must pass stringent laws to fight imitation.

To sum up, in order to have a safe way of living, we should be aware of the future results and fight counterfeiting.

## الملخص

تبحث الدراسة الحالية في إمكانية دمج تكنولوجيا المعلومات و التغذية الراجعة بغية تحسين مهارة الكتابة لدى طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة معسكر. قسم الباحث البحث إلى ستة فصول، يعني الأول بتقديم وصف للمنهجية المتبعة و الإشكالية و الفرضيات والعينة المدروسة و كذا أدوات البحث المستخدمة لفحص الفرضيات. يقدم الفصل الثاني مفاهيم أساسية حول تكنولوجيا المعلومات و الاتصالات و نماذج متعددة تعزز استخدام هذه الأخيرة في تعليمية اللغة، كما يسعى الباحث من خلال الفصل الثالث إلى وصف مفصل لمهارة الكتابة و تأثيرا لتغذية الراجعة مع تكنولوجيا الإعلام و الاتصال على العملية ككل. يتناول الفصل الرابع تقديم شرح للتغذية الراجعة و كيفية دمجها في تدريس الكتابة للطلاب. يتضمن الفصل الخامس وصف و تحليل للنتائج المتحصل عليها من أدوات البحث في حين يهدف الفصل الأخير إلى تقديم اقتراحات و استراتيجيات ذات التأثير الإيجابي على المهارة المستهدفة.

## Summary

The current study investigates the availability of integrating informational technologies and feedback to improve the writing ability of second year English language students at the University of Mascara. The researcher devises six chapters to fulfill the work. The first one is devoted to provide a description of the methodological approach used in the investigation, the research questions and hypotheses, the population and the research instrumentation. The second chapter provides background information about ICTs and the different models fostered to their integration in education. The third one seeks a general description of the writing skill and the effect of feedback practices and technologies on the whole process. The fourth one deals with feedback provision in the teaching of the writing skill. The fifth chapter includes description and analysis of the raw data obtained from the research tools while the last chapter is intended to provide strategies that are thought to have a positive impact on the teaching of the writing skill.

## Résumé

La présente étude porte sur la disponibilité de l'intégration des technologies de l'information et le feedback pour améliorer la capacité d'écriture des étudiants de la deuxième année Anglais à l'Université de Mascara. Pour accomplir son travail, le chercheur a divisé son travail en six chapitres six. Le premier est consacré à fournir une description de l'approche méthodologique utilisée dans la recherche, questions de recherche, les hypothèses, la population et l'instrumentation de recherche. Le deuxième chapitre fournit des informations générales sur les TIC et les différents modèles liés à leur intégration dans l'éducation, alors que le troisième vise une description générale de la compétence d'écriture et de l'effet des pratiques et technologies sur l'ensemble du processus. Le quatrième chapitre traite le retour d'information dans l'enseignement de l'écriture, quant au cinquième, il comprend la description et l'analyse des données brutes obtenues à partir des outils de recherche. Le dernier chapitre fournit les stratégies qui sont supposées avoir un impact positif sur l'enseignement de l'écriture.

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## Integrating ICTs in Providing Feedback to Students' Writing

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**Heartfelt thanks**

## **Dedications**

*I dedicate this work to:*

*My father and mother*

*Abdellah & Latifa Elhachemi*

*For their constant support and continuous encouragement throughout my years of study*

*To my uncle*

*To my brothers and sisters*

*To my beloved nephews and nieces*

# **Abstract**

## **Abstract**

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The fact that writing is considered as a problem that hinders most students leads the researcher to enquire the effectiveness of ICTs, practice, and feedback in changing students' attitude towards the writing skill. The current study, thus, investigates the availability of integrating informational technologies along with feedback to improve the writing ability of second year English students at the University of Mascara. To reach the predetermined objectives the researcher devises six chapters to fulfill the work. The first one deals with the linguistic situation in Algeria and the teaching of foreign languages including English. It is also devoted to provide a description of the methodological approach used in the investigation, the research questions and hypotheses, the research population and the research instrumentation. The second chapter provides background information about ICTs and the different models fostered to their complicity in education. The third one seeks a general description of the writing skill and the effect of feedback practices and technologies on the whole process. The fourth one deals with feedback provision in the teaching of the writing skill. The fifth chapter includes an analysis of the raw data. It also gives a detailed description and interpretation of the information gained from the three tools employed; the observation, the questionnaire, and the written test. The last chapter is intended to provide strategies that are thought to have a positive impact on students' achievement, their writing ability in particular.

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# **General Introduction**

It is commonly believed that an intimate and inseparable relation between English language and communication across the globe exists owing to the influx of globalization and the need for a de facto tongue that unifies the universe. This makes such a code no more the monopoly of the British or any other rather than a universal language that is required for dealings. Accordingly, the significance of the English language across the globe gains momentum due to its urgent need in different aspects of life including education, commerce, medicine, etc. Thereby, the scrutiny and debate over the acquisition of English becomes essential and manifested along several educational programmes.

Communication among people from diverse spheres of interests is currently thought to be effortless and less demanding because of the evolvement and introduction of new media and technologies. Within the birth of the printing press and the telegraph, the pace with which those means were developed increased, leading people all over the globe to come into contact using a variety of tools. The fact that innovations occupy a number of fields fosters drastic changes in many aspects including education. However, people tend to believe that it is difficult to keep up with Information and Communication Technologies due to many constraints including accessibility in the instructional landscape. For this reason, the inclusion of ICTs in education is one of the most challenging aspects in the digital era.

The changes brought up by the pervasive impact of the new technologies led many to think about the ways of exploiting such tools in informing and refining the process of language instruction. These alterations were based on a shift in educational settings and approaches. Such transformations led to a consideration of the student and his perception of knowledge construction rather than a domination of teachers over the educational environment. From traditional apprenticeship that is based primarily on identifying learners' deficits and information transfer from instructors to the individual student towards a more sophisticated and recent way of learning that stems from a focus on collaborative attainment. The latter urges many educators and researchers to find out the relevant methods that aid reaching instructional goals and technology integration is no exception.

The possibility to connect the teaching of English to reality increases due to the new insights and evolvement in the virtual world. Using software applications, searching for information on the Internet, chatting, and game playing are part and parcel of the lives of

people in the 21st century. The opportunities that digital media provide today's language teachers and learners with are great. Today, it is so simple to bring the world into the classroom and have students use authentic materials and participate in real communicative contexts to successfully gain competence. Competence in language is most often manifested in the acquisition of the four primary skills or what is known as literacy and oracy.

Writing, the last skill to be acquired besides listening, speaking, and reading is often perceived as a productive activity that entails creativity on the part of the writer. It represents a means to an end i.e. writing research papers, letters, etc., not an end in itself. This increases the importance of such a skill to English language students and their opportunities to achievement. Besides communication of ideas, composition requires thorough preparation and mastery of a set of conventions and rules including mechanics and grammar. Teachers and students, thus, have to rigorously and effectively focus on practising writing to achieve significantly their learning goals and efficient outcomes. For this reason, teaching and evaluating or more precisely providing feedback to students' productions is the most challenging in the educational process.

Opportunities for implementing information technologies into the process of teaching composition rose owing to the immense effect that can be brought in the course of using word processing, social networking and others. Thus, the need for investigating the impact of the new media on the students' way of writing increases leading many to enquire such a field. The researcher, on her part, tries to explore the availability of using ICTs as an effective tool while teaching composition to 2<sup>nd</sup> year ELT students at the University of Mascara, or more precisely when providing feedback to what they have produced.

To rigorously explore the effectiveness of the new technologies on the way teachers correct their students and the way students themselves progress, the researcher tend to organize and build her investigation on the subsequent research questions:

1. What do students think of their writing performances in English language and where do their attitudes stem from?
2. How do English language learners perceive their teachers' comments on their productions?
3. To what extent can feedback be used as a practical tool to improve students' productivity?

4. What are English language teachers attitudes and beliefs towards ICT inclusion when teaching writing?
5. To what extent will using ICTs provide better learning outcomes and improve productivity when providing feedback to students' writing performances?

Based on the prearranged research questions, the researcher suggested the following hypotheses upon which the current study rests:

1. Witness the fact that generating ideas and finding out the relevant words to express their thoughts, most of the students think that they cannot reach a good level in composition and thereby are always anxious to write in English.
2. Some learners think that teachers' comments on their writings are demotivating while others see that it is a good way to inform their productivity.
3. Teachers believe that positive feedback, if used continuously, can enhance students' motivation to write accurately.
4. Most language teachers consider ICT, if used appropriately, as an important tool that might have a great effect on the teaching-learning process and writing instruction is no exception.
5. Through the regular and appropriate integration of ICTs and the direct implementation of the necessary methods for its inclusion particularly when correcting or providing feedback to what they have produced, English language learners can write better.

The contributions of the new technologies to education lead many to inquire how best to use them to foster attainment and improve education generally. Thereby, the investigator aims through her study to reach by the end the following objectives;

- a. To explore the effectiveness of ICT in refining English language students' achievement, their production in particular.
- b. To investigate the extent to which feedback can be used as a motivating tool to improve the way students write.
- c. To diagnose the main difficulties faced by learners when they write and to find how such deficits can be overcome.

Accordingly, three necessary tools are employed to ensure a triangulation and to achieve the predetermined objectives. These include an observation based on field notes, a

written test intended to adjust students' composition and to further ascertain the effect of ICTs and feedback on their ability and literacy, and teachers' and students' questionnaires to diagnose and pinpoint their perceptions and attitudes towards the integration of the new technologies into the teaching of writing.

Moreover, the researcher intends to encourage the use of innovations in the process of instruction. Therefore, the present investigation attempts to present some strategies and implications that might have an impact on students' attainment, their writing ability in particular. It aims to suggest further applications for teachers as well to help them adjust their teaching styles and procedures.

The current survey, consequently, is managed into four fold; an introductory chapter that provides the methodology being employed, a literature review to tackle what has been stated by on ICTs in education, writing, and feedback, a data collection and analysis chapter to testify the research hypotheses, and finally advised implications for practice. The intended plan aids the investigator to fulfill her study thoroughly despite the limitations and the encountered constraints.

# **Chapter one**

## **Methodology and the Learning Situation**

### **1.1.Introduction**

This chapter will present a portrayal of the linguistic situation in Algeria in addition to the status and the teaching of languages in general and the English language in particular. Further, it highlights the learning situation and research procedures involved in the current investigation. The researcher will also provide a detailed description of the context of the study, the research instruments utilized and the sample population. The research design and the limitations of the study are also tackled to significantly offer a general description of the whole research.

### **1. 2.The Linguistic Situation in Algeria**

Algeria comes to be considered as the first largest country in Africa. It is situated in its Northern part with a population around 41, 2 million, 25% of them are Berber while the rest inhabitants are Arabs according to the Algerian Ministry of Health, Population and Hospital Reform survey. Shortly after its independence, Algeria followed a policy named 'Arabisation' a process by which Arabic was chosen to represent the Algerian identity as an official and national language. Hence language in education has been divided into two distinct periods, the first one prolonged from 1962 to 1970s represents a bilingual education in Modern Standard Arabic (or MSA) and French, while in the second period instruction is monolingual in MSA from 1970s till nowadays (Baldauf et al, 2007: 27)

Diglossia exists in Algeria at the level of different varieties distributed over the national ground including Eastern, Central, Western, and Southern accents known as 'Dialectal', 'Colloquial', or 'Algerian Arabic'. The latter represents the low variety and is considered as the mother tongue of most of Algerians. On the other hand, MSA is the high variety that is used in official, formal, and written contexts.

The remainders of Algerians, nearly about 25% of the total population, speak Berber, an indigenous language that exists even before Arabic. It has been recently supported by the government and chosen as a national language. Besides, French the ex colonizer language holds a high status in Algeria. It is used in studying most of the scientific disciplines as medicine, technology, etc. it is considered as the first foreign language.

### **1.3. Language Teaching in Algeria**

The system of instruction in Algeria starts at the age of five in what is called a preparatory stage. At this level the teacher introduces the alphabetical graphs of the Arabic

language to the pupils that can be used in the first elementary year in reading and composing different useful words in Arabic. After the preparatory year, the first stage (five year span elementary stage) begins and students are required to perform the different tasks in Arabic (the first and basic medium of instruction).

The French language possesses a high status in the Algerian community; hence it is introduced at the third year of the elementary stage. In Algeria, French is the second most spoken language (Negadi, 2015). Learning French lasts ten years so that students can acquire its basic principles. After that whoever decides to study scientific disciplines that are taught mainly in French including medicine, technology, architecture, etc, will find it easy to carry on higher education.

English on the other hand is introduced at the first year of the second stage (the first year at the middle school) to be taught for seven years (it is also taught for three years at the secondary or high school). English is considered as the second foreign language. At university, English is studied as a separate section, besides it is taught as a module in other disciplines especially with the newly introduced LMD system, for instance, biology and economy as a language for specific purposes(LSP).

#### **1.4. The Status of English in Algeria**

Changes and developments in different fields including science, economy, as well as technology enable English to manifest itself as the first language in the world. Thus, an increasing awareness of its importance has been mobilized to the Arab world and Algeria is no exception. In this concern, Cook (2003: 25) points out that:

*“In recent years the growth of English has been further accelerated by starting expansion in the quality and speed of international communication, the rise of international operations, linked to expanding US power and influence, ensure an ever increasing use of English in business, films, songs, television programmes, and advertisement in English are heard and seen in many countries where it is not the first nor even a second language.”*

Owing to the giant importance of the English Language all over the world, Algerian policy makers have decided to establish an English department at each university. Besides, the inclusion of ESP (English for Specific Purposes) courses in other disciplines gains special concern. To state it differently, English is the language of information and technology that plays a crucial role in widening the sphere of knowledge of the Algerian

students as well as in keeping pace with the neck breaking changes and developments across the globe. Thus, Meliani (2000, cited in Medjahed, 2011: 73) points out that: “The introduction of English is being heralded as the magic solution to all possible ills-including economic, technological and educational ones.”

Meliani (2000) assumes that the introduction of the English language can basically contribute to the improvement of various fields, and education is no exception. It is therefore estimated that such powerful language leads to the development of each nation considers it as a necessary code for communication.

### **1.5.Aims and Objectives of English Language Teaching in Algeria**

As stated by Roumadi, an inspector of English (cited in Meziane, 2011: 33), there are different purposes behind the introduction of English language teaching in Algerian schools. These include:

1. To cope with the scientific, technological, as well as cultural advancements and to ease communication in the globalized world where the English Language represents the first communicative code.
2. To develop the personal identity and to be more open-minded.
3. To achieve the desirable goal of developing different linguistic as well as communicative competencies including grammatical, semantic, critical thinking, etc.

For Hanifi (2012: 20), three main objectives students’ would reach during the learning of the English Language;

1. Linguistic and communicative objectives; being able to communicate fluently and accurately.
2. Methodological objectives; acquiring the skills that help evaluating ones’ progress and to carry on lifelong learning.
3. Cultural objectives; being aware of the cultural bridges in order to establish or deconstruct boundaries or to become cross borders and to tolerate cultural differences.

The contributions of the new technologies to education lead many to inquire how best to use them to foster attainment and improve education in general and the learning of

the English Language in particular. Thereby, the investigator aims through her study to reach by the end the following objectives;

- d. To explore the effectiveness of ICT in refining English language students' achievement, their production in particular.
- e. To investigate the extent to which feedback can be used as a motivating tool to improve the way students write.
- f. To diagnose the main difficulties faced by learners when they write and to find how such deficits can be overcome.

### **1.6. The Context of the Research**

Second year students from the English Language department at the University of Mascara were shortlisted as study subjects. The department was created in 2003. The department is composed of fourteen classrooms and three lecture halls. The English and Translation departments have merged in 2010 and are one single department.

The department staff is composed of thirty permanent teachers and got about four full-time secretaries. There are about nine hundred seventy four subscribed students. We count three hundred fifty first year students, two hundred sixty second year, and one hundred thirty five third year students forming the promotion of the LMD system at the university; and one hundred sixty fourth year English students who are master students.

The English department provides an undergraduate and post graduate education that can fulfill educational objectives and is an institution dedicated to teaching all students how to live, learn, and solve problems in an English context. At the department students have to either accomplish three years (the LMD system) in order to gain a license degree or five years to fulfill their master studies to become teachers of the English language either in the middle or high schools.

At first year, students are taught the mechanics of writing and the way they structure and organize a piece of writing. It is therefore at the second year when students might be able to write effectively, but as far as their level is concerned, they still struggle to write. Moreover, at the third year they are required to accomplish a dissertation to fulfill their Licence degree in English. For this reason, the researcher has chosen second year English students at the University of Mascara as a case study to testify the effectiveness of ICTs

integration and feedback implementation in improving their writing skill; they are about two hundred sixty students.

### 1.7. The Type of Research

There is a consensus that any research is an act of searching knowledge and finding data base related to a particular area or problem. Redman and Mory (quoted in Kothari, 2004: 1) define research as a *“systematized effort to gain new knowledge”*. Thus, the researcher tries to explore the students’ perception of the writing process as well as the utility of feedback along with ICTs in improving the way students write, so she uses the descriptive research in her investigation as defined by Kothari (2004: 2)

*“Descriptive research includes surveys and fact-finding enquiries of different kinds. The major purpose of descriptive research is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present...The main characteristic of this method is that the researcher has no control over the variables; he can only report what has happened or what is happening”*

So the role of the researcher here is just reporting what has happened inside the classroom. For this reason quantitative as well as qualitative approaches have been utilized to help reaching the main objectives. The former aims to ascertain data base concerning the way students’ perceive writing and the implementation of ICTs and feedback in the process of teaching writing through the use of structured teachers’ and students’ questionnaires. On the other hand, the classroom observation and the test are concerned with finding out qualitative data including the way feedback and the new technologies are handled and the different opinions provided to improve students’ composition.

The researcher has used in second hand formative experiment. Such an approach provides platforms to address gaps between theory and pedagogy or practice. In a formative experiment, instructional difficulties, obstacles, and even failures are perceived as useful information that can inform instruction and help build pedagogical understanding. Yet, the aim of formative experiment is not to offer reliable and defined solutions to pedagogical needs but to identify the concomitant issues to understand how instruction can be carried out more effectively (Pytash and Ferdig, 2014). Multiple drafts of students are revised to improve students’ productivity through using social networking and word processing software.

### 1.7.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative or what is acknowledged as interpretive or field research has been brought up to education from sociology and anthropology. It stems from views believing that studying humans is so different from enquiring nature that it needs interpretative methodology. Hence, a good deal of light is shed on the way the target population perceives the examined environment. With an intention to discover the similarities and differences between pre-conducted investigations in the field and the current enquiry, the qualitative study develops different concepts and theories (Scott and Morrison, 2006).

Interpretive research on the whole aims to provide an in depth investigation of a given social phenomenon since knowledge is achieved through interactions in society. Such approach relies on inductive reasoning because it seeks several perspectives about the area to be investigated i.e. giving participants the chance to express their views and feelings about a particular aspect (Lodico et al, 2006). Qualitative investigation is primarily *“concerned with qualitative phenomenon, i.e., phenomena relating to or involving quality or kind”* (Kothari, 2004: xv). Accordingly, when conducting any research using such method the researcher is required to inquire the why and how to search for a closer justification to a particular problem.

#### 1.7.1.1. Steps in Conducting Qualitative Research

In their book entitled “Methods in Educational Research: From Theory to Practice” Lodico et al (2006) identified a procedure the researcher goes through to conduct any qualitative study. Such strategy has been employed to fulfill the current investigation and to seek a well-managed work. It includes the following stages:

##### 1.7.1.1.1 Identifying a research topic

According to the researcher’s background knowledge demonstrated from preliminary readings, pre-established observations, and his personal experiences connected with an enthusiasm to investigate the field, a topic is to be identified. The latter can be neatly focused, even if it was set in the first place, before gathering data base. The researcher then tries to probe the utility of feedback and new technologies in refining students’ performances owing to the outstanding role of such a skill in the EFL educational landscape.

### 1.7.1.1.2 Conducting a Review of Related Literature

Having the topic identified, the researcher moves to search for information about the issue under investigation. Consequently, research questions are defined and refined according to the theoretical assumptions provided by experts in the field. Even though the latter would help pin down the topic, qualitative researchers do not prefer too much theory because they believe that it would be confusing.

The enquirer at this stage gathers all possible data related to ICTs and the way eminent figures in the area tackled it. An understanding of feedback practice in the course of teaching the writing skill follows to establish a link between the availability of integrating new technologies in such a process. Reviewing the literature, thereby, aids narrowing and refocusing the ideas.

### 1.7.1.1.3 Defining the Role of the Researcher

The nature of qualitative study necessitates establishing a thorough real standpoint. Accordingly, after identifying a topic and reviewing the necessary data, a participatory role of the researcher should be set. For this, she needs to establish an insider's perception. The latter requires close interactions in the field under scrutiny to gain the necessary information from the target population. Thereby, administering an entry to the field and maintaining good relations and trustworthy communication with the personnel and the informants would be practical to construct potential and reliable data. These data would stand as a corner stone in conducting the investigation.

Once the researcher selects the participants based on the research questions and the literature review, he has to construct what is called foreshadowed questions. ***“Foreshadowed questions are designed by the researcher and are based on the topics or research questions identified both at the start of the study and as the study progresses”*** (Lodico et al, ibid: 266). These help managing data collection tools and instruments necessary to fulfill the enquiry.

Investigators who seek qualitative data collection basically make use of ***“observations, interviews, and document analysis”*** (Lodico et al, ibid) as essential tools used to seek reliable information about the examined aspect. The procedure followed is often called triangulation that is basically administered to ensure quality and validate the outcomes.

The researcher then moves on to analysis through reading and reviewing raw data to further provide an explanation to the results. In qualitative researches interpretations are often needed in addition to establishing a link between the current findings and the precedent investigations in the field.

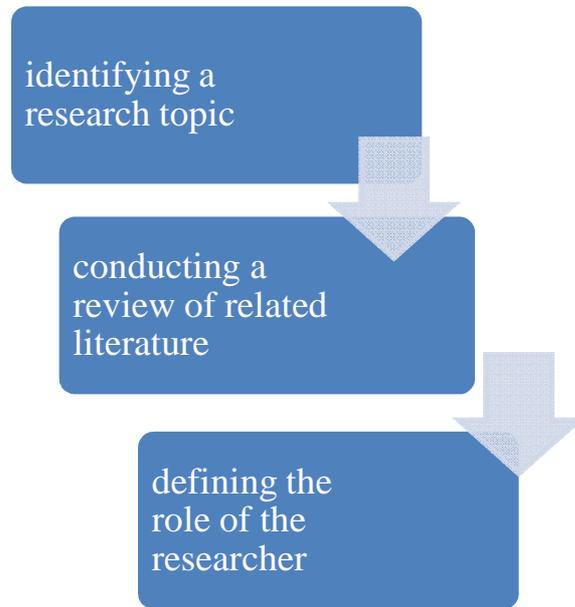


Diagram 1.1. Steps in conducting qualitative research

### 1.7.1.2 Types of qualitative research

Researchers tend to typify qualitative enquiries into distinct taxonomies. On their part, Lodico and her colleagues (2006) suggest a fourfold classification of qualitative researches. These types are thought to be the most commonly used by researchers. They identify ethnography, *“the science of writing about tribes or ...writing about cultural groups”* (267). Ethnographic researchers probe phenomena related to different cultural and societal aspects. The overriding purpose of such enquiry is to construct knowledge about a particular culture and its sole characteristics. Case study another facet of interpretive research is an *“in-depth understanding of an individual, group, or situation”* (269). Both ethnographies and case studies count on specific sampling to draw clear descriptions and precise analyses of raw data.

Phenomenological research on the other hand seeks an understanding of a given phenomenon according to what people think about it and how do they perceive it. A closer look at the participants’ experiences gives the researcher an in depth reflexive reasoning to provide accurate and worldly interpretations. They try to identify the unique trees within

the forest through a sophisticated use of interviews that are thought to ascertain confidential raw data.

Grounded theory, on its own, has adopted its main tenets from the work of Glasser and Strauss (1967). Such method of enquiry relies greatly on ‘constant comparison’ as a key instrument for analysis. The researcher aims thereby, are totally different from those in other fields; he seeks an overgeneralization of findings. Likewise the length of time in conducting the research is so germane and necessary that the analysis of the findings would be more reliable and applicable to other situations.

### **1.7.1.2.1 Case Study Methodology**

Case study the best known method of research has been chosen to fulfill the current investigation. It is the most viable strategy through which the researcher can understand the selected population and consequently interact with them positively. The latter will stand as point of departure in probing the situation to identify certain attributes that would furnish the present survey.

#### **a. Definition of Case Study**

It is universally acknowledged that case study is one of the most practical forms of educational research that implies a *“close examination of people, topics, issues, or programmes”* (De Marrais et al, 2004: 218). Besides, such study requires, according to Scott and Morrison (2006), seeking raw data by answering focused questions with reference to an ordinary real state where the issue under investigation cannot be controlled unlike artificially created cases. It is mainly used to seek a generalization of defined results determined from a particular examined case with an emphasis on two basic variables; the insiders to the case i.e. participants’ voice and the external interpreter i.e. the researcher. In view of that, Adelman et al (as stated in Nunan, 1992:74-75) assert that

*“Although case studies have often been used to sensitise researchers to significant variables subsequently manipulated or controlled in an experimental design, that is not their only role. The understandings generated by case study are significant in their own right. It is tempting to argue that the accumulation of case studies allows theory building via tentative hypotheses culled from the accumulation of single instances.”*

The researchers, therefore, hold that the implications of a case study are often manifested along various aspects including their reliability since they provide qualitative outcomes.

Yet, such a view has been criticized by many experts in the field especially in terms of generalization of findings.

This kind of inquiry is a facet of qualitative research that investigates a specific area of interest *“to gain insight into an in-depth understanding of an individual, group, or situation”* (Lodico et al, 2006: 269). *“It provides a unique example of real people in real situations; enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply by presenting them with abstract theories or principles”* (Cohen et al, 2007: 253).

According to Scott and Morrison (2006) the use of this research represents a challenge since any enquiry requires a case to be examined and probed. Thus, determining whether a particular investigation is or is not a case study is no longer an easy task. In other words, Smith (1988, cited in Nunan, *ibid*) confesses that the term itself is confusing while Gomm et al (2000, cited in Scott and Morrison, *ibid*) assert that it is universally recognized that *“there is always some unit, or sets of units, in relation to which data are collected and/or analyzed”*. For this reason, Adelman et al (1976, as cited in Nunan, *ibid*) draw a clear cut distinction between case studies and other types of qualitative researches. They declare that CSs focus on a single instance or a bounded system such as a class to a school district. Scott and Usher (2011), on the other hand, differentiate between two separate facets, “either as a set of procedures integral to all types of research; or paradigmatically separate form of research”, owing to which such study might be understood.

To better understand and appreciate what is exactly meant by case study, a collection of definitions is to be afforded. To name but few, Nunan (*ibid*: 75) admits that:

***“Case study research may be initiated in one of two ways. In the first of these, an issue or hypothesis is proposed, and an instance drawn from that class is selected and studied. In the second, a case is selected and studied in its own right rather than an exemplar of a class.”***

Consequently, one can point out that a case study research implies in the first place a sample to be examined that stands as the single unit or what is called a bounded system. The latter links the whole body with the particular entity under investigation so that conclusions can be drawn to ascertain solutions, theories, or generalizations. Besides, case studies are determined by the context in which it occurs and should consider the following (Cohen et al, *ibid*):

1. A sequential description and analysis of the interrelated procedures and observations;
2. A focus on the participants themselves to avoid bias and to understand their perception of events to underline its germane features;
3. A researcher's contributions and reporting of events and procedures.

### **b. Typology of Case Studies**

Researchers strive to categorize case studies under several typologies. Stenhouse (1983, cited in Nunan, *ibid*), for instance, identifies: the neo-ethnographic studies that provide a profound examination of *participant observer* of a single case, the evaluative investigations are meant basically to gauge a given policy or practice, the multi-site studies that are undertaken by different researchers in diverse contexts, and the teachers research or action studies are conducted by instructors in a defined classroom or school to improve a set of identified skills.

Bassey (1999, cited in Scott and Morrison, *ibid*), on the other hand, provides a threefold classification: theory seeking that basically looks for a provisional generalization of findings, evaluative which focus on investigating education in particular to gauge the effectiveness of a given programme, system or project, and story-telling case study that is intended to recount a particular event or story along a given period of time. Yin (1984 as cited in Cohen et al, *ibid*) describes three types of case studies according to their estimated findings: exploratory: that may direct to formulating an educational statement based on several studies, descriptive: it provides description of experiences, and explanatory: is a study that seeks an exploration and understanding of other tested experimentations.

The inquirer, in the current study, makes use of exploratory descriptive action research or what has been named as evaluative case study. The researcher is concerned in finding out “how” do English language students at the University of Mascara think of their writing abilities and performances in different EFL contexts, “why” such particular perceptions are established. The investigator is also interested in figuring out “how” teachers view their students' skillfulness and efficiency, especially their composition. Moreover, she tries to point out “what” teachers think of the infusion of information technologies and feedback to foster students' learning outcomes and productivity. Whilst the researcher has little control over the variables, the interpretations of the findings can be

made through a descriptive perspective and personal experiences to uncover some issues related to the teaching of the writing skill.

### 1.7.2. Quantitative Research

*“Quantitative research was seen to offer a structured and highly regulated way of achieving a macro perspective of the overarching trends in the world, whereas qualitative research was perceived to represent a flexible and highly context-sensitive micro perspective of the everyday realities of the world”* (Tavakoli, 2012, 510)

Quantitative research is a formal, objective, systematic process attempts to find out statistical facts derived from, for instance, surveys and questionnaires in order to deduce reliable numerical information when enquiring a given field. It is assumed to be built “on the measurement of quantity or amount” (Kothari, *ibid*). This research method is used; to describe variables, to examine relationships among variables, and to determine cause-and-effect interactions between variables.’ (Burns & Grove 2005:23)

### 1.8. Data Triangulation

Triangulation has been defined as using more than two techniques to researching human comportment. Social researchers use it as a multi-method approach to map out the complexity and richness of certain behavioural aspects from different standpoints.

Data triangulation is a process that involves the use of multiple data sources to provide reliable and deeper understanding of the issue under investigation for a single method can never shed light on a phenomenon and may bias or distort the whole picture. Qualitative researchers generally use this technique to ensure that an account is rich, robust, comprehensive and well-developed.

It is universally acknowledged that triangulation has countless advantages over the educational research including confidence on the part of the researcher who uses such method to provide neutral and theoretical information. The obtained data from contrasting methods are more reliable and guarantee greater assurance. Moreover, the researchers value the use of triangular methods because qualitative and quantitative approaches when intertwined overcome what is termed as method boundedness as it opens up interpretations and further expectations. (Cohen et al, 2007).

Denzin (1970, as cited in Cohen et al, *ibid*) set up a classification of different types of triangulation. He has identified time triangulation, space triangulation, combined levels of triangulation, theoretical triangulation, and methodological triangulation. The researcher in the current investigation makes use of the methodological triangulation and more particularly the implication of several methods in the same investigation. Three main research instruments have been utilized: an observation, a questionnaire, and written tests i.e. writing assignments.

### **1.8.1. Written Tests**

A test has been defined as a stimuli or questions to be answered by the study sample members for a particular enquiry (Van Horn and Monsen, 2008) . Educational researchers made use of testing documentation because it is the most viable technique. It is thought to be a powerful method of data collection. It is also a reliable and valid tool in assessing students' achievements and aptitudes. Cohen et al (2007) admit that there are certain issues the educational researcher has to take into consideration when using testing as a research tool. To name but a few, the type and purpose of the test is to be defined, whether it is individual or group test, what is tested in particular (achievement, skillfulness, intelligence ...etc), and whether they are norm referenced or criterion referenced.

Tests in educational research have been subject to a good deal of criticism. Some reckon that tests may lead to misleading results; the construct to be testified is to be tightly measured otherwise it would be impoverished and incoherent, last but not least, test takers may reflect different performances that hinder the researcher and thereby misrepresent the study.

Tests have been classified into different taxonomies, yet the best known classification is that of norm referenced, comparing student to another students' achievement and criterion referenced test that provides the exact information about a student and the criteria he is required to fulfill while learning. The researcher, in the current study, will then use the criterion referenced testing to gauge learners' progress and to formatively assess their apprenticeship. Such type of tests aids the investigator to testify the hypotheses, supports the findings, and recommend certain suggestions.

The test employed was in form of writing assignments targeted to measure learner's assimilation of certain written skills. The assignments are corrected and based on the

obtained information a subsequent lesson follows to provide feedback and to show students how to make use of certain software and connectivity materials that may facilitate the writing process.

### 1.8.2.Observational Research Phase

Observation is acknowledged as the most commonly used technique by educational researchers. Since they are guided by particular procedures, scientific observers are thought to “*see what participants cannot*” (Foster, 1996, cited in Scott and Morrison, 2005:168). They therefore “*listen, watch, and record... what informants say and do in specific educational settings and time frames*” (Scott and Morrison, *ibid*: 167). Observational research thereby affords them opportunities to unfold what is obscure and to give certain probed issues different perspectives and interpretations. Researchers then tend to collect vivid data from its genuine context to shed light upon very particular educational areas under investigation (Cohen et al, 2007).

Although the observation as a research tool has many limitations including lack of control over the variables as humans are constantly changing their behaviours owing to their moods, personal lives, or other circumstances, it is usually a valuable way of gathering raw data. “*Since observation enables the researcher to note down what he or she sees as it occurs, observational data are often more accurate.*” (Jupp and Sapsford, 2006: 59).

Concomitant with the purpose of research, several typologies came forth including; naturalistic, participant, systematic, and structured observation (Scott and Morrison, *ibid*). On their part Cohen et al (2007) provided a more comprehensible classification according to several dimensions including the role of the researcher, the methodological framework, and data collection procedures (Scott and Usher, 2011). To name but few, Structured quantitative and unstructured qualitative observation, participant and non-participant observation, overt and covert observation, and direct and indirect observation. Each of the pre-mentioned typologies has its own guidelines that consequently set the yardsticks to data interpretation.

As far as the observational research is concerned, researchers most often classify it into two main types or approaches either structured or less structured observation. Both of them have different aims, purposes, and procedures. Thus, in her investigation the researcher makes use of less structured observation or what has been referred to as

‘ethnographic’ or ‘unstructured’ observation. Since one of the objectives of such an instrument is to produce primary information through recording directly what is seen by the researcher, participant unstructured observation count on the involvement in the area where her engagement changes respectively from complete participant to complete observer (as cited by Scott and Usher, 2011). Jupp and Sapsford (2000: 63) further clarify such an aim when they state that *“the observer participates in some way with the group under study...while at the same time observing the behaviour of group members”*. It requires an understanding of humans behaviours related to different social aspects according to which they interact. Even though unstructured observation is thought to be flexible and less prepared, it provides qualitative and detailed data from the chosen context.

*“Since the greater the number of observations, the greater the reliability of the data might be”* (Cohen et al, ibid: 408), the investigator will adopt an insider’s role in the intended context. Along three years, the investigator has taught and attended written expression courses to second year students at the University of Mascara. She further has tried to testify and record possible information on the viability of teaching such overwhelming task using some of the available technologies in the institution. Besides, she has documented some data about the other ways this module is instructed to construct and establish reliable data related to the probed topic. So as Morrison (1993, as quoted in Cohen et al, ibid: 405) puts it,

*“being immersed in a particular context over time not only will the salient features of the situation emerge and present themselves but a more holistic view will be gathered of the relationship of factors”*

Such full integration in the area would facilitate the description of the interactions occurring along this period of time. This will consequently aid recording; the speech acts, non-verbal communication, timing of events, and the processes involved. That information will be categorized and carefully described.

There is a consensus that interviews, conversations, field notes, and audio or video recordings are used to record observation. The researcher, therefore, uses field notes in her investigation since January 2014, every Sunday and Monday. During such period basic notes have been recorded. So, the following questions, even if it is an extended list, will be adapted and employed from the work of Lecompte and Preissele (as cited in Cohen et al, ibid:405-406) to direct the observational procedure. These include

- Who is in the group and who is taking part?
- How many people are there and what characterize each one?
- How do participants come to be members of the group?
- What is taking place?
- How routine, regular, patterned, irregular and repetitive are the behaviours observed?
- What sources are being used in the course?
- How are activities being described, justified, explained, organized, labeled?
- How do different participants behave towards each other?
- What are the statuses and roles of the participants?
- Who is making decisions, and for whom?
- What is being said and by whom?
- What is being discussed frequently and infrequently?
- What appear to be the significant issues that are being discussed?
- What non verbal communication is taking place?
- Who is talking and who is listening?
- When does the event take place?
- How long does the course take place?
- How is time used in the course?
- How are the individual elements of the course connected?
- How are change and stability managed?
- What rules govern the social organization of, and behaviour in, the event?
- Why is this event occurring, and occurring in the way that it is?
- What meanings are participants attributing to what is happening?
- What are the history, goals, and values of the group?

The aforementioned questions will set the benchmarks to ascertain some information that will be categorized according to Lofland's (1971 as cited in Cohen et al) taxonomy; *acts*: are the set of actions performed by both the teacher and his students, *activities*: last longer to seek better outcomes, *meanings*: how are certain events or acts explained,

participation: what does the chosen group perform, relationships: the different interactions among the group members, and settings: description of the observed local and the interactions taking place.

The Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching i.e. The COLT (as cited in Nunan 1992) developed a refined plan that would enable the educational researcher in the present study to describe neatly what is being observed. Such a scheme is twofold; portrayal of classroom activities and reporting classroom language. The next table highlights the major procedures as occurring in the COLT scheme.

Features	Questions
<b>Part A: classroom activities</b>	
1. Activity type	What is the activity type- e.g., drill, role play, dictation?
2. Participant organization	Is the teacher working with the whole classroom or not? Are students working in groups or individually? If group work, how is it organized?
3. Content	Is the focus on classroom management, language (form, function, discourse, sociolinguistics), or others? Is the range of topics is narrow or broad? Who selects the topic- teacher, students, or both?
4. Student modality	Are students involved in listening, speaking, reading, writing, or combination of these?
5. Materials	What types of materials are used? How long is the text? What is the sources/purpose of the materials? How controlled is their use?
<b>Part B: classroom language</b>	
1. Use of target language	To what extent is the target language used?
2. Information gap	To what extent is requested information predictable in advance?
3. Sustained speech	Is discourse extended or restricted to a single sentence, clause, or word?
4. Reaction to code or message	Does the interlocutor react to code or message?
5. Incorporation of preceding utterance	Does the speaker incorporate the preceding item into his or her contribution?
6. Discourse initiation	Do learners have opportunities to initiate discourse?
7. Relative restriction of linguistic form	Does the teacher expect a specific form, or there is no expectation of particular linguistic form?

Table1.1 Questions Related to the Principal Features of the COLT Scheme (adopted from Nunan, 1992: 99)

Stimulated recall will also be employed in some ways as another observational technique to get some facts related to the issue under scrutiny. Nunan (ibid: 94) contends that such a strategy makes

*“the researcher records and transcribes parts of a lesson and then gets the teacher (and where possible, the students) to comment on what was happening at the time that the teaching and learning took place. Such technique can yield insights into processes of teaching and learning which would be difficult to obtain by other means.”*

In a post session discussions took place. The researcher converse the teacher to get an understanding of what was delivered and the aim behind using certain techniques when presenting the course.

### **1.8.3. The Questionnaire**

The questionnaire is universally acknowledged as the most admired method of collecting raw data open to measurement on attitudes and opinions. Such method allows students to respond freely in an ample period of time to the designed questions. It is also viewed as the ever structured and quicker technique for collecting quantitative data when compared to others as it enables the researcher to pile up information responsive to suggestions and influences. Unlike participant observation and documentation (Nunan, 1992), such an instrument includes “simple but straight forward directions for the respondents so that they may not feel any difficulty in answering the questions” (Kothari, 2004: 114). Questionnaire has been defined in a variety of ways; one can affirm that they refer to

*“The use of questions to elicit responses in self-completion (by electronic or postal means), face to face (survey interviews) and telephone formats in order to generate data that is quantified in a case-by-variable data matrix”* (Marsh, 1982, quoted in Scott and Morrison, 2006: 189)

Questionnaires are generally administered to seek certain concerns. These fall into threefold; philosophy, technique, and politics (De Vaus, 1996 and Burton, 2000 as cited in Scott and Morrison, 2006) that consequently help piloting them. Philosophical interests show that questionnaires are less theoretical as they are based on empirical and scientific model of inquiry which considerably lacks creativity and imagination. Accordingly, they were subject to criticism. Most scholars contend that surveys establish certain link among variables and not causes of the studied phenomenon. So they provide separate rather than consistent outcomes.

Technical concerns, from another point of view, portray the complexities that hinder design and analysis. Yet, advocates of questionnaires support this criticism in case when they are designed inappropriately without any acknowledged purpose. More significantly, they accept the fact that qualitative analysis has to go in tandem with the statistical finding to not open up multiple interpretations. At another, political manipulations lead educational researchers to carry out a thorough analysis of current data sets available in the area. This would prevent any misunderstanding of the outcomes and carefully present them.

