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**Implementing Formative Assessment in Teaching
Writing**

An action research study of first year LMD students at Ibn Khaldoun
University- Tiaret

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Doctorate in Didactics of English as a Foreign Language*

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Dedication

To my family,

“...the compass that guides me. It is the inspiration to reach great heights, and my comfort when I occasionally falter.”

Brad Henry

To my teachers,

“...who inspire my mind, ignite my imagination, and instill a love of learning in me.”

Brad Henry

To my dearest friends,

“But if the while I think on thee, dear friend, all losses are restored and sorrows end.”

William Shakespeare

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Abstract

The implementation of formative and self-assessment in the writing classroom has been a constant challenge for teachers since assessment for learning is a demanding process in daily practice. Yet, investigating the impact of assessment on students' achievement and teacher practice has resulted in positive outcomes. This research study aims at the implementation of formative and self-assessment in the writing classroom. To this end, an action research plan was undertaken with a first year class of 50 undergraduate students majoring in English language throughout twelve weeks. Four data collection methods were used in this study; an attitudinal questionnaire was utilised in the pre-study phase in order to identify the participants' attitudes and experiences towards writing and self-assessment. Then the participants assessed their writing during three phases of the writing process using binary checklists. The practitioner researcher also used a reflective diary as a means to reflect on the students' action during the self-assessment phase and to inform her teaching practice. In addition, a Likert Scale Survey was used in the post-study phase. Findings indicated that when the students were engaged in self-assessment, they could achieve the task learning goals and apply the task criteria effectively. The results showed that the students could assess the quality of their work accurately. Moreover, the students developed positive attitudes towards writing in English and classroom assessment. Themes from the reflective diary informed the practitioner researcher's classroom decision-making and showed patterns of shift towards learner-centred classroom. Hence, the findings suggested that formative and self-assessment had the potentials to empower the students to take an active part in their learning. Besides, when the students were trained in self-assessment, accurate criteria guided them towards achieving learning aims in their writing. Reflecting on students' self-assessment procedures

also informed the teacher about the students' needs, thus she designed her lessons to cater for their needs.

Keywords: criteria, formative assessment, reflection-on-action, student self-assessment, writing process.

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General Introduction

This research study revolves around a special interest in the implementation of formative assessment in the writing classroom at university. The major concerns stem from questioning the limitations of narrowly focusing on summative assessment and testing only. Despite the fact that assessment of learning can transcend the function of measuring the students' performance at the end of instructional units, it is merely used for managerial purposes (grading and ranking students). Therefore, a significant part of the information that summative assessment provides about the students' learning is overlooked. Furthermore, opportunities to analyse and reflect on the information to address the students' learning needs and skills to face the requirements of the 21st century are not well-invested.

It is an essential pre-requisite for today's university students to be equipped with a range of flexible skills and competencies to prepare them to successfully cope with this age. Education is no longer about the impartment of knowledge to passive students. However, it calls for the empowerment of the students to take active parts in the journey of deep learning. Teachers, on the other hand, are supposed to assume different roles such as mentors, coaches, and facilitators for the sake of advancing quality learning and helping their students become autonomous learners who can pursue their own learning journeys in the short and long terms. Assessment, in this respect, should directly respond to the students' current needs. The assumption is that assessment in this context should improve the process of learning. Assessment is about providing the teacher and his/ her students with descriptive feedback that monitors progress and allows for immediate changes in instruction. Assessment enhances the process of reflection in order to attain learning goals in a supportive environment. For these reasons, formative assessment stands as a solid option that reflects the substantial role of assessment in advancing quality learning and teaching in the writing classroom.

Formative assessment is used interchangeably with the term assessment for learning throughout this dissertation. Moreover, student self-assessment is the dominant pattern of investigation; the term formative assessment is used frequently to incorporate other aspects of formative assessment that have a link to the role of the teacher in the whole system of assessment. The practitioner researcher's roles includes assigning descriptive feedback, monitoring the students' self-assessment process, analysing the obtained information to address students' needs and adjusting instruction.

This action research study challenges the view that formative assessment is only paid a lip service (Dassa, Vazquez-Abad and Ajar, 1993). That means that policy makers and teachers have positive attitudes and beliefs towards formative assessment. They do recognise the value of formative assessment in raising the standards of quality teaching and learning in the classroom. The chief problem is that policy makers do not prescribe the appropriate guidelines for teachers to implement the practices of formative assessment in daily teaching to guarantee effective learning. Accordingly, the focus has always been on assessment that favours accountability and achievement, rather than kinds of assessment that are consistent with current changes and the promotion of active learning. Moreover, teachers are not well-equipped with the appropriate assets to administer formative assessment due to the fact that the implementation of formative assessment is a demanding journey.

Entrenching formative assessment as a daily routine in the writing classroom requires devotion, perseverance, commitment and skills to make assessment and instruction work harmonically, in addition to taking other administrative routines such as syllabus coverage and official exams into account. The practice of formative assessment depends on an ongoing rigorous process of observing and monitoring students' performance to adjust teaching and learning. To improve classroom learning, teachers should be well-informed about the characteristics of superficial versus deep learning objectives when they design learning tasks.

Formative assessment is, therefore, about seeking change on a daily basis and keeps reflecting on reinforcing learning gains and addressing students' learning weaknesses. Additionally, the implementation of assessment for learning calls for the ability of the practitioner to design tools such as exit cards, rubrics, reflective journal and checklists. These tools would assist the teacher and his/ her students throughout the journey of learning and the realisation of given objectives. The question is whether teachers are willing to give up attitudes that support teacher-centered classrooms at the expense of regarding their students as partners in the teaching-learning process by relying on formative assessment as the main drive inside their classrooms or not.

Although formative assessment may seem unrealistic in its endeavour and practice as well for some practitioners, teachers who aspire for renewal may undertake difficult, yet rewarding experiences throughout the ways of discovering their potentials and their students' active engagement in learning. Assessment for learning is considered unrealistic or ideal to conduct due to multiple factors. Teachers are not in a position to make substantial decisions in isolation from external authorities and policy makers. Teachers are required to follow guidelines to respond effectively to accountability purposes. This means that teachers should prepare their students for end-of-term or end-of-year exams, which puts pressure on them to cover the syllabus. Hence, teachers may find themselves shaping an instructive rather than a constructive approach in their teaching.

In this respect, it is crucial to raise the question of whether teachers may enhance their attention beyond summative assessment and use the obtained information about their students' performance in order to improve or/ and promote learning. The core of formative assessment, in this case, has to do with making a radical change in questioning actual attitudes, teaching habits and rethinking the roles of teachers and their students inside the classroom setting. Furthermore, formative assessment may constitute a challenge for some

teachers since positioning formative assessment at the heart of the instructional process requires motivation to enhance one's knowledge and skills in this domain. Initiating a change in one's practice calls for devotion and commitment to self-development. Besides classroom-related teaching, teachers should develop their repertoire about what formative assessment is and what it is not. In addition to that, intensive reading about previous case studies and teacher-led research on assessment for learning is essential to pinpoint the suitable practices and tools that advance formative assessment. Eventually, it is essential to know if teachers are ready to embrace approaches that support students' independence, namely peer- and student self-assessment.

The practice of formative assessment is not overlooked in classrooms, however; it may be invisible or poorly implemented. The key to consolidate formative practices that promote students' learning lies in teacher research, particularly action research. The classroom setting is a hub for discovering the potentials of practitioners and their students. The classroom environment also fits day-to-day research and experimentation with new methods of teaching and learning. In this prospect, contextual factors are of a great value to make a change since formative assessment is a central element in the teaching and learning process. In addition, formative assessment and action research provide teachers with opportunities to develop responsive actions to their teaching and to their students' engagement in their own learning. Action research entails reflective teaching and seeking change is the main drive of reflective teaching and formative assessment. Daily routine represents recurrent opportunities for practitioner researchers to collect data about their students (learning preferences, aptitudes, needs and styles), and themselves as well. This can be effectively achieved through the implementation of student self-assessment in the writing classroom. Unfortunately, there is no research on the implementation of self-assessment that is two-folds. This means that research about self-assessment in the writing class targeted one dimension only; either students

assessing their own writing or comparing student self-assessment against teacher assessment. The lack of research on this matter, mainly in EFL contexts points to the need to use action research in order to create an environment in which both, the practitioner researcher and the students are empowered to be partners in the whole process of self-assessment. Therefore, this action research study attempts to investigate the following research questions:

1. What are the appropriate tools and strategies that can help implement formative and self-assessment in daily instruction and practice of writing?
2. How might self-assessment engage students in active learning of the writing process?
3. Does the implementation of self-assessment bring a change to students' attitudes about improving their writing?
4. Does the implementation of formative assessment bring new insights into the practitioner researcher daily practice of teaching writing?

The primary purpose of this investigation is to address the positioning of formative assessment in its natural setting; it considers formative assessment as an indispensable element of the writing classroom. In this context, the implementation of formative assessment in daily routine is based on the practice of the writing process. The phases of the writing process (clustering, outlining, writing the paragraph, and editing) are recurrent in writing skill and essential for the quality of the final product. Hence, it is crucial to train the students in self-assessment by taking into account the criteria of a good performance. In addition to that, student self-assessment provides the practitioner researcher with information about the students' strengths and needs. The aim is to accurately describe how the process of self-assessment empowers the practitioner researcher to develop a responsive attitude. Once this objective is achieved, lesson planning is based on students' needs and adjusted accordingly. The hypotheses call for a system that highly regards the practitioner researcher and students

as partners in the whole process of formative and self-assessment. Thus, the following hypotheses are formulated to be tested in the writing classroom:

1. Teacher's reflective diary and student's writing checklists would contribute to the implementation of formative and self-assessment in the writing classroom.
2. Informing the students about criteria and breaking a writing task into manageable steps would support students' learning in the writing classroom.
3. The implementation of self-assessment would contribute to students' positive perception about improving their writing.
4. Implementing formative assessment in the writing classroom would boost the teacher's engagement and productivity.

To test the hypotheses, this action research study employs four data collection methods and procedures. Before venturing into the field study, the participants are invited to fill an attitudinal questionnaire about their previous experience in writing and assessment. The objective of this pre-study questionnaire is to identify the participants' needs and the design of the intervention during the course of the study. The intervention plan consists of training the students in self-assessment and then enabling them to assess their own writing using yes/ no checklists with a description of quality criteria. Throughout the study, the practitioner researcher reflects on the students' performance using a diary in order to respond to their needs. In the post-intervention phase, the participants fill a Likert scale survey about their attitudes and experience during the self-assessment process.

This action research study contributes to literature and research about formative and self-assessment in several significant ways. First, this study extends research about self-assessment in the writing classroom since there is a dearth of studies in this field in the Algerian context (Eg., Kadri, 2018 ; Kadri and Amziane, n.d). For another, most studies (Eg., Black *et al*, 2004) about the implementation of formative and self-assessment in the writing

classroom are conducted by researchers, and not teachers. Teachers are either observed or they are mentored by researchers or teacher trainers. However, this action research study is conducted by a practitioner researcher. It provides insight on how teachers can conduct research about assessment in their own classrooms to make change to their teaching and to their students' learning. Moreover, many studies focus on showing how self-assessment can improve the quality of the students' writing without pinpointing how self-assessment becomes an indispensable element of daily teaching. Hence, this study positions self-assessment within the teaching and learning process so that decisions about lesson planning are based on information from the self-assessment process. Finally, this study entitles the students to take an active part in assessing the quality of their written performance and to assume responsibility since teachers are not the only source of assessment.

This study consists of five chapters. The first chapter provides a thorough account of the concept of formative assessment. Precisely, it sheds light on the significance of formative assessment in relation to effective teaching and learning. It also traces the development of the concept of formative assessment and pinpoints the effectiveness of formative assessment in several studies. It ends with listing some of the important tools that are used formatively.

The second chapter scrutinises the development of assessment of the writing skill. It is, therefore, devoted to examining the different stages that contribute to the discipline of assessing writing. It encompasses four stages namely the objective tests, the holistically-scored essay, portfolio assessment and assessment for learning in the writing classroom. This chapter points to empirical studies about formative assessment in EFL writing classrooms. Then it examines the process of evaluating the students' writing via feedback. This chapter also emphasises the role of self-assessment in general and its significance in the writing classroom by providing a detailed account of empirical studies about self-assessment in EFL higher education institutions.

The third chapter describes the research motivation for selecting action research and offers theoretical justifications for using this approach in implementing self-assessment in the writing classroom. Accordingly, the chapter provides information about the participants and the profile of the practitioner researcher. It justifies the use of four data collection methods that regard the participants and the practitioner researcher as partners in the self-assessment process. The tools of investigation are the pre-test attitudinal questionnaire, the yes/ no self-assessment checklist, the practitioner researcher diary and the Likert scale survey at the end of the self-assessment process.

The fourth chapter tackles the analysis of the obtained data from the four data collection methods. First, it displays the analytical approach for every data collection method and engages in analysing and interpreting the obtained data. The data is also displayed in pie charts and bar graphs. The chapter discusses the findings in details in relation to the research questions and the hypotheses.

The last chapter is the researcher's attempt to take the appropriate measures to implement formative assessment in the writing classroom. It pinpoints the role of policy makers and teacher research in making a change via assessment for learning. In addition, it sheds light on the empowerment of the students to have their role in assessment and improving their writing skill through writing strategies. Eventually, it suggests a lesson plan that incorporates formative and self-assessment in the writing classroom.

Chapter One

The Correlation between Formative Assessment and Active Learning

Introduction

The effective development of any foreign language skills in higher education depend a great deal on a set of well-conducted practices such as *assessment*. The significance of assessment mainly lies in its solid relationship to both, teaching and learning. Different types of assessment serve various purposes such as grading, accountability, placing the students in appropriate classes and informing teaching and learning. Furthermore, types of assessment can co-exist to provide evidence that can be used for other purposes. However, some kinds of assessment such as formative assessment are overlooked in favour of other important ones, yet traditional assessment practices such as summative assessment.

Researchers in the field of assessment have emphasised the necessity of altering the threatening nature of assessing students' performances into a rigorous assisting tool in promoting their learning within classrooms and outside them. This form of assessment is embodied in assessment for learning, or known by the term formative assessment. Opponents of assessment of learning admitted that it can help the students improve their skills such as writing.

At the university, students are required to develop an academic writing style to be able to respond to the requirements of university studies. However, demonstrating an acceptable level in writing has always constituted a serious challenge at diverse levels within university. Fortunately, there have been voices calling for granting all forms of assessment a balance in incorporating them and recognising the prominent role of formative assessment in teaching and learning the writing skill. Overcoming this deficiency is needed because of the imperative function of writing. This skill serves as a key factor for the students' achievement during their studies and an indispensable tool for the majority of their summative exam papers and graduation dissertations. Scholars like Black and Wiliam (1998; 2003) assume that the integration of formative assessment can have a reflective impact on the teaching process and

this fact would result in promoting a good quality of students' written performances for the sake of paving the way for their autonomy.

This chapter will examine the concept of formative assessment and investigate the reasons for the call to focus on integrating formative assessment in daily instruction by highlighting the drawbacks of over-emphasising *assessment of learning*, or summative assessment. Furthermore, it identifies the chronological order of coining the term formative assessment and the theoretical and empirical research related to its effective application from the angle of teaching and learning. Moreover, it provides the arguments and the main body of research that support the implementation of formative assessment in various disciplines across the world. Then it identifies the tools and strategies that contribute to the improvement of learning and quality teaching in different levels of education, ranging from kindergarten to higher education. Ultimately, the chapter ends with a review of research in the area of teaching the writing skill formatively and highlighting the gaps that this research study will address in the next sections.

1.1.The Shift from Summative to Formative Assessment

The ultimate aim of education is to infuse in students the passion for learning, out of which builds their self-confidence, autonomy and lifelong learning (Butt, 2010, p.121). Therefore; the students should be placed at the centre of the trichotomous elements: teaching, learning and assessment. In this context, the element of assessment has had a powerful impact on the learning process, more than its impact on the subject contents or the methods of teaching (Harlen, 2008) due to the fact that assessment is a decisive factor through its profound influence on the students' willingness to engage in active learning, their success in their educational career, and on their opportunities after graduation (Butt, 2010, p.121).

According to Gibbs and Simpsons (2003), “*assessment is seen to exert a profound influence on student learning: on what students focus their attention on, on how much they study, on their quality of engagement with learning tasks.*”

However, assessment as a comprehensive balanced system is in need for re-conceptualisation because *assessment of learning* (summative assessment) is the only one, which is largely entrenched in education (Mussawy, 2009, p. 11), in addition to the fact that traditional forms of assessment like standardised tests, teacher-made tests and multiple choice tests overlooked other forms of assessment (Herrera, Murry and Carbal, 2007).

Though summative assessment is well-placed within the educational context (Stiggins, 2002, p. 1) as it aims mainly at making scores, measurements, and judgments (Harlen, 2006, p.103), the emphasis on assessment for learning has led to many shortcomings and negative effects on learning and teaching (Biggs, 1996; Firestone and Mayrowtez, 2000).

Concerns about summative assessment, or *high stakes assessment* (Butt, 2010, p. 13) result from its emphasis on examinations, grading and marks (Falchikov, as cited in Irons, 2008, p.14; Black and Wiliam, 1998, p.84), which contribute to a set of issues related to the effectiveness of learning, teaching, motivation and the delivery of criteria-referenced feedback.

Assessment has been affected by frequent standardised tests (Crooks, 1988; Black and Wiliam, 1988, 2004) and the change, particularly in higher education, into modularised or unitised structure. The focus, in this context, shifted towards the accumulation of credits so that the students can flexibly move between programmes and universities (Irons, 2008, p.15). However, these two practices affected effective learning, which became to a large extent superficial and rote, particularly because teachers are not well-trained on how to design tests that test high level thinking skills and therefore jeopardise the quality of the instruction

content (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p. 83; Pelligrino, 2001, p.26, as cited in Irons, 2008, p.14; Stiggins, 2002, p.1; Herrera *et al*, 2007). As a result, “*schooling becomes more about gaining the right qualifications than about the learning that these are meant to represent. So learning becomes instrumental and teaching becomes a soulless preparation for the test*” (Stobbart, 2008, p.114)

Moreover, when testing for marks given the ultimate priority, formative assessment becomes overlooked (Irons, 2008, p. 15). Thus, there are few opportunities to remedy their mistakes (Entwhistle and Entwhistle, 2003). Testing, in this case, could have harmful effects on learning (Biggs, 1996), especially the students’ self-perception due to the fact that they judge themselves as learners from an early age and these judgments find their way through assessment and get reinforced with time (Butt, 2010, p. 121-122). In addition to that, the burden of summative assessment on the students demotivated and discouraged them, mainly low-attaining ones because this kind of assessment is *normative referenced assessment*, which is characterised by the tendency of ranking the students and compare their achievement with other students so as to distinguish between high and low achievers (Greenstein, 2010, p. 152; Huit, 1996). Besides, Natriello and Dornbusch (1984, as cited in Crooks, 1988, p. 449) found out that there is a close link between setting higher learning standards and the willingness of the students to attend classes and making greater efforts in the course. They also concluded that if the students did not regard the evaluation of their work as a significant indicator of improvement, they would not do much effort (Black, Harrison, Lee, Marshall, and Wiliam, 2003).

The third issue with standardised tests is the lack of coordination among teachers because, who even within the same school or university, do not tend to share these tests samples with other colleagues, consequently; these questions or tests are not critically reviewed. This fact is a clear indication of a narrow vision about the importance of a well-

administered summative assessment tests. At the same time, there is a negative impact, which is the managerial role of assessment in which the teachers hold the same stern vision about their students after setting their tests. Teachers tend to know the scores of their students on official exams because these tutors imitate their design, and they are much more interested in the social and managerial role of these marks at the expense of analysing the information that summative assessment yields, the needs of their students to improve or being seriously committed with reviewing the previous learning records of their students (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p. 83). In the same line of thought, it has been acknowledged that teachers are not well-trained in devising assessment tasks. Hence, it is challenging for them to create a balance between the different kinds of assessment in their classrooms (Stiggins, 2002, p. 02). Though they regard evaluative activities crucial to their own teaching and students' learning, a significant number of teachers lack a proper command of evaluative measurements due to the absence of training, and even those who went through such training could not see the relevance of this training in relation to their classroom practice (Gullickson, 1984; Stiggins and Bridgeford, 1985, as cited in Crooks, 1988, p. 440). In this view, some researchers also ascertained that the mindset of teachers played a decisive role in perceiving the value and the purpose of tests as well as all the efforts it takes to design them appropriately so that they can meet the standard of validity. Accordingly, teachers tended to devise tests that target lower cognitive levels that do not match the teachers' stated objectives claiming that it is easy for them to mark the questions that aim at recalling and recognition in comparison with activities that require higher level thinking skills (Elton, 1982, pp. 115-116; Natriello, 1987, p.58).

Some teachers presumed that their students would not be able to perform well on higher level thinking questions and any attempt to do so would only result in anxiety and confusion (Doyle, 1983, 1986, as cited in Crooks, 1988, p. 442), which in turn adds to the responsibility of teachers because the students are still dependent on their teachers to assess

their performances, to provide them with feedback about their strengths and weaknesses, and to guide their learning (Weeden *et al*, 2002).

The last drawback, which is attributed to summative assessment, is that it is generally administered at the end of the programme or the academic year, which makes it too late to take any action in the process of improving learning (Brown, 1999, p.06; Herrera *et al*, 2007; NCTE, 2013, p.02; Torrance and Pryor, 2002, p.08). The concerns regarding this fact consist of its ability to provide records of the students' achievements to policy makers, but these data are of a lost value because they are not used in favour of advancing active learning, and the instructors do not use them to adapt their teaching (Irons, 2008, p. 16).

To make quality teaching and effective learning happen, summative assessment can also play a vital role. In this prospect, policy makers and educators should think about ways to balance the use of all kinds of assessment to benefit one another and at the same time practitioners and teachers should be empowered with the necessary strategies and tools to perform assessment successfully. Hence, there has to be a shift towards a new vision in assessment, which is formative assessment. Stiggins (2002, p. 02) asserts that,

We know how to build healthy assessment environments that can meet the information needs of all instructional decision makers, help students want to learn and feel able to learn, and thus support unprecedented increase in student achievement. But to achieve the goal, we must put in place the mechanisms that will make healthy assessment possible.

Therefore, creating a system that puts assessment results in favour of teaching and promotes the students' learning requires proper implementation of assessment tools.

1.2. Definition of Formative Assessment

It is important to note that there is no commonly established definition of the concept of formative assessment among researchers (Black and Wiliam, 2010, p. 82). Several authors refer to it as *classroom evaluation* (Crooks, 1988; Bloom, Hastings, and Madaus, 1971),

instructionally relevant assessment (Shepard, 2000, p. 13), *classroom assessment* (Fulcher and Davidson, 2007, p. 27; Stiggins, 2002; McMillan, 2001), *internal assessment*, *instructional assessment*, *student assessment* (Black and Wiliam, 2010), *assessment for learning* (James, 1992), *formative evaluation* (Oosterhof, 2003), *classroom-based assessment* (Gipps, 1999), *learning-oriented assessment* (Keppel, Au, Ma and Chan, 2006; Carless, 2007, p. 57), *assessment as learning* (McKean and Aiken, 2016). However, some authors have distinguished between formative assessment and assessment for learning (Moeed, 2015, p.181). For instance, supporters of the view of process prefer the latter and regard it as a purpose (Wiliam, 2011).

Broadfoot et al (1999) affirm that formative assessment is only carried out and planned along with teaching. In addition, other authors labelled assessment for learning and formative assessment differently. Black, Harrison, Marshall and Wiliam (2004, p.10) provide the following definition:

Assessment for learning is any assessment for which the first priority in its design and practice is to serve the purpose of promoting students' learning. [...] An assessment activity can help learning if it provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged. Such assessment becomes 'formative assessment' when the evidence is actually used to adapt the teaching work to meet learning needs.

According to Wiliam (2010), the major difference between assessment for learning and formative assessment is at the level of function and not the assessment or the way the information about students' leaning is gathered. Therefore, Black and Wiliam (2009, p. 06) put forward an extended definition of the concept of formative assessment:

...to the extent that evidence about student achievement is elicited, interpreted, and used by teachers, learners, or their peers, to make decisions about the next steps in instruction that are likely to be better, or better founded than the decision they would have taken in the absence of the evidence that was elicited.

Thus, the above definitions revolve around a central concept, which is using evidence to inform teaching and learning. Then they highlight how other components are related to it. First of all, identifying the evidence is the major drive towards the aim of such assessment, which is making adaptations at the level of teaching and learning by making positive change towards effective teaching and learning. The second focal point is that any agent would be able to seek the evidence. Thus, the teachers and their students are regarded as partners in this ongoing process. Furthermore, the students are assigned an active role in the process of self as well as peer-assessment. Moreover, the act of assessing the students' learning is purposefully done through a conscious action towards the identification of the strengths and the weaknesses of students, and a reflection upon them by making interpretations that lead to make further planning decisions to enhance the quality of teaching and meeting the students' needs.

In this research study, formative assessment is defined as the intentional collection of evidence of learning by teachers and students to be used for the sake of adapting teaching, advancing effective learning and lifetime learning skills.

1.3.The Milestones of Formative Assessment

The term formative assessment has its roots in the work of the Australian philosopher Scriven. In a monograph of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Scriven (1967) coined the concept of *formative evaluation* in which the primal scope of inquiry was the effectiveness of school programmes and curricula (Cizek, 2010, p. 05).

In conducting the processes of curricula evaluation, Scriven made a distinction between the function of formative and summative evaluation. He stated that a school district or a curriculum designer may intervene and take action to bring about a mid-programmatic change if the intended programme is not yielding positive outcomes. He also contrasted it with

summative evaluation, which may take a place once the evaluation and the programmatic change were completed (Drost, 2012, p.20). Though Scriven contributed to the understanding of the significance of evaluating materials such as curricula and textbooks, and making changes within the progress of teaching and the learning process, his work has less to do with the scope of the study in hand.

Still within the American context, Benjamin. S. Bloom extended the concept of formative evaluation to the educational settings by introducing the instructional practice of Mastery Learning along with the concept of variation in learning and teaching (Bloom, 1968, [para, 04]).

Bloom and his students pointed at the fact that some students failed in their studies, not because the reasons of failure lie within the individual student, but within the instructional system that does not recognise differences within students (William, 2011, p. 03). By researching the work of Dollard and Miller (1950) to highlight the activities of high achieving students in comparison with low-attaining ones, he concluded that assessment as a system should be given a central role in the classroom setting. Hence, he developed the system of Mastery Learning (Guskey, 2005, p. 03).

According to Ford (n.d, p.04), the implementation of Bloom's Mastery Learning flows from two basic components. The first principle is that students with different levels and aptitudes are able to learn and master academic contents. The second one is that policy makers and teachers are responsible in assisting the students in achieving learning objectives and gains.

In his article *Learning for Mastery*, Bloom (1968) explained the rationale behind Mastery learning and outlined the process that ought to be incorporated to ensure an effective implementation of its principles, particularly the achievement of each instructional unit's

learning goals. Bloom claimed that the system of Mastery Learning is firmly based on a crucial operating procedure, which is formative evaluation.

The strategy of Mastery Learning places a considerable emphasis on the ability of the teacher to design his instructional units that are parts of a whole course. These units are designed in a hierarchal way to make learning proceed from specific facts or concepts into more complex and abstracts ones (Gagné, 1959, as cited in Bloom, 1968), and the amount of time devoted to each unit may range from a week to two. Once the unit is finished, the teacher administered a brief diagnostic-progress test to determine whether the learners master the unit, or they need further assistance to master it. The purpose of these tests is to give feedback about the strengths and weaknesses at this level and to motivate the learners to make efforts to learn better (Bloom, 1968). In addition, within each formative test, there is a set of 'individualised corrective' activities that match the learning difficulties. These resources may be additional or alternative learning sources that the teacher would recommend to his students. For Bloom, these corrective interventions help the teacher address his/her students' learning difficulties immediately and they can be used to inform the teacher's lesson planning and instructional methods. Therefore, this procedure is multifaceted as it takes into account the students' needs and the teacher's performance (Bloom, Madaus, and Hastings, 1981, as cited in Guskey, 2005, p. 4).

Once the students made the appropriate correctives, the teacher would administer the second formative assessment test that deals with the same concepts of the first test, but it is slightly different in questions. This procedure takes place in order to find out whether the correctives have a positive effect on the process of learning or not. The second objective is to reinforce motivation by giving low achieving students a second chance to succeed. As for the high achieving learners, it is recommended that they also need to continue their learning

through "enrichment" or "extension" activities (Guskey, 2005.p, 04). Figure 1.1 clearly illustrates the concept being discussed in the previous sections.

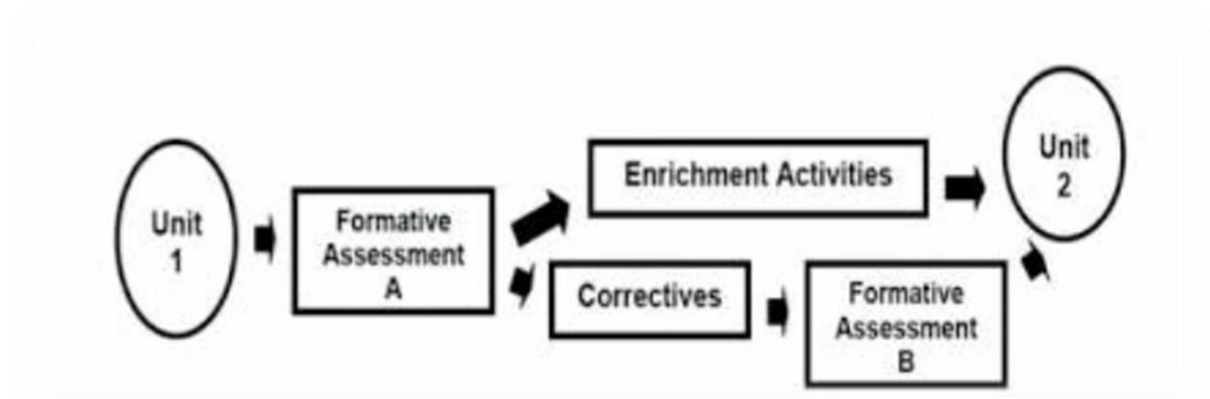


Figure 1.1 The Mastery Learning Instructional Process
(Guskey, 2005, 4)

Though Mastery Learning is ideal and perfectly practical on paper; as it is ambitious in showing the steps that can enable every teacher to assist his students in making effective learning take place, it received criticism from specialised scholars in the domain of supervision and curriculum development. In a report entitled *Mastery Learning: Sounds in Theory, but...*, Horton (1979, p. 154-155) claimed that Mastery Learning could not be widely implemented within the American school system because of curriculum and teacher-related issues.

The first component of concern within the applicability of mastery learning is the curriculum design of mastery learning. The idea of constructing a curriculum over the concept of mastery was vague, especially when the nature of what had to be mastered is under scrutiny. Furthermore, the issue of the ability of learners to transcend the mastery level prescribed in the curriculum was not tackled and whether there was a possibility for the majority of the learners to deal with the enrichment activities once they mastered a given level within the learning unit or not.

As for teacher-related issues, Horton questioned the teachers' readiness to embrace this method. In addition, he wondered whether they were trained on practising its principles such as administering diagnostic assessments to identify learners' academic problems and difficulties. Also, he tackled the issue of interpreting evidence to prescribe the appropriate remedial activities to reach the mastery level of the learning unit. In addition, teachers are trained to teach basic skills and could provide the kind of corrective feedback to learners, but this activity is not an easy task when a teacher is in a situation to teach his learners how to think creatively and independently, or to solve matters that require decision making.

In addition to the lack of training in implementing this method, the issue of time and teacher-energy are firmly addressed. In this regard, it is clear that time is a fixed factor. Furthermore, the contents of any curriculum need to be covered within an amount of time; however, mastery learning suggests the flexibility of the curriculum through the engagement of teachers and learners in achieving mastery over an undefined period of time. But, this idea is uncommon and needs further consideration. Moreover, designing a whole system of identifying objectives and preparing materials for students are time-consuming.

Though Mastery of Learning was criticised, it is considered as a basis for the creation of the concept and the system of formative assessment within the United States of America and abroad.

The end of the next decade witnessed the publication of two reviews of literature by Natriello (1987) and Crooks (1988). Their main focuses were on the impact of classroom assessment and evaluation process on the students' motivation, achievement and self-perception.

Natriello (1987) designed his review of literature around a model of evaluation with all its phases in the context of higher education. It covers the establishment of the purpose of

evaluation and the phase of monitoring outcomes in less differentiated or non differentiated classrooms. The major aim of this review was to identify the effects of each phase on the students. Findings indicated that the students have conceptions of normative comparisons in relation to other classmates. Besides, students who had clear evaluation criteria enjoyed high self-efficacy experience and that setting higher standards would lead students to make greater efforts to achieve better (Brookhart, 2003, p. 37).

Crooks (1988) took another path in reviewing 14 researches about the impact of motivation on students' classroom assessment, largely summative assessment. He investigated the impact of motivational achievement theories on students' motivation and classroom achievement. These theories include self-efficacy (Bandura, 1982, 1986), student's conception of ability (Nicolls, 1984), goal-orientation (Ames, 1984), and self-determination (Ryan, Connell, and Deci, 1985). Findings suggested that classroom evaluation is perceived from one angle only, which is the function of assigning grades and marks to students (Crooks, 1988, p. 467). This fact has undermined learning and has led to the intensive use of forms of standardised testing environment. Thus, channelling classroom evaluation as grading only resulted in reduction of intrinsic motivation, weakening self-efficacy within low-achieving students, and reducing the effectiveness of feedback. In addition to that, he pointed at the usefulness of getting advantages of effective feedback that focuses on students' progress by being timely and giving the opportunity to the students to work on it without getting penalised in case of failure (Ibid, 1988). Furthermore, he suggested that tests should provoke some anxiety that leads to positive careful work or in current terminology "moderate level of challenge" (Brookhart, 2003, p. 36).

Within the late 1980's, the conceptualisation of a fruitful practice of formative assessment took a new focal direction with the publication of the theoretical work of Sadler (1989) under the title of *Formative Assessment and the Design of Instructional Systems*.

Sadler's (1989) investigation was founded on two concerns namely, the lack of data and practical knowledge on how to provide feedback and how to conduct formative assessment in complex situations. He chiefly tackled the theme of providing qualitative judgments in disciplines like the English language, foreign languages, humanities, arts and social sciences. Complexities in these realms are characterised by the fact that students are assigned with tasks in which they synthesise and integrate ideas, concepts, and skills. In such assessment contexts, qualitative judgements are of a paramount importance. The second issue is about the inability of the students to show any improvement though they were provided with descriptive feedback. Hence, the main synthesis from these situations is what if there are deficiencies within the instructional system associated with formative assessment (Sadler, 1989, p. 119).

Sadler clarifies that formative assessment is concerned with how judgments about the quality of students' responses and performances are made and utilised to shape and improve learning. To guarantee effective achievement, he proposed the concept of self-regulation in which three conditions need to be met; descriptive feedback, the student's possession of the concept of a work of quality, and self-monitoring. Feedback is provided by an external source (the teacher/ peers). It relies on factors like a supportive environment in which the teacher is competent enough to identify how skills can be learnt, in addition to highlighting the nature of the standards of good performances and to indicating possible ways and alternatives to meet the learning target.

If the teacher is able to showcase the concept of quality, the students can internalise his feedback and bridge the gap towards self-monitoring. This process can be accomplished when the student is working on a task and can make the right decision by considering the following three elements:

1. The identification of the goal or the aim of the task in hand.

2. Making a comparison between the current level of performance and the learning target.
3. The student's ability to engage in appropriate action to close the gap.

However, it is sometimes challenging to convey to students the meaning of standards and quality due to the fact that the notion of quality for teachers is represented in tacit or guild knowledge, which is the accumulation of teachers' experience throughout their teaching career and the difficulty of interpreting this knowledge into explicit guidelines or knowledge (Glogowski, 2012, p.1).

Sadler (1989, p. 127) points at the negative impact of guild knowledge on learners since teachers' experience in grading is not the only dimension in assessment. In addition, regarding the teacher as the only available source of assessment and qualitative judgment is another issue that hinders students' engagement in assessing the quality of their performance.

Though Sadler's theory of self-regulation contributed to the understanding of an effective mechanism that can foster the students' achievement, Nicol and McFarlane-Dick (2006, pp. 06-14) reported a concern in their review about the fact that Sadler's model of self-regulation lacked a wider vision and it needed the repositioning of formative assessment and feedback through the incorporation of other elements. They asserted that the students can have control to a certain extent, but not full control on aspects such as academic tasks assigned by teachers, or the grading and the marking procedures.

Building on the previous positive research literature on self-regulation that boosts learning in an encouraging environment that makes the learning process explicit through the provision of opportunities to exercise self-regulation (Zimmerman and Schunk, 1994, as cited in Nicol and McFarlane-Dick, 2006), they suggest a list of good feedback practices that self-regulate motivation, behaviour and cognition in order to reinforce the students' ability to

accelerate self-regulation. Also, they provide rationale for every principle and some skills for teachers on how to apply them with their students. Hence, good feedback practice should: (Ibid, 07).

1. Clearly describe the criteria, standards, goals, aims of a good performance.
2. Assist students' in developing their self-assessment skills and reflection.
3. Provide students' with high-quality information about their learning.
4. Promote teacher and peer communication about learning.
5. Advance values of motivational beliefs and self-esteem.
6. Allow students to engage in learning tasks that help them close the gap between their current learning and the desired goal.
7. Provide teachers with data to make decisions to adjust their teaching.

According to Andrade (2013, pp. 21-21), the empowerment of students to self-regulate their current as well as lifelong learning exclusively depends on the teacher's willingness to do so. For Andrade, the model of Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) requires further adaptations by adding other key aspects that are not generated by students.

1. External feedback can be provided by teachers, peers, technologies, and others.
2. The incorporation of the process of interpreting feedback by teachers and students.

This view encourages the active role that the students can play in monitoring their progress towards the desired performance by activating their motivation, employing their knowledge of the specialty and the appropriate skills. Students can also benefit from external feedback to improve subsequent achievement.

Relating to 30 years of research on assessment, Hattie (1999) concluded that many teachers and researchers failed to discuss the fundamental principles that contribute to positive impacts on their students' learning. Hence, he proposed a model of basic postulates to

highlight a formative assessment system that boosts the understanding and the use of feedback as a powerful tool inside the classroom and across schools. These postulates are the improvement of achievement when teachers share the responsibility of setting and communicating goals with their students, achievement is enhanced as a function of feedback, and the advancement of students' learning also lies in the reconceptualisation of information.

Hattie (1999, p. 09) ranked feedback among the five most influential elements that have an impact on students' learning, how the students understand or misunderstand information about their performance, and what action they take in order to improve.

In their article entitled the *Power of Feedback*, Hattie and Timperley (2007, pp. 82-91) highlighted the fact that previous research dealt with feedback in teaching and learning frameworks, and neglected two facts: the meaning of feedback in classrooms and the necessity to tackle feedback in a learning context to have a positive effect on achievement. Thus, they proposed a three- component cycle that an effective formative assessment system would answer:

1. Feed-up (Where Am I Going?): one aspect about feedback is about informing students about the level of the accomplishment of learning goals on any assigned task. Thus, any learning goal should meet clear success criteria that show them the expectations of their teachers and inform them about the components that they will be assessed against. Secondly, feedback should be closely related to the achievement goal. Furthermore, teachers should train and nurture a sense of commitment towards the attainment of the desired performance.
2. Feedback (How Am I Going?): is about the provision of data about a performance or a task against a standard or a criterion. Students can get benefit of feedback when it offers data about a performance or gives directions and advice on how to proceed

better on an activity because students often seek answers on how they are doing on a task.

3. Feed-forward (Where to Next?): teaching and learning are progressive. With the accomplishment of any task, new learning opportunities can be provided such as raising the level of challenging tasks, assigning students with tasks that reinforce the process of self-regulation and deepening understanding in given areas.

Another milestone conclusion was made by Black, Wiliam and the Assessment Reform Group (1998). It indicates that raising achievement is accomplished by placing formative assessment at the centre of teaching and learning.

In their seminal work *Inside the Black Box*, Black and Wiliam (2010, p. 140) addressed worldwide issues about educational policies and current realities in schools and classrooms. Governments and educational policy makers have always been interested in raising standards of learning through the introduction of various reformations and initiatives, mainly by the enhancement of external testing of students' performance, ameliorating school planning and management, and frequent inspection. However, no change has been brought through these reformations.

Governments and policy makers introduce reformations and regulations into classrooms. For them, positive outcomes would proceed such as good test results, competent students and satisfied teachers. However, most of the time, teachers are left alone –without any kind of guidance or support- to work and manage the toil of raising the standards of achievement due to the fact that these regulations do not address ways to assist teachers in applying the prescribed reformations or to support them in what they do in their classrooms.

To address the above concerns, the Assessment Reform Group extensively investigated many books and publications that exceeded 160 journals. This body of research contributed to the classification of 580 articles or chapters to be scrutinised throughout nine years (1988-

1989). Eventually, they could generate a lengthy review of literature that is based on 250 of the previous sources. The final review article was published in the journal of *Assessment in Education*, under the title of *Assessment and Classroom Learning* (Black and Wiliam, 1998). This review was driven by three core questions about their argument of the inevitability of focusing on formative assessment as the most essential drive for effective teaching.

1. Is there proof that achievement can be met by improving formative assessment?
2. Is there proof that there are possibilities to seek and implement such improvement?
3. Is there proof about ways and methods of improving formative assessment?

By reviewing the previous literature and undertaking the King's Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project (KMOFAP) in 1999, Wiliam, C. Lee, Harrison, and Black (2004, p. 49) admitted that the answers of the questions are all yes. However, bringing about positive change and higher quality teaching are challenging to implement due to some factors,

We also acknowledge widespread evidence that fundamental change in education can be achieved only slowly-....The issues involved are too complex and too closely linked to both the difficulties of classroom practice and the beliefs that drive public policy.

(Black and Wiliam, 2010, p. 82)

These issues can be classified into attitudes about the managerial roles of summative and formative assessment, teachers' beliefs about students' learning and their practice, and students' self-concept towards progress and effective learning.

Based on educational and studies reports, the main findings indicate that many teachers are not well aware of the fact that kinds of assessment can work in harmony, particularly summative and formative assessment. Summative assessment is executed properly, but records of mark are given priority at the expense of using information for formative purposes. Priority is given to the collection of marks rather than their analysis in giving them account of the state of their students' learning and needs to take the appropriate actions to bring learning forward. In addition, teachers were not interested in comparing their students' level of

achievement with their previous records due to the fact that these teachers believed that external testing would advance learning anyway (Black & Wiliam, 1998, 2010).

The second issue relates to teachers' attitudes towards formative assessment. Teachers agree that formative assessment is promising and can make change, but they regard its practice as unrealistic in their classrooms (Dassa *et al*, 1993) because the implementation of formative assessment depends great deal on pedagogical change in classroom practice, boosting the effectiveness of feedback exchange between teachers and students, and a shared culture of success in the classroom that students of different levels and ability can achieve.

The third issue is the case of students who lack self-confidence. When some students fail to make learning gains, they related these learning obstacles to a set of self-deficiency aspects. Therefore, they tend to show less interest and effort in their learning.

1.3.Synthesis of Evidence about the Effectiveness of Formative and Self-assessment

The selection of the following empirical studies was based on identifying the positive effects of formative assessment on teaching and learning. This selection is driven by the assertion that teachers who integrated formative assessment in their classroom experience could bring positive change to their practice since they helped their students learn effectively, and raise their students' awareness about the objectives of learning and involve them in active learning.

These statements are supported by four studies from different levels of education and disciplines. Fontana and Fernandes (1994) reported that training Portuguese mathematics teachers in self-assessment techniques coupled with focus on implementing daily self-assessment by pupils led to significant gains over a period of time and in comparison with another control group. Throughout 20 weeks, the experimental group worked with 246 pupils aged between 8 and 9 and a control group consisted of 108 aged between 10 and 14. Both

groups spent the amount of time in this course. However, the experimental group was trained on how to understand the desired learning goals and the assessment criteria. In addition, these pupils could select from a range of activities that could give them the opportunity to assess their learning outcomes. Post-tests for both groups indicated that the experimental group's achievement gain was about twice of that of the control group.

Another positive impact that is attributed to formative assessment is that regular feedback to students about their tests performances followed by remediation of their weaknesses can lead to high achievement. This evidence was indicated by a Mastery Learning study led by Whiting, Burgh and Render (1995). In this assessment experiment, the teacher relied on Mastery Learning throughout 18 years in which his students were exposed to regular testing and feedback. Without mastering the task at hand, they were not able to work on the next task without accomplishing 90% of the content through making further efforts on the task beforehand to meet its mastery criteria.

A third implication from empirical research about the achievement effects of formative assessment is that substantial learning gains and high quality learning can be achieved through an increased use of formative assessment and by assisting teachers in implementing formative assessment it in their daily instruction (William, Lee, C., Harrison, and Black, 2004, p. 49).

By undertaking a direct experiment, the King's Medway Oxfordshire Formative Assessment Project (KMOFAP) members asked 24 teachers with various years of experience and positions (two mathematics and two science teachers) in six schools to develop formative assessment strategies and incorporate them in their daily instruction at the beginning of September 1999. The selection of schools was based on their willingness to develop formative assessment. Therefore, the Assessment Reform Group collaborated with teachers by

suggesting without imposing on them some directions that might be productive such as rich questioning, comment-only- marking, sharing criteria with learners, student peer assessment and self assessment, and giving these teachers the opportunity to implement change in their own classrooms. In the same line, researchers also supported teachers through series of intervention in which these teachers took part in in-service session, during which they were introduced to the principles of formative assessment and interacted with researchers to design their own formative assessment plans. Eventually, the project staff paid visits to the teachers to observe how teachers approached the integration of formative assessment strategies to discuss their procedures and help them put their innovations into practice effectively (ibid, 1998).

A fourth implication is highlighted in Taras's (2001, 2002, 2010) research about self-assessment in Higher Education. She used a distinctive model of self-assessment in which university students were engaged in the process of assessing their own performance. First, using summative graded work to serve formative functions. Second, enabling students to discuss and negotiate tutor and peer feedback prior to self-assessment. Eventually, students would not receive their grades unless they understand the nature of their errors, complete the learning aspect by taking corrective actions of the self-assessment tasks. Interestingly, the students showed interest in taking active part in assessing their own activities along with their teachers and peers.

From the above empirical studies, five conclusions have been identified to highlight the effectiveness of formative assessment:

1. Formative assessment can raise achievement if teachers have positive attitudes about its utility in making change inside their classrooms

2. Providing teachers with support and training could deepen and develop their formative assessment strategies and techniques (Eg., providing descriptive feedback, differentiation, analysing information to respond to the students' needs...etc).
3. The implementation of formative assessment is based on teachers' intention to devote time and effort to develop themselves in this area and make a radical change in their teaching and use of formative assessment
4. Teachers' belief that students can achieve if they can see the purpose of their learning and properly trained on self-assessment skills.
5. Summative assessment can be used for formative functions and to create a culture of cooperation and dialogue among the students and with their teachers.

1.4.Tools of Formative Assessment

Teachers can use a wide range of tools and techniques to implement formative assessment in their daily instruction.

1.5.1. Analytic rubrics: Definition, components, and usefulness

A rubric is a descriptive tool of assessment and an indicator of learning outcome. It is composed of criteria about the student's performance quality on a task with different levels of performance. It can be holistic or analytic to be used for various purposes including processes and products (Brookhart, 2013, p. 04-06).

An analytic rubric is composed of different criteria that it describes comprehensively and separately with a scale that attributes the levels of each performance starting with the best performance until the weakest one (Centre for Teaching Excellence, 2018, p. 02).

Selecting analytic rubrics, as another tool to promote formative and self-assessment in the writing class, was based on several reasons that have to do with formative assessment, students' motivation and engagement, reflection during and after the process of writing, and teaching the writing skill.

Teachers incorporate analytic rubric during and after the writing process in order to advance formative assessment, particularly criterion-referenced assessment (Manoa University, 2017, p.1) and timely feedback, which is the fact that students should receive detailed feedback as soon as possible after submitting their work because it would be neither helpful, nor useful for their learning to take place if information about their performance was too late (Brookhart, 2008, p.57 and Irons, 2008, p.45). Therefore, making feedback on time can be a decisive factor in enabling the students to make the appropriate improvement or change into their learning situation (Rucker and Thomson, 2003)

Timeliness is an important factor to provide the students with descriptive feedback. To avoid issues related to taking time to read, analyse and provide every single student with descriptive feedback especially in oversized classes in which the number of students may exceed 50 students per class, rubrics can be the suitable solution thanks to predicting different levels of performances on various dimensions. In addition to that, not all of the students are able to understand and act upon the assigned feedback. However, rubrics can do that by providing them with detailed information about any kind of performance and the highest level that the students can achieve on a given task (Stevens and Levi, 2005, pp. 18-19).

Moreover, analytic rubrics are not just about the description of various dimensions on a given task, they are a powerful means of reflecting on the process of writing with all of the steps, the phases, and the techniques and at the same time an indicator of what it means to accomplish an outcome of quality. By using a rubric, the teacher can engage his students in the process of constructing their first rubric. When doing such an activity, they are well-aware of how they can invest what they learn and they are supposed to use what they learnt in the practical session of any module. Moreover, it is an opportunity for them to question previous learning techniques by breaking the whole task into smaller units or components they need to work on and to be more conscious about their coming tasks and how to perform well. Besides,

engaging students in discussion about a sensitive topic like assessment is positive because they become open about discussing some problems they encounter when they work on any task and it is a motivation for the teacher to come to facilitate learning.

Finally, analytic rubrics are considered as roadmaps that show students different paths with different results and to show teachers, later on, shared obstacles and learning difficulties among the students. In this situation, rubrics would be useful in addressing these issues without vexing low-achieving students and enlighten the teacher to make refining adjustments to tackle any learning weakness without pointing at the students (ibid, 25).

1.5.2. Questioning

Questioning is another source of collecting evidence about students' outcome. According to Black et al (2003), *"more effort has to be spent in framing questions that are worth asking: That is, questions that are critical to the development of student understanding"*. This means that teachers should invest more time in planned questions that promote students' engagement in their learning, rather than asking questions randomly just for the sake of getting answers from them.

Frey and Fisher (2011, p. 108) classify the kinds of the questions that the teachers use in their guided instruction into six categories: Elicitation, elaboration, clarification, divergent, heuristic, and reflective. Hence, if strategic teacher questioning is used appropriately in the classroom, it can play a vital role in the advancement of formative assessment and meaningful learning as well (Moss and Brookhart, 2009, p. 97). Walsh and Sattes (2005) identify three important characteristics of strategic questioning:

1. They are planned for previously,
2. They help the students harness the working of their minds, and
3. They rely on the students' 'wait time' so as to help them elaborate their answers and engage in critical thinking.

The construction of effective questions depends on five steps: planning the question, presenting the question, prompting the students' answers, processing the students' answers and reflecting on the questioning practice. Figure 1.2 highlights the appropriate steps that teachers may follow to formulate their questions.

QUILT Framework (Questioning and Understanding to Improve Learning and Thinking)

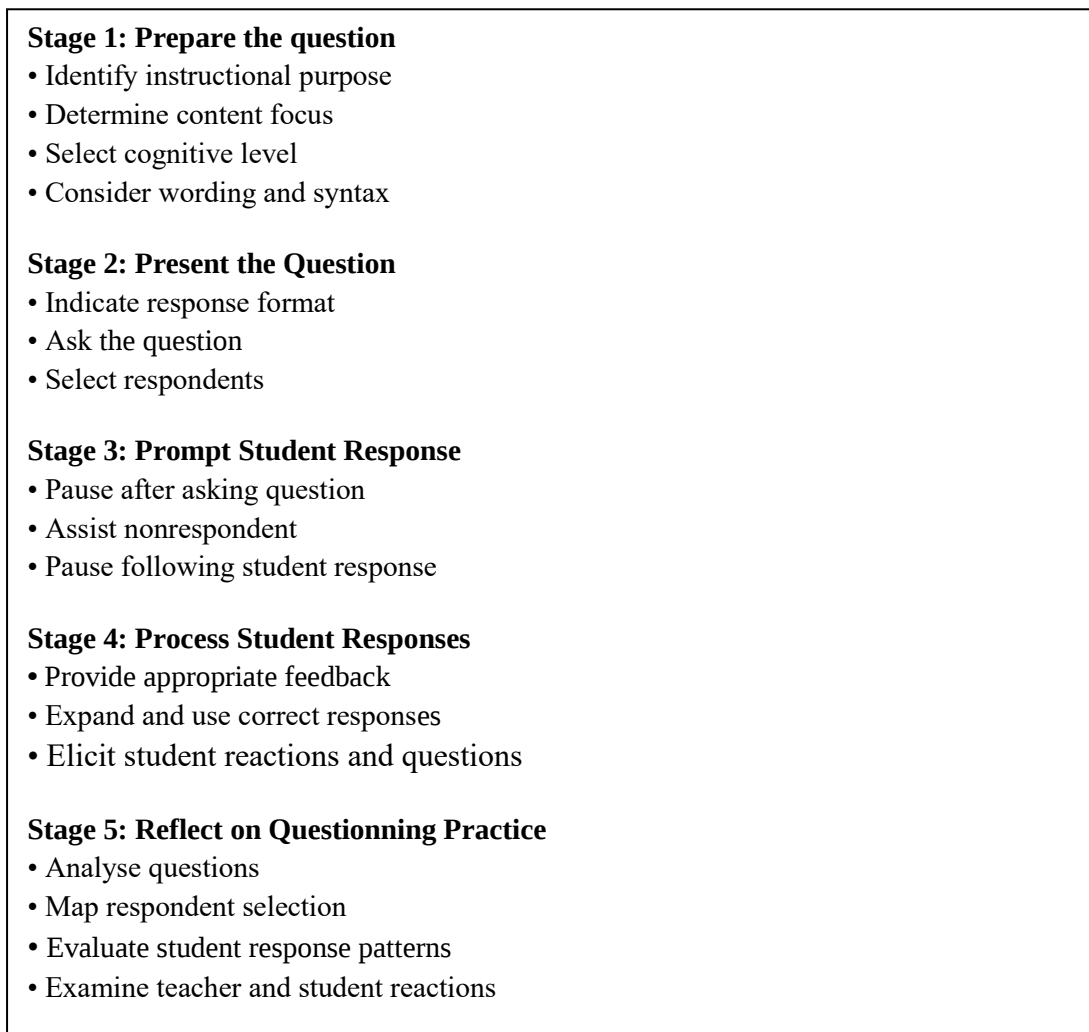


Figure 1.2 Quality questioning: Research-based practice to engage every learner
(Walsh and Sattes, 2005, p.vi)

The cycle of planning questions has an impact on the quality of formative assessment because well-crafted questions provide the teachers with evidence about day to day learning. Moreover, they help the teachers guide their students towards the realisation of significant content and learning objectives. Furthermore, engaging the students in figuring out the appropriate questions leads them to be aware of their current state of learning and what they

need to do to reach their target. To highlight the efficacy of planned questions, Moss and Brookhart (2009, pp. 98-99) refer to high quality questions versus simple two-step process (question-answer) in Figure 1.2. Finally, the students' answers can be a source of reflection as Fisher and Frey (2007, p.40) put it,

It is easy to be lured into thinking of students' answers as dichotomous—either correct or incorrect. However, it is essential to keep in mind that a student's answer reflects everything he or she knows and does not know at that particular moment. In other words, an incorrect answer is completely logical to the learner, even if it seems irrational to the teacher. The challenge is to analyze the incorrect answer to hypothesize what the student understands and does not understand, because then the teacher can determine what needs to occur next.

Closed Questions	Open Questions
• Imply there is only one predetermined “correct” answer. • Almost always ask students to recall facts or to demonstrate simple comprehension. • Are designed to determine whether the student knows, understands, or can do a predetermined thing.	• Invite a range of responses and make progressive demands on student thinking. • Encourage students to think beyond the isolated facts to authentic and relevant uses of concepts. • Are designed to increase and gauge the quality of what the students know, understand, and can do as they make progress toward the learning target.

Figure 1.3 Closed versus open question
(Moss and Brookhart, 2009)

The second characteristic of strategic questioning is asking questions that stimulate the students' active thinking; when the teacher asks high quality questions, the students question their current knowledge and can smoothly develop new insights. These teacher-student conversations pave the way for deep understanding on how complex thinking processes (Greenstein, 2010, p. 83).

The last key for successful strategic questioning is ‘wait time’. This strategy makes a difference in the classroom when the teachers ask a question or get an answer, then they pose

for several seconds in order to have their students process the question effectively. By allowing the students to have a wait time, they actively engage in finding the expected answers (Tobin, 1987). If wait time is coupled with teachers' high expectations for the students' well-thought answers, the following actions and behaviours happen (Moss and Brookhart, 2009, p. 109):

1. The students provide long and correct responses.
2. The students show more attempts in providing answers.
3. The students are ready to give relevant answers.
4. Wait time creates an atmosphere of seeking the appropriate responses since the students are engaged in extending and building on other students' answers.
5. The students can question other students' answers.

In the same line of thought, the teachers may invest further in this technique by asking productive questions. This type of questions invites the students to evaluate and synthesise their ideas so that they generate well-crafted responses. In a study by Tienken, Goldberg and DiRocco (2009) about the dominating mode of questions inside the classroom, they find out that reproductive questions are the dominating pattern with 76 percent. Another result shows that novice teachers (less than four years of experience) tend to ask this type of questions with a percentage of 85.

The last effective step in the questioning cycle is the analysis of the students' responses (Walsh and Sattes, 2005). The teachers can use a variety of tools to record the level of students' engagement in responding to their questions. One way to do this is by designing a seating chart in order to (Fisher and Frey, 2007, p. 40)

1. Spot the students who do not make any attempts to answer the questions.
2. Highlight any aspects during the process of getting answers such as paying attention to a given row at the expense of another one, or favouring boys more than girls, etc.

In this respect, the teachers can also reflect on the contents of their questions by using an audiotape. This technique is useful because the teachers can analyse the posed questions, their relationship to taught content and the students' level of understanding as well. Furthermore, incorrect answers are indicators of learning difficulties and teachers can use them to assist their students in their learning. Table 1.3 highlights common strategies that the teachers may utilise in this case.

Helping students who respond incorrectly
Cue: Use symbols, words, or phrases to help students recall. Clue: Use overt reminders such as "Start with..." Probe: Look for reasoning behind an incorrect response or ask for clarity when the response is incomplete Rephrase: Pose the same question in different ways. Redirect: Pose the same question to a different student. Hold accountable later: Later in the lesson, check back with the student who responded incorrectly to make sure that he or she has the correct answer.

Figure 1.4 Quality questioning: Research-based practice to engage every learner
(Walsh and Sattes, 2005, p. 89)

Even if the teachers notice that their students are reluctant to take part in answering their questions, they can exit cards at the end of the session to diagnose their students' disengagement during the lesson.

1.5.3. Exit cards

The implementation of formative assessment in day to day instruction can also be enhanced through the use of exit cards (tickets/ slips). Exit cards are an immediate tool that can be used to check the students' understanding and learning gaps at the end of a session (Barton, 2017). According to Cox (2019),

[Exit cards can be used to] ask a student to summarize the key points of the lesson...to verify the students can solve a problem, to allow students to ask any questions they may have about what they just learned, to see if students can apply the content just learned in a new way, or to have students demonstrate what they just learned.

Exit cards also serve as an effective way of collecting evidence about the teacher's pedagogy, taught content, participation, collaboration, use of technology and group work in a low-stake environment. After the analysis of the students' cards, the teacher gets feedback about his students' satisfaction or concerns. Hence; he/she may address any issues within the next session, either individually or collectively. Furthermore, reflection on the content advances on-going feedback about learning and instruction so that decision-making can take place in the right time, rather than leaving this process to the end of the semester evaluations (Eifler, 2018).

Exit cards can be used for a variety of purposes in which the students can respond to questions or prompts (Fisher and Frey, 2004):

1. Documenting learning
2. Emphasising the process of learning
3. Evaluating the effectiveness of instruction

The teacher can administer an exit card once or twice a week. A good exit card identifies whether the objectives of a lesson were met or not, by addressing one skill or concept at a time. The ideal number of questions ranges from three to five questions and it should take the students just few minutes to answer them. An effective way to collect and analyse data can be done through softwares such as Poll Everywhere or Google Forms. After the analysis of data, the teacher can use the obtained data to bring change to his classroom practice (Edutopia, 2015). Some of the decisions that the teacher can make include the following points (Khan, 2019):

1.5.3.1. Differentiation

After reviewing the students' responses, the teacher is informed about the needs of his learners and can use a variety of instructional strategies to cater for the different needs of his/her students to meet lesson objectives.

1.5.3.2. Data driven instruction

The obtained data from the exit cards give the teachers a clear account of the level of students' progress and the effectiveness of instructional methods. This diagnosis highlights the students' strengths and weaknesses. Thus, the teacher can take action to bring the appropriate modifications or remedy to his classroom.

1.5.3.3. Progress monitoring

Every student can keep his exit cards in a portfolio to see whether the student is making improvement in his learning over a period of time. Additionally, they can help locate any learning gaps to be addressed. Moreover, exit cards boost students' reflection about their learning process and journey and serves as a tool that promotes the assessment of their own learning.

1.5.3.4. Increasing communication between teachers and learners

Exit cards are a continuing form of communication. They provide the students with the opportunity to have a say about their own learning and any difficulties they may have encountered. At the same time, the teachers are always there in order to listen carefully to their students. Accordingly, they think about the appropriate ways to respond to their needs and interests. They also engage in their own self-assessment to adjust their teaching and promote effective practices in their classrooms.

Conclusion

The assumption behind this chapter is that making positive change in teaching and learning can be accomplished through the implementation of formative assessment in daily teaching and learning, and that it has the potential to bring change. In other words, much of the research that have been undertaken to raise achievement and quality learning was conducted by scholars who are specialised in scientific domains like mathematics and science. Research still needs further contributions to deal with formative assessment outside its

conventional sphere. Research has to transcend studies that examined formative versus summative assessment, assessment for learning and affective factors such as motivation, students' self-confidence and self-efficacy. Theoretical research indicated that formative assessment can be executed properly in contexts where it is not marginal, but through the active engagement of policy makers and the intentions of teachers to question their practice and willingness to bring change to their classrooms even if it means to challenge their every day routine just for the sake of differentiating their instruction and granting every single student the opportunity to learn. Formative assessment has proved effective when the teachers nurtured a classroom culture of advancing learning that values their relationship with their students and is embodied in dialogues about students' learning and perception of teachers' assistance, mainly by interpreting feedback, reflection and engagement in self-assessment techniques. That is to say, the main drive for change and students' engagement is the teacher's vision towards making it happen.

Chapter Two

The History of Assessing Writing

Introduction

This chapter reviews research on the chronological development of the assessment of writing and composition. Accordingly, it examines the chief stages of the shift from written examinations to considering the assessment of writing as a field on its own; with its theoretical considerations, underpinning philosophies, scholars and methods. Then it focuses on how assessing writing should be executed formatively; that means that formative assessment is a central element that informs teachers about the quality of their teaching and their students' learning. A synthesis of recent research into the relationship between assessment for learning and the attempts to empirically study its effects on teaching and learning the writing skill will also provide an understanding of the roles of formative assessment. Furthermore, the present chapter tackles issues related to different ways that teachers use to respond to their students' writing. This chapter ends with exploring self-assessment in writing and highlighting studies about the implementation of self-assessment as well.

2.1. Definition of Assessing Writing

Assessing writing is a field of study and research in composition that deals with theories and practices that are used to evaluate the writing ability, production and performances through writing tasks. Thus, as a realm on its own, assessing writing combines scholarships and insights from composition studies such as the composing process, the context of writing development, the impact of readers on writing, and discourse (Nystrand, Greene and Wiemelt, 1993, p. 3), and measurement theory within educational settings (Behizadeh and Engelhard Jr, 2011, p. 189). It also refers to the use of different technologies such as computer-assisted assessment practices to rate and grade students' writing (Huot and Neal, 2006).

2.2. Origins of Assessing Writing

The relationship between writing and assessment existed thousands years earlier, although it should be noted that the notion was mainly about assessment *through* writing. For instance, in the Chinese civilisation, sons of the nobility were trained for the service of the Imperial Court during the Chou period (1111-771 B.C). One of the requirements of selection for service was the ability of the candidates to pass the test of the writing system of their ancestors. While in the Eastern Chou period (770-255 B.C), the writing skills of government servants were evaluated for the sake of imperial and governmental purposes. In addition, written examinations became a fundamental condition within the foundation of national university during the Han period (206 B.C- 220 A.D). Within the establishment of a school system during the Sung period (960-1280 A.D), written analysis was also considered one of the indications of an educated man (Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 06).

In the European context, it was not until 1599 that the Jesuit Order led the incorporation of written tests in the Western world by publishing a statement of writing test procedures. The Jesuit Order claimed that the perfect method to control teaching in Catholic schools was through written examinations. The principals of these schools were supposed to monitor the quality of instruction by asking teachers to administer monthly examinations (DuBois, 1970). Then this practical system spread throughout the French educational system and throughout Europe (Spolsky, 1996).

The period between the Middle Ages and the late nineteenth century witnessed the domination of oral examinations and university instruction was conducted in the form of tutor-student dialogue or lecturing and debates (Rashdall, 1895, as cited in Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 07). Gradually, written examinations started to gain importance in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, thus they had a powerful impact in defining the ‘man of distinction’ (Latham, 1877).

Within the growing need for civil services across the British Empire, the British Parliament passed a law that required civil servants to undergo written examinations to get their positions in 1858. Therefore, written examinations were reliable means to evaluate the literacy skills and the servants' levels of intelligence (Spolsky, 1996).

As far as the United States of America is concerned, Harvard University took the lead in the introduction of essay placement exams as the chief condition for admission in the academic year of 1873-1874 replacing the traditional oral examination (Lunsford, 1986; Connors, 1997, p. 11) due to the increased concern about the students' lack of readiness for the challenges of university study (Huot, 2002, p. 01). The landmark of this year's requirement was: literature to be studied as a subject for composition (Applebee, 1974, p. 30). This change in English composition was as follow: *"Each candidate will be required to write a short English composition, correct in spelling, punctuation, grammar, and expression, the subject to be taken from such works of standards authors as shall be announced from time to time"* (Sever, 1874, as cited in Elliot, 2005, p.10). Then this practice took place across other universities by the turn of the twentieth century (O'Neil, Moore & Huot, 2009, p. 15).

This approach of assessing writing was a shallow one because writing, as a complex system, was positioned as a primarily mechanical skill that was used for the sake of testing the students' ability to demonstrate command over vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation in order to formulate sentences that conform to standard academic English (Paretti & Powell, 2009, p. 03). Lunsford (1986) concurs this statement by characterising this period,

Where reading, writing and speaking had once been combined in the pursuit of a student's own academic [...] goals, writing was now separated from the other communicative arts. The direct result of this separation was dramatic loss of purpose: writing merely became a way to demonstrate proficiency.

During this period, the procedure of assessing the students' writing ability consisted of making the examinees write (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p. 01). However, during the 1920 and the 1930's, there were calls for the need to change the method of assessing writing due to the growing numbers of university students. Besides, there seemed to be flaws with the essay scoring methods because essay raters were inconsistent in rating the student's essays (Greenberg, 1992, p. 08).

In fact, assessing writing has been an increasingly important area of research and study among legislators, educators, educational psychologists, institutional researchers, and measurement specialists with a continuous motion of discussion resulting in reformations and methods to measure, evaluate and respond to the students' writing (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p. 01; Huot, 2002, p. 03). Therefore; the richness of the field of assessing writing as a discipline in its own right on one hand, and its correlation with other areas like composition and writing studies, writing faculty, testing theories, and writing programmes on the other hand, have allowed writing assessment to be historicised from miscellaneous perspectives (Ibid, 01).

The history of assessing writing may be examined from different perspective that are brought together to give a fuller understanding of the existing literature. For instance, it may be tackled from historically conflicting principles of validity and reliability. Another approach may deal with unconnected strands: the composition teacher (the new non-expert) and the psychometric scholar (the old expert), in which there is a struggle between the contribution of psychometrics and rhetoric studies. Eventually, assessing writing can be scrutinised through lenses of the self; the educator's self, the self that educators want to teach and they hope will learn, and the self that strive to evaluate (Yancey, 1999, p. 484).

The context of assessing writing can be approached from various perspectives because it is rich with literature and world-class expertise and landmarks in this field of study. The list includes, but is not limited to the following publications: Barbara Kroll's *Second Language*

Writing: Research Insights for the Classroom (1990), Edward White's Teaching and Assessing Writing (1996), Kathleen Blake Yancey and Brian Huot's Assessing Writing Across the Curriculum (1997), Brian Huot's (Re)Articulating Writing Assessment for Teaching and Learning (2002), Brian Huot and Peggy O'Neil's Assessing Writing (2008), and most recently Abdelhamid Ahmed and Hassan Abouabdelkader's Assessing EFL Writing in the 21st Century Arab World: Revealing the Unknown (2018). The list also includes journals that deal with the scholarship of the assessment of writing across the world and in various contexts in which English has various statuses such as Assessing Writing and the Journal of Writing Assessment.

In this study, the history of assessing writing will be tackled from a chronological perspective. The selection of Yancey's (1999) historical context of the development of approach, methods and practice of the assessment of writing is due to the fact that it describes each period in relation to contextual factors and the nature of this practice.

2.3. Laying the Foundation of the Discipline of Assessing Writing

In '*Looking Back as We Look Forward: Historicizing Writing Assessment as a Rhetorical Art*', Yancey (1999) offers a rich account of the history of writing assessment or the so-called *testing* during the 1950's, and the tremendous impact it had on the field of composition and in shaping it throughout three distinguished waves. She describes the shift from one period to another as overlapping waves: "*with one wave feeding into another but without completely displacing waves that came before*" (Ibid, 483). These waves of writing assessment consisted of three waves: the first wave (around the 1950's -1970) was characterised by objective tests with indirect measures of assessment. The second wave (1970-1986) was embodied by the holistically scored essays. And the third wave (1986 – present time) shifted towards portfolio assessment and programmatic assessment.

2.3.1. Objective tests (Around the 1950's-1970)

The first wave (around the 1950's-1970) came as a reaction to some contextual factors such as the demographic one; addressing the growing number of students enrolling at university, determining who would take the pre-college writing courses and who would not place them appropriately (Yancey, 1999, pp. 484- 485).

During this period, the assessment of writing took the form of indirect assessment or recognition measure (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p. 01). This kind of assessment requires the students to demonstrate their writing ability by sitting a multiple choice test. That means that this kind of assessment aimed to measure the students' writing ability by means of answering questions about grammar, usage, particular language constructs, and punctuation (Stiggins, 1981, p.03; Lippman, 2003, p. 199).

[These tests] assess students' ability to distinguish between standard and non-standard English, or their ability to choose the most 'correct' or the most 'mature' alternative to a defective construction...Students are provided with a faulty sentence and are asked to select the best correction. By varying the test items, the students' proficiency with a range of writing skills can be tested.

(Charney, 1984, p. 66)

The objective tests gained popularity because they could be administered easily, thus they minimised the costs of a growing number of students (Behizadeh & Engelhard Jr, 2011). In addition, proponents of multiple choice tests claimed that assessment before 1966 proved to be neither reliable, nor valid in comparison to objective tests, which have the ability to measure the students' written ability (Palmer, 1966, p. 286). However, a study by Godshalk, Swineford and Coffman (1966) indicated that essay rating method could be reliable and valid under specific circumstances. Hence, essay tests of writing started to gain popularity (Greenberg, 1992, p. 10).

Though objective tests were the norm of assessing writing, they were also criticised for some reasons. The first major reason is their lack of face validity, which is the extent to which a test measures what it is meant to measure (L. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2000, p.132; Johnson, 2013). That is, multiple-choice tests did not seem to really measure the students' writing ability because these tests were not able to perform the intended behaviour: the act of writing. Instead, these tests measured practices that are related to writing. Moreover, these measurements could not assume whether the examinees can actually write at all (Charney, 1984, p. 66; Yancey, 1999, p. 486; Lippman, 2003, p. 2000). For example, McColly (1970) asserts that *"...the tests simply are not measures of writing. For the purpose of judging writing ability, they therefore should be ignored"*. The second shortcoming of objective tests was that they may have caused a misunderstanding towards the practice of the writing skill. The students may hold the idea that the writing skill is not important since they are not required to undergo a test of composition (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p. 03). The last element that received criticism was their inability to measure the 'larger elements' of composition (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones & Schoer, 1963, p. 42). In that sense, objective tests failed to measure essential components of written expression and production, namely: originality, creativity, logical coherence, effectiveness of rhetorical strategy, management and flexibility of tone, the ability to generate ideas and supporting examples, the ability to compose for different purposes and audiences, the ability to stick to a subject, or the ability to exercise any other higher-level writing skill such as planning, writing, revising, or editing.

In short, some scholars in the area of writing research affirmed that indirect assessment of writing was not a valid tool to measure writing ability. However, it can be used as a standardised assessment, or as a means for placement purposes only (C. Cooper, & Odell, 1977, p. viii).

2.3.2. *The holistically-scored essay (1970-1986)*

The limitations of the quantitative method or the objective tests led to dissatisfactions among teachers of English (Greenberg, 1992, p. 10). Therefore, the trend was to move to qualitative methods, or the so-called direct assessment, production assessment (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p. 02), and performance assessment (Lipmann, 2003, p.02). Researchers went back to holistic rating during the 1960's because they found out that raters who were trained in reading and evaluating writing samples were able to produce reliable results (Charney, 1984, p. 67).

According to Yancey (1999, p.484), writing assessment within this wave relied on essay tests that ought to be produced in a single session. These sessions may range from twenty-five minutes on a Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) to an hour or two on most university-based tests (Condon, 2011, p. 164). In this type of assessment, *“students must demonstrate writing competence rather than recognizing the correct answer; teachers exercise their judgment and this judgment replaces the scoring of the scantron”* (Walcott, 1998, p. 5). Judgments, therefore, are done by means of holistic rating or scoring. This method is an impressionistic qualitative procedure that is based on the evaluation of a trained rater to a whole piece of writing. It is designed for the sake of assigning a value to a writing essay according to established criteria (Greenberg, 1992, p. 07).

The use of holistic rating depends on the kind of the assigned topic or the objective of the task. The procedure may simply address the reader's total impression of a written piece, as it may evaluate other characteristics such as specific linguistic, rhetorical or informational aspects. Raters are not supposed to correct or suggest remarks for further correction, and they are not responsible for identifying weaknesses within the assigned essays (Charney, 1984, pp. 67- 86).

Despite the fact that the holistically-timed essay gained a widespread use, specialists in the field of writing assessment highlighted some limitations of this method. By reviewing previous literature as whether researchers could distinguish between writing ability and writing performance, Braddock et al (1963, pp. 06) identified two variables; the writer variable and the assignment variable. The former is about whether the student writer fully uses his writing ability, or he is just performs well on an assigned task. As for the assignment variable, it includes the following elements: time for writing, the topic, the mode of discourse, and the context of examination (Ibid, 07).

The time limitation of the generation of an essay raises an issue for the effectiveness of this method to actually measure the students' writing ability. The allotment of 20 or 30 minutes was regarded as "ridiculously brief" for a university student to generate a piece of writing that is thoughtfully discussed and well-crafted in terms of linguistic maturity (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p. 06). Or this amount of time would be merely judged in terms of putting students under time pressure to measure their ability to create and organize materials (B. G. Davis, Scriven, & Thomas, 1981, p. 213). Under such conditions, it seems that the chief objective of such tests is to measure performance since the students are put under time pressure to formulate ideas and select words that are relevant to this end, rather than measuring their writing ability (Coffman, 1971, p. 284). Hence, scholars suggested that the appropriate amount of time to perform such tests should range from seventy to ninety minutes for high school students and two hours for university students (Lloyd-Jones, 1977; Braddock *et al*, 1963).

The assigned topic for writing imposes another problem at the level of reliability. According to Conlan (1982, p. 11), the topic variable cannot be under control for consistent scoring due to the fact that any prescribed topic is open to various kinds of developments and

multiple approaches. Thus, it is hard for teachers or raters to apply consistent scoring across all written samples.

English teachers hardly need to be told that there exists a great deal of variability in student writing from one theme to another and from one essay to another. The most brilliant students may do well on one essay topic and badly on another (Palmer, 1966, p.288)

On a more complex and demanding level, writing an essay in different modes of discourse is another variable within this kind of assessment. Not all the students are equipped with the assets of writing for various purposes (informing, persuasion, and entertaining..etc), and audience (formal, informal, professional, academic..etc) beyond the basic modes such as description, narration, exposition and argumentation. Furthermore, modes of discourse play a crucial role in the generation of key components such as the sentence structure and other syntactic features (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p. 05; Braddock *et al*, 1963, p. 08). Moreover, writing for different purposes requires different skill constructs, which have to be taken into account to avoid unfairness and inaccurate decisions (Quellmalz, Capell & Chih-Ping, 1982, pp. 255-256).

We know that assigned mode of discourse affects test score distribution in important ways. We do not know how to develop writing tests that will be fair to students who are more skilled in the modes not usually tested

(White, 1982, p.17)

The fourth variable that some assessment specialists identified as having an impact on the reliability of the holistically timed essay is the examination situation. This includes the conditions of the examination setting, the health state and the mood of the students, and the degree of anxiety before and during the administration of the written test. These factors may influence the quality of the final product in comparison with objective tests, which give the students the opportunity to score well due to multiple items within the test (P. L. Cooper, 1984, p.7).

Aside from the assignment variables, there are other variables that were judged as contributors to lack of reliability within essay tests. They incorporate validity issues and rater inconsistencies. The former has to do with whether essay tests measure the students' writing ability or not. White (1995, p360), in *"An Apologia for the Timed Impromptu Essay Test"* clearly asserts that the timed essay limits the students' creativity and ability in a context where they are obliged to take into account a prescribed topic and scoring criteria. He also adds that this kind of writing assessment restricts the complex concept of writing it measures and defines it in a narrow way of merely a first draft piece of writing. Hence, the students should be able to demonstrate, *"The ability to discover what one wishes to say and to convey one's message through language, syntax and content that are appropriate for one's audience and purpose"* (Odell, 1981, p. 103).

Direct assessment, therefore, does not address writing sub-processes such as brainstorming, planning, revising and editing (Chou, 2003, p. 166). On the other hand, this kind of assessment does not prepare the students for the contexts outside school or university. Equally important, they do not recognise the fact that some conventions (terminology, style, and incorporating sources for evidence) do not fit into other situations (Beaufort, 1999; Aremeva, Logie and St-Martin, 1999, as cited in, Paretti & Powell, 2009, p. 04).

Rating variability constitutes another challenge for the essay assessment due to several reasons. Raters may be faced with subjectivity issues towards the students' written performances (Khongput, n.d, p. 01). According to Noyes (1963, p. 08), *"over and over it has been shown that there can be wide variance between the grades given to the same essay by two different readers, or even by the same reader at different times"*. Hence, Cumming, Kantor, and Powers (2002) pointed at the fact that raters' subjectivity can be a factor that results from the raters' perceptions they assign to good writing and their cultural and professional backgrounds. For instance, they conducted a study to investigate features of

TOEFL essays rated by experienced raters. Each rater was asked to identify the three most essential factors of successful essay writing. They found out that qualities of good writing performance varied from one rater to another and they were classified as; rhetorical organization (nine raters), expression of ideas (nine raters), accuracy and fluency of English grammar (seven raters), and vocabulary, and the length of writing (two raters).

Variability can also occur when the essay question is open-ended that the students find the opportunity to develop it in a vague way (Coffman, 1971, p. 277). Furthermore, consistency across all scored samples cannot be guaranteed when the raters are exhausted or bored. These states may lead to error or unfairness (McColly, 1970, p. 151; Wood, 1993). These issues, therefore, lead to lack of reliability. Myers, McConville and Coffman (1966, p. 53) add, *“if readers become less reliable as they near completion of an arduous task, [then] there would be an equivalent drop in reliability regardless of how long the reading period was”*. In light of the above issues with the holistically-scored essay, White (1995, pp.32-34) noted that there is no such a concept as good or bad assessment techniques or tools. Every assessment device is judged according to its own context and how the raters would use the information obtained from the students’ performance. Hence, some scholars pointed at the possibility of making the essay assessment work better in given contexts by reflecting on some of its qualities.

The teachers can use one option that the essay assessment has; the topic or the theme of the assigned task. The students can perform well on their writing providing that the assigned topics stimulate their interest (Atwell, 1987; Graves, 1993, as cited in Lippman, 2003, p. 202). Furthermore, both audience and purpose of the writing task should be clearly stated for the students. In this respect, Wolcott (1998, pp. 24-25) identified the characteristics of the topics of direct assessment. They should be accessible, clearly stated, broadbased, engaging, but not

emotional in order not to lose control of writing, and at the same time, reinforcing the types of writing that are prescribed in the curriculum and dealt with in class.

2.3.3. Portfolio assessment (Since 1986)

In writing, a portfolio is a cumulative and an ongoing compendium of the students' essays, reports, papers, and other material (Forgette-Giroux & Simon, 2000, p. 02). Portfolio assessment is based on the selection of multiple written pieces of the students' performance in different rhetorical styles that are tied to the course curriculum (Graziano-King, 2007, p. 77). The portfolio is different from other techniques of collecting students' papers in annotating papers based on reflection. In that sense, the students are required to review them and write reflective essays to assess their improvement over the course period (White, 1995, p. 34; M. H. Davis, & Ponnampuruma, 2005, p. 279; Lam, 2018, p. 03). The student can include pieces of writing in his own portfolio or he can ask for assistance from his writing teacher as well (Lippman, 2003, p. 214). Therefore, the collection of the students' written performances can be used as a proof of their learning journeys, in which progress and achievements are showcased (Genesee and Upshur, 1996, p. 99, as cited in Ghoorshaei, Tavakoli and Ansari, 2010, p. 37).

The application of portfolio assessment emerged in other disciplines before education including architecture, fashion design, photography, journalism, and medical education (Heywood, 2000; Guard, Richter & Waller, 2016, p. 01). The fundamental motive for using such assessment is to display the professional's various performances of quality through a collection of work, which one has achieved throughout a period of time. They may be printed copies, multimedia or web-based documents collected on a daily basis (M. H. Davis *et al*, 2001; Lam, 2018, p. 02).

During the 1970's, the use of portfolios started to gain popularity as a key element within the writing classroom. Back in 1986, Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff reported on their investigation of the implementation of portfolio assessment with students in first year writing courses. Thus, there was a shift from indirect assessment –timed essay of writing to portfolios (Condon, 2011, p. 164), and as a substitute to this kind of assessment in some American universities (Belanoff and Dickson, 1991, as cited in Lam, 2018, p. 04).

The shift to portfolio-based assessment was motivated by several reasons and attitudes towards the writing skill and assessing it. According to Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000, p.12), teachers, and not assessment specialists, were the main drive behind the use of portfolios for writing assessment. They explained that “...*teachers increasingly saw it [direct assessment] as a context-poor assessment and began looking for an even better instrument.*”

The incorporation of portfolio as a device to assess the students' writing creates a real context, in which there is an alliance between assessment, instruction, and students (Moeller, 1994, p. 111). Before the emergence of the portfolio, writing tests were not connected to the curriculum to which the students were exposed to during their studies. Therefore, the curriculum was driven by tests and not the opposite (Smith, 1991). Once teachers were involved with writing assessment, there exists an “*interactive and collaborative process in which information is collected in natural classroom instructional encounters*” (Hedge, 2000, p. 395). In this respect, the gained evidence has a washback effect on the kind of instruction (Hamp-Lyons, 2002, p. 11). Assessment through portfolio can also provide the teacher with rich account of the performance of the students at different stages of their writing process. Before the final step of selecting the samples of the portfolio, the teacher or peers can provide the students with descriptive feedback on one or multiple drafts. Besides, remarks can be provided on the final product as well. For these reasons, one of the strengths of portfolio is that it can combine process and product simultaneously (Wolcott, 1998).

We cannot reliably or validly evaluate a performance without knowing its context, without knowing the conditions under which the performance was accomplished. Thus, we can adequately judge a portfolio only if we know something about the instruction that led the writer to produce the portfolio; as a result we cannot evaluate the performance without, in some respects, evaluating the instruction.

(Hamp-Lyons and Condon, 2000, p. 03)

Once assessment is closely tied to instruction and curriculum, the teachers can use the results of their students' performance to monitor and modify their instruction (Moeller, 1994, p. 111; Tsagari, 2004, as cited in Tavakoli and Amirian, 2010, p. 37). Moreover, the portfolio facilitates the students' engagement in their learning. That means that the processes of reflecting on one's strengths and weaknesses boosts revision and adjustment of performance to meet learning goals. Besides, presenting the students with opportunities to select the portfolio samples empowers them to assume an active part in their writing. Finally, the whole process of selection, reflection and collection help develop the students' self-evaluative skills (Hartman, 1995, p.35). According to Lam (2018, p.14),

For portfolio assessment, it expects students to collect, reflect and select works-in-progress in support of learning. It further nurtures students' self-regulated learning capacity to monitor their portfolio journey

Hamp-Lyons (2002, p. 11) provided another perspective towards other factors of assessing writing in the modern era. These characteristics have to do with the appearance of ESL/ EFL students. When assessing writing, various elements need to be taken into account such as the students' language background, their degree of cultural integration, their socio-economic status, their learning styles and other factors that may also apply to L1 students.

2.4. Assessment for Learning in Writing Classrooms

The last twenty years have witnessed a notable interest and concern about the alignment of assessment for learning, instruction and learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Gardner, 2012). Traditionally, L2 and EFL classrooms of writing have been dominated by conventional views

of testing and assessment that serve summative and grading purposes (I. Lee, 2007, 2011, 2014, p.73). Hence, there was a need to reconsider assessment from another angle that could affect learning and teaching positively. Currently, assessment is regarded as a tool that has the potential to inform and improve both; teaching and learning (Parr, 2013, p. 489-490). In this context, an assessment is considered formative when it helps teachers collect information about their students' engagement in learning. Also, it functions formatively when the analysed data helps foster learning and positive gains, and when the evidence is used in meaningful ways to adapt teaching to meet the learning needs (Gorlewski, 2008, p. 97; I. Lee, 2014, p. 74). In addition to that, in a classroom that is characterised by formative assessment, the teacher assumes the responsibility of guiding his students towards ultimate successful learning. This process involves the interaction with the students and assistance is provided through feedback (Lantolf and Poehner, 2004, p. 58). By doing so, there is a possibility of applying a formative assessment system that align assessment with teaching and learning on one hand, and making assessment drive instruction in the process of developing students' writing during instruction and not at the end of it (Frey and Fisher, 2013, p. 67). Therefore, the implementation of the formative assessment system can be achieved under the umbrella of a supporting classroom culture. This culture is driven by a secure and a supportive environment especially in L2 and EFL contexts in which the students are learning how to write. Moreover, they are bound to commit mistakes throughout their journey of writing in a foreign language (I. Lee, 2017, 35). Hence, the teacher should take all of these factors into account to realise the ultimate aim of formative assessment, which is the ability of the students to be autonomous writers.

According to Popham (2008, p. 05), formative assessment should be regarded as a process. This idea truly aligns with the practice of teaching writing and assessing it throughout different stages. Moreover, Delpit (1986) and McTighe and Ferrera (1998)

advocated the view of process-oriented instruction and assessment in teaching the writing skill (Bauer, 2016, p. 17). For Delpit (1986), the process-oriented instruction is based on the principles of fluency and creative expression of students, rather than centring the whole journey of learning writing on the notion of correctness only, and thus embodying the concept of reflecting on the students' ability to generate ideas in writing. McTighe and Ferrera (1998) extended this concept by noting that the process-oriented assessment intends to explore the students' processes and strategies in generating ideas in the writing classroom without focusing on grammar and spelling as a primary concern at the early stages of writing. By doing so, the potential for improving one's writing is centred around "what is present" to highlight the students' strengths and not on "what is not present" to guide the instruction (Swain and LeMahieu, 2012).

When it comes to the alignment of formative assessment with instruction in the writing classroom, I. Lee, (2014, p. 74) proposed a framework to integrate classroom assessment with teaching and learning writing. This framework is based on the work of Hattie and Timperley's (2007, p. 86) model of feedback 'feed up, feedback, and feedforward'. By translating these three principles into assessing writing, the teacher will rely on the following formatively-oriented strategies or stages 'pre-writing, during-writing, and post-writing'.

Fundamental to the integration of formative assessment in the writing classroom is sharing the assessment criteria with the students at the stage of pre-writing. That means that the students should be made well-aware of the nature of writing assessment. In Stiggins' and Chappuis' view (2012), it is of a paramount importance to give the students a sense of direction about where they are going. In addition, the teacher can help them set any attainable goals as well. To help the students identify and formulate these goals, the teacher can provide them with goal-setting sheets, analytic rubrics and feedback forms.

In the during-writing stage, the teacher is supposed to provide the students with descriptive feedback on their performance so that their strengths and weaknesses are highlighted. He can also help them act upon the provided feedback to work on their weaknesses and reflect on them because if they fail at working on the teacher's feedback, it will lose its value in the cycle of moving towards meeting the previously-set goals.

The post-writing stage serves revising and editing purposes. That means that the students assess their performance based on guidelines to make the final corrections. For the teacher, the obtained data serve as a means to inform his instruction so that he can use it to plan the next lesson. As for the students, the gathered information can be used to reflect on their learning and find possible ways to close the gap.

2.5. Synthesis of Empirical Studies in Formative Assessment and Writing

Table 2.1 provides details about research undertaken in the writing classroom, in which the focus is on exploring the potentials of formative assessment in teaching and learning writing.

Researchers	Purpose	Context	Results and premises
Eriksson and Maurex (2018)	The exploration of the introduction of formative assessment in teaching writing reports to psychology students.	This study fostered peer and teacher formative assessment. The sample consisted of 48 fourth year students. Half the students voluntarily participated in reviewing their peers' first drafts and all of them submitted a first draft for teacher's review before final submission.	peer review and teacher review proved to be beneficial methods in teaching how to write a psychological report.
Vågen (2017)	To investigate pupils' experiences	This case study relied on an interview with	The provided feedback needs to be

	towards formative assessment in EFL writing to uncover any positive or negative aspects of this practice.	two teachers and 58 pupils from two classes of 10 th grade, and who experienced the same feedback strategies since the eighth grade.	specific and understandable, and feedforward that shows them how to improve, preferably with examples/ The students also need the teachers' help to understand written feedback
Johansson & Nilsson (2017)	To research how teachers give feedback during the learners' writing process and the reasons behind their choice of these feedback strategies.	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two teachers of four and six grades in a Swedish school.	The teachers preferred to give informational and selective feedback during the writing tasks/ Teachers are not aware of delivering feedback during the process-based approach of writing.
Hamlaoui and Fellahi (2017)	To investigate the role of teacher-student conferencing to improve grammatical accuracy in EFL university students' writing.	120 composition drafts of ten students were analysed during the course of one month. Conferencing sessions were held with the students at the editing stage.	The participants showed progress in grammatical accuracy and could eliminate subject-verb disagreement and a significant reduction of run-on sentences.
Prithvi (2016)	To examine the relationship between the formative feedback provided by the tutors and the extent to which students' academic writing development did (not) improve over two assignments.	Mixed-methods of open and distant undergraduate course about academic skills. Data were collected by means of a survey, and interviews with tutors and students.	There is some evidence of positive impacts of assessment materials and tutor feedback on students' learning/ these results can be used to improve institutional assessment strategies and tutor feedback practices in higher education.
Burner (2015)	To investigate how both teachers and students responded to new emphasis on	Mix-methods study involved four teachers and 100 students at a	The students appreciated constructive written feedback, but found

	formative assessment in the writing classroom.	Norwegian middle school. Two classes in the eighth grade and two classes in the ninth grade.	it challenging when it came to following the teachers' feedback. As for teachers, they hesitate to deal with self-assessment, text-revision and student involvement.
Sahli (2015)	To investigate the current practice of formative assessment in the Algerian University	Observing one teacher of writing, conducting an interview with two teachers of writing	Formative assessment is applied to some extent. Teachers need further training to implement formative assessment in the writing classroom.
Mak and Lee (2014)	To foster change by an attempt to implement assessment for learning in L2 writing classroom dominated by examination culture.	Observing two elementary teachers for one year and interviewing administrators and teachers of the two primary schools.	The arising of tensions as a result of the introduction of AfL in the writing classrooms/The culture of testing and covering the syllabus still persists/ Teachers are not totally free to introduce innovations in their classrooms.
Foltz (2014)	To use automated feedback to provide rapid individualised feedback to maximise students' writing and language skills.	The implementation of formative assessment technological system that provides students with feedback on grammar, content, organisation, planning and revising. (English for native speakers/ EFL).	Teachers could track the students' improvement in the writing skills and invest time in other activities.
Frey and Fisher (2013)	To make formative assessment drive instruction and foster learning in the	550 high school students were asked to rate the best feedback practice	The students favoured "Edits to improve my writing"/ Teachers

	writing classroom.	they favour on end-of-unit extended writing tasks.	developed strategies so that assessment could inform instruction/ The use of remedial sessions to improve the students' writing.
Bouzidi (2012/Algeria)	To explore teachers' roles in delivering feedback.	Questionnaires with 2 nd year LMD students and interviews with teachers of writing at Biskra University.	Students are aware of the importance of feedback and the teachers concluded that acting on the provided feedback depends on the students' ability to understand it.
Lee (2007/Hong Kong)	To investigate whether teachers' feedback serves formative purposes in secondary writing classrooms or not.	Analysing 26 teachers' written feedback to 174 students and interviewing 18 students (ESL/ EFL)	Teachers' feedback focuses largely on assessing writing summatively. The call to implement assessment for learning in the writing classroom.
Sawyer, Graham, and Harris (1992)	To extend the work of Harris and Graham (1989) on self-regulation in students' composition and including (self-regulation, goal-setting, self-instruction, and self-assessment)	5 th and 6 th grade pupils with learning disabilities.	The group who were taught self-regulated strategies and goal setting performed better than the group without the goal-setting, and all the group performed well when they were provided with feedback on planning and writing a story.

Table 2.1 Selected Empirical Studies about Formative Assessment in the Writing Classroom

To sum up, formative assessment in the writing classroom has primarily been studied from the teachers' perspective on how to deliver feedback, the modes of delivering feedback and to some extent, the impact of feedback on the overall improvement of the writing skill. However, there are major gaps in the available literature about empirical research that covers

the impact of assessment for learning on teaching and learning the writing skill. First of all, formative assessment of writing in general and in English as a Foreign Language in particular is still considered an underexplored field of research. Also, many teachers at different levels of education are not trained on how to invest assessment evidence to foster learning in the writing sessions. Therefore, these issues have to be addressed to create a balance in literature between assessment for learning in English as a First Language and EFL (I. Lee, 2011, 2017, p. 02). In addition, little research has been done in contexts of assessment for learning and the improvement of writing where both teachers and students are studied (Burner, 2015, p. 01). Furthermore, there is a dearth in research about the teachers' attempts to implement assessment for learning in teaching writing, therefore; greater attention should be directed to this issue (I. Lee, 2014, p. 73; 2007, p. 190).

2.6. Responding to Student Writing

Theories of development and learning stressed the fact that response to the students' learning is fundamental to the process of good performance and successful achievement (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore; using feedback to respond to the students' writing plays a major role, not only in checking their progress, but also to help them master the process and the conventions of the writing skill (Flower, 1979, as cited in, Zellermayer, 1989, p. 145).

Teacher written feedback can take the forms of comments, questions or error corrections that are written on the students' written tasks (Mack, 2009, as cited in Razali and Jupri, 2014, p. 63). According to Brookhart (2008, pp.31-32), written feedback is a realm on its own. That means studies on feedback have tackled many dimensions such as feedback as a written speech between the teacher and his students, such as expressive and directive feedback (Tee, 2013, p. 389). Research also shed light on the impact of feedback on the students' writing. Studies in this context include the effects of feedback on the students' ability to edit their word choice (Bobrova, 2017), the role of corrective feedback strategies;

direct correction; indirect feedback; coded feedback; and uncoded feedback (Chen, 2018, p. 55).

When responding to students' writing in L1 and L2, teacher written feedback raises issues among teachers and researchers in this field. This issue rises from the fact that scholars made negative judgments about the nature and the effects of the teachers' delivered response, mainly written feedback (Ferris, 2003, p. 19).

According to Leki (1994, pp. 57-58), teachers of writing know that their written comments have an impact on their students' visions about writing. Though providing the students with written feedback is time-consuming, it is still in use today. This is due to the fact that teachers feel that their comments contribute to their students' writing improvement. In addition, F. Hyland (2003) states that teachers also comment on their students' writing in order to assess them through a reader reaction. Comments also serve as a justification for an assigned grade.

Research about feedback on writing focused mainly on the teacher written comments and on teacher-student conferencing. In this respect, three areas of feedback were tackled in empirical studies: the focus of feedback, the form and nature of feedback and the impact of written feedback on students' writing (Ferris, 1997, p. 21).

According to Zamel (1985), previous studies on responding to students' writing revealed that ESL/EFL teachers consider themselves as language teachers rather than teachers of writing and composition. Therefore, the students' language errors were the focus of the teachers' written comments, without providing feedback that addresses the ideas or the organisation of the piece of writing. According to Cumming (1983, p. 06),

Error identification appears to be ingrained in the habitual practices of teachers who perhaps by reasons of perceiving their role solely as instructors of the formal aspects of

language, therefore restrict their activities to operations exclusively within the domain of formal training rather than that of cognitive development.

In this context, it was observed that in writing classrooms, there was not a culture of multiple drafts, in which the students may make use of the teacher's written feedback during the revision phase.

Other justification of the prominence of error-correction method in this period was due to lack of training in the area of teaching composition and writing skills (Reid, 1993). In addition, the process-oriented approaches were not wide-spread until the mid- 1980's. Furthermore, it is likely that many teachers were instructed by teachers of language. This fact justifies the way the teachers responded to one-draft (language product) rather than multiple drafts (written expression) (Ferris, 1997, p. 22).

Examining the manner of providing feedback, Zamel (1985, pp. 79-82, as cited in Gascoigne, 2004, p. 72; Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 78) highlighted a list of frequent feedback (either form or content) issues:

1. Teachers share a common restricted view of writing and composing by responding to writing as single final draft.
2. Students find it challenging to interpret the teachers' written feedback and comments. This is due to the fact that these comments are abstract and vague.
3. Teachers focus on grammatical and mechanic errors and they do not expect their students to revise issues beyond language errors.
4. Teachers modify their students' written pieces in accordance with their own purpose and opinions.
5. Teachers address both concerns: language-specific errors and content. By doing so, the students receive perplexed messages.

6. Teachers do not always suggest direct, adequate remarks about the written text, and particular revising techniques for their students.

Furthermore, Truscott (1996) criticised the practice of error and grammar correction as being harmful and ineffective to the students' writing improvement and it should be abolished. Besides, it is "*a clear dramatic failure*" (Truscott, 2007, p. 271). Instead, he pointed at the fact that writing quality may be enhanced through continuous practice (Truscott, 2004, p. 342). These claims were a reaction to Chandler's study (2003) on the effectiveness of error correction.

Chandler (2003) conducted an empirical study about the effects of error correction on the students' writing over a semester. He found out that the accuracy of the students' writing improved substantially when they acted on feedback on their errors immediately.

As an attempt to oppose Truscott's claims, Ferris (2004) published a paper called "The 'Grammar Correction' Debate in L2 Writing: Where Are We, and Where We Go from Here? (and What Do We Do in the Meantime...?) as a response to Truscott's claim.

Based on previous research on error correction and on her own studies, Ferris (2004) comes to the following conclusions:

1. Research on error correction is not addressed properly and has some limitations. That means that a few research studies on the effectiveness of error correction did not include control and experimental groups. That is why there were not accurate results about the effectiveness of error correction. (Sheen, 2007)
2. There is no place for generalisation of the effectiveness of written feedback because research was done in various incomparable contexts. Besides, there was no replication of previous studies in the area of error correction (Ferris, 2005, as cited in Schmidt, 2017, p. 03; Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 79).

3. Current research on error correction and corrective feedback may have positive effects on the students' writing. Ferris (2004, p. 56) stated that adult students may not show progress in linguistic accuracy without direct instruction and corrective feedback. Moreover, receiving corrective feedback during the phase of revision would boost the students' self-correction. The students' engagement with feedback may develop their linguistic competence in long-term. Finally, research showed that students seem to take corrective feedback into account and act upon it to improve their writing. In addition to that, Budimilic (2012, p. 34) stated that several studies indicated that constant exposure to language correction in writing would improve the students' written performance.

Leki (1991) conducted research about ESL students' favorite strategies of error correction in writing. She found out that her participants appreciated the fact that their teachers correct errors for them. In another study by Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1996), they concluded that EFL students preferred to get feedback and corrections on the mechanical aspects of their language. These aspects include grammar mistakes and the use of words.

In an attempt to compare between L1 writers and language students writers, Hyland and Hyland (2006) pointed at the fact that there exists some differences when it comes to self-worth. Language students tend to invest less of their self-worth in their writing. That means that L1 students do not feel inhibited or discouraged by making grammar mistakes in comparison with other students of a language.

There might be a quite large body of information and research investigating teacher's feedback in L1 writing. However; it seems that there is a dearth of studies when it comes to the students' attitudes and subsequent action towards feedback (Leki, 1990, p. 64; I. Lee, 2005, p. 03). In addition to that, reviewing empirical studies about teachers' written feedback on organisation, rhetoric, and content in ESL did not take place until the beginning of the 1990 (Ferris, 1997, p. 22; I. Lee, 2005, p. 03).

In this respect, Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990) conducted a case study about the focus of teacher feedback. They found out that the three teachers' written commentaries were about grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, content, and organisation. In another study, Ferris et al (1997) analysed over 1500 comments provided by one teacher about 47 ESL students' written pieces (110 papers). The results indicated that approximately 15% of the comments were about grammar and mechanics issues. 85% of the provided comments were about the students' ideas and rhetorical development.

Conrad and Goldstein (1999) highlighted several issues that a teacher responded to in a case study about writing at the revision stage. These comments included remarks about coherence, cohesion, paragraphing, content, purpose, choice of words, and development such as providing examples and details in writing.

In an attempt to review studies about teachers' written commentary on content and rhetoric, Goldstein (2001) investigated 15 studies. He found out that 11 studies only explored the students' attitudes about their teachers' written feedback on their final drafts or the kinds of the provided feedback. In the same context, he revealed that only 04 studies examined the correlation between the teacher's provided feedback and comments and their impact on the students' revisions or scores.

Another key area of investigation is when to provide feedback. According to Hall (1990, p. 182), the issue of whether to pay attention to form or content first has raised debate among researchers. According to Zamel (1985, p. 96), "*we need to establish priorities in our response to drafts and subsequent revisions and encourage students to address certain concerns before others.*" That means that teachers and commentators should tackle issues of content and meaning in early drafts. Then they can address issues related to the students' written forms. This position towards responding to meaning or form first is backed by two

arguments. First of all, at the early stages of writing, the students should be encouraged to work on meaning by adding, deleting and rearranging ideas. Therefore, at these stages, it would be inappropriate to pay attention to form, which may be corrected at the global revision stage. The second argument is that by paying attention to form first, the students may lose focus on the brainstorming of ideas and may struggle to keep track of developing meaning (Faigley and Witte, 1981, as cited in Ferris, 1997, p. 23; Sommers, 1982, Zamel, 1985).

Though the vision of meaning is prior to form seems to work when writing is performed through several drafts, some researchers like F. Hyland (2003) and Ferris & Hedgcock (2005) argued that meaning is primarily constructed through language, therefore, they reject this view. In addition, there are no empirical studies that proved that working on ideas and language simultaneously hinders the students' from correcting them on the revision stage later on (Ferris, 1997, p. 23).

In their study, Fatham and Whalley (1990, pp. 182-185) involved four groups of writers and compared their revision scores on content and form. The first group was not provided with feedback at all. The second groups received feedback on grammar or form only. The third group received content feedback only, and the fourth group received feedback on form and content simultaneously. The results indicated that the students made substantial improvements in grammatical accuracy when they were provided with direct feedback on grammar. Furthermore, all the groups made progress at the level of content though some groups did not receive feedback in this area. Moreover, comments on grammar seem to have an impact on correcting it than content comments had on correcting mistakes about content. To sum up, both researchers concluded that feedback given on form and content, whether alone or at the same time has positive effects on the revision stage.

The third argument against the content and form dichotomy is that the provided feedback should be about the most needed aspect about the student's writing (Conrad and Goldstein, 1999). That means that the teacher should address the issue at hand, whether it is about form or content. For instance, if a first draft is well-developed, the teacher should check for grammatical mistakes if they exist or not (Ferris, 1997, p. 23).

The last argument against leaving form until the end of the writing cycle is that in some cases form is of a paramount importance. Such cases may include contexts of ESL/ EFL. According to Leki (1990), the students should be provided with continuous feedback on form in order to strengthen their linguistic repertoire, particularly at university and in writing proficiency exams.

Research studies have also attempted to study other aspects of responding to feedback such as the students' feedback preferences (A.D. Cohen, 1987; A.D. Cohen & Cavalcanti, 1987, p. 63, 1990, p. 157). Students' attitudes about receiving feedback were done by means of questionnaires and surveys. Many studies indicated that the students appreciate the fact of receiving teachers' written feedback. They also value it more than other forms such as peer and oral feedback (Radecki & Swales, 1988, as cited in Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 81).

In a small-scale study by A. D. Cohen and Cavalcanti in an EFL context (1987, pp. 70-71, 1990), they were motivated to address three points. The first one was the discrepancy between the teacher's feedback and the students' feedback preferences. The second point was about the various ways that the students use to respond to feedback. The last point was that the students did not seem to possess the appropriate skills to act upon the provided feedback. Results showed that there was a fit between the teacher's feedback and the students' preferences when it comes to content and organisation. In addition, the authors pointed at the fact that the EFL students should be trained on recording feedback. Thus, they may use it for further revision and rewriting of their written pieces.

In other studies, the students showed positive attitudes about receiving written indirect feedback that provides them with clues rather than correction. Thus, they are trained on widening their repertoire of feedback handling strategies (Arndt, 1993, as cited in Hyland & Hyland, 2006a, p. 81; F. Hyland, 2001).

Leki (2006) conducted a study to analyse written comments on students' homework. She also investigated the students' perceptions about the value of feedback and its impact on their disciplinary development. The students reported that feedback was of a paramount importance in their studies. Moreover, some students stated that they preferred to get feedback that assists them in identify learning issues and highlights their teachers' expectations. Finally, they pointed at the fact that they liked feedback that focused on content and language simultaneously.

Research on responding to students' writing has also tackled the aspect of how teachers should use language and style in order to give appropriate feedback to their students (Hyland & Hyland, 2001; Hyland & Hyland, 2006a, p. 80; Hyland & Hyland, 2006b). According to Brookhart (2008, p. 31), *"writing good feedback requires an understanding that language does more than describe our world; it helps us construct our world."* That means that the teacher commenter takes into account what he wants to say to the students about their writing. Brookhart (2008), in her book *"How to Give Effective Feedback"*, provides a detailed description of the dimensions of written feedback including feedback strategies and feedback content. In addition, the prescription of these criteria is based on an extensive research about good feedback practices and recommendations. In this respect, feedback strategies incorporate timing, amount, mode, and audience. As far as feedback content is concerned, the teacher selects the appropriate terms and expressions to give differentiated feedback to his students. This kind of feedback may serve informational, pedagogical and interpersonal objectives while considering the students' potential reactions to the provided feedback (Hyland &

Hyland, 2006, p.80) and its impact on the short and the long-term improvement of the students' writing (Ferris, 1997, p. 24).

Feedback Content Can Vary in...	In These Ways...	Recommendations for Good Feedback...
Focus	• On the work itself • On the process the student used to do the work. • On the student's self-regulation • On the student personally	• When possible, describe both the work and the process- and their relationship. • Comment on the student's self-regulation if the comment will foster self-efficacy. • Avoid personal comments.
Comparison	• To criteria for good work (criterion-referenced) • To other students (norm-referenced) • To student's own past performance (self-referenced)	• Use criterion-referenced feedback for giving information about the work itself. • Use norm-referenced feedback for giving information about student processes or feedback. • Use self-referenced feedback for unsuccessful learners who need to see the progress they are making, not how far they are from the goal.
Function	• Descriptive • Evaluative/ judgment	• Describe. • Don't judge.
Valence	• Positive • Negative	• Use positive comments that describe <i>what</i> is well done. • Accompany negative descriptions of the work with positive suggestions for improvement.
Clarity	• Clear to the student • Unclear	• Use vocabulary and concepts that the student will understand. • Tailor the amount and content of feedback to the student's developmental level.
Specificity	• Nitpicky • Just right • Overly general	• Tailor the degree of specificity to the student and the task. • Make feedback specific enough so that students know what to do but not so specific that it's done for them. • Identify errors or types of errors, but avoid correcting every one (e.g., copyediting or supplying right answers), which doesn't leave to students anything to do.
Tone	• Implications • What the student will "hear"	• Choose words that communicate respect for the student and the work. • Choose words that position the student as the agent. / Choose words that cause students to think wonder.

Table 2.2 Feedback Content (Brookhart, 2008, pp.6-7)

Research surveys indicated that there is a dearth of literature about the analysis of teacher's written feedback. Ferris (1997, pp. 24-25) reported that Conrad and Goldstein's study (1999) and her studies investigated this issue in depth. Ferris et al (1997) examined 111 pairs of student essays by 47 students at university in a composition module by the same teacher over two semesters. They could analyse more than 1500 teacher comments. Then they used a rating scale to trace the impact of these comments on the students' revisions. In another case study, Ferris (2001) analysed eight students' written texts and their teachers' responses (four good writers and four weak writers) in order to determine whether the teacher's comments seemed to lead to any positive or negative revisions of the students' texts. Both case studies indicated the following results:

1. The teacher varied her commenting techniques. She mentioned comments on the margins and at the end of the essays. Marginal comments in the first study exceeded end comments. However, the end comments were longer than the marginal ones. Comments in general served the following purposes: asking for more information, making a suggestion or a request, giving positive or encouraging feedback to the students, and commenting on grammar issues verbally. These comments took the forms of questions, statements, and imperatives.
2. Feedback was provided in accordance with the kind of the essay assignment and the competency of the student writer.
3. Some comments had more positive impact on revision than others.

For instance, the students acted upon comments requesting more information, imperatives and grammar mistakes. However, it did not stimulate the students' thinking, without providing them with suggestions or clues on how to approach this challenge. In this case, some students made ineffective attempts to refine their essays, but they were unsuccessful. Other students completely ignored the teacher's comments.

In the same line of research about the analysis of the teacher's comments, Conrad and Goldstein (1999) stated that the kinds of the issues in the students' writing may influence the student's ability to respond and to make effective revisions. They pointed at the fact that:

If the problem to be revised focused on explanation, explicitness, or analysis, the resulting revisions were almost never successful. In contrast, if the directive focused on details, examples, coherence/ cohesion, purpose, paragraphing, or lexical items almost all revisions were successful.

(Goldstein & Conrad, 1999, p. 160)

These results match Ferris (1997) findings about her first case study about the analysis of challenging comments and their impact on the students' effective revisions. Both authors stressed.

To make the students act upon the challenging comments, both authors suggested that there should be a kind of combination between written comments and other techniques such as conferencing. In this context, the teacher should identify some issues that may be discussed face to face with the students to address them better.

Sommers (1982) reviewed the aims and the impact of comments on the students' papers. In her study, she examined two kinds of comments; interlinear remarks and marginal comments. She found out that these comments have different functions. Interlinear remarks were meant to ask the students to edit sentences and regarded the text as a finished piece in need of editing. As for the marginal comments, they required the students to make further changes to the content to make it appealing for the audience. That means that marginal comments inform the students about the substitution they need to make to meet the requirements of their writing activity. Sommers concluded that the use of two kinds of comments sent conflicting messages to the students. In this respect, the students were confused whether content or style deserves priority for revision and may give them the impression that stylistic details need careful consideration before meaning.

Moreover, the students need to be informed about the reasons of revisions in order not to consider revision as a process of rewording. In case the students failed to see the importance of skills such as revising, editing, and proofreading, they would make revisions at the surface and ignore the meaning of the text itself.

Another important aspect of the way teachers respond to their students' writing is the use of codes and directions. Zamel (1985, pp. 89-90) notes that using ambiguous codes as marginal comments such as INC SEN (incorrect sentence) is unhelpful for the students to make revisions and corrections. For Reid (1994) highlighted the fact that teachers may assume that their students are well-aware of rhetoric and grammatical terminology that is why they tend to use these abbreviations. One way to address this issue is by dealing with them. That means that the teacher should explicitly teach these forms to his students so that they would decipher them easily at the stage of revision.

By the examination of teachers' comments, Ferris (1999, 2006, as cited in Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 79) suggested that teachers should use direct versus indirect comments when addressing treatable and untreatable errors in the students' writing. That means that if the students committed errors that have to do with verbs, subject-verb agreement and run-ons, the teacher should provide his students with indirect comments because these notions are governed by grammatical rules. However, when it comes to untreatable errors such as word choice, the teacher is supposed to provide direct comments because some teachers believe that the students are not able to perform self-correction.

In the same line of thought, Ferris (2001, as cited in Ferris 2003, p. 27) advocated the shift towards conferencing when revision issues are global and of an abstract nature, or when the students had another vision in their writing.

...the mere fact that a student does not address a teacher's suggestion in revision hardly means that the teacher's comment was "bad" or "unsuccessful"- it may simply means

that the writer has chosen to go in a different direction with his/her text, which is a healthy sign of independent thinking.