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Investigating Algerian Secondary School Teachers' Attitudes Towards Peer Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Magister in Didactics

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Dedications

To the soul of my grandmother

To my mother and father for their sacrifice and prayer

To my wife for her continuous help and patience

To my sisters and brothers for their love and support

To my three pearls Ranim, Mounib, and Souhaib

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Abstract

This study investigated the attitudes of secondary school teachers of El-Oued towards peer feedback and its usefulness in improving students' writing skills in English. A descriptive case study, employing an attitudinal questionnaire and a semi-structured interview, was used to collect data from 113 participants. The quantitative and qualitative data obtained were analysed by means of descriptive statistics and thematic analysis respectively. The results of the study provided answers to the three research questions, and confirmed the hypotheses set by the researcher. The findings indicated that teachers predominantly had negative attitudes towards peer feedback, and doubted its effectives in enhancing students writing skills. Teachers' practices were consistent with their attitudes, that is, they did not use peer feedback in teaching writing for many stated reasons in the third chapter. However, a good number of teachers expressed their willingness to adopt peer feedback approach into their writing classes, and to train their students on using it appropriately. This attitudinal change was the result of the process of raising teachers' awareness on the usefulness of peer feedback in improving students' writing skills, which constituted a major aim of the present study. This research project came up with important implications as to the incorporation of peer feedback approach into Algerian secondary school writing classes, and provided suggestions for further research.

Key words: attitude, peer feedback, writing

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

A	Agree
BA	Bachelor of Arts
CBA	Competency Based Approach
D	Disagree
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
F	Frequency
L2	Second language
MA	Master's degree
MG	Magister degree
N	Number
P	Participant
S	Statement
SA	Strongly agree
SD	Strongly disagree
U	Undecided
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

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General Introduction

Researchers and practitioners have always agreed that writing is a complex process and a difficult skill for EFL students to learn and develop. That is why there have been continuous attempts to develop an understanding of how instructional practices may be proposed to help EFL students improve their writing proficiency. Peer feedback—an activity in which students receive feedback about their writing from their classmates—is one of the pedagogic approaches that has widely been practised in many writing classes due to its multiple benefits.

In traditional writing classes, learners receive feedback from their teacher, whose role is not only to correct the final texts, but also to give guidance during on-writing activities. However, the shift away from teacher-fronted classes to learner-centered ones has brought up the issue of learner autonomy. In modern ESL/ EFL writing classes, peer feedback has been considered as a teaching technique that promotes learner autonomy, enhances students' writing skills, and prepares them for lifelong learning.

The effectiveness of peer feedback for improving learners' writing skills has been proved by many studies. For instance, it has been found that peer feedback enhances students' critical thinking skills, and raises their awareness of the audience; it increases students' confidence, and reduces their apprehension by seeing peers' strengths and weaknesses in writing; it fosters autonomous learning; and that it boosts L2 students' linguistic and communication skills.

The present study is motivated by the theoretical views that advocate the use of peer feedback in EFL writing classes, and ascertain its beneficial role in improving students'—Algerian in our case—writing skills, facilitating interaction among them, and boosting their autonomous learning. These are, in fact, major objectives of the national EFL curriculum that

need to be met. Therefore, this study starts from the conviction that peer feedback is a useful pedagogic approach to writing in EFL classes, and that teachers should adopt any teaching strategy that could promote their teaching and motivate their students to improve their learning.

Within the Algerian context, peer feedback activities have been incorporated into the national EFL curriculum since the educational reforms of 2003 and the adoption of Competency Based Approach. The new curriculum greatly stresses the use of peer feedback techniques—within the process approach to teaching writing—in order to enable students to improve their writing skills and to boost learner autonomy. This trend quickly found its way into the official textbooks. For instance, the designers of *New Prospects*, the 3rd year official textbook for all streams, devised activities for the practice of peer feedback technique in many writing tasks. After writing a first draft, students are asked to correct their own mistakes, and then, exchange their drafts with their peers for further correction, before they write a final version on the basis of the comments and suggestions provided (see Appendix 6). Unlike the traditional product approach to writing, which emphasises the final outcome of the writing procedure, process approach considers peer feedback or reviewing as an important stage in EFL writing. Thus, peer feedback approach has become a key feature in EFL writing classes in Algeria.

However, and through informal discussions, the researcher has noticed that the attitudes of some English teachers towards peer feedback and its usefulness in improving learners' writing skills tend to be discouraging. Some of them claim that EFL students are not linguistically competent enough to make sound comments on each other's drafts, and that students themselves do not trust their peers' comments and will not likely incorporate them into their writings. Others state that as students are used to receive feedback only from their teachers, they generally feel very embarrassed if they receive it from their peers as they vary

in terms of competence and ability to provide appropriate feedback in return. As a result, these students show resistance to peer feedback activities. So, for some teachers, peer feedback technique cannot help students improve their writing skills, and is only a waste of time. Even the more optimistic teachers argue that peer feedback activities are time-consuming ones and require a lot of training and praxis, which makes the integration of such techniques difficult. In fact, these attitudes shared by many teachers may negatively affect their classroom practices which, in turn, may affect students' attitudes towards EFL writing in an undesirable way. In addition, such attitudes do not serve the broader aims and objectives of EFL teaching in the Algerian educational system and contradict with the principles underlying CBA and the process approach to writing which all stress classroom interaction and collaboration among learners.

Given this situation, and starting from the fact that most studies pertinent to attitudes towards peer feedback in Algerian EFL writing classes concentrated more on learners at the tertiary level, and that no studies —according to the researcher's little knowledge—have been conducted on teachers, the researcher has found a great interest in exploring secondary school teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback in EFL writing classes in an attempt to shed more light on this debatable issue and enrich the existing body of knowledge.

The following research questions will be addressed:

1- What are Algerian secondary school teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback in EFL writing classes?
2- Do teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback affect their instructional practices?
3- What factors influence teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback?

In the light of what has been previously said, the hypotheses on which the present study is based run as follows:

1- Algerian secondary school teachers have negative attitudes towards peer feedback in EFL writing classes.
2- Teachers with negative attitudes do not use peer feedback in teaching writing.
3- The lack of theoretical background and teacher training are major factors for teachers' negative attitudes towards peer feedback.

The aims of carrying out this research are:

1. To investigate Algerian secondary school teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback and uncover the factors underlying these attitudes.

2. To establish a correct understanding of peer feedback technique among teachers and raise their awareness on its usefulness in improving students' writing skills.

3. To provide information concerning a relatively large sample of teachers so as to add to the existing body of knowledge and propose some useful recommendations as to the implementation of peer feedback activities in future EFL classes.

In order to answer the research questions stated beforehand, a descriptive case study is going to be undertaken. This type of research approach focuses on understanding a phenomenon within its natural settings without any experimental manipulation. Thus, it enables researchers to capture and formalise the knowledge of practitioners, develop theories from practice, and move on the testing stage. Two data collection instruments, a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview, will be employed to gather data from the participants—113 secondary school teachers from El-Oued. While the questionnaire aims at gathering quantitative data, which will be analysed using descriptive statistics; the interview aims at collecting qualitative data, which will be transcribed, coded for themes, and analysed.

The structure of the research encompasses four chapters. The first chapter presents the methodology for conducting this study. It will describe the research design and justify its selection together with the data collection instruments employed. Also, it will profile the subjects and explain the sampling issues, the procedures of piloting the questionnaire and interview questions, and discuss the statistical procedures used to analyse the data gathered. Chapter two represents the theoretical part of this study. It will introduce the concept of attitude and highlight its importance in the teaching-learning process. It will as well elaborate on two major aspects of the present study—writing and feedback. While the third chapter is devoted to the discussion and interpretation of the findings, the last one will summarise the whole work, highlight the main findings, and discuss the implications of the results. Finally, the limitations of the study and some recommendations for further research will be proposed.

This study is thought to be of a great significance as is it strives to shed light on an instructional issue, namely, the use of peer feedback in Algerian writing classes, which has not received much attention from researchers yet. The results of such a study may help researchers build up a clear understanding of this issue and prescribe an appropriate remedy for it. In addition, this study is an attempt to bring teachers' attention to the usefulness of peer feedback and influence their instructional decisions towards adopting it into their writing classes. This helps them promote their teaching, provide a good opportunity to their students to learn autonomously, and ensure that the objectives of the national curriculum are met.

CHAPTER ONE:

Methodology

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1.1. Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology of research used in this study and the rationale for selecting it to answer the research questions. Thus, the research design and approach, participants, and data collection methods, namely the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview, will be comprehensively explained. In addition, the procedures of carrying out the research and the methods of data analysis will be spelled out.

1.2. Research Methodology

Methodology refers to the theoretical paradigm or framework in which the researcher is working; to the approach (quantitative or qualitative) s/he is following; and to the methods s/he is using to gather and analyse data in order to answer the research questions. A sound justification of the choice of such research paradigms is to be developed within methodology too. Below is a statement of all these items.

1.2.1. Research Design

This study aims at investigating the attitudes of the secondary school teachers of El-Oued towards the usefulness of peer feedback in enhancing EFL students' writing skills, and the factors underlying these attitudes. It has as a secondary objective too, investigating the extent to which these attitudes may impact on teachers' instructional practices in real contexts. Thus, it was perceived that a descriptive case study, employing a questionnaire and an interview as research tools, would be most suited to the nature of this research project. The main goal of the descriptive case study is to assess a sample in detail and in depth, based on an articulation of a descriptive theory—what is already known about the phenomenon. Yin (2003b) states that when a case study aims at presenting a complete description of a phenomenon within its context, it is a descriptive one (as cited in Duff, 2008). Johnson (1992)

writes that "the purpose [of case study] is to understand the complexity and dynamic nature of the particular entity, and to discover systematic connections among experiences, behaviors, and relevant features of the context" (as cited in Duff, 2008, p. 32).

The rationale for selecting such a research strategy to conduct this study is:

- to provide an in-depth and holistic description and analysis of the attitudes of secondary school teachers towards peer feedback in EFL writing contexts, and the factors underlying these attitudes relying on multiple sources of evidence.
- to examine the effect of these attitudes on their instructional practices, and hence, develop an understanding of peer feedback from teachers' point of view.
- to provide database materials that could be interpreted by future researchers and used in teacher development programmes.

The task of implementing any new approach or technique, peer feedback in our case, is assigned to teachers whose perspective is a crucial factor in determining the success of the implementation of these approaches or techniques, because teachers are the individuals who implement them. This is why it was assumed that studying teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback would be of great importance in developing a clear and deep understanding of this issue; hoping that the final findings would contribute to solving this problem.

Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003) define case study research as "the in-depth study of instances of a phenomenon in its natural context and from the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon" (as cited in Duff, 2008, p. 22). This definition underlines some strengths of case study which place it among the mostly used research methodologies by researchers. Case studies allow the focus on special cases—instances—such as an individual, a group of people, a school, a community, an organisation, a workplace, etc., with the purpose of probing deeply and analysing a phenomenon within its real environment from a holistic and

participant-involved perspective. In deed, this enables researchers to go beyond the boundaries of the traditional research paradigms. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000) postulate that the observations of such instances permit the establishment of generalisations about a wider population; but they should be handled with care and related to theoretical framework (Mikkelsen, 2005 as cited in Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 2006).

According to Cohen et al. (2000), case study has been valued as a research paradigm above other paradigms for the following principal advantages:

- Case study data are drawn from people's experiences and practices and so it is seen to be strong in reality and more persuasive and more accessible.
- Case studies allow for generalisations from a specific instance to a more general issue.
- Case studies allow the researcher to show the complexity of social life. Good case studies build on this to explore alternative meanings and interpretations.
- Case studies can provide a data source from which further analysis can be made. They can, therefore, be archived for further research work.
- Because case studies build on actual practices and experiences, they can be linked to action and their insights contribute to changing practice.

Yin (2003a) states that another key feature that distinguishes case study from other research strategies is that it draws on such multiple resources of evidence—instruments—as documents, archival records, interviews, questionnaires, direct and participant observations, and physical artifacts. This wide range of data collection tools allow researchers to gather quantitative and qualitative data, and hence, answer different types of questions.

All in all, the above-mentioned definitions, advantages, and hallmarks explain the notion of descriptive case study and justify its use as a research design for carrying out the present research project. It is particularly meant to provide an overall picture of what happens

in EFL classrooms without any control over the context or manipulation of the independent variable (teachers' attitudes) or dependent variable (their in-class practices). It seeks to describe and analyse what happens in Algerian secondary school EFL writing classes, with regard to the role of peer feedback technique in improving students' writing skills, through teachers' attitudes and practices.

1.2.2. Research Approach

Duff (2008) states that "although generally associated with qualitative research, cases may be analysed quantitatively as well" (p. 33). Given this, and as the present study employs features of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, namely a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview, it is vital to devote a section to discussing these two research approaches and highlight their connection to this case study research.

Methodologists argue that the nature of the research tackled, the research questions, and the aims of the study determine the research methodology and methods to be used. However, it is the researcher's responsibility to decide which specific methodologies will allow him or her to obtain better results. While many researchers opt for a quantitative or qualitative approach in isolation, others however, combine them together in a single study drawing on the appropriateness of such a combination to answer different types of questions and provide rich data.

1.2.2.1. Quantitative Approach

Unlike qualitative approach which is concerned with *understanding*, quantitative approach is concerned with *explaining* (the social world). Being so, quantitative research is typically one which operates within positivist assumptions. Blaxter, Hughes, and Tight (2006) define positivism in the following words:

> This is the view that social science procedures should mirror, as near as possible, those of the natural sciences. The researcher should be objective and detached from the objects of research. It is possible to capture 'reality' through the use of research instruments such as experiments and questionnaires. The aims of positivist research are to offer explanations leading to control and predictability. (p. 60)

The assumption behind the positivist paradigm is that there is an objective truth existing in the world that can be measured and explained scientifically through measuring events and performing statistical analysis. Likewise, social sciences must follow this paradigm for the sake of obtaining data that is reliable, valid, and generalisable.

According to Punch (2005 as cited in Blaxter et al., 2006) "quantitative research is empirical research where the data are in the form of numbers" (p. 64).

The previous definitions reflect, in fact, the major characteristics enjoyed by quantitative research approach as being more scientific and objective and seeks to establish general laws or principles (Blaxter et al., 2006). The findings are more precise, more representative of the population under investigation, and can provide a better understanding of the phenomenon studied because they are statistically calculated. Quantitative researchers are greatly concerned with providing data that are reliable and valid, and aim at using their findings to draw conclusions beyond the participants of their study. This trend is reflected in this study through the researcher's attempt to generalise his findings about the secondary school teachers of El-Oued over the larger population—Algerian teachers—in a bid to draw a further holistic picture on the attitudes of the Algerian teachers towards peer feedback in EFL writing classes and the factors behind these attitudes. According to Cohen et al. (2000), this is one of the attributes of a descriptive case study employing both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2010) state that quantitative research often falls into two classes—experimental or non-experimental. The former is designed to determine cause-effect relationships, and the latter—which is the case of the present study—uses numbers to describe preexisting groups or to determine whether a relationship exists between variables.

1.2.2.2. Qualitative Approach

Punch (2005) defines the qualitative research as "empirical research where the data are not in the form of numbers" (as cited in Blaxter et al., 2006, p. 64). Qualitative research is, thus, concerned with the collection and analysis of information in as many non-numeric forms as possible. "It tends to focus on exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples which are seen as being interesting or illuminating, and aims to achieve depth rather than breadth" (Blaxter et al., 2006, p. 64). Denzin and Lincoln (2005 as cited in Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010) assume that the role of the researcher in a qualitative study is that of an observer. This position, Denzin and Lincoln add, enables the researcher to uncover reality and give meaning to the phenomena being studied through the power of observation. Other qualitative research techniques—for example, interviews and photographs, and so on—bring the researcher in close contact with the participants in order to capture their perspectives on the meaning of reality. Additionally, qualitative researchers study their participants in naturalistic settings while searching for the meaning and understanding of the human experience (Lodico et al., 2010).

As qualitative research is concerned with *understanding*, it is considered to be deeply rooted in interpretivism. Blaxter et al. (2006) state that interpretivist approaches to social research see interpretations of the social world as culturally derived and historically situated. Interpretivism is a research paradigm which is based on the notion that social reality is created and sustained through the subjective experience of people involved in communication. It

suggests as well that the social sciences are concerned with understanding (of the social world) as compared to explaining, which forms the basis of seeking causal explanations and is the hallmark of the natural sciences. The distinction between understanding and explaining underlies the distinction between qualitative and quantitative research approaches (Blaxter et al., 2006).

Although there are significant differences between quantitative and qualitative research strategies, which may be viewed as a reflection of the weaknesses of every single approach if dealt with alone, combining both approaches in a single research project would give more strength to the research and more credibility to its findings. Table 1.1. below illustrates the main differences between quantitative and qualitative research approaches:

Qualitative Research	**Quantitative Research**
• concerned with understanding behaviour from actors' own frames of reference	• seeks the facts/causes of social phenomena
• naturalistic and uncontrolled observation	• obtrusive and controlled measurement
• subjective	• objective
• discovery-oriented and inductive	• verification-oriented and deductive
• process-oriented	• outcome-oriented
• ungeneralisable: single case studies	• generalisable: multiple case studies
• valid: real, rich, deep data	• reliable: hard and replicable data
• holistic	•particularistic

Table 1.1. Differences between quantitative and qualitative research approaches (Adapted from Oakley, 1999 as cited in Blaxter et al., 2006, p. 65)

As mentioned beforehand, a good number of methodologists consider that the combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches together in a single study permits researchers to benefit from the advantages of both approaches in order to answer different types of questions and obtain richer and more reliable data. According to Madrigal and McClain (2012), the advantages of combining both approaches are:

- While quantitative research requires the standardisation of data collection to allow statistical comparison; qualitative research requires flexibility, allowing you to respond to user data as it emerges during a session
- You can use qualitative research to identify the factors that affect the areas under investigation, then, use that information to devise quantitative research that assesses how these factors would affect user preferences.
- While quantitative researchers aim at performing statistical analyses; qualitative researchers look for trends in the data, that is, statements that are identical across different research participants.
- Qualitative research studies can provide researchers with details about human behaviour, emotion, and personality characteristics; whereas quantitative ones can provide numerical data from which important facts about the subject matter can be derived.

Drawing on a pragmatist view, the researcher assumed that using qualitative and quantitative approaches would be an ideal methodology to yield convincing answers to the research questions posed, and to gather more valid and reliable data about the attitudes of secondary school teachers towards peer feedback and the factors underlying these attitudes, as well as the impact of these attitudes on their instructional practices. While quantitative information obtained from the questionnaire will provide reliable data that can be measured;

interview-based qualitative information will provide more valid and interpretive data which allow deeper and richer description and analysis of the phenomenon investigated.

1.2.3. Participants

The study participants were 113 secondary school teachers from El-Oued working in thirty-eight secondary schools and technicums. The total number of the realistic population—the ideal population being all Algerian secondary school English teachers—from which this sample was taken was 217 English teachers working in the fifty-seven schools (50 secondary schools and 7 technicums) of El-Oued.

In this vein, it is worth mentioning that amongst the 217 teachers working during 2014-2015 school year, thirty-nine were novice teachers, that is, working for their first year. These novice teachers were excluded from the study for the simple reason that they would not be able to give a sound judgement on the usefulness of peer feedback before experiencing it with their pupils. Peer feedback activity is only practised in third year classes, which are not normally assigned to novice teachers. Therefore, the researcher decided to exclude all novice teachers from the study as he thought that their contribution would affect the validity and reliability of the research findings. Being so, the authentic total number of the realistic population from which the sample of the study was taken was 178 teachers.

At first, the researcher planned to recruit all teachers representing the authentic total number of the realistic population of the study, that is, 178 teachers. The aim was to cover all schools in a bid to get a better representation of the whole ideal population, and hence guarantee a greater validity and reliability of the findings. Unfortunately, this was not possible due to many factors. First, many teachers were reluctant to complete the questionnaire and did not send it back to the researcher on time. Secondly, El-Oued is a very large region with various schools located in very remote areas, which represented a big challenge for the

researcher to reach some teachers. The third factor was that some schools were not even equipped with elementary technological facilities—at least at the moment this study was conducted—that would permit contact with some colleagues. For instance, one four-year-old school did not even have a telephone line. Last but not least, to get access to every single teacher in the whole region would be very costly in terms of time, effort and money.

Despite the difficulties stated beforehand, the researcher managed to recruit 113 participants (66 females and 47 males). Ages of the participants ranged from twenty-one to more than forty-five years, and their working experience ranged from two to more than twenty years. Except for one participant, all other participants (112) held three types of academic degrees, namely, bachelor's degree, master's degree, and magister degree. Table 1.2. below summarises the background information of the questionnaire participants, which will be further analysed in Chapter Three.

Characteristics of participants		**Participants**	**Percentage**
Gender	Male	47	41.59
	Female	66	58.41
Age	21-25	16	14.15
	26-30	36	31.85
	31-35	23	20.35
	36-40	19	16.81
	41-45	13	11.50
	45 +	06	5.30
Academic degree	BA	62	54.86
	MA	48	42.47
	MG	02	1.76
	Other	01	0.88
Years of teaching experience	2-5	47	41.59
	6-10	29	25.66
	11-15	19	16.81
	16-20	06	5.30
	20 +	12	10.61

Table 1.2. Background information of questionnaire participants

Out of the 113 participants taking part in the attitudinal questionnaire, five teachers were selected for the interview. The interviewees were three male teachers and two female teachers who taught in four different schools. Their ages were between twenty-four and forty-five years, and their teaching experience ranged from three to twenty-two years. Two participants had Bachelor's degrees, two others held Magister degrees, and one with Master's degree. Table 1.3. below presents the demographic distribution of the interview participants.

Variables	**P. 1**	**P. 2**	**P. 3**	**P. 4**	**P. 5**
Gender	Male	Male	Male	Female	Female
Age	24	26	45	36	32
Years of teaching experience	03	04	22	11	07
Academic degree	MA	MG	BA	BA	MG

Table 1.3. Demographic distribution of interview participants

The sampling techniques used in this study for selecting the questionnaire and interview participants are stated below.

1.2.4. Sampling

Sampling is an important component of most educational research projects. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007), "the quality of a piece of research stands or falls not only by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted" (p. 100). The significance of sampling comes from the fact that the precision of conducting the sampling procedures will determine the extent to which the research findings enable the researcher to draw conclusions beyond the real participants of the study—generalisability.

Sampling refers to the selection of a sample of elements from a large group of objects, and the sample is , according to Lodico et al. (2010), "a smaller version of the population, the group to which the researcher would ultimately like to generalize or apply the results of the study" (p. 25). Samples allow researchers to work with a smaller, more manageable group out of the realistic population.

As this study draws on features of quantitative and qualitative research methods, the researcher used both probability and non-probability sampling strategies to collect data from the questionnaire respondents and the interview participants respectively.

Concerning the quantitative attitudinal questionnaire, a probability simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents. Blaxter et al. (2006) define this technique as one "where every individual or object in the group or 'population' of interest . . . has an equal chance of being chosen for study" (p.164). Many researchers consider simple random sampling as the most widely understood approach among all the probability sampling approaches for the various advantages it entails. Gorard (2001) states that "Random sampling has two key advantages. It is free of the systematic bias that might stem from choices made by the researcher, and it enables the analyst to estimate the probability of any finding actually occurring solely by chance" (p.19). These two advantages, among others, make the results obtained through randomisation more representative of the population of the study and more reliable.

Talking about qualitative studies, Lodico et al. (2010) argue that "qualitative researchers select their participants by using purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling involves the selection of participants who have key knowledge or information related to the purpose of the study" (p. 34). Drawing on this view, the researcher opted for a non-probability purposive (purposeful) sampling technique to select participants for the interview. This type of sampling involves "handpicking supposedly typical or interesting cases" (Blaxter et al.,

2006, p. 163). That is, researchers generally choose their subjects according to their own judgment. This includes the subjects' ability to provide the information essential for the study depending on their own experiences and knowledge on the study under investigation, the constraints of time, costs, etc. The criteria for selecting the interview participants will be explained in more details in the section of Data collection Procedures.

1.2.5. Research Methods

As previously articulated, two main data collection instruments were employed by the researcher to gather quantitative and qualitative data, namely a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. In this vein, Cohen et al. (2000, 2007) state that research manuals confirm that questionnaires and interviews are two very accepted methods for collecting data in educational research.

1.2.5.1. Questionnaire

The first tool used in this study was an attitudinal questionnaire, which aimed at gauging secondary school teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback, the factors underlying these attitudes and teachers' instructional preferences. The reason for utilising a questionnaire as the first phase of this study was to gather data from a relatively large sample of the realistic population, that is, the teachers of El-Oued. Cohen et al. (2000) believe that the merits reported on questionnaires place them as very popular data collection methods in educational research. These include:

a) questionnaires are more economical (as they save the researcher's and participants' time and effort),

b) they can be used in small-scale and large scale issues,

c) they encourage greater honesty from respondents as they are anonymous (reliability),

d) they can be administered without the presence of the researcher, and

e) they can be used to provide numerical data.

Although questionnaires are flexible and cheap data collection tools, they might have the following disadvantages: a) the percentage of returns is often too low; b) respondents may be unwilling to write their answers (Cohen et al., 2000).

It is vital for any researcher to identify the scale of measurement (or type of data) to be obtained before determining the questionnaire design, because this indicates the type of statistics to be used to analyse the data (Lodico et al. 2010). Data are of four types: nominal, ordinal, interval or ratio. As for the present study, the researcher aimed at collecting ordinal data—indicate order e.g., from strongly agree to strongly disagree—which were obtained through utilising a Likert rating scale. According to Brace (2004):

> The Likert scale (frequently known as an 'agree–disagree' scale) . . . presents respondents with a series of attitude dimensions (a battery), for each of which they are asked whether, and how strongly, they agree or disagree, using one of a number of positions on a five-point scale . . . . Responses using the Likert scale can be given scores for each statement, usually from 1 to 5, negative to positive". (p. 86)

Two major qualities characterise Likert rating scales: a) they combine the flexibility of response with the ability of determining quantitative analysis, and b) they are very useful means for determining attitudes, perceptions, and opinions (Cohen et al., 2007).

This study's questionnaire was composed of four sections. Section one was designed to obtain participants' professional and demographic data. Sections two, three, and four aimed to measure teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback, their instructional practices, and the factors impacting on their attitudes respectively. Eighteen Likert items, employing a 5-point format, were designed and distributed in the sections two, three, and four (Appendix 1).

Apart from the first section wherein participants were asked to tick the appropriate choices and provide the necessary biographical information (see Table 1.2.); the response options for sections two, three, and four were: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Respondents were asked to tick once for each item in the space that best represented their opinions. Table 1.4. below shows the number of items in each section and their focus.

SECTIONS	ITEMS	FOCUS
1	———	Background information about participants.
2	**1—7**	General attitudes towards peer feedback approach and its usefulness in EFL writing classes.
3	**8—13**	Impact of teachers' attitudes on their instructional practices. That is, to know whether or not they incorporate peer feedback in their writing classes.
4	**14—18**	Authentic factors shaping teachers' attitudes to peer feedback technique and its useful role in enhancing students' writing skills.

Table 1.4. Distribution and focus of questionnaire items

While the first section of the questionnaire aimed at gathering background information about the participants: their age, gender, academic degree, years of teaching experience and name of their school; section two referred to the first research question: What are Algerian secondary school teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback in EFL writing classes? It comprised seven 5-point Likert scale items (1–7) that aimed at gauging the attitudes of the secondary school teachers of El-Oued towards peer feedback with regard to three major

issues: its usefulness in enhancing pupils' writing skills, the extent to which it could boost pupils' self-confidence and strengthen the notion of autonomous learning among them, and the ability of pupils to give appropriate comments on their peers' writing.

The third section included six items (8–13) designed to learn to what extent teachers' teaching preferences and behaviours were influenced by their attitudes towards peer feedback. This is, in fact, the core of the second research question: Do teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback affect their instructional practices? This section was mainly interested in confirming whether teachers' classroom practices were aligned with their attitudes and if these practices would really serve the aims of EFL writing curriculum in their view.

Section Four of the questionnaire was designed to explore the factors impacting on teachers' attitudes, which is the focus of the third research question of the present study: What factors influence teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback? It consisted of five items (14–18) that displayed a variety of theoretical and practical difficulties likely to be shaping teachers' attitudes according to the researchers' view. More factors would be generated in the second phase of the study—interview.

1.2.5.2. Interview

Interviews are a commonly used method in educational research, as they enable researchers to gather a great amount of qualitative information. Easterbrook (2008) states that:

> Interviews allow researchers to examine issues, at length, from the interviewee's personal perspective. The data gathered typically consist of verbatim responses to the interviewer's questions, which are designed to elicit opinions, feelings, attitudes, descriptions of personal behaviours, and other elements related to the research problem. (p. 829)

This quotation clearly shows that interviews involve questioning or discussing issues with people for the sake of collecting data which would likely not be accessible using other techniques such as observation or questionnaires, because respondents are given a chance to talk freely and express their attitudes and thoughts.

Depending on the design and aims of the study, individual interviews are of three major types: structured, semi-structured and unstructured. Structured interviews are like questionnaires using a set of questions requiring specific answers; unstructured interviews generally take the form of a detailed discussion focusing on a few issues with a great flexibility; semi-structured interviews stand in a medial position between these two types (Blaxter et al., 2006).

In this study, the researcher opted for a semi-structured interview schedule, which according to Easterbrook (2008), generally uses open-ended questions to capture interviewees' thoughts of a variety of topics. Lodico et al. (2010) explain the nature of a semi-structured interview as follows:

> Semi-structured interviews are typically planned carefully before the interview is carried out. The researcher develops an interview protocol . . . that includes a list of questions or topics to be addressed in the interviews with all participants. Like an observational protocol, the interview protocol helps guide the collection of data in a systematic and focused manner. (p.124)

Lodico et al. (2010) add that although semi-structured interviews are planned in advance, researchers are able to introduce any necessary changes into their interview schedule depending on the circumstances governing the interview such as rewording questions, reordering them, omitting questions or adding others for the sake of exploring unexpected issues. This flexibility that characterises semi-structured interviews enable researchers to

obtain additional, rich data from their respondents as they can elaborate on issues which cannot be thoroughly covered in questionnaires due to their rigid nature, or cannot be directly observed such as attitudes. However, and in order to be consistent with all participants, the interviewer has a set of key pre-planned core questions, themes or issues for guidance to ensure that the same areas are covered with all interviewees, who are given a chance to provide more information if they like. Another major advantage of a semi-structured interview, according to Lodico et al. (2010), is that it enables researchers to gather extensive, in-depth data using only a small number of participants.

In fact, all the advantages stated beforehand about the semi-structured interview technique, encouraged the researcher to use it in the present study to gather in-depth qualitative data to answer the research questions posed. This type of interview is marked by its flexibility and the additional questions a researcher can ask to generate additional information about the research topic. This type of questions is referred to as a probe. Probes, which permit the interviewer to explore new dimensions which were not initially considered, differ somewhat from participant to participant according to the direction of the interview.

Researchers state that there are two major methods for reporting interviews: field note taking and tape recording (Lodico et al., 2010). Each method has its own advantages; for example researchers using tape recorders aim at preserving the integrity of the data, because their studies may include verbatim responses as part of the data analysis (Lodico et al., 2010); whereas note taking gives researchers instant record of the key points of an interview (Blaxter et al., 2006), and enables them to formulate new questions or locate quotations in a tape transcript at a later time (Gray, 2004 as cited in Lodico et al., 2010).

Despite the merits reported on interview tape recording or note taking, researchers admit that these two techniques underlie some inconvenience. Blaxter et al. (2006) for

example, argue that tape recording may make respondents anxious and less likely to reveal confidential information; recording takes long time to transcribe and analyse; and recorders may not work appropriately during recording. As for note taking, Blaxter et al. (2006) state that this is a complex process as interviewers may miss to take note of key information as they listen and write; and interviewees sometimes get frustrated as their interviewers do not jot down every single information they give, thinking that what they have said is unimportant.

The semi-structured interview schedule used in this research project, which involved five key participants (see Table 1.3.), included eight major open-ended questions, which were structured parallel to the second and third research questions (Appendix 2). That is, to get deeper knowledge of teachers' instructional practices and the factors affecting their attitudes towards peer feedback. It is worth mentioning, however, that the researcher did not aim to investigate the *depth* of teachers' knowledge of peer feedback, but to learn how they conceptualised this teaching approach and clarify responses which emerged from the quantitative data.

1.3. Data Collection Procedures

This section will be dealing with the procedures followed by the researcher to collect the quantitative and qualitative data of this research using the instruments mentioned beforehand, namely, a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview.

1.3.1. Piloting the Questionnaire

Before administering the questionnaire to participants, the researcher carried out a pilot study to ensure its quality. Blaxter et al., (2006) define piloting as “the process whereby you try out the research techniques and methods which you have in mind, see how well they work in practice, and, if necessary, modify your plans accordingly” (p. 137). Piloting any data collection tool would increase its reliability, validity and practicality (Wilson and McLean,

1994 as cited in Cohen et al., 2007), because feedback which researchers receive from participants enables them to reword the items or modify them, add items or delete others, minimise the risks of bias and to correct grammatical and spelling mistakes as well. All in all, the ultimate purpose of the pilot study is to make sure that the tool designed to collect data are suitable to be used on a larger scale (Cohen et al., 2000, 2007).

The pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted between 2nd and 22nd December 2014, and went through two main stages. First, it was critiqued by an expert university teacher, who expressed his satisfaction with the form and content of the questionnaire design and proposed a few suggestions. The second phase of the pilot study was carried out with eight secondary school teachers, who were purposefully selected from the realistic population of the study, therefore, represented the research population. The eight teachers (five females and three males) taught in four different schools and had different academic backgrounds. Four of them had Bachelor's degrees in education, two held Master's degrees, and two had Magister degrees (one in Applied Linguistics and the other in British Literature).Their working experience ranged from three years to more than twenty-two years.

The researchers had either studied or worked with the participants of the pilot study. Thus, he was quite aware of their competence, commitment, and willingness to contribute to such studies. They were thought to be able to spot any inconveniences, vagueness of contents, and/or any other problems with this data collection method. These were the reasons behind the selection of the pilot study participants. Among the eight cases of the questionnaire pilot study, one was sent by e-mail (electronic) and the others were given by hand (hard copies).

All the questionnaires—electronic and print—were returned, and feedback from the expert university teacher and participants resulted in a few changes such as adding a sixth value (45+) to the age category in section one; integrating two statements in one statement in

section two; reordering the items of section four; reordering the scale values from 5–1 to 1–5 in sections two, three and four; and correcting one spelling mistake. In addition, participants found no difficulty in understanding the statements and ticking their choices.

Interview questions were piloted in the same way, by the same population and during the same period. Moreover, the researcher carried out a semi-structured interview with one participant to ensure that the questions were comprehensible. The piloting of the semi-structured interview schedule resulted in no further modifications.

1.3.2. Distribution of the Questionnaire

Prior to the distribution of the questionnaire, the researcher carried out many telephone calls and sent many e-mails to schools' head teachers asking for their help in recruiting participants for the questionnaire and explaining its focus. After positive response was received, distribution of the questionnaire started. There are many different ways to administer questionnaires. According to Blaxter et. al. (2006), questionnaires can be administered face-to-face, by post, over the telephone, or over the Internet.

As for this study, 136 questionnaires were administered to participants: 117 hard copies were given by hand, whereas nineteen *word processing* questionnaires were electronically sent by e-mail. In both cases, participants were asked to fill in the first part of the questionnaire with their demographic information, and to tick the specific boxes in the questionnaire according to their opinions.

Distribution and collection of the questionnaires lasted for about forty-five days— from 10th January to 23rd February 2015. It was relatively difficult for the researcher to collect the questionnaires earlier than this date, because many schools were situated in remote areas and some teachers were very hesitant to complete their questionnaires on time.

Despite many constraints, the response rate of the print questionnaire was almost high: out of the 117 print questionnaires distributed by hand, ninety-four were returned; whereas all electronic questionnaires (19) were returned. Table 1.5. below compares the number and average of the distributed questionnaires to those returned.

Type of distribution	**Distributed questionnaires**	**Returned questionnaires**	**Return %**	**Total return %**
Print questionnaires	117	94	80.34	90.17
Electronic questionnaires	19	19	100	

Table 1.5. Distribution and response rate of print and electronic questionnaires

Quantitative raw data obtained from the questionnaires were entered onto a special table designed to present participants (in 113 columns) and their responses (in 18 rows). Later, the researcher used these reduced data to carry out the necessary statistical analysis.

1.3.3. Selection of the Interview Participants

As previously articulated, five key teachers were purposefully selected for carrying out the interview after responding to the questionnaire. They were three male teachers and two female teachers who were all enthusiastic to take part in the interview. The criteria for selecting these participants included: a) to have no less than three years of teaching experience, b) to have an appropriate academic background, and c) to express willingness to participate. According to the researcher's view, participants with such criteria would be able to provide the information essential for the study

As for the first two criteria, the researcher referred to the first section (about background information) of the returned questionnaires and prepared a list of all the teachers whose characteristics corresponded to these two criteria. After that, the researcher sent e-mails to many of those teachers and asked them whether they would like to participate in the interview. A good number of teachers gave consent, and arrangement about time and place was made with five of them. At this stage, the researcher selected the participants who worked in the schools nearest to the researcher's own school to save time and effort.

1.3.4. Carrying out of the Interview

The aim of the semi-structured interview was to clarify some responses stated in the questionnaire with regard to the third and fourth research questions, and elicit more in-depth information about teachers' classroom practices and the factors influencing their attitudes towards peer feedback.

Interviews were conducted between 8th and 12th March 2015 in four different schools. The researcher asked in advance for permission from the headmasters of the schools where the interview participants worked. Each interview lasted for 15 to 20 minutes and were all carried out in English. All participants did not like the interview to be recorded, so, the researcher resorted to note-taking technique to report participants' answers and views.

In each interview session, the researcher started with a more general question about the way participants taught writing, then, moved to more specific questions. Depending on the participants' responses, the researcher probed with additional questions to get insight into more issues. Participants could understand all questions and provided valuable information. Qualitative data were, then, coded for themes and patterns and analysed.

1.4. Data Analysis Methods

Responses of participants gathered from the questionnaires and interviews represent the raw data essential for the researcher to carry out the necessary analysis. One of the purposes of analysis is to seek explanation and understanding. So, at this very stage, it is vital for researchers to organise and prepare the data gathered for analysis; be aware of the available data analysis methods; decide on the most suitable one for their research; and be ready to summarise their findings accurately and draw up practical conclusions from them. As the data collected in this study are both quantitative and qualitative, different methods of analysis will be adopted. These methods are explained below.

1.4.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

According to Cohen et al. (2000), any quantitative researcher should engage in a very essential process before analysing data, i.e., 'data reduction'. This process consists of two main stages: *editing* and *coding*. Editing aims at identifying and eliminating errors made by respondents, and according to Moser and Kalton (1977 as cited in Cohen et al., 2007), it accomplishes three tasks:

1- Completeness: refers to whether or not all questions are answered,
2- Accuracy: refers to whether or not all answers are accurate (mistake-free), and
3- Uniformity: refers to whether or not the interviewer has interpreted instructions and questions uniformly (p. 348).

The second stage in reducing data is coding. This implies assigning values or scores to each answer or statement to allow for statistical analysis to go smoothly. Depending on the design of the questionnaire itself, coding can be planned before the completion of the questionnaire (pre-coding), or can be developed after it (post-coding) (Cohen et al., 2007).

For the case of the present study, and as the researcher is employing a Likert rating scale, all statements were coded in advance. Each statement in the questionnaire had five options of response with a different score for each one: strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5). Being so, the major task at this stage was to check that all statements were ticked appropriately and that there were no ambiguous responses. Within this respect, and while checking participants' responses, the researcher found out that some statements in six participants' questionnaires were not ticked. Fortunately, all of these six participants, whose questionnaires were incomplete, provided their e-mail addresses in the background section of the questionnaire. The researcher, then, sent them electronic copies by e-mail asking them to tick the appropriate spaces for specific statements. This step was followed by reducing the questionnaire data into numerical form (scores) using a special table set out for this purpose including all participants (in 113 columns) and their responses (in 18 rows). After the accomplishment of the process of data reduction, analytical procedures of the raw data started.

As quantitative studies provide data in a numeric form, descriptive statistics can be used to analyse this type of data. Lodico et al. (2010) state that “almost every study using a quantitative measure will use descriptive statistics to depict the patterns in the data” (p. 48). Descriptive statistics used in this study entails calculating frequencies (the number of times a score happens) and percentages (the percentage of each score) for every statement in the questionnaire. Summaries are, then, represented in frequency tables and bar charts. All of these analytical procedures can be produced by hand, or by computer using either a spreadsheet or a statistical package such as SPSS (Gorard, 2001). In this study, the researcher used a spreadsheet to carry out the statistical procedures.

1.4.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

Analytical procedures followed when analysing qualitative data may differ from those applied for analysing quantitative data due to the nature of the factual information obtained from qualitative data collection methods—semi- structured interview in the case of this study. Thus, the qualitative analysis is almost inevitably *interpretive* and less accurate than quantitative analysis which draws on numerical data (Cohen et al., 2000).

Creswell (2012) assumes that "There is no single, accepted approach to analysing qualitative data, although several guidelines exist for this process . . . . It is an eclectic process" (283). The rule of thumb in any qualitative data analysis is to establish themes or trends that arise from participants' responses; and this can be achieved through extensive reading and highlighting emerging patterns. Within this respect, Madrigal and McClain (2012) postulate that hearing a statement from three participants and more makes it a trend or theme.

Creswell proposes six steps for analysing and interpreting qualitative data:

1- preparing and organising the data for analysis,
2- exploration of the data through the process of coding it,
3- using the codes to develop descriptions and themes,
4- representing the findings through narratives and visuals,
5- making an interpretation of the meaning of the results, and
6- conducting strategies to validate the accuracy of the findings.

Qualitative analysis may be carried out by hand or through the use of a computer. However, and since qualitative computer software programs need some training, many researchers prefer to hand analyse their data, particularly, when their database is rather small.

Hand analysis enables researchers as well to keep track of files and locate text passages (Creswell, 2012).

As for the present study, the researcher resorted to an eclectic approach to hand analyse the qualitative data. This process involved reading all field notes many times; marking essential statements and jotting down notes, dividing them into categories (coding) according to the questions of the interview in a bid to establish themes; representing the findings through narratives and visuals; interpreting the data; and finally drawing conclusions.

1.5. Conclusion

This chapter included three major sections: the research methodology, the data collection procedures and the methods of data analysis. Within research methodology, the research design and approach were fully discussed together with the participants, the sampling techniques and the data collection tools. A detailed justification of the different methodological choices was as well given. Secondly, all data collection procedures were thoroughly described. This included the pilot study, the questionnaire administration, the selection of the interview participants, and the carrying out of the interview. Finally, the chapter ended by presenting the statistical analysis techniques used to analyse the raw data. Analysis and interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative data collected will be presented in chapter three.

CHAPTER TWO:

Literature Review: Attitudes, Writing and Feedback

Chapter Two: Literature Review: Attitudes, Writing and Feedback

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2.1. Introduction

Since this study investigates teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback in EFL writing classes, it is necessary to provide a thorough explanation of its three major aspects: attitudes, writing and feedback. This chapter is, then, divided into three sections. The first section elaborates on the concept of attitude from different socio-psychological perspectives, and highlights its outstanding position in EFL teaching through differentiating between its various types. The second section provides an in-depth discussion about the nature of the writing skill, its components, and its stages within process approach to teaching writing in EFL contexts. The last section portrays the concept of feedback, its distinct types, its significance in EFL writing classes, and its impact on EFL students' writing skills. Much emphasis, however, is laid on peer feedback approach and how it can be successfully introduced to students.

2.2. Attitudes

The role of teachers' attitudes is very decisive in shaping teachers' instructional practices and affecting the way their learners react to these practices. They are as well so important for understanding and improving educational processes and the learning environment. Within this section, the nature of attitude will be widely surveyed in terms of definition, structure, types, and formation theories. Categories of teachers' attitudes and ways of measuring them will be also discussed in detail.

2.2.1. Nature of Attitude

Attitudes have occupied a central position in social psychology since its very early beginning as a discipline. Allport (1935), who was one of the first psychologists to focus on the study of attitude, argues that ''The concept of attitude is probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American social psychology . . . . In fact several

writers (cf. Bogardus, 1931; Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918; Folsom, 1931) *define* social psychology as the scientific study of attitudes" (as cited in Krosnick, Judd, & Wittenbrick, 2005, p. 22).

Other disciplines also study attitudes. Baker (1992) states that ''The notion of attitudes has a place in psychology, sociology, anthropology, education, history, human geography and creative arts'' (as cited in Bacher, 2013, p. 247). This implies that specialists in a myriad of disciplines study attitudes from various perspectives and dimensions. In fact, this trend strengthens the claim that attitudes are very important and constitute an indelible part of our daily language and thought. Thus, it urges scholars to strive to further examine the nature of attitude and how it affects our life.

This venerated position that attitude has retained is greatly confirmed by Abarracin, Johnson, and Zanna (2005) who state that ''A recent search for the term *attitude* in the American Psychological Association's comprehensive index to psychological and related literature . . . yielded 180,910 references. This impressive number certainly suggests that attitude research has come a long way since 1918, when Thomas and Snaniecki defined social psychology as the study of attitudes.'' (p. vii). Visser and Cooper (2003) also state that ''Today, a literature search using attitude as the search term yields nearly 50,000 articles, chapters, books, and dissertations" (p.197).

The four statements mentioned beforehand stress the amount of prominence which psychologists have given to the concept of attitude since the inception of social psychology. However, and despite this pivotal position, there is no consensus among specialists on one definition of the construct of attitude.

2.2.2. Definition of Attitude

Early on, attitudes were vey broadly defined. For instance, Baldwin (1901) defines attitude as ‘‘readiness for attention or action of a definite sort” (as cited in Bacher, 2013, p. 247). Chave (1928) writes, ‘‘An attitude is a complex of feelings, desires, fears, convictions, prejudices or other tendencies that have given a set or readiness to act” (as cited in Bacher, 2013, p. 247). Allport (1935) puts it, “An attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related” (as cited in Banaji & Heiphetz, 2010, p. 351).

As it can be noticed, the definitions aforementioned tend to perceive the construct of attitude as a single entity. In addition, all these definitions emphasise the enduring nature of attitudes, and postulate that attitudes are to be engendered by people's interactions in the social environment to evolve into a judgment of the latter. That is, attitudes exert a direct and dynamic impact upon behaviour. Therefore attitudes can predict behaviour.

Contemporary definitions of attitude deliberately attribute emotional and cognitive features beside the behavioural aspects to attitudes. Triandis (1971) assumes that an attitude is ‘‘an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations” (as cited in Bacher, 2013, p. 248). Anderson (1981) views attitude as ‘‘a disposition to react with characteristics judgments and with characteristics goals across a variety of institutions” (as cited in Bacher, 2013, p. 248).

Krosnick, Judd, and Wittenbrick (2005) say that ‘‘Since Allport, the definition of attitudes has evolved considerably, focusing much more on approach and avoidance behaviors and defining attitudes as the evaluative predispositions that lead to these” (p. 22).

In their influential definition, Eagle and Chaiken (1993) assert that an attitude is ‘‘a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (as cited in Krosnick, Judd, & Wittenbrick, 2005, p. 22). That is, an attitude is a predisposition to like or dislike one entity regardless of all the objects or situations related to it. This disposition results in approach or avoidance.

Ajzen (2005) is among the most prominent theorists who have stressed the evaluative (pro–con, pleasant–unpleasant) nature of attitude, admitting that they underlie and cause behaviours. The essence of the construct is succinctly expressed in his definition. For him attitude is ‘‘a disposition to respond favorably or unfavorably to an object, person, institution, or event” (p. 3). Another definition brought by Hewstone and Stroebe (2004) states that ‘‘an attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour” (as cited in Bacher, 2012, p. 250). Clearly, these two definitions postulate that individuals generally formulate evaluations to attitude objects—people, issues, events, institutions, products, etc.—through social interaction. These evaluations can be positive or negative, and are later represented through responses—evaluative responses.

Cherry (2013) adds another value to the evaluative nature of attitude; it is that of *uncertainty*. She says:

> Psychologists define attitude as a learned tendency to evaluate things in a certain way. This can include evaluations of people, issues, objects or events. Such evaluations are often positive or negative, but they can also be uncertain a times. For example, you might have mixed feelings about a particular person or issue. (Cherry, 2013, ‘‘What Is an Attitude?” para. 1)

In summary, the concept of attitude has received much attention from psychologists and other subject specialists for decades. However, no consistency among scholars is found on a definition of attitude. What is common among scholars, is that attitude is a latent, hypothetical construct that is inaccessible to direct observation. Rather, it is inferred from behaviours or measurable limitless number of responses that reflect positive or negative evaluations of the attitude object. Researchers continue to strive to further explore the nature of attitude and its role in everyday life.

2.2.3. Structure of Attitude

A particular focus of research interest in recent years has been on aspects of the structure of attitude. Richardson (2010) states:

> It is generally agreed that an attitude consists of three components: an affective, cognitive, and behavioral component. When a child has a positive attitude toward a teacher, for example, it implies that the child has formed positive thoughts and beliefs through knowledge gained about the teacher (cognitive). The child also feels happy, excited, or comfortable around the teacher (affective) and has a tendency to behave in ways which demonstrate his positive attitude, such as, wanting to be in the teacher's presence, or his eagerness to help the teacher (behavioral). (p. 3)

Richardson's statement implies that an attitude is made up of three main components: cognitive, affective and behavioural. The cognitive component is about what we *think*. It refers to that part of attitude which is made up of the thoughts and beliefs people hold about the object of an attitude. The affective component is about what we *feel*. It refers to the positive or negative feelings that people hold toward an attitude object. The behavioural (conative) component is about what we *do*. It refers to that part of attitude which reflects the

intension of people in short run or in long run: overt actions and responses toward an attitude object.

Advocates of this classic, tripartite model—offered by Rosenberg and Hovland in 1960—listed many reasons to defend their claim. Breckler (1984) admits that this classification enables researchers to study attitudinal responses through categorizing them within an accurate framework (as cited in Fazio & Olson, 2003). Eagly and Chaiken (1993) posit that ‘‘it has served as a road map for guiding research on attitude formation and change” (as cited in Fazio & Olson, 2003, p.123).

The classic three-component view suggests that as attitudes are harboured in humans' minds, they are observable only in reported thoughts, feelings, and behaviour toward the attitude object. That is, all three components must be consistently present for an evaluative tendency to exist. However, research suggests that attitudes can form as a result of any one (or combination) of the three components (Fazio & Olson, 2003).

As cited in Fazio & Olson (2003), some advocates of a one-component view insist that attitudes are based on cognition, and that feelings and behaviours toward the attitude object simply derive from beliefs (e.g., Fishbein & Middlestadt,1995); other researchers (e.g., Monahan et al., 2000) argue that feelings form the foundation of attitude, and that one's affective reactions to an object can precede any beliefs about it; others, however, confirm that attitudinal responses to the attitude object can be inferred into existence from past behaviour even in the absence of either beliefs or feelings about the attitude object (e.g., Bem, 1972; Fazio, 1987).

Zanna and Rempel (1988) view that attitudes can form and manifest themselves from beliefs, feelings, and behaviours, but not consistently constituting the ‘‘anatomy” of an attitude (as cited in Fazio & Olson, 2003). That is, attitudes can be based on any combination

of the three components, and no assumptions are made about which component might predominate, how the components interact in determining an overall evaluation of an attitude object, or how the components might affect one another. Within this respect, many social psychologists (e.g., Zimbardo & Leippe 1992) admit that as an attitude structure is dynamic, any change in one of its components might very well lead to changes in the other components. New feelings about an attitude object may lead to new thoughts, which, in turn, may result in a change in behaviours (as cited in Fazio & Olson, 2003).

Another debate that holds between social psychologists is about whether attitudes are stable entities stored in memory, or temporary judgments constructed on the spot (Bohner & Dickel, 2011). For example, Visser and Mirabile (2004) stress that an attitude is an ‘‘array of summary evaluations stored in memory” (as cited in Bohner & Dickel, 2011, p.393). This statement supports Allport's (1935) classic view of attitudes as enduring entities that determine behavioral responses. On the other side, constructionists (e.g. Schwarz 2007; Conrey & Smith 2007) view attitudes not as enduring personal dispositions, but rather as *evaluative judgments* that are constructed on the spot (when needed) based on currently accessible information (such as stored evaluations). Constructionists emphasise that many self-reports of attitudes have been found to be highly context-dependent and can be profoundly influenced by minor changes in question wording, question format or question order (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001). For them, this is a good reason to conclude that the traditional concept of attitude—as being memory-based summary evaluations—may not be particularly useful. Other researchers, however, have taken an intermediate position in an attempt to maintain the traditional attitude concept. For example, Fazio and Olson (2003) postulate that ‘‘attitudes vary in terms of the strength of their object-evaluation associations in memory” (p. 135). To them, the extent to which attitudes are accessible—in memory—determines the strength of the attitude, and the extent to which construction processes are

involved in response to any situational need to evaluate the object in question. They also confirm that a fast response to an attitude question indicates that a previously formed evaluation was accessible in memory, whereas a slow response indicates that an evaluation had to be computed on the spot, which takes time.

Attitude researchers have spent a good deal of energy in exploring the complex structural relationships between the three components of attitude and how they affect its nature. Some of them believe that any attitudinal response is the result of the systematic coexistence of its three bases, cognitive, affective, and behavioural, which altogether constitute the anatomy of attitude. Others admit that attitudes can be based on either affect, cognition, or behaviour, and that the existence of an evaluation based on one of the elements need not imply the existence of the other two elements. In addition, researchers are not quite sure whether individuals hold enduring attitudes, or construct an attitude judgment when needed, based on the information at hand. It seems that this controversial relationship between the three elements of the construct of attitude on one side, and its enduring or temporary nature on the other side, will undergo much more debate among attitude researchers in the coming years. The reason, according to many researchers, is that it is surprisingly difficult to design conclusive empirical tests to evaluate the relative merits of all these proposals.

2.2.4. Types of Attitude

Our attitudes about ideas, events, objects or people help determine the way we live and the choices we make. We have seen that attitudes have affective, behavioural and cognitive components, and that they can stem from each of these components. A central question that psychologists often ask is, how are attitudes manifested? Unless someone tells us, how do we know someone's attitude toward something? In a bid to answer this question, social psychologists have distinguished between two types of attitudes: explicit and implicit.

2.2.4.1. Explicit Attitudes

Bordens and Horowitz (2008) state that "Explicit attitudes operate on a conscious level, so we are aware of them—aware of the cognitive underpinnings of them—and are conscious of how they relate to behavior'' (p.160). Explicit attitudes are then positive and negative controllable evaluations that occur at the conscious level. They are deliberately formed, typically unknown to us, and are easy to self-report. This last attribute is also stressed by McConnell, Rydell, Strain, and Mackie (2008) who propose that explicit attitudes are "evaluations that people can report'' (p. 793). For example, you are sitting in a bus going back home, and suddenly a man wearing a Barcelona jersey gets on the bus and sits next to you. You may soon decide to dislike this man and change your seat simply because you are a fan Real Madrid. Here, your attitude was deliberately formed and you are able to self-report it, because you consciously made that association between your negative attitude and the attitude object—the man with Barcelona jersey.

2.2.4.2. Implicit Attitudes

Greenwald and Banaji (1995) define implicit attitudes as "introspectively unidentified (or inaccurately identified) traces of past experience that mediate favorable or unfavorable feeling, thought, or action toward a social object" (p.8). This definition implies that implicit attitudes are positive and negative evaluations that occur outside of our conscious awareness and control, are involuntarily formed and are typically unknown to us. They are as well not accessed by introspection—self-analysis or self-reporting. For example, you may find yourself uncomfortable in a birthday party without identifying the real cause. This feeling may result from the fact that one of the people around you reminds you of someone from your past that you greatly disliked. So, your attitude towards this person is what is making you feel

uncomfortable, but you are unaware of it because it was involuntarily formed. Therefore, you cannot self-report it.

2.2.4.3. Cognitive Dissonance

It is possible and quite common for an explicit attitude and an implicit attitude to contradict each other. Conflicts and differences between explicit and implicit attitude are referred to as *cognitive dissonance*. This term was coined by Festinger in 1957, who puts cognitive dissonance as ‘‘a psychological state in which an individual’s cognitions—beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors—are at odds” (as cited in Egan, Santos, & Bloom, 2011, p. 978). This definition implies that a single individual can hold in his or her mind two attitudes that are inconsistent with one another. This leads him or her to experience the pressure of an aversive motivational state (Egan et al., 2011). Aversive in the sense that the individual feels uncomfortable as he or she has to make a clear decision about an issue; motivational in the sense that he or she is motivated (by the state of dissonance per se) to seek to remove that pressure through resolving the inconsistency between the discrepant cognitions. The concept of cognitive dissonance has implications for many areas of psychology including attitudes, prejudice, decision making, happiness, etc. (Egan et al., 2011). A good example of decision making dissonance happens after buying something. People may feel worried and upset over whether they have made the right choice after purchasing something, especially if it is valuable such as a car. This feeling results in a great internal tension which may lead the buyer to think of dismissing the purchase. However, this kind of dissonance can be reduced by altering cognitions (Draycott & Dabbs, 1998). It is similar to the state of hunger (unpleasant), which generates the wish to eat (behaviour) in order to reduce that unpleasant state of hunger (satiation). As for the example of post-purchase dissonance, people can reduce the degree of that unpleasant state by seeking out exclusively positive information

about the object they have bought and avoiding negative information about it (Egan et al., 2011). Dissonance, however, do not suggest that either one or the other attitude is the real or true attitude, because both attitudes (explicit and implicit) provide information about the individual, and both can influence behaviour.

2.2.5. Formation of Attitude

Attitude researchers have long concerned themselves with answering a fundamental question in social psychology: Why do people hold particular attitudes? In other words, why and how people form attitudes. Oskamp (1991) says that, "The term *attitude formation* refers to the movement we make from having no attitude toward an object to having some positive or negative attitude toward that object" (as cited in Bordens & Horowitz, 2008, p. 164). In fact, many theories have been put forward in a bid to answer such a question. Six major theories for attitude formation are succinctly explained below. These theories are: Mere Exposure, Associative Learning, Observational Learning, Self-Perception Theory, Functional Theory, and Direct Personal Experience.

2.2.5.1. Mere Exposure

As explained by Zajonc in 1968, the process of mere exposure—also known as the exposure effect and the familiarity principle—involves exposing people to an attitude object repeatedly. This repeated exposure can cause them to hold more positive attitudes toward the object. Watching many commercials for a shaving blade on TV for instance, may increase the likability of the that brand item, then you decide to buy it. The more exposure we have to a stimulus, which can be people, commercial products, places, etc., the more we will tend to like it. It is worth mentioning that, within mere exposure, *affect* plays a more dominant role in attitude formation than *cognition* (Crano, 2008 as cited in Richardson, 2010).

2.2.5.2. Associative Learning

Associative learning is the process by which an association between two stimuli or a behaviour and a stimulus is learned. The two forms of associative learning are classical and operant conditioning.

2.2.5.2.1. Classical Conditioning

This theory is also known as stimulus-response theory. Discovered by Ivan Pavlov at the beginning of the 20th century, classical conditioning asserts that attitudes or behaviours can be formed through repeatedly associating a neutral stimulus (attitude object) with a liked or disliked unconditioned stimulus (noise, pain, odour, sound, etc.) which naturally produces an involuntary (unconditioned) response. The neutral stimulus will elicit the same emotional response elicited by the unconditioned stimulus. Classical conditioning usually produces stronger attitudes when the individual is unfamiliar with the attitude object, and is especially involved with the *affective* component of attitudes (Crisp & Turner, 2007 as cited in Richardson, 2010).

2.2.5.2.2. Operant Conditioning

As Operant (or instrumental) conditioning was coined by F.B. Skinner in 1953, it is occasionally referred to as Skinnerian conditioning. It is a method by which attitudes or behaviours are formed through reinforcement (reward and punishment). The consequence determines whether the response will occur again or not. Therefore, behaviours or attitudes that are followed by positive consequences (rewarded) are reinforced and are more likely to be repeated. Conversely, behaviours and attitudes that are followed by negative consequences (punished) are inhibited and are less likely to be expressed. Reinforcements of the desired response can be verbal or nonverbal. A mother, for instance, who finds a great difficulty in

convincing her little child to take his regular, bitter syrup, can reward him with a bar of chocolate each time he accepts to take the syrup. Likewise, the child may develop a positive attitude toward medicaments. Operant conditioning is especially involved with the *behavioural* component of attitudes. It enables us to establish concordant attitudes with our social environment (Richardson, 2010).

2.2.5.3. Observational Learning

Observational (or social) formation of attitude—as thought of by Albert Bandura in his 1977's Social Learning Theory—is based on watching and then modelling or imitating. We usually interact with people around us and observe how they behave and express their attitudes. We are more likely to model (consciously) or imitate (unconsciously) others' attitudes or behaviours, especially, if they are getting rewarded for them (Richardson, 2010). However, observational learning does not depend on rewards, but rewards can strengthen the development of any attitude. A little child who observes his elder brother being praised by his parents for performing his prayer, is more likely to imitate his brother's behaviour—praying.

2.2.5.4. Self-Perception Theory

Unlike the above-mentioned attitude formation theories which assume that attitudes precede behaviours, Bem's 1972 self-perception theory argues that attitudes are inferred from behaviours which serve an informative purpose. That is, people develop their attitudes (when there are no clear feelings or beliefs about a potential attitude object) by observing their own behaviour and concluding what attitudes must have caused it— self-perception. When internal cues are so weak or confusing, they effectively put the person in the same position as an external observer. Self-perception theory also states that when people are unsure about their feelings and motivations, they will use their own behaviour to infer what they feel. We constantly evaluate our attitudes and make internal or external attributions based on what we

believe might have caused them. Such a view implies that our previous experiences and the conditions in which our behaviours occur are important in the process of attitude formation (Bohner, 2002 as cited in Richardson, 2010). A young girl from the far south may develop an extremely negative attitude towards the sea as she sinks during her first swim. Inferring attitudes from behaviour is most likely to happen when we have no prior knowledge about attitude object (Richardson, 2010).

2.2.5.5. Functional Theory

The functional theory was developed by Katz in 1960. It is built on the assumption that attitudes are formed in order to satisfy certain psychological needs. In other words, the reasons for developing or changing attitudes are found in the functions they perform for the individual. There are four major functions for attitude formation: utilitarian, knowledge, ego-defensive, and value-expressive (Crano, 2008 as cited in Richardson, 2010).

2.2.5.5.1. Utilitarian Function

The utilitarian (or instrumental/adjustment) function embraces those attitudes which are utilitarian in origin and intent. It allows people to adapt to their social environment, selecting behaviours that will result in maximum reward, and avoiding behaviours with negative consequences. In an electoral campaign, one can show a supportive attitude towards a certain political party while harbouring a totally different one.

2.2.5.5.2. Knowledge Function

The knowledge function of attitudes permits people to understand how objects are organized in their environment. Attitudes provide an inner framework for simplifying and guiding the information we always receive, and enhancing internal perceptual accuracy. This enables people to make accurate predictions about the behaviour of objects, which brings

meaning to their lives. Housewives may develop a positive attitude towards a weekly radio program, because they view it as an invaluable source of information and advice.

2.2.5.5.3. Ego-defensive Function

The ego-defensive function enables people to protect their self-concept by avoiding internal or external conflict through ego-defence mechanisms. They tend to align with positive objects, and avoid negative ones which may cause them embarrassment or humiliation. Many people dislike giving public speeches, because they are afraid of audience's reactions which could be discouraging. According to them, this damages their ego.

2.2.5.5.4. Value-Expressive Function

Attitudes underlying this type of function allow people to define themselves by letting others know what their central values are. The accurate expression of values is intended to confirm the self-identity and boost the self-image. If you inform a new acquaintance that you dislike gossip, this may lead him to avoid talking negatively about others in your presence. This reinforces your self-image in your new friend's eyes.

2.2.5.6. Direct Personal Experience

Another way we form attitudes is through direct personal experience. Bordens and Horowitz (2008) argue that "Direct personal experience has the power to create and change attitudes," and that attitudes that we form through direct experience are ". . . likely to be strongly held and to affect behaviour" (p. 165). This way, we can admit that direct experience continues to form and shape our attitudes throughout life. Many researchers (e.g., Bordens & Horwitz 2008) believe that it is not easy to convince people to abandon attitudes which they have formed out of direct personal experience. Inversely, such people are more likely to search for information to support such attitudes and maintain them. This claim may explain

why some teachers stick to certain attitudes—especially negative ones—towards some students or any instructional practices, and keep on defending these attitudes all the time. Using process approach for teaching writing, for instance, poses a big challenge that EFL teachers are supposed to cope with. Owing to an unsuccessful primary experience with managing peer feedback session, some teachers may develop, and maintain, a strong negative attitude that peer feedback technique is an unuseful classroom practice—at least for their students. This attitude may lead them to abandon this technique for a long time later.

2.2.6. Attitude Measurement

We have learnt so far that attitudes are private, latent constructs that are not accessible to direct observation. Being so, major questions can be asked like: How do we know someone's attitude toward a particular subject? How do researchers investigate and measure attitudes on a particular issue? Are explicit and implicit attitudes measured similarly. The answers to these questions are a source of some debate, but a variety of methods have been created by social psychologists to discover and measure attitudes both explicit and implicit. Some of these techniques rely on direct responses, whereas others are more indirect.

2.2.6.1. Measuring Explicit Attitudes

Since explicit attitudes are known to the subject and are deliberately formed, attitude surveys are the most common methods to determine explicit attitudes. Bordens and Horowitz (2008) explain these techniques in these words:

> In an attitude survey, the researcher mails or emails a questionnaire to a potential respondent, conducts a face-to-face interview, or asks a series of questions on the telephone. Because respondents report on their own attitudes, an attitude survey is a

self-report measure. A respondent indicates his or her attitude by answering a series of questions. (p. 161)

Self-reporting involves asking participants explicitly to describe their own attitudes through answering some question items. Two types of questions are generally used for surveying attitudes: closed-ended questions (requiring the participant to select an answer from a set of choices) and open-ended questions (permitting the participant to answer in his or her own words). Although open-ended questions provide researchers with an opportunity to gain insight on the topic under question, they are not largely used in survey studies, because they are costly in terms of time and money, and the qualitative data gathered are difficult to code and analyse (Krosnik, Judd, & Whittenbrink, 2005). Thus, most researchers prefer using closed-ended questions when investigating attitudes, because they are easily answered, and the data are more appropriately calculated from a statistical point of view (Krosnik et al., 2005).

Self-report scales are also widely used by researchers to measure attitudes. These techniques enable the respondent to evaluate an attitude object by checking a numeric response on a scale expressing the degree of agreement or disagreement with a statement (Bordens & Horowitz, 2008). There are, in fact, many types of self-report (also called rating) scales which have long been used by researchers to measure attitudes such as Thurstone's Equal Appearing Interval Scale, Semantic Differential Scale, Likert's Summated Scale, Guttman's Scale, Q-Sort Scale, and Staple Scale (Krosnik et al., 2005).

Bordens and Horowitz (2008) ascertain that "One of the most popular of these methods is the Likert scale" (p.161). Within this type of scales, respondents are given a number of statements that infer attitudes, and are asked to choose one of the five options available which express their preferences or degree of agreement with a given statement. The set of options

comprises the following degrees: strongly disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, and strongly disagree agree. The total score the respondents are given is the result of the summation of their scores on all of the items on the scale (Krosnik et al., 2005).

Although self-reports of attitudes have been widely used by social psychologists to explore people's attitudes, they have been subject to criticism. Many attitude researchers argue that self-reports are highly context-dependent and can be profoundly influenced by minor changes in the wording, format, or order of questions**.** This indicates clearly that there are measurement errors—within self-reports—which result only in evaluative judgments that respondents construct at the time they are asked (Schwarz & Bohner, 2001).

2.2.6.2. Measuring Implicit Attitudes

As it has been noticed, the varieties of methods used for explicit attitude measurement depend on introspection—the respondents' ability to self-examine and self-report their attitudes. As for measuring implicit attitudes, researchers admit that it is much more difficult than measuring explicit attitudes, because implicit attitudes are not open to introspection, or may be because people are sometimes unwilling to reveal their real attitudes in order to preserve their self-image (Bohner & Dickel, 2011). Being so, researchers have developed different techniques that allow them to measure implicit attitudes indirectly.

Bordens and Horowitz (2008) confirm that "The most well-known implicit measures test is the Implicit Association Test (IAT) . . . developed by Greenwald, McGhee, and Schwartz (1998)" (p. 163). IAT is a test in which subjects categorise in five subsequent sessions and as quickly as possible a stimulus—words, cards, pictures, etc.— into two dichotomous groups: targets or concepts (e.g., male-female, white-black) and evaluations (e.g., positive-negative, good-bad). As respondents do not have enough time to consider how they feel about the targets, their categorisation depends on their automatic reactions. The

speed of categorising the stimulus is considered as an indication of the association strengths between the targets and evaluations. Implicit attitudes are then inferred through calculating differences in response times for categorising the stimulus in the third session versus the fifth one (Krosnik et al., 2005).

The IAT has proved to be an effective means for investigating attitudes in a variety of domains such as race, gender, violence, religion, etc., (Krosnik et al., 2005); this is why many web sites today provide online IAT tests, like *https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/*, which can help individuals explore their implicit attitudes and even prejudicial attitudes. Nonetheless, IAT has not remained beyond criticism. Many researchers claim that the test merely demonstrates the tendency for humans to prefer people who are similar to us, and that the results of the IAT might be biased by the participant's lacking cognitive capability to adjust to switching categories (Ajzan, 2005).

2.2.7. Categories of Teachers' Attitudes

Marzano (2007) argues that ‘‘A number of studies have concluded that the single most important factor determining the quality of the education a child receives is the quality of the teacher, and that effective teachers can produce significantly greater student learning gains than less effective teachers” (as cited in Cooper, 2011, p. 2). In other words, effective teachers are perceived as those who manage to bring about intended learning outcomes with their students. This major statement leads us to ask the following question: What makes teachers effective?

Cooper (2011) admits that one of the most essential factors that foster learning, and enable teachers to achieve desired results with students is attitude display. He says, ‘‘Virtually all educators are convinced that teacher attitudes are an important dimension in the teaching process. Attitudes have a direct effect on our behavior; they determine how we view ourselves

and interact with others" (pp.4–5). In other words, attitudes have a direct impact on teachers' instructional practices and choices. According to him, there are four major categories of attitudes that affect teaching behaviour: (a) teachers' attitudes toward themselves, (b) teachers' attitudes toward children, (c) teachers' attitudes toward peers and parents, and (d) teachers' attitudes toward the subject matter. Here is the explanation of these categories.

2.2.7.1. Teachers' Attitudes towards Themselves

Copper (2011) claims that ''There is evidence from psychology that persons who deny or cannot cope with their own emotions are likely to be incapable of respecting and coping with the feelings of others" (p. 5). That is to say, teachers who have positive attitudes towards themselves can better manage their feelings and behaviours, which results in a better understanding and sympathizing with their students' feelings. Inversely, teachers who underestimate themselves, are more likely to fail in coping with their students' feelings and behaviours. Copper (2011) ascertains that educators should help future teachers learn more about themselves, their attitudes, and how others perceive them. This is possible, according to him, through including counselling sessions, reflective thinking, and awareness experiences into teacher education programmes. These experiences emphasize introspection, self-evaluation, and feedback from other participants.

2.2.7.2. Teachers' Attitudes towards Children

A large body of research reveals that attitudes—whether positive or negative—that teachers develop towards their students play a decisive role in improving teaching effectiveness. ''Strong likes and dislikes of particular pupils, biases toward or against particular ethnic groups, low learning expectations for poverty-level children, and biases in favour of or against certain kinds of student behaviour—all can reduce teaching effectiveness" (Copper, 2011, p. 5). Teachers are, therefore, supposed to show great respect

and empathy for their individual students or whole classes, and to be aware of the way they convey their attitudes and expectations to them, because students are much more likely to react on that basis. Teachers' self-awareness of their attitudes allows them to better determine and manage their own beliefs and feelings. For instance, if teachers form positive attitudes towards students, and manage to convey these attitudes together with high expectations, students may appreciate these good feelings and strive to live up to the teacher's expectations, thus confirming the teacher's original expectations. Again, teachers' attitudes towards and expectations of students are of paramount importance in the process effective teaching.

2.2.7.3. Teachers' Attitudes towards Peers, Parents, and Administration

The nature of a teacher's job requires dealing with various people, other than students, such as administrators, colleagues and parents (Copper, 2011). So, it is also a prerequisite that teachers develop positive attitudes towards all these groups for the chain of teaching-learning process to be solid and successful. Teachers' interaction with their peers enables them all to receive appropriate feedback, and to reflect on their instructional approaches and practices for the sake of improving their teaching, and obtaining better results with students. Cooperation with the administrative staff is as well essential. This may comprise negotiating timetables, discussing school rules and discipline issues, organizing exams, creating students' clubs, and so for. Although teachers can be sometimes dissatisfied with the school authorities for one reason or another, this must not impede their effective participation in improving the context in which they are involved. Parents' responsibility in paving the way for their children to gain satisfactory outcomes is shared with teachers. For this reason, continuous and trustful coordination between both parts is highly recommended. Regular meetings and even informal ones—outside the school—provide parents with a convenient opportunity to ask about their

children's performance, progress, marks, discipline, relation with peers, etc. Teachers are supposed to be comprehensible and react positively to parents' demands. However, this is not possible unless their attitudes to parents are positive. Effective teachers are always aware that their classrooms are not isolated spots, and that their work can be better achieved if they work in harmony with all participants in the educational process (Copper, 2011). Therefore, developing favourable attitudes towards those participants is a major step to success.

2.2.7.4. Teachers' Attitudes towards the Subject Matter

A statement made by Cooper summarises all what can be said in this respect. He postulates that ''if you [teacher] don't care about the subject matter, how can you ever hope to motivate your students into learning about it?" (Copper, 2011, p. 6). In addition to a good command of knowledge in the subject matter, and a possession of pedagogical skills, teachers must show enthusiasm toward the subject matter. That is, have positive attitude towards it. Enthusiasm, commitment and motivation are all indicators of positive attitudes that teachers should reflect and communicate to students. Virtually, many reasons can lead teachers to form negative attitudes towards the subject matter such as pedagogical challenges, the use and overuse of instructional materials over long periods, the socio-economic status, dissatisfactory students' results in standardized tests, age, and so forth. But, it must be always present in mind that if this negative attitude is transferred to students, intentionally or unintentionally, the risk of destroying the whole educational process is very high. If English teachers are to look around them, they will discover many encouraging factors that may help them regain their enthusiasm and motivation, and reconstruct their attitudes. One of the major factors is the increasing demand on learning English, particularly, among adult learners for educational or professional purposes. The considerable increase in the number of people who use English as a medium of interaction through social media, is another good reason.

All in all, and despite all pedagogical challenges, professional stresses, socio-economic obstacles, or any other constraints that could deflate their commitment and enthusiasm, teachers should be able to develop and display positive attitudes to whom they teach and what they teach. They should be aware that such positive attitudes could affect their behaviours (instructional practices) and even career to a great extent. Hence, in order for them to motivate their learners and achieve better outcomes with them, and enjoy a lifelong process of self-improvement, they have to learn how to develop *positively* all four types of attitude mentioned beforehand.

2.3. The Writing Skill

This section deals with the nature of the writing skill and its major components. We will go through some theoretical backgrounds and common issues related to EFL writing, and how it can be effectively taught to EFL learners. A description of the aims of teaching writing to EFL learners will be also discussed together with the notion and stages of process approach to teaching writing.

2.3.1. Nature of Writing

Writing is generally viewed as a means of communication that translates thoughts and feelings through the use of graphic symbols. Crystal (2006) defines writing as "a way of communicating which uses a system of visual marks made on some kind of surface. It is one kind of graphic expression" (p. 257). However, many researchers argue that writing is by no means limited to this narrow sense, but also refers to the process through which a piece of writing is produced. Brown (2001), for instances, states that the view that writing is graphic symbols is not valid any more. Brown adds that writing is the result of thinking, drafting, and revising procedures that require specialized skills to produce an appropriate final product. White and Arndt (1991) also confirms that "Writing is far from being a simple matter of

transcribing language into written symbols: it is a thinking process in its own right. It demands conscious intellectual effort which usually has to be sustained over a considerable effort of time" (p. 3). These two last views imply that in order for writing to be expressive of our thoughts, opinions and feelings, it must be arranged according to certain conventions and rules to form words and sentences that need to flow smoothly to form a coherent whole.

Based on social constructivist view that knowledge is a social act, namely, socially constructed through the systematic and permanent interaction among learners, Hayes (1996) claims that writing is a social artefact because it is carried out in social setting. Starting from this view, we can assume that writing is not a spontaneous skill with which a child is born, it is a skill that can be taught and developed through systematic instruction and practice.

An important concern connected with writing is that we write for a reader, which, according to Byrne (1991), makes writing more difficult. In order to communicate our thoughts to a reader, who is absent or unknown, and affect him, we should put all our effort on writing, the only means available to us, unlike speaking, wherein additional facilitators such as gestures and facial expressions which would do a lot for us (Byrne, 1991). For this reason we need to learn how to write skillfully and keep on developing this skill for better and more effective communication with others.

Another key feature related to the nature of writing is that it is not a spontaneous skill, but one that needs great mental efforts which lead the writer to be exposed to many problems during the process of writing. Byrne (1991) divides these problems into three types: a) psychological problems which the writer faces due to the lack of interaction and feedback between the writer and his audience; b) linguistic problems which refer to the absence of some features we use in speech like gestures that facilitate communicating our thoughts, this implies more concentration on the writing style; and 3) cognitive problems which result from

the formal instruction that accompanies the development of the writing skills and the organization of our thoughts.

2.3.2. Components of Writing

Producing a piece of written communication demands an understanding of the content, knowledge of the audience and the context, and the ability to use appropriate conventions for that audience and context. Mastery of such features provides students with a framework for reading and improving their own writing. Bowen and Cali (2003) state that there are five major components of effective writing: focus, organisation, support and elaboration, style, and conventions.

- **Focus**: is the establishment of a clear topic in response to the writing task. The piece of writing should develop in a way that guarantees that the reader should not be confused about the subject matter.

- **Organisation**: refers to the progression, relatedness, and completeness of ideas. The writers' thoughts should evolve smoothly forming an effective beginning, middle, and end.

- **Support and Elaboration**: is the use of supportive, clear and sufficient details to explain and defend one's ideas, which must be related to the subject matter. This increases the power of response. Redundancy and the repetitious paraphrasing of the same point should be avoided.

- **Style**: concerns the control of language that is appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of the writing task. A skillful and purposeful choice of words and sentences enhances the effectiveness of the composition, establishes effective relationships between and among ideas, and engages the audience.

- **Conventions**: involve good knowledge of grammatical structures, usage, and mechanics that are appropriate to the writing task, and the ability to construct meaningful sentences

Nowadays, command of good writing skills is considered as a vital tool that equips learners for success in the twenty-first century. Hyland (2003) states that "the ability to communicate ideas and information effectively through the global digital network is crucially dependent on good writing skills" (p. xiii). Tribble (1996) argues that anyone who lacks good writing skills is to be excluded from a wide range of social roles which reflect power and prestige (as cited in Harmer, 2007, p. 323). Brown (2004) adds that "Writing skill is necessary condition for achieving employment in may walks of life" (p. 218).

2.3.3. EFL Writing

Writing is one of the four language skills, and it is considered the skill to be obtained last according to Krashen's natural order hypothesis. In fact, it is a complicated cognitive task because it demands careful thought, discipline, and concentration. This makes it a difficult skill to learn and master for language learners. However, this difficulty increases for non-native learners because they are expected to create written products that demonstrate mastery of all writing issues such as content, organization, purpose, audience, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling and mechanics (Baghzou, 2011).

This difficulty in mastering the writing skill for foreign learners implies that the writing programmes should follow the most appropriate approaches to teaching writing, and that teachers' practices should be aligned with such approaches and adapted to learners needs and interests. According to Broughton, Brumfit, Flavell, Hill, and Pincas (2003), many EFL writing classes are primarily concerned with reinforcing the teaching of particular structures than with developing writing skills. Such practices do not teach students how to write

effectively in English because instruction has, undoubtedly, an effect on how learners write and their attitudes towards writing.

Harmer (1998) argues that the reasons of teaching writing to EFL learners are fourfold: reinforcement, language development, learning style and writing as a skill per se.

- **Reinforcement**: teaching writing reinforces the languages forms they have acquired in an oral/aural way. Writing is a kind of visual demonstration that helps students memorise what they have learned and provides evidence of their achievements.

- **Language development**: the process of writing helps learners as they go along the whole learning process. The cognitive efforts and mental activities they go through in order to produce appropriate texts constitute part of their learning experience.

- **Learning style**: students have different learning styles, and writing is specifically appropriate for those learners who need time to think things through and are slow to produce written texts.

- **Writing as a skill**: writing is a basic skill like all other skills, and must students acquire it and demonstrate a good command of the writing conventions in order to able to tackle different writing genres.

Another important issue that is deeply connected to EFL writing is how to teach it to ELF learners and according to which concept. Researchers admit that teachers basing their instruction on sound theoretical grounds and appropriate practice, achieve the best results with their students. For this reason, Algerian secondary school teachers should be aware that all their instructional decisions must be guided by both practical and theoretical knowledge, because "familiarity with what is known about writing, and about teaching writing, can

therefore help us to reflect on our assumptions and enable us to approach current teaching methods with an informed and critical eye" (Hyland, 2003, p.1).

2.3.4. Process Approach to Teaching Writing

Process approach gained its reputation and position in the field of writing instruction based on the criticism which its predecessor—product approach—received owing to the strong emphasis it laid on the final product and its neglect of the underlying processes of writing. This latter is traced back to the audiolingual method of second language teaching that appeared in the 1950's and early 1960's, in which writing was used essentially to reinforce oral patterns and to check learners' correct application of grammatical rules (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005). Based on the behaviourist view of language learning, the most common activity required under this approach was copying and imitating prescribed texts, models, or exemplars to produce similar proper written texts (Coffin et al. 2003). According to Dyson and Greedman (1990), there has been a shift over the past two decades from a focus on the final product itself to the different stages that the writer goes through in order to create this product (as cited in Sundem, 2007). Thus, process-oriented approach to writing has dominated the writing classes in the world, and since 1980, syllabi and textbooks in many parts of the world—including both ESL and EFL contexts—have incorporated this approach as an integral part of teaching (White & Arndt, 1991). In Algeria, process approach has been officially adopted and incorporated into textbooks after the educational reforms of 2003.

2.3.4.1. Nature of the Process Approach

Process approach, which dates back to the late 1970's, sees writing primarily as the exercise of linguistic skills and writing development as an unconscious process that occurs when teachers facilitate the exercise of writing skills (Zhang, 1995). In other words, this approach gives the opportunity to practise linguistic skills such as pre-writing, brainstorming,

drafting, revising, and editing, with less focus on linguistic knowledge aspects such as grammar, with the teacher assuming the role of a facilitator. According to White and Arndt (1991), these different activities (skills) are not linear, but typically recursive, allowing writers move backwards and forwards between the stages when they feel necessary and useful to do so. White and Arndt add that process approach also involves the discovery and transformation of the author's ideas and the reader's reactions, as well as the linguistic means necessary to accomplish the writing task at hand. This means that this approach teaches students not only how to edit but also to develop strategies to generate ideas, to revise their product and receive feedback from readers throughout a dynamic process.

One of the major strengths of process approach is that it helps students gain greater control over the cognitive strategies involved in writing and develop a sense of audience—readers. It also seeks to help students gain proficiency in writing through understanding and mastering the composing process, and through laying emphasis on fluency, content and self-expression rather than accuracy. That's why, within this approach, students' mistakes are tolerated because this is a sign that they are allowed to write what they want and express their thoughts freely (Byrne, 1991).

Talking about students' mistakes in writing leads the discussion to highlighting the relationship between process approach to writing and feedback in general, and peer feedback in particular. The links between peer feedback and process approach are obvious, because many tasks involved in peer feedback sessions are in fact applications of the process approach. Zhang (1995) argues that peer feedback is actually part of the process approach to teaching writing and feedback in its various forms is a fundamental element of this approach. Zhang adds that "as a recursive model, the process approach focuses on how to revise in response to feedback from the reader, whether the reader is the instructor, an ESL peer, or the author him- or herself" (p. 209). According to Hyland and Hyland (2006), process approach

encourages students to work collaboratively in pairs or in groups wherein students exchange drafts and provide comments on each other's writing.

As for teachers' role in process-oriented writing instruction, researchers agree that it is that of a guide and facilitator. Hyland (2003) confirms that teachers should guide their students along the stages of the writing process to avoid focus on form and give more importance to content and the elaboration of ideas. In addition, teachers assume the role of feedback provider.

Researchers' interest in the writing process, gave birth to many models that describe the cognitive functions involved in this process and the source of knowledge that the writer uses. Hayes and Flower's Model, Bereiter and Scardamalia's Model, Hayes's Model, and others have all served as a theoretical basis for using the process approach in both native and non-native writing instruction. Although apparently different, these models share many of the stages underlying the writing process, which are described below according to the model used in the official textbook for 3rd year classes—*New Prospects* (see Appendix 3).

2.3.4.2. Stages of the Process Approach

Stages of the writing process are meant to help students gain control over each step in the course of writing, and to be aware of what they are exactly working on. Sundem (2007) views that the most recursive stages of process approach to writing are: prewriting, drafting, self revising peer/adult revising, editing, and publishing

2.3.4.2.1. Prewriting

Prewriting is the stage at which students generate ideas and put their thoughts in order. It includes all the operations they carry out before they get ready to write out the first version, and it usually takes even for experienced writers. There are three formats for prewriting: a)

bubbling (mind web): this kind of brainstorming ideas involves writing the topic in a circle in the center of the page, and connecting related ideas like cartoon quote bubbles. The ideas connected directly to the central topic represent paragraphs in a draft, and the bubbles connected to these ideas will likely become ideas that support the paragraphs; b) outlining: it refers to describing the function and contents of each paragraph of the writing by organizing ideas into topic sentences and supporting details. It very helpful when students engage in expository, persuasive, or descriptive writing; and c) cartoon strip: which requires drawing/writing a captioned picture-by-picture comic strip. This technique is useful for narrative writing, and it motivates students as they enjoy the process.

2.3. 4.2.2. Drafting

Drafting or writing is the stage of developing ideas through sentences and paragraphs within an overall structure. At the drafting stage, students decide upon what to include and exclude, as well as make initial decisions about how ideas will be organized. Therefore, in this stage the emphasis is on content and meaning rather than mechanics and conventions. White and Arndt (1991) say that within drafting, writing moves from *writer based* to *reader based* wherein much emphasis is given to the reaction and needs of the audience. As starting writing is always difficult and frustrating even for knowledgeable writers, teachers are supposed to circulate around, give help to students if needed, and encourage them without distracting them or breaking their concentration.

2.3. 4.2.3. Self-Revising

Revising represents a great potential for learning, because students learn techniques that enable them to improve their writing. Thus, students will be able to see “before” and “after” versions, and by comparing the two, they will demonstrate to themselves the specific elements that make for a better piece of writing. It is vital that students learn to first revise

their own work before getting comments from their peers or adults, and that revising is for content, and not conventions. It is the teachers' responsibility to teach students the mechanics of self-revising which may include how to add and delete material.

2.3. 4.2.4. Peer/Adult Revising

This kind of revision guarantees the transfer of information from author to reader—peer, teacher, parent, etc. This transfer of information is necessary for students to learn about their strengths and weaknesses. That's why audience is viewed as the best barometer of success. Also, through revising someone else's writing, students will collaboratively learn techniques they can use in their own writing. Peer revision is preferred in educational contexts as it is easier to control in the format of writing classes, and as it engages students in collaborative problem-solving activities related to writing. As for parent revision option, it allows teachers to involve parents more closely in their child's education and helps bridge the gap between school and home. For peer feedback (revision) to be successful, teachers have to train students on how to conduct such activities, which requires teachers to deepen their theoretical and practical knowledge of it primarily.

2.3.4.2.5. Editing

In editing, students make a final check to polish their draft. This allows them to proofread their text and find mistakes related conventions which may affect the accuracy of the piece of writing, and hence impede the communication of thought. This stage involves checking for capitalization, punctuation, grammar, spelling, choice of words, etc. According to Coffin et al. (2003), "students may be encouraged to use computer spelling check programmes but not to limit their review of errors to those noted by the computer" (p.42). As in the revising stage, after students edit their own work, they may get feedback from peers,

teacher or other adult readers using editing checklists which proved to be very useful, as they provide a guiding framework for collaborative work.

2.3. 4.2.6. Publishing

Although publishing is the final stage in the writing process, it is by no means less important than its prior stages because it teaches students how to present their work appropriately—a skill they later in life. In fact, it is the stage at which the writer (or student) meets his intended audience and shares with them his final version. There are different strategies for publishing one's writing as reading it aloud to an individual or a group, handing it to a teacher, printing in on a class newspaper, publishing it in an on-line magazine or journal, blogging, etc. Teachers are recommended to create class publishing norms which will increase students' motivation to write with purpose.

Writing is a means of communication per se, which enables students to discover and develop themselves. It also helps them learn about the interests of their readers and how to transfer information more fluently and accurately to them. However, writing is a skill that involves the acquisition of a set of competences—grammatical, strategic, sociolinguistic, and discourse—that underlie knowledge in different language systems. Such tools enhance students' self-confidence and increase their motivation to write with purpose, a skill they need in their studies and in all walks of life. Therefore, EFL students need to be instructed on how to develop their writing skills for the sake of helping them succeed in their life.

2.4. Feedback

Feedback is a constant aspect of our daily life, and we usually receive or produce it either intentionally or unintentionally at work, at home and in school. Feedback enables us to improve the quality of our product as it tells us how well we have performed. Hyland and Hyland (2001) state that feedback has three functions, which are praise, criticism and

suggestion. People may receive appreciation on their work or they may be criticised, and in both situations they may be given suggestions for further development

In instructional contexts, feedback has been considered as a significant component of successful L1 and L2 classes, especially in writing activities, due to the multiple merits reported on it by many researchers. In this section, we will discuss the notion of feedback, its types and importance in EFL writing classes, and some issues related to it. However, and since this study is more concerned with peer feedback and its role in enhancing EFL learners' writing skills, much emphasis will be laid on it, bearing in mind that peer feedback is a novel concept in Algerian secondary school writing classes.

2.4.1. Definition of Feedback

Researchers have provided numerous definitions of the term feedback in a plethora of studies. For instance, Ramaprasad (1983) defines feedback as "information about the gap between the actual level and the reference level of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way" (as cited in Clarke, 2000, P. 34). This implies that feedback informs learners about the knowledge they have already acquired, the targeted skills they need to acquire in the future and the ways to reach that.

Mory (2004) states that "in the purely instructional sense, feedback can be said to describe any communication or procedure given to inform a learner of the accuracy of a response, usually to an instructional question" (p. 745). Learners are then informed how well they have produced through feedback, and can realise which parts of their writing are already successful and which parts are to be improved. Therefore, learners have the opportunity to revise their product by paying attention to the comments of different individuals rather than only their own.

According to Brookhart (2008), “Feedback is an important component of the formative assessment process . . . which gives information to teachers and students about how students are doing relative to classroom learning goals” (p. 1). In other words, feedback as part of formative assessment makes learners aware of the knowledge or skills they need to develop, how close they are to that goal and what they should do next. Within this respect, Black and Wiliam (1999) suggest that feedback is key feature of formative assessment as it enables teachers to diagnose students' weaknesses and provides constructive comments that lead to the improvement of learning (as cited in Irons, 2008). Formative feedback, according to Brookhart (2008), addresses two major factors: cognitive factor—enables learners to know about their learning; and motivational factor—enables learners to develop a positive attitude towards their learning as they are aware of what they do and why.

Driscoll (2007) assumes that feedback serves two major functions during the learning process: assessment and correction. First, assessment provides learners with information about how well they performed or responded to an instruction. Second, correction provides learners with corrective information that can help them modify their performance (as cited in Purnawarman, 2011).

Hyland and Hyland (2006) argue that since feedback involves all the aspects of any communicative act—context, participants, medium and goal—it can be considered as an a social act. In other words, the aspects mentioned earlier can be represented this way: the context is purely institutional (classroom); participants are teacher and learners; the medium of communicating feedback is via peers, conferences or written comments; and the goal is to fulfil some educational, pedagogical and social aims. Feedback that holds all these features would surely guarantee better learning improvements.

2.4.2. Significance of Feedback in Writing

The role of feedback in improving learners' writing skills and increasing their achievements has been advocated by many scholars. Fathman and Whalley (1990 as cited in Hyland, 2003) found in their study that students' texts improved most when they received feedback on both content and form. Ashwell (2000) suggests that feedback enables beginners and expert writers as well is to evaluate their writing and spot their weaknesses possible points of weaknesses. Hyland and Hyland (2001) add that the thoughtful comments students receive from teachers or even their peers motivates them to write something better in the subsequent draft. Without comments from their teachers or their peers student writers would revise in a piecemeal way, and without comments from readers, students assume that their writing has communicated the intended meaning, and hence see no need for revising the substance of their text. According to Cai (2011), feedback helps students diagnose the advantages and disadvantages of their writing, identify writing problems, and improve their writing competencies consequently (as cited in Lei, 2012).

2.4.3. Types of Feedback

There are various typologies that classy feedback on writing into different types. However, the most prominent categorization is that based on the source of feedback, that is, who is giving it. Depending on this view, many researchers (Ferris, 2003; Hyland, 2003; Harmer, 2007) speak about three major types of feedback: teacher written feedback, teacher-student conferencing and peer feedback. Below is a description of these types. It is worth mentioning, however, that as this study is more concerned with peer feedback, much emphasis is laid on it.

2.4.3.1. Teacher Written Feedback

Traditionally, learners receive written comments on their writing from their teacher, whose role is not only to correct the final texts, but also to give guidance during on-writing activities. This commonly-used technique of responding to students' writing still plays a central role in L2 writing classes despite emphasis on other types of feedback like oral responses and peer feedback (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Hyland, 2003).

Many researchers have studied teacher feedback from different perspectives. In relation to teachers' actual performance and self-assessment, Hyland and Hyland (2001) suggest that teachers' feedback can take the form of praise (positive comments), criticism (negative comments), or suggestions (constructive criticism). These forms can be given using written commentary, audio recorded commentary, or electronic commentary (Hyland, 2003).

A central issue to studies related to written feedback and L2 writing is whether to concentrate more on local issues (also known as form: linguistic accuracy) or global issues (also known as content: meaning, organization and the process of writing). Truscott (1996, 1999) claims that correcting students' linguistic errors in writing is useless, unsystematic, arbitrary and may hinder learners' writing development. He argues that teachers should not intervene within the process of acquiring grammar because it is a complex one, and hence, "grammar correction has no place in writing courses and should be abandoned" (Truscott, 1996, p. 328). These claims have not gone unchallenged. Ferris (1999), states that Truscott's thesis "is premature and overly strong and discusses areas for further research" (p. 1). Ferris contends that learners would benefit too much from grammar correction in writing, and that learners themselves favored this type of teacher feedback. She believes that students cannot be left without any guidance; errors that go unnoticed can be fossilized. Although Ferris stresses the fact that the "substance" of written commentary is more important than its form,

she admits that the ways in which feedback is given also affect both writer's reactions to it and its effect on short and long term improvement in student writing. Within this respect, Ferris (2006) distinguishes between two categories of feedback: *direct* feedback which involves providing students with the correct linguistic form next to their errors; and *indirect* feedback which refers to highlighting (i.e. underlining, circling, etc.) students' errors without providing them with the correct linguistic form (as cited in Zahida, Farrah, & Zaru, 2013). Ferris adds that the selection between these two feedbacks depends on the type of the error. Owing to this endless debate, teachers are generally advised to consider global issues when commenting on their students' writing (Hyland, 2003).

Feedback strategies have also been the subject of a heated debate among scholars. This looks into the ways teachers give effective feedback depending on the context: the characteristics of students, the assignment, and the classroom atmosphere. In this vein, Brookhart (2008) points out four main strategies: timing, amount, mode and audience. Concerning the first strategy—timing, teachers should know when and how often they give feedback. For example, it is advised to give immediate (hot) feedback for knowledge of facts (right/wrong), and slightly delay it (cold feedback) for more comprehensive reviews of student thinking and processing. Amount refers to how many points to be made and how much about each point. Here teachers are supposed to pick the most important points that relate to major learning goals and consider the student's developmental level. As for mode, feedback can be given orally, in writing or through visual demonstration. Nowadays, and with the availability of ICTs, feedback can also be given online synchronously or asynchronously. Teachers opt for the most appropriate mode to convey their messages depending the circumstances. The final strategy is that about audience. That is, teachers should decide whether feedback is to be given individually, within a group of pupils or to the whole class. All these decisions are governed by the teaching context.

A very important area of study pertinent to feedback is that about the content of feedback—what to say. Deciding on the content of feedback involves decisive choices about focus. In this vein, Hattie and Timperley (2007 as cited in Brookhart, 2008) stress two major levels of feedback: the task and the processing of the task. Feedback about the task requires teachers to provide information about errors (correct or incorrect language points), neatness, format and information about the depth or quality of the work vis-à-vis certain criteria like a scoring rubric. Whereas Feedback about the process requires the teacher to give information about the way learners manipulated the task, information about the quality of their performance, and information about possible alternative strategies that would also be useful.

2.4.3.2. Conferencing

In addition to teacher's written feedback, researchers consider teacher-student face-to-face conferencing as a valid technique of feedback on students' writings. This technique, which appeared with the advent of process-oriented composition instruction in the 1970's, was approved by L1 scholars as an ideal approach to teaching and feedback (Ferris, 2003).

Hyland and Hyland (2006) define teacher-student conferencing as "an approach lauded by L1 researchers as a dialogue in which meaning and interpretation are constantly being negotiated by participants, and as a method that provides both teaching and learning benefits" (p. 5). This means that this technique is beneficial for both teachers and students as they can discuss the meaning of any piece of writing and spot strengths and weaknesses. In addition, it enables teachers to "respond to the diverse cultural, educational, and writing needs of their students, clarifying meaning and resolving ambiguities, while saving them the time spent in detailed marking of papers" (Hyland, 2003, p.192). It has been argued as well that some types of writing problems such as sentence structure and lexical errors are better addressed through conferences due to its complexity (Conrad & Goldstein, 1999 as cited in Hyland, 2003).

According to F. Hyland (2000) and Riley (1997), teacher-student conferencing has the following advantages: a) it assists learners with auditory learning styles, b) informs them about their strengths and weaknesses, c) develops their autonomous learning skills, d) allows them to raise questions on their written feedback, and e) helps them construct plan for revision (as cited in Hyland, 2003).

Nevertheless, oral conferences have disadvantages for both teachers and students. Hyland (2003) views that L2 students are not always in a good position to benefit from this technique. Hyland means that students' lack of experience, interactive abilities, or aural comprehension skills may hinder their appropriate use of this technique. As a result, they may accept blindly their teachers' comments. As for teachers, it has been found that they need considerable amounts of time and good interaction skills to conduct this activity very appropriately and enable their student to benefit from it (Ferris, 2003; Hyland, 2003).

All in all, it is unfair to say that teacher–student conferences are not helpful and effective in some circumstances, but in order for this technique to be successful, writers (students) need to be active and take part in the discussion and negotiate their writings with their teachers. This gives them chance to discover their strengths and weaknesses and enhance their writing skills.

2.4.3.3. Peer Feedback

Peer feedback is considered as an activity which emphasizes the importance of cooperation between students and their effective role in enhancing their learning, particularly in writing. The shift away from teacher-centred approach to learner-based instruction has brought about the notion of autonomous learning. Hirose (2008) asserts that peer feedback, which has become a familiar instructional practice in ESL/EFL writing classes, refers to an activity in which students receive feedback about their writing from their classmates. In the

related literature peer feedback is also referred to as peer review, peer editing, peer evaluation, peer critique, peer commentary, and peer response.

2.4.3.3.1. Definition of Peer Feedback

Various definitions of the term peer feedback have been provided by researchers. For example, Liu and Hansen (2002 as cited in Morra & Romano, 2008.) define peer feedback as:

> The use of learners as sources of information and interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by a formally trained teacher, tutor or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other's drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing". (p.19)

This definition suggests that during the process of peer feedback, learners interact and comment or critique their peers' drafts orally or in the written form. While carrying out this task, students are involved in the writing instruction and assume the roles of a teacher or an editor besides that of a writer. Topping (1998) defines peer feedback as "an arrangement in which individuals consider the amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes of learning of peers of similar status" (as cited in Strijbos, Narciss, & Dünnebier, 2010. P. 239). In other words, learners see themselves through the comments of their readers.

According to Hyland (2003), peer feedback helps students improve their drafts and provides a good opportunity to readers to develop their understanding of good writing. In this way, Hyland adds that peer feedback has become an alternative to teacher feedback in ESL contexts after it was approved to be useful in L1 classes.

2.4.3.3. 2. Theoretical Background of Peer Feedback

Researchers admit that peer feedback is deeply rooted in several theoretical frameworks. Hansen and Liu (2005) claim that peer feedback follows the model the collaborative learning theory, Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory, interactionist perspectives of second language acquisition (SLA), and the process writing approach. As for the collaborative learning theory, which derives from social constructivist view, knowledge is considered as a social act, that is socially constructed through the systematic and permanent communication among peers (Carson & Nelson, 1994 as cited in Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005). Brown (2004) adds that the links between peer feedback and collaborative learning are obvious, and that the former is one of the major tasks within the domain of learner-centred and collaborative education.Within this line of thought, Vygotsky (1978), who believes that learning occurs through interactions with and within the environment in which these interactions take place, argues as well that learning is a *collaborative* process in which learners interact to produce spoken or written texts collaboratively while performing a task (as cited in Poehner, 2008). Another theoretical basis for peer feedback is found in Vygotsky's notion of cognitive development referred to as ZPD (the zone of proximal development). According to him, ZPD marks the difference between the learner's *actual* development level (that learners have already reached) and the level of *potential* development (that learners can reach under the guidance of teachers or in collaboration with peers) at which they are capable of understanding material and solving problems that they are not capable of solving or understanding at the level of their *actual* development (as cited in Poehner, 2008). Support for peer feedback also comes from interactionist perspectives of SLA which claim that language is learned through negotiation of meaning in interaction (Long & Porter, 1985 as cited in Morra & Romano, 2008). Peer feedback is as well deeply rooted in the process writing approach. Zhang (1995) states that there are obvious links between peer feedback and

process approach. He believes that peer feedback is actually part of the process approach to teaching writing and feedback in its various forms is a fundamental element of this approach, and that many tasks involved in peer review sessions are in fact applications of the process approach. Hong (2006) also claims that the process writing approach, which is characterized by a recursive procedure of prewriting, drafting, evaluating, and revising, focuses on how to revise in response to feedback from the reader whether the reader is the teacher, a peer, or the author him / herself.

2.4.3.3.3. Advantages and Disadvantages of Peer Feedback

The literature on peer feedback reveals a great interest in its advantages and drawbacks. While some of the studies highlight its positive effects in improving students' writing skills, others discuss the difficulties connected with its application. Lundstrom and Baker (2009), who stress the valuable social, cognitive, affective and metalinguistic benefits of peer feedback, found in their study that both givers and receivers of feedback improved their writing ability and also enhanced their critical thinking skills. Li (2009) states that peer feedback allows students to gain confidence and reduce apprehension by seeing peers' strengths and weaknesses in writing. Therefore, more positive attitudes towards writing are generated. Ferris (2003) corroborates that peer feedback helps students develop sound analytical and critical reading and writing skills, and enhances their self-reflection and self-expression. Harmer (2007) ascertains that peer feedback boosts learner autonomy as it enables students to reflect upon their own learning. Kulsirisawad (2012) suggests that peer feedback allows students to develop a sense of self-reliance, learn to become more engaged and start to trust their own ability. Liu and Hansen (2002 as cited in Gedera, 2012) confirm that peer feedback provides opportunities for ESL students to practice English in a meaningful context and increases an awareness of audience by creating a collaborative drafting process.

Mangelsdorf (1989 as cited in Ferris & Hedgcock, 2005) asserts that peer feedback boosts L2 students' linguistic and communication skills. As cited in Rahmat (2013), other advantages of giving peer feedback may include affecting student's behaviour and motivation (Mutch, 2003); enabling learners to construct their own knowledge and eventually share what they think (Reynolds, 2009); and developing metacognitive skills (such as collaboration) and facilitating self-regulated learning (Topping, 2009).

On the other hand, while discussing the difficulties in carrying out peer feedback activities, some scholars provide several arguments. Leki (1990) believes that students are sometimes unable to provide helpful feedback because their comments are unclear and do not focus on in-depth matters. Amores (1997) stresses the state of uneasiness for students to provide feedback to their friends because of the sarcastic and critical nature of some students' comments. According to Amores, students' feeling of uneasiness makes them defensive when they receive criticism from their peers and would not likely incorporate it in their subsequent drafts. In a similar vein, Harmer (2007) states that it is possible that the student, after being corrected by a peer, feels that s/he is inferior to his or her peers; therefore, s/he shows preference for teacher feedback over peer feedback. This preference issue can act as a barrier to effective peer sessions.

Although peer feedback approach is still a debatable issue as seen in the literature, researchers admit that if its advantages are approached properly, they can help L2 learners develop their writing skills and regulate their learning. So, it is the teachers' responsibility to adjust peer feedback activities to their students' level and provide them with opportunities to make use of its benefits.

2.4.3.3.4. Importance of Peer Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Researchers admit that the effectiveness of peer feedback in enhancing L1 learners' writing skills has received much attention by scholars and practitioners, and many studies reported excellent results (Hirose, 2008). For the case of L2 learners, most of the studies have been conducted on ESL students at the tertiary level, and reported encouraging results too (Shokrpour, Keshavarz, & Jafari, 2013). But, the effectiveness of peer feedback in EFL instructional settings and whether EFL learners would behave like ESL learners remained underinvestigated. Lundstrom and Baker (2009) say that there is a need to understand how writing teachers can maximise the benefits of peer review, and how these benefits can be generalised to the L2 writing classrooms. Kondo (2004), for instance, reported in his comparative study that students incorporated their peers' comments and improved their final drafts after revision (as cited in Hirose, 2008). Tsui and Ng (2000) also found in their study that although secondary students favoured teacher feedback, peer comments had a role in "enhancing a sense of real audience in the students, raising the students' awareness of strengths and weaknesses of their own writings, encouraging collaborative learning and fostering an ownership of text" (p.168). Lei's 2012 study showed that most students in the writing class were able to provide a helpful and constructive feedback, and that strong correlations were found between student writing performance and the feedback they offered. Shokrpour, Keshavarz, and Jafari (2013) revealed in their comparative study that the students who received peer feedback (the experimental group) improved more than their classmates who received teacher feedback (the control group); and that the experimental group's motivation for writing increased. Another evidence for the usefulness of peer feedback in EFL writing classes came from Srichanyachon's (2012) study, which asserted that peer feedback allowed students to learn from other perspectives and see their weaknesses, that it increased their motivation to improve their writing, and that peer feedback could be a relaxing activity.

In her six-week study, Al-Jamal (2009) found that students displayed positive attitudes towards peer feedback technique; invested more time and effort in the task; showed more self-confidence in ranking their writing abilities; and demonstrated greater consistency in their critical responses.

In regard to the Algerian context, a few studies were conducted (on university students) to confirm the positive impact of peer feedback on students' writing. Moussaoui (2012), for instance, claimed that peer feedback helped students improve their writing and critical thinking skills, hence, developed their writing autonomy. She added that, students' interaction during peer feedback activities increased their confidence and lowered their level of anxiety. Boucheche (2010), and although her study focused on the role of peer feedback in improving students' communicative competence, stated that peer feedback was an impressive interactional activity which students liked getting engaged in, and which teachers should make use of to help their students develop a number of skills—with the writing skill included.

Although these small-scale studies were carried out in limited EFL contexts (mainly Asian), they yielded interesting results that reflect the effectiveness of peer feedback activities in improving students' writing skills in EFL teaching contexts. Algerian secondary school teachers are, then, recommended to build on the findings of such studies and strive to incorporate peer feedback approach into their writing classes, taking into consideration the specificities and needs of the their students.

2.4.3.3.5. Introducing Peer Feedback to Students

Despite the availability of some studies that confirm the effectiveness of peer feedback in enhancing EFL students' writing skills, and the official implementation of peer feedback activities in the national EFL curriculum, many Algerian secondary school teachers

are still reluctant to introduce peer feedback to their students. This attitude is due to many reasons like the low linguistic level of students and fears that the results of such an activity would be discouraging. Experts insist that teachers should make use of any teaching technique and create the appropriate learning environment that supports collaboration among students.

Talking about the necessity of introducing peer feedback to students, Ferris (2003) suggests seven techniques and strategies for making L2 peer feedback as successful as possible: 1) to utilize peer feedback consistently through planned sessions and during appropriate times, 2) to explain the benefits of peer feedback to students to motivate and make them aware of its merits in improving their learning, 3) to prepare students carefully for peer response through prior training and rehearsal, 4) to form (and keep stable during the whole writing course) pairs or groups (not more than four) thoughtfully to guarantee a variety of viewpoints and comfort, 5) to provide structure for peer review sessions by having students read peers' papers silently then providing written responses on a peer feedback sheet, before discussing it orally, 6) to monitor peer review sessions without being too intrusive so that students stay on task, and 7) to hold students responsible for taking peer feedback opportunities seriously by stressing your own (teacher) positive attitude towards it, appreciating their comments, and letting them talk about their experience, etc.

2.5. Conclusion

The overarching purpose of this chapter has been to provide a thorough theoretical background of the three major aspects of the present study, namely, attitudes, writing and feedback. The first section of this chapter surveyed a wide range of scholarly definitions of *attitude* as being a prominent psychological construct, and elaborated on its structure and types. Enough space was also devoted to explaining how attitudes are formed and measured. The second section was intended to discuss the nature of writing and its components. Much

emphasis, however, was laid on the nature of the process approach to teaching writing and its major stages. This chapter ended up with a thorough description of the nature of feedback, its major types, and its significance in EFL writing classes. As the focus of the study has been on peer feedback, a detailed discussion of its theoretical underpinnings, its advantages and disadvantages was provided. In addition, this section stressed the importance of peer feedback in EFL writing classes and the necessity of introducing it to students. The next chapter will be dealing with the analysis and discussion of the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study.

CHAPTER THREE:

Data Analysis and Interpretation

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3.1. Introduction

This study investigates the attitudes of 113 Algerian secondary school teachers (from El-Oued) towards peer feedback approach in EFL writing classes, and its usefulness in enhancing secondary education students' writing skills. The study also aims at examining the factors impacting on teachers attitudes, and their instructional practices. For this purpose, a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview were used to collect quantitative data and qualitative data respectively. Attitudinal questionnaire results were examined through a descriptive data analysis, and the semi-structured interview results were coded for themes and analysed. This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section describes the findings of the attitudinal questionnaire using frequency tables and graphic figures, the second section presents the qualitative data related to the second and third research questions, and the third section discusses the aspects of both types of data gathered in the this study.

3.2. Analysis of the Questionnaire Findings

Quantitative findings of the teachers' questionnaire are divided into four sections. The first section presents the background information of the participants. The second section examines teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback approach and its effective role in enhancing Algerian secondary students' writing skills. The third section investigates the impact of teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback on their instructional practices. That is, to know whether or not teachers incorporate peer feedback in their writing classes. The fourth section elaborates on the authentic factors shaping teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback approach and its usefulness in Algerian EFL writing classes.

3.2.1. Teachers' Background Information

This section provides a thorough analysis of the questionnaire participants' demographic information including four main variables: gender, age, degrees, and years of teaching experience. This analysis is supported by pie charts.

3.2.1.1. Gender

Participants of the study were 113 secondary school teachers from El-Oued. This sample was taken from a realistic population of 178 teachers, which amounts 63.48 % of the teachers with a working experience of two years and up as explained in the section devoted to participants in Chapter One. Figure 3.A. below shows that the rate of female teachers is higher than the rate of male teachers. 58.41 % of the participants were females (N= 66), and 41.59 % of them were males (N= 47).

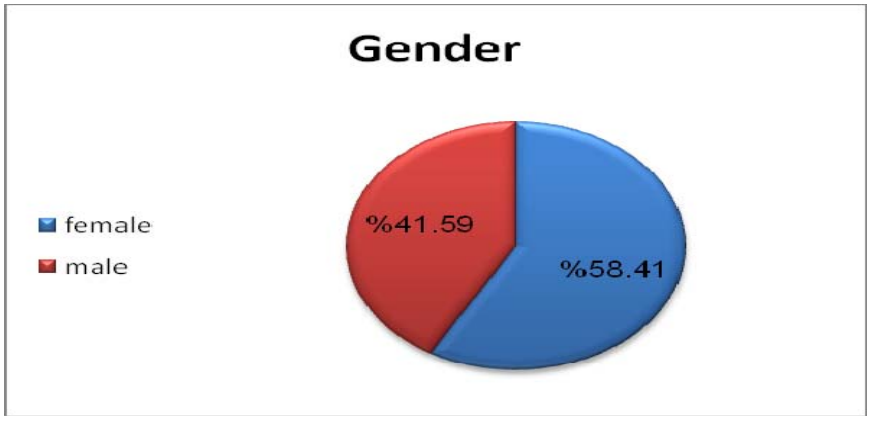

Figure 3. A. Teachers' gender

3.2.1.2. Age

Ages of the participants were classified into six categories of age range. As displayed in Figure 3.B. below, 14.15 % of the participants (N= 16) were between 21years and 25, and 31.85 % of them (N= 36) were between 26 and 30. Teachers whose ages ranged from 31 to 35 represented 20.35 % of the participants (N=23), and those from 36 to 40 represented 16.81 %,

that is (N= 19) teachers. The last two ranges had the lowest percentages with 11.50 % for the participants aged between 41 and 45 years (N= 13), and only 5.30 % for those (N= 6) whose age exceeded 45. The total percentage of first three age ranges amounts to 66.35 %, which means that the majority of the teachers are youths.

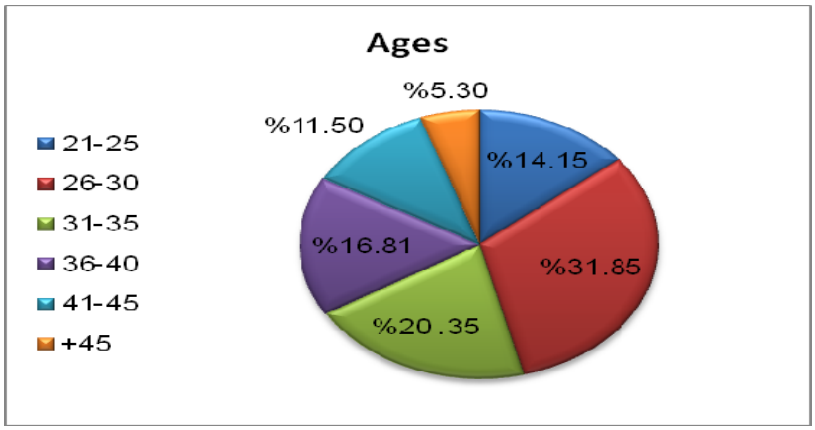

Figure 3. B. Teachers' ages

3.2.1.3. Academic Degrees

Except for one participant, all teachers had academic degrees. As in Figure 3.C., the number of teachers who had Bachelor's degrees was the biggest (N= 62) representing a percentage of 54.86 %, the second highest rate was for the teachers with Master's degrees 42.47%, that is, 48 teachers. Two teachers had Magister degrees—one in Applied Linguistics and the other in British Literature—1.76 %, and one teacher graduated from the Technological Institute For Education (ITE) as a middle school teacher with a rate of 0.88 %.

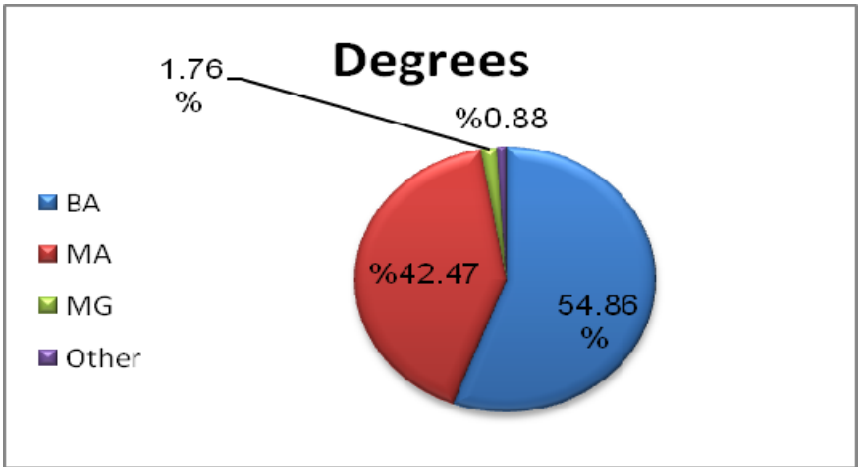

Figure 3. C. Teachers' academic degrees

3.2.1.4. Teaching Experience

Participants' working experience ranged from two to more than twenty years. 41.59 % of them had an experience between two and five years, and 25. 66 % were between six and ten years. Teachers experienced between eleven and fifteen years represented 16.81 % of the number of participants, and those between sixteen and twenty years were about 5.30 %. There were twelve teachers who had had an experience of more than twenty years which amounted to 10.61 % of the participants.

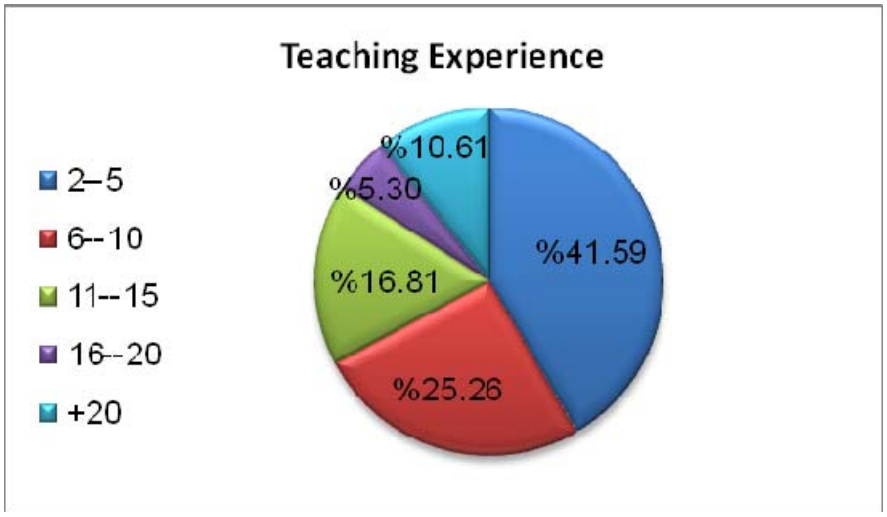

Figure 3. D. Teachers' years of teaching experience

3.2.2. Teachers' Attitudes towards Peer Feedback

The second section of the questionnaire seeks to gauge teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback in Algerian writing classes in a bid to answer the first research question. It comprises seven statements that examine different aspects of teachers' attitudes. Frequencies and percentages of teachers' responses to the seven statements are summarised in Table 3.1. below, then, each statement is represented through a bar graph and analysed independently.

S.	SD		D		U		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	26	23,01	52	46,02	21	18,58	9	7,96	5	4,42
2	32	28,32	41	36,28	20	17,70	12	10,62	8	7,08
3	47	41,59	38	33,63	4	3,54	18	15,93	6	5,31
4	29	25,66	57	50,44	9	7,96	10	8,85	8	7,08
5	19	16,81	24	21,24	17	15,04	39	34,51	14	12,39
6	32	28,32	36	31,86	21	18,58	13	11,50	11	9,73
7	19	16,81	33	29,20	48	42,48	5	4,42	8	7,08

Table 3.1. Frequency and percentage distribution of teachers' attitudes

Statement 1. Peer feedback is a useful activity in Algerian secondary school EFL writing classes. This statement is intended to determine whether or not teachers view peer feedback as a useful technique in their writing classes. The findings as reflected in Figure 3.1. below show that the respondents mostly rejected the statement. 46.02 % disagreed and 23.01% strongly disagreed that peer feedback was a useful technique in EFL writing classes (i.e. a total of 69.03 %), and 18.58 % were undecided. Teachers who agreed with the statement were 7.96 %, and those who strongly agreed were 4.42 % (i.e. a total of 12.38 %).

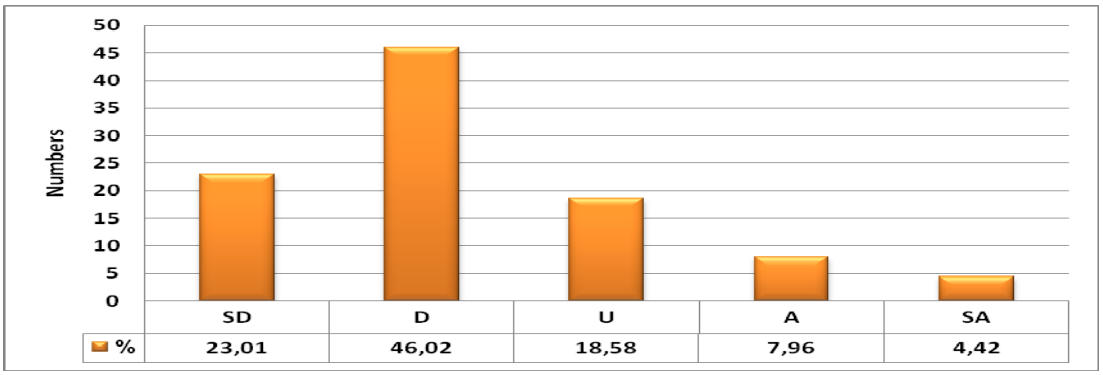

Figure 3.1. Usefulness of peer feedback in EFL writing classes

Statement 2. Peer feedback activity enables students to improve their writing skills and enrich the content and form of their writing. This statement examines teachers' view about whether or not students can improve their writing skills through engagement in peer feedback activities. Figure 3.2. reveals that 36. 28 % disagreed and 28.32 % strongly disagreed with this statement, that is, a total of 64.60 % believe that peer feedback does really enhance students' writing skills. 17.7 % were undecided, 10.26 % agreed, and 7.08 strongly disagreed.

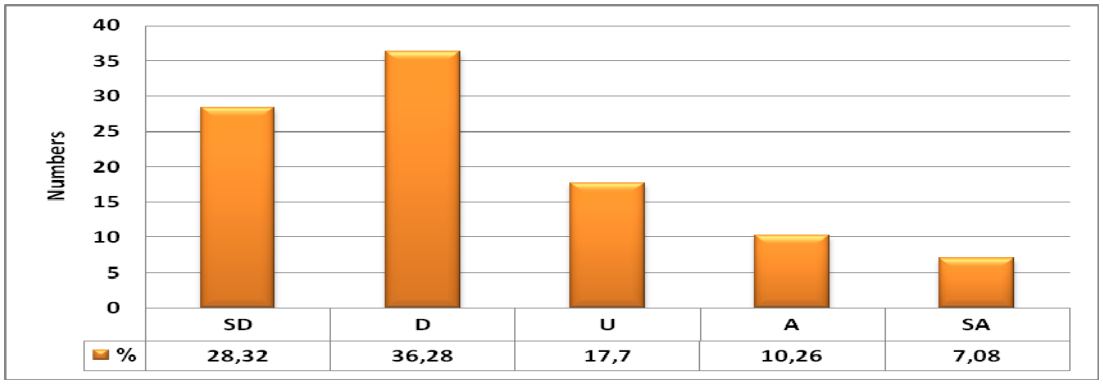

Figure 3.2. Impact of peer feedback on students' writing skills

Statement 3. Students are able to give trustful comments on their peers' pieces of writing. Statement three enables us to know how teachers perceive the ability of their students to provide appropriate feedback on each other's written texts. As shown in Figure 3.3. below, 33.66 % expressed their disagreement, and 41.59 % expressed strong disagreement with the statement. This makes a total of 75.22 % who believe that students' level is too weak to give

trustful feedback to each other. However, a total rate of 21.24 % thought that students were able to comment appropriately on their peers' writing, and 3.45 % remained undecided.

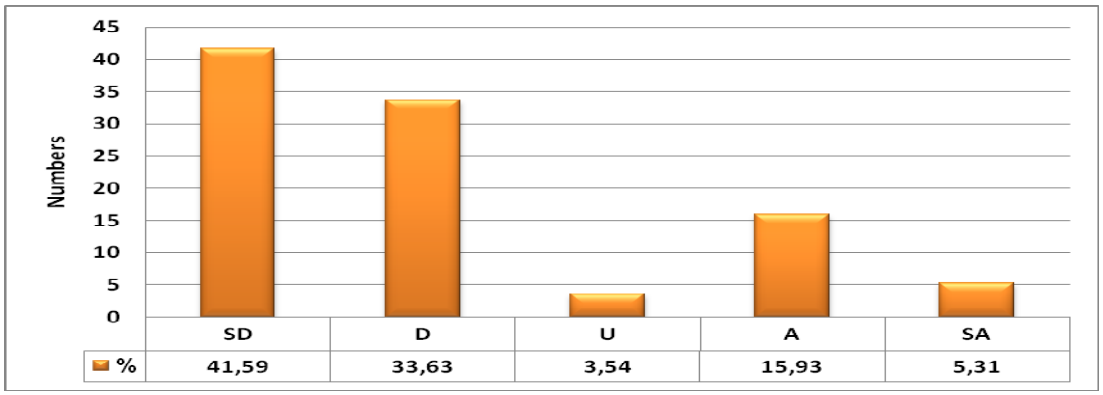

Figure 3.3. Students' ability to provide constructive feedback

Statement 4. When students engage in peer feedback activity, they become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses in writing. This statement is meant to examine the ability of students to spot their strengths and weaknesses in writing according to their teachers' view. More than half of the respondents (i.e. 50.44 %) disagreed, and 25.66 % strongly disagreed that students could spot their strengths and weaknesses in writing. A total of 15.93 % expressed their agreement with the statement, and 7.96 % neither agreed or disagreed.

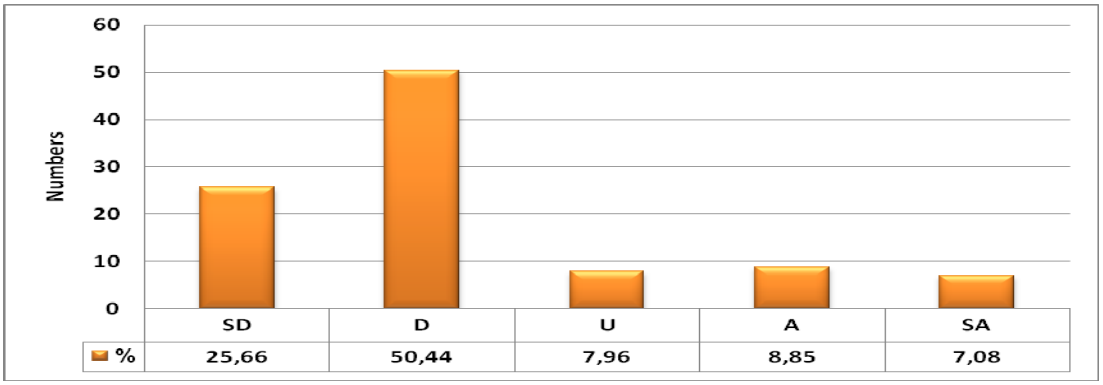

Figure 3.4. Ability of students to spot strengths and weaknesses in writing

Statement 5. Students enjoy practising peer feedback activity because it reduces their apprehension and increases their self-confidence. The present statement reflects teachers' belief about whether or not peer feedback as a collaborative activity distracts students and

helps them increase their self-confidence. This time the agreement rate amounted to 46.90 % (including 34.51 % for the agree option) , and the disagreement rate was 38.05 %. 15.04 % chose the neutral option.

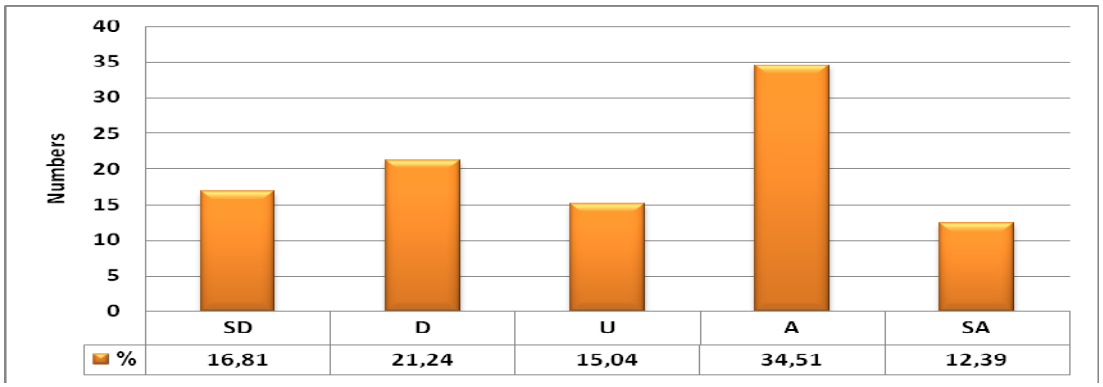

Figure 3.5. Role of peer feedback in increasing students' self-confidence

Statement 6. Peer feedback strengthens students' sense of responsibility for their own learning and boosts autonomous learning. This statement describes whether or not teachers perceive peer feedback as an efficient tool that enables students to become autonomous and take charge of their own learning. Again, disagreement rate was very high. 31.86 % disagreed and 28.32 % strongly disagreed with the statement. 18.58 % were undecided, 11.50 % agreed, and 9.73% displayed strong agreement.

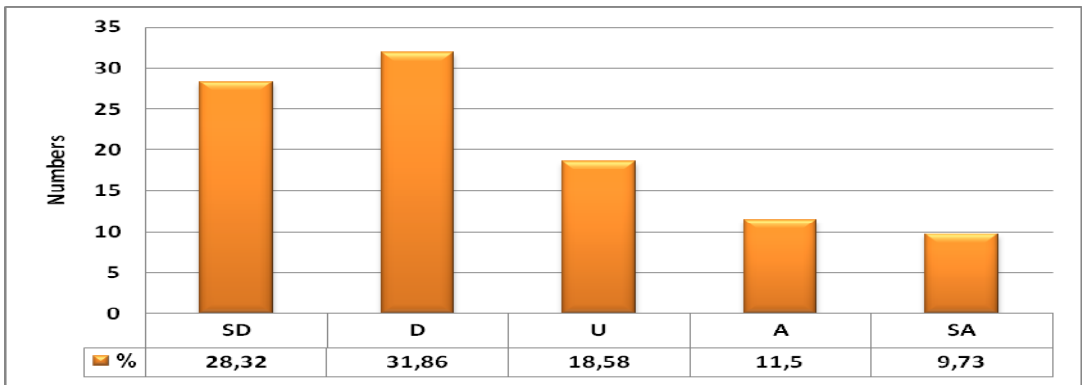

Figure 3.6. Peer feedback and learner autonomy

Statement 7. Emphasis which the national curriculum lays on peer feedback technique is a correct step towards improving English teaching. The last statement in this section addresses

teachers' attiude towards the implementation of peer feedback approach into the EFL classes and whether it helps them improve their teaching. Interestingly, 42.48 % of respondents neither agreed or disagreed with the statement (i.e. undecided). While 29.20 % expressed their disagreement, 16.81 % strongly disagreed. As for the agreement rate, it was very low: 4.42 % agreed and 7.08 % strongly agreed that peer feedback improved EFL teaching.

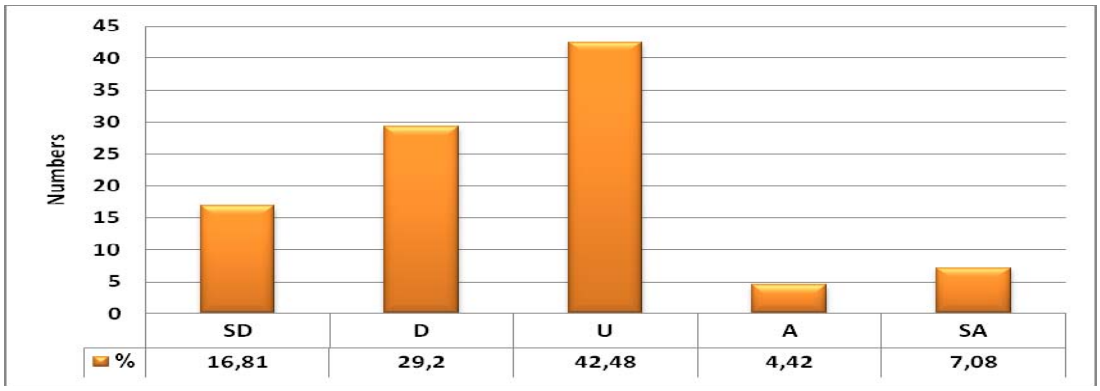

Figure 3.7. Improvement of EFL teaching through peer feedback

3.2.3. Teachers' Instructional Practices

The six statements of the third section of the questionnaire are designed to learn about the extent to which teachers' teaching preferences and practices are influenced by their attitudes towards peer feedback. That is, whether their classroom practices are aligned with their attitudes and if these practices really serve the aims of EFL writing curriculum. This section seeks to answer the second research question. Findings of this section are represented below through a collective frequency table and independent bar graphs for statements.

S.	SD		D		U		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
8	33	29,20	52	46,02	16	14,16	7	6,19	5	4,42
9	29	25,66	55	48,67	19	16,81	8	7,08	2	1,77
10	38	33.61	48	42,48	10	8.85	9	7.98	8	7,08
11	3	2,65	9	7,96	15	13,27	64	56,64	22	19,47
12	1	0,88	6	5,31	10	8,85	49	43,36	47	41,59
13	2	1,77	7	6,19	2	1,77	67	59,29	35	30,97

Table 3.2. Frequency and percentage distribution of teachers' practices

Statement 8. Algerian secondary school teachers must incorporate peer feedback activity in their writing classes. This statement shows if teachers adopt peer feedback into their writing classes. The results revealed that a total percentage of 75.22 % of respondents did not incorporate peer feedback activity in their writing classes. More particularly, 46.02 % disagreed, and 29.20 % strongly disagreed. 6. 19 % agreed and only 4.42 strongly agreed with peer feedback implementation. The rate of the undecided respondents was 14.16%.

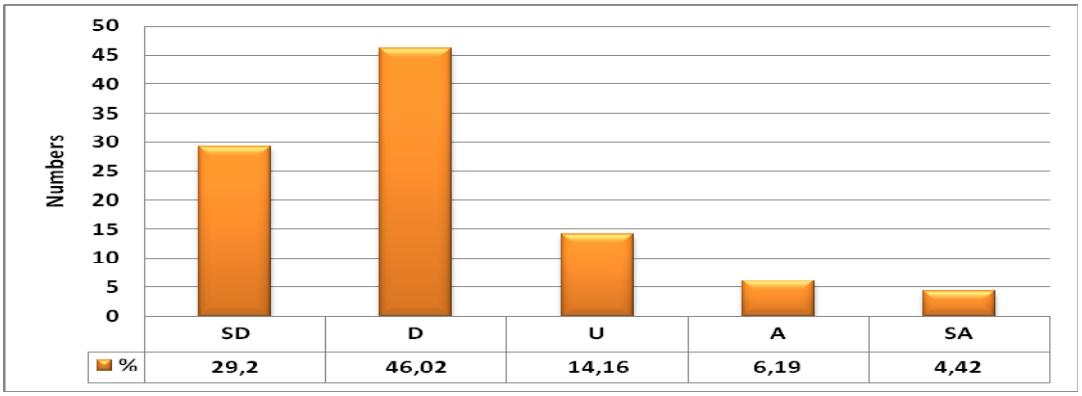

Figure 3.8. Implementation of peer feedback into writing classes

Statement 9. Peer feedback is part of the process of writing in modern EFL writing classes and Algerian writing classes are not an exception. Statement nine is closely related to the previous one as it shows if teachers consider peer feedback as an essential stage in the process of writing, and hence, should not be neglected. As shown in Figure 3.9. below, 48.76 % expressed their disagreement, and 25.66 % expressed strong disagreement with the statement. When considered together, these two disagreement rates constituted 74.33 %, that is 84 respondents. 7.08 % agreed and only 1.77 % strongly agreed with the statement. 16.81 % remained undecided.

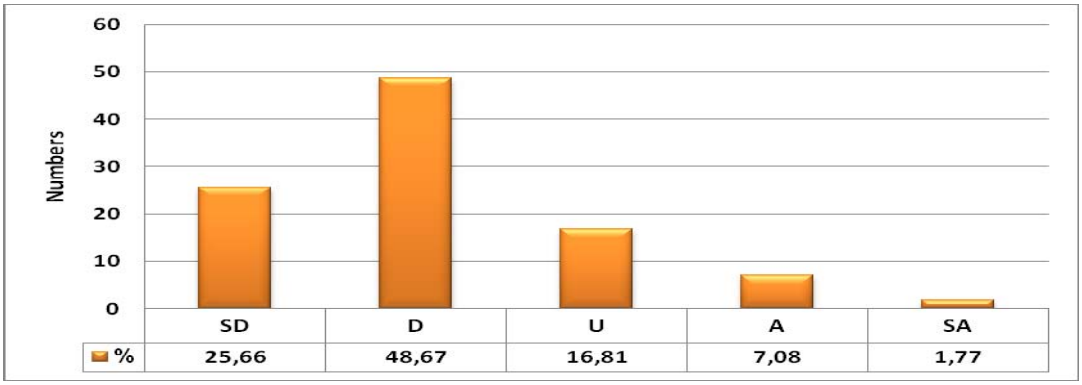

Figure 3.9. Peer feedback as part of the writing process

Statement 10. The time teachers spend on carrying out peer feedback activity in their writing classes is worth it. This statement looks into whether teachers devote time to practice peer feedback when they teach writing. 42.48 % expressed their disagreement, and 33.61 % were strongly against devoting some time to this technique. While 8.85 % chose the undecided option, the total percentage of the respondents who devoted some time to the practice of peer feedback was 15.06 %.

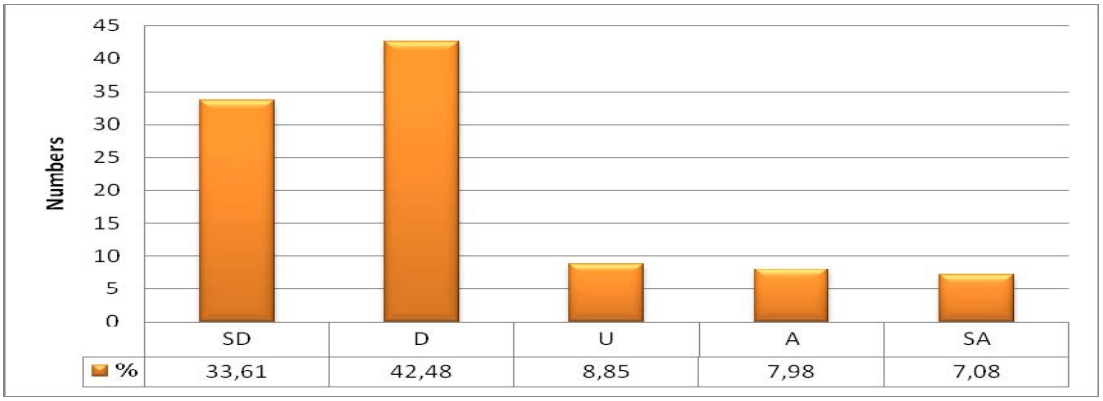

Figure 3.10. Worthiness of devoting time for the practice of peer feedback

Statement 11. Teachers instructional practices should be aligned with the objectives of EFL writing curriculum. The reason behind putting this statement is to know whether teachers feel obliged to align their classroom practices with the objectives of EFL instruction. Surprisingly enough, more than two thirds of the respondents (76.38 %) admitted that their practices had to

serve the objectives of EFL writing curriculum. 13.27 % were undecided, 7.96 % disagreed with the statement, and only 2.65 % strongly disagreed.

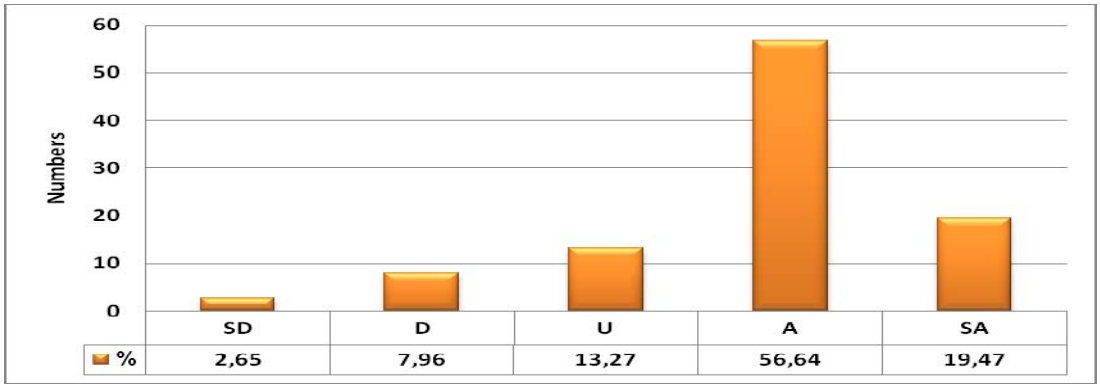

Figure 3.11. Concordance between teachers' practices and EFL writing curriculum

Statement 12. Teachers should train their students on how to give appropriate comments on their peers' writing. The aim of the present statement is to learn to what extent teachers think that introducing peer feedback to students is indispensible. The results in Figure 3.12. show that an overwhelming majority of 84.95 % either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. 8.85 % were undecided, and slightly above 6 % of the respondents believed that introducing peer feedback to students would be unnecessary.

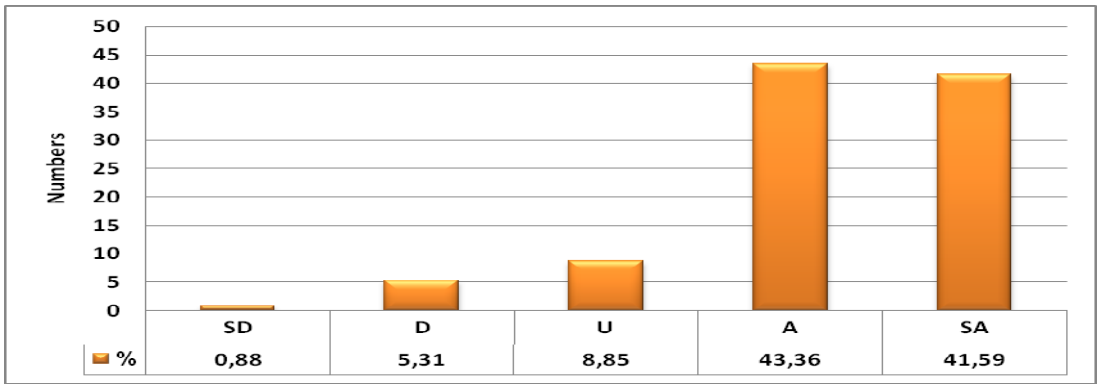

Figure 3.12. Importance of training students on peer feedback giving

Statement 13. Teachers have to deepen their theoretical knowledge on peer feedback approach so that they can use it appropriately. The last statement in section three examines teachers' need to broaden their knowledge of peer feedback approach for more successful

classroom practices. More than 90 % of the respondents displayed agreement and strong agreement with the statement, and 6.19 % disagreed. Two people reported that they strongly disagreed with the statement, and two others were undecided.

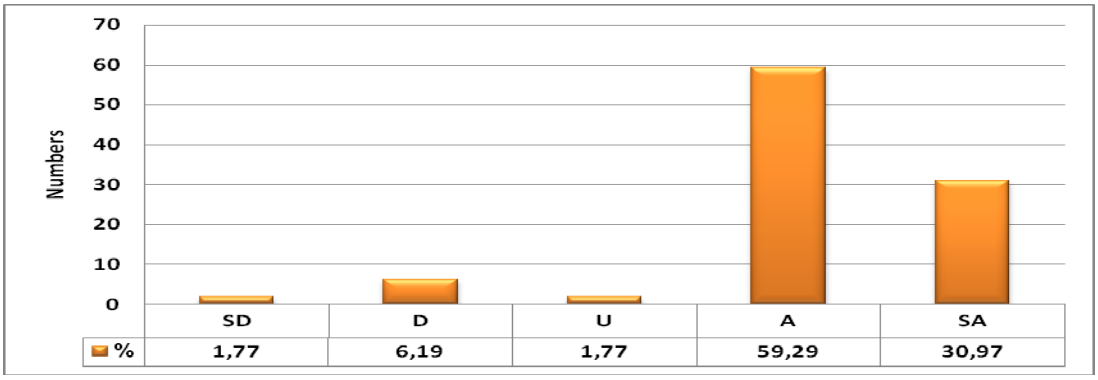

Figure 3.13. Necessity of improving teachers' theoretical knowledge of peer feedback

3.2.4. Factors Affecting Teachers' Attitudes

Section three of the questionnaire is intended to look into the factors affecting teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback, which is the core of the third research question. It is an attempt to explore the authentic factors that hinder teachers from incorporating peer feedback in their writing instruction. The five statements (factors) put forward are the result of the researchers' conceptualisation of the issue, however, more authentic factors will be generated from participants' responses to the interview questions. Table 3.3. presents the distribution of teachers' degrees of agreement or disagreement with the factors proposed. This will be followed by an independent analysis of every single statement through a bar graph.

S.	SD		D		U		A		SA	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
14	4	3,54	5	4,42	7	6,19	28	24,78	69	61,06
15	9	7,96	7	6,19	19	16,81	42	37,17	36	31,86
16	3	2,65	3	2,65	5	4,42	38	33,63	64	56,64
17	6	5,31	8	7,08	5	4,42	57	50,44	37	32,74
18	2	1,77	8	7,08	14	12,39	62	54,87	27	23,89

Table 3.3. Frequency and percentage distribution of different factors

Statement 14. Students' actual linguistic competence is too weak to give appropriate feedback on each other's writings. This statement reveals whether teachers' consider the low level of their students as hindering factor from using peer feedback. The results showed that 61.06 % of the participants strongly agreed, and 24.78 % agreed that students' level was weaker than to give feedback to each other. The disagreement rate was too low; 4.42 % preferred to disagree, and 3.54 % strongly disagreed. Slightly above 6 % remained neutral.

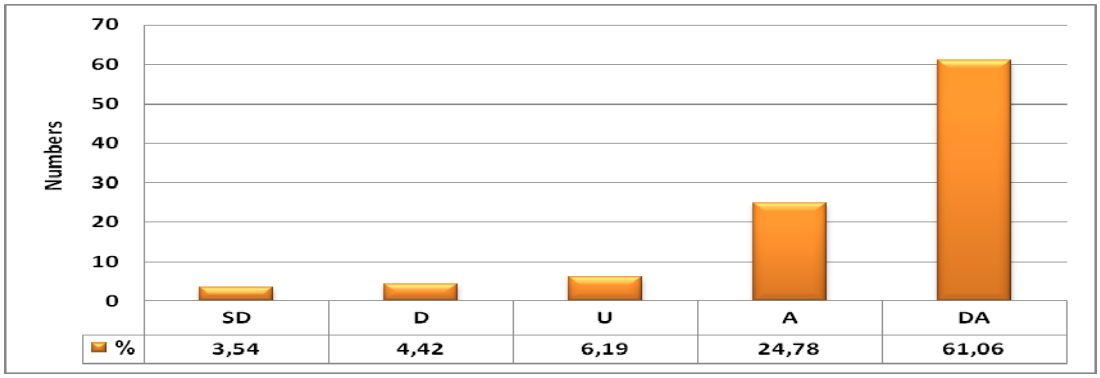

Figure 3.14. Impact of students' level on teachers' use of peer feedback

Statement 15. Students prefer teacher feedback because they view peer feedback as an unreliable source of information. This factor reflects to what extent teachers' attitudes can be affected by students perception of peer feedback. A total number of 78 (i.e. 68.03%) teachers confirmed the view that students would not appreciate their peers comments. 19 teachers were undecided, 7 of them disagreed, and 9 others strongly disagreed with the statement.

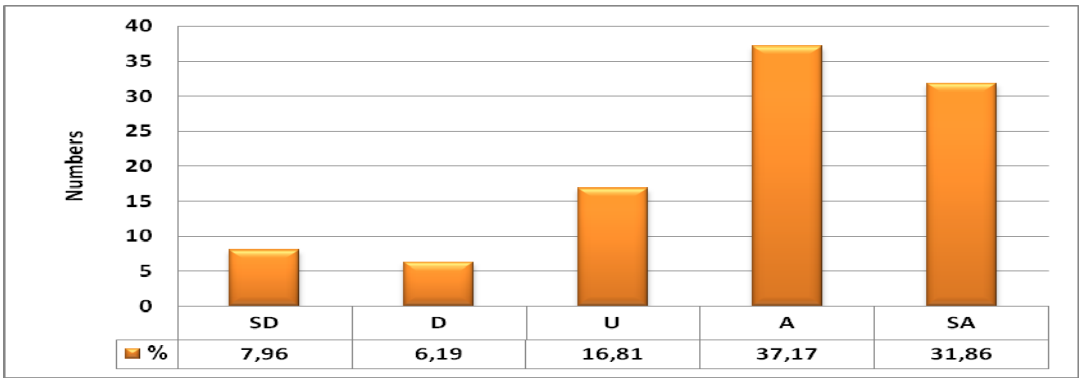

Figure 3.15. Students' preference for teacher feedback

Statement 16. The time allotted for teaching English is not enough to do peer feedback activity. This statement allows us to learn about the impact of the time (weekly hours) devoted to EFL instruction (in all streams) on teachers' preferences with regard to the implementation of peer feedback. The rate recorded for both agreement options was very high, as 90% of the respondents affirmed the statement. 4.42 % of the participants neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, whereas, both disagreement options got 2.65 % each.

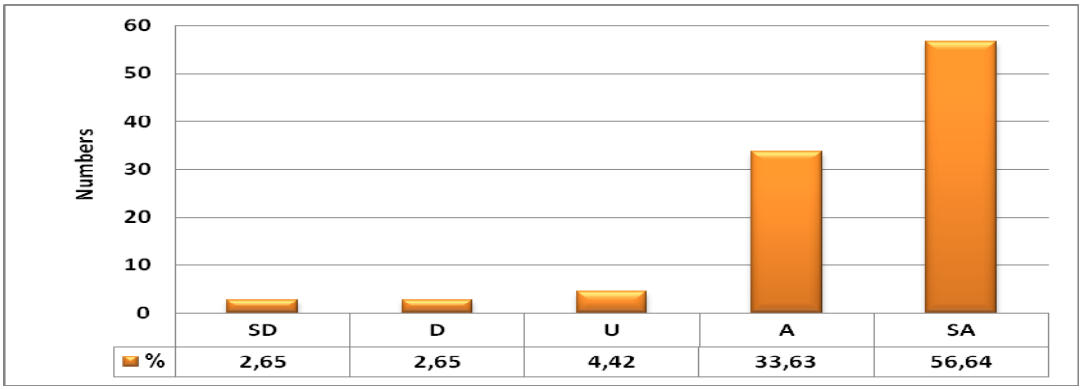

Figure 3.16. Insufficiency of the time allotted for EFL instruction

Statement 17. My theoretical knowledge of peer feedback approach is not good enough to use it in my writing class. Teachers' responses to such a statement may give an idea about their actual knowledge of the theoretical bases of peer feedback, which may help them manage it successfully in their classes. Figure 3.17. below reflects teachers' ignorance of the theoretical underpinnings of peer feedback at rate of 83.18 %. While 7.08 % preferred to disagree with the statement, 5.31 % opted for the strongly disagree option. The percentage of those who remained undecided was 4.42 %.

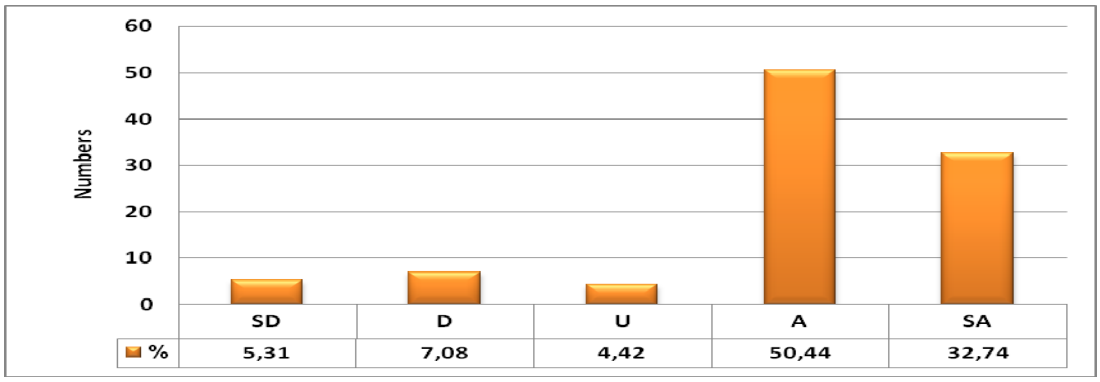

Figure 3.17. Teachers' ignorance about theoretical underpinnings of peer feedback

Statement 18. I did not receive any training about how to manage peer feedback activity in class. The final statement in this attitudinal questionnaire checks whether or not teachers received any training vis-à-vis peer feedback provision. Teachers provided the following findings: 89 teachers confirmed the statement (78.76 % for both agreement options), fourteen of them were undecided, eight expressed their disagreement with the statement, and two teachers only strongly disagreed with it.

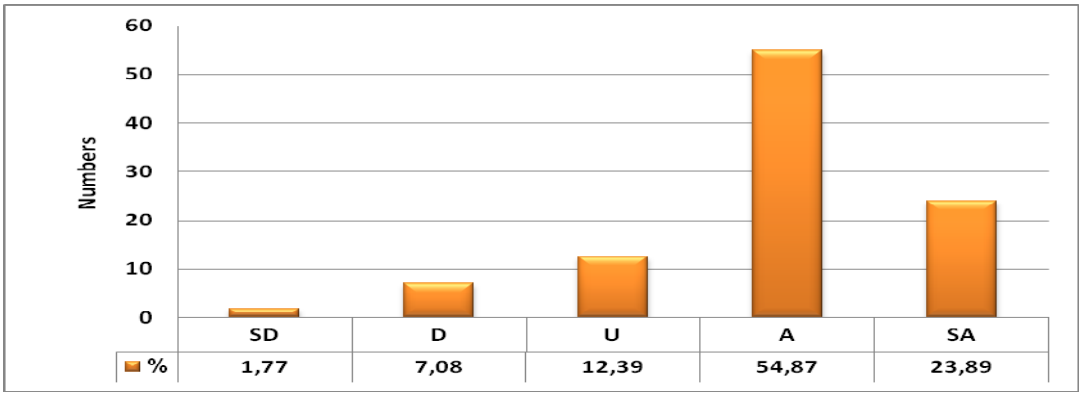

Figure 3.18. Lack of teacher training on peer feedback provision

3.3.Analysis of the Interview Findings

Qualitative data obtained from the semi-structured interview were analysed according to the steps explained in the Methodology Chapter. This analysis mainly involved reading through the data texts many times, assigning codes to emergent themes and sub-themes, representing the findings through visual displays and narrative discussions, and then,

providing appropriate interpretation to the findings comparing them to existing literature. The semi-structured interview was designed to gather in-depth information about the second and third research questions in particular:

- Do teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback affect their instructional practices?
- What factors influence teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback?

Analysis of the qualitative data resulted in major themes and sub-themes, which are summarised in Table 3.4. below.

Themes	Sub-themes
1/ Teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback	- Usefulness of peer feedback in enhancing student's writing - Usefulness of peer feedback in fostering learner autonomy
2/ Teachers' practices with regard to peer feedback	- Incorporation of peer feedback into writing classes - Role of students in the writing process - Teachers' role in the writing process
3/ Factors leading to teachers' non-use of peer feedback	- Lack of theoretical knowledge and teacher training - Weak level of students - Insufficiency of time allotted to teaching EFL - Length of official programme - Large classes
4/ Willingness to use peer feedback in future classes	- Deepening of theoretical knowledge of peer feedback - Introducing peer feedback to students

Table 3.4. Themes and subthemes of interview findings

The following is an explanation of the emergent themes and sub-themes outlined in Table 3.4. above.

Theme 1: Teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback

Findings of the interview showed that the attitudes of secondary school teachers towards peer feedback were mostly negative although variations were marked with regard to the following subthemes.

Sub-theme 1: Usefulness of peer feedback in enhancing student's writing

Four out of five of the informants (80 %) expressed a strong negative attitude towards the fact that peer feedback could help *their* students improve their writing skills. One participant (P.5), however, reported that peer feedback could enhance students' writing skills in relation to language forms in specific if students received appropriate training. Participant (P. 2) said:

> I don't think that the practice of peer feedback will enable my students to improve their skills in writing. Many of them (students) don't even write their names correctly. So, how can they correct their peers' mistakes?

Informant (P. 4) strongly agreed with (P. 2). She added:

> My students study Economy and Management, and don't perceive English as an important school subject . . . whenever I ask them to write about a topic, they just don't do it and say they are busy revising other subjects. My students don't write and don't want to learn how to write.

Nevertheless, (P. 5) had a more optimistic view when she assumed that peer feedback could be beneficial to students in certain instances:

> In my opinion, peer feedback is an effective instructional tool in the hands of teachers. They can adapt it to the interests and needs of their students to gain some good results.

For example, they can use it to detect incorrect language forms, say present simple, in writing after being presented well to students.

Sub-theme 2: Usefulness of peer feedback in fostering learner autonomy

Interestingly, as shown in Table 3.5. below, all participants doubted about the effectiveness of peer feedback in increasing students' sense of responsibility towards their learning.

Peer feedback fosters learner autonomy	
Yes	**No**
0 (0 %)	5 (100 %)

Table 3.5. Impact of peer feedback on students' autonomy

Participant (P.3) told the researcher that he could not image his students to learn English by themselves without teachers' supervision and guidance. He confirmed “we do everything for them without seeing good results, what if we leave them alone”. Even informant (P. 5), who almost agreed with the first statement (in sub-theme 1), showed a negative attitude as to the impact of peer feedback on boosting students' autonomy, “I assume that peer feedback is to some extent useful, but not to the point that it enables students (at least my students) to be autonomous learners. This may be possible in other teaching contexts”.

Theme 2: Teachers' practices with regard to peer feedback

Answers of the interviewees revealed that secondary school teachers' behaviours (practices) generally matched their attitudes towards peer feedback, that is, they did not use peer feedback in their writing classes.

Sub-theme 1: Incorporation of peer feedback into writing classes

Three of the informants (60 %) who expressed strong negative attitudes towards the usefulness of peer feedback in teaching writing, stated that they have never used it. One interviewee (P.2) said that he used it few times since the adoption of process approach into Algerian writing classes, "As a beginning teacher, I used peer feedback only two or three times. This experience was, unfortunately, unsuccessful because my students could not spot weaknesses in their writings. So, I simply gave up using it". Conversely, participant (P.5) confirmed:

> Despite the difficulties connected with peer feedback provision, I still use it when I teach writing. I noticed that my students like working together in all types of tasks. So, I want to make profit of this characteristic in my students and get them engaged in collaborative learning, which has many benefits in my view".

Sub-theme 2: Role of students in the writing process

Approximately three-quarters of the questionnaire informants agreed that students' role during the process of writing was to write a composition according to the guidelines set by the teacher, and then, gave it to him or her for correction. Nevertheless, one participant (20 %) assumed that students were supposed to exchange drafts with their peers and correct each other's grammatical mistakes. (P.5) added that "based on the feedback they receive from their peers, students write a final draft, then, read it out to the class for discussion, or give it to the teacher for further correction".

Sub-theme 3: Teacher's roles in the writing process

When it comes to teacher's roles, qualitative findings exhibited that the majority of the participants assumed product-oriented teacher roles, wherein, they set the task, guided students' during on-writing activities and gave help, and then, corrected the final product (teacher feedback). One interviewee (P.1) opined that he was always obliged to supervise his students from the beginning of the task till he collected the papers, otherwise, they would not finish it up. However, when asked if he corrected his students' writings, he answered "Frankly speaking, I sometimes correct students' compositions, and sometimes not. It depends on time and the load of work".

Theme 3: Factors leading to teachers' non-use of peer feedback

As far as the factors that shape teachers' attitudes towards and the practice of peer feedback, predominant views from informants focused on three major factors: lack of theoretical background information and appropriate training, students' low linguistic competence, and time constraints. Nonetheless, other important factors were also mentioned. Table 3.6. below presents in order the major factors stated by participants with reference to frequency of responses.

Factors	F	%
1- Lack of theoretical knowledge and teacher training	5	100 %
2- Weak level of students	5	100 %
3- Insufficiency of time allotted to teaching EFL	4	80 %
4- Length of 3rd year programme	4	80 %
5- Large classes	2	40 %

Table 3.6. Frequency of factors affecting teachers' attitudes

Sub-theme 1: Lack of theoretical knowledge and teacher training

As displayed in Table 3.6. above, all informants (100 %) confirmed that the lack of sound theoretical information about peer feedback, and the absence of appropriate training on how to conduct it in writing classes represented an obstacle that would hinder any teacher from introducing it to his or her students. For instance, (P.3) reported:

> Honestly, I did not know about both terms *peer feedback* and *process approach* until I participated in this study. I spent more than twenty years in teaching, and I have never come across these technical terms even after the implementation of CBA. Also, we (teachers of EL-Oued) have never been told how to use peer feedback in teaching writing within process-oriented approach.

Participant (P.1) added "although I graduated with a Master's degree only three years ago, I have no idea about peer feedback, and it was not part of the writing module syllabus at university. I knew about peer feedback when I started teaching".

Sub-theme 2: Weak level of students

Teachers' responses with regard to students' low linguistic competence scored 100 % as well. That is, all of informants admitted that students were unable to perform peer feedback activity and achieve encouraging results. Even interviewee (P.5), who stated earlier that she used peer feedback, confessed:

> I agree with the claim that when students are too weak, peer feedback would rather be difficult, and teachers may suffer a lot to make it a success. Still, I think teachers should be flexible enough and adapt any instructional activity to the level and mainly interests of their students. If teachers just do that, they will gradually achieve success.

Sub-theme 3: Insufficiency of time allotted to teaching EFL

Reponses to this statement showed that most teachers (80 %) believed that peer feedback could not be practised in class within the very few weekly hours allotted to teaching EFL. Interviewee (P.4) put it "I meet my students (Economy and Management) three times a week, and peer feedback activity needs three sessions to be completed. I cannot spend the whole week doing peer feedback. I will not finish the programme this way". Informant (P.2) expressed the same concern:

> According to the official textbook, 3rd year students are asked to write (on different topics) in six occasions (tasks) under three rubrics per unit, and in each time they are supposed to exchange drafts and correct each other's mistakes. If we carry on this way, we will not have any time to deal with other components of the programme.

Sub-theme 4: Length of 3rd year programme

This issue is mostly related to the previous one (time), and the results obtained revealed the same rate, i.e., 80 % of the interviewees shared the same concern. Participants (p.1) and (P.3), for example, agreed that the official 3rd year programme for all streams was overloaded, and they hardly finished all units by the end of the school year. So, they had no escape from excluding peer feedback activity from their writing instruction. Participant (P.4) added "Even in the case of literary streams wherein students study English for four or five hours per week, peer feedback remains a challenge".

Sub-theme 5: Large classes

Two informants (P.1) and (P.3) raised the issue of large classes. They claimed that their classes were always overcrowded and this constituted a great challenge that was nearly impossible to overcome. (P. 1) stated "overcrowded classrooms have a tremendous negative

impact on the quality of education that even the most effective teachers can provide to their students". (P.3) had the same voice when he said:

> An ideal class does not normally exceed twenty students, however, we still teach in classes of forty and sometimes fifty students. we cannot work under such frustrating conditions. As you know, students perform better when the teacher is able to give one on one or small group instruction on a regular basis. In addition, overcrowding increases classroom discipline issues.

Theme 4: Willingness to use peer feedback in future classes

This last theme highlighted teachers' willingness to incorporate peer feedback activity in future writing classes. It also aimed at measuring to what extent teachers benefited from participating in this survey study. Two major sub-themes are explained below.

Sub-theme 1: - Deepening of theoretical knowledge of peer feedback

An interesting finding was that all participants (100 %) confirmed that their participation in this study benefited them too much, and made them aware of many interesting instructional techniques such as peer feedback, which should normally affect the quality of their teaching. Informant (P.3) stated:

> I realise that as soon as I read through the questionnaire, I hurried to my computer and started browsing for the term *peer feedback*. This experience motivated me to get more in-depth information not only about peer feedback, but also about process approach and how to use it in teaching writing to my students.

Sub-theme 2: Introducing peer feedback to students

However, and when it comes to incorporating peer feedback into writing instruction, responses showed variation. In addition to (P.5) whose attitude towards peer feedback was positive from the beginning, two informants only (P.1) and (P.2) seemed to have changed their minds, and expressed their enthusiasm to start using peer feedback in their writing instruction as of next school year, which makes a total rate of 60 % of the interview participants. Interview (P.5) reported that she has always used peer feedback to teach writing, and her participation in this study strengthened her conviction that peer feedback was a key feature in modern writing instruction which should not be neglected. Informant (P.1) expressed the following view:

> I started thinking seriously to introduce peer feedback to my students next year. I intend to prepare—this summer— sample writing lessons based on process approach including possible ways to train students on peer feedback provision. I am quite sure that students will find this technique ambiguous and difficult at the beginning, but I wish they would like it afterwards.

In the same line of thought, informant (P.2) pronounced the following statement:

> I confirm that our (teachers) practices with regard to teaching writing are much affected by students' level and their attitudes to the writing skill per se. Their inability and, in many times, unwillingness to write in English are reflected in our decisions as to teach writing or not, and according to which approach. It is, in fact, teachers' responsibility to vary their teaching, and to engage students into new activities in order to maximise their learning.

3.4. Discussion of the Questionnaire and Interview Findings

The focus of this section is to discuss the quantitative and qualitative findings of this study in relation to the existing literature, showing how these findings confirmed or

disconfirmed previous studies. It also aims at stating whether or not these findings provided answers to the research questions, and whether or not the hypotheses set by the researcher were confirmed. Interpretation of the findings will be presented in three sub-sections which seek to answer the three research questions of the study.

3.4.1. Teachers' Attitudes towards Peer Feedback in EFL Writing Classes

Section Two of the questionnaire was designed to investigate Algerian secondary school teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback in EFL writing classes. The results showed that about two thirds of the teachers had predominantly negative attitudes towards peer feedback activity. In fact, they doubted its usefulness to improve students' writing skills, and to foster autonomous learning (see Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.6). However, and when it comes to students' ability to provide trustful feedback, and to spot weaknesses in each other's writings (see Figures 3.3 and 3.4), teachers showed stronger negative attitudes. This could be clearly noticed in the rise in the disagreement rate for S.3 and S.4 which exceeded 75 %. Consistency in teachers' responses to these two statements (3 and 4), accounted for teachers' negative attitudes towards peer feedback. Generally, teachers' negative attitudes were shaped by their strong belief that students' low linguistic competence would undoubtedly hinder any (students') positive engagement into such an activity, and that students themselves would show resistance to it. This finding was in line with the studies of Hong (2006) and Zhang (1995, 1999) which found that L2 students who came from a teacher-fronted classroom did not seem to welcome peer feedback.

This interpretation was supported by findings from the interview, which also revealed that the majority of the informants viewed peer feedback negatively. Interviewer (P.2) pointed out that it was impossible for his students to provide appropriate comments on each other's writings, because many of them could not even write their names correctly. Informant (P.3)

added that his students were always reluctant to write compositions, and did not show any readiness to write.

With reference to teachers' working experience, Figure 3.D. above displayed that the average of the teachers whose experience ranged from two to ten years exceeded 66 % of all the study participants. Those teachers have started teaching after the late reforms which the Algerian educational system witnessed. That is, they have not experienced teaching writing through product approach, which has been replaced by process approach since 2003. However, their attitudes towards peer feedback were negative. This means that the variable of working experience did not affect the results of the study. Age variable did not also affect teachers attitudes. When counted together, the first three age ranges (see Figure 3.B) gave a percentage of 66.35 %, which was approximately the same percentage of the teachers holding negative attitudes towards peer feedback. Teachers' gender and academic degrees were found to have no impact on teachers attitudes as well. The unique statement in which teachers showed more positive attitudes than negative attitudes was statement five. Teachers agreed with the statement at an average of 46.90 %, and disagreed with it at an average of 38.05% (see Figure 3.5. above). This can be explained that teachers considered more the entertaining aspect of peer feedback as an activity in which students would sit together, break the classroom routine, and get away from teachers' control. Concerning statement (S.7), a considerably high number of teachers remained undecided (42.48 %). This was referred to teachers' uncertainty about whether peer feedback would really improve their teaching because they did not use it, and to their ignorance about the main and broad objectives of the national curriculum, which guides EFL teaching in Algeria.

Overall, the findings obtained from the first section of the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview provided a clear answer to the first research question, and confirmed the hypothesis that secondary school teachers had negative attitudes towards peer feedback.

However, teachers' view did not reflect the results of many previous studies which found, for instance, that peer feedback improved students' writing ability and enhanced their critical thinking skills (Lundstrom & Baker, 2009; Moussaoui, 2012); that peer feedback boosted learner autonomy (Harmer, 2007); and that learners could spot their strengths and weaknesses in writing, which increased their confidence and reduced their apprehension (Li, 2009). Teachers' attitudes (negative) were not aligned with Copper's (2011) recommendations that teachers should show commitment and enthusiasm towards the subject matter if they were to inspire and motivate their students. In the same line, Aydin and Başöz (2010) assumed that teachers' negative attitudes towards writing in English might affect students' writing skills as they (students themselves) might develop similar negative attitudes.

3.4.2. Teachers' Instructional Practices with Regard to Peer Feedback

Statements in Section Three attempted to answer the second research question. That is, to learn to what extent teachers' instructional practices were influenced by their attitudes towards peer feedback, and whether or not these practices were aligned with their attitudes and the aims of EFL writing curriculum.

Findings from the attitudinal questionnaire suggested that three quarters of the study participants did not use peer feedback in their writing classes. Teachers indicated that they neither devoted time to the practice of peer feedback nor considered it an important element in teaching writing (see Figures 3.8, 3.9, and 3.10). This means that teachers' instructional practices (behaviours) with regard to peer feedback matched their stated attitudes.

The above results were endorsed by 80 % of the interviewees' responses. Three out five (60 %) of the interviewees stated that they never used peer feedback in teaching writing. Another interviewee (P.2) reported that he only used it two or three times, then stopped as the results were discouraging. This finding raised the issue of implementing change into EFL curriculum without considering teachers' attitudes towards that change. In this regard, Young

and Lee (1984) stated that for any innovation in EFL curriculum to be successful, teachers' attitudes should be examined with care, because teachers are the ones who are supposed to implement any instructional reforms (as cited in Kennedy & Kennedy, 1996).

Teachers' responses to statements (S. 11, S. 12, and S. 13) revealed contradiction in their views. For example, 86 out of 113 participants asserted in (S. 11) that teachers' practices had to be aligned with the objectives of EFL writing curriculum. This interesting finding pointed to the gap between the guidelines and instructions contained in the official syllabus and teachers' actual practices. This gap has to be bridged by means of continuous teacher training and development, and teacher involvement in the process of decision making in all what relates to the educational system.

The same thing can be said about teachers' claims, in statements (S. 12 and S. 13) respectively, that they had to train their students' on how to practice peer feedback (84.95 %), and that they felt obliged to broaden their knowledge of peer feedback approach (90.26 %). These two positive attitudes accounted for teachers' poor theoretical background on the approach of peer feedback, and the necessity—according to them—to enrich their teaching techniques for better future classes. This attitude was consistent with Lundstrom and Baker's (2009) statement that writing teachers needed to understand how they could maximise the benefits of peer feedback, and how these benefits could be generalised to the L2 writing classrooms. This positive attitude was considered as good sign for change in teachers' negative attitude towards peer feedback, because it was found in the study that one of the barriers to the implementation of peer feedback was the lack of basic theoretical knowledge of this approach. Interviewees (P. 1) and (P. 2) both confirmed that they benefited a lot from their participation in this study, and that they would incorporate peer feedback in teaching writing.

Demographic variables described in Section One of the questionnaire were not found to have any impact on teachers' practices. In sum, the findings discussed in this section provided a thorough answer to the second research question, and confirmed the hypothesis that secondary school teachers' actual practices (use or non-use of peer feedback) matched their attitudes. Thus, and as teachers had a negative attitude towards peer feedback, they did not integrate it into their writing instruction.

3.4.3. Factors Affecting Teachers' Attitudes towards Peer Feedback

This last section of the attitudinal questionnaire aimed to answer the third research question through exploring the major factors that shaped teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback. The researcher proposed five major factors he thought they would explain teachers' non-use of peer feedback. More factors were generated from the interview informants. Although the findings revealed variation in teachers' agreement with each statement, the scores for all factors were high (see Table 3.3.). The first factor which affected (negatively) teachers' attitudes and prevented them from incorporating peer feedback was the shortage of time devoted to EFL teaching. 90.26 % of the participants viewed that the time allotted to teaching English was insufficient, and that the practice of peer feedback needed appropriate time. This obstacle was also supported by interviewee (P. 4), who stated that if she used peer feedback on a regular basis, she would not finish the programme.

Secondly, teachers referred their non-use of peer feedback to the weak level of their students (85.84 %). With reference to the interview participants, even informant (P.5), who had a positive attitude towards peer feedback, stressed that students' linguistic competence was too low, and this weakness constituted a great challenge which teachers had to face.

The third factor behind teachers' negative attitudes towards the incorporation of peer feedback was their ignorance of the theoretical underpinnings of peer feedback approach.

83.18 % of the subjects reported that their knowledge of peer feedback was little, and this prevented them from using it. This rate involved experienced teachers as well as newly graduated ones. Interviewee (P.1), who graduated with a Master's degree three years ago, reported that peer feedback approach was totally new to her.

Lack of training was another barrier to effective implementation of peer feedback as suggested by 78.76 % of the study participants. Interview informant (P.3), who was the most experienced teacher among all of the teachers of the study, asserted that he and his colleagues have never received any training on the use of peer feedback in teaching writing.

The factor which got the lowest rating (69.03 %) according to teachers' responses, was students' preference for teacher feedback. Teachers opined that students would not trust their peers' comments, because they thought that they would not benefit from them, and that feedback was better received from an expert (teacher). This finding was consistent with Leki's (1990) statement that students' comments were sometimes unclear and unfocused, and Amores's (1997) statement that students rejected their peers' criticism and did not incorporate their comments in their final drafts. That is why students opted for teacher feedback.

In addition to these five factors, interview informants highlighted two other factors: length of the programme and the large classes. With reference to the former, 80 % of the interviewees indicated that the official programme for all 3rd year steams was overloaded, and that it was not possible to practice peer feedback to the detriment of—according to them—more important elements. Informants (P. 1) and (P.3), for instance, claimed that they would not finish the programme if they used feedback in each writing activity. As for the issue of large classes, participants agreed that working in overloaded classes constituted a big challenge, especially, when the subject matter was a foreign language. Teachers assumed that

ideal EFL classes should not have more than twenty students so that teachers could teach more effectively.

3.5.Conclusion

This chapter has been devoted to the analysis and discussion of the data obtained from the teachers' attitudinal questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The study yielded interesting results about the attitudes of the secondary school teachers of El-Oued towards peer feedback, the factors affecting these attitudes, and teachers' classroom practices with regard to writing instruction and the use of peer feedback. The findings of the study revealed that teachers had negative attitudes towards peer feedback and its usefulness in improving students' writing skills. This explained their non-use of peer feedback and preference for teacher feedback, i.e., teachers' practices matched their attitudes. Teachers' negative attitudes were referred to many factors such as the low linguistic competence of students, the lack of theoretical information and training, and the insufficiency of the time allotted to EFL teaching. Nonetheless, a great number of teachers' expressed their willingness to broaden their theoretical knowledge of peer feedback approach, and confirmed that their instructional practices had to be aligned with the objectives of EFL curriculum. This was perceived as a good sign of an expected change in teachers' attitudes towards adopting more positive attitudes towards peer feedback and its incorporation in Algerian EFL writing classes. In other words, teachers' practices may change if their attitudes change. The next chapter will consider how to resolve such issues, and will elaborate on the main implications of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR:

Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

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4.1. Introduction

This concluding chapter outlines the main findings of the study, and presents the major recommendations which the researcher came up with from this research project. Based on the results discussed in the previous chapter, some pedagogical implications for the successful incorporation of peer feedback technique into secondary school writing classes will be proposed. This chapter also provides a number of recommendations for decision makers in relation to the strategies to be considered when implementing any systematic innovations to teaching programmes. Finally, the chapter ends up with the limitations identified by the researcher and some recommendations for future research.

4.2. Pedagogical Implications

One of the major goals of educational research is to inform practice or action. In other words, a good educational research should produce high quality findings with implications beyond the scope of study. The following are some implications for teaching that are supposed to contribute to the improvement of secondary school students' writing ability and their motivation to write in English through the implementation of peer feedback.

4.2.1. Importance of Adopting Process-Oriented Writing Instruction

Since English language teaching in Algeria has shifted from teacher-based instruction to learner-centred teaching, where a high degree of learner autonomy is encouraged, EFL teachers are recommended to opt for more modern approaches to teaching writing, that is, process approach, which was officially implemented in the Algerian writing classes following the educational reforms and the adoption of CBA as a teaching approach in 2003.

Findings of the study revealed that product-oriented writing instruction is still entrenched in the beliefs of the teachers, and hence, preventing their students from engaging in more

useful collaborative activities, and benefiting from the multiple merits reported on process approach. Teachers must be aware that students' final product in writing is no more the main focus of teaching writing, but the processes students go through when they write (White and Arndt,1991); and that their role is that of a facilitator (Zhang, 1995). Assuming such a role, teachers offer students plenty of opportunities to learn in collaboration (Hyland & Hyland, 2006), to develop sound analytical and critical reading and writing skills (Ferris, 2003), and to start trusting their own abilities in writing (Kulsirisawad, 2012).

Teachers should know as well that their instructional practices need to be aligned with the broader objectives of the Algerian English Framework (AEF), and based on the theoretical underpinnings of the newly adopted teaching approach, namely, CBA, " which tends to make the learning skills related to the outside environment," (Medjahed, 2011, p. 72). That is, to equip students with the necessary competences that help them face various problem-solving situations or circumstances throughout and beyond the school context. In fact, enabling students to master the writing processes—through process approach—is one of the intended competences described by EFL curriculum.

4.2.2. Introducing Peer Feedback to Students

Teachers who use process approach encourage students to see writing not in terms of an end product, but as a recursive process of many stages including prewriting, drafting, evaluating, and revising. According to Hong (2006), this approach focuses on how to revise in response to feedback from the reader whether the reader is the teacher, a peer, or the author him/herself. This implies that there is a strong connection between process approach and peer feedback. Moreover, and as peer feedback is one of the activities repeatedly emphasised in the 3rd year textbook (*New Prospects*), teachers need to consider integrating peer feedback into their classes as part of the assessment for learning practices, taking into account the level

and needs of their students. This will certainly have a positive impact on students' attitudes towards writing and achievement. Researchers suggested many techniques and strategies for introducing peer feedback smoothly to students. Ferris (2003) proposed a seven-step procedure to familiarise students with peer feedback. These steps—thoroughly explained in the literature review chapter—are summarised in the following points:

- **clarity of purpose:** teachers should explain to students in advance what they are expected to learn from giving or receiving feedback from their peers. This helps them learn about the various uses and benefits of this technique.
- **group size:** teachers need to decide upon the size of the group when carrying out peer feedback. Students can work in pairs, in small groups, or in entire-class workshops. Decisions of this kind draw on many factors like the focus of feedback, the format of feedback, time constraints, etc. Groups can be consistent, or can be changed.
- **timing of peer feedback:** depending on the purpose teachers want their students to use feedback for, they can plan to introduce peer feedback at any stage of the writing process—at the beginning, at the end, etc.
- **supportive praise:** in order for peer feedback sessions to be successful, teachers need to express positive attitudes towards students comments all the time regardless of their worthiness. They can as well assign grades to these comments to motivate students, and make them see the values of the work they are doing.
- **creating a supportive environment:** above all, students should be trained on how to attend to peer feedback technique through adequate and continuous training. Training sessions allow students to gain familiarity with the technique, understand their role, and most importantly learn to trust the comments they receive from their peers.

Overall, improving the learning conditions can be best achieved if the students are encouraged to be actively involved in the learning process. In modern EFL teaching, peer feedback is considered as one of these activities which encourage students' involvement in their learning, and increase their awareness of their role as independent learners. That is why peer feedback should be made a regular activity and part of EFL instruction (Farrah, 2012).

4.2.3. Training Students on Peer Feedback Provision

Although the practice of peer feedback may be connected with some difficulties, many researchers (e.g., Chisholm, 1991; Farrah, 2012; Lam, 2010; Moore & Teather, 2012) argue that training can help students overcome many obstacles and enjoy this activity. Moore and Teather (2012) ascertain that if students are provided with instructions detailing the process and how to provide the feedback, and are clearly informed on what is expected of them in this process, they will learn a lot. Lam (2010) stresses that students should be systematically trained through workshops before the implementation of peer feedback. This preliminary training helps students become more competent in analysing their own peer feedback and assessing its effectiveness. Chisholm (1991) confirms that an initial training exercise during the first week of writing sessions to introduce students to what peer review entails, and to demonstrate procedures for collaborative peer feedback of writing, is an essential step.

There is no unique model for peer feedback training procedures. There are, in fact, as many models as there are researchers and practitioners, and teachers are recommended to adapt these models to the level and needs of their students. Lam (2010) proposes a three-stage peer feedback training workshop, which lasts for three hours—an hour for each stage. Lam's model, which has been considerably approved by many researchers and practitioners, is thoroughly explained through Table 4.1. below, and the discussion following it.

Stage 1 Modelling	Stage 2 Exploring	Stage 3 Consciousness-raising
• purpose of peer review • rationale of training workshop • introduction of four-step procedure • introduction of error correction • demonstration of how to attend to both content and language errors with reference to the scoring rubrics	• practice of peer review procedures • practice of four-step procedure • discussion of quality of rehearsed peer marking • presentation of peer review process • clearing up students' misunderstandings and resolving uncertainties	• preparing a mini-essay for practice • teaching students how to analyse peer feedback based upon area, nature and type • teaching students how to analyse the effectiveness of peer feedback in terms of incorporation rate and reasons why some feedback is not adopted • keeping a peer review log for consciousness-raising purposes

Table 4.1. Peer review training workshop. (Lam, 2010, p. 121)

- **Modelling:** This stages involve primarily defining peer feedback and explaining its benefits, and informing students about the objectives of the training workshop. Next, the procedure of peer feedback is explained and modelled. This includes four steps.

1) clarifying (to elucidate writer's intentions): through questions like "Do you want to say . . .", students try to elicit what their peers want to say in a sentence or in another. The aim here is to have an idea about the content of the writing.

2) identifying (to search for problematic areas): after getting the meaning, students move to look for probable content errors (in first reading) and form errors (in second reading) in their peers writing. They can use comments like "It sounds to me that this issue you presented is too subjective," or questions like "Do you realise that . . . and . . . are incompatible?"

3) explaining (to describe the nature of problems): this is a crucial stage wherein students are supposed to justify what they perceive as erroneous in their peers' writings, otherwise, they will not incorporate their comments. At this stage, students should know the difference between treatable and non-treatable errors. Treatable errors are more rule-governed and are generally easy to explain and correct like tenses, passive form, pluralisation, etc. Non-treatable errors are more difficult to explain and correct like prepositions, sentence patterns, etc.

4) giving suggestions (to provide workable suggestions for modifications): after identifying content and form errors, peer reviewers move to correcting these errors and suggesting alternative patterns to improve their peers' piece of writing. A detailed list of the accurate operational procedures for students to follow when practicing peer feedback activity, is included in (Appendix 4).

- **Exploring:** This stage involves students in the practice of the four-step procedure with some authentic writing samples, which are not necessarily written by students themselves. During this very stage, teachers can assess to what extent students have mastered the four steps described above, and how well they (students) can detect content and form errors before they explain them and suggest modifications to their

colleagues. As previously articulated, students make a first reading, and write a number of content errors according to their order of occurrence using a guidance sheet for Peer (see Appendix 5). After that, they read the writing sample a second time and identify language errors. Students now exchange their sample comments with each other, and discuss their quality. If time allows, teachers may ask a few students to read out their comments to the class for further deepening of the practice of the four stages. Teachers can end up this stage with any clarifications or answers to some questions.

- **Consciousness-raising:** In this stage a student is supposed to assume both roles of a writer and a peer reviewer. In the first role, he is coached to analyse his response to his peers' comments, and how he incorporated them; and in the second role he is coached how he can analyse the comments he gave to his peers and study their effectiveness. Consciousness-raising is a stage which aims at helping students engage more autonomously in peer review activities although they still need guidance. Peer comments are coded according to these three aspects:

  (a) area (global or local): comments about content or form respectively.

  (b) nature (revision-oriented or non-revision-oriented): comments given for further revision or not.

  (c) type (evaluation, clarification, suggestion or alteration): comments given to assess the content of a sentence, to ask for more information, to suggest a modification, or to immediately modify.

As illustrated above, peer feedback training workshops have a pivotal role to play in facilitating students' engagement into this effective writing-enhancement technique, which permits them to learn from other perspectives, see their own weaknesses, and gain more motivation to improve their writing skills. In addition, these training workshops help students become good peer reviewers and conscientious writers who take responsibility for editing

their own work (Lam, 2010). Therefore, EFL teachers should take this step forward, and offer students a good opportunity to learn and relax in a revision process (Srichanyachon, 2012).

4.3. Recommendations for Decision Makers

It is evident from the research findings that many teachers have reservations about implementing peer feedback activity in their writing classes. They seem to have doubts about how this approach will contribute to the improvement of students' writing skills, and doubts about their own role in the writing classroom according to the new teaching approach. With such doubts, it could be difficult for peer feedback—or any other activity—to be implemented and to achieve its aims. Therefore , and to overcome teachers' reservations about innovations, and to ensure the successful implementation of any new teaching mechanisms, some measures have to be taken by decision makers at different levels.

4.3.1. Consideration of Teachers' Attitudes

The implementation of any new teaching approach or technique in the field of education—peer feedback in our case—is assigned to teachers whose perspective is of a paramount importance in determining the success of this implementation. In other words, teachers' attitudes and practices with regard to peer feedback are central to its implementation and efficacy in Algerian secondary school writing classes. Therefore, considering teachers' views and attitudes with regard to instructional innovations is a decisive step decision makers should undergo to guarantee the contribution of all effective members of the teaching-learning process, and to avoid reservations. In this vein, Medjahed (2011) corroborates that in all the world, teachers participate in deciding on what methods and strategies they implement. But, what happens in Algeria, Medjahed adds, is that educational decisions are centralized, wherein inspectors play the most important role. What is even worse, according to her, is that sometimes these decisions are built on political and economic considerations, and sometimes

contradict with what must be taught. This, situation yields pedagogical reservations on the part of teachers, which may be reduced only through training.

Teachers know best what the curriculum should look like, and what are their students' needs. They can provide insight into the types of materials, activities and specific skills that need to be included at each level. After all, they are the ones who work directly with the students meant to benefit from the curriculum. Therefore, and to create a balanced curriculum, teachers must play an integral role in every step of the process of curriculum design. Assuming this role, teachers will gain ownership in the final product, and feel more confident that the curriculum was designed according to their concerns and the needs of their particular students in mind.

Decision makers should be aware, then, that failure in the effective implementation of any new instructional approach, method, or technique is not the mere responsibility of teachers only, but of all stakeholders forming the educational community. So, Professional and expert teacher trainers should participate in making decisions related to their profession, and have their own voice in designing teaching curriculum and textbooks.

4.3.2. Importance of Teacher Training

The field of teaching witnesses dynamic developments all the time, and the same thing applies to teaching approaches and methods. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to undergo training courses regularly to keep up-to-date on the latest innovations, and to improve their theoretical and practical knowledge on different teaching matters. Teachers' professional skills have been found to be among the most influencing factors on students' achievement. So, it is crucial to pay close attention to how we train and support both novice and experienced teachers.

As far as novice teachers are concerned, it can said that they are left without adequate support and supervision from both inspectors and their veteran teachers. Although novices are in many cases assigned to challenging classes (3rd year classes), they hardly receive coaching from teacher trainers to help them (novices) learn from their practices, and analyse and reflect on their teaching. One of the major tasks assigned to teacher trainers is to mentor novice teachers through class observations, workshops, conferences, pedagogical meetings, and the like. Nevertheless, when it comes to reality, none of these supportive mechanisms are given consideration. Therefore, teacher trainers' role in mentoring new teachers has to be re-examined and highlighted.

The role of inspectors is as well central to the development of teachers' professional skills, especially new ones. Having a great number of teachers (sometimes 300 teachers) under their supervision, inspectors in Algeria remain unable to cope with all the tasks they should do. However, the most pivotal task an inspector should assume is to provide adequate supervision and support to teachers via seminars, attending class demonstrations, lectures, etc. With the load of work they have, inspectors rarely conduct any of these activities. Sometimes new teachers do not see the inspector until the day of their tenure (CAPES).

As for experienced teachers, it is critical for them to engage in in-service regular training course essential for the development and improvement of their teaching. Ongoing professional development keeps teachers up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more. It is not difficult to observe that there are no special training programmes designed for in-service teacher training in Algeria. Teachers may spend many years in teaching without attending a single seminar or a training course. This undoubtedly yields a continuous decline in teachers' competences and skills, which ultimately affects students' achievement and development.

One of the solutions to the shortage in teacher training and development programmes in Algeria, is to think of re-opening the teacher training institutions which were sent to retirement many years ago. These institutions used to offer new teachers great opportunities to practise teaching under the supervision of expert teachers, get constructive feedback about their performance, and reflect on their teaching styles. Even veteran teachers used to undergo continuous teacher development intensive courses, which permitted them to assess their teaching and learn new techniques. It will be, in fact, a clever decision if officials listen to the calls of educationists and the voices of syndicates, and decide to bring to life such institutions and allow teachers to enhance their professional skills.

4.3.3. Reducing Class Size

Working in classes larger than 25 or 30 students constitutes a big challenge for teachers. Overcrowded classrooms make discussion and group work more difficult because students are less engaged, and teachers may find it difficult to keep students on task as they monitor pair and group work. Sometimes even the classroom space is too limited for some energetic activities such as role-playing. In many Algerian secondary schools, the number of students per class exceeds 45 students. This widens the possibility of individual differences among learners, and creates discipline problems, which render a teacher's job to a disciplinarian rather than an instructor. Although researchers designed many strategies for coping with large classes, teaching such classes proved to have many disadvantages that prevent teachers from offering high quality teaching to their students.

Given this situation, it is high time the educational authorities thought of reducing class size to the norms used in the world. Building more schools and recruiting new teachers may be too costly in terms of budget, but the pedagogical gains are priceless.

4.3.4. Balancing the Official Programme and EFL Teaching Time

Another issue repeatedly discussed in the secondary education, particularly for 3rd year classes, is the length of the official programme. Teachers keep complaining about the length of the teaching units and themes they should teach with no sufficient time allotted to cover this programme. Of course, the situation is aggravated when teachers go on a strike. There is an urgent call for a wise decision to slim down the official programme, and create an appropriate balance between the teaching units and the yearly teaching hours devoted to completing such units.

4.4. Limitations of the study

Although the study could have yielded some useful implications for the effective implementation of peer feedback, some limitations have to be considered. First of all, the researcher collected the data for the study according to the participant teachers' self-reported information: what the participants reported about their attitudes and practices in their classrooms. The researchers did not carry out a classroom observation to learn about the actual teachers' classroom practices with regard to peer feedback activity. In fact, the main focus of this study was on teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback, rather than how these attitudes influenced teachers' classroom practices. Another reason, was that the researcher drew on the widely acknowledged definition of *attitude* as being an unobservable hypothetical construct, which can be examined through overt behaviours (practices) or self-reporting. The researcher, then, opted for the second choice for it would permit saving much time and effort.

The second limitation was the small number of the study participants: 113 questionnaire participants, and five interview informants. This limited the generalisation of the findings to the larger ideal population—all Algerian teachers. The findings of the study expressed the

views of the teachers of El-Oued only, and therefore, it was not appropriate to assume that all secondary school teachers in Algeria had the same attitudes towards peer feedback.

Another limitation was that no tests for establishing the validity and reliability of the questionnaire items were conducted by the researcher, who constructed the questionnaire for the unique purpose of being used in the present study. However, the researcher conducted a pilot study to determine whether or not participants could understand the items of the questionnaire. The results of the pilot study showed that the participants understood all the items, and even proposed some modifications.

4.5. Recommendations for future research

The study primarily investigated teachers' attitudes towards the effectiveness of peer feedback in developing students' writing abilities, and the impact of these attitudes on their classroom practices. However, classroom observations to understand whether the teachers really do what they report doing in the questionnaire and interviews were not undertaken. Thus, further research using observations, might be carried out to understand whether, to what extent, and how secondary school teachers actually incorporate this technique in their writing instruction practices. Observations may also help reveal the effectiveness of peer feedback activity and students' engagement.

To overcome the issue of generalisability and to gain an accurate representation of the whole ideal population, other studies could be conducted in the form of a wide-scale survey. Of course, the aim is not, and cannot be, to survey all secondary school teachers in Algeria, but to gain access to the biggest possible number in various regions. This is possible if future researchers adopt researcher-triangulation technique. This implies involving more than one researcher from different places employing the same tools to answer the same questions.

As a good number of teachers who participated in the study expressed their enthusiasm and motivation to implement peer feedback in their future writing classes, case studies might be conducted to understand how teachers plan the integration of this activity into their teaching, and the training workshops they intend to organise for their students to introduce them to peer feedback.

Students' attitudes and perceptions are as well of paramount importance for the success of any innovations in the field of education. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies will be conducted to investigate students' attitudes towards peer feedback approach, their motivation to practice such a technique, and to what extent giving and receiving feedback from peers may improve their writing skills.

4.6. Conclusion

The final chapter of the present study has been intended to present the main recommendations for practice and for further research. Building on the findings of the research, some pedagogical implications were proposed to secondary school teachers to help them incorporate peer feedback into their writing instruction. This is mainly meant to contribute to the improvement of teachers' instructional practices with regard to peer feedback, and the teaching of the writing skill in Algerian secondary schools. The implications stressed the necessity of introducing peer feedback to students, explaining its merits to students, and implementing it through adequate strategies to enable students to gain familiarity with this new classroom activity. A whole section has been devoted to some recommendations for decision makers. This basically involved considering teachers' attitudes towards pedagogical innovations, and the necessity of re-opening teacher training institutions, which provide higher-quality ongoing professional training. At the end, the limitations of the study were acknowledged, and recommendations for future research were displayed.

General Conclusion

The shift away from teacher-based approach towards learner-centred teaching put the learner in the centre of the learning process. This new approach, which seeks to foster learner autonomy and equip learners with lifelong skills, necessitated assuming new roles by teachers as that of a facilitator and guide. Peer feedback, as a key feature of learner-oriented classes, is one of the major activities designed to enhance students' writing skills within process approach. Although peer feedback technique has been implemented in the Algerian EFL curriculum many years ago, a good number of secondary school teachers are still reluctant to incorporate it into their writing classes.

The aim of this study was to gauge the attitudes of a sample of Algerian secondary school teachers (from El-Oued) towards peer feedback and its usefulness in improving students' writing ability. The study also aimed to identify the factors which could affect teachers' attitudes and the impact of these attitudes on their instructional practices.

To answer the research questions posed at the outset of this research project, a descriptive case study employing two main data collection tools: an attitudinal teachers' questionnaire and a semi-structured interview was used. The quantitative questionnaire addressed 113 randomly-chosen participants, and was followed by five interview sessions with purposefully selected informants. Quantitative data were analysed by means of descriptive statistics, and were represented through frequency tables and bar graphs. Qualitative data were analysed according to thematic approach, that is, transcribed, coded for themes (categories), and interpreted.

The results of the study indicated that teachers mostly had strong negative attitudes towards peer feedback, and doubted its usefulness in improving students' writing skills. The results also revealed that the overwhelming majority of teachers did not use peer feedback in

writing instruction. Teachers reported many factors that impacted on their negative attitudes, and led to their non-use of peer feedback. These factors included the low linguistic competence of the students and their preference for teacher feedback, teachers' ignorance of the advantages of peer feedback due to the lack of theoretical and practical knowledge, and the insufficiency of the time allotted to EFL teaching. Many other factors, however, were generated through interviews like the length of the teaching pogramme and the overcrowded classes.

In addition to these negative attitudes, findings from the study suggested that a good number of teachers expressed their willingness to deepen their knowledge of peer feedback, and to introduce it to students in future writing classes. This interesting finding was constituent with one of the aims of the study, which was to establish a correct understanding of peer feedback technique among teachers, and raise their awareness on its usefulness in improving students' writing skills. All in all, the findings of the study provided appropriate answers to the research questions, and confirmed the hypotheses set at the onset of the study.

Other than the general introduction and general conclusion, the study included four chapters. The first chapter dealt with the research umbrella under which this study was conducted. Chapter two was devoted to the review of literature and the theoretical concepts related to the scope of the study. Data obtained were analysed and discussed in the third chapter. Finally some implications and recommendations for further research were presented in the fourth chapter.

This research project was driven by the theoretical claims that students' engagement in peer feedback activities provides them with great opportunities to develop their writing ability, enhance their critical and communicative skills, and gain responsibility for their own learning. As these intended learning outcomes are clearly pronounced in the official national

syllabus, investigating teachers' attitudes and practices vis-à-vis peer feedback in secondary school writing classes was considered a pedagogical priority. To the researcher's knowledge, this is the first study of its kind to focus on teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback in the secondary education. Many other studies, which the researcher reviewed, surveyed attitudes of either teachers or students at the tertiary level. This adds to the significance of the study, which is hoped to have contributed to the field of educational research in Algeria, raised secondary school teachers' awareness on the usefulness and necessity of implementing peer feedback in their writing classes, and proposed appropriate, practical implications and suggestions for further research.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire of teachers' attitudes towards peer feedback

Dear colleagues,

I am enrolled for a postgraduate study in English Didactics at the university of Sidi Bel-Abbes, and I am conducting a research on **Algerian Secondary School Teachers' Attitudes Towards Peer Feedback in EFL Writing Classes: The case of the teachers of El-Oued.** Please respond to these statements by ticking **(√)** in the spaces that best show your opinion. Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire will be highly appreciated. Please note that this questionnaire will be used only for the sake of this research and the information contained in it is strictly confidential.

SECTION ONE: Background information

Please tick **(√)** the appropriate choices and provide the necessary information.

E-mail (optional)	
Gender	[ ] male [ ] female
Age	[ ] 21-25 [ ] 26-30 [ ] 31-35 [ ] 36-40 [ ] 41-45 [ ] 45+
Academic degree	[ ] BA [ ] Master [ ] Magister [ ] Other: …..……..
Years of teaching experience	[ ] 2-5 [ ] 6-10 [ ] 11-15 [ ] 16-20 [ ] 20+
Name of school	

SECTION TWO: **General attitudes**

Scale: **1**= strongly disagree **2**= disagree **3**= undecided **4**= agree **5**= strongly agree

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	Peer feedback is a useful activity in Algerian secondary school EFL writing classes.					
2	Peer feedback activity enables students to improve their writing skills and enrich the content and form of their writing.					
3	Students are able to give trustful comments on their peers' pieces of writing.					
4	When students engage in peer feedback activity, they become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses in writing.					
5	Students enjoy practising peer feedback activity because it reduces their apprehension and increases their self-confidence.					
6	Peer feedback strengthens students' sense of responsibility for their own learning and boosts autonomous learning.					
7	Emphasis which the national curriculum lays on peer feedback technique is a correct step towards improving English teaching.					

SECTION THREE: **Instructional practices**

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
8	Algerian secondary school teachers must incorporate peer feedback activity in their writing classes.					
9	Peer feedback is part of the process of writing in modern EFL writing classes and Algerian writing classes are not an exception.					
10	The time teachers spend on carrying out peer feedback activity in their writing classes is worth it.					

11	Teachers instructional practices should be aligned with the objectives of EFL writing curriculum.					
12	Teachers should train their students on how to give appropriate comments on their peers' writing.					
13	Teachers have to deepen their theoretical knowledge of peer feedback approach so that they can use it appropriately.					

<u>SECTION FOUR:</u> Factors affecting teachers' attitudes

	Statements	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
14	Students' actual linguistic competence is too weak to give appropriate feedback on each other's writings.					
15	Students prefer teacher feedback because they view peer feedback as an unreliable source of information.					
16	The time allotted for teaching English is not enough to do peer feedback activity.					
17	My theoretical knowledge of peer feedback approach is not good enough to use it in my writing class.					
18	I did not receive any training about how to manage peer feedback activity in class.					

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Appendix 2

Semi-structured interview schedule for secondary school teachers

Respondent:	
Date:	
Time:	
Location:	

Please give full, honest answers to the following questions.

1) How do you teach writing?

- How and how often do you assess your students' writing?

2) Do you think that peer feedback is an effective activity in writing classes? Why or why not?

3) Have you ever used peer feedback technique with your students?

- If yes, what difficulties have you met?
- If no, what are the major factors that have prevented you from using it?

4) What are the challenges in implementing peer feedback in Algerian EFL classes?

5) How do you evaluate you theoretical knowledge of peer feedback approach?

- Have you ever thought of deepening your knowledge of peer feedback?

6) Have you received any training on how to use peer feedback technique in writing classes?

7) Do you support the use of peer feedback in future writing classes? Why or why not?

8) What is your overall comment on peer feedback approach?

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Appendix 3

Distribution of teachers' responses to the attitudinal questionnaire

S.	SD		D		U		A		SA	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	26	23,01	52	46,02	21	18,58	9	7,96	5	4,42
2	32	28,32	41	36,28	20	17,70	12	10,62	8	7,08
3	47	41,59	38	33,63	4	3,54	18	15,93	6	5,31
4	29	25,66	57	50,44	9	7,96	10	8,85	8	7,08
5	19	16,81	24	21,24	17	15,04	39	34,51	14	12,39
6	32	28,32	36	31,86	21	18,58	13	11,50	11	9,73
7	19	16,81	33	29,20	48	42,48	5	4,42	8	7,08
8	33	29,20	52	46,02	16	14,16	7	6,19	5	4,42
9	29	25,66	55	48,67	19	16,81	8	7,08	2	1,77
10	17	15,04	48	42,48	28	24,78	12	10,62	8	7,08
11	3	2,65	9	7,96	15	13,27	64	56,64	22	19,47
12	1	0,88	6	5,31	10	8,85	49	43,36	47	41,59
13	2	1,77	7	6,19	2	1,77	67	59,29	35	30,97
14	4	3,54	5	4,42	7	6,19	28	24,78	69	61,06
15	9	7,96	7	6,19	19	16,81	42	37,17	36	31,86
16	3	2,65	3	2,65	5	4,42	38	33,63	64	56,64
17	6	5,31	8	7,08	5	4,42	57	50,44	37	32,74
18	2	1,77	8	7,08	14	12,39	62	54,87	27	23,89

Appendix 4

Operational Procedures of Peer Review Sessions

1. In pairs, exchange your first draft in the genre of categorization (e.g. nations or careers) with your partner and read it in detail.
2. Use a pencil to annotate your partner's work in the areas of thesis statement, topic sentences, developing ideas and organization in various paragraphs.
3. Jot down your comments and suggestions in the order of occurrence and number the comment/suggestion one after another on the margins.
4. Then, read the draft again and identify some common and "treatable" grammatical errors with a highlighter and a ball-point pen. Do not correct the language errors. Underline or circle those errors with the appropriate error codes.
5. Point out all language and content errors on the draft. If you have doubt about some errors, feel free to contact me. Having entered all your comments, please also record these comments in Part 1 of your peer review log for analysis; then, sign at the bottom of the draft and pass it back to your partner.
6. Let your partner silently read your comments for about 5 to 10 minutes. Then, you need to clarify any points you are not clear about in your partner's work and invite him or her to explain the problematic areas to you.
7. In the meantime, your partner should also explain to you why he or she thinks particular feedback points are inappropriate for his/her draft if necessary.
8. Having received peer feedback from your partner, you (as a writer) need to read all the comments and raise questions if you are not certain about some feedback points. Then, start revising your first draft based upon the feedback, enter any revisions made in Part 2 of the peer review log, and analyze how much peer feedback you have incorporated in the subsequent revision and work out why some feedback cannot be adopted.

Appendix 5

Guidance Sheet for Peer Reviewers

A. What is the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph?

B. Is the introductory paragraph interesting and clearly written?

Attend to the following questions (C-E) when checking from the second to the fifth paragraphs:

C. What are the topic sentences in each paragraph and are they supported by developing ideas?

D. What are the supporting details for the main idea in each paragraph? If you cannot identify them, please suggest one for your partner.

E. Has your partner used any real life examples or concrete illustrations to support the main idea of each paragraph? If not, please provide him/her with directions to explain the main ideas with solid examples.

F. What is the target audience of the essay?

G. Have the issues of the essay been appropriately addressed?

H. Is the essay coherent in terms of proper use of discourse markers or transitional signals to signpost various ideas?

I. Does the essay include the effective use of pronouns, paraphrasing, and synonyms in order to make the text cohesive (i.e. improving the texture of writing)?

J. Does the conclusion echo the thesis statement put forward in the introductory paragraph? Does the conclusion include relevant information highlighted in the previous paragraphs and moved to more general statements on the topic as a whole?

Appendix 6.A

Sample Peer Feedback Activity (Unit 1. Think, Pair, Share)

➤Think, pair, share ➤

Follow the guidelines below to write an ***expository*** essay (i.e., an essay that explains how things work. See p.40.) about *the challenges faced by modern civilization*.

① Work individually. Select three ideas from the thesis statement in the essay structure below.

Essay structure

Introduction

There are three major threats to our civilization: nuclear warfare - pollution - natural catastrophes - diseases - economic collapse - collision with heavenly bodies.

Thesis Statement

Body

§1 _____ .

Topic Sentence

_____ .

Supporting Sentences

§2 _____ .

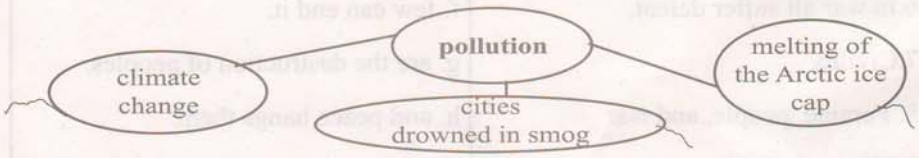
Concluding Sentence

§3 _____ .

Conclusion

_____ .

② Jot down details about the ideas you have selected as follows:



③ Write a first draft essay using the structure provided above. Then exchange drafts with your partner for error checking.

④ Write a revised version and share your ideas with the class.

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Appendix 6.B

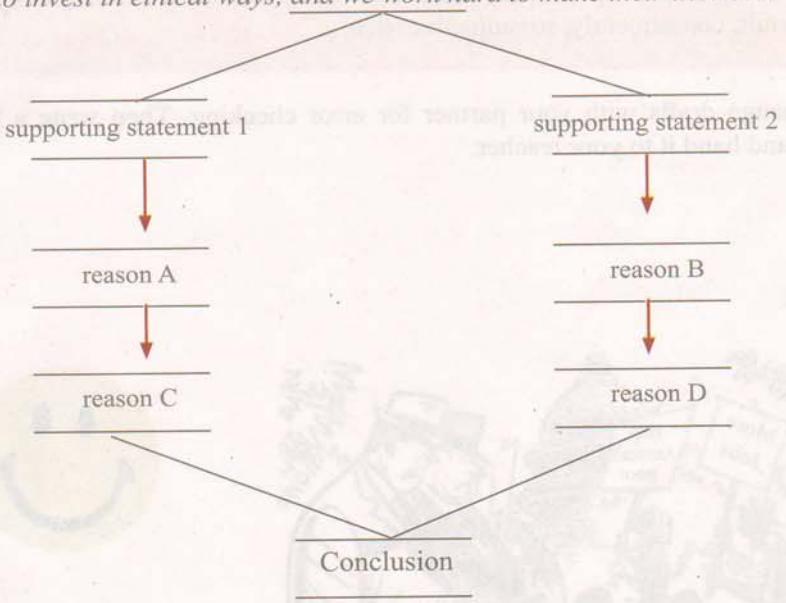
Sample Peer Feedback Activity (Unit 2. Writing Development)

▶ Writing development

● Suppose you were the manager of an **ethical investment** fund, i.e. a fund which invests only in socially responsible businesses. Write a policy statement to inform potential fund contributors about it. Follow the guidelines below.

① Think over the opening statement in the diagram below. Select two to four notes from the checklist of expanding notes that follow and develop them into supporting statements.

The people and organisations who put their money into our fund want us to invest in ethical ways, and we work hard to make their desires a reality.



Expanding notes

- avoid companies that endanger the environment.
- refrain from investing in certain sectors – tobacco, arms manufacturing, nuclear power, or uranium extraction.
- not place money in companies that lack ethical labour standards (E.g. using child labour, bad working conditions …).
- choose to invest in well-managed companies (transparent financial accounting).
- invest in companies that balance economic growth with social responsibility.

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② Write supporting statements in the diagram. Then jot down reasons to explain/ illustrate your statements.

③ Write your first draft of the policy statement using the relevant information in your diagram.

Useful language

- Link words to illustrate : for example, for instance, such as…
- Link words to express cause and result : because, due to, since, as a result, consequently, so+adjective+that …

④ Exchange drafts with your partner for error checking. Then write a final version and hand it to your teacher.

'It's awful the way they're trying to influence Congress. Why don't they serve cocktails and make campaign contributions to senators as we do ?'

Appendix 6.C

Sample Peer Feedback Activity (Unit 5. Say it in Writing)

▶Saying it in writing

● Make a short public speech in **defence of the usefulness of astronomy**. Follow the procedure below.

① Brainstorm details to support your arguments. You could draw inspiration from the following expanding notes.

Expanding notes

- ❑ Predicting catastrophe
- ❑ Solving the mysteries of the universe
- ❑ Improving telecommunications
- ❑ Making celestial and nautical navigation safer
- ❑ Reckoning/calculating time
- ❑ Making weather forecasts

② Now write a short draft speech in defence of astronomy developing the notes above. Organise your arguments from the most to the least important starting with this opening:

Ladies and gentlemen,
I think/believe that astronomy is one of the most useful sciences today.

③Correct your mistakes.Then exchange drafts with your partner for further error checking.

Editing checklist

- Is the punctuation right?
- Are the paragraphs of the speech well marked off ?
- Are the link words used appropriately ?
- Are there any mistakes in grammar and spelling ?
- Is there a pertinent conclusion ?

④ Write a new version of your speech and read it to the class.

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Résumé

Cette étude vise à connaître l'attitude de 113 enseignants d'anglais, dans le cycle secondaire à la wilaya d'el-oued du compte rendu (émanant de l'élève) et son importance dans l'amélioration du niveau des compétences écrites chez les lycéens. Et pour répondre aux questions posées, au début de la recherche, on a suivi la méthodologique descriptive, en utilisant deux méthodes: le questionnaire et l'interview. J'ai utilisé les résultats obtenus en se servant de la méthodologie descriptive des résultats quantitatifs. Ces résultats ont montré une attitude très négative des enseignants vis-à-vis du compte rendu et son importance dans l'amélioration du niveau des compétences écrites chez les élèves. Les activités des enseignants en classe liées au compte rendu reflète leur attitude négative face à cette technique. C'est-à-dire, ils en l'évitent lors de l'enseignement de l'expression écrite. Cependant, ces résultats ont révélé une orientation générale chez quelques enseignants à adopter cette technique au futur dans les activités de l'expressions écrites, et permettre aux élèves de la connaître et les entraîner à l'utiliser en classe. Ce changement dans l'attitude des enseignants prouve la conscience croissante de l'importance de l'enseignement de la technique du compte rendu grâce à ces nombreux avantages éducatifs. Et cela est l'un des plus importants objectifs de cette étude. Cette étude est parvenue à citer quelques domaines d'utilisation de cette technique et l'entraînement des élèves à s'en servir. Ainsi, la proposition d'autres études touchant le même sujet.

Mots clefs: attitude, compte rendu (de l'élève à l'élève), écriture.

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التعرف على موقف 113 أستاذ تعليم ثانوي للغة الإنجليزية بولاية الوادي من التغذية الراجعة (الصادرة عن التلميذ) وأهميتها في تحسين مستوى المهارات الكتابية لدى تلاميذ المرحلة الثانوية. و للإجابة عن الأسئلة المطروحة في بداية البحث ، تم إنتهاج دراسة حالة وصفية بإستعمال أداتين للبحث هما إستبيان وإستجواب. حللت النتائج المتحصل عليها بإستعمال التحليل الوصفي بالنسبة للنتائج الكمية (العددية) والتحليل من خلال المحاور بالنسبة للنتائج الكيفية. ولقد أبانت النتائج عن موقف جد سلبي للأساتذة تجاه التغذية الراجعة وأثرها في تحسين مستوى المهارات الكتابية لدى التلميذ. كما إتسمت النشاطات الصفية للأساتذة بالتناسق التام مع مواقفهم السلبية المذكورة سابقا، أي أنهم يتجنبون إستعمال هذه التقنية أثناء تدريس التعبير الكتابي. مع ذلك، كشفت النتائج عن توجه عام لعدد من الأساتذة لإعتماد هذه التقنية ضمن نشاطات تدريس التعبير الكتابي مستقبلا وتمكين التلاميذ من التعرف عليها وتدريبهم على إستعمالها بإنتظام داخل القسم. هذا التحول في موقف الأساتذة يدل على إرتفاع في مستوى الوعي بأهمية تدريس تقنية التغذية الراجعة لما تنطوي عليه من فوائد تعليمية جمة، وهذا يعد من بين أهم أهداف الدراسة. كما خلصت الدراسة إلى ذكر بعض مجالات إستعمال هذه التقنية وكيفيات تدريب التلاميذ عليها ، وإقتراح المزيد من الدراسات ذات الصلة.

كلمات مفتاحية: موقف، التغذية الراجعة (من التلميذ وإلى التلميذ)، الكتابة.