It is of importance to look at the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires before adopting them as a research tool. As for Gilham (2007, as cited in Souryana, 2012: 160) the main pros include;

- a. Low cost in time and money
- b. Easy to get information from a lot of people quickly
- c. Respondents can complete the questionnaire when it suits them
- d. Analysis of answers to closed questions is straightforward
- e. Less pressure for an immediate response
- f. Respondents' anonymity
- g. Lack of interviewer bias
- h. Standardization of questions
- i. Can provide suggestive data for testing a hypothesis

While the major cons incorporate

- a. Problems of data quality
- b. Typically low response rate unless sample captive
- c. Problems of motivating respondents
- d. The need for brevity and relatively simple questions
- e. Misunderstandings cannot be corrected
- f. Questionnaire development is often poor
- g. Seek information just by asking questions
- h. Assume respondents have answers available in an organized fashion
- i. Lack of control over order and context of answering questions
- j. Questions wording can have major effect on answers
- k. Respondents literacy problems
- l. People talk more easily than they write
- m. Impossible to check seriousness or honesty of answers
- n. Respondents uncertainty as to what happens to data

### **1.8.3.1. Typology of Questionnaires**

Researchers tend to classify questionnaires into several types, Cohen et al Typology of questionnaires, for instance, includes: structured; are thought to be piloted and refined before handing the final version through the help of the participants. This would ease the analysis and data interpretation and thereby provides reliable outcomes, semi structured; leads to bias since they require less preparation time and rely heavily on theory and research questions as they set the agenda, and unstructured; comprise open ended items that give respondents freedom in providing their views in their own ways.

#### **1.8.3.1.1. Types of Questionnaire Items**

Cohen et al (2007) identified several types of questions researchers use in surveys. For instance, Dichotomous questions, multiple choice questions, rank ordering, rating scales, constant sum questions, ratio data questions, matrix questions, contingency questions are likely to shape questionnaires.

Whatever their type and purpose, questionnaires most often include open ended or closed ended questions. The former is referred to as open ended item in which the researcher pinpoints the possible answers that would be ticked by the participants. The latter, on the other hand, allows the respondents to answer freely.

In order to identify the main hindrances faced by learners when they write, the researcher administered a questionnaire to sixty second year students from the groups where the observation takes place. The student questionnaire includes 28 items; students have to tick the adequate answer. It also includes 3 open ended question aiming to provide suggestions student perceive as important in ameliorating their writing ability.

As to the second questionnaire, it is distributed to twenty four teachers but only seven teachers respond while the others claim that they do not teach written expression. The researcher manages 39 items and 14 open ended questions which purpose is to inquire the availability of integrating ICTs in the process of providing feedback in improving the writing skill. It also seeks teachers' contribution by providing valuable strategies that might improve students' performance.

#### **1.8.3.1.2. Description of the Questionnaire Addressed to Students**

The questionnaire is made up of twenty eight items as we have already mentioned. It is divided into four main sections each devoted to fulfill an aim. The latter include:

pedagogical use of ICTs, writing instruction, the use of technologies in writing instruction, and the use of technologies in feedback provision.

The first section, pedagogical use of ICTs, aims to finding out the extent to which technologies are supported and how their use is fostered in education generally. The items consequently deals with the kind of technological tools available at the institution, students' perception about the IT expertise, and the areas that can be improved through ICT inclusion.

The second division, writing instruction, is intended to ascertaining students approaching of their writing ability and the possible ways such a skill can be improved. The questions included look for, the importance of composition instruction in foreign language acquisition, the difficulties encountered while writing, the processes involved, and the possibility of self assessing progress.

The third dissection, feedback use, deals with the level to which feedback can improve productivity. It considerably seeks an understanding of the type of feedback students receive, the importance of feedback practices, the writing aspects refined by feedback, the type of feedback received, the extent to which feedback improves writing performance.

The last part, the use of technologies in feedback provision, is intended to determine the viability of integrating ICTs in the feedback process. It tackles mainly teacher's use of electronic feedback, the students' use of E-folios in gauging progress, the type of innovation used in self assessment, and finally an examination of learners' perceptions towards feedback practices and teacher' use of the process.

#### **1.8.3.1.3. Description of the Questionnaire Addressed to Teachers**

The questionnaire contrived as part and partial of the current investigation is intended to testify the formulated hypotheses i.e. the viability of integrating ICTs in writing instruction. It is designed to teachers at the University of Mascara to complete the raw data related to the probed phenomenon. As writing is thought to constrain students, the researcher finds it useful to address the questionnaire to writing teachers and teachers of other modules who can provide us with handy information about the actual level of their students and the possible aspects that had to be highlighted so that learners ameliorate their productivity i.e. writing performance.

The questionnaire is headed by an introductory section explaining that it is part of an investigation that is intended to examine the impact of ICTs inclusion on the students writing performances. This part explicates the way teachers are required to answer the items included i.e. either by ticking the right item or giving a full response based on their own experience and expertise.

The survey is made up of thirty nine items that are of different types; open and closed ended questions. It is divided into three subdivisions each with a deliberate purpose. Their names are as follows: “Pedagogical Use of ICTs”, “Writing Instruction”, and “Feedback Use”.

The first division entitled “pedagogical use of ICTs” is meant to find out the extent to which technologies are supported in the institution. It looks for the teachers’ perceptions of technological expertise and the department’s role in fostering IT use. Moreover, it tackles the role of ICTs as management tools. Last but not least, this part enquires the use of technologies in attainment support.

The second part “Writing Instruction” is considerably intended to inquire about the time devoted to the teaching of writing, whether it suffices students to acquire the major aspects of composition, and the problems encountered while instructing such a skill. Besides, it looks for the teacher’s consideration of the students’ needs and the anticipated objectives. In addition to all the forgoing assessing writing and the way it is directed is questioned to find out the teacher’s attitude towards students’ performances. It also includes an enquiry on the use of the process and the product approaches designed on the Likert scale (adopted from Al-Mahrooqi et al, 2015).

The third section “Feedback Use” is designed to ascertain the extent to which feedback is important in refining productivity, the type of feedback provided, the procedures used in error correction, the aspects of writing focused, and the effects of positive and negative feedback. Moreover, it looks for the principles from which feedback practices stem and the time needed to accomplish the desired outcomes. This part comprises a set of questions that are meant the find out students’ perceptions of the process, its effects on progress and the factors that influence the type of feedback employed.

The last part “The Use of Technologies in Writing Instruction” focuses mostly on enquiring the use of electronic feedback to gauge students’ productions, E-folios’ role in monitoring progress, and the types of technologies implemented when necessary to provide feedback.

The collection of the quantitative raw data goes through two stages. In the first go, the administration and the piloting of the questionnaires took place on October 2015. Some questionnaires were distributed to testify their clarity. Shortly after receiving the questionnaires, especially the teachers’ questionnaire, the researcher did some corrections and refined them to be redistributed in April 2016.

### **1.9.Data Analysis Procedures**

This section is devoted to presenting data analysis procedures. It presents thus the statistical and discourse analysis methods to analyzing data obtained from the questionnaire.

#### **1.9.1.Analyzing and Interpreting Quantitative Data**

Cresswell (2013) contends that analyzing the data requires several steps each with an intended purpose and estimated results. First of all the researcher should prepare and organize his data for analysis. The latter consists of scoring the data i.e. assigning a numeric value to each response in the instrument to be used. Then, he has to determine the type of scores to analyze the responses such as: the single item score that is an individual score assigned to each question for each participant in the investigation, the summed score which is assigned to individuals and meant to be compared from one time to another, or net scores that present an obvious difference for each individual. In the current investigation the summed score will be chosen to value the findings into statistics and to compute an overall value for one variable.

Later on, the researcher selects a computer statistical programme that enables her analyze the data. The Excel software will be the most convenient way to clarify the findings. Shortly after the investigator selects the programme to be used, he inputs the data by relocating it from the instrument into the computer file to prepare it for analysis. Analyzing the data is to follow. The analysis has to go in tandem with the research questions and the proposed hypotheses. Quantitative data in particular calls for both inferential and descriptive analysis. The former indicates conclusions about the entire

group based on one variable, tests the null hypotheses, or relates the different variables in the instrument. The latter seeks general tendencies that enable the researcher to gain overall understanding of the data set (Mackey and Gass: 2005).

### **1.9.2. Analyzing Qualitative Data**

It is universally acknowledged that there is no one single method to analyzing qualitative data, yet, the type of the study undertaken takes the lion share in determining the type of analysis to be utilized. A case study, for instance, is written as descriptive narrative with certain issues raised but more importantly with events conforming to chronology.

Cohen et al (2007) provide five ways of organizing and presenting data analysis. The most prevalent methods are those determined by people/respondents, by issue, and finally by instruments. The researcher, thus, is to present and organize data using the participants by presenting their total responses and grouping them according to the issue raised in the research questions. This is very useful because it enables the researcher to preserve coherence and consistency of the material. Besides, data presented from the questionnaires are followed by, as stated by Cohen et al, documentary data and field notes.

### 1.10. Research Design

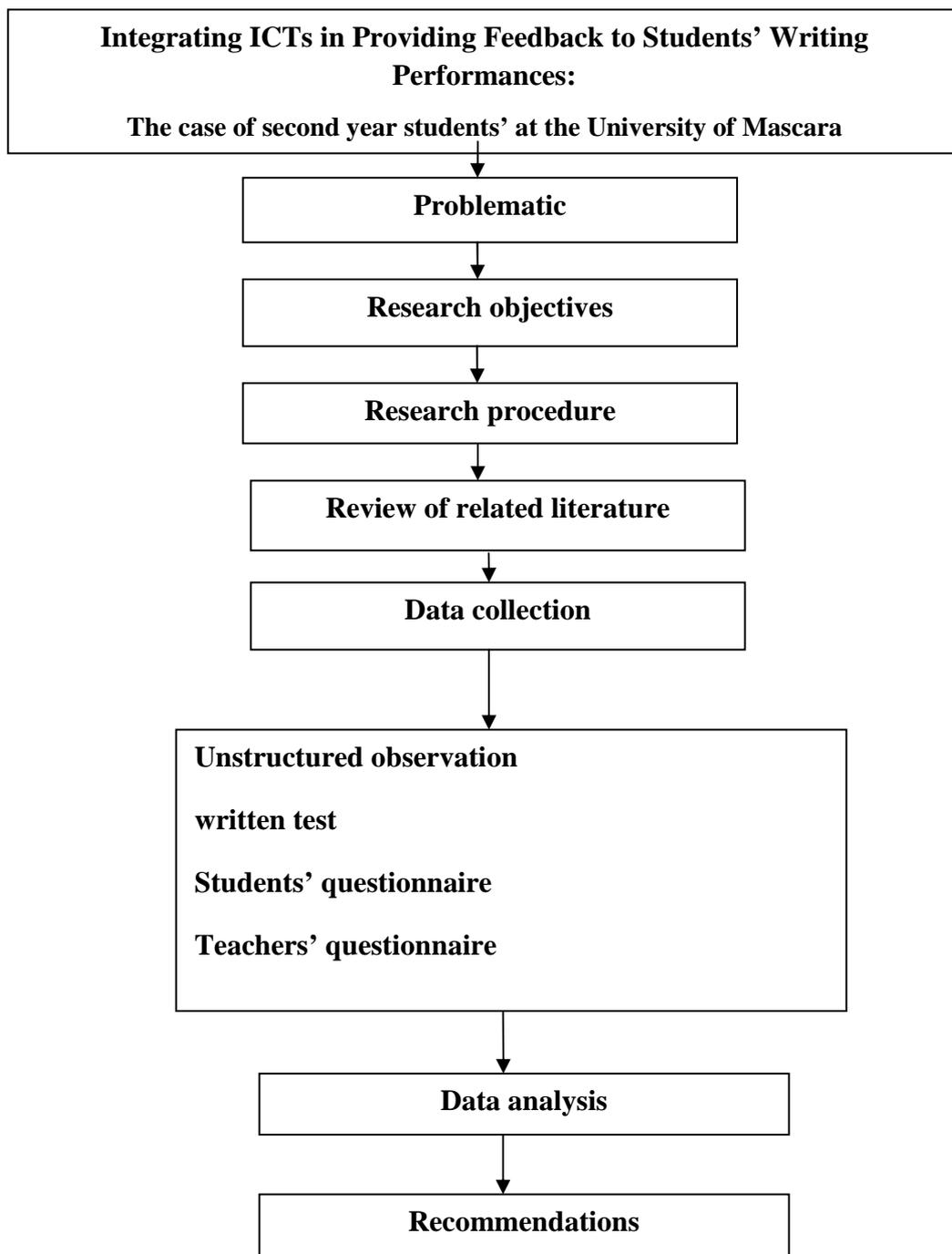


Diagram 1.2. Research Design

The following diagram will further explain the structure of the study. It includes the main steps the researcher goes through to fulfill her investigation. In the first go a problematic was put in focus to direct the whole research. The research objectives are then set to be followed by defining the research procedure employed, a review of the related

literature, data collection, an analysis of the findings, and finally recommendations are suggested for feedback implementation.

### **1.11.Limitations of the Study**

Time has a considerable effect on the fulfillment of the current study. The short amount of time devoted to the writing course for instance constrains the researcher from gaining an accurate understanding of the issues involved when providing or receiving feedback and to increase reliability of the findings. Besides, the poor connection to the internet curtails the possibility of successfully integrate connectivity into the teaching of writing and the provision of electronic feedback, yet, with some students it works only through the use of the social media, more particularly facebook.

The access to the sample population was another constrain that paralyzes the researcher; even its size was noticeably small. Access to some teachers proved difficult and even subject to change. Further, most of them did not hand back the questionnaires or even offer some help due to personal reasons. The case exacerbated by the resignation of the head of the department that put pressure on the staff and severely limited access to the participants.

One more weakness of the research design was the open ended questions included in the questionnaires. Perhaps, due to their limited background, most of the participants left them unanswered. Another limitation is that the researcher and the analyst are the same person that could lead to bias. However, triangulation is used to avoid researcher bias and to ensure validity.

### **1.12.Conclusion**

In this chapter the researcher provided a clear description of the investigation. It has dealt primarily with the research design, its procedures, the sampling, and the limitations of the study. In addition, some information about the linguistic profile in Algeria and the teaching of languages has been provided to offer a clear understanding of the learning situation and the students' background.

# **Chapter two**

## **ICTs and the Writing Process**

## 2.1.Introduction

In this chapter the researcher is concerned with providing a theoretical background related to Instructional Communication technologies ICTs. It includes a definition of ICTs, the motives behind using them in education, insights into the implementation of ICTs in teaching and the stages of ICTs inclusion in education. Besides, it offers a short description of the different models of ICTs inclusion in education, the traditional view of the learning process, and the main theories that support the new view of the learning process.

## 2.2.Definition of ICTs

The use of the term ICT in education as explained by Glen and Anderson (2002, cited in UNESCO report, 2004: 4) stemmed from precedent terms like *information technology* (IT) and *new technology* around the 1970s to represent the tools that are used to directly access information (Jo Tondeur, 2007). They further argue that the link between communication and information technology is basically due to the communicative feature of the new technologies. This has been emphasised by Anderson and Baskin (2002, *ibid*) when they state that: ***“The addition of communication to previous terms such as information emphasized the growing importance attributed to the communicative aspects of new technologies.”***

Anderson and Glen (*ibid*) also define ICT as principally related to *“those technologies that are used for accessing, gathering, manipulating and presenting or communicating information”*. Besides, Toomey (2002, *ibid*) contends that

***“The technologies could include hardware (e.g. computers and other devices); software application and connectivity (e.g. access to the internet, local networking, infrastructure, and video conferencing).”***

Moursund (2003, cited in UNESCO report, 2004: 4) has further provided a thorough definition of ICT to include

***“the full range of computer hardware, computer software, telecommunication facilities ... the full range of display and projection devices used to view computer output. It includes the local area networks that allow computer system and people to communicate with each other. It includes digital cameras, computer games, CDs, DVDs, cell phones, telecommunication satellites, and fiber optics. It includes computerized machinery, and computerized robots.”***

Moreover Downs et al 2003(ibid) differentiates between educational technology that consists of a variety of tools for “*accessing, presenting, or communicating information such as projector equipment and video and audio technologies including distance education formats such as radio and television*” and ICT in general. To state it differently, these technologies are described as media that are principally used as learning strategies to acquire and deliver knowledge whether they are one-way such as TV and print or two-way as cell phone and video conferencing i.e. *broadcast* or *communicative*. (Nedjah, 2010)

### **2.3.Motives Behind the Use of ICT in Education:**

It is generally believed today that communication among people became the easiest in the world since the evolvment and introduction of new media and technologies. Within the birth of the printing press and the telegraph, the pace with which those means were developed increased, leading people all over the globe to come into contact using a variety of tools. Likewise, Rodgers (1986, cited in Kenning, Ibid: 26, 27) believes that the evolution of the human communication passed through four main epochs along which several devices were used to include: *writing, printing, telecommunication* (telegraph, telephone, radio and television), and *interactive communication*. To name but few, the World Wide Web today is considered as an interesting means of communication and a primary source of information especially after the introduction of smart phones. This affected most areas of life including education and language learning that consider technologies an important aid to enhance apprenticeship.

According to Tondeur, (2007) there are three main reasons that urge teachers and education personnel to infuse Instructional Technologies in the teaching learning process. These include,

1. Economic motives; the implementation of ICT promote improvement in society. It rather helps maintain an experienced work force and experts who know how to solve the problems associated with economy in their country.
2. Social motives; since ICT aid learners to be more autonomous and responsible for their attainment, they will seek and aspire to build a strong and well- informed society.

3. Educational motives; IT is thought to be a motivating and helpful issue in the teaching- learning activity. It is primarily used to support the learning environment and to focus more on learners and knowledge centered processes.

Makkar (1974, as quoted in Abbot, 2001: 67), on his part, identifies a set of reasons for using computer software in education.

- a. Technologies offer an understanding of any topic under scrutiny than is possible with a conventional approach.
- b. Unlike other methods, they are a time saving tools when learning to achieve the same results.
- c. Ease the teachers' task by affording handy techniques for innovative classes
- d. Technologies encourage learner centeredness by giving chance for the students' to exert the different learning tasks
- e. ICTs help ameliorate the teaching process
- f. They offer cheaper ways to carry out learning
- g. Technologies boost up the learners' motivation

#### **2.4.Stages of ICT Inclusion in Education:**

The infusion of ICT in education became the most problematic since it plays a crucial role in motivating students and enhancing their attainment. For this reason, several models have been proposed to appropriately integrate the new technologies into the learning process. In one of the UNESCO's (2003) publications, a model of ICT development in the educational system for teacher-learners has been suggested by a group of experts and that can be relevant to any instructional operation. The latter includes four main stages; *emerging, applying, infusing, and transforming*.

1. The emerging phase: at this level authorities provide the necessary tools that support the physical environment in which learning takes place. For instance, computers are given to the school whilst both of students and teachers can use them and know the basic steps to access and maintain such new machinery. In other words, they should feel at ease and confident to utilize the devices.
2. The applying phase: at this stage, teachers should use the innovations into the area they are interested in to improve their skills and competencies such as languages, mathematics, science...etc. for this, the UNESCO program proposes a

set of attributes that are congruent to the applying stage and any learner aims to achieve. Thus, users will be able to:

- a. know when, where, how, and where will using ICT help attain the pre set aims;
  - b. select the devices that fuel students' desire and motivation towards learning;
  - c. find out and choose the suitable data that help constructing a given idea.
3. The infusing phase: in this stage both of teachers and students incorporate the information Technologies into every single element of their learning i.e. in preparation and management to provide variation and more creativity to the educational process. At this level IT aid teachers to be;

*“Active and creative, able to stimulate and manage the learning of their students, as they infuse a range of learning styles and uses of ICT in achieving their educational goals... they use multimedia themselves, or make it available to their students to present what they have learned.”* (A Programme of Teacher Development, cited in UNESCO, 2003: 27)

4. The transforming phase: at this stage the use of ICT should be extended to encompass all the educational personnel; from teachers to students to administrators... etc. The roles of teachers and students should be altered leading to the consequent change in the learning process into a more learner centred one. Thereby, new views and ways in perceiving the teaching learning processes ought to take place to help construct knowledge authentically and work collaboratively in a flexible environment.

## **2.5.Models for ICT Integration in Education**

Scholars tend to administer a variety of models, based on their perception of ICTs and their assumptions about the teaching and learning of language, for the integration of technologies in the educational landscape. This section thus will deal with the main models generated to the investment and infusion of the available instructional technological tools.

### **2.5.1.The concerns based adoption model (CBAM)**

It has been stated that this model is inspired from the work of Fuller (1969) based on teachers' perception of ICTs and its impact on pedagogy in general. It was published in the mid 1970s to gain attention and foster several other models including the *ACOT* and the *instructional transformation* that help assess and implement the new technologies. It

consists basically of three stages: Stages of Concern “SoU”, Levels of Use “LoU”, and Innovation Configuration “IC”.

According to Hall and Hord (1987, cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 16) at the Stages of Concern one should wonder; “*how teachers or others perceive an innovation and how they feel about it*”. Thereby, it is preferable to think how to determine the status of the ICT in the lives of teachers and students so that one can formulate an idea about the possible use of technologies in a given educational environment.

Moreover, Hall, George, and Rutherford (1986, cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 49) afford a clear description of how to gain a close look at people’s apprehension and appreciation of the tools in hand. They grade from little concern to use the innovation to a focus on exploring the worldly profit that could be reached through the use ICTs and how best they can alter and control more sophisticated tools to lessen their ignorance of the world around them. To further understand what has been stated, the following table offers the stages through which the experts classify the concerns about the IT.

Table 2.1. Description of the CBAM Stages of Concern (SoC) adapted from Newhouse et al (ibid:49)

Stage	Description
Awareness	The innovation is introduced to make its users, the teacher and his students, aware of its different uses.
Informational	A clear relationship between the medium and education is drawn such as its characteristics, effects, and requirements for use to create a obvious atmosphere for learning and to ensure flexible use of the technologies.
Personal	At this stage the users’ roles are defined to identify what is required from each individual. Since they are uncertain with what to do, their duties are neatly devised to avoid inadequacy and problems within its usage.
Management	How best is to use the information and resources through ICTs is the focus of this stage. The tasks and the processes of using the innovation purposefully. Efficiency, organization, management, scheduling, time and requirements are thought to occupy the top of the list in the first go.
Consequence	Any expected consequence out of using the innovation is to be highlighted including the impact of the ICTs on the students’ apprenticeship. The teacher had better evaluate the outcomes and find out the relevance of the tools for the target students and thereby define the requirement for better assimilation.
Collaboration	Coordination and cooperation is needed to share expertise and therefore improve the outcomes.
Refocusing	An exploration of the benefits of the technologies is needed to pinpoint the possibilities of change and using more influential alternatives based on the students’ recommendations and need and inspired from experts in the field.

Besides and at the levels of use Hall and Hord ( ibid: 16) try to find out “*what a teacher is doing or not doing in relation to the innovation*”. In other words they wonder whether the teacher is able to evolve and improve when using the innovation to move from no use to an entire integration of ICTs in their field of interest. They further provide a guiding procedure upon which they could build their assumptions. The following provides a clear description of what they have devised.

Level	Description
Non-Use	At this stage knowledge about the innovation is poor. Even worse, the user may know nothing about the different issues related to the implementation of the technologies in facilitating the teaching learning process.
Orientation	The users start an exploration of the innovation and to acquire the necessary information related to their field of interest and the requirements for its use.
Preparation	Get used to the technologies by putting into practice what they have acquired.
Mechanical Use	In this special step the user focuses on the short range effects while putting his/her needs in focal point. Rather, the users try to master the benchmarks of technologies implementation.
Routine	The use of the innovation is getting steady through its continuous implementation. Little attention is paid to the using the ICTs, more importantly the focus is on reaching the aim.
Refinement	The impact of the innovation on the users’ achievements within short and long term effect need to be defined; especially the estimated changes based on the actual needs and field of interest.
Integration	At this stage the user is to fully integrate the technologies for more achievements. Creativity is required from them to boost up the level of knowledge construction and thereby achieve satisfactory outcomes.
Renewal	An evaluation of the quality of the tools in use to look for more practical alternatives. Besides, at this level, the users seek further positive effect on the outcomes for both the self and the whole system.

Table 2.2. Description of the CBAM Levels of Use (LoU) (adapted from Hall et al 1975 cited in Newhouse et al, ibid: 49)

At the third level which is the innovation configuration, the researchers focus more on the results that might be gained through the use of ICTs. Hall and Hord contend that this stage “*focuses on describing the operational forms an innovation can take*”. Furthermore, the specialists tried to investigate the possible effect of IT on the teaching process and the possible implementations of the innovation.

Access to computers	Student use of computers in the subject area	Classroom organization	Independent learning	Teacher-student relationship	Learning activities	Nature of task environment
<b>All students use computers at home and in school</b>	Suitable use of computers at home and in many lessons	Teachers make use of computers basically to change his teaching strategies	Students construct their own knowledge themselves through the regular use of computers	Students reach autonomy based on computer use	Teachers design activities that help improve higher and lower order thinking skills. These activities are both exploratory and practical	Students receive regular feedback on motivating and problem solving tasks
<b>All students use computers at home and sometimes in school</b>	Use of computers at home and in some lessons	Teachers most often use computer as an alternative teaching strategy	Students sometimes use computers to acquire sense of what they are learning	Students sometimes rely on themselves to gain knowledge	Teachers design practical activities germane to students experience	Students receive regular feedback on motivating tasks
<b>Some students have computers at home</b>	Students either use computers at home for learning or do not use them at all.	Teachers do not use computers	Students never use computers to learn	Students rely primarily on teachers in the process of learning	Teacher design either exploratory or practical activities to be completed	Students do never receive feedback on tasks that might be motivating

Table.2.3. Innovation Configuration Components and variations for Computers Supporting Learning (adapted from Newhouse, 1998 cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 48)

In the aforementioned table Newhouse (1998) tried to pinpoint the effects of computer use on each of; lessons and learning, classroom organization and the teacher’s style, autonomy in learning, teacher- student relationship, and learning activities and tasks. He reckons that whenever computers are used regularly, both of teachers and students reach a level of autonomy and motivation that could not be reached through other tools.

Besides, learners find themselves more involved and responsible for their own learning when they construct the meaning of what they are attaining by themselves.

### 2.5.2. Instructional Transformation Model

Such a model was fostered from the concerns based adoption model and Rogers's work (1983) to aid educational institutions devise their plans. It is recommended by Rieber & Welliver, Rieber and Marcinkiewicz (1989, 1993, 1994) who inspire from the Level of Use stage a hierarchy for a well established innovation in schooling. The elements that could be included in this hierarchy are: *non use*, *familiarization: the Reiberprocess of becoming acquainted with the notion of computer*, *utilization: teachers make use of the computers for many educational opportunities but are not committed*, *integration: crucial turning point of fully implementing the computer in education... for appropriate activities*, *reorientation*, and *evolution* (Rieber and welliver, 1989, cited in Newhouse et al, ibid: 18). This means that an educator have to pass along six main steps to reach a successful integration of ICT in instruction. To state it differently, Newhouse et al (2002: 18) further explain that

*“... the educator must go through a period of familiarization (entry) representing baseline exposure to technology, utilization (adoption) occurring when teachers try the technology; integration (adaption) beginning the appropriate use of ICT, reorientation (appropriation) where ICT becomes a part of the learning context and evolution or revolution (invention) where there is a change in methods and media to facilitate learning.”*

### 2.5.3. The Stages of Concern with Information Technology Model

It is primarily designed and meant for teachers to evaluate the significant impact of ICTs on their teaching. The stages of concern is perceived as a reform to the proposed CBAM model to include two major projects; PRINT (project on the implementation of new technologies), and PIT (project information technology). The former suggests a model that comprises seven dimensions a teacher should come through to overcome the constraints that detract him from using technologies, especially in instruction. These include; *awareness*: when a teacher has no prior interest or knowledge on the IT, *informational/personal*: the role of the teacher here is to try to improve and get some information on what is really required for using the innovation, *consequence*: at this level the instructor is to find out the importance and the consequent impact of ICTs on the students and their attainments, *management*: the point at which a teacher tries to adopt the

ICT in his classroom, *collaboration*: at this stage a sense of sharing the benefit and generalize the use of ICT all over the school should be considered, *refocusing 1&2*, an attempt to adapt and find other options when using the new technologies ought to be settled to promote creativity. (Vernooy-Gerritsen, 1994, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*)

Project information technology; on the other hand, provides a seven stages model devised by Collis (1993, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*). The model comprises; 1) *Unawareness*, 2) *Information Level*, 3) *Initial Personal Skill Level*, 4) *level of Routine Use of Some Aspects of the Innovation*, 5) *Extended Impact Level*, 6) *Contributor's level*, and 7) *Leadership level*. The pit project endeavors to aid teachers improve to reach the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> level. Collis' aim here is to widen the scope of infusing the technology beyond the adoption stage and to further exploit ICTs to adjust the different educational practices. Moreover, teachers should extend to alter the innovation itself to a more flexible and original use.

#### **2.5.4. Levels of Technology Implementation Framework**

It is another model fostered from the CBAM. Moersch (1997) inaugurated it to analyze teacher's high-tech competence at schools to elaborate a digital, collaborative, critical, and sustainable learning environment or what he calls *computer efficiency*, "***the degree to which computers are being used to support concept-based or process-based instruction, consequential learning, and higher order thinking skills***" (Moersch, 1997, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*: 21). Nevertheless, such an instrument was not supported since it makes use of a less reliable research tool (questionnaire) to find out skillfulness in using ICTs. The model has been developed to form a seven aspects replica for IT incorporation; *non use, awareness, exploration, infusion, mechanical integration, routine integration, expansion, and refinement* (Newhouse et al, *ibid*).

#### **2.5.5. The ACOT Model**

Such a model was carried out in USA to identify three basic levels including; survival, mastery, and impact related to the teacher know-how in technology based classroom. The Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow project emphasizes an imperative need for "high-access-to-technology-classroom environments" (Sanddholtz et al, 1992, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*). While developing such a model, Dwyer and his colleagues (1991, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*) tried to consider a set of alterations affect on the educational programs that apply it. This change follows a five stages process: *entry, adoption,*

*adaptation, appropriation, and invention* paying particular attention to the student himself who is in fact the driving force of the whole process.

In the entry stage, a teacher who is a beginner in using ICTs seeks help from experts and specialists to properly include the innovations into instruction; he is viewed as an apprentice who requires thorough training in the field. Then, a subsequent use of some of the software applications known for the teacher in the adoption stage takes place, for he uses such devices in planning and preparing his courses rather than in teaching. Next, when adapting any device, the instructor needs to implicate ICTs in his traditional classes especially when they attempt to teach writing through the use of word processors and graphics tools to get the students involved in the learning process. In the appropriation level, the teacher is required to use the innovation as a tool to enhance cooperation, and thereby, he has to select, grade, and apply what suits better a class based on learners' needs. Finally, and as the teacher purchased the necessary techniques and acquired the essential knowledge related to the implications of technologies in the way a given aspect is taught, he would then become an innovator who would find out novel ways and tools such as designing new applications and devising creative models of integration.

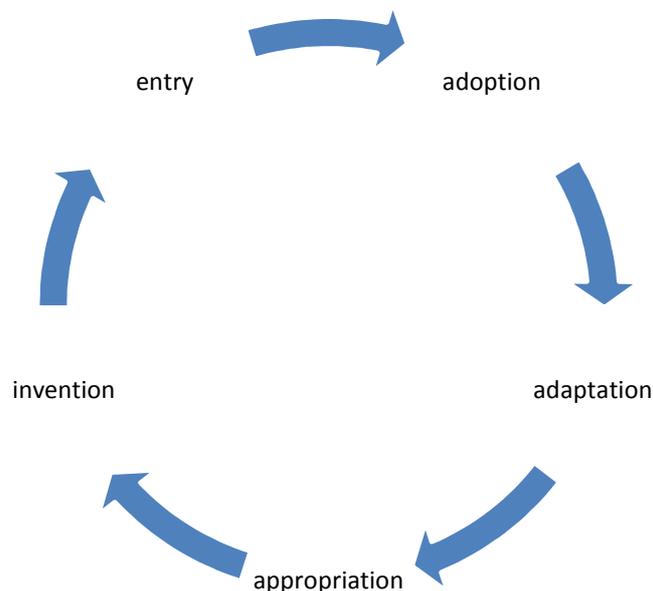


Diagram 2.1. Stages of ICTs integration

Mandinach and Cline (1994, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*) in their project *the Systems Thinking and Curriculum Innovation (STACI)*, on their parts, added an *innovation stage* to the ACOT model to aid teachers reformulate some educational elements such as

the curriculum and the learning activities. They further identify that there might be some constraints that curtails the possibility of purposefully applying such stages, thereby, they can either move progressively or regressively in their way of implementing technologies. For this, Mandinach and Cline (1994) proposed three system models through system thinking concepts and system diagrams to describe computer based curriculum innovation according to three levels: Student Learning Level, Classroom Processes Level, and Organizational Change Level. In the Classroom Processes Model, for instance, five domains should be included, namely: *instruction, curriculum, resources, support, and accountability*. They claim that these aspects have variables that can be either *stocks* or *flows*. The instructional domain for example has two flows including the technology and student-teacher role play and two stocks comprising interactive learning and learner-directed learning. They further make this point clearer when stating that technology can foster interactive instruction which aid reaching learner-directed attainment that is affected by the role changes of teachers and students.

#### **2.5.6. Technology Maturity Model (TMM)**

The maturity model is concerned with the level to which the educational settings are responsible to fulfill within the infusion of ICTs to reach satisfying results. It is thought to be broad and complex since it addresses the innovation's development in the school over a considerable period of time to direct and practise approaches to the processes and products happening in the teaching context. Sibley and Kimball, (1998, cited in Newhouse et al, *ibid*) believe that this model concentrate on the challenges of technology use and implementation in educational settings in a repeated way over an extended time frame to cover four basic areas. First, the organizational phase that deals with some preparation and programming aspects to appropriately use technologies in a given classroom. Then, the assessment level is primarily meant to gauge the efficiency of what has been planned and the effectiveness of ICTs in instruction and lessons' planning. After, a formulation phase occurs to properly identify a systematic framework upon which the use of the technologies in the target area rests. Finally, the implementation phase takes place. Likewise, an extended plan can be applied to smoothly infuse the ICTs into a given instructional environment.

Moreover, such an approach comprises nine stages to include: *'improvement cycle, planning phases, spiral refinement, concurrent planning and improvement, comprehensive planning, assessment instruments, benchmarks, a plan analysis rubric, and maturity*

*indicators* (this is the most important step since it depicts how further an institution improved in using the innovation). The latter can be measured and filtered through a systematized plan comprises four basic steps that could be gauged through various indicators designed to meet specific aspects. These incorporate: the Emergent Stage; this represents an introduction of technologies into the school that basically lacks support and formal planning procedures from the concerned institution besides minimal support for teachers' preparation, the Islands' Stage; at this level, the school authorities encourage the use of computers through sophisticated procedures and planning to support ICTs implementation in the process of teacher development, the Integrated Stage; the school authorities provide appropriate use of the innovations and more formal and informed plans are administered to ensure efficient implications, and the Exemplary Stage; represents the ideal uses of the ICTs into the teaching -learning process.

The following table that is adopted from Newhouse et al, (ibid), can better illustrate the TMM administrative and curricula filter.

Category	Policy		planning		Electronic information		assesment	
	Type	Behavioural	Resource infrastructure	Behavioural	Resource infrastructure	Behavioural	Resource infrastructure	Behavioural
Emergent	Appropriate technology use is considered, but is informal and inconsistent.	No technology policy exists.	Informal planning process, isolated to projects, and is budget driven.	Informal plan.	Staff and students rarely depend upon electronic resources and use them sporadically	Resources are scarce, limited to materials like electronic encyclopedias. Few students have access	Few staff and no students use technology for assessment of student work.	Electronic tools are rarely used for assessment and are not readily available
Island	Appropriate technology use is formalized but is mostly ignored by many in the school.	Some policy exists loosely articulated and mostly formal with no formal approval.	Formal planning takes place, but is isolated to specific projects with some connections with other planning efforts.	Formal plan with isolated implementation and little or no connection to other planning efforts.	Students and staff are somewhat dependent upon information resources and utilize them often.	Resources are beyond basic, but lack depth and are not available to all areas of the school.	Used by many of the staff and some of the students for the assessment of work and self assessment.	Some assessment and reporting tools are available, with a focus on traditional assessment measures.
Integrated	Appropriate technology use is formalized and embraced in many parts of the school.	Formal policy exists, but is not comprehensive in nature, or has not been approved by the governing body.	School wide comprehensive planning receives informal review, and is connected to other planning efforts.	Comprehensive technology plan that receives informal review and some connection to planning efforts	Students and staff are very dependent upon information resources, and utilize them regularly	Resources are fairly comprehensive providing depth or diversity, but not both. Access is available to most.	Used by most of the staff and many students for the assessment of work and self assessment	Many assessment and reporting tools are available, with tools limited in scope and availability.
Exemplary	Appropriate technology use policy is formalized and fully supported at all levels of the organization	Comprehensive Policy exists and has been approved by the organization's governing body.	School wide comprehensive planning with formal evaluation and connected to other planning within the school and district.	Comprehensive technology plan with formal evaluation and connection to planning in the school and district	Students and staff are heavily dependent upon information resources and use them daily.	Resources are comprehensive providing depth and diversity. All students have regular access.	Technology is an essential part of the assessment process for students, teachers, and parents	Fully integrated assessment and reporting tools are available for student and staff use.

Table 2.4. (Adopted from Newhouse et al, *ibid*), the TMM administrative and curricula filter

### 2.5.7. Typology of ICT Uptake

This model has been deduced from Brundage and McKeracher (1980) and Boud (1988) studies on learning and teaching practices with ICTs infusion. While learners and teachers use ICTs to get knowledge, they find themselves obliged to acquire the data base related to technology. For this reason, such an approach to technologies use is meant mainly to develop a framework that determines the teachers' will, expertise, or more precisely to assess their capabilities and pedagogies through a more sophisticated procedure that includes four stages: dependence, counter-dependence, independence, and interdependence. According to these stages, one can determine the instructors' level of improvement. In other words, the teachers' reaction and feelings towards technology infusion position them on the stage that they have reached.

These predetermined assumptions were based on Bloom's taxonomy i.e. Bloom's head: understandings, heart: feelings and hand: behaviors dimensions to consider the instructors' affective and cognitive appreciation of the innovation and their reflection on the actual use in their classrooms. A typology, thus, has been suggested to discuss the results got from a research done on the availability and efficiency of using this model.

Along the four stages and the three dimensions of Bloom's classification the following outcomes have been induced

Dependence  $\Rightarrow$  counter dependence  $\Rightarrow$  independence  $\Rightarrow$  Interdependence

<i>Survival issues with ICT dominate concerned more with own mastery and learning</i>	<i>Limited local thinking about ICT, teaching Oriented</i>	<i>Directed focused ICT thinking. Teaching and learning oriented.</i>	<i>ICT thinking, usage now second nature; learning oriented; student's focus</i>
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Digrame 2.2. The four stages for learning new material adapted to this model of ICT uptake (Boud, 1988)

### 2.6. Insights into the Implementation of ICTs in Teaching

The pace with which the new technologies affected and changed ways in instruction led many to investigate the perception of people about the possible impact and future implications of such innovations. Researchers agree on the substantial change that has been brought up by the use of ICT in and outside EFL classrooms, on teachers and students and their daily interactions, their motivation and zeal to attain and transmit information, and on the teaching of English language in particular. For this, a good deal of light has been shed

on the views of several futurist applied linguists from several branches as determined by Chapelle (2003) including the technologist, the pragmatist, and the critical analyst.

### 2.6.1. The Technologist View

The futurist technologists at this point are very optimistic concerning the efficiency of computers and its positive effect on teaching especially in the coming years and within the unprecedented evolvement of technological devices. Artificial Intelligence AI, for instance, gains special attention by building novel motive to refine the human being's sense of achievement. This has been further defended by Charniak and McDermott (1985, as cited in Chapelle, *ibid*: 3) when they state that *“the ultimate goal of AI research (which we are very far from achieving) is to build a person, or more humbly, an animal”*. Moreover, Winston (1977, cited in Chapelle, *ibid*) reckons that AI intended objective is *“to make computers more useful and to understand the principles which make intelligence possible”*.

There is a considerable contradiction between those who support AI and the positive impact of computers on humans' thinking and those who argue that it fails to reach and accomplish what was intended. Hogan and Bruce, for instance, point out that technologies go beyond everyday dealings and touch several other aspects, language teaching is no exception. To name but few, word processing programs provide new insights into the world of writing skill since it *“identify words written in English, underline in red unrecognized words, and correct misspelling automatically as the user types”* (Chapelle, *ibid*: 3).

Kurzweil (1999, cited in Chapelle, *ibid*) is one of the futurists who are concerned with predictions of the authentic use of technology in several spheres and education is no exception. He admits that much of the learners' interactions will be on computers or more precisely would be supported through online courses intended to sustain creativity on the part of students. These courses rely on confidential accredited teachers using diverse technologies including: *“selected response questions (such as multiple-choice), multimedia presentation, and computer mediated communication in chat rooms and discussions”* (Chapelle, *ibid*:4). Yet, his views were criticised by social pragmatists who primarily focus on real feasible aspects rather than virtual ones.

### 2.6.2. The Social Pragmatist's View

Brown and Duguid (2000) who support realistic, useful, and more social beneficial issues, see technology as a relevant aspect for language teachers since they are available and at affordable. Yet, they admit that using such innovation might constitute a challenge for English language learners since it is frustrating and its users have no control over the different problems occurring during attainment. They believe that the impact of technology infusion on people's daily life is perceived from technological perspectives rather than real viable estimations. Besides, they reckon that the technologist *“isolates information and informational aspects of life and discounts all else. This makes it blind to other forces at work in society”* (Brown and Duguid 2000: 31). In other words, one is bound by several issues in his community that he cannot get rid of the obstacles paralyzing the flexible use of technologies.

The social pragmatists seek not an opposition to change but rather look for pragmatic solutions to the problems encountering the daily interactions in general and constructing knowledge in particular. For this reason, they (ibid: 213) contend that the

*“Envisioned change will not happen or will not be fruitful until people look beyond the simplicities of information and individuals to the complexities of learning, knowledge, judgments, communities, organizations, and institutions”.*

Based on the fact that a person is tied by a set of conventions established in a given community, a considerable focus should be put on those norms before infusing the innovation. The mechanical, complex, and external factors exceed those internal simple cognitive strategies employed during learning or teaching processes. This is basically due to the poorly informed users and the misguided implementation of the technologies especially within educational contexts.

### 2.6.3. The Critical Analyst's View

The critical analysts doubt the idea that technology integration is a natural, positive, and inevitable advancement that any society needs to adopt as a culturally neutral issue. Although, according to them, information is the mainstream target of people around the world, it is of interest to consider the de-contextualization of the data being retrieved from the internet for instance.

*. . .the Internet could be looked at as one giant garbage dump: people and organizations dump information in bits and pieces;*

*they also retrieve whatever is of use and interest to them. What is found by scavengers depends on where they dig, what is dumped, and what is considered useful or relevant enough to be retrieved.*  
(Franklin 1999: 144)

Rose (2000) contends that educational computing creates a paradoxical split between those who eagerly support the use of technologies as the magic cure for all educational troubles and the angry opponents who sees technologies in a pessimistic light. The latter think that any information must be represented in a strongly built context so as to ensure cultural diversity and thereby empower unity for the secret behind diversity is unity and technologies curtail such a chance. For Rose (2000)

*“The result is an ongoing and often bitter contest between two extremes: those who view technology as the ultimate panacea for all educational ills, and those who cling to traditional values which they argue are being destroyed by the infiltration of digital media into instructional spaces”* (Rose 2000: 2).

English language teachers are also sensibly warned about the inclusion of technologies. Especially, according to the critical analyst, who unlike the pragmatist or the technologist, views ICTs complicity a two edged sword that might be used for other political imperialistic reasons. For this, in the 21st century teachers had better infiltrate and select prudently what to be presented or discussed based on cultural filters.

Although technology in fact enforced itself as an influential means in education, the language teacher is to play a critical role for connecting culture, ideology and technology is not an easy task. It is of importance to envision the impact of the instructional technologies on the future of ELT. An informed vision, thus, based on the contributions of the three perspectives makes one stand on a middle ground so as to purposefully use the innovation in hand.

## **2.7. The Traditional View of the Learning Process**

Teacher centeredness or what is known as the traditional learning process goes back to the twentieth century. At that time, individuals were required to acquire a set of skills in industry and agriculture. Few years later, the process was further standardized to include around twenty to thirty students grouped in a particular class to be taught several aspects in life. According to such a view learning was seen as a linear activity where the teacher is the final authority, the only knowledgeable, and the responsible expert about the teachings.

Scholars tend to describe the traditional model of the learning process with different attributes to establish a thorough understanding. They identify apprenticeship to be hard and extremely difficult. When learners feel comfortable and that learning is enjoyable, they might be considered as not accomplishing any outcome. Thereby, students have to be more serious when the teacher is presenting any instructional material.

Moreover, “learning is based on a deficit model of the student” (UNESCO, 2002: 17). This paradigm endeavors to find out the different deficits students have in apprenticeship. Accordingly, they “are tracked, categorized, remediated, or failed” (UNESCO, *ibid*). Since little has been paid to identify the learner’s strengths, such model relies on *compensatory education*. The latter focuses on treating the problems encountered in schoolings so that learners’ behavior would be changed according to the schools’ requirements. The learning materials, that some lack, are thought to be acquired by all students.

Besides, Bruer assume that very little research has been done to alter teaching with an intention that it can meet their students’ needs, enthusiasm, and the theoretical progress. He (1993, as quoted in, *ibid* UNESCO: 17) believes that teachers often

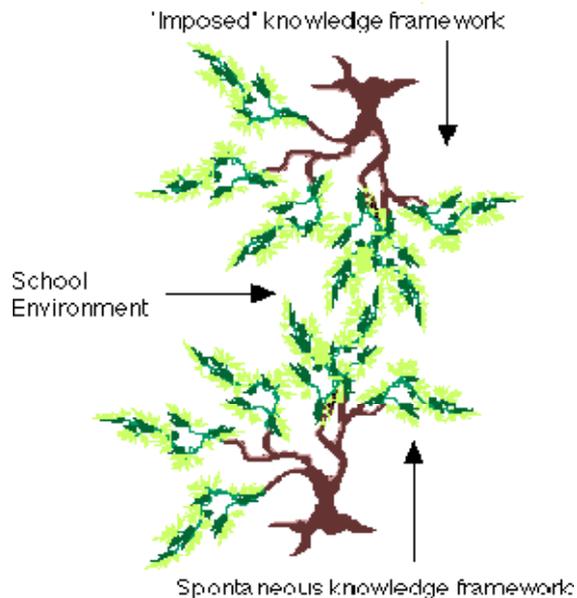
*“Militated against offering them a literacy of thoughtfulness and have favored a low level, atomized, concrete, basic-skills curriculum. The language of that curriculum has been so simplified that it is so boring and artificial. It has been stripped of its richness and context and made fundamentally meaningless, which is to say un-absorbable by normal people, except through memorization, whose effects last only few hours or days.”*

Learning is based on stimulus-response process where all the teachings are done by the teacher while the learner passively receives new data. It is primarily information oriented. In other words, the learner tends to attain knowledge to be reproduced. He is not allowed to produce his own ideas and construct facts creatively. So, teacher centeredness is focused and strengthened because the teacher is the first distributor of knowledge.

## **2.8.Theories that Support the New View of Learning**

Constructivism is one of the most famous pedagogical philosophies that underlie the learning environment. It basically stems from psychology and neuroscience (biological based theory). Its eminent figures are Dewey (1966), Bruner (1962, 1966), Piaget (1970) and Vygotsky (1978). The term has no exact definition, but there is a consensus that, it primarily refers to the acquisition of knowledge or language through the interaction of

individuals in their community. Perkins (1992, cited in Newhouse et al, 2002: 7) tries to simplify its notion when he reckoned that people tend to build their understandings of the world around them by: “engaging, grappling, and seeking to make sense of things”.



Schematic of Pines and West ‘vines’ representing the knowledge frameworks imposed by the curriculum and that is simultaneously developed in the school environment by the individual student into a spontaneous knowledge framework. (adopted from Newhouse et al, 2002: 8)

In their diagram, Pines and West, clearly explain how knowledge is often formulated in any teaching-learning activity. Students gain information and therefore acquire knowledge through a conglomeration between what is planned to be learnt and their everyday dealings in their society.

According to what has been stated and in relation to pedagogy, the constructivism is often used to portray how learners tend to attain knowledge. In other words, as Perkins (1992) puts it, there are three ways in achieving data; *Beyond the Information Given (BIG)*, *Without the Information Given (WIG)*, or a mixture of both is employed. In any teaching- learning activity, instructors should act as guides and allow students to construct meanings by themselves and this can be reached easily through the use of the new technologies. In this concern DeCorte (1990, cited in Newhouwse et al, 2002: 8) states that:

*“A powerful computer learning environment is characterized by a good balance between discovery learning and personal exploration on one hand, and systematic instruction and*

*guidance on the other, always taking into account the individual differences in abilities, needs and motivation between students.”*

Here, the expert emphasizes the importance of computers in shaping the learning environment and fostering students' motivation to acquire the foreign language.

### **2.8.1. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory**

The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky avers that the person's interactions in his community play a crucial role in his perception of knowledge of the world around him. He holds that learning is merely a social product since society intervenes in developing the individual's cognition. Vygotsky (1987) thereby developed two basic levels according to which learning can be accomplished. First he emphasized the necessity of interaction with people in one's society to acquire new data and the subsequent cognitive formulation and analysis of these information. He clarifies more this aspect when he states that;

*“Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals.”* (Vygotsky, 1987, cited in UNESCO, 2002: 25)

Accordingly, the individual tends to evolve and construct his awareness and understanding through an organized critical transmission of knowledge from the outer world to the human's mind and later the conceptualization and inner formulation of the pre-gained facts, using various strategies, or what has been named as interpsychological and intrapsychological conception. Further, Vygotsky stresses the role of what he calls “Zone of Proximal Development” in maintaining and improving attainment. The latter is a cognitive area of exploration that humans need to develop in everyday dealings through the use of scaffolding and other techniques such as: modeling, collaborative learning, and discourse for a more advanced thinking and skillfulness.

Experts in ICTs and education from the UNESCO (2002) on their parts highlight the concomitant efficiency of a wealthy social context on learning and students' acquisition of knowledge within peers, teachers, and specialists. For this reason, they favour the use of the new technologies to support education when they contend that

*“ICTs can be used to support the learning environment by providing tools for discourse, discussions, collaborative writing, and problem solving and by providing online support systems to scaffold students’ understanding and cognitive growth”*  
(UNESCO, 2002: 26)

## **2.9. Conclusion**

This chapter provided a theoretical background about the instructional communication technologies. The researcher started with a short definition of the ICTs and the different model of their implementation in the teaching learning process. Different experts’ perspectives about the inclusion of technologies in the teaching process, including the social pragmatist, the technologist, and the critical analyst views were presented. To end up to the main learning theories that support the use of ICTs in education.

# **Chapter three**

**The Writing Skill and the Implementation  
of ICTs**

### 3.1.Introduction

The current chapter will shed light on the most important aspects related to the writing skill including its historical background, the contextual and cultural influences on the process, the definition, the main approaches to the teaching and learning the skill. It will also tackle the different reasons for teaching writing, assumptions about its teaching, and the different purposes of the writing process.

### 3.2.Writing: a Historical Background

Since the dawn of the formal standard education, the power of writing, a process by which people transcribe spoken words into written language, gains special recognition as it provides considerable permanence to the oral culture. Most ancient civilizations developed a system of signs to preserve and pass down their heritage to the coming generations. The latter makes written words a more sophisticated means that transcends time and place to communicate knowledge and record history. This requirement gave writing an everlasting value to the intellectual people and mastering such a skill lies at the heart of knowledge construction (Al-Mahrooqi: 2015). For this, “a hallmark of the educated person is thus partly defined by the ability to write correctly” (Reichelt et al, 2012: 28)

What appears to us is that writing is but a technological means that has figured and recorded human beings’ cultural and intellectual activities. However, it is, “in the strict sense of the word, the technology which has shaped and powered the intellectual activity of modern man” (Ong, 2001: 82).

Writing as a means of communication arisen in Mesopotamia around 4500 years ago in the form of marks and pictures to depict the different activities held in that community. People were keen to develop a coded system of visible marks representing hidden thoughts through which a writer finds out the exact words that best tell the reader what is being conveyed. For this, the development of writing into the current sophisticated system required gradual changes. In the first go people designed pictograph and ideograph, notches on sticks, and scratches on rocks with the intention to record their culture. These intermediary efforts are thought to represent other sorts of semiotic markings, albeit, actually, writing, the truly restructuring means, is a deliberate representation of thoughts or spoken words; it can even surpass the potentials of oral language was indeed a giant leap into modern history. (Ong, 2002)

Writing, in this ordinary sense, was and is the most momentous of all human technological inventions. It is not a simple representation of speech. Because it moves

speech from oral-aural to a new sensory world, that of vision, it rather transforms speech and thought as well. (Ong, 2002: 83)

The creation of cuneiform by the Semitic people led to the foundation of alphabetical letters, whether Hebraic or Ugaritic, Greek or Roman, Cyrilic or Arabic, that has considerably reduced time to space. The alphabet affords a bridge, yet another complexity that can be best depicted, for instance, in the African culture, between orality and literacy. Writing by these means creates an area for critical analysis. In contrast to oral language, the significance of analyzing thoughts is attributable in the first place to written words and that calls for, what Goody (1977) terms as, “backward scanning”. Critical analysis to writing, the most permanent mode of language, fosters new assumptions about the process. Ong (2001) makes this point further clear by stating that

*“All language and thought are to some degree analytic... written words sharpen analysis, for the individual words are called on to do more. To make yourself clear without gestures, without facial expression, without intonation, without a real hearer, you have to foresee circumspectly all possible meanings a statement may have for any possible reader in any possible situation, and you have to make your language work so as to come clear all by itself, with no existential context. The need for this exquisite circumspection makes writing the agonizing work it commonly is.”* (101- 102, Ong)

In the sharply focused sense, writing restructures the human life-world where the state of words in texts is rather special when compared with spoken words. Written words lack the full context and circumstances, such as the paralinguistic, the supra segmental and phonetic qualities. Unlike oral utterances that do not occur in a context of pure words, written words are cut off. Spoken utterances are always modifications of a full context enforced by their natural and real existence for they are told by a real person and addressed to another present person at the appropriate time. Writing is, in effect, a solipsistic self centered process in which the writer is isolated from everyone even the ones who will read him. Writing is a more excruciating activity in which absent and unknown readers can cast themselves.

### **3.3.Contextual and Cultural Influences on the Writing Process**

Writing requires a keen understanding of the target language’s cultural standards for it is the springboard upon which the linguistic activities rest and writing is no exception. “Cultures evolve writing styles appropriate to their histories and the needs of their societies”

Swain's (1995) "output hypothesis" summarizes the basic tenets of the socio-cultural theory based on the fact that the socio-cultural context of writing represents a stage upon which EFL students learn to use the different linguistic forms of the target language and thereby offer practice that enables the learner to transform their competence in a second language into controlled skillful performance. p2 el mahrooqi P18

Society and culture are deeply interrelated to dictate a set of rules individuals have to follow. The sum of conventions that naturally shapes the different activities and processes held in that community, and writing is no exception, affects the way language is learnt. For Sperling (1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, 2002:19) "writing like language in general is a meaning making activity that is socially and culturally shaped and individually and socially purposeful". Accordingly, the practice of writing requires more than learning the structural aspects of the language, more importantly; it entails a keen understanding of the social and cultural components of the target language.

Different assumptions hold that any piece of writing affects and is affected by the social context in which it has been composed and that shapes the worldly aspects of such a process. Consequently, a conglomeration of the context, the audience, and the purpose of writing determine how it can be handled and organized. Hayes (1996, cited in Sara Cushing Weigle, *ibid*) notes that writing is

*"A social artifact and is carried out in a social setting. What we write, how we write, who we write to is shaped by social conventions and by our history of social interaction... the genres in which we write were invented by other writers and the phrases we write often reflect phrases earlier writers have written."*

### **3.4. Writing as a Cultural Phenomenon**

It is often taken for granted that culture have a considerable impact on the way people write while it mirrors and dictates the genre and style to be used. Kaplan (1966, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 20) was the first to investigate the influence of culture on writing through his *contrastive rhetoric*, an analysis of ESL students' productions from different cultural backgrounds. His ideas were further developed by Grabe and Kaplan (1989, 1996) who note that differences in composition are not necessarily attributed to cognitive qualities, yet, they are related to "cultural preferences which make greater use of certain options among linguistic possibilities" (Grab and Kaplan 1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 20).

### 3.5. Definition of Writing

Any foreign language learner has to acquire a set of skills and writing is no exception. Writing the last skill to be achieved in addition to listening, reading, and speaking, as it requires mastery of a set of instructions and rules is often perceived as a cognitive productive process that gains increasing importance. So, what is the nature of writing and how can it be defined?

It is usually agreed upon the fact that in most EFL contexts writing has been neglected and considered difficult for teachers to teach and learners to learn because it is the ever complex of the macro language skills. Walters (1983: 17), for instance, contends that “writing is the last and perhaps the most difficult skill students learn- if they ever do”. According to Raimes (1978 as cited in Nunan, 1999),

*“Until the mid 1970s, writing was seen as a subservient skill, whose function was to support the development of oral language. Pedagogy was therefore communicated by form focused techniques that were in line with the audio-lingual ideology of drill and practice.”*

Widdowson (1983: 35) sees “writing an irksome activity and an ordeal to be avoided whenever possible”. Students usually struggle to write a paragraph on their own. And when they try to produce a piece of writing, they have to recognize how best to integrate ideas with appropriate wording and grammar. Producing a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing is most likely the ever difficult task a learner does because students do not use the target language regularly (Nunan 1999). Further, writing outside school is scarcely practiced when compared with the rest of the language skills where proficiency can be seen quickly.

The writer is simultaneously involved in thinking of what to write, coherence and cohesion of the text, formation and legibility of individual letters, spelling, grammar including punctuation, layout, tone and register, organization and selection of appropriate content for an intended audience (Raison and Rivelland, 1997 ). Writing is considered as both a private and a public aspect among those who share a common interest. A process that entails the individual student to communicate in written words a hidden idea to an intended audience that would considerably receives it with approval or reject it (Broughton et al, 1980).

While writing gains increasing popularity and importance in a variety of areas, it is extremely difficult to define. Writing in English as in first language is firmly attached to

formal education. In other words, it is taught and not acquired when compared to spoken language. In this concern, Grabowski (1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, 2002: 4) states that:

*“Writing, as compared to speaking, can be seen as a more standardized system which must be acquired through special instruction. Mastery of the standard system is an important prerequisite of cultural and educational participation and maintenance of one’s rights and duties... The fact that writing is more standardized than speaking allows for a higher degree of sanctions when people deviate from that standard”*

Accordingly, writing is an important educational activity that deserves much attention and focus on conventions and rules since it is maintained as a standard. It is first and foremost a cultural and social phenomenon through which people accomplish a set of roles in their communities.

The four macro language skills, listening, speaking, writing, and reading can be categorized according to *channel* i.e. *aural* including listening and speaking versus *visual* reading and writing, and, *mode: receptive: reading and listening* versus *productive: speaking, writing, and reading* (which involves cognitive processing and critical thinking that makes a human mind produces thoughts and ideas (Weigle, 2002:14). To offer a clear understanding of what is meant by writing, scholars tend to study it in relation to reading a skill firmly attached to writing and that is mainly perceived as an input and speaking that is a product.

### 3.5.1. Writing and Speaking

According to different linguistic and mental aspects, writing and speaking are thought to be dissimilar. Kaplan and Grabe (1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 15) affirm that a set of investigation in traditional linguistics and educational psychology find out different assumptions in drawing a relationship between the two skills. On the one hand, linguists hold strongly that spoken language is prior and first to be acquired while writing is merely a reflection of speech. On the other, educational researchers believe that written discourse is more prestigious and should be highly valued than oral language as it necessitates the mastery of a set of conventions and rules. Yet, new perspectives emerged and assume that no medium, either oral or written, is superior to the other. But, there are certain boundaries, including “textual features, sociocultural norms and patterns of use, and the cognitive processes involved in text production and comprehension” (Cushing Weigle, *ibid*), at which distinctions are to be drawn.

In terms of textual differences, Brown (1994, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*) affords a set of aspects that differentiate written language from speech. These patterns are:

*permanence*, written language can last for longer time;

*production time*, writers can plan, review, revise then provide a final piece whereas speakers have to plan, formulate, and then deliver an idea in a short span of time;

*distance*, the listener and the speaker are close to each other when compared to the reader and the writer;

*orthography*, spoken language is characterized by intonation, stress, pausing, gestures that ease communication while writing lacks such aspects;

*complexity*, written language is more complex and characterized by longer sentences and clauses whereas speech is simple and natural;

*vocabulary*, writing contains more sophisticated and rich vocabulary.

Sperling(1996, cited in Cushing Weigle, *ibid*: 17) also points out that:

*“To talk about written and spoken language differences is to consider the range of communicative purposes to which either writing and speaking is put. In this sense, broader characteristics \_ such as what gets said and what remains implicit, what is foregrounded and what is backgrounded , and what is stated by whom and under what circumstances\_ implicate the norms and expectations of the range of contexts in which both writing and speaking are produced”* (Sperling, 1996)

Consequently, written and spoken modes differ in terms of textual features, sociocultural norms, and cognitive processes through which such activities are handled. To state it differently, there are a set of characteristics that distinguish and characterize writing from speaking that include; the purpose of both of their productions that will constantly determine the style to be used, whether it is formal, informal, the rules that govern each of them when transforming what is deep and abstract, the context in which they are accomplished, etc.

### **3.5.2. Writing and Reading**

Reading and writing are considered as two similar processes as both of them follow some basic cognitive strategies. Besides, they can be used as important tools to fulfill a set of roles in any society.

It is generally believed that the relationship between reading and writing is reciprocal; the former is regarded as an input while the latter is a consequent output. Thomas Mann (2004) in his famous novella *Death in Venice* contends that: “nothing gladdens a writer more than a thought that can become pure feeling and a feeling that can become a pure thought”. Thereby, he draws a close relationship between writers as

encoders of thoughts and feelings and readers who are merely decoders of what has been transmitted.

On the other hand the novelist Annie Proulx seeks a correlation between reading and writing when she points out that; *"You should write because you love the shape of stories and sentences and the creation of different words on a page. Writing comes from reading, and reading is the finest teacher of how to write."*

Here Annie Proulx assumes that the writer can only appreciate and understand the art of writing through reading different authentic resources. Furthermore, reading plays a giant role in refining and refreshing the student's ideas and thoughts. Reading enriches vocabulary and cultural knowledge and develops a sense of self-esteem as learners become more aware of the world around them.

One, therefore, can assume that reading lays the groundwork for a well-organized piece of writing. It refreshes the student's mind by providing new ideas and useful vocabulary. Reading also unveils cultural misunderstanding as it is one of the most important sources of cultural and language enrichment. "Reading keeps" the "mind active, introduces new ideas" and "provides specific information" (Sorenson Sharon, 2010:5). It is only through reading that one can refine and improve his writing ability. In fact, good writers are obviously those good readers.

### **3.6.Reasons for Teaching Writing**

Although it is considered as an uninteresting activity, teaching writing is one of the most important courses that are carried out during the process of learning a foreign language. Thus, many reasons are behind the urgent need to master such expertise. Hancock and MacDonald (2000: 1) identify two sets of reasons for studying as well as teaching composition.

Teaching writing might have a considerable impact on the writing skill itself since it is thought to be a strategy that basically provides opportunities for practice and thereby improves students' writing ability through;

- a. Aiding the learners to reach a better level of proficiency and empowering their will and motivation to write more
- b. Giving the writers a sense of achievement and self confidence to carry on their future investigations in other fields

Teaching writing influences foreign language learning since it;

- a. Aids the students to develop their mental activities as it enables them to express and generate the hidden ideas;
- b. Helps learners to master different structures as well as to self assess their language in order to identify the deficits and thereby work out and gain progress;
- c. Writing is a handy and fostering tool to teach grammar and vocabulary.

As for Hedge (1988, cited in Štefanovičová, 2011: 14);

*“the role of writing is little different from its role in any other subject; it allows students to see how they are progressing and to get back feedback from the teacher, and it allows teachers to monitor and diagnose problems.”*

In short, writing instruction is highly valued as it overcomes many difficulties encountered by the learners related to grammar, vocabulary, spelling, etc. on the other hand, it can be used to diagnose the progress of students in learning a language, especially foreign language.

One can also assume that writing is a product i.e. a text that comprises an accurate content in terms of grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. related to a given purpose, to inform, to persuade, etc. it is also a process that is concerned mainly with the individual human's competencies that enable learners to compose a coherent piece.

### **3.7. Assumptions about the Teaching of Writing**

According to Urkhart and Maclver (2005) Writing is a recursive process that requires students to learn the necessary strategies for invention and discovery that a language teacher can use to improve content learning. Three interrelated elements including audience, purpose, and occasion dictate the type of writing a writer undertakes to fulfill a set of purposes and to meet the addressees' needs.

#### **a. Purpose**

Purpose is the main point a writer seeks in a given writing context. It differs according to the situation. The purpose of writing will certainly determine the differing ways of presenting the final product. Traditionally Formal academic writing basically concerns

Clarification of an idea or theory or an investigation of a particular problem (expository writing)

Reporting a process, an experiment, or lab results (technical or scientific writing)

Providing an up to date information on a given project at work (business writing)

Convincing the readers to understand a point of view, change their minds, or take action (persuasive or argumentative writing)

As for the less formal and more personal writing, the student usually

Document personal experiences and feelings (expressive writing)

Create an artistic work like plays or short stories (creative writing)

Just like oral interactions, in writing, good writers, in fact, keep their readers in mind at all times. Those readers differ considerably making the task even challenging for writers to achieve a connection between the intended task and the audience needs. Readers do not have the same characteristics. Moreover, they come from different parts, regions, communities, ethnic groups, organizations, and academic disciplines of the world, endowed with specific linguistic and rhetorical conventions that require a writer to adapt to the writing situation. To state it differently, students need to play several roles and to shift from one context to the other according to the audience. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

It is said that teacher, time, technology, assessment, and practical strategies are the four critical and pressing aspects that interweave to shape students learning in general and writing in particular.

#### **b. Time**

Time is the most vital and sensitive aspect a teacher must deliberately manage. Most scholars qualify it to be the learning equalizer if used wisely. Yet, it is the learning warden that constantly paralyzes the whole process and constrains goals achievement. To better understand how to deal prudently with this aspect, researchers tend to categorize it into different types. Marzano (2000), for instance, believes that time can be classified into four fold

1. Allocated time is specifically intended to schooling to perform instructional and non-instructional activities. It has the least impact on the learners' attainment because it encompasses passing and lunch time, pauses, evaluation and tests that considerably constrain the teacher from fully accomplishing the learning outcomes.
2. Instructional time is the portion devoted to instruction and class management activities. It is the allotted time attributed to the teacher officially to direct the teaching learning process.
3. Engaged time is intended to course presentation where the student follows attentively the content knowledge being presented.

4. Academic learning time is the part of the engaged time intended to engage the student in doing tasks related to the content being presented. It is thought to affect the achievement a great deal. Marzano insists on the fact that the learner needs not only writing classes but indeed they must practice and participate in the process for greater benefit so that the teacher can use new knowledge and skills that help the learner understand and considerably transfer what they have learned in new contexts.

Yet, when considering writing instruction in an EFL context, the fact that makes teachers deny their students the chance to tackle important processes is actually another issue to be questioned. (Urkhart & Maclver, 2005)

### **c. Assessment**

Though used interchangeably, drawing a clear cut distinction between measurement, assessment, feedback, and evaluation is most often a controversial issue. Scholars tend to believe that measurement is the broader area of interest that encompasses both assessment and evaluation. While assessment avoids judgments, evaluation judges the students' performances. In other words, Urquhart and McIver contend that, evaluation is merely "writing-to-demonstrate what was learned" and assessment is purely "writing-to-learn", more importantly, they contribute to the improvement of the students' apprenticeship. Besides, they indicate that writing assignments can be used to gauge students' attainment through ongoing assessment.

The fact that writing to learn, since the 60s and 70s, is an accurate assessment of students' achievement is increasingly getting popularity among educators. Ongoing assessment is the best tool to portray the learners' attainment. The obtained results can be used for corrective feedback or to motivate the writers.

Many researchers agree on the positive effect of writing on learning. Sorenson (1991) on her part reckons that writing to learn and learning to write support each other in content learning. Though it is often perceived in a negative light, Sorenson believes that incorporating writing in their instruction helps students to either discover the techniques to understand the content, their retention ability of the content evolves, or their writing improve as far as they practice it. In fact, practicing writing enables the human mind to be active in connecting the newly established knowledge with the prior one. Langer (1986)

points out that the more the student writes the better learning occurs, their performance will certainly improve.

Effective instruction goes in tandem with effective assessment where the teacher's concern is how best the student analyzes, integrates ideas, and applies knowledge. Clarity, variety sound pedagogy, and reliable research are essential traits a good assessment considers. The teacher uses assessment to find out and thereby diagnose a given problem or provide information that will be employed to adjust a lesson to meet students' needs.

"Begin with the end in mind" is important. Setting the goals and then striving to reach them is helpful when designing writing assignments. In *Guidelines for Teaching Middle and High School Students to Read and Write Well* (2000), Langer values the integration of test preparation into coursework claiming that it fosters high student achievement. Even though it sounds like "teaching to the test" that is usually rejected, including assessment this way would be constructing and encouraging. Teachers in any content area should count on:

- The collaborative study of what the standardized tests require.
- Accrediting the skills and knowledge students need to do well on those tests.
- Discussing of the possible ways to integrate those skills into the curriculum. (Urkhart and Maclver, 2005)

#### **d. Technology**

The pace with which technologies entrenched into modern societies is speeding up to an extent that they alter significantly the set of processes people perform. Apart from being useful tools for finding out information, educational technologies brought up great changes to the teaching-learning process. Virtual learning, however, represents a different scenario and interesting area educational researchers are seriously concerned with.

Interests to investigate the impact of technologies in promoting meaningful language acquisition is growing up for students nowadays rely a great deal on the use of internet to perform their learning tasks. Futurists most often contend that educational technologies support project based learning by helping the student to use higher order thinking skills and improve problem solving abilities to engage positively in the learning process. Even more, though contradicting views appear, many believe in the fact that the benefit of using technologies to focus students' learning is everlasting and the need to enquire it is urgent.

Technology's appeal is indeed undeniable and myriad. It has brought up irresistible changes that in fact have transformed traditional classes into new arenas of collaboration

and interaction. Technologies afford innovative ways of dealing with knowledge construction by allowing the teachers to be more creative. Through these means, the teacher can either genuinely communicate traditional topics or introduce new ones that are unknown to the learners. Multimedia capability, information access, and collaboration potential and other attributes have a miraculous effect on expanding and ameliorating the aptitude of student's apprenticeship.

The fact that information is now processed in a variety of ways that it is pleasurable for the student to engage in any learning activity. The computer screen, indeed, offers incredible opportunities for many students who become fluent in using the new technologies to combine both the acquired knowledge and the available skills in creating authentic and interactive productions rather than simply produce boring texts.

In fact, its effect on the teaching learning process is increasingly recognized by many educators. The critical role that technologies play leads proponents to support their place in the educational landscape, more importantly they consider them imperative to literacy. Bringing students in a worldly authentic exploration and analysis of information, in addition to breaching isolation and facilitating collaboration, is a key feature of educational technologies, through which courses can become more interesting, diverse and rich.

It is not necessary however to use the most sophisticated or the latest technology so as to make learning more effective. The teachers who are keen of bringing the real world into his classroom can use simple technologies to explore and solve the encountered problems. Teachers can eagerly integrate writing tasks into real-world situations by asking the students to discuss and write about the recommended solutions to a given problem as it occurs in their community. (Urkhart and Maclver, 2005)

### **3.8.Approaches to Teaching and Learning Writing**

Students, when writing, have to keep in mind that such a process involves basically three interacting components: the text, the writer, and the reader in addition to the social and contextual motives that shape the process.

When teaching students to write, any instructor has to consider a variety of areas namely, linguistics, psycholinguistics, cognitive psychology, as well as sociolinguistics (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006). There is no one approach to the teaching of writing in EFL classes.

Anne Raimés (1983) designed a diagram including the most important issues writers have to deal with and that she deems essential in the writing teaching cycle. She assumes

that the differing teaching and learning styles foster different approaches to teach writing. The following is a diagram adopted from Raimes *ibid*:

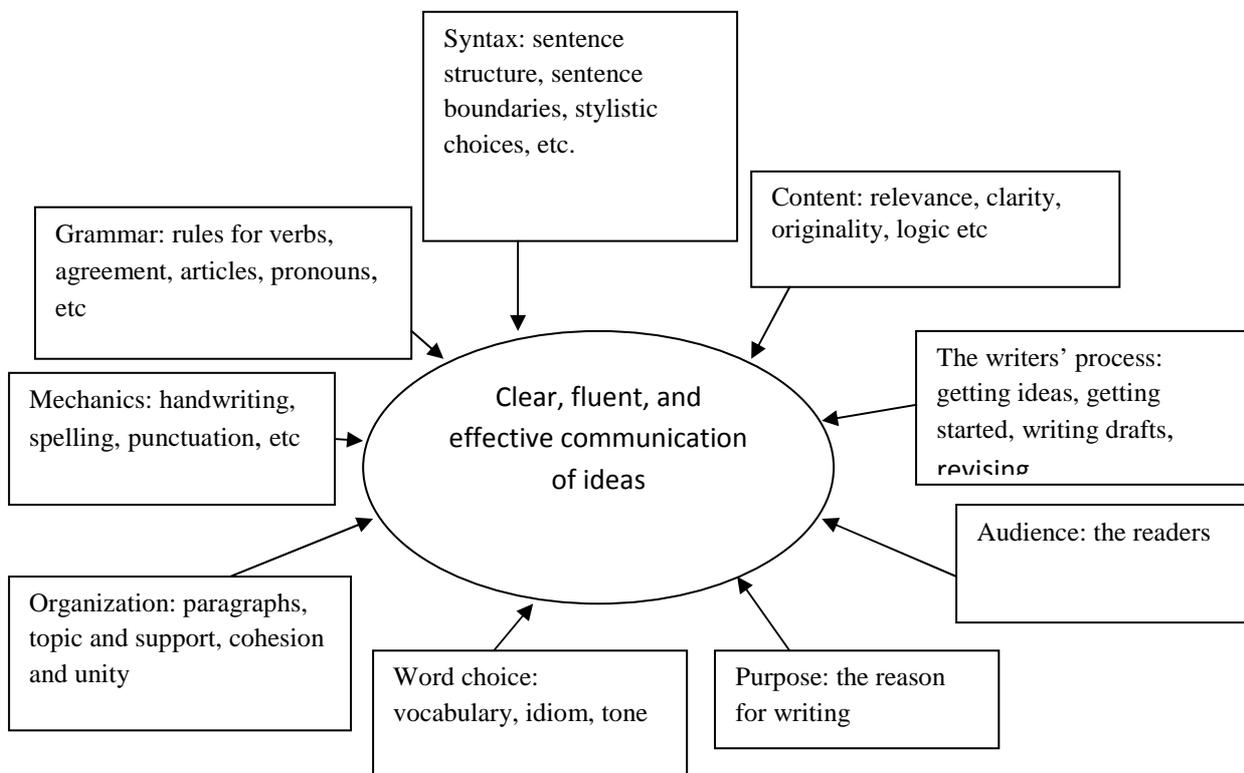


Diagram 3.1. Producing a piece of writing (Raimes: 6)

Therefore, different approaches to the teaching and learning writing have to be concerned including environmentalist, innatist, interactionist, process oriented, and product oriented approaches.

### 3.8.1. The Environmentalist Approach

This approach emerges from environmentalist ideas that considerably neglect the importance of writing. It was believed that language learning is a mechanical process that involves a *stimulus-response-reinforcement chain* i.e. speech and fluency. Therefore, written language is less important and the acquisition of speaking precedes the mastery of writing.

According to such a view, writing is merely used as a tool to maintain accuracy. Moreover, Silva (1990, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, *ibid*) contends that any written text is “*a collection of sentences patterns and vocabulary*”. Teaching composition thereby entails a free-error imitation of certain models and sentences. Such approach was subject to criticism since it is mainly teacher centred.

### 3.8.2. The Innatist Approach

A Chomskyan revolution in linguistics, in the 1960s, shifts attention towards cognitivism and mental processing. Thus, many scholars namely Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer attempt to study the mental process through which a piece of writing is generated. Moreover, Emig (1971, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, *ibid*) was the pioneer to use the think aloud protocol technique to ascertain how learners can generate and write down what is innate. She found that writing is not only a mechanical process but rather a “*recursive and creative*” activity. Kern (2000, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006: 386) makes this idea clear to state that:

*“Writing was no longer seen as simply a way of recording thoughts, feelings, and ideas after the fact, but also a key means of generating and explaining new thoughts and ideas.”*

Therefore, teaching the writing skill basically involves active creative learners who can successfully generate a piece of writing through the use of various systematic innate abilities. This view stresses fluency rather than accuracy, errors are claimed to be natural within language learning whether it is first or second.

### 3.8.3. The Interactionist Approach

The development of discourse analysis, between 1970s and 1980s, has changed basically assumptions and beliefs about language learning. A variety of approaches, mainly interactional and functional theories, assume that language is not merely structural and cognitive but also a product of cultural and social interactions in a given community.

Influential studies in linguistics, particularly formal linguistics, maintain that the composition of a particular text demands an organization of students’ prior knowledge and not only grammar. A research done by Winter (1977) and Hoey (1983) supported such a view. They have distinguished three patterns through which any piece is regulated. First, a problematic is identified and provided with suggested solutions, this is known as the *problem-solution pattern*. Second, the student or writer presents a particular statement or hypothesis that will be either confirmed or rejected i.e., the *hypothetical-real pattern*. Third, in relation to what has been found a generalization is proclaimed and supported within particular examples i.e., the *general-particular pattern*. (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006)

Halliday (1978), on the other hand, develops a set of contextual approaches, within systematic linguistics, which assume that writing is essentially a social phenomenon. In his theory, Halliday highlights two notions genre and register. The latter can only be studied

along three basic variables: *mode* (what can language do), *tenor* (the role of participants, reader and writer), and *field* (the social function). Genre, on the other hand, has been defined by Swales (1990, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor 2006: 387) as;

*“... a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes. These purposes are recognized by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and thereby constitute the rationale for the genre. This rationale shapes the schematic structure of the discourse and influences and constrains choice of content and style”*

Swales (1990) claims that genre is, basically, built upon a set of communicative purposes identified by members of particular community. Furthermore, as Connor (1996, cited in Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor, 2006: 388) puts it “*Language and writing are cultural phenomena*”; 2) “*Each language has rhetorical conventions unique to it*”; and 3) “*The linguistic and rhetorical conventions of the first language interfere with writing in the second language.*” Thus, language is shaped through certain cultural dimensions.

Accordingly, the teaching of the writing skill requires: *modeling*; a good understanding of the genre to be used is provided; *negotiating*, questioning the subject in hands; and *construction*, students start drafting in relation to social and cultural aspects and within teacher’s guidance. (Usó-Juan and Martínez-Flor 2006)

#### **3.8.4.The Controlled to Free Approach**

Writing in the 1950s and the early 1960s was seen as reinforcement to the mastery of grammar and syntax. The speaking skill was primary because the dominant approach to language teaching at that time was the audio-lingual method. The aim of language teachers then was to generate techniques that foster students’ fluency and speaking competence.

#### **3.8.5.Product Oriented Approach**

It is also recognized as the skills based approach, the most traditional approach that stresses the teaching of mechanical aspects of writing and that is merely teacher-centered. According to this approach, students are engaged in tasks selected by their teachers about writing mechanics as spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence construction. For Nunan (1999): “the product-based approaches see writing as mainly concerned with knowledge about the structure of language”. Students’ productions have to be precise and accurate to reach the higher level of composition where the focus is on producing grammatically correct sentences.

**3.8.5.1. Stages of implementing the product approach**

Badger and White (2000: 153) devote four necessary stages for the implementation of the product approach in writing classes

**a. Familiarization:**

At this stage the learner is supplied with written models to practice the grammar and lexical points being presented. The focus however is on practicing the mechanics of writing, especially grammar rules i.e. writing is a means to end but not an end itself.

**b. Controlled writing:**

The students practice the grammar rules taught while at the same time explore new vocabulary based on a substitution table to highlight the key points a writer needs in the course. The teacher lays emphasis, at this stage, on vocabulary and lexis to enhance productivity.

**c. Guided writing:**

In this stage the learners generate paragraphs and essays from the composition models provided beforehand using the grammar and the vocabulary aspects presented to them in class. A keen consideration of form, usage and meaning is the aim. Yet, the students do not write on themselves, rather, they are controlled by their teachers.

**d. Free writing:**

In the last stage in the product approach the writers are encouraged to write on their own. The instructor relies a good deal on the language and the use of models so as to enable the writers to produce flawless pieces. Though they can write still freely, the students still rely heavily on the teacher's control and the composition models.

### 3.8.5.2. Advantages and disadvantages of the product approach

Of significance is to consider the product approach as one way to enrich the linguistic knowledge of the students by imitating significant resources to improve attainment. Moreover, the teacher finds it affordable to assess the productions while neatness and form are emphasized. The grammatical and lexical rubric thereby provides reliable results when gauging the students' papers by leaving only comments on the productions (Badger and White 2000). Further, they believe that a focus on forms help to ameliorate the pace with which language is being learned.

This approach, however, has been subject to a good deal of criticism. Some critics claim that it is demotivating as students are more mechanical and constrained when they write. While the writer pays little attention to writing skills and the communication of ideas, the product approach verily neglects the fact that writing is a creative activity that requires an imperative consideration of both audience and purpose.

The product approach suffers considerable shortcomings as it disregards the communicative aspect of the writing skill. According to Nunan (1999) this approach is "bottom up processing" that calls for accuracy and neatness and where lower order choices such as grammar and lexis affect higher order choices, especially the communicative and contextual purposes, and consequently paralyses the development of thoughts and ideas that in fact is the intent of any writing activity. This approach creates a gap between the background knowledge and the newly discovered knowledge rather than using them attentively to develop new ways of thinking. It does neither support the previously acquired skills nor creativity and communication, which are viewed in a pessimistic light; however, a considerable emphasis is targeted towards imitating, copying, or transforming the models provided in class (Nunan 1999).

### 3.8.6. The Process Oriented Approach

This approach is one of the widely used approaches to writing instruction in the ELT landscape that is primarily student-centered. It emphasizes students' creativity and cognitive aspects of writing rather than mechanics. Accordingly, students, when composing, manage the proceeding of their ideas through different stages including primarily *planning*, *drafting*, and *revising*. Its main focus is to engage students in free-writing models since to stimulate their interest and thereby boost up motivation. This approach pays little attention to perfectness and accuracy in writing since its major concern is the processing of ideas and creativity.

It is universally acknowledged that the process approach to the teaching of writing is the most widely used approach in EFL contexts, especially for novice writers. More importantly, this approach helps the learners to initiate writing with more confidence because its major concern is the processing of ideas. For Kroll (2001: 220-221) the process approach

*“Serves today as an umbrella term for many types of writing courses...what the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than a single shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts.”*

Through this approach the teacher aids learners to get integrated recursively into different stages that considerably vary from one writer to the other, and thereby feel confident when writing. By designing activities that enables the learner to start writing at an early stage, unlike in the product approach, the writers can progressively master the skill.

White and Arndt (1991) recommend six procedures along which writers can produce a polished piece of writing.

- a. Discussion(Class, small group and pair)
- b. Brainstorming/ making notes/ asking questions
- c. Fast writing/selecting ideas/ establishing a view point
- d. Rough drafting
- e. Preliminary self-evaluation
- f. Arranging information/ structuring the text
- g. First draft
- h. Group/ peer evaluation and responding
- i. Conference
- j. Second draft
- k. Self evaluation/ editing/ proof reading
- l. Finished drafts
- m. Final responding to draft (Al mahrouqi et al: 98)

The starting session spurs out discussions about the topic either in groups or in pairs where the students are encouraged to brainstorm all that best reflect their reasoning. Successive actions take place. The students should select among the stated ideas the ones

that are interesting and worth mentioning. After that they try to employ them into, sentences, paragraphs or essays, a first draft to be assessed and commented. Through pairing the drafts, the teacher enables the writers to reflect on their peers' productions by correcting errors, editing and proof reading. A final draft is then written and submitted to the teachers for final comment.

Zamel (1987: 267) believes that a major feature of the process approach is that it aids writers to create meaning. Novice writers are in fact not able to generate ideas quickly, so, new thoughts can significantly come to their mind at any time during the process. They can add as many useful ideas as they can since the procedure is recursive. Another advantage of the process approach is that it reduces the amount of errors progressively because the writer, in the first place, lays more emphasis on coherence and meaningful communication of thoughts, mechanics are left to the last go. Zamel, according to his observation of student writers' processing, opines that

*“Final parts of sentences were crossed out and reworded as if authors realized in mid-stream that what they ended up expressing was not what they had intended ... some sentences were totally rewritten so that the relationship between the preceding sentence and the one that followed became more logical and clearer... vocabulary, tense, and punctuation were frequently focused on. Inflections were added where they have been omitted before”* (1987: 273)

The process approach is an effective strategy that aids the writers to review their writing continuously and hence make significant changes to reach accurate composition. The learners are provided with feedback, which is imperative in guiding the process especially when given between drafts, at every single stage to leverage the productions Ozagac (2004). Stanly (2003: 1), on the other hand, reckons that “the process approach treats writing as a creative act which requires time and positive feedback to be done well” for novice writers to generate meaningful productions.

#### **3.8.6.1. Stages of the process approach**

When implying the process approach, learners have to get involved in the following stages;

##### **a. Planning**

Students most often pay little attention to prewriting activities where they determine what they know about the topic through reading, discussing it, asking questions and the likes. They directly start composition disregarding and underestimating the planning stage that guarantees successful writing performance. Teachers, on the other hand, devote a good

deal of the instructional time to the drafting process where writers struggle to put on paper what best reflects their logical reasoning.

Skillful writers significantly devote an important portion of the time planning that apparently reflects the decisive impact of this stage on the whole process. Rather, prewriting offers a springboard that supports content learning and helps students to move smoothly to the drafting phase. Devoting a considerable part of the engaged time to prewriting activities which ultimate goal is to find out what a writer knows about the writing assignment and more importantly to establish, especially through researching and reading noteworthy resources, an understanding of what to be included in the draft.

As already explained, prewriting is an essential stage that should not be taken lightly. The key is thus to allow the time needed. Yet, prewriting activities should be interesting so as to stimulate the students' interests. So, the teacher is to use a variety of prewriting activities such as freewriting, brainstorming, making lists and the like.

At this level students should consider the purpose of writing (why we write?), the audience (for whom we write? Do we know for whom we write?), content (what language and vocabulary is relevant for such activity?), and structure (how will we organize the written piece). These will determine the style we will use, is it formal or informal. The student then prepares to write using his background knowledge and searching necessary data i.e. brainstorming stage. Several activities can be carried to shape the planning stage that includes;

### **1. Reading**

Reading is the finest teacher of how to write as it affects the quality of students' productions. It is also an essential feature to learning and exploring the main ideas about the topic. So the suggestion that "the more you read the better you write" is most often taken for granted as the first step. Reading a variety of resources open up the horizons for learners to discover new ways of thinking and improve content learning. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

### **2. Dialogue**

The teachers most often neglect the social aspect of the writing and learning process. So, it is of great importance to think about the suitable ways to engage the writers into positive talk especially when preparing to write. This, in fact, can involve students in purposeful discourse analysis and aids enriching their their knowledge about a topic.

Discussing the topic at hand helps the students prepare for the writing. More effectively, the students discover other prewriting strategies when discussing the topic together for it is one of the social attribute of writing. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

### **3. Inquiry**

Questioning the topic takes a front seat when preparing to write. It gets them to think about several aspects related to the topic. Questions lead to understanding more the other and thereby figure out the students' knowledge. When the students engage in purposeful discussions they are automatically uncovering the necessary strategies to deal with a particular topic or genre of writing. Questions are indeed a normal step towards exploring the world of knowledge and finding out different possibilities to tackle issues. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

### **4. Personal interests**

Most of the time students do not have the opportunity to write about a topic that stimulates their personal interests. For this, successful teachers are in fact those who encourage and motivate their students to write by considering their needs. This, according to writing scholars, can positively impact the time devoted to the drafting and lessening the writers' hesitation. (Urkhart & McIver 2005)

#### **b. Drafting**

Drafting is another inevitable step that most teachers glorify, a fact that is often taken for granted. Writing instructors consistently include it into the instructional time since they require their students to begin composition striving to reach one end, writing a coherent essay, getting nebulous thoughts in mind into logically stitched ideas. Further, drafting represents the transitional stage between planning and revising. In a relatively coherent way, writers struggle to put words on paper. Drafting is indeed critical, an imperative step in representing what one knows.

Just like prewriting, when drafting, students need to be free from any constraints. Writers should not be strictly bound with the required rules. They need a considerable amount of time and freedom, the choice of words and the essentials of grammar had better be left to the end. Their chief concern, however, is to transform the deep structure into a surface one i.e. converting their hidden thoughts into evident ideas.

Students are trained, from their past school habits, that neatness counts a lot and submitting a perfect work is their first concern. Yet, in the real sense of the word, drafting

confronts with conventions and flawlessness. So, encouraging students to take chances and making them believe in themselves is an important step for no one's writing is perfect at this stage. Both teachers and students have to believe in the fact that drafting alone, without considering the other steps in the process, would not provide a polished product. Students' writing abilities improve; with sustainable treatment, when the teacher focuses on the whole process eloquently.

At this stage students start to put words on paper keeping in mind that it is only a start where mistakes are natural. In this concern, Brown and Hood (1989) point out that the writer should not care much "*about spelling, grammar, punctuation, or the best wording*". Students therefore might correct what is wrong, drop out what is useless, and add important aspects according to the predetermined purpose and audience.

### c. Revising

Curtailing the writer the possibility to revise their drafts is in fact ignoring a significant stage in the whole writing process that strips their motivation to progress owing to time constraints. "*As freewheeling as the drafting process can be, the central craft or art of writing is revision.*" (Urkhart and Maciver, 2005: 17)

Writers simultaneously reconsider, rethink, and reshape their drafts in the revision stage struggling with what they are intended to say and the words that best depict their mental representation (Lindemann, 1995). To fulfill the intended purpose and reach a polished product, writers tend to cut, rearrange, and add, changing the language and structures.

***"Successful revision results not from the number of changes a writer makes but from the degree to which revision changes bring a text closer to fitting the demands of the situation"*** (Faigley and Witte 1981: 411)

Understanding the purpose of the writing and the addressees helps the writer to successfully reconsider his production. Besides, to identify when to drop the thread of an intended message, the teacher's assistance and other knowledgeable persons is needed to enrich the students' experiences to review their written texts.

Revision is, thus, an indispensable step in the writing process that requires a considerable metacognition on the part of the writer that he finds easier said than done. Writers have to play a reader's role and foresee any confusion within his writing. Schriver (1992) believes that writers usually find revision difficult for at least two reasons: (a) they do not anticipate where their choices fail within the text, or (b) they know where the troubles lie but are not endowed with the necessary tools and strategies to overcome them.

“If writers fail to notice text problems in the first place, no revision occurs” (Schriver: 181). Even when writers recognize textual confusions, they have to identify those that do not confront with the purpose at hand.

Faigley and Witte (1981) found that novice writers’ revisions tend to change only surface aspects including mechanics and word choice. However, skillful writers most often focus on meaning. They always keep in mind the purpose and audience and accordingly they add, delete, consolidate, and redistribute their words, to improve their writing. Consequently, such a problem solving activity requires a considerable amount of time to practice and thinking.

Consequently, giving each stage in the writing process the required time is indeed a challenging issue to most writing teachers. They should learn how well to control the instructional time and devote equal portions to every single step when writing. Further, instructors ought to recognize that the ongoing evaluation of the learners’ productions in order to improve them is not an easy task. It is thought to take a significant amount of time and efficient strategies to gauge the learners’ productions.

Revision is the last and the most important stage where students have to rather focus on the organization of ideas, coherence, and accuracy. Though it is the last step, students should not worry about what they have written because through the teacher’s assessment and evaluation and their continuous practice they will get rid of most of their mistakes. It is generally assumed that any writing activity follows a linear processing. In other words, the student prepares a set of ideas and manages them into a plan, writes them down, and then revises what has been written. Thereby, the use of the three stages is as follow:

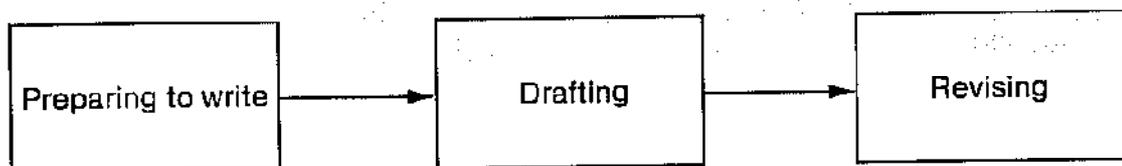
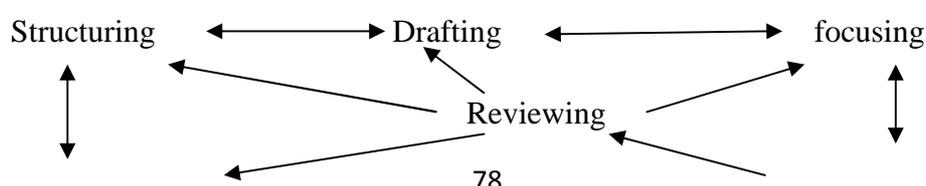


Diagram 3.2. The writing process adopted from Brown and Hood (1989:10)

Since writers perform the writing tasks moving carefully through them, these stages, though appear to be linear, are emphasized to be used recursively.

The following diagram presents clearly the different procedures the students go through when writing



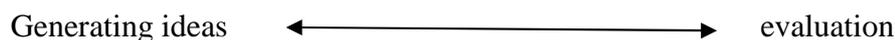


Diagram 3.3. The procedures involved in the writing process (adopted from el Mahrooqi et al, 2015: 98)

Although it is praised to affect the writing skill positively, the process approach has been subject to criticism. This approach to writing instruction focuses in the first go on the processing of ideas while curtailing students the chance to deal with the form and the content being produced. Since the process is the major concern of both the teachers and the students, what is written often takes a back seat. Badger and white (2000: 154) contend that it has “a somewhat monolithic view of writing. The process of writing is seen as the same regardless of what is being written and who is writing”. Besides, the learners may not acquire the skills of academic writing that enable them to succeed in higher education. Just as Nunan (1999) puts it, “if left to themselves, young writers will produce recounts and narratives, but not the sorts of factual writing that they need to succeed in school”.

### 3.9. Writing Purposes

In any writing context three major components should be considered. First, a topic has to be chosen and limited. Second, a purpose or the reason for composing has to be pinpointed. Third, one has to identify the audience that will read what will be composed i.e. the teacher, the classmates, etc. Therefore, the student asks the following questions: what shall I write? Why? and for whom? These will determine: the style, the structure, and the language and vocabulary to be used.

In fact,

***“a piece with strong organization begins with a clear purpose that creates anticipation in the reader. Events proceed logically. Information is given to the reader doses at the right time so the reader never loses the big picture, the overriding sense of what the writer is driving at”*** (Culham, 2003, cited in Ecenbarger, 2007: 14)

Moreover, Weigle (2002: 10) has distinguished between two main dimensions along which the different types of texts can be classified. She determines “*cognitive processing*” and “*dominant intention or purpose*”. To state it differently, any writing process is constrained by a purpose; to inform, to convince, etc, and the mental activity required in composition i.e. whether to *reproduce* or restate what has been already written, to *organize* or *reorganize* a piece of writing, or to *generate* and create a new text through paraphrasing, summery, note taking, etc. The following table illustrates what has been stated;

cognitive processing purpose	Reproduce	Create	Audience
To learn	Copying, taking, and dictation.	Comments on books margins through metaphors and analogies.	Self
To convey emotions and feelings	Stream of consciousness	Reflective writing and personal essays	Self and others
To inform	Quote, or fill in a form.	Expository writing: Definition, academic essays and articles, book reports, commentary.	Others
To convince, persuade	Citation from authority or experts	Argumentative or persuasive writing: Editorial, critical essay or article.	Others
To entertain, delight, and please	Quotation of poetry or prose.	Entertainment writing: Parody and rhymes.	Others
	Documentative discourse.	Exploratory discourse	Others

**Table 3.1.** The general model of writing discourse adapted from Vahapassi (1989, cited in Weigle, 2002: 10)

As far as writing purposes are concerned, John Harris (1993) contends that the most traditional classification of the different types of writing is a fourfold: *exposition*, *argument*, *description*, and *narration*. In his study of the writing context Matt Copeland, on the other hand, distinguishes among eleven purposes that can either be used separately or a combination of two or more is required.

The writer may either: *express* his own thoughts and feelings in words in an informal and creative writing, *describe* by providing a detailed depiction of persons, things, etc, *explore/learn* by unveiling what was ignored and answering various queries, *entertain* by establishing a sense of humor and joy, *inform* to give information and state them in an objective way, *explain* by analyzing and evaluating a set of collected data, *argue* to discover some truth (Lunsfurd et al, 2010: 7), *persuade* when they already know a given idea (Lunsfurd et al, *ibid*), *evaluate* to gauge and judge persons, ideas, beliefs, etc following a set of standards, *problem solving* when persuading the reader to adopt a given

policy or idea, and *mediate* to set an end to disputes and disagreements by providing convincing argumentations.

### **3.10. Conclusion**

This chapter was devoted to providing a theoretical background related to the writing skill, the possible approaches for its teaching, with a special emphasis on the best known ones including the process and the product approaches, and the effect of the technologies on the acquisition of such a skill. The researcher has also tackled the main cultural and social features of writing, the reasons for the teaching of composition and its main purposes.

# **Chapter Four**

## **Feedback, Writing and Information Technologies**

#### 4.1.Introduction:

This chapter will present a theoretical background for feedback and its implementation in the teaching of writing. It starts with a definition of feedback follows to provide a clear understanding. The researcher moves to highlighting the different dimensions that interweave to shape feedback practices. The different modes of feedback and the students' preferences of feedback provision will also be tackled.

#### 4.2.Definition of Feedback

Traditionally, feedback is thought to have two main distinguishable components: assessment and correction. In assessment, the teacher informs the learner about his or her performance and how best he or she has acquired the presented material. In correction, detailed information is supplied on the missing aspects according to the learner's performance either through explanation, provision of alternative strategies, or elicitation of these from the learner. (Ur, 1999)

Researchers have attributed a primary role to feedback as it is thought to be crucial for both consolidating and encouraging learning. Such a process enables teachers to easily promote scaffolded instruction. Feedback is also a key element in improving students' control over writing in EFL classes with product, process, and genre approaches. (Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

According to Tavakoli (2012) the term feedback is frequently referred to as corrective feedback or error treatment. Yet, for Bienes (2010) both notions are used interchangeably but with a preference of corrective feedback for its positive connotation, while the latter is perceived as inhibiting. Most often feedback is provided to students through comments on what they have produced. It is typically used to enhance the students' level of proficiency in acquiring the language skills, composition in particular. To state it differently, it is through feedback and error treatment that teachers help their learners alter the way certain linguistic aspects are being acquired.

In second language writing feedback means “an input from a reader to a writer with the effect of providing information to the writer for revision” (keh, 1990: 294). As for Tavakoli, it is recognized as

*“the information that a teacher provides in response to a learner production (spoken or written) and is most commonly associated with inaccuracy rather than with praising interesting or accurate productions.”* (Tavakoli, 2012:128)

It is universally acknowledged that teachers who consider writing a product most often shed light on mechanical aspects and student's grammatical errors. The instructor sees that he is first and foremost a language teacher who should avoid errors' fossilization (Zemel, 1985, as cited in Lee, 2008). Ohta (2001, as cited in Bienes, *ibid*: 6) contends that "any utterance produced by a teacher or a learner that either initiates repair on a malformed utterance, or contrasts with a learner's malformed utterance" is regarded as any sign used to alleviate a learner's erroneous acquisition of the target language.

Zamel reported that

*"ESL writing teachers misread student texts, are inconsistent in their reactions, make arbitrary corrections, write contradictory comments ... [and] overwhelmingly view themselves as language teachers rather than writing teachers; they attend primarily to surface features of writing . . ."* (p. 86).

The arrival of the process approach changes the way students' productions are evaluated. Other language aspects gain special concern including the flow of ideas and the communicative competence in delivering the information. Thus a shift from focus on mechanics and grammar to a consideration of rhetorical processing holds the lion share in the realm of composition teaching (Ferris, 1997 as cited in Lee, *ibid*).

Such an advent makes it clear that language instructors should formatively assess students' writings to diagnose their progress in such a process. Feedback, thereby, plays a crucial role in refining the learning through raising standards and motivation towards acquiring the foreign language. It helps to improve students' accuracy and productivity. The continuous implementation of such a practice aids "learners' texts gradually come nearer and nearer to written fluency" (Hamp-Lyons, 1987: 143).

#### **4.3. Feedback as Part of Formative Assessment**

Feedback can drive the formative assessment process if used systematically as it can derail it if neglected. Both students and teachers perceive it as an integral part in the writing process. Black et al claim that (2003:42)

*"An essential part of formative assessment is feedback to the learner, both to assess their current achievement and to indicate what the next steps in their learning trajectory should be."*

Giving effective feedback is one of the skills a teacher should master when formatively assessing students' writings. Good feedback most often addresses the learners'

cognitive and motivational factors since it provides a clear view about the students' actual competence and the required abilities to move on. On the other hand the more students are assessed and given feedback the better they control their own learning. Providing feedback as part of formative assessment weighs a lot. It creates a context in which learning and practice cannot be disassociated. It also gives an intention that feedback is valued and students are given chance to use it constructively. (Brookhart, 2008)

It is worth noting that feedback is one of the most important facets to reform students' composition and refresh the fading motivation to learn a foreign language, chiefly learning to write. Ellis (2009, cited in Hamidun et al, 2012: 1) notes that both structural and communicative approaches to language teaching insist on the viability of feedback in establishing competence and motivation in producing good writing especially for underachievers.

A good deal of researches held by Brophy (2003, cited in Hamidun et al, *ibid*), Glover and Brown (2006, *ibid*), and Simpson (2006, *ibid*) stress that feedback on the content and organization by indicating the strengths and weaknesses is likely to improve the quality of students' writing. Therefore, providing regular, direct, and positive responses might necessarily boost up the level of students' composition. This has been further clarified by Duppenhaler (2002, cited in Hamidun et al, 2012: 2) when he states that:

***“through responding to the content of students' writing and not correcting errors, teachers can...[control] affective variables that affect the writer's motivation.”***

Furthermore, in her proposal, Butler (1988, cited in Black et al, 2004) studies the importance of the way responses to students' productions can be given in improving achievement. So, she urges teachers to try the effect of three different types of feedback; marks, comments, and a combination of marks and comments when assessing their students. Most of the teachers who experience the use of only comments when responding to their learners' productions appreciate the idea. One of them Nancy a teacher in Riverside School (cited in black et al, 2004) reports her experience as follows:

***“My marking has developed from comments with targets and grades, which is the school policy, to comment and target only. Students do work on targets and corrections more productively if no grades are given... my routine is now, in my target class, to (i) not give grades only comments; (ii) comments highlight what has been done well and what needs further work; (iii) the minimum follow-up work expected to be completed next time.”***

In a nutshell, when assessing writing ability, if grades and red ink are employed, students may focus on their ability i.e. bad marks are often attributed to incompetency and low attainment that consequently muddy the waters. Therefore, they may lack self-esteem, confidence, and consequently motivation to learn the language. However, if only comments are used to evaluate achievement, the attention would shift to a focus on improvement and learners are encouraged to make effort to obtain better results. It is understood thus that the constructive criticism and feedback are used positively as part of formative assessment to bring up achievement.

#### **4.4.Contextual Factors that Influence the Feedback Practices**

One of the social activities that is intended to reach certain educational and social objectives is feedback. Such a process is communicated between peoples through a variety of modes in specific cultural, institutional and interpersonal contexts. Researchers most often deem these motives as being a central reason for the unsettled areas of feedback and the controversies to pinpoint its effectiveness in education definitely. For this reason, it is recommended that, research on feedback should go beyond the fact that it is an individual act; it should consider further the influential motives, the choices made, and the learners' perceptions that are shaped by their pre-established habits and their background knowledge including assumptions and beliefs about writing instruction.

Contextual factors are thought to shape the feedback practices and afford data base for its interpretation. Hyland and Hyland (2006) provide three key dimensions of feedback that helps to scrutinize and contextualize the process and offer an understanding of what a teacher does when responding to the students' writings, how he does so and what effects has those responses on the teaching learning process in general. This examination relies on: socio-cultural dimensions, delivery and focus dimensions, and interpersonal and interactional dimensions.

##### **4.4.1.Socio-cultural Dimensions:**

It is generally acknowledged that most of the research on writing is embedded within socio-cultural theories. Within this school of thoughts, scholars assert that learning to write is a process requiring students to interact with each other. It is therefore approved that culture, context and activity interweave to shape knowledge construction and transactional learning through spoken and written language (Pytash and Ferdig, 2014).

The socio-cultural theory is originally associated with the work of Vygotsky on the origin and development of the human mind that is considered as a social entity, shaped and developed in a given cultural, historical and institutional context. Learning results from the internalization of interrelated modes of thinking, feeling and behaving. Accordingly, social communications are internalized from external to internal interactions and thereby into socially constructed dialogism that affects the processing of ideas in the learners' mind.

To analyze feedback, the sociocultural theory developed a set of interconnected concepts including "mediation, internalization, developmental change, and cultural embeddedness" (Hyland and Hyland, 2006: 24). The cultural mediation helps the human mind, through feedback practices, to transform lower forms of thinking into higher forms of thinking where the student shifts from cognitive to metacognitive learning strategies including: voluntary attention, logical reasoning, planning, problem solving ...etc. The succession of developmental processes that takes place in schools' interactions causes a radical change in the nature of information processing. According to Lentolf (2000), Vygotsky has distinguished three forms of mediation that occurs during constructive interactions: mediation by others, mediation by self, and mediation by artifacts. All of them rely on language as a psychological mediating tool. He believes that mediation in the Zone of Proximal Development leads to the possible maturation of certain mental functions. So,

*"An essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's developmental achievement."* (Vygotsky, 1978: 90)

He attributed improvements in the zone of proximal development to the interactions in a particular constructive setting. The fact that communication opens the doors for collaborative interactions helps students to have control over the variables that occur during the writing process.

As for Villamil and Guerrero (2006) teachers should afford students chance to interact with their class-mates to extend the area of *other mediation* and to guarantee the learner's improvement in the Zone of Proximal development. The motives that affect peer feedback, for instance, including: L2 knowledge, role adopted during the interaction, and the likes aid learners to position themselves in different roles i.e. other-regulated, self-

regulated, or object-regulated. Receiving such strategic assistance ensures successful scaffolding and collaborative dialogue.

#### 4.4.2.Delivery and Focus Dimensions:

For decades, the debate and controversy on the attitudes and approaches towards feedback provision has been the concern of language acquisition and writing instruction researchers. “What a teacher says to a student about writing is saturated with the teacher’s values, beliefs and models of learning” (Anson 1989: 354). While, some believe that correcting all students’ mistakes is crucial for both adjusting learning and improving productivity, others prefer selective and effective corrections of certain mistakes (Ferris, 1995). Conversely, recent contributions of some scholars and ESL writing teachers consider grammar correction as counterproductive and inhibiting (Hyland and Hyland, 2006, Ferris, 2011).

However, error correction in EFL and L2 writing contexts is a must and comments on students’ papers are important, according to Hyland and Hyland (2006), for two reasons. First, in academic and professional settings accuracy and flawless writing is often the glorified dogma that calls for error treatment. Second, students usually claim that they favor the teacher’s interference and they value their writing instructor’s responses on their works that is why they believe that the imperative need for feedback implementation is essential for their apprenticeship.

In a study conducted by Ferris (2006) the role of the teacher, the student achievement, the teacher marking strategies, and the agreement of the linguistic structures with the type of feedback are deemed to have an overriding impact on error correction in student writing. She assumes that providing feedback in intermediate stages of the writing and revision process helps students to progress and attend more positively to the teacher’s corrections. Ferris recommended that teachers had better

1. Provide indirect feedback,
2. Locate errors and not label or code them,
3. Not use a one-size-fits-all strategy to the treatment of errors in students’ writings,
4. Use a small number of error categories in feedback provision. (Hyland and Hyland, 2006: 105)

Electronic feedback and second language writing has also occupied an area in writing instruction owing to the rapid growth of educational technologies. A broad spectrum of techniques to merge technologies with second language writing is reflected in computer mediated feedback. The opportunities that are afforded to writers who are linked to the screen are numerous that it is difficult for writing instructors to choose from the recommended pedagogical approaches in the field. The fact that writing purposes differ and so the uses of technologies made electronic feedback an area that covers a range of approaches to writing instruction and that needs an informed empirically based enquiry.

Ware and Warschauer (2006), on their part, enquire three strands of research on electronic feedback in a variety of research and instructional areas that have a considerable impact on the teaching of writing. First, they scrutinize the effectiveness of software generated feedback and whether it can replace or enhance human feedback. Second they compared computer mediated feedback with the traditional face to face feedback. Third, they studied the socio-cultural and socio-cognitive perspectives of technology based communicative modalities such as online chat, e-mail collaboration and multimedia authoring and their roles in mediating feedback and helping learners become independent writers.

#### **4.4.3. Interpersonal and Interactional Dimensions**

Recognition of the influence of oral and written language on students' writing performance has gained widespread concern among writing scholars and teachers. A central role is often attributed to social interactions and how learners receive and internalize those interventions during the writing process. Researchers within this school of thoughts posit oral language to have a great control over the learners' performance believing that it is the point origin of all language skills. This means that interactions in the field of language learning and in particular writing instruction would leverage acquisition.

Oral brainstorming, collaborative composing, peer revision groups, and tutorial conversations are but an example of the deliberate use of conversational interactions in the teaching and learning of writing. A great deal of research is thus devoted to analyze the role of scaffolding in the teacher's talk and interactions among student writers and oral feedback in writing conferences. Researchers, accordingly, scrutinize the purposes and functions of tutor talk, the ways in which discussions are managed, how it affects the

students' writing, how such conversations are maintained, and the role played by scaffolding in tutors' instructions (Hyland and Hyland, 2006).

Scaffolding or assisted performance (Ohta, 2001) is a constructive approach to learning. As part of the socio-cultural theory, scaffolded instruction is thought to be central to the writing tutorials. It has been defined in a variety of ways, but it is Jerome Bruner who introduced the term in education. He believes that scaffolding is a

*“process that enables a child or novice to solve a problem, carry out a task, or achieve a goal which would be beyond his unassisted efforts... it consists essentially of the adult controlling those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learners' capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence”*  
(Wood et al., 1976: 90).

For Donato (1994: 40), scaffolding in an L2 learning context means “social interaction in which a knowledgeable participant can create, by means of speech, supportive conditions in which the novice can participate in, and extend current skills and knowledge to higher levels of competence”. It is the verbal support and feedback that a tutor provides to the learner who works on a particular aspect or skill to enable him in improving it. For the tutor to control the *communicative ratchet* and progress considerably, Wood et al identified six stages in the act of scaffolding.

1. Recruitment: in which the teacher or tutor captures the student's attention through deliberate task choice and provision.
2. Reduction of degrees of freedom: where the task is simplified.
3. Direction maintenance: aids the learner to keep on doing the task and stay on track.
4. Marking critical features: the tutor aids the learner to focus on the key aspects of the task at hand and the anticipated solutions.
5. Controlling frustration: the learner is provided with support and a break to reflect on some aspects of writing.
6. Demonstration: useful solutions to certain problems are proposed.

Later Bruner added the seventh stage which is extension where alternative cases to strengthen attainment are recommended to boost up the learning process.

#### 4.5. Principles for Providing Written Feedback

Based on reviewing noteworthy literature and their own experiences in the field, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) suggested a list of principles to address the process of providing feedback to L2 students.

1. The teacher is not the only respondent: *“it is by no means necessary or advisable, however, that all corrections should come from the teacher”* (Broughton, 2003: 140). Peer response intertwined with guided self evaluation may benefit a great deal L2 students who are responsible for their own mistakes. Their experience and ability with writing allow them to interact privately with tutors, peers or experts in an online context.
2. Written commentary is not the only option: the student attitudes and the writing problems he faces dictate the type of feedback that better fits the situation. Writing conferences and audio-taped commentary for instance may be alternative modes for feedback delivery.
3. Teachers need not respond to every single problem student draft: most gifted teachers respond primarily to the development of ideas and postpone comments on language and editing issues to the penultimate draft. They believe that addressing every single aspect in the students’ paper may overwhelm both the teacher and the learners and make the process arduous.
4. Feedback should focus on the issues presented by an individual student and his or her paper, not on rigid prescriptions: as already noted, the controversy of providing feedback on content-related issues or on language errors may be settled according to the individual student’s ability in dealing with the writing. Serving the students’ need would affect positively prose construction along the planning, editing and revising process.
5. Teachers should take care to avoid appropriating or taking over a student’s text. Final decisions about content or revisions should be left to the writer: appropriation of the students’ productions has gained major concerns as most writing scholars consider it demotivating. Misunderstanding of the whole processing of ideas and failure to communicate suggestions sometimes makes the student feels that his work belongs to the teacher. Consequently he struggles to give the teacher exactly what s/he asked for rather than developing his own way of writing. *“In most instances”* teachers *“should (a) be focusing their feedback*

*attention on more pressing issues and (b) not be appropriating or taking over the students' texts by rewriting them"*(Ferris, 2011: 03).

6. Teachers should provide both encouragement and constructive criticism through their feedback: Everyone knows the sensitivity of a student receiving a paper covered with red ink. Such a practice generates a feeling of guilt that makes a learner quit writing. Students most often see feedback as an important tool a teacher uses to leverage their productions. They estimate suggestions for improvement on what they have written interwoven with positive comments. This, they believe, would create a constructive atmosphere where motivation is fueled. The L2 writing teachers' task is, hereby, to build confidence in L2 writers so that they can express their ideas in English freely. So it is recommended that both positive and negative feedback contribute to the development of writers and teachers have to regulate themselves on varying responses.
7. Teachers should treat their students as individuals, considering their written feedback as part of an ongoing conversation between themselves and each student writer: treating students as individuals can be reflected in the formative and continuous reviewing of their writings. The writing teacher must bridge the gaps through personalized feedback –a deliberate process that entails summary endnotes to each student by identifying the lacunas and stimulating progress. (Hyland and Hedgcock: 190-192)

#### **4.6. Error**

It is said that even with optimal instructional conditions there is no perfect learning. The need for remedial work is imperative due to the human being nature that lacks the capacity to retain every single fact being presented. Error remains a contentious and natural aspect at the same time and is most common in EFL classes owing to several reasons. Just as noted by Geoffrey Broughton, 2003 poor teaching is but an example that necessitates remedy. Further, he listed other circumstances that are beyond the teacher's control including; mother tongue interference, the poorly designed syllabus, and the many choices of the material to teach from. Apart from the pre-listed reasons, behaviorists' most often consider the learner as another source of trouble.

Scholars in the field of language acquisition studied error from different perspectives. For behaviorists', error was perceived as a sin that should be avoided at all costs. It was recommended thus to encourage students to produce correct English through

“massive manipulative practice of the language” (134). The mentalists on the other hand gave error another direction stating that it is a sign of learning. Students as beginner language learners are not competent enough to express their ideas correctly. So, they gradually improve as they learn from their mistakes. Corder (1967), for instance, reckoned that in an L1 context an error is a natural developmental sign that learning is taking place. It is advisable thus to not overwhelmingly problematize L2 errors. Williams (1981), on the other hand, argued that in writing classes the teacher wielding a red pen looks for errors to spot them. Those errors in fact are not troublesome but rather are in the eyes of the beholder.

Most recent studies that focus on L2 students counter these lines of arguments in their study of the notion of error by stating that one has to worry about the issue of error fossilization that derails the progress of learning. So teachers had better provide a good amount of feedback and instruction to avoid such a problem. Further, scholars who assert that written errors are but an illusion that a teacher reader imagines may go far away. Proficient users of the target language would identify certain constructions as incorrect though some errors in them seem unnoticeable. These errors are most often global errors that have a dire impact on the communication of the ideas that make the text incomprehensible.

This theoretical framework, according to Ferris (2011: 03), seems to offer a concrete definition of what is meant by error in writing classes though doubtless other ways the term could be defined. “Errors are morphological, syntactic, and lexical forms that deviate from rules of the target language, violating the expectations of literate adult native speakers”.

Certain errors are but blind spots to the learners. It seems, thus, counterproductive to address all errors made. Ferris (2002) suggested a classification of errors to aid teachers prioritize problems in the process of feedback provision based on individual differences and students’ particular preferences (Hyland, 2003).

1. Genre-specific errors – those particular to the current target text-type.
2. Stigmatizing errors – those that most disturb the particular target community of readers.
3. Comprehensibility errors – those that most interfere with the clarity of the writing.
4. Frequent errors – those consistently made by the individual student across his or her writing.

5. Student-identified errors – those the student would like the teacher to focus on. (Hyland, *ibid*: 186)

Broughton, 2003 identified four steps to deal with an erroneous utterance. These stages allow the teacher to spot the mistake before providing the last response to enable his students benefit as much as possible from the remedial work.

1. Establish what the error is

Sometimes the misuse of some grammatical and syntactic structures gives another meaning to what is being communicated. The learner may want to communicate an idea that counters totally what he intended to state. A sentence like “John came to the room” does not convey the same meaning as “John entered the room”. This misrepresentation may present a completely different impression that calls for elicitation techniques such as translation or multiple choice tests so that the teacher can identify the erroneous statement.

2. Establishing the possible sources of the error, to explain why it happened

Finding out the causes of the error means providing an analysis that helps to elaborate the suitable strategy to deal with it. As already noted, error is essentially made due to poorly prepared teaching, badly chosen materials, weak attainment and L1 interference. However, the last two reasons are thought to occupy the top of the list as they are ascribed to the learner, the less powerful side in the teaching-learning process.

3. Deciding how serious the mistake is

The most serious errors call for systematic analysis, especially the least tolerable ones in the eyes of the educated native speakers. Teachers think that an urgent remedy has to be planned to not disrupt the progress of the student but it is preferable to relate the error to its use in the English system i.e. spelling, morphology, syntax, or lexis. The linguistic aspect, for instance, is important. For this, identifying the broken rules that transgress the whole structuring of the sentences is a prior step. Broughton (*ibid*: 137) believes that transformations, tense, concord, case, negation, articles, order, and lexical errors are the gravest ones that have to gain special concern when compared to those that affect parts of the utterance.

4. Correcting the error

For fools rush in where angels fear to tread. Teachers should tread gradually in the feedback process to create a positive friendly atmosphere. The student’s paper is his own property. He most often feels resentful when he receives his paper covered with seas of red ink that they hardly dare to write another time. The teacher must think twice before giving a final decision about the writing escaping too much criticism and appropriation. The

sensitivity of the student and the nature of the task are two salient features that interweave to dictate how much to correct and how often. While an immediate feedback may help to better the productions whether oral or written as it aids the learner to work out the mistake deliberately, delaying some mistakes for another session matters a great deal. Writing teachers need to exercise his responses precisely through a regular review of the students work.

#### **4.7.Modes of Feedback**

For feedback to be effective certain modes are to be adopted and an immediate response and interaction should follow. The best known modes of feedback in the ELT writing landscape are written feedback, oral feedback (writing conferences) and computer mediated feedback (Hyland and Hyland, 2006, Brookhart, 2008)

##### **4.7.1.Written Feedback**

Teacher's written responses on a given piece of work affect the learners a lot. Many researchers in the field of writing instruction see that too much written feedback may harm the process rather than amplifies it. They often lament it as being too vague, authoritarian, pointless and too directive that students misunderstand it. Knoblauch and Brannon (1981:165) suggest that teachers'

*“Commenting on student essays might just be an exercise in futility. Either students do not read the comments or they read them and do not attempt to implement suggestions and correct errors.”*

Despite the fact that written feedback has been subject to criticism, it remains essential in EFL writing contexts and responses on earlier drafts appear to improve the learners' productivity.

Written comments play a central role in most writing classes and hold the lion share in the process of evaluating students' papers since students continue to see it as fundamental to their improvement as writers. They are more than linguistic statements. They have a great impact on the student's perception and interpretation of the feedback and thereby on his proficiency (Brookhart, 2008). For this feedback to be effective, written comments have to consider three basic aspects including clarity, specificity and tone.

##### **a. Clarity:**

The students' understanding of the feedback information as intended is of paramount importance. Most often, the acquired habits and vocabularies and the learners' background and experiences have an influence on their interpretation of the received

feedback. Brookhart (2008: 32) provided an illustration of good and bad feedback practices in terms of clarity as follows

Good feedback practices

1. Use simple vocabulary and sentence structure
2. focus on the student's developmental level
3. Check if the student understands the feedback

Bad feedback practices

1. Use big words and complicated sentences
2. Show what the teacher knows, not what the student needs
3. Take for granted that the student understands the feedback

#### **b. Specificity**

Specifying comments in the feedback a teacher makes matters a lot. It should not be too broad or too narrow but rather right and to the point. Comments like “write more” or “try harder” do not afford guidance. As a result, students may act counterproductively. It is preferable thus to respond more purposely through the use of specific vocabulary. A vague comment “This is great!” is accepted, yet “This introduction is great! It would make me want to read your work” makes the student know what the teacher considered great in the writing and why he thought so and thereby draws conclusions about the choices made in writing that introduction and encourages him to use them another time.

In specified feedback teachers should

1. Use a lot of nouns and descriptive adjectives
2. Describe concepts or criteria
3. Describe learning strategies that may be useful (Brookhart, 2008: 34)

#### **c. Tone**

The tone of the feedback is usually sent through word choice and style to express its quality. The tone may shape the way the comments will be understood. Thereby, feedback wording can either hamper or motivate the learning as they convey an assumption about the students themselves. The feedback is supposed to respect the student as a learner and promote thoughts and curiosity. Besides, the writing instructor should position the learner as an agent who is responsible of the process.

Yet, it is important to note that teachers have to avoid being always positive. Despite the fact that it is appropriate to lighten the way forward, positive remarks may be counterproductive. Constructive criticism requires credibility and reasoning to assist the student positively and to adjust the ongoing changes by telling the student what is going

wrong with his writing and suggesting how to correct it. The students, by this means, will be motivated and feel that they can control their own learning and contribute to improve it.

Brookhart (2008: 34) suggests the ways teachers should communicate good feedback tone. She asks teachers to keep away from being the final authority through using words that reflect that the learner is an active respondent. The teacher had better not tell the student what to do but rather to ask questions to encourage thinking and curiosity. The feedback should not be the final opinion; however, it should share what the teacher thinks about the product.

#### **4.7.1.1.Types of Written Feedback**

It is said that the teacher written feedback may take various forms including: commentary, rubrics, minimal marking, taped comments, and electronic feedback. (Hyland, 2003)

##### **4.7.1.1.1.Commentary:**

Handwritten comments on the student's paper itself is the best known and used of the teacher written feedback techniques. The teacher uses a correction code on the margin appearing on the exact point where the problem appears or at the end where the teacher summarizes the issue by making general observations. Through this method the teacher responds to the written work rather than evaluates it by stating how the reader sees the text, to what extent it has communicated the idea, and how to improve it. The following is a list of correction symbols adopted from Hyland (2003: 181)

- S* Incorrect spelling
- W* Wrong word order
- T* Wrong tense
- C* Concord (subject and verb do not agree)
- P* Punctuation is wrong
- Wf* Wrong form
- S/f* Singular or plural form wrong
- NA* The usage is not appropriate
- PM* Meaning is not clear
- [ ] Something is not necessary
- $\lambda$  Something has been left out



- Peer response and self-evaluation
- Paper is on time

**Your Strengths:**

**Possible Improvements:**

**Grade:**

#### **4.7.1.1.3.Minimal Marking**

Such type of written comments is based on the fact that allocating the students' errors and indicating its type is effective and may stimulate students' response and develop self editing strategies better than correcting it directly (Ferris, 1997). It is an in-text form based feedback where no mistake is identified and no symbol is used. The use of a simple correction code as suggested by Byrne (1988) makes the feedback less threatening and the student can look for the mistake and then correct it. Yet, the use of a more extended code may make the correction confusing and cumbersome. Teachers thus prefer to opt for a more minimalistic approach by focusing on a limited number of general areas (Hyland, 2003).

#### **4.7.1.1.4Taped Commentary**

It is an alternative form of marginal comments where the teacher records remarks on a tape recorder to refer to the mistake identified with a number. It is a time saving technique that enables the student to develop his listening skill as it also suits auditory learners. It reflects better the teachers' point of view about logic and structure, ideas and confusions within the writing. (Hyland, 2003)

#### **4.6.1.1.5.Electronic Feedback**

The development of communication technologies opened up novel and flexible ways to deal with written feedback in the teaching writing cycle. Either via e-mail or through the comment function, the teacher responds to the student's production in a separate window while he reads the word processed text. Such a technique if used conveniently can provide an online explanation or contextual features of some problematic issues through concordance lines to offer the student chance to learn from his mistakes.

#### **4.7.2. Oral Feedback (Writing Conferences):**

Although oral feedback requires specified features, it follows the same patterns and covers the issues that the written feedback takes into account. It is the best used one of feedback modes that considerably varies from individual to group oral responses and from formal well-structured to informal unstructured comments. Yet the questions to be asked are where and when should the teacher send the feedback? Is the student willing to hear

and use it? Besides, one has less time to decide how to say things and make comments; plans therefore are needed to ensure effectiveness ( Brookhart, 2008).

Writing conference is thought to be the extolled formal structured method for L1 researchers which has been adopted by L2 scholars to call for conversing the writer to negotiate meaning and interpretation to ease knowledge construction and provide meaningful outlook of the good and bad points in the student's production. This two-way communication makes use of Vygotsky's scaffolding technique through which the received feedback develops the students' writing abilities as well as their texts. Such a time saving technique allows the teacher to understand the cultural, educational and writing needs as it clarifies meaning and settles misunderstanding through questioning and revision plans. (Hyland 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

Teacher-student conferences provide more detailed, focused and functional commentary than written feedback especially when the teacher makes use of the individual oral feedback. Scholars tend to attribute success to those conferences where the student reacts actively to the remarks and makes a contribution rather than accepting passively the teacher's comments. They believe that it helps learners to develop both their cognitive and communicative abilities and to have lasting effects in improving their writing performances.

Based on the students attitudes and changing mood that detract from positively negotiate meaning and discuss ideas, some tend to express reservations about oral feedback. The setting and the student affect a good deal the process. In some situations the student lacks the ability to interact constructively with his teacher. In others, the learner's culture restrains his informal contact with teachers that consequently result in passive engagement that makes the conversation tedious and ineffective at all. For this, it is recommended that for specialized and constructive interaction to occur further investigation is required on the feedback offered in conferences. (Hyland 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

#### **4.7.2.1. Forms of Conferences**

It is said that writing conferences are interactions between the student and his teacher on his productions; however, they can take various forms according to different factors including time constraints and teacher and students' preferences. The oral conferences may take the form of group work if the discussions are intimidating where peer support is an imperative factor. Teachers can also briefly consult "topics, sources, or outlines,

explorations of strategies for writing or future conferences, or reviews of already completed writing, but more usually they focus on a paper in progress, examining the current draft and ways of improving it.” (Hyland, 2003: 194)

Classes can also be organized as writing workshops where students work on their writing and consult their teacher or classmates when necessary. The teacher can discuss with one of the students on his own work while the rest are engaged whether individually or in groups in activities on computers or on papers. These workshops enable the teacher to easily and quickly review a short piece of work. In other situations, teachers prefer to monthly assess each individual student privately for fifteen minutes to discuss progress. Oral conferences thus should always address doable things to ensure improvement.

### **4.7.3. Computer Mediated Feedback**

The introduction of technology in the field of language teaching and learning gave computers an indispensable role in communicating knowledge and providing feedback. Online courses aided the spread of computer mediated learning and gave students chance to exchange drafts and comments with peers and the teacher easily. Researchers thus insist on investigating how best to use computers and technologies in writing instruction, feedback delivery in particular.

Although its benefits have not been yet demonstrated, it is often claimed that ICTs promote collaborative writing and students’ motivation. Learners are more autonomous and active as they are free to interact whenever they want to. Computer mediated communication raises students interaction with each other while the teacher plays a role of facilitator and mediator in the process. It, therefore, fosters student centeredness and group knowledge. Besides, it aids underachievers to produce well constructed texts through well controlled peer reviewing.

Attempts to intertwine traditional forms of feedback with computer mediated comments appear due to its positive outcomes. This aids significantly the students who do not have an easy access to updated computer facilities. Besides, peer responses may be impeded by the absence of real interactions and time constrains. Therefore, the integration of the advantaged electronic feedback in a real classroom context and traditional face to face communication may impact writing development positively.

The development of software including grammar checkers, e-rater, concordances, Criterion Online Writing Service, Daedalus integrated writing and the likes impacts the approaches to feedback. These programs guide students’ productions in terms of grammar,

usage, style, organization, and development. Yet, their reliable use in L2 instruction remains an area of further investigation. (Hyland 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006)

#### 4.7.4. Peer Feedback

It is said that the response of peers on writing productions has been adopted from L1 contexts to become an alternative form of teacher feedback in L2 writing classes. Researchers tend to consider such mode of feedback as important for improving students' papers and developing their readers understanding of what constitutes a good piece of writing.

#### 4.8. Types of Feedback

A detailed classification of the different types of feedback has been provided by Lyster and Ranta (1997, as cited in Bienes, *ibid*)

1. Explicit correction: when the teacher notices a student's error, he immediately stops him to correct the mistaken utterance. In this type the teacher not only gives the student the correct form, he also informs him that his statement was erroneous. (e.g. what do mean by she goed to school, I think you had better say she went to school).
2. Recast: it is an indirect indication that the learner is incorrect. This can be done through a repetition of part of the sentence excluding the false utterance so that he can recognize the mistake and thereby corrects it. The teacher reformulates the statement in a totally implicit way and sometimes uses techniques that call for translation when the learner uses his mother tongue or switches to another code. e.g. I have thirteen.

I ..... thirteen.

I am thirteen.

3. Clarification request: the teacher interrupts his student using statements like "pardon" or "excuse me". Likewise he provides an indication that there is something wrong within the utterance that needs reformulation. The teacher then made a request to point out that some clarification is needed.

e.g. T: what is wrong with you?

S: I have hungry.

T: what is wrong with you?

S: I am hungry.

5. Metalinguistic clues: when the learner misuses a given utterance, the teacher gives some information related to the erroneous statement. He may also comments and asks yes/no questions to aid his student draws the right way.
6. Elicitation: the language teacher asks his student to reformulate the ill-formed utterance, otherwise, he can proceeds to the use of questioning to elicit the correct information.
7. Repetition: focusing on the erroneous utterance by repeating it with a special tone may draws the language learner attention towards the mistake. Thereby, he can correct or elicit the right way.
8. Paralinguistic signals

#### 4.9. Student's Preferences of Feedback

It is of importance to consider students preferences and what they want to learn from the feedback provided. Leki (1991: 210), on his part contends that

*“ignoring their request for error correction works against their motivation...It seems at best counter-productive, at worst, high-handed and disrespectful of our students, to simply insist that they trust our preferences”.*

The teacher comments on a given piece are appreciated and valued a great deal by the learner since it brings forth positive feeling and gives an impression that someone cares enough about the writing (Brookhart, 2008). Many researches indicate that the L2 students, especially those from cultures where teachers are constantly directive, prefer teacher written feedback than any other type of feedback including peer feedback and oral feedback. They may even feel resentful if they do not receive comments on their mistakes and lacunas. Yet its significance in developing students' writing is still contentious (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). While many argue that form-focused feedback accompanied with certain instructions may affect prose construction, others such as Truscott (1999) believe that the adoption of a “correction-free approach” in their classrooms is almost a significant incentive to L2 improvement.

Most writers prefer grammar corrections since the professional and academic contexts entail flawless writing. Students then favor neatness and accuracy as an essential attribute of their productions and prefer to be assessed on mechanical aspects. Yet, in other contexts where multiple drafts are assigned and proficiency is the aim, students see comments on ideas and organization as crucial for their improvement and later on grammar is to be corrected. These contradicting views may occur due to the approaches used in the

teaching of the writing skill and more particularly to the product and the process theories. Both approaches may lead the writing teacher to focus considerably on grammar and mechanics as students progress (Hyland, 2003). In other words, for beginners priority therefore is paid to meaning, feedback on errors is thought to be discouraging and helpless.

Student use of the teacher written feedback differs considerably. Some correct their papers following the allocated comments and their major corrections cover grammar mistakes, others see feedback a stimulus for further revisions to write a polished piece of work that follows a given tone or style; as for some students the corrective feedback may cause problems rather than amplifying their productions. The problematic text is then ignored to avoid the identified flaws as they destruct the ideas being presented. So the revisions made can contribute a little to the improvement of the writing skill. Thus it is worth noting that what the learner wants from the teacher's comment matters a lot and that error correction remains a significant factor in refining the writing skill (Hyland, 2003, Hyland and Hyland, 2006). A comprehensible classroom concordance is then needed to specify and classify teacher responses including error codes and symbols because most of the time students are confused when interpreting comments (Ferris, 2003).

The students' expectations vary significantly in terms of their perception towards the teacher treatment of their compositions. The learners accept positive remarks and constructive criticism (Ferris, 2003) but the teacher's fear of the effect of negative comments leads him to address errors indirectly; yet this may lead to misinterpretation and can contribute a little. Some students value responses to their ideas and want to see all their mistakes identified that makes the task even challenging. For Enginarlar, (1993: 203)

*“What students perceive as effective instructor feedback encompasses: (1) attention to linguistic errors; (2) guidance on compositional skills; and (3) overall evaluative comments on content and quality of writing....When feedback in these areas is provided in a problem-solving manner, students seem to regard revision work as a collaborative type of learning where responsibility is shared by the two parties”*

Since the teacher is responsible to change the attitudes towards error correction, it is preferable then that the writing instructor design questionnaires or dialogues intended to identify the areas on which the received feedback should focus according to their learners' needs, background, and preferences (Hyland and Hyland, 2006). This would create

classroom collegial and trustworthy atmosphere that significantly improves motivation towards learning (Ferris, 2003)

**4.10. Conclusion:**

This chapter summarizes the theoretical data base related to feedback practices. The researcher talked about the notion of feedback, the major social and cultural factors influencing the process, and the different modes of feedback. She also deals with the major types of feedback employed in an EFL context and the students' preferences.

# **Chapter Five**

**Analysis and discussion of the  
findings**

### **5.1.Introduction**

This chapter is merely empirical. It deals first and foremost with the description, interpretation, and analysis of the raw data gathered from the research instruments. The researcher will begin with an interpretation of the first data set obtained from the students and the teachers' questionnaires. The second data set results from the analysis of the observation is intended to provide a clear understanding of the context under scrutiny. The third data set is concerned with the analysis of the written test findings so as to validly testify the research hypotheses.

### **5.2.Analysis and Discussions of the Questionnaire Results**

The current section is devoted to analyzing the teacher's and students' questionnaires. They were mainly intended to pinpoint the major difficulties both the students and the teachers encounter in writing classes and how technologies and feedback strategies are employed to overcome them.

#### **5.2.1.The Students' Questionnaire**

The researcher will present an interpretation and analysis of the main findings of the students' questionnaire, especially the use of ICTs and feedback practices in the process of writing instruction so as to deduce how best technologies are implemented in facilitating progress and better achievements.

##### **5.2.1.1.Pedagogical Use of ICTs**

The first part of the students' questionnaire aims to finding out the quality of the technological support the department is endowed with. It includes three questions; the first ones try to ascertain the kind of instructional technologies used in the institution and the quality of the tools being employed in the teaching of English. The third question looks for the students' perceptions about the inception of ICTs in their classes.

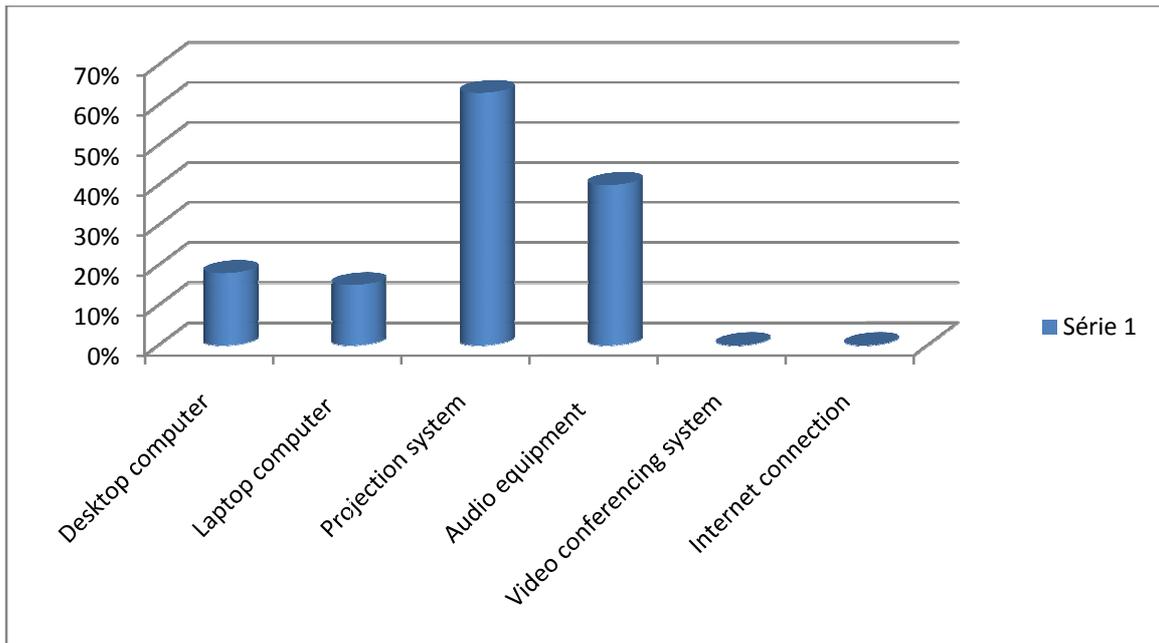


Diagram 5.1. The kind of technological tools that are used in the classroom

When questioning the informants about the kind of technologies available in the classroom they use, 18% replied that they had a desktop computer in the informatics laboratories, 50% answer that the teachers use their personal laptop computers, 63% state that a projection system is available in the amphi-theatres, while 40% of the sample population say that their teachers use audio equipment whenever possible, especially in oral expression sessions. As for the video conferencing system and the internet connection, the respondents respond that it is used only in international conferences to ease as more foreign scholars' contributions and communications as possible.

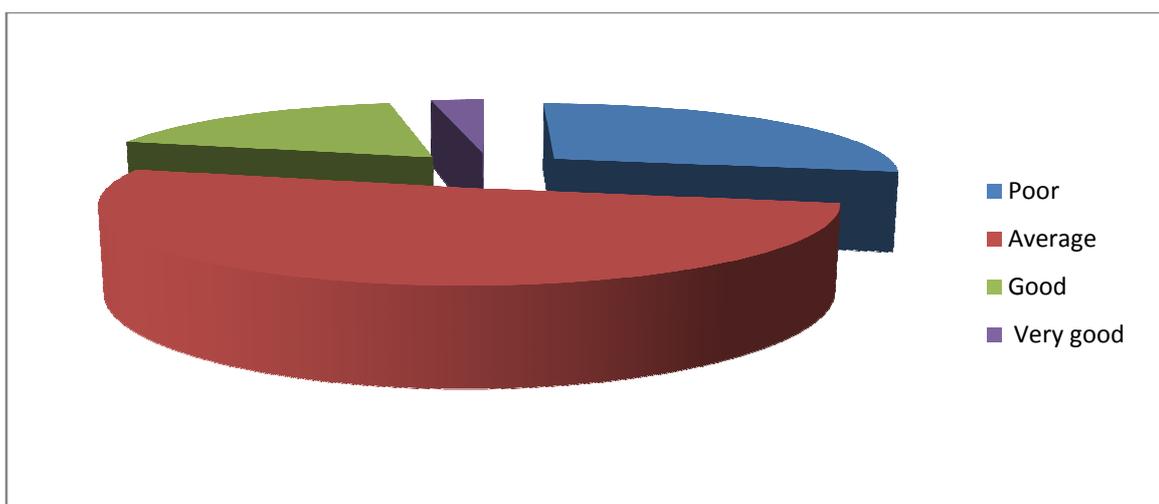


Diagram 5.2. The quality of technological support in the institution

As for the second item that, just like represented in diagram 5.2., aims to find out the quality of the technological support. The result shows that 28% of the respondents believe that it is poor when compared with the rapid growth of technologies in the market place, 51% respond that it is average. This is basically due to the gap between their daily use of the technologies and its actual implementation in the teaching learning process. 18% state that it is good, while only 3% of the whole sample population believe that it is very good for, according to them, the technologies used afford a considerable understanding of the worldly knowledge they have to acquire.

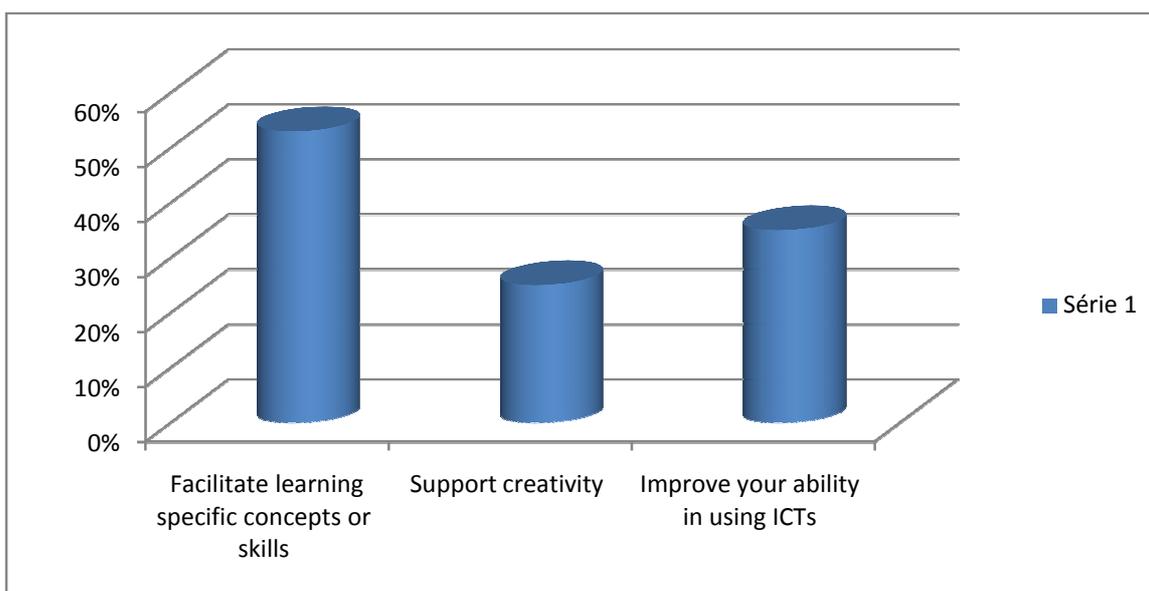


Diagram 5.3. Students' perceptions about ICTs

According to diagram 5.3., the majority of the students and who represent 53% of the whole respondents believe that ICTs are handy means that facilitate learning specific concepts and skills and writing is no exception for they could create their own spaces to learn and record easily what they produced. 25% opine that instructional technologies open up great opportunities as they support creativity on the part of both the teacher and the students that it is impossible to deny the positive role they played since their inception in pedagogy. 35% of the respondents state that technologies improve their ability in using the ICTs. Through their regular complicity they are able to recognize so many aspects related to their use the reason why they are dissatisfied with the level of technological expertise in the teaching of English in general and writing instruction in particular.

#### 5.2.1.2. Writing Instruction

The second part of the students' questionnaire is devoted to determine the importance of the writing skill to EFL students and the appropriateness of the time devoted

to impart it. Further, it aims to find out the aspects the writers find difficult to fulfill when writing, the use of the process approach, especially for beginners, to compose a given piece, the part of the essay the students find difficult when writing, and the use of assessment as part of gauging and informing the students' productions, it also looks for some recommendations the students find useful to ameliorate the writing skill.

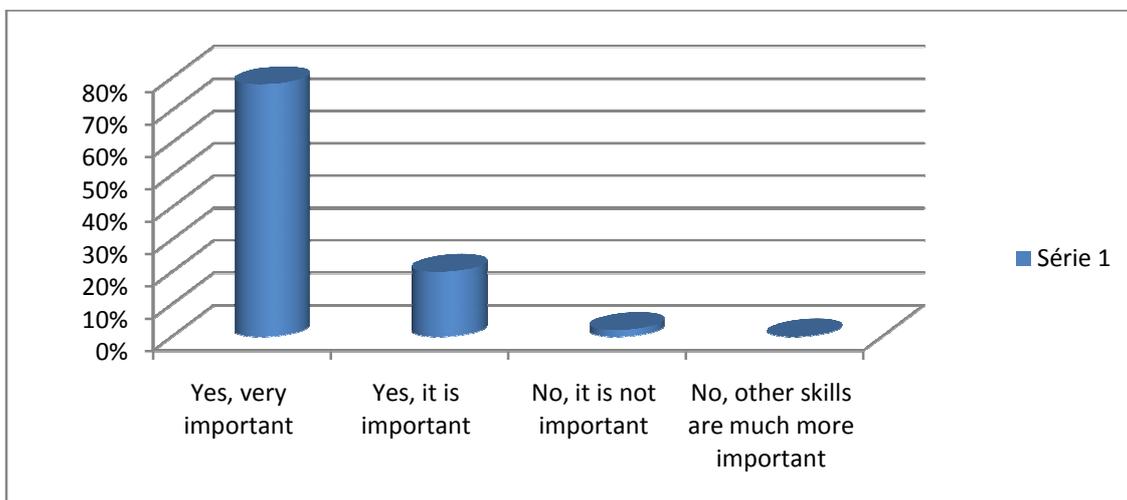


Diagram 5.4. The importance of the writing skill

According to the result of the fourth item, 78% of the respondents believe in the imperative need of the writing skill in the process and acquiring the necessary academic skills to achieve competence and thereby success. 20% of the whole population reckoned that writing is as important as any other skill in achieving success. 2% think that writing is not important when compared with speaking for their major concern is to communicate orally with the target language.

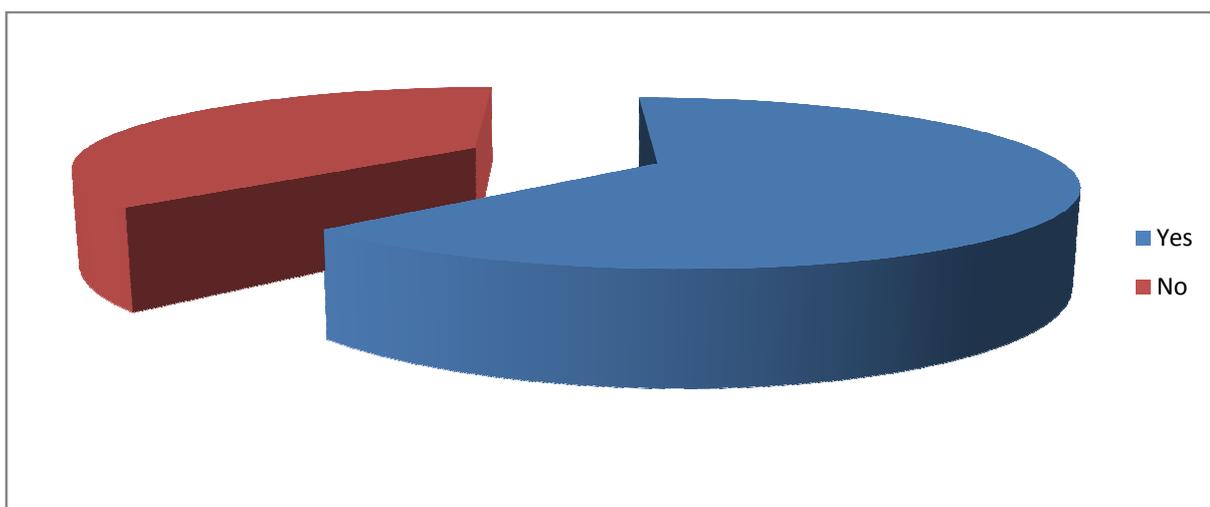


Diagram 5.5. The appropriateness of the time devoted to writing instruction

This item was intended to ascertain the appropriateness of the time devoted to the teaching of writing. While 63% of the respondents state that three hours a week is enough to acquire the necessary aspects related to the skill, 37% of the total think that it is not the appropriate amount of time as they are curtailed any chance to be assessed and consequently inform their performances.

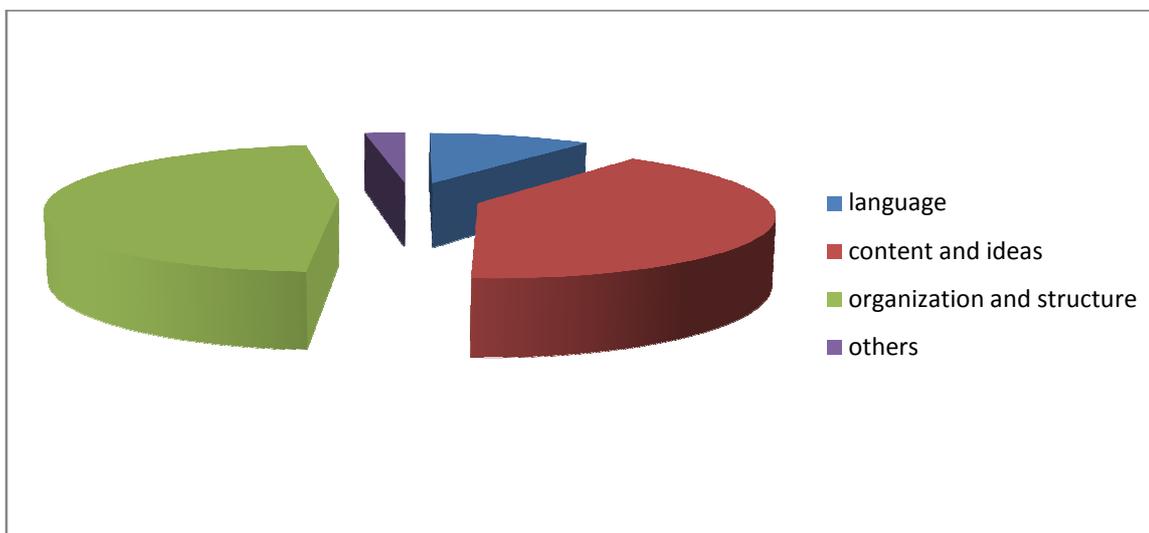


Diagram 5.6. The writing aspects students find difficult to acquire

When the researcher questioned the students about the aspects of writing they find difficult to acquire. 12% of the whole population find language an obstacle, 45% state that the content and ideas hinder their ability to write an essay, 52% say that organization and structuring thoughts is their major worry when writing while 3% of the respondents state that their teacher's strict regulations hamper their writing performances.

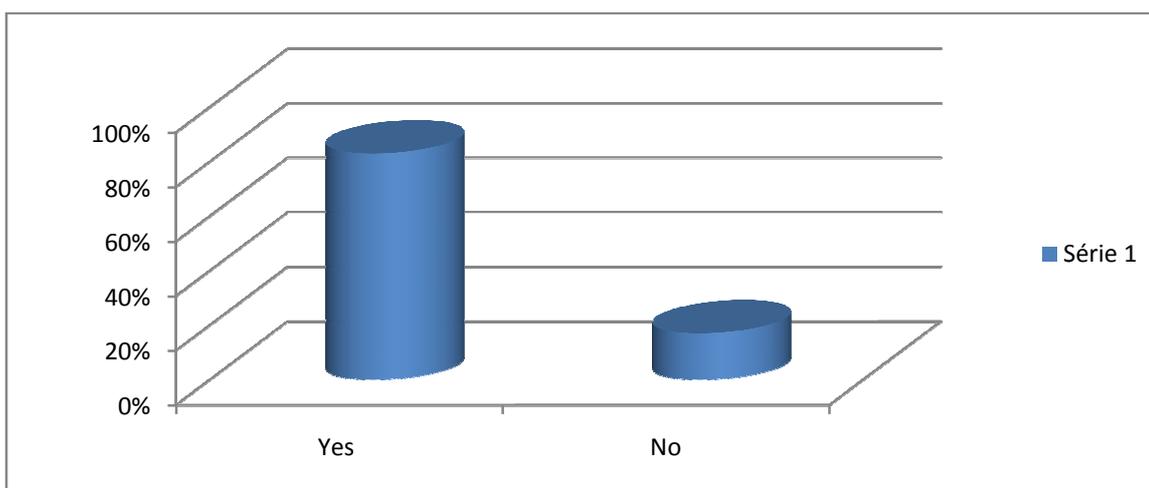


Diagram 5.7. The process approach vs the product approach

This item aimed at finding out the preferred process the students follow when writing. While the majority of the respondents who represent 83% of the whole population

state that they use the process approach because it is the best procedure to be followed especially for beginner writers, 13% answer that making mechanical mistakes reduce the possibility of getting good marks so they prefer focusing on the mechanics of writing, they rather prefer the product approach.

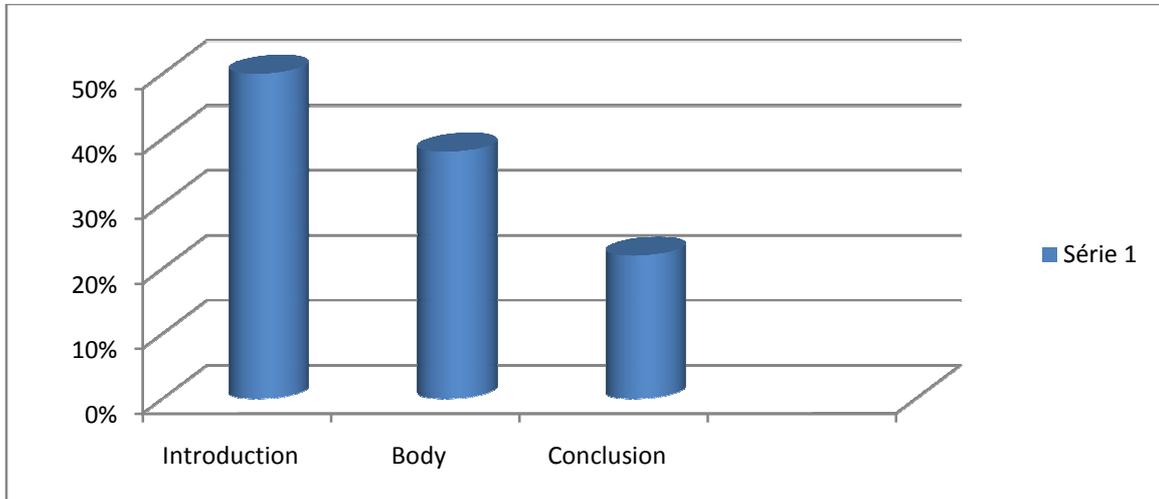


Diagram 5.8. The part of the essay students find difficult

The researcher aimed, through this item, to find out the part of the essay the students see difficult to fulfill. The majority of the respondents and who represent 50% of the whole sample population state that the getting started or the introduction is, according to them very complex since it stimulates the reader's interest. 38% respond that developing supporting ideas into a body is their major worry for this part that provides a hook between the introductory and the concluding idea. 22% of the target population assert that generating a concluding idea is the ever difficult since they give much attention to the first two parts that it is tiresome to end up with a noteworthy idea.

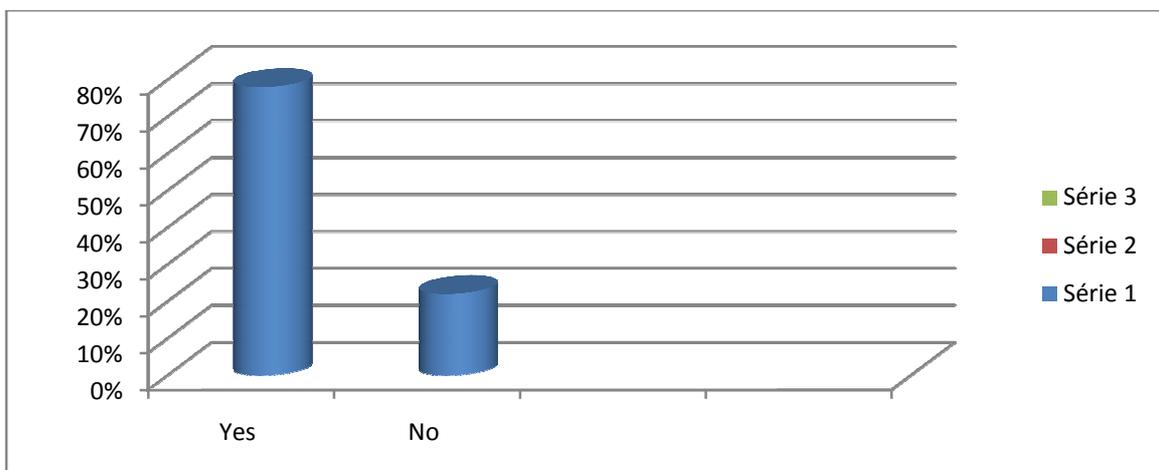


Diagram 5.9. Self assessment to check on progress

When the researcher enquire whether the students continuously assess themselves to check on their progress, 78% of them state that they most of the time self assess their productions while 22% answer that they dare not evaluate their writings believing that the feedback of an absent reader is more objective and reliable.

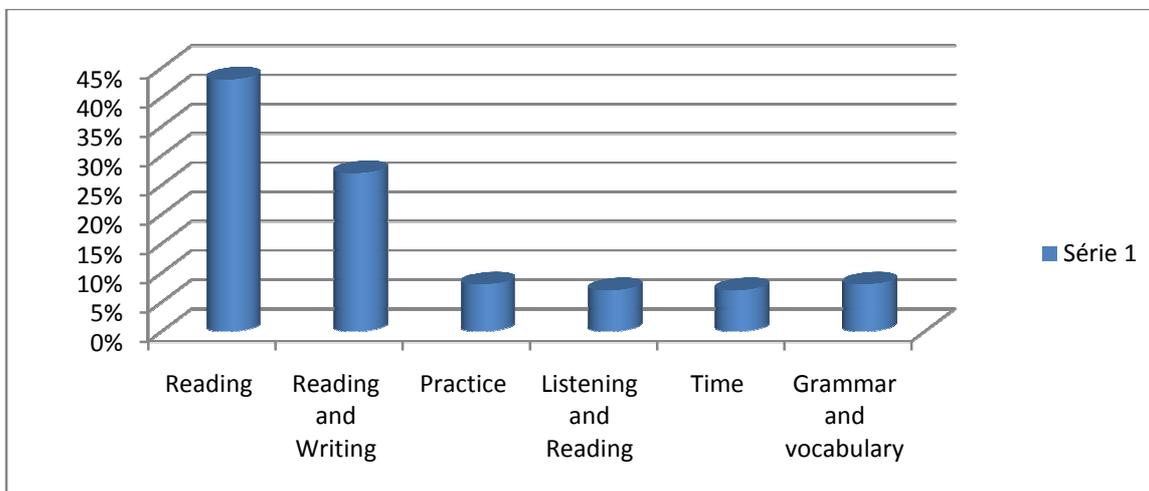


Diagram 5.10. Students' suggestions of what best help them improve their writing

When asked about recommendations for writing improvement, 43% suggest reading because it is the best teacher of how to write better besides it helps the learners to acquire more vocabulary and enriches their cultural literacy; they further believe that reading resources related to the content being taught helps a great deal for their highly sophisticated language used by experts and professional writers enables the novice writer to learn the right way words are arranged.

27% recommended an immersion of writing with reading in the first place to aid the learners imitate noteworthy productions and at the same time learn grammar and morphology i.e. how words are related to each other in a given piece. They suggested the continuous contextual practice as well so as to improve considerably. 8% recommend the practice of writing through diaries, 7% of the population opine that listening and reading are imperative skills in enriching the vocabulary storage and improving grammar. 7% are not satisfied with the amount of time devoted to writing so they think that devoting more time creates a positive atmosphere where the teacher can better leverage his students' productions. 8% of the respondents answer that the learners have to intensify their grammar and vocabulary so that they can feel confident when writing.

### 5.2.1.3. Feedback Use

The third part of the questionnaire deals with the process of feedback provision. It is primarily concerned with finding out the type of feedback used to inform the students'

composition, the importance of feedback provision to the writer and the frequency of feedback provision during the teaching of writing, the aspects that usually the students receive feedback on, the type of comments they receive and the way the writing teacher corrects students' productions

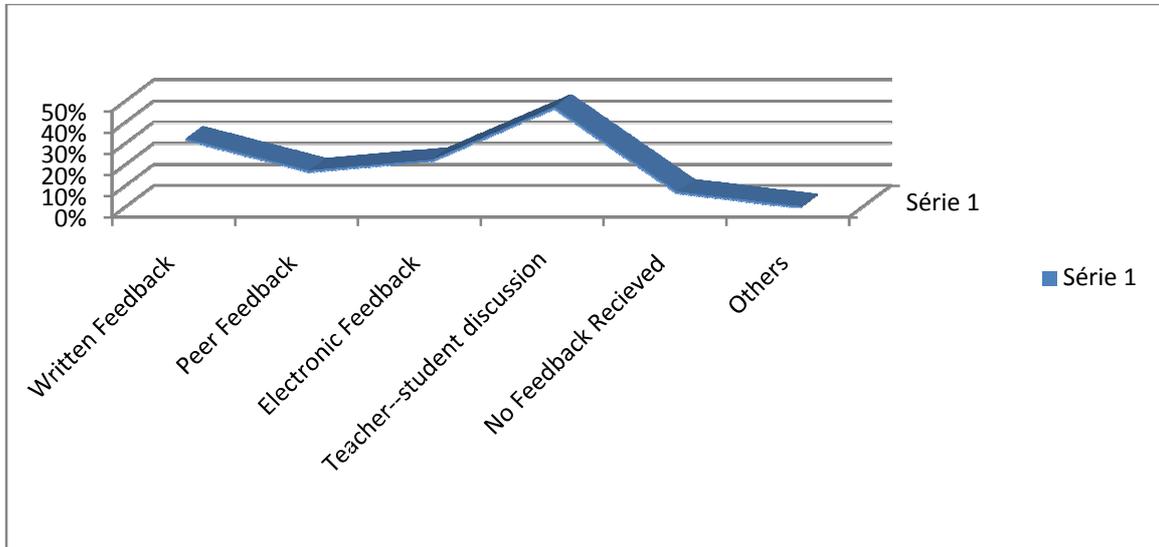


Diagram 5.11. The type of feedback students receive

#### The type of feedback used to leverage students' writing assignments

32% of the sample population, when asked about the type of feedback they receive, answer that their teacher provide written feedback every time they produce a given piece of writing in the form of comments. 17% of the informants consider the use peer feedback useful when gauging progress to encourage collaborative work. 22% state that they are provided with electronic feedback, 47% respond that teacher-student discussions is the main technique employed to help them improve while 7% state that they receive no feedback which is contradictory to what has been noticed in the observational phase.

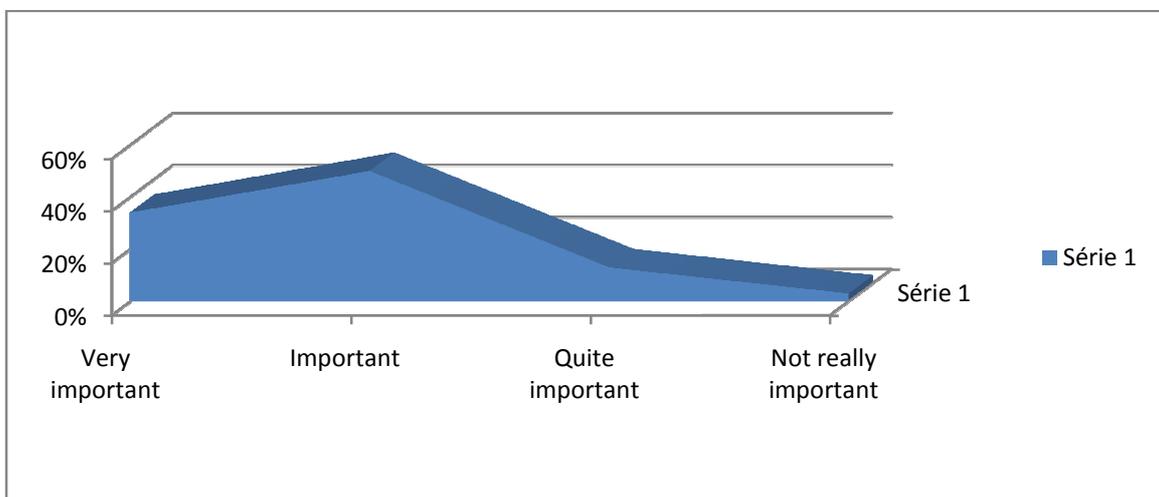


Diagram 5.12. The importance of feedback to writers

This item aims to explore the students' attitudes towards the feedback. 34% of the respondents believe that feedback is very important for it pushes them forward and leverage their performance. 50% state that such a process is important albeit it needs further consideration and systematic implementation to guarantee dynamic communication of thoughts. 13% of the informants respond that in the age of technologies, the teacher's feedback is quite important for they can rely on themselves in improving their skills. While the tiny minority of the population (3%) assumes that feedback is not important at all, especially with the teachers' authoritative comments that demotivate them.

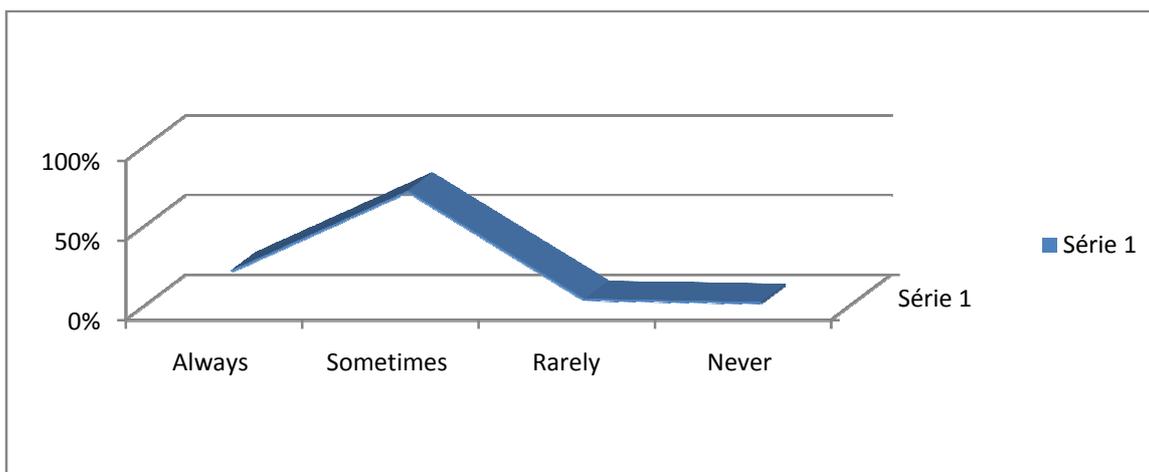


Diagram 5.13. Teacher's provision of feedback

The researcher enquires, through this item, about the regularity of the feedback the students receive on their productions. 22% of the whole sample population respond that they always receive feedback from their writing teacher because they write a lot and need their writing assignments to be evaluated. 72% of the respondents state that they are sometimes assessed for the time constrains the teacher from offering responses to their productions. 4% answer that they rarely receive feedback because they underestimate their writings and do not submit their work for formative assessment while 2% never get responses for they dislike writing.

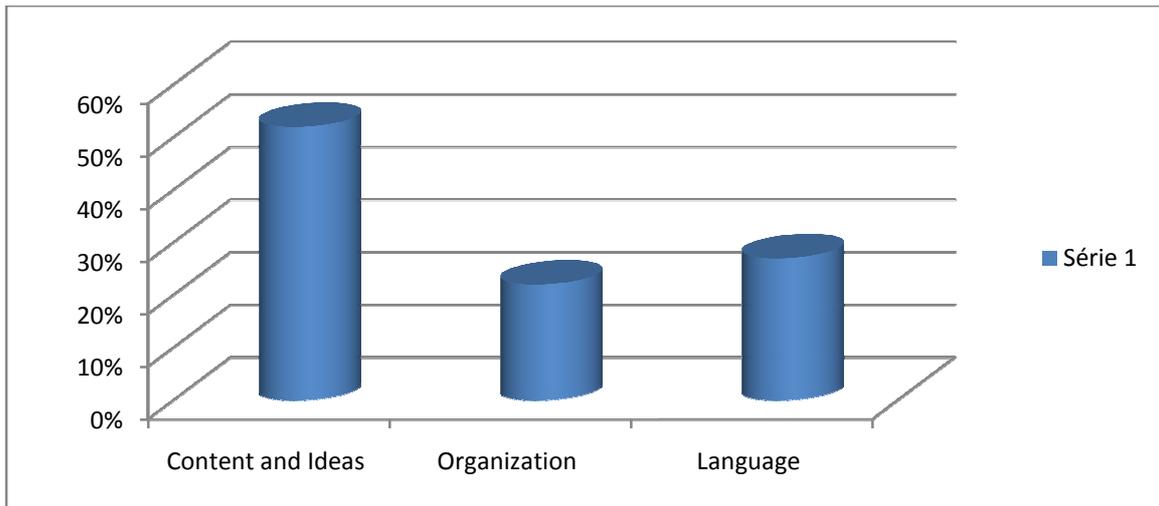


Diagram 5.14. The aspects that usually the writing teacher provide feedback on

When asked about the aspects they usually receive feedback on, 52% of our informants respond that they most often receive feedback on the content and ideas, 22% state that organization is the main concern of their writing teacher while 27% answer that a great importance is given to the language used in expressing the ideas.

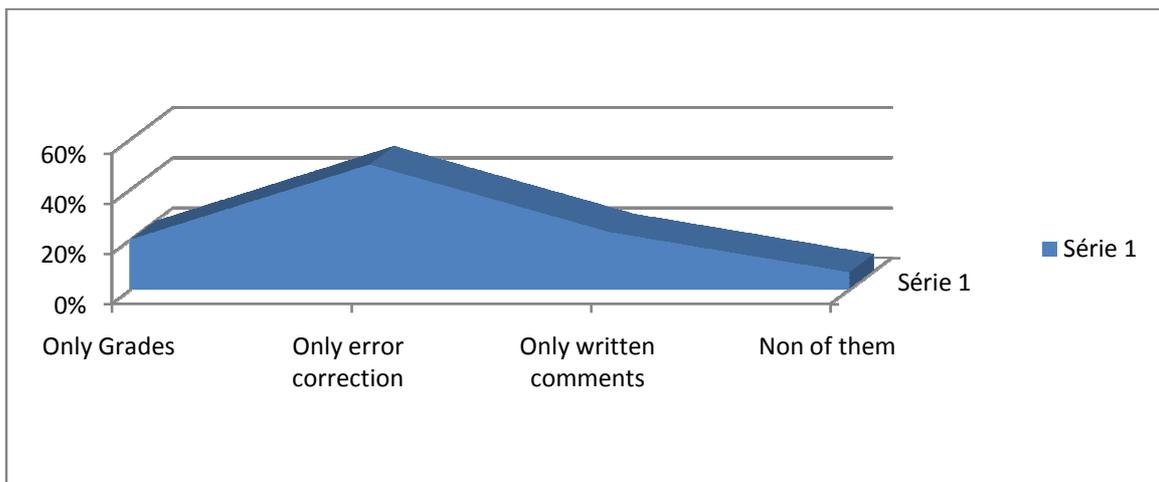


Diagram 5.15. The type of comments teacher's uses

The researcher through this item aims to ascertain the type of feedback the teacher provides to his students. 20% of the respondents state that they receive only grades without any remarks or corrections, 50% respond that they are generally supplied with only error correction, 23% declare that their writing teacher prefers supplying written comments to give them a chance to look for the correct way an erroneous statement is to be presented. 7% of the informants receive oral feedback for they present orally what they have written.

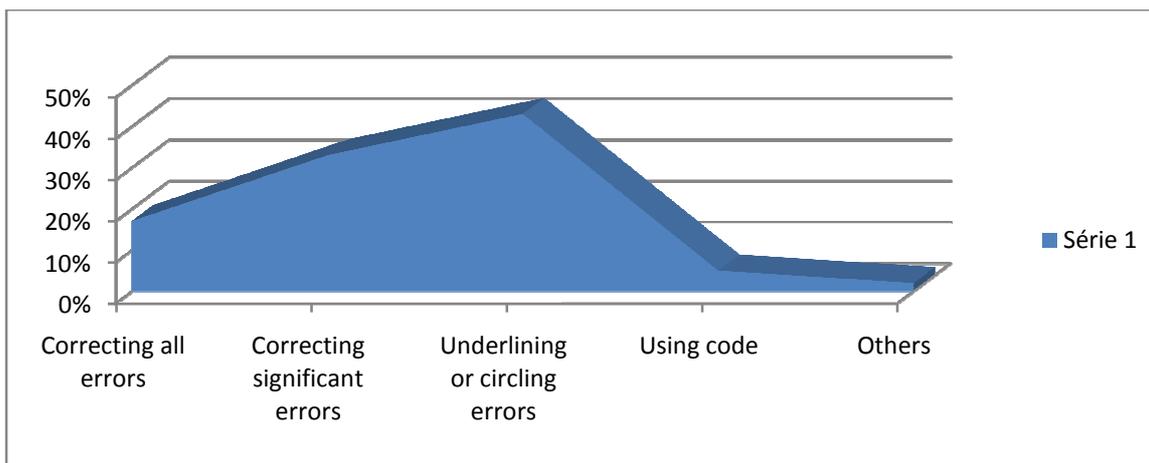


Diagram 5.16. The way the writing teacher corrects students' productions

This item looks for the kind of rubric the teacher follows to correct his students. 17% of the respondents respond that all their mistakes are corrected because their teacher uses an analytic scoring, 33% state that the significant errors are highlighted, 43% declare that the writing instructor usually underline or circle their errors, 5% assert that a code is devised sometimes to comment their writing while 2% say that other technique are employed including oral discussions.

#### 5.1.1.4. The Use of Technologies in Feedback Provision

The fourth part of the questionnaire is intended to find out whether instructional technologies are used when providing feedback to the students' productions. The questions included aim in the first go to ascertain whether the writing teachers use electronic feedback when teaching, the type of technologies used to offer e-feedback, the importance of electronic feedback, the teacher's provision of accurate and complete feedback on errors and the main aspects students learnt from the feedback provided.

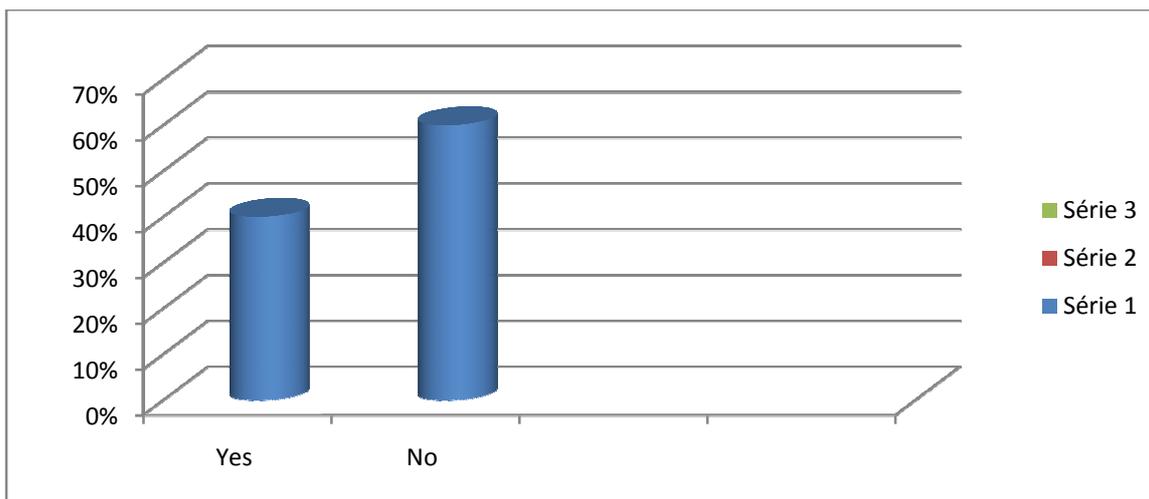


Diagram 5.17. The use of electronic feedback in gauging progress

This item is intended to find out whether the writing teacher uses electronic feedback to gauge the learners writing performances. The result shows that e-feedback can best be employed through emails or facebook though 60% of the respondents deny its implementation especially when they consider the ones who do not have internet connection at home that constitute an obstacle and curtails the writing teacher any chance to implement this strategy in providing feedback to their students' writing.

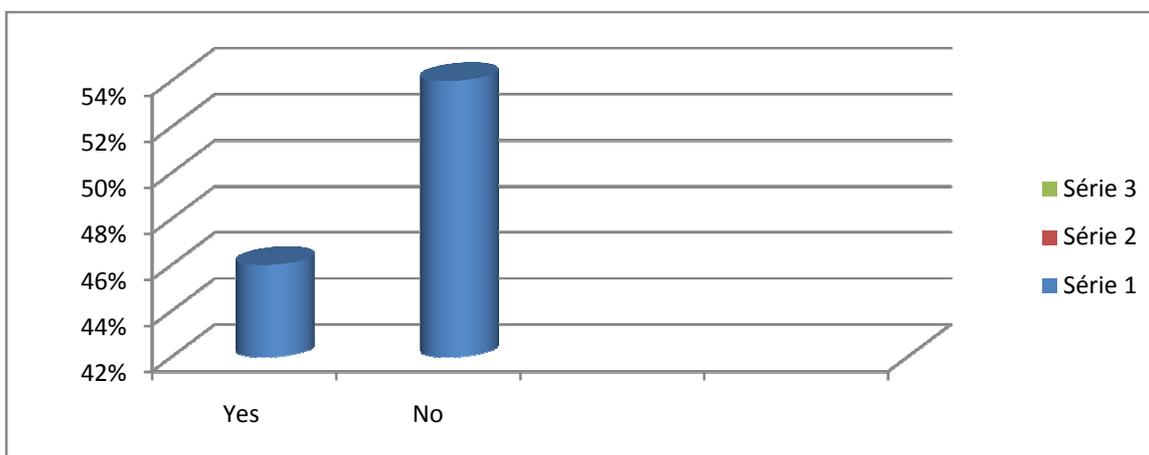


Diagram 5.18. The use of electronic folios to monitor progress

When the researcher questioned the respondents about the possibility of using electronic folios in the feedback process, 46% of them state that they keep copies of their writings in files containing word documents, each with an intended purpose, to see how best their performances change over time. 54% of the informants answer that they prefer using papers and they write only for the sake of exams.

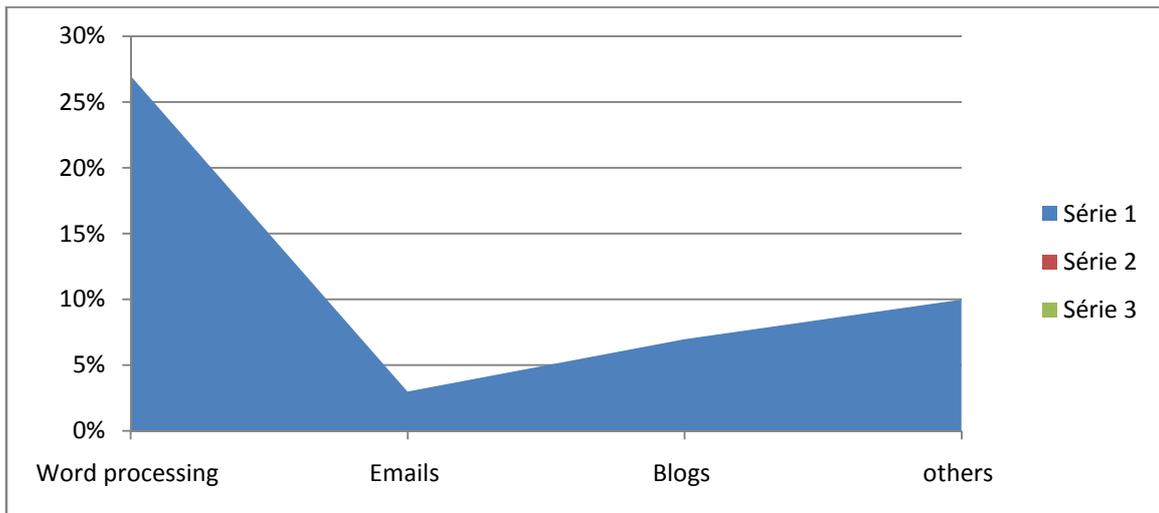


Diagram 5.19. The kind of technologies used in gauging progress

Among the students who keep electronic folios to gauge progress, 27% answer that they use the word processor, 3% use e mails, 7% create blogs while 10% use the social media to practice writing.

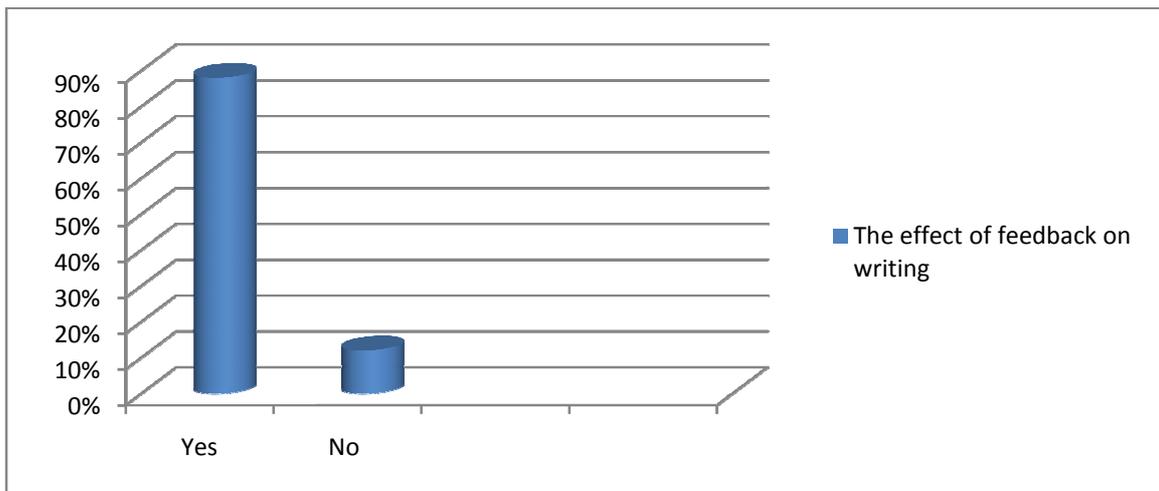


Diagram 5.20. The importance of e feedback

This item aims to find out the students' attitudes towards electronic feedback. 88% of the respondents believe that it is a very useful and sophisticated technique to record the mistakes and thereby find an immediate remedy for the erroneous statement. 12% of the informants think that it is not practical because they are still in need of strategic implementation of such devices.

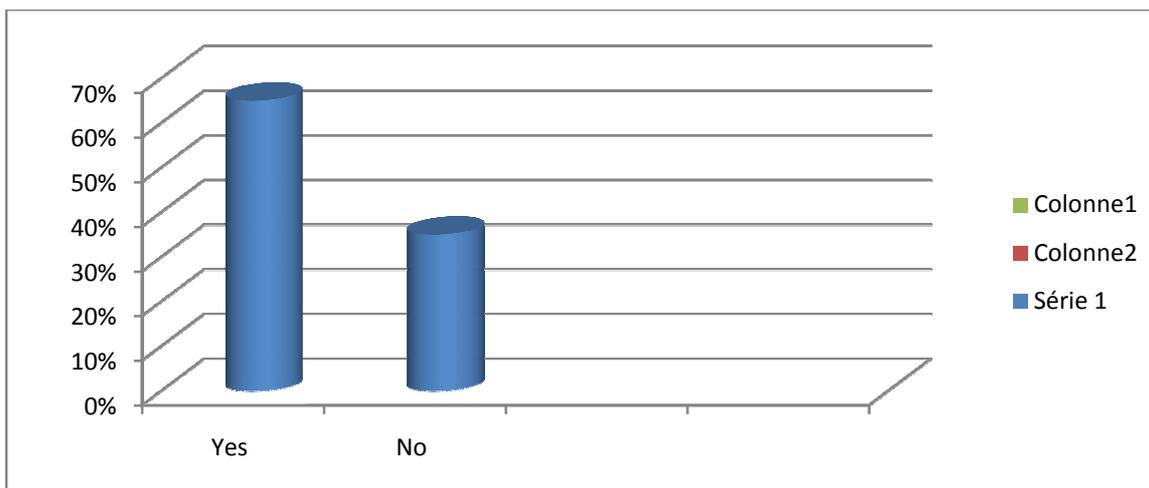


Diagram 1.21. The teacher's provision of accurate and complete feedback on errors

This item looks for the accuracy of the feedback the writing teacher provides. When the researcher questioned the students whether their teacher feedback is accurate or not, 65% of them answer that it is accurate as they are continuously guided by certain instructions whenever they produce a given piece of writing. They think that it helps them to write better by learning from the previously made mistakes. Besides they can resume back and learn the missed aspects to reduce the amount of flaws. The feedback they receive, according to some of the informants, helps them to acquire new strategies to deal with different genres of writing and to write full essays. The remaining of the respondents that represent 35% of the total stated that the feedback is not accurate because it does not follow a defined procedure i.e. the teacher responses are delivered arbitrarily.

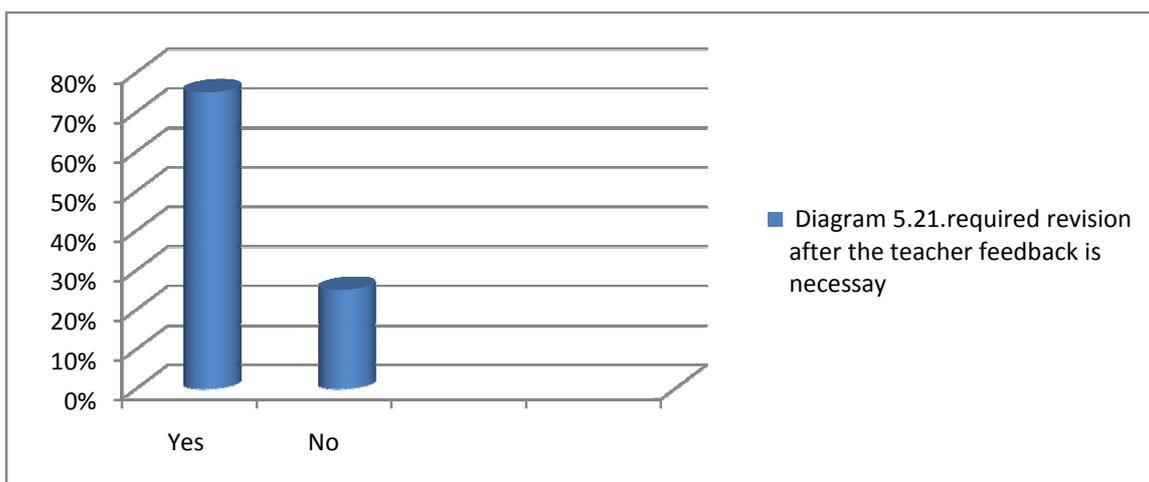


Diagram 5.22.the students' revision after the teacher feedback

The last item in the student's questionnaire was intended to determine whether revision is required after receiving the feedback and to what extent does the latter aid the learners achieve better outcomes. 75% of the informants agree on the fact that feedback helps novice writer by pinpointing their flaws and therefore provides useful insights into how best to present ideas and to improve gradually through learning from the mistakes made. They further believe that feedback is so important in re-assimilating and reacquiring the language aspects they have missed. 25% of them state that such a process is not important at all due to the negative effect that it may have on the writers' productivity.

#### **5.1.1.5. Analysis and Discussion of the Results**

Based on what was presented and the students' responses, one may assume that even though the institution is supplemented with the necessary material needed to cope with the technological advancement, the respondents still find it underprivileged. The implementation of these technologies, according to the results, even if the students believe in the positive impact of the technologies over the teaching learning process, still needs further concern and systematized efforts to aid elevate the level of apprenticeship and thereby promote constructive learning environment.

Just as to what was hypothesized. The result showed that generating ideas and finding out the relevant words to express their thoughts in addition to the language and mechanics make most of the students think that they cannot reach a good level in composition and thereby are always anxious to write in English.

Concerning the learners' attitudes towards the feedback they receive, the researcher found that some learners think that teachers' comments on their writings are demotivating while others see that it is a good way to inform their productivity.

#### **5.2.2. The Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was distributed to more than twenty five teachers since most of the exams the students are required to pass test their writing ability, yet, only five completed it. Its primary purpose is to discover the availability of using ICTs in the teaching of writing and its importance in leveraging the students' productivity especially when providing feedback to inform their writing assignments.

##### **5.2.2.1. Pedagogical use of ICTs**

As clearly shown in the following diagram, one can assume that the majority of the teachers (60%), when they were asked about the technological support available in their classrooms, prefer using their own computers with the department's overhead projectors to

present courses for it was the least they can do to make the course more vivid and that in fact reveal their underestimation and unawareness of the systematic ways of ICTs implementation. 2% use internet connection to create an identical authentic learning environment. Yet, the other tools suggested, no one used them due to their unavailability or time constraints. This reflect an idea that, they still do not welcome the fact that exposing a students to differing types of technologies provide a motivating atmosphere for the learning to take place.

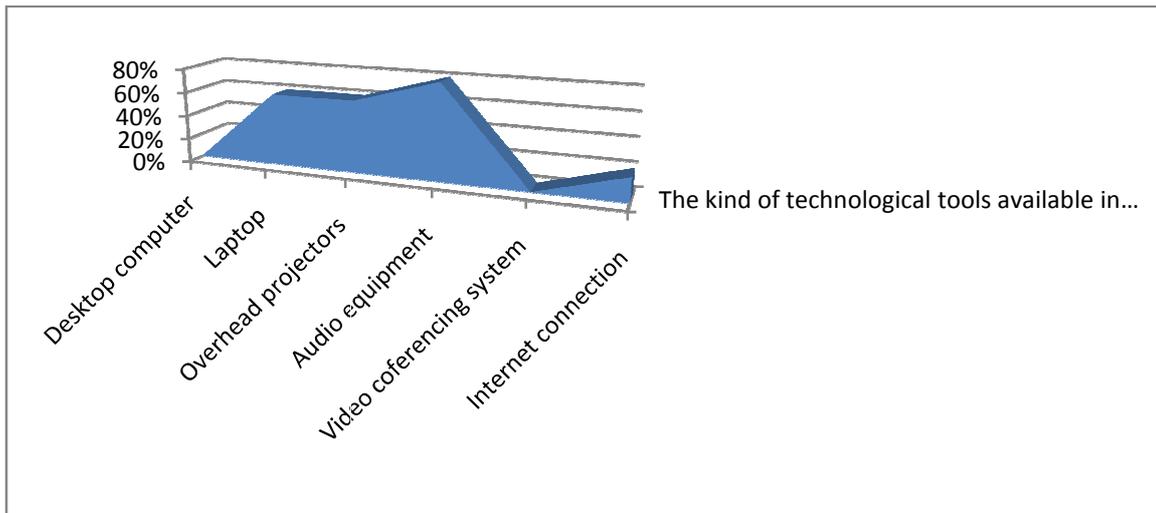


Diagram 5.23. The kind of technological tools available in the classroom

The second item's results in the teacher questionnaire show that 40% of the respondents see the technological support they are provided with in a pessimistic light for they believe in fact that it represent a gap between what the market place offer and the actual technological support. 60% of the informants contradict with what they have stated beforehand. While they believe that the quality of the support is average, their use of the innovation is poor.

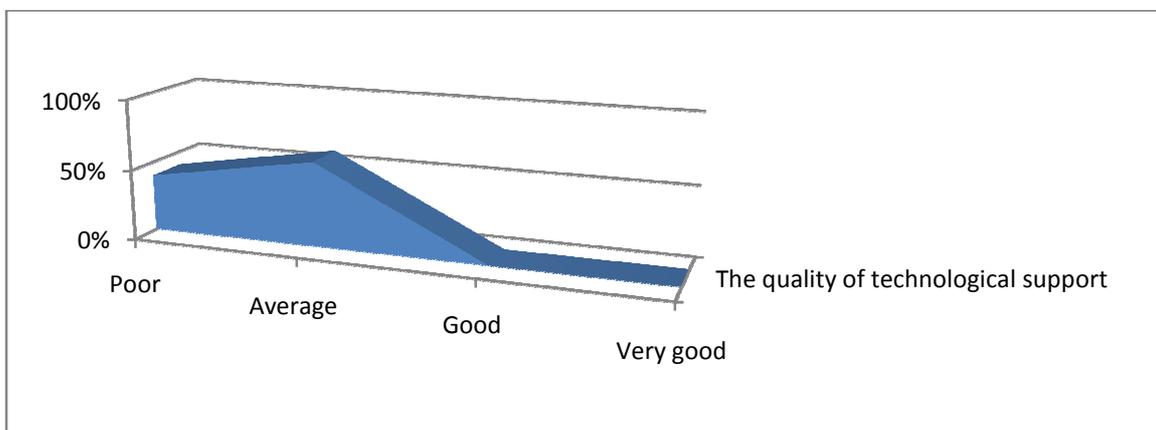


Diagram 5.24. The quality of technological support

As for the level of technology expertise in the classroom, just as shown in the following diagram, 20% of the respondents believe in their abilities when using the technologies, 40% are fairly comfortable with the ICTs since they try to keep up with technological advancement, 20% are fairly uncomfortable while 20% are very uncomfortable with the implementation of ICTs owing to the time devoted to their sessions that they refuse to integrate any of the available technologies. This is true to an extent and seems very logical when compared with the observation result.

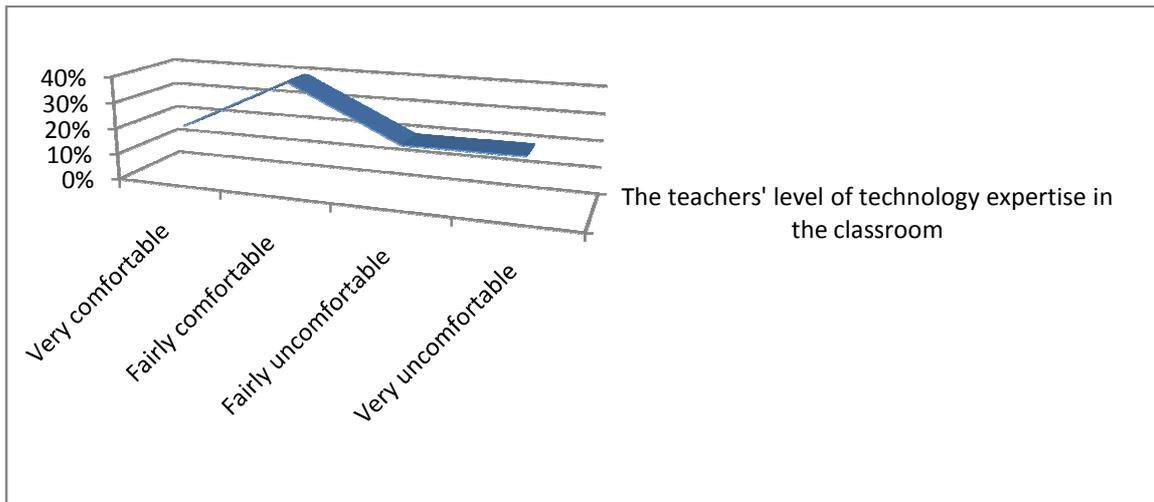


Diagram 5.25. The teachers' level of technology expertise in the classroom

This item is intended to check whether any institutional support for ICTs improvement is planned to leverage their use in instruction. 90% of the informants deny any support the department plans to integrate ICTs in learning. 10% respond that there is a considerable support for several technological devices were brought to the department lately and a module of informatics was devised especially with the implementation of the LMD system.

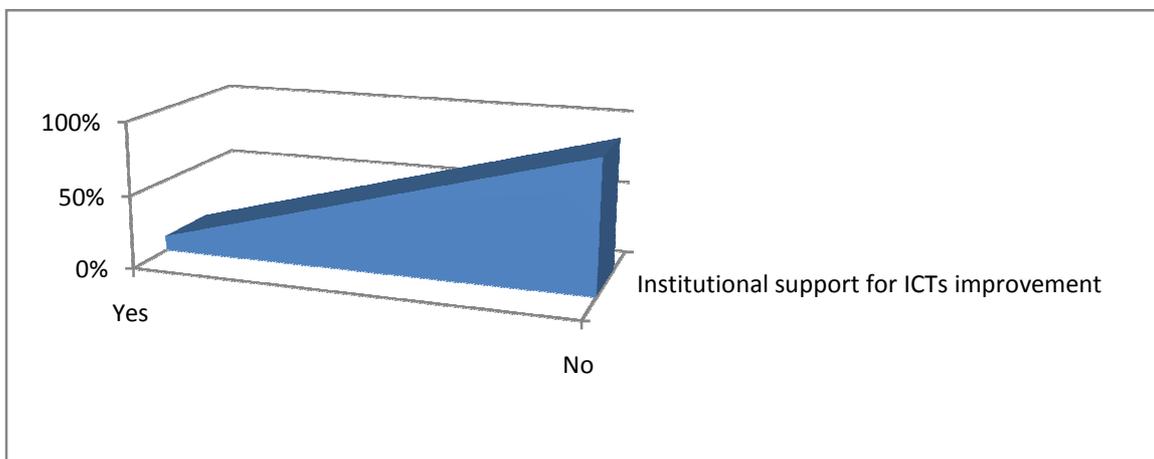


Diagram 5.25. Institutional support for ICTs improvement

The teachers' aims behind using technologies at the university differ significantly. While some find them useful in organizing and keeping records of their work, others use them to select practical teaching resources. The majority of the respondents (60%) use the technologies to organize their work, prepare their lessons, or to find teaching resources. While only 20% use them to design teaching resources so as to meet their students' needs.

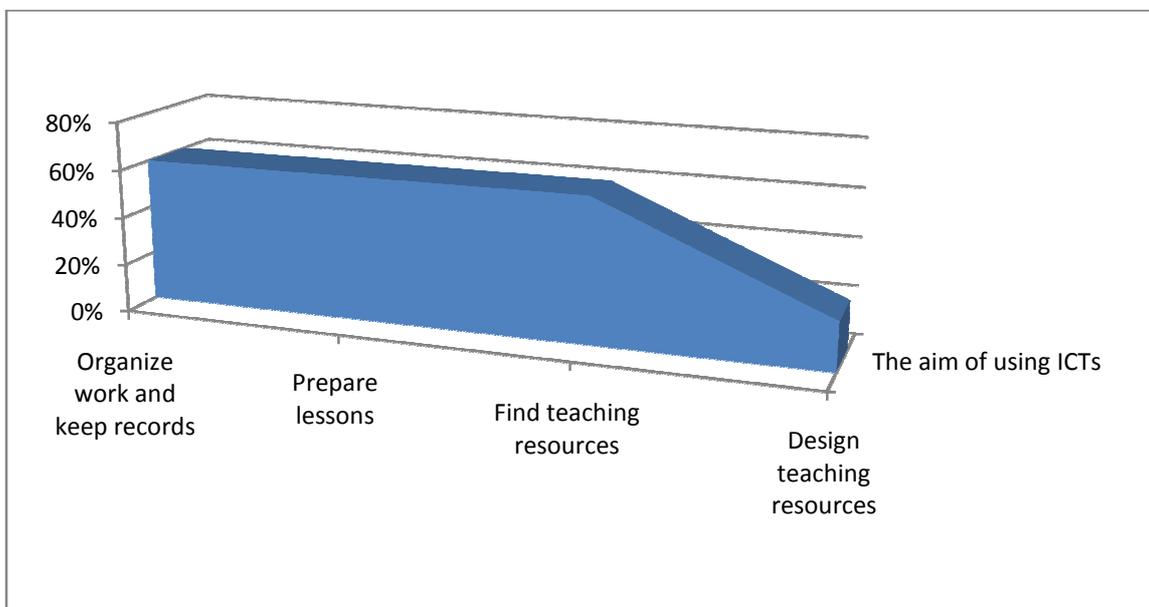


Diagram 5.26. The aim of using ICTs

Just as shown in the following diagram, all of the informants (100%) believe in the fact that ICTs facilitate the teaching of certain concepts and skills by offering access to more authentic data. 40% of the total reckon that technologies support all the learning styles and stimulate the students' attention to involve in the courses and thereby contribute to improve the level of their expertise. 80% state that the innovations encourage creativity on the part of both the teacher and the student while others (60%) respond that the continuous implementation of the ICTs improve the students' ability in using them and thereby promote an autonomous learning environment.

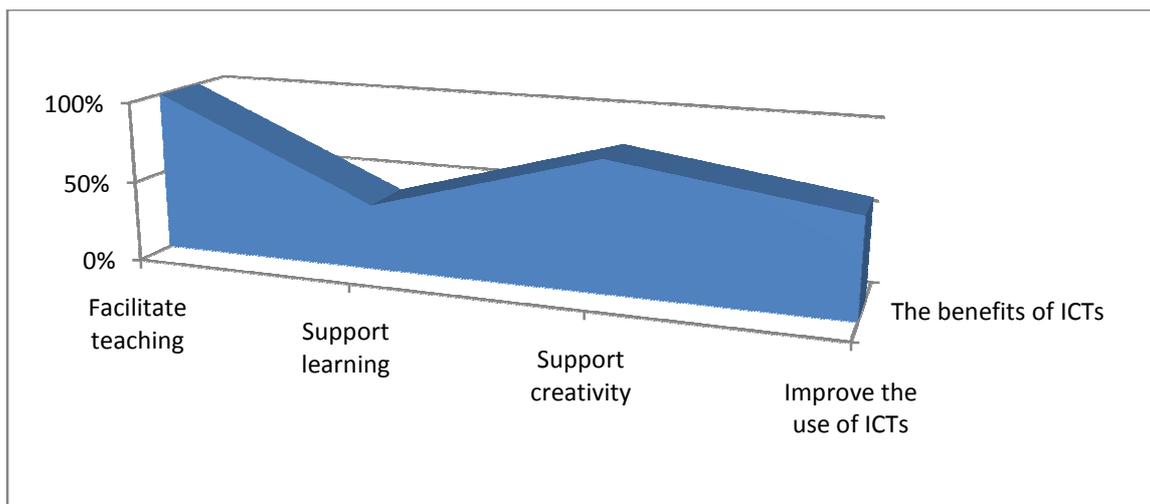


Diagram 5.27. The benefits of ICTs

### 5.2.2.2. Writing instruction

This part of the teacher questionnaire aims to uncover some issues related to the approach the writing instructor follows when teaching writing. The result is depicted in the following diagrams to illustrate the teachers' responses.

The first item result shows that the majority of the respondents (40%) strongly disagree that their students when composing try to view their productions as a piece of art that communicates their thoughts to an intended audience. 20% believe that communicating ideas is the first concern of their students since they are encouraged to logically organize their ideas and forget about any mechanical aspects that might hinder their productivity.

When the researcher questioned the teachers about the possibility of assisting students in understanding that the writing process involves many sub skills, 40% disagree because they think that, especially for novice writers, a special emphasis should be on the macro aspects so as not to confuse themselves at an early stage. The remaining agree to an extent that the learners give equal attention to the sub skills that had better be interwoven to achieve unity within the produced text.

Brainstorming and planning the written work in the writing class is an imperative step according to the majority of the respondents (60%) who strongly agree that without well organized background information about the topic at hand, even a skillful writer could do nothing. While 20% express their neutral view concerning prewriting may be because they think that a second year student at the university could do more with an experience with the English language of about six years.

According to the fourth item, the great majority of the respondents (60%) agree on the idea that group and pair work is the panacea for most brainstorming, planning, making outlines, and revising problems. Yet, 20% of the informants avoid such a strategy for it is a waste of time and a source of troubles where instead of working collaboratively and share noteworthy views, the students' talk about other issues.

After a student produces a piece of writing, peer correction has to be done prior to teacher's correction is a good way to assess the students, according to 60% of the respondents, how to spot mistakes and thereby to offer a collaborative atmosphere where by exchanging drafts they share views and construct knowledge. A teachers' comment is to proceed to direct the discussions and positively inform their students' productions.

When the researcher enquire about the possibility of providing feedback to the ideas presented and their organization, the respondents split on a dividing line between those who agree and those who deride. While 20% agree on the fact that ideas and organization must be given much concern.

40% of the informants agreed on the idea that the students had better write a final draft after peer correction and teacher's correction so as to form a more reliable view about their productions. While some (20%) express their disinterest, others (40%) strongly disagree to waste an important portion of the instructional time on issues that are ranked among the learners' responsibilities. Rather, they prefer to devote the great amount of the time to writing.

As for the last item the researcher found that the respondents prefer to expose the learners to different genres of writing as they will be writing for different purposes so as to succeed in their academic and professional life.

The result shows that the process approach is valued to an extent. Though the teachers focus on certain steps in the process for they think they are important, they still lack the opportunity to significantly apply it. Time always constitutes an obstacle that hinders them and their students as well.

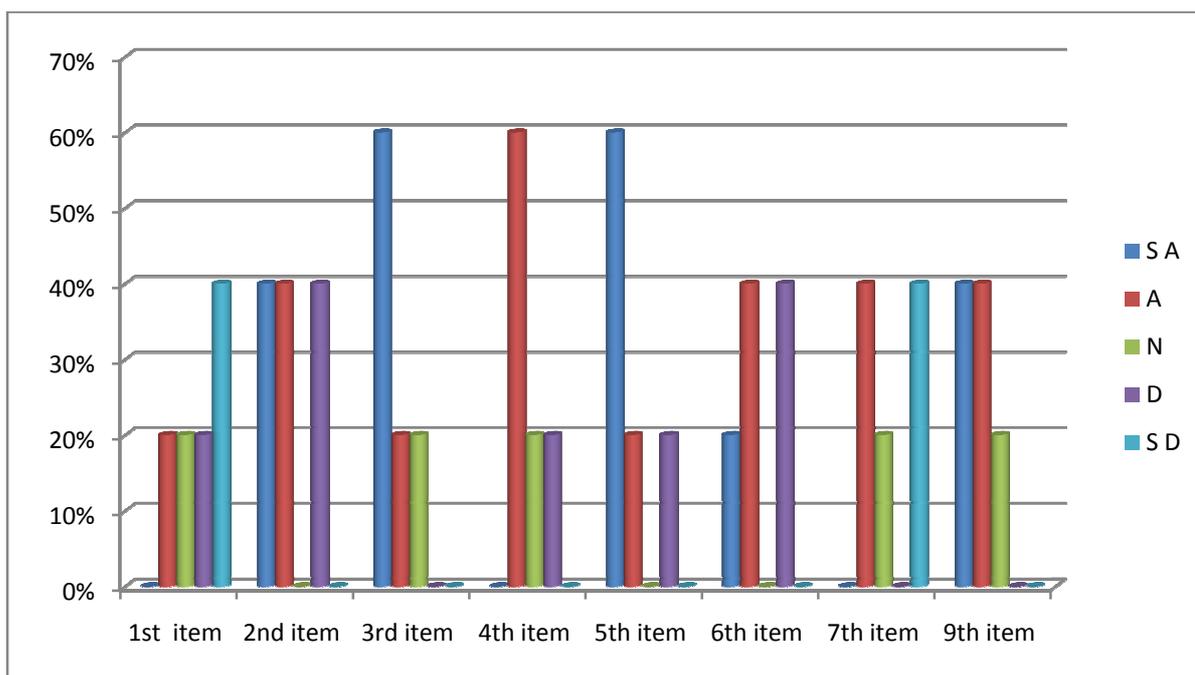


Diagram 5.28. Process approach

### Product Approach

The majority of the respondents and that represents 60% of the whole strongly agree that their students should learn to write correct sentences and build them up into a text from the beginning while the remaining split between those who agree (20%) to an extent that the mistakes made would not mortify the communicating purpose of the text. 20% stated that they should express neutrality concerning this for it is rather unreasonable to receive a flawless piece of writing.

Most of the respondents agreed on the urgent need to pay a special attention to improve grammatical accuracy in writing classes. They think that the mistakes would become more serious when fossilized. For this, writing teachers must never accept them.

The same result was got when the researcher enquired about the possibility of referring to model essay to help the learners understand the way they can compose a piece of writing. 60% of the respondents express their strong agreement. They think that imitating certain models makes the learners recognize how best to arrange the semantic and syntactic structures to successfully communicate their thoughts in a well managed production.

In writing classes, the focus has to be on what students produce at the end of the lesson. This means that the teacher does not assess the procedure a writer goes through to compose a piece of writing. Nearly the majority (40%) agreed that a final draft reflects the

students' reasoning because the continuous intervention interrupts the flow of ideas and hence paralyzes the learner.

It is of importance to consider that writing in the classroom does not help students and it is impossible to make it realistic. The respondents (60%) also support this view. They believe that writing is a time consuming skill that needs much preparation and composing a final draft is not an easy task. For this, it is preferable to introduce the topic and give the students chance to write at home. As for some (20%), holding this idea could cause troubles since academic success rests upon written exams that take place in the classroom. So, the writers had better get accustomed to writing in class and for a defined amount of time.

The sixth item sustain to a great extent what has been stated beforehand. For most of the respondents, it is not worth spending too much time on making the students write in class.

40% of the informants support the suggestion that the students should be left alone to work on the writing activities. As already stated, they believe that the students is the first responsible for what they are intended to fulfill and what ensures success is their endeavor to achieve the goal i.e. writing a well organized piece.

As to the last two items, the writing teacher is seen as a language teacher who must avoid error fossilization. The teachers have to correct all the grammar mistakes that the students make in their writing since the academic requirements call for accuracy and neatness. For this, most of the respondents (60%) hold strongly that all written language can be regarded as formal language, so it should be flawless.

The following diagram summarizes the findings.

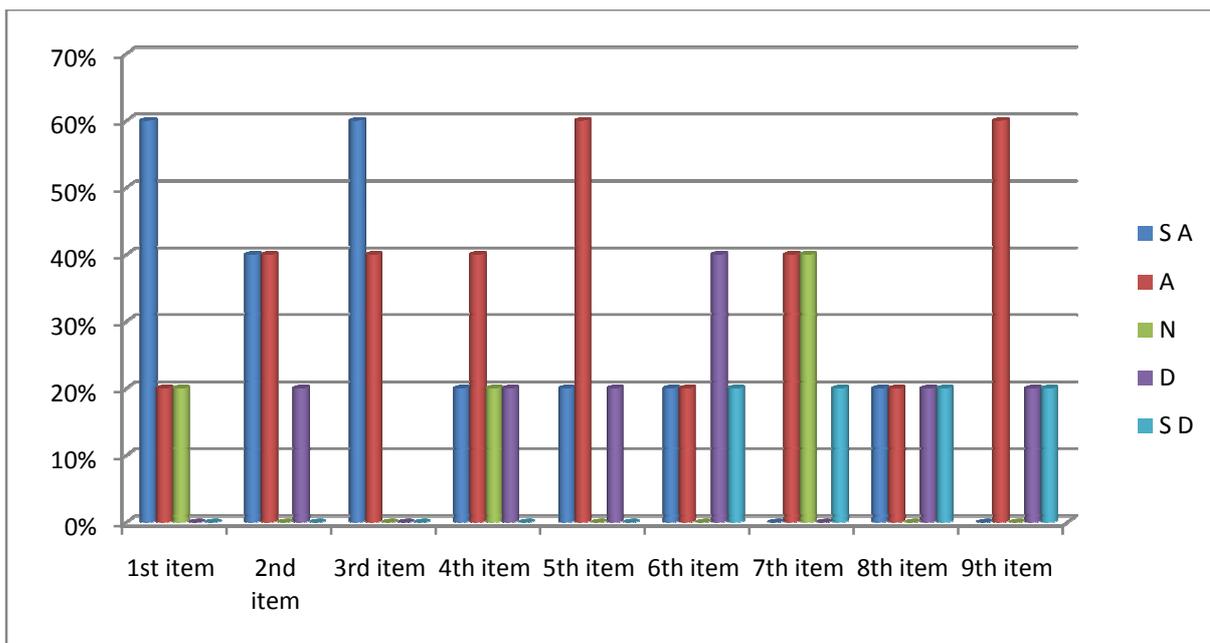


Diagram 5.29. product approach

Just as illustrated in the following diagram, when the researcher asked the teachers about the aspects they rely on to direct their responses 20% state that they focus on the immediate impressions of the writing, 40% state that their comments stem from the students' abilities to write, while, 20% give much concern to the students' goals for improvement. The great majority of the respondents (80%), however, focus on the elements included in the curriculum and which the students are studying.

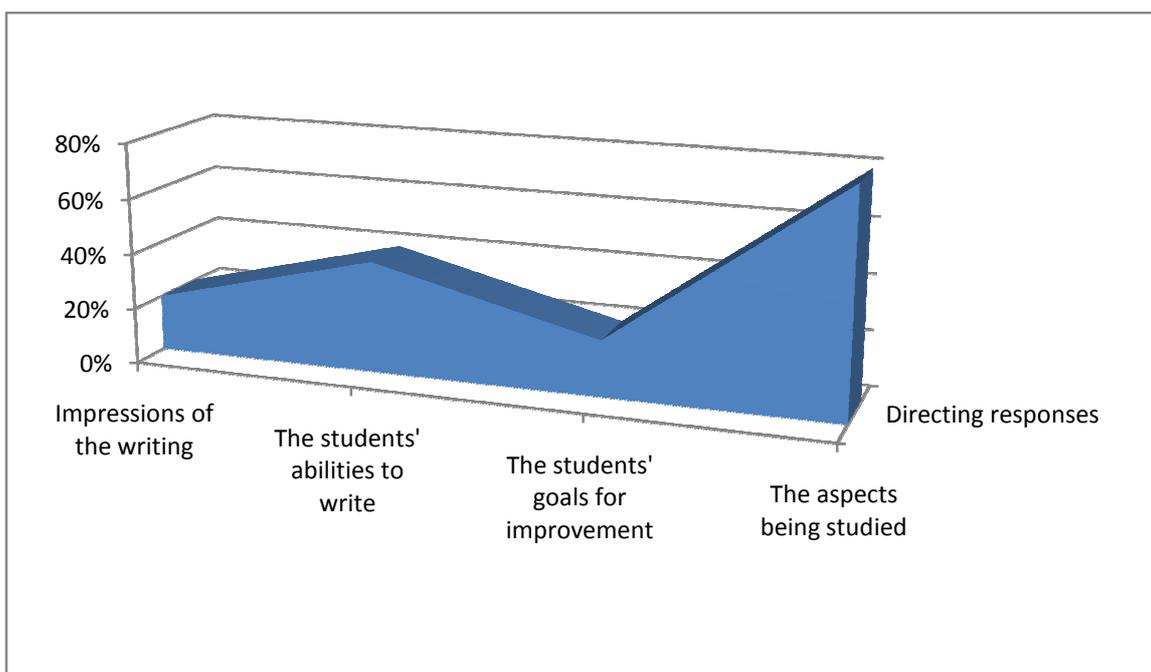


Diagram 5.30. Directing responses

### 5.2.2.3. The use of technologies in writing instruction

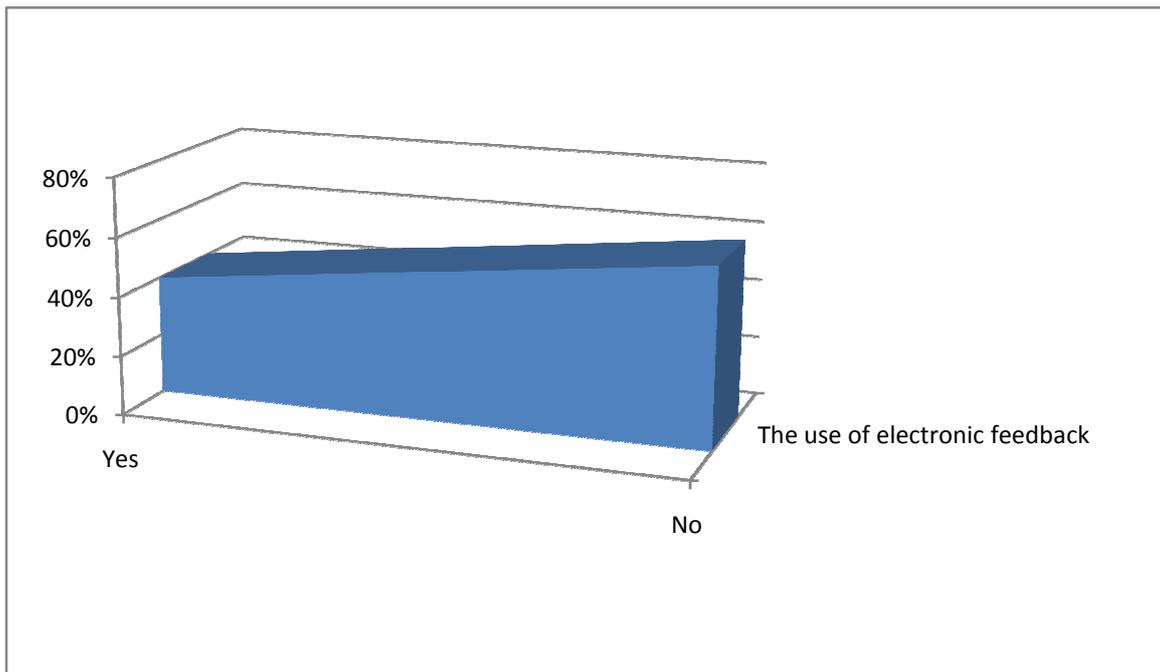


Diagram 5.31. The use of electronic feedback

The researcher through this item wanted to know whether electronic feedback is used to gauge progress. 60% of the informants answer that they do not use such a technique because implementing technologies is far from reality while the remaining state that they comment on students writings using a variety of technological aids to avoid misunderstandings and to facilitate the feedback process.

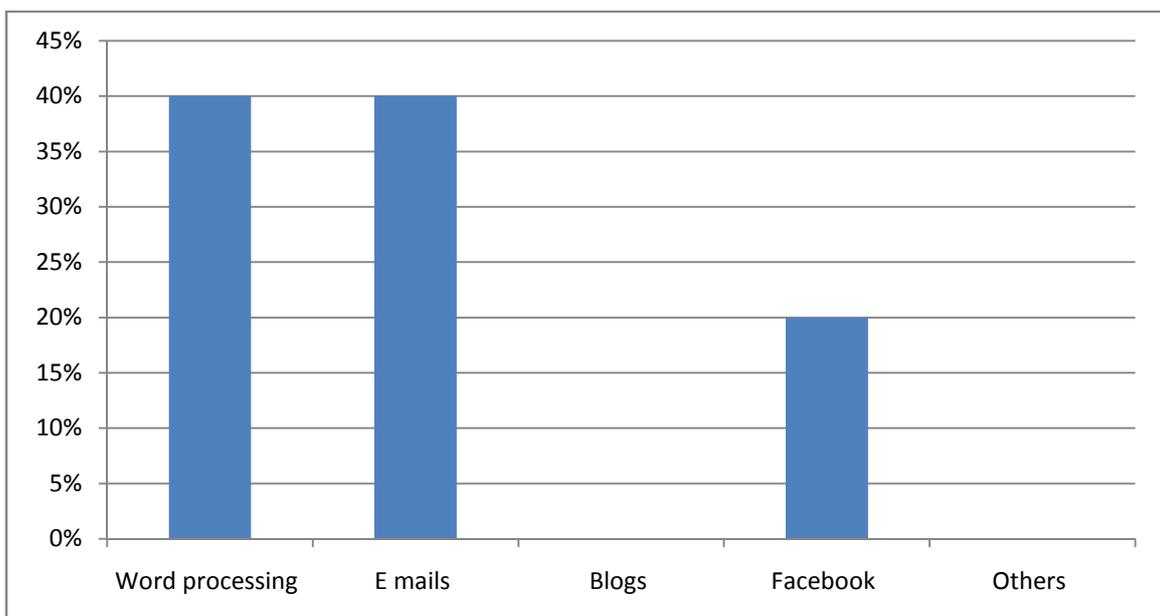
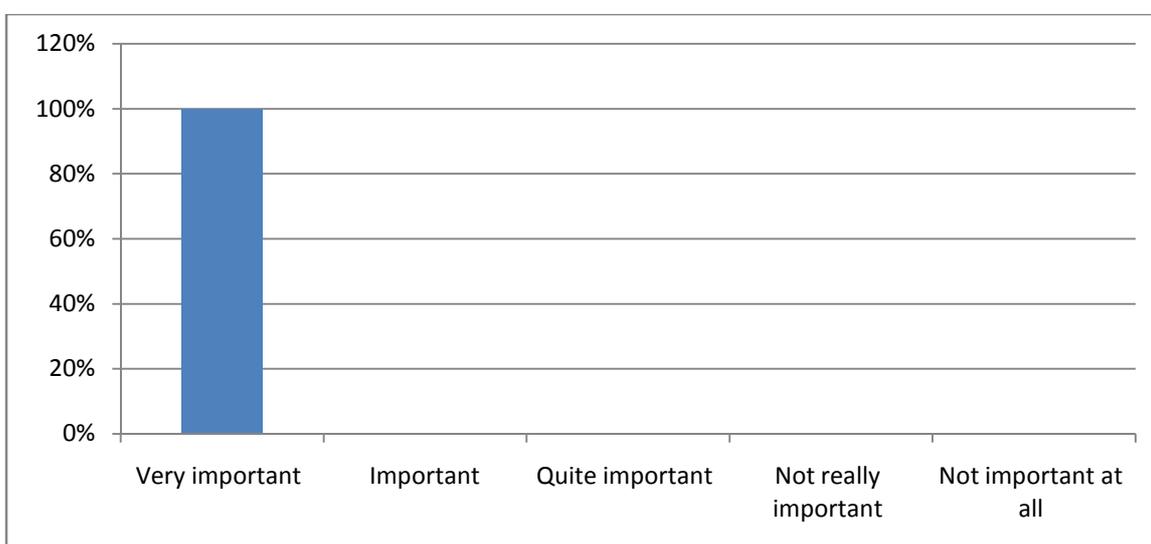


Diagram 5.32. The type of technologies used in feedback provision

When asked about the type of technologies used to offer feedback, 40% of the respondents answer that they use the word processing for they believe it helps the learners easily spot their mistakes as it offers immediate suggestions to correct most of the mechanic mistakes. Others (40%) prefer Emails to facebook, which is used by only 20% of the informants because it preserves the teacher's self-respect by keeping a bridge.

#### 5.2.2.4.Feedback use

All of the informants agree on the importance of feedback in the teaching of writing. They believe that it is an imperative step in leveraging the students' productivity and that should take place whenever possible to inform and direct the processing of ideas when composing.



**Diagram 5.33. The importance of feedback**

Just as shown in the following diagram, 60% of the respondents state that they always provide feedback to assess the students writing ability while 40% declare that time prevents them from continuously evaluating all their students' papers, so most of the time they focus on global mistakes and the possible ways to avoid them. They either re-teach the missed aspects or recommend some learning strategies.

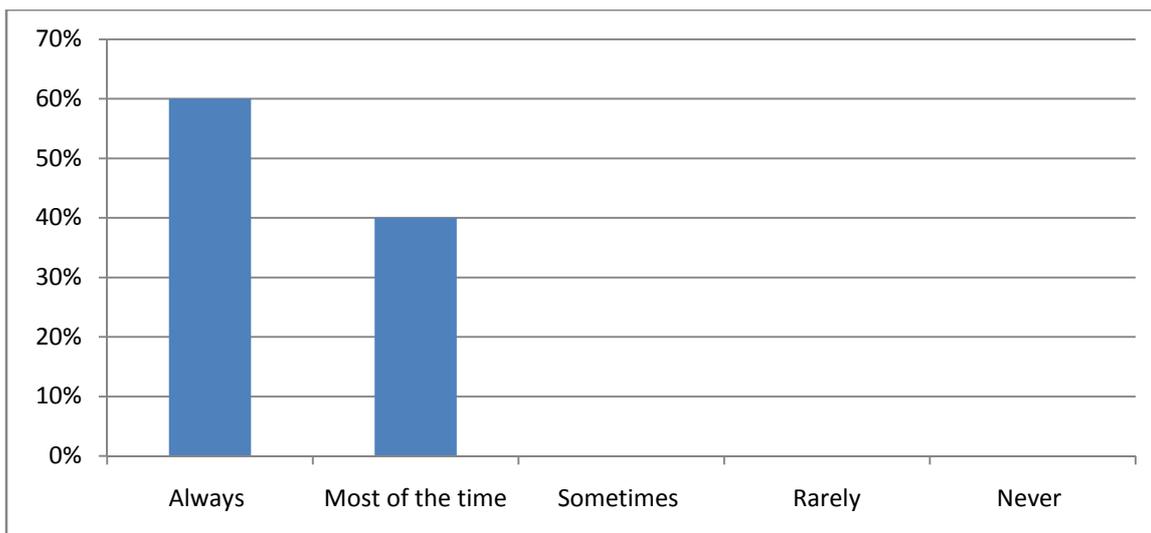


Diagram 5.34. The frequency of feedback provision

60% of the respondents, as shown in the following diagram, use teacher written feedback to assess the students' writing ability. The same result is got for the teachers' use of peer feedback, and oral teacher-students conferences. They hold that, when interwoven, they would have an everlasting positive effect on the writers' productions. On the one hand, peer feedback encourages collaboration among the learners, while, on the other one, teacher-students conferencing opens up great opportunities for the students to strengthen their self esteem when they get involved in the assessment process.

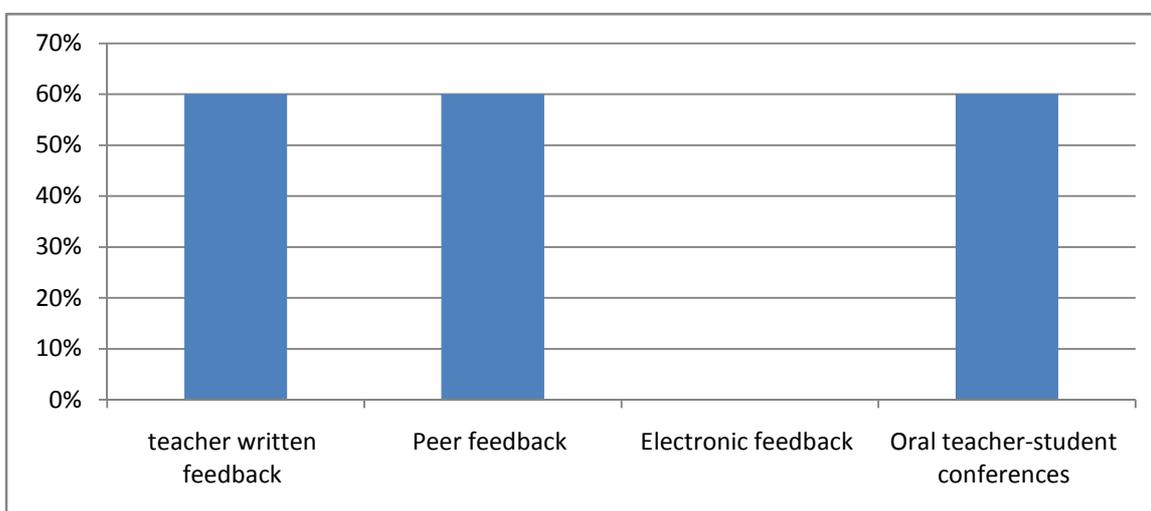


Diagram 5.35. The type of feedback used

Just as shown in the following diagram, the great majority of the respondents (80%) use written comments as a formative tool to inform the students' productivity. Comments, according to them, direct the learners indirectly to find the right way an erroneous utterance must be written. 60% believe that error correction is very influential and limits to

an extent errors' fossilization. Further, correcting the errors directly gives an intention that the processing of ideas relies on the number of mistakes made for too much errors harm the communicative aspect of the writing.

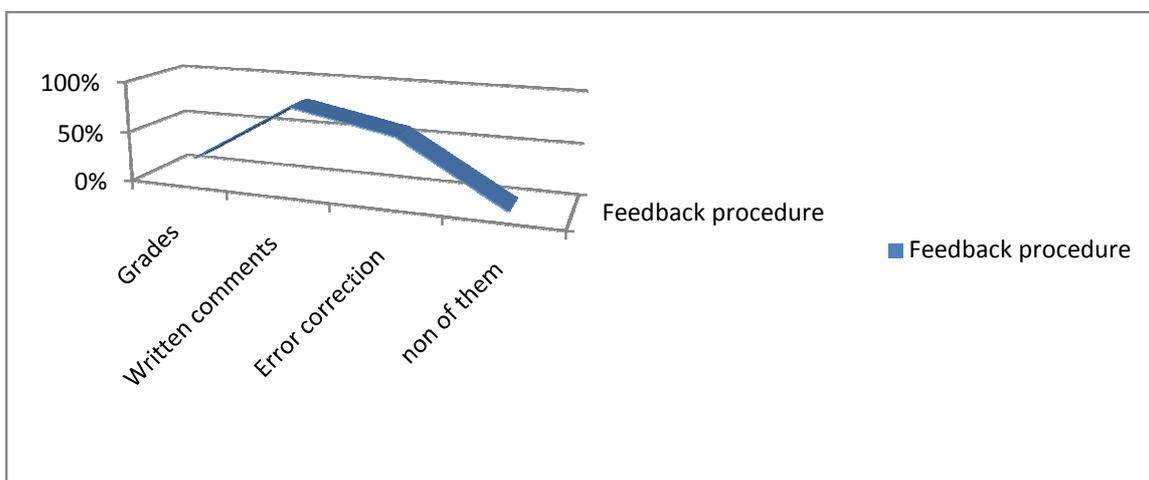


Diagram 5.36. Feedback procedure

When the informants were asked about the writing aspects that should gain much concern, the responses differ considerably. All of the respondents reply that language must take a front seat when assessing students' papers because they think that language errors affect the communicative purpose and lead to misunderstanding, 80% shed light on the organization of ideas since the process matters a lot while 40% focus on the richness of the content and the brightness of the ideas.

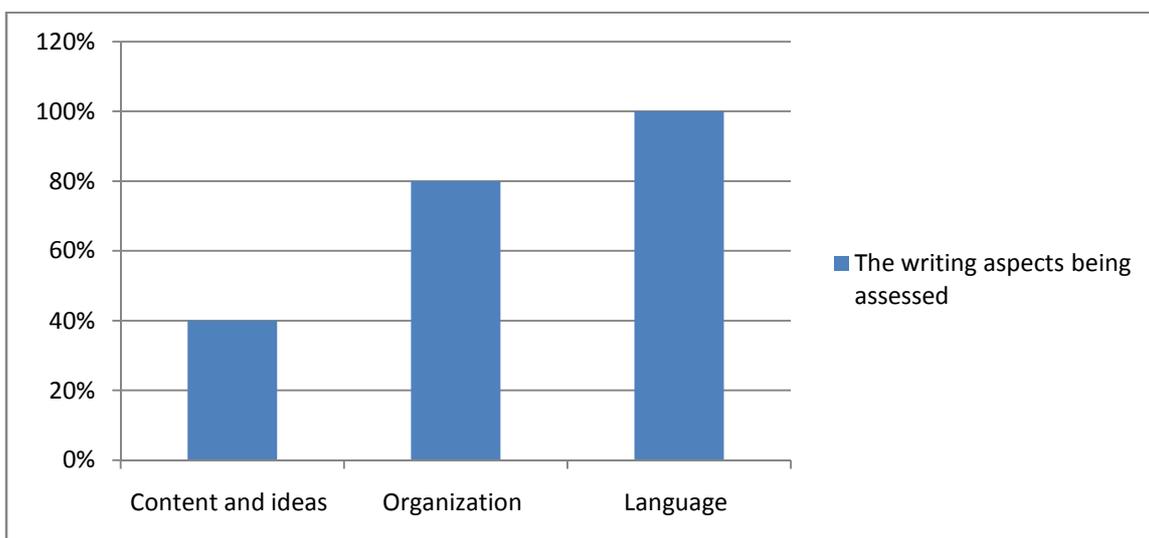


Diagram 5.37. The writing aspects being assessed

The majority of the respondents, as presented in the following diagram, (60%) strive to identify all the mistakes made for they see themselves merely language teachers who are determined to ensure accuracy. 20% of the informants state that they spot only the

mistakes that obscure meaning. 40% concentrate on the frequently occurring mistakes so as to provide a holistic remedy for them. 20% of the respondents, however, give special concern to the coherence and cohesion within the text.



Diagram 5.38. Mistakes identification

This item aims to find out the basis upon which the teachers' feedback practices rest. According to the following diagram, 60% of the respondents follow the institutional guidelines while at the same time rely on their precedent experiences. No one, however, looks for the students' contributions or seeks their suggestions. 20% ask for help from other teachers who are more experienced when it comes to giving the suitable feedback for a particular genre of text.

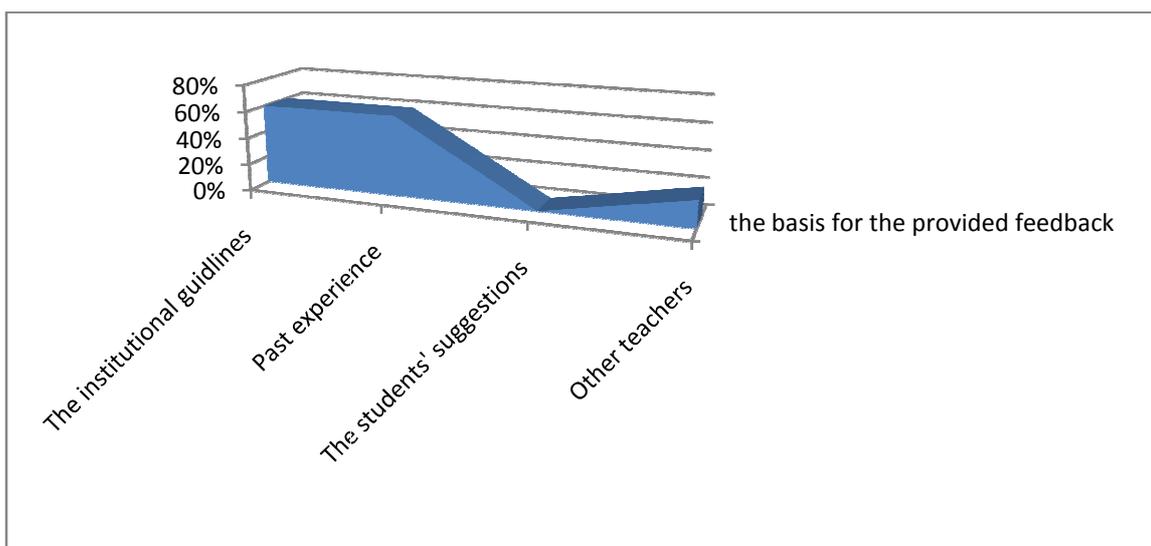


Diagram 5.39. the basis for the provided feedback

When the researcher enquired about the students' attitudes towards the feedback they receive. 50% of the teachers state that most of the time their students underestimate their

comments for they see them demotivating. The students give much importance to the marks, they add. The remaining of the respondents answer that their students value the feedback and sometimes call for more to improve.

As to the feedback mechanisms the students favor most, the respondents views differ considerably. Some state that they prefer receiving indirect feedback for it fosters students' independent improvement by allowing them to fix their errors themselves. For others, All that is important is to be corrected; they do not make any difference of what kind of feedback do they receive. Some of the respondents answer that the majority of the students prefer direct feedback to indirect comments.

The great majority of the respondents, when asked about their attitudes towards feedback and to what extent does it helps achieve better outcomes, some say that feedback may have a great effect on improving the students' writing quality and performance as it also encourages critical thinking and constructive criticism. Others state that it is useless and have no effect over the learners' apprenticeship.

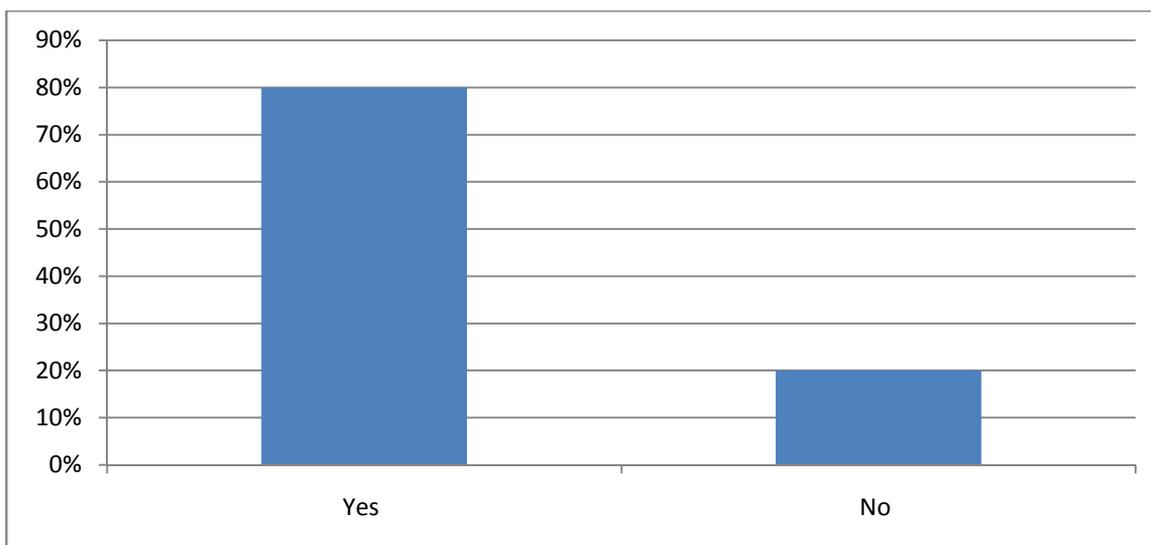


Diagram 5.40. the use of teacher feedback in revisions

The result of this item shows some contradiction to what has been stated beforehand. 80% of the informants declare that their students attend to the feedback they receive and use it for revision. While only 20% answer that the students underestimate the teacher's feedback for they are reluctant to correct and rewrite their essays.

Some of the teachers, when asked about what can help students improve, opine that, apart from feedback provision, other types of classroom intervention such as pre-writing sessions devoted for extensive reading and post writing determined to the teaching of mechanics of writing or the teaching of writing strategies would have positive impact on

the writing assignments. Others suggest an exploration of new lexis instead of providing marks when assessing the students' productions.

When the researcher enquired about the different factors that would influence the feedback, time occupy the top of the list. They said that time curtailed them the chance to tackle as many significant strategies as possible to boost up their students' productivity. Others listed the level of the writing per se impeded the feedback. While the remaining of the informants said that the student's demotivation and unwillingness to practice the writing skill is a major hindrance.

As for the teachers' directions for feedback implementation, some suggested to devote more time to writing instruction and that a feedback session had better immediately follow the writing course to reflect that revision is part of writing. Others insist on revealing that writing is process not a product that needs heavy practice inside and outside classroom. Guided peer-review of student writing and practice the most important issues are imperative. They recommended group work as a panacea for all the writing ills that direct the learners to focus on their improvement and not to intervene in banal issues. Others believe that specifying a whole session to post writing activities where a remedial work is emphasized to pinpoint the major hindrances.

#### **5.2.2.5. Discussions of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

Contrary to the hypothesis which states that most language teachers consider ICTs, if used appropriately, as an important tool that might have a dire effect on the teaching-learning of the writing skill. The researcher found that, however, most of the instructors do not prefer an over reliance on the technologies for most of them keep using the traditional ways believing that ICTs are just a waste of time.

#### **5.2.3. Classroom Observation**

During the first observational session that took place on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2015, the teacher asked his students to write a five paragraph essay about peer pressure and the effect of the internet on behavior. The teacher divided the group into sub group and gave each group a topic to encourage a sense of competition. A discussion was started by asking the learners about the different steps a writer goes through to write an introduction, and then moved to collect as many views as possible about the uses of internet. Shortly after, he asked about the possible ways peer pressure could be defined so as to use the definition as a general statement.

Concerning the teaching aids, the teacher makes use of only poly-cops to aid the students concentrate more. The learners' interventions are encouraged, either by asking question or responding to the instructor's questions, while the teacher mediated the discussions as possible to control time. More interestingly, the students listen thoroughly to each other.

A portion of time was then devoted to the composing stage; the teacher gave the students chance to write an introduction to their essays. When they finished, they read the leader of the group read the writing while the teacher intervene to either correct some mistakes or to provide suggestions for better expressions of ideas. Since, one hour and a half did not suffice, the students were asked to complete the whole essays at home to be submitted for correction.

While the teacher deals with one idea the students follow considerably and consequently kept the threads of thoughts well interwoven. He referred to the poly-cop. Most of the time, the teacher made the decision so as to enable the majority of the students enable students understand the way idea are organized in paragraphs and to reach the main intended objectives.

The next session took place on November 23<sup>rd</sup>. it was about narrative writing and its main characteristics. After explaining what is meant by narrative description, the teacher moves to a debate trying to check his students' acquisition of some aspects of writing especially indentation and paragraphing, and what is meant by unity or coherence; one idea developed within one paragraph.

He gave them a hand outs that presented a detailed explanation of narrative description. After that, they were asked to write on their own a story that happened to them. The teacher then moved to provide feedback and discussed the main attributes a narrative text should possess. When they finished, he appointed some students to read their productions and opened a debate after the performer ended reading.

#### **5.2.4.The Test**

After attending some sessions, the researcher was offered the opportunity to teach a group of second year students each Sunday during 2015. She strived to implicate technologies in the presentation of the courses and in the feedback provision. Among the ICTs the researcher used a data show, internet connectivity, and audio equipment.

The researcher started the presentation of the courses that were primarily meant to explain and uncover some issues related to writing. Later on, the students practiced writing

some essays that are included in the appendices. Each time the students write, the researcher corrected the productions and tried to offer feedback based on a holistic scoring to treat the global errors that basically obscure the meaning of their communications.

The investigator has administered a summative test so that she can diagnose students' main deficits and test the hypothesis. Students were required to write an essay in response to literature. So they were asked to read a novel written by Elizabeth Gaskell *North and South*. Subsequently, they watched a movie version of the work to be asked to write a summary of the story. The productions were then written on the word, sent to the teacher, through a facebook group created for the sake of the investigation, and corrected.

As to what has been noticed from students' productions, the main difficulties that hinder their writing ability are those that are hypothesized including mechanics, generating ideas, and the choice of suitable words to communicate a given idea. Moreover and just related to what has been suggested, students are reluctant to write as most of them did not give back their work written by word processor. Only few students contacted the teachers to get feedback about their writings.

A tangible effect can be noticed after using the technologies to inform the students' writings when formatively assessing the writers by providing useful strategies. The students who received electronic feedback experienced a positive change occurring. After suggesting some techniques to deal with the writings, to name but few, the use of the word processor instead of the pens and the implementation of E dictionaries, their productions improve considerably. Besides, they were greatly motivated to write. The result, thus, validate what has been hypothesized for it confirmed that the systematic use of ICTs when commenting on students performances.

Consequently, through the regular and appropriate integration of ICTs and the direct implementation of the necessary methods for its inclusion particularly when correcting or providing feedback to what they have produced, English language learners can write better.

### **5.3.Conclusion**

This chapter shed light on the result got from the research instruments including the teacher and students' questionnaires, the observation, and the written test. A detailed description and interpretation of the findings was presented and thereby compared with the hypotheses formed beforehand. The findings confirmed to great extent what has been hypothesized.

# **Chapter Six**

**Recommendation for practice**

## 6.1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to provide some useful pedagogical implications related to the issue under investigation. In the first go, the researcher will tackle the integration of connectivity to write different writing genres in EFL classes, the strategic use of feedback, and the avoidance of grammar correction in the assessment of students' papers. It also includes a description of the synchronous and the asynchronous technological tools and their use in the teaching of the writing skill.

### **Assumptions about Writing in the Digital Era**

It is universally acknowledged that young people know everything about computers and are familiar with using the technologies. For this they are most often named digital natives. But the question to be asked is: to what extent is their knowledge about ICTs enough to enable them cope with the neck breaking changes that the requirements of the age imposed on them.

Just as stated by Pystash and Ferdig (2014) one needs to learn the technologies, learn through the technologies, and learn about the technologies and this is mainly the researcher's concern in the current investigation. The following are some recommendations intended to both teachers and learners to best implement the technologies in the teaching learning process in general and in the teaching of the writing skill in particular.

## 6.2. Using the internet in writing instruction

Internet opens up great opportunities for language learning. It offers a massive amount of authentic resources, especially for the learners of the English language. They can indeed surf the whole world by a simple click on the mouse. Further, it is said that the internet is a significant teaching aid in writing classes for it provides a rich context and various writing genres to learn from. The question to be raised, however, is how best to implement such a tool to improve the students' writing and to achieve as much learning outcomes as possible.

Although he does not call for a total rejection of traditional instruction that rely heavily on noteworthy written resources, Jarek Krajka insists on the implementation of technologies as a teaching aid to support writing instruction. Jarek Krajka (2000), based on **web pages, e-mail connection and creating class websites**, suggested a set of ideas to

deal with different genres and make them more interesting through the introduction of the internet when teaching writing to English language students.

### **6.2.1. Writing a letter to a friend**

Email correspondence makes communication with a person of the same age more realistic and practical as it creates a feeling of interest. The students, through the use of emails, can genuinely communicate with key pals from the English speaking countries or with their classmates. The students are likely motivated when they receive real responses and thereby seek further dealings. E-mail interactions generate cooperative learning and real acquaintances that significantly lead to the improvement of cultural awareness to make the learners appreciate other cultures and thereby improve their understanding to the other.

### **6.2.2. Writing a biography**

As recommended, Krajka prefers a pre-session where the teacher presents all the necessary requirements of writing a biography including the structuring and the vocabulary to be used. By laying emphasis on these aspects, the teacher could move on to use the web that constitutes a resourceful area that provides a great deal of information a writer needs to improve and writes better. The learner can, for instance, be directed to the sites that publish biographies and aid the beginners to write them. Choosing and selecting among the range of the recently updated models about persons they know give the students the freedom and autonomy to acquire the strategies that suit his own needs and the techniques that enable him to create his own way of thinking and writing. This is the sole characteristic the internet possesses and is indeed advantageous over other resources.

After selecting the suitable models and reading them thoroughly, unlike the offline lesson, the students will be asked to transform the chosen models into prompted biographies so as they pinpoint and summarize the main features of a biography and to write biographies of the persons they admire. Later on they exchange the drafts using their Emails for feedback and further suggestions to build a motivational atmosphere. Through creating a web log special for that class, for generating a sense of involvement and more authentic and rewarding atmosphere, the students can publish their production after the corrections.

### 6.2.3. Writing a descriptive essay

As already suggested, the key pal connection is the best technique to be used in the teaching of descriptive writing. The students will be asked to describe a well known person in their country and later on exchange it with their key pals. The teacher plays a role of a guide and a supervisor so as to develop an open-minded attitude and a real understanding of the other's culture.

### 6.2.4. Writing an argumentative essay

The emphasis on the structuring of the essay is a must. The teacher is to pay a special attention when presenting the necessary skills a writer needs most when dealing with an argumentative essay. It is suggested that the use of some course books is imperative since they enable the students to attain the essential vocabulary and the modeling of a given argumentative piece.

The teacher needs to highlight certain issues that he thinks can widen the students' knowledge and that constitute an obstacle, especially in persuasive writing on abstract issues. In fact, researching about the topic helps the writers to afford a more serious point of view whether it would be for or against.

Reading and digesting the selected web data are the major concern in the online session. However, researching a variety of websites and evaluating the content they afford sounds overwhelmingly tiresome. Group work is therefore the best technique that encourages collaborative discussions. The instructor thus has to design the lesson in order to meet the students' needs and to achieve more outcomes by assigning one topic to two students. They should weigh the arguments and decide whether the pros prevail over the cons or vice versa. Finally, the students are asked to write the essays in pairs and share their writings with the classmates for feedback and further corrections since it reduces stress and is rather favorable.

After submitting the final draft, and to ensure authenticity and the students' personal touch, the teacher had better evaluate the content, lexis, and grammar so as to encourage the students balance their writing and reduce the amount of mistakes for they impede the communicating purpose of the passage. Shortly after the revisions and the corrections, the essays are published in the class blog to guarantee real contribution in the process and to boost up the learners enthusiasm.

### 6.2.5. Writing advertisements and notifications

The internet is thought to be very useful since it supplies the writing teacher and students with a variety of materials to analyze and learn from in teaching this genre. To name but few, online newspapers constitute a noteworthy source of information concerning advertising and notifications.

The teacher, during the online session, adapts the material so as to enable the learners choose among the advertisements the ones that are of interest to them. They actually find in the web a range of appealing models which provide freedom that the traditional resources curtail. Online newspapers offer encouraging examples that are meant in the first go to advertise for real purposes not only, like ordinary books of instruction, for studying. Online adverts present the necessary vocabulary and structuring that helps sort out the main characteristics and layout this specific genre requires.

Students then move to the subsequent step i.e. writing their own copies. It is said that writing about real things provides a more authentic presentation of thoughts and an understandable depiction. It is advisable thus to encourage the students to write advertisements about the aspects available in the scene for it eases the communication of ideas to the intended audience, more particularly the classmates who will considerably react to the writings, when published in the class website for the students must feel their writing is valued.

### 6.3. Suggestions for appropriate and effective feedback

The choice of the effective way of feedback provision is an imperative step in the planning of a writing course. The teacher had better thus choose among the common ones the most positive methods that consider the student desire in the first place. Besides, the aim of the course is the determining factor that dictates the type of feedback the teacher has to employ in informing his students' performances because the feedback that does not go in tandem with the writing assignment may lead to misunderstanding. For this, the writing teacher has to take into account while preparing the course the goals of the assignment, the stage of the writing process, and the form of feedback to be employed. (Gordon Williams, 2003)

It is recommended that the instructor should create or devise a rubric based on the writing textbooks available for the sake of unifying a standard set of symbols or markings

that also indicate how best the corrections should be made according to each symbol. Besides, Gordon Williams (2003) suggests that raising the students' awareness of the type of feedback employed would influence their performance positively especially when considering form and content.

Properly designing direct and consistent comments and questions is thought to be the best way that focuses the writers' attention on the content and the process of the writing. This, according to them, would create a kind of conversation between the teacher and the student and afford an understanding of the comments so as to use them constructively. These comments will, after training, develop into conferences. The latter will be an excellent way to uncover ambiguity by asking direct questions to each other. (Kroll, 2001)

Gordon Williams (2003) suggested a list of questions a writing teacher considers when giving feedback. The following includes an example, adopted from his work, of commenting on content and form and conferences remarks.

### 6.3.1. General questions

- a. Is the feedback consistent with the goals of the course?
- b. Is the feedback consistent with the goals of the assignment?
- c. Is the feedback consistent with the goals for this phase of the assignment?

#### Form

- a. is the feedback clear and easy for the students to understand?
- b. Did I use the system and symbols that I made the students aware of?
- c. Have I consistently marked the same errors or types of errors?
- d. Have I marked the errors that I told the students I would or that I covered in class?
- e. Have I marked anything not gone over in class? Why?
- f. Will the students know what I do with the feedback?
- g. Did I correct the errors or mark it for the students to correct? Why?

#### Content

- a. Is the feedback clear and easy for the students to see and understand?
- b. Did I use the system and symbols that I made the students aware of?
- c. Have I marked the same errors or types of errors?
- d. Have I made only negative remarks or did I also use positive comments?

- e. Are the comments I made specific to content and the problems we covered in class?

Comments for feedback on content

- a. I like this very much.
- b. This is a good example.
- c. Tell me more about this.
- d. Can you think of another example?
- e. Do you have a personal example about this?
- f. Can you make this clearer?
- g. Can you think of another way to say this?
- h. Why do you think so?
- i. Is this paragraph complete?
- j. Do you think this necessary? Why or why not?
- k. Should this paragraph be deleted?
- l. Is your thesis clear?
- m. You are repeating yourself here.
- n. I am not sure what you mean?

### 6.3.2. Conferences

Pre conference questions for students

- a. Were there any comments or markings that you did not understand?
- b. Were there any comments or markings that you understood but were not sure what to do with?
- c. Were there any other things about the assignment or class that you have questions on?

Pre conference questions for teachers

- a. What aspects of this course/ assignment are the students performing well on?
- b. What aspects of course/assignment do the students need to improve on? How?
- c. Are there any errors that are consistent?
- d. Are there any other points to cover in this conference?

#### **6.4. The role of online tools in promoting EFL writing**

Since their introduction into education, the pervasive impact of the new technologies on writing instruction lead many to enquire how best can such tools improve the students writing abilities to meet the demands of the age. Considerable alterations touched the writing environment and a clear division occurred; conventional writing and digital writing are now the major concern of most writing scholars. Digital writing is thought to create a more spontaneous, purposeful and interactive atmosphere that is often needed to boost up the learners enthusiasm.

It is recommended thus to incorporate online communication in the writing courses so as to enable the students to acquire the necessary strategies for accomplishing his role in the globally digitized world. It is more than a prerequisite to keep up with the requirements of the digital era but rather to positively improve the students' language learning for in online communication they can build up their long term language proficiency.

Al Mahrooqi et al (2015) suggested that electronic writing may be carried through two basic types of digital tools and that the writing instructor might use in their teaching of this interactive skill. Online synchronous tools and online asynchronous tools are the main categories.

#### **6.5. Synchronous (real time) tools**

The best known synchronous tool intended to writing instruction is chatting. Such a facility can be used to create a virtual learning atmosphere where the students can interact positively in a real time communication. Virtual contexts can be established in the computer laboratories or assigned as homework to ensure real interaction and more attainment. (Kue, Wible, & Chou, 2001)

With the age of connectivity, EFL teachers can now easily get his students to use the language they acquired at anytime, anywhere and with anyone. Many sites are designed to meet EFL students' needs and thereby improve their performance in a more authentic setting. To name but a few, SchMOOze University, MOO, the English Club, Clubcooe, are thought to be the most useful chatrooms on the net that are intended for non native English language students and that tolerate even the low linguistic performance to enable the learners ameliorate.

However, the teacher has to supervise the communications by adapting the chatting sessions to meet a given teaching goal and to improve a particular language

structure. Torky (2015) on her part recommended some activities to be practiced through synchronous dealing.

### **6.5.1. Interviewing people**

The students can be asked to interview people from a variety of areas so as to gather as much information as needed to enrich their cultural literacy. The conversations may include information about their customs, food, and traditions. Later on the conversation history will be recorded and submitted for evaluating their accuracy and adequacy.

### **6.5.2. Providing a video streaming**

This activity requires the integration of YouTube or any other video sites. The students will then afford a short report about what they have watched. The report should include a short description, a summary of the content and criticism so as to enable the students to afford their own point of view. They can after that share their writing for further discussion in a group created on facebook. The latter encourages argumentation through the students' justifications afforded in simple sentences for choosing a certain view. (Nur, 2010)

### **6.5.3. Retrospective reflections**

Chatting sessions can greatly affect the students' awareness of the main lacunas in their inter-language system. The teacher can pinpoint the common problem his students face when communication so as he identifies then the missed language aspects. Designing a chatting session may improve the students' performance through follow up comments, back channeling and further questions for reflection.

Although synchronous tools afford spontaneous learning environment, they have been criticized for the type of communication they offer may restrict the students as they lack a planning stage. For this, the integration of asynchronous tools is in fact required, especially for novice writers. Asynchronous tools might offer the students chance to participate with thoroughly prepared writings.

## **6.6. Asynchronous (delayed) tools**

Through this facility, the student can interact with key pals in considerably distinct periods of time. Since they don't have to be present online at the same time, the students have the advantage of planning beforehand their writings. To name but a few, e-mails, blogs, social networking sites, list serves, newsgroups, bulletin boards are thought to

offer delayed comments and interactions. (Perez-Prado and Thirunarayanan, 2002: 193). Email, however, is the best known and used tool among EFL learners.

Al Mahrooqi et al (2015) short-listed the following as the main advantages asynchronous communication possesses.

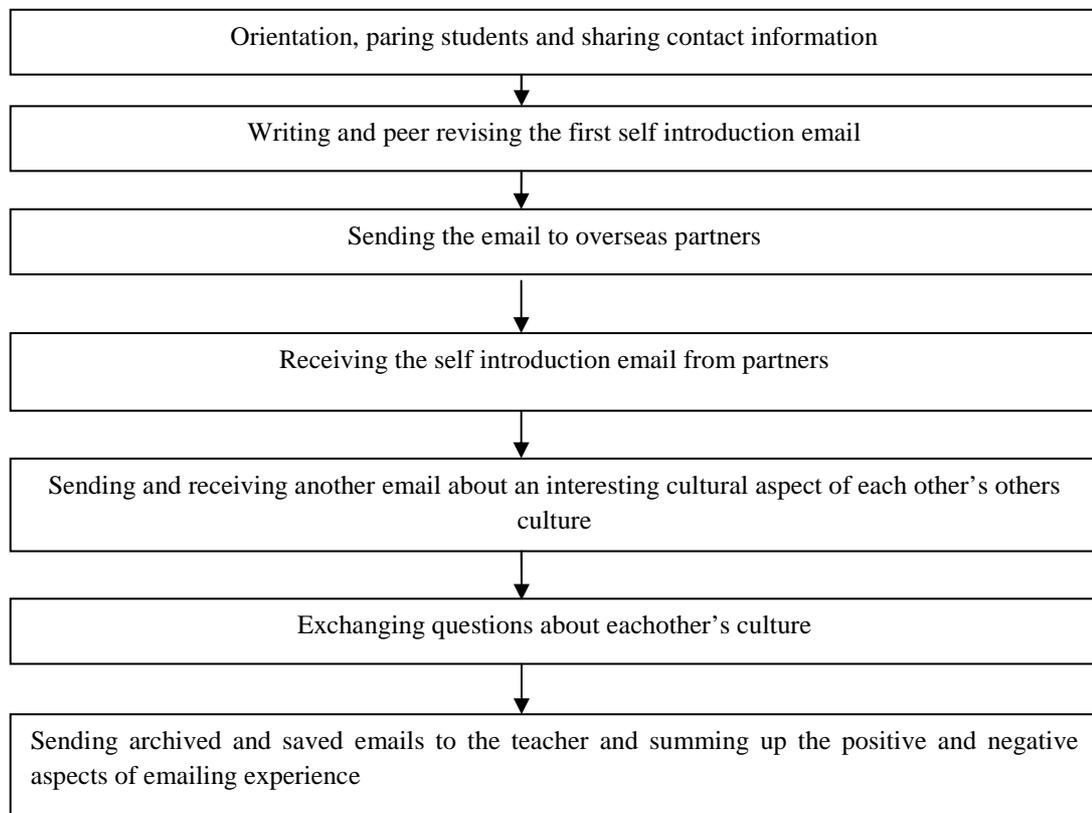
1. Such tools integrate writing with reading by providing a comprehensive input from the key pals and classmates' reading that influence considerably their writing performances.
2. It presents a variety of authentic tasks that stimulate the students' communicative ability.
3. By encouraging peer review, asynchronous tools enable the students to value revision after receiving feedback.
4. Supporting a student centered atmosphere where the students' can do without the teacher who may ignore their voice when present.
5. These tools build the students' self confidence and subsequently improve self consciousness by allowing them to read carefully their peers comments, edit their writings and send the replies only when they feel satisfied with their performances.

#### **6.6.1. Emails – a strategic tool for writing instruction and feedback on writing assignments**

The integration of emails in EFL classes, especially in writing courses, would have lasting effect if used systematically. Email communication enables the students to interact with native speakers and their teachers at the time they feel suitable. So they have more control over the learning process. Besides, the teachers can retrieve their students' writing for analysis and grading when monitoring their progress in the skill.

Email can be used as an important tool to encourage dialoging either between classes to foster reading and writing exchange or between students of the target language and native speakers to raise awareness. It can also be used strategically to ease student-teacher interactions, especially conferencing and feedback on the writers' productions. Emails increase constructive dealings even beyond the classroom since the writing skill needs more concentration and an over reliance on readings. The students' anxiety lessens due to the large amount of time they devote to the writing and the relaxing atmosphere they offer. Further, the teachers can receive the productions, organize them, and basically offer the appropriate evaluation to each student.

The following will present an illustration of a deliberate out of class email communication devised by Torkey (2015: 253)



According to Torkey (2015), emailing sessions can be arranged according to the intended objective of each one. She recommends that the writing teacher plans successive courses for email use in writing classes. The first email should be dedicated to self-introduction where the students get acquainted. In the following session the students are required to present briefly their culture to the recipients. The students will then contact at a more personal level where the teacher does not intervene until the students achieve the communicative purpose. Later on, remedial sessions will be planned to offer the necessary feedback.

### 6.5.2. Listservs

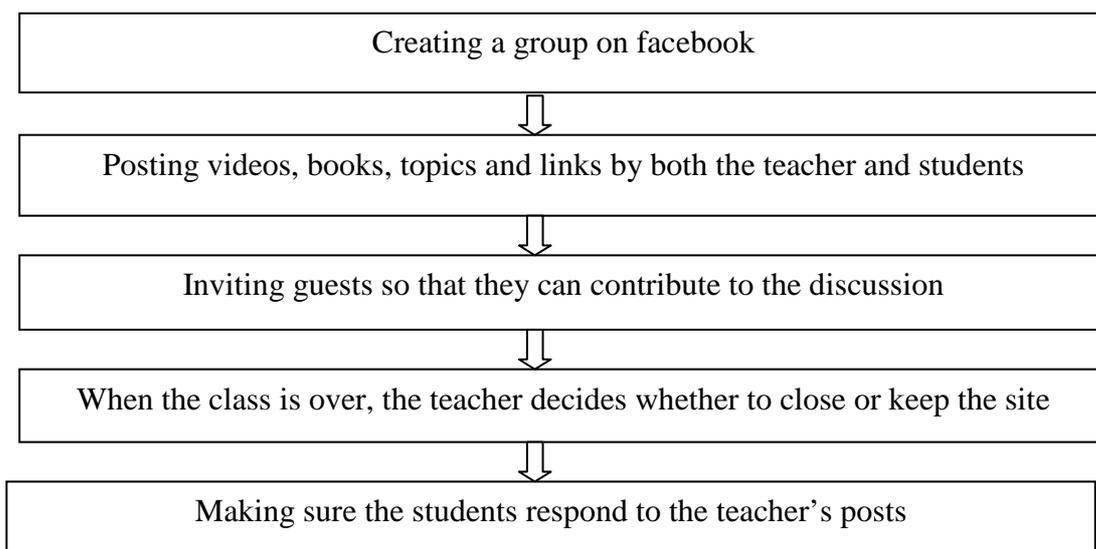
A listserv is defined as *“a system that allows the teacher to create, manage, and control electronic mailing lists on any corporate network or on the internet”*. It can be used to foster offline writing and collaborative learning as it can improve interactivity and audience awareness. It is suggested that the writing teacher should organize his classes into groups each one headed by what Torkey (2015) called a group representative. Each group

will discuss opinions through the representative so as to manage the large volume of the emails sent to the teacher in addition to involving the learners into a motivating atmosphere where they keep active within the group.

### 6.6.3. Social networking sites

Social networking sites enable the students to meet with a large and varied discourse community by making their networks visible. Though these sites do not offer a prolonged discussion to keep the thread of ideas well interwoven, they remain the best tool to lessen the learners' anxiety and promote EFL writing. Facebook and twitter occupy the top of the list of asynchronous communication.

The following diagram presents the main steps followed when using facebook in the teaching of writing as suggested by Torkey (2015: 255)



Many activities can be performed through social networking sites, but it is brainstorming that seems to be the most efficient prewriting activity that motivates the students and involve them interactively in collaborative work. The teacher and the students can share so many strategies including how to prepare for writing through reading, editing, revising and modifying the productions. (Kabilan et al: 2010)

### 6.6.4. Web-blogging

Blogs are thought to have the same characteristics and effect as diaries in an EFL context. They enable the students to regularly post their productions and practice writing more authentically and freely. The teacher is to intervene when necessary to offer positive comments, pick out noteworthy ideas and boost up the students to write better.

**6.7. Conclusion**

This chapter tackled some useful pedagogical implications including the integration of connectivity when teaching the writing of different genres in EFL classes, the strategic use of feedback, and the avoidance of grammar correction in the assessment of students' papers. It also took into consideration how best the synchronous and the asynchronous technological tools can be used in the teaching and evaluation of the writing skill.

# **General Conclusion**

## **General conclusion**

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The possibility to connect the teaching of English to reality increases due to the noticeable development that touches the virtual world. Using software applications, searching for information on the Internet, chatting, and game playing occupy the top of the list of technological tools that can be used to make the learning atmosphere more vivid and original. It is so easy for the language teacher to bring the world into the classroom and have students use authentic materials and participate in real communicative contexts to successfully gain competence that is summarized in what is known as literacy and oracy.

To develop literacy, the language student has to develop his reading and writing abilities. Writing is, thus, a necessity that requires creativity and a good deal of reading for the writer to produce a polished piece. Writing is by no means an end, yet a means to an end since the students' academic success is tied with their performances and how best they transform their thoughts into written words.

Opportunities for integrating and implementing information technologies into the process of teaching composition gain special interest especially within the introduction of software applications that helps the novice as well as the advanced writer. Thus, the need for investigating the impact of the new media on the students' way of writing was the major concern of the study. The researcher, thus, tries to explore the availability of using ICTs as an effective tool while teaching composition to 2<sup>nd</sup> year LMD students at the University of Mascara especially when correcting the students' assignments.

The present research is intended to diagnose the main difficulties faced by learners when they write and to investigate the efficiency of ICTs' infusion and feedback in improving the way students write. Five hypotheses were thought in the first place to answer the research questions. It has been suggested that generating ideas and finding out the relevant words to express their thoughts lead students to think that they cannot reach a good level in composition and thereby increase their frustrations to write in English. Besides, the researcher assumes that teachers and some students consider positive feedback, if used continuously, a worthy means to fuel motivation and inform productivity, yet, others reckon that teachers' comments on their writings are demotivating. Moreover, most language teachers regard ICT as an important tool that might have a great effect on the teaching-learning process and writing instruction is no exception. Therefore, the regular and appropriate integration of ICTs and the direct implementation of the necessary

## General conclusion

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methods for its inclusion particularly when correcting what they have produced aid English language learners to write better.

Three basic instrumentations are utilized to ensure triangulation and to either confirm or reject the expected hypotheses: An observation to discover how ICTs and feedback can be used in the teaching of writing, a questionnaire to second year students, a questionnaire to a group of teachers, and a test to pinpoint the main difficulties students encounter when they compose and to afford opportunities for providing feedback to what has been produced.

The researcher suggests a set of strategies that would enable teachers and students to improve standards and learning attainments. Positive feedback, strategies for providing effective feedback, and the use of internet and computers are to have an impact on the way students write. Furthermore, improving the writing skill does not rest only on employing assessment, practice is thought to provide lasting and significant outcomes.

Teachers are hesitant to integrate ICTs in their teaching, yet, the current study uncovers some of the opportunities the world of technology offers to the EFL classes. Computers in fact provide innumerable chances to make learning more vivid and real.

Due to the limitations that the researcher encounters, it is recommended that;

1. ICTs inclusion in the teaching of languages is of paramount importance that requires special concern and further research
2. The need for systematized integration of the available ICTs requires a consideration of collaborative work of both the students and the teachers
3. Authorities have to encourage educators by planning workshops to ensure professional development in the field
4. Although it is impossible to keep pace with the development of technologies, the writing teacher should exploit the available technologies and create his own environment to involve as much students as possible.
5. It is not necessary however to use the most sophisticated or the latest technology so as to make learning more effective and authentic. The teachers should use the simplest technological means to cure some of the educational ills and to get the learners used to ICTs.

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# Appendices

### Appendix 1

#### Chapter 4:

#### “Doubts and Difficulties”

After Mr. Lennox had left, Margaret joined her parents for an early tea. She sat with her head filled with many thoughts, including the walk, the sketching, and dinner. She felt guilty for hurting the feelings of the one man whose love could have been the only one which would ever enter her heart and she was trying to get over everything that took place that day, especially her refusal. Suddenly, her series of thoughts were interrupted by the rough worn out voice of her father, calling her over to talk about an urgent matter.

In his study room, Mr. Hale told Margaret that they were to leave their home in Helstone for good because he could no longer work for the church there. His words were both astonishing and unexpected to her and she kept demanding for explanations to their sudden departure. Mr. Hale was full of grief and despair. His heart was being squeezed from sorrow and his soul was profoundly tormented and Margaret could not help but fall into deep endless agony, watching her old father in pain.

Margaret understood that they were moving to Milton-Northern, an industrial city in the north of England and she despised the place already, even before seeing it. She hated the manufactures, the crowds, the noise and the wild which symbolized the north and were completely different from her marvelous beloved Helstone.

### Appendix 2

North & South - Elizabeth Gaskell

Chapter 3 (The More Haste The worse Speed)

They say that home is where the heart is, and Margaret's home was Helstone. The Helstone's village was like something out of a fairy tale, with squirrels playing and dogs barking out and all that wonderful stuff. In a word, it was a home that no words could describe its charm.

Henry Lennox, the brother's groom has just finished seeing his brother and his new sister-in-law Edith (who is Margaret's cousin). They were off on their way to Greece. On his way home, he decided to stop off at the Hale's house. Henry Lennox is not handsome as his brother. Instead of being a charming prince, he's smart and ambitious. He looks forward to climbing the ranks of London society.

When Margaret ducks out for a moment, Henry glances around. He wants to see if the hamlet of Helstone is really as Margaret has described. Margaret Hale is a proud, young woman filled with some sort of vanity, ego, and jealousy... Eventually Henry admits that Helstone is stunning, he's only surprised at just how modest the Hale's house is. At this point Gaskell tries to add some modest irony to the plot; when Margaret informs the gentleman that they had nothing for supper, except some cold meat.

Until supper, Margaret suggests that she takes Mr. Lennox for a walk to spend the afternoon sketching some of the village cottages.

Mrs. Hale is a woman that complains a lot, and who's hardly happy unless everything is going her way.

Once in nature, Henry can really see why Margaret loves Helstone this much... In other words Margaret isn't like most young women of her time who are afraid to speak their minds, she's so the opposite; especially when she describes to him her village making him changing his mind about this village, that is isn't just a mere village in a fairy tale. So at least u can notice how bossy she can be and sometimes having her wide mouth signifying how much, she likes to speak when she has an opinion.

While they're out, Lennox starts to pay her compliments (the guy starts flirting with the arrogant lady that she thinks no man is good enough for her). As you expected Margaret becomes uncomfortable in his company, sensing that this flirts is leading somewhere.

Luckily, she gets back home before he continues his poetic expressions (though, for a cruel vivid lawyer that had never paid any feminine creature a single attention. But love can turn everyone into a poet in this case).

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After dinner, the two of them go back into nature for grabbing some fruits for desserts. That's when Henry apologizes for saying back in CHAPTER 1 that Margaret made their home village sound like something out of a fairy tale. The poor creature lapses back into an emotional, flattering way of speaking. Unlike any other Margaret feels dreadfully frightened about what he is going to say next.

You guessed it : Henry Lennox wants Margaret Hale to marry him. And she totally turns him down, and he's crushed!!

And guess what!?! The two of them still have to go back to the house and hang with Margaret's parents, so he pretends as if every thing's fine. They come up upon Mr. Hale in the garden & they head inside the house.

As the chapter draws to a close, and once the agony is over Henry Lennox leaves after that Margaret kicked him out into the friend-zone, and it turned out that after all he's not the right guy for her.

In this chapter, if you feel like griping about wedding's issues, u could probably criticize the reaction to fancy-schmancy wedding proposal from Henry to Margaret the snarky strong minded woman that she doesn't know how to place her love in the romantic sense, yet to the natural beauty and exactly to Halstone.

So lengthy, but that's half the fun of these kinds of 19th century big old books just put aside your 21st century need for speed, grab a pot of tea, and settle in like people from Gaskell's era did.

### Appendix 3

Bribery is to offer money or service to anyone who holds invested with power in exchange for an undue induced advantage. In many countries nothing moves works without bribery. Such an unethical practice has spread to reach several aspects including governmental officials and even educational institutions. People often think that corruption and bribery is just a way of life. But every society, sector and individual would benefit from saying no to this crime.

Despite the fact that corruption and bribery is all around us, we cannot give up fighting it because we are naturally thoughtful survivors and we hope to make a difference. So we can fight bribery via following righteous procedures. By setting well implemented system of law we would punish severely and punishing any offence. Besides, educating the public community about that the government's responsibility to be corruption-free refuses requires a total refusal of any participation in any illegal activities. Moreover, to achieve transparency, and make authorities had better make companies sign commitment contracts to not encourage or intervene in any unsavory act.

In a nutshell, bribery may have lasting effects. It leads us to a puzzled area where the problems caused cannot be solved. Thus it is compulsory that people unite to combat this phenomenon. Thereby, If we can when we do our best to keep minds and hearts open, then we'll be a step nearer to fight eradicate this crime.

### **Appendix 4**

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Despite the fact that corruption and bribery is all around us, we cannot give up fighting it because we are naturally thoughtful and we hope to make a difference. So we can fight bribery via following righteous procedures. First, setting a well implemented system of law would enable us punish guilty people. Besides, we must promote the idea that the government's responsibility to be corruption-free requires a total refusal of any participation in illegal activities. Moreover, to achieve transparency, authorities had better make companies sign commitment contracts to not encourage or intervene in any unsavory act.

In a nutshell, bribery may have lasting effects. It leads us to a puzzled area where the problems caused cannot be solved. Thus it is compulsory that people unite to combat this phenomenon. When we do our best to keep minds and hearts open, then we'll be a step nearer to eradicate this crime.

### Appendix 5

Some people argue that counterfeiting benefits consumers by giving them access to lower-price goods. This is a totally mistaken claim. To counterfeit means to imitate something, imitated products are fake replicas of the real ones. **In other words, imitating goods is a totally offensive act.**

First, counterfeiters copy anything that turns a profit, without regard to quality, safety or the law. **Secondly**, fraudulent medicines are obviously a health risk to unsuspecting consumers. Sometimes they contain no active ingredients, and even worse, they contain potentially harmful chemicals. **Manufacturers** of fake **consumer** goods **also** are more likely to use toxic dyes or chemicals that have adverse environmental and health impacts. **Thirdly** piracy kills creativity and innovation; those who engage in pirating objects had better **engage in creating design** new things or at least improve the existing ones. Last but not least, counterfeiting **operations** encourage money laundering and promote corruption, **so** because when you buy **counterfeit forged** merchandise you're giving your money to a dishonest person. The seller, **on the other hand**, is committing a crime by selling you the product **since your actions transaction cost effects** the **original** company **making the real product**. **More badly**, you're **are** probably buying lousy product that doesn't last long. **Producers are tired of seeing their products imitated.**

In addition to this fact, counterfeiting has an influence on the reputation of some countries that **would not become the destination of those who look for quality**, **especially economy**. All in all governments should **make** take **controls and** certain measures trying to find solutions to this misdeed.

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### Appendix 6

I am a student investigating the **teaching of writing with a focus on feedback and ICT implementation** and would be extremely grateful if you could take few moments of your time and help in completing this questionnaire based on your experience of teaching writing at the University. It is totally anonymous and the information provided will only be used in my research project.

What kind of technological tools are available in the classroom you use?

1. Desktop computer
2. Laptop
3. Overhead projector
4. Audio equipment
5. Video conferencing system
6. Internet connection

How would you rate the quality of the technological support?

1. Poor
2. Average
3. Good
4. Very good

How do you feel about your level of technology expertise in your classroom?

1. Very comfortable
2. Fairly comfortable
3. Fairly uncomfortable
4. Very uncomfortable

Has your department designed a policy to foster ICT use in education?

1. Yes
2. No

Do you use ICTs as a management tool to

1. Organize your work and keep records
2. Prepare lessons
3. Find digital teaching resources
4. Design your own teaching resources

Do you think that ICTs

1. Facilitate teaching specific concepts or skills
  2. Support various student learning styles
  3. Support creativity
  4. Improve students' ability in using ICTs
- (you can choose more than one answer)*

Writing instruction

Mark the following statements

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(SA for Strongly Agree, A for Agree, N for Neutral, D for Disagree, SD for Strongly Disagree)

### Process approach

Statement	S A	A	N	D	S D
While composing, students think of writing as a piece of communication					
In writing lessons teachers should assist students in understanding that the writing process involves many sub skills					
It helps the students when they brainstorm and plan their written work in the writing class					
It is important that writing activities like brainstorming, planning, making outlines, and revising can be done effectively in pairs or in small groups.					
After a student produces a piece of writing, peer correction has to be done prior to teacher's correction.					
Teacher's feedback should focus on the ideas presented and their organization					
After peer correction and teacher's correction the student writes a final draft					
Teachers should expose the learners to different genres of writing as they will be writing for different purposes					

### Product approach

Statement	S A	A	N	D	S D
Students should learn to write correct sentences and build them up into a written text from the beginning.					
In writing class grammatical accuracy needs to be emphasized.					
Referring to model essay helps learners understand the way they can compose a piece of writing.					
In writing classes, the focus has to be on what students produce at the end of the lesson.					
Writing in the classroom does not help students and it is impossible to make writing realistic.					
It is not worth spending too much time on making the students write in class.					
Students should be left alone to work on the writing activities.					
Teachers have to correct all the grammar mistakes that the students make in their writing.					
All written language can be regarded as formal language, so it should be flawless.					

When you respond to your students' writing, how do you direct your responses?

1. to your immediate, intuitive impressions of the writing

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2. to the student's present abilities to write
3. to their individual goals for improvement
4. to elements of the curriculum they are studying

The use of technologies in writing instruction

Do you use electronic feedback to constantly gauge your students' progress?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, what kind of technologies do you use?

1. Word processing
2. Emails
3. Blogs
4. facebook
5. Others (please list them)

Feedback use

How important is it to provide feedback to students' writing?

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Quite important
4. Not really important
5. Not important at all

How often do you provide feedback on your students' productions?

1. Always
2. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
4. Rarely
5. Never

What type of feedback do you usually use?

1. Teacher written feedback
2. Peer feedback
3. Electronic feedback
4. Oral teacher- student conferences

What procedure do you usually use when correcting student's papers?

1. grades
2. written comments
3. error correction
4. none of them

What aspects of writing do you provide feedback on?

1. Content and ideas
2. Organization i.e. paragraphing, links between ideas
3. Language i.e. grammar, vocabulary, sentence pattern

When correcting mistakes, do you identify

1. All mistakes
2. mistakes that obscure meaning
3. Frequently occurring mistakes
4. Others

.....

Do your feedback practices stem from



**Appendix 7**

Student questionnaire

I am student investigating the **teaching of writing with a focus on feedback and ICT implementation** and would be extremely grateful if you could help me by completing this questionnaire based on your experience of learning writing here at the University. It should take around 10 minutes to complete. It is totally anonymous and the information provided will only be used in my research project.

Thank you very much for your help.

What kind of technological tools are available in the classroom you use?

1. Desktop computer
2. Laptop computer
3. Projection system
4. Audio equipment
5. Video conferencing system
6. Internet connection

How would you rate the quality of the technological support?

1. Poor
2. Average
3. Good
4. Very good

How do you feel about your level of technology expertise in your classroom?

1. Very comfortable
2. Fairly comfortable
3. Fairly uncomfortable
4. Very uncomfortable

Does your department have designed a policy to foster ICT use in education?

3. Yes
4. No

Do you think that ICTs

1. Facilitate learning specific concepts or skills
2. Support creativity
3. Improve your ability in using ICTs

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### Writing instruction

Do you think writing is important?

1. Yes, very important
2. Yes, it is important
3. No, it not important
4. No, other skills are much more important

Do you think that the amount of time given to the written expression course is appropriate?

1. Yes
2. No

What aspects of writing do you find most difficult?

1. Language
2. Content and ideas
3. Organization and structure
4. Others .....

Do you use the process oriented approach, i.e. planning, drafting, and revising?

- a. yes
- b. no

When writing essays which part is the most difficult?

- i. introduction
- ii. body
- iii. conclusion

Do you often assess your own writing to check on your progress?

1. yes
2. no

What do you think can help you improve and write better?

.....  
.....

### Feedback use

What type of feedback do you usually receive?

1. Written feedback

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2. Peers feedback
3. Electronic feedback
4. Teacher-student discussion
5. we don't receive feedback
6. Others (specify).....

To what extent do you see feedback on your productions important?

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Quite important
4. Not really important

Does your teacher provide feedback on your productions?

1. Always
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely
4. Never

How important is to receive feedback on your writings?

1. Very important
2. Important
3. Not really important
4. Not important at all

On what aspects do you usually receive feedback?

1. Content and ideas
2. Organization
3. Language

What type of feedback do you usually receive?

1. Only grades
2. Only error correction
3. Only written comments
4. One of them

When correcting your work, does your teacher

1. Corrects all errors
2. Correct significant errors
3. underline or circle my errors
4. use a code
5. others

The use of technologies in feedback provision

**Appendices**

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Does your teacher use electronic feedback to constantly gauge your progress?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Do you often use electronic folios to monitor you progress?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes, what kind of technologies do you use?

- 1. Word processing
- 2. Emails
- 3. Blogs
- 4. others

Do you think feedback helps you improve and become a better writer?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Are you satisfied with the feedback you receive?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Do writing teachers give accurate and complete feedback on your errors?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

If yes, what have you learnt from it?

.....  
.....

Does required revision after receiving feedback facilitate progress? Explain

.....

Appendix 8



**Moussedek Sara**



11 juin 2015, 20:24 ·

"Your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of others."

Joseph Conrad: Heart of Darkness

Vu par 28 personnes



Grace Misalucha et 2 autres personnes

J'aime

Commenter



**Moussedek Sara a téléchargé un fichier.**



3 mai 2015, 21:17 ·

**Animal Farm.pdf**

Moussedek Sara



Vu par 29 personnes



An Avid Reader

J'aime

Commenter



**Moussedek Sara a téléchargé un fichier.**



3 mai 2015, 21:08 ·

**Achebe\_\_Chinua\_-\_Things\_Fall\_Apart.pdf**

Moussedek Sara



Vu par 29 personnes



An Avid Reader

Appendix 9



**Kheira Charef**



16 avril 2015, 18:09 ·

Chapter 4:

“Doubts and Difficulties”

After Mr. Lennox had left, Margaret joined her parents for an early tea. She sat with her head filled with many thoughts, including the walk, the sketching, and dinner. She felt guilty for hurting the feelings of the one man whose love could have been the only one which would ever enter her heart and she was... [Plus](#)

[Voir la traduction](#)

Vu par 29 personnes



Moussedek Sara

3 commentaires

**J'aime**

**Commenter**



**Kheira Charef**

you're welcome miss

Je n'aime plus · 1 · [Répondre](#)



**An Avid Reader** a téléchargé un fichier.



15 avril 2015, 13:53 ·

**North-South-Elizabeth-Gaskell-Chapter-3-Analysis-.docx**

An Avid Reader



Vu par 29 personnes



Moussedek Sara

**J'aime**

**Commenter**

Appendix 10



**An Avid Reader**

12 avril 2015, 20:55 ·

The only way to do all the things u'd like to do is to  
READ \_\_ Tom Clancy

Vu par 29 personnes

Vous et 1 autre personne

J'aime

Commenter



**Grace Misalucha**

10 mars 2015, 20:26 ·

When to the session of sweet silent thought  
I summon up remembrance of things past,  
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,  
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:  
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,  
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,  
And weep afresh love's long since cancelled woe,  
And moan the expense of many a... [Plus](#)

Vu par 29 personnes

Moussedek Sara

J'aime

Commenter



**Moussedek Sara**

7 mars 2015, 12:13 ·

'For joy or grief, for hope or fear,  
For all hereafter, as for here,

Appendix 11

The screenshot shows a mobile email application interface. At the top, there is a status bar with icons for camera, flash, alarm, Bluetooth, alarm, Wi-Fi, cellular signal, 93% battery, and the time 09:16. Below the status bar is a browser address bar displaying a lock icon, the URL "m.mg.mail.yahoo.com", a refresh icon, and a "PLUS" button. The email header shows a left arrow, "0 of 206", an up arrow, and a down arrow. The email content includes a subject "[No Subject]", a star icon, the date and time "16 Jan, 2016, 4:40 PM", the sender "From Nina Nono", and a "Details" link. A document attachment is shown with a ".DOC" icon, the text "Bribery is to offer money or sevice to anyo...", and a size of "14 KB". At the bottom, there are two rows of navigation icons: the first row contains icons for back, delete, download, security, and compose; the second row contains icons for back, forward, home, favorites, and tabs, with labels "Retour", "Page suiva...", "Accueil", "Favoris", and "Onglets" respectively.

Appendix 12

 96% 09:05

 **Language Students**  
15 juin 2015, 18:25 · 

“I never wish to be easily defined.”  
– Franz Kafka

 J'aime |  Commenter

 **Fatima Zahraa Darcy et 3 autres personnes**

Vu par 29 personnes

 **Khadidja Ch**  
.....nd I'd rather float over other people's minds  
as something strictly fluid and non-perceivable  
!!!just like when you know someone fr sth !  
[Voir la traduction](#)  
Je n'aime plus ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Moussedek Sara**  
great thanks  
J'aime ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Moussedek Sara**  
my dear  
J'aime ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Khadidja Ch**  
warmly welcome 😊  
[Voir la traduction](#)  
Je n'aime plus ·  1 · Plus · 15 juin 2015

 **Moussedek Sara**  
well said

Appendix 13

Topic 1:

Ethics is a set of moral values that control our successful work. Yet, our society is full of dishonest people whose primary aim in life is to collect money and achieve gains. Counterfeiting is an example of their illegal and unethical practices.

To combat this cruel practice, people must boycott fake products and medicines, companies should reduce the price of their brands, people must unite to fight counterfeiting through education, raising consciousness, and it's high time the government implemented stringent laws to fight imitation.

To conclude, one can admit that such practices have had bad consequences on a nation, they weaken the country's economy and social relationships.

Appendix 14

Part two:

Corruption is an international phenomenon that organizations or individuals profit improperly their positions in an activity.

We should combat counterfeiting because it's an unethical activity. First, people must boycott fake products because it's unhealthy. Second, companies should reduce the price of their brands because it's very expensive. Third, the government must pass stringent laws to fight imitation.

So, all the governments should combat corruption because it's an improper way to gain profits.

Appendix 15

Counterfeiting is a kind of fraud that should be fought by authorities and citizens.  
The counterfeiting is an international phenomenon, so all the governments and organizations or individuals are responsible of combating the counterfeiting. The people must boycott fake products, and the companies should reduce the price of their brands. The government must pass stringent laws to fight imitation.  
The counterfeiting have more inconvenient refer to the health and environment etc. So it necessary to combat it.

Appendix 16

Ethics is set of morals and values that constitute the basis of any successful work. But our society is full of dishonest people who want to achieve gains and success using any method such as counterfeiting. It is a part of corruption and unethical behaviour that corrupt persons wish to spread in society to possess authority and wealth. For this damages, we should take serious measures to fight counterfeiting.

First, we must boycott fake products because it is not safety and it can be (danger) fake for the health.

Then, companies should reduce the price of their brands for instance officer and all the people.

Finally, the government must pass stringent laws to fight imitation.

To sum up, in order to have a safe way of living, we should be aware of the future results and fight counterfeiting.

## الملخص

تبحث الدراسة الحالية في إمكانية دمج تكنولوجيا المعلومات و التغذية الراجعة بغية تحسين مهارة الكتابة لدى طلبة اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة معسكر. قسم الباحث البحث إلى ستة فصول، يعني الأول بتقديم وصف للمنهجية المتبعة و الإشكالية و الفرضيات والعينة المدروسة و كذا أدوات البحث المستخدمة لفحص الفرضيات. يقدم الفصل الثاني مفاهيم أساسية حول تكنولوجيا المعلومات و الاتصالات و نماذج متعددة تعزز استخدام هذه الأخيرة في تعليمية اللغة، كما يسعى الباحث من خلال الفصل الثالث إلى وصف مفصل لمهارة الكتابة و تأثيرا لتغذية الراجعة مع تكنولوجيا الإعلام و الاتصال على العملية ككل. يتناول الفصل الرابع تقديم شرح للتغذية الراجعة و كيفية دمجها في تدريس الكتابة للطلاب. يتضمن الفصل الخامس وصف و تحليل للنتائج المتحصل عليها من أدوات البحث في حين يهدف الفصل الأخير إلى تقديم اقتراحات و استراتيجيات ذات التأثير الإيجابي على المهارة المستهدفة.

## Summary

The current study investigates the availability of integrating informational technologies and feedback to improve the writing ability of second year English language students at the University of Mascara. The researcher devises six chapters to fulfill the work. The first one is devoted to provide a description of the methodological approach used in the investigation, the research questions and hypotheses, the population and the research instrumentation. The second chapter provides background information about ICTs and the different models fostered to their integration in education. The third one seeks a general description of the writing skill and the effect of feedback practices and technologies on the whole process. The fourth one deals with feedback provision in the teaching of the writing skill. The fifth chapter includes description and analysis of the raw data obtained from the research tools while the last chapter is intended to provide strategies that are thought to have a positive impact on the teaching of the writing skill.

## Résumé

La présente étude porte sur la disponibilité de l'intégration des technologies de l'information et le feedback pour améliorer la capacité d'écriture des étudiants de la deuxième année Anglais à l'Université de Mascara. Pour accomplir son travail, le chercheur a divisé son travail en six chapitres six. Le premier est consacré à fournir une description de l'approche méthodologique utilisée dans la recherche, questions de recherche, les hypothèses, la population et l'instrumentation de recherche. Le deuxième chapitre fournit des informations générales sur les TIC et les différents modèles liés à leur intégration dans l'éducation, alors que le troisième vise une description générale de la compétence d'écriture et de l'effet des pratiques et technologies sur l'ensemble du processus. Le quatrième chapitre traite le retour d'information dans l'enseignement de l'écriture, quant au cinquième, il comprend la description et l'analyse des données brutes obtenues à partir des outils de recherche. Le dernier chapitre fournit les stratégies qui sont supposées avoir un impact positif sur l'enseignement de l'écriture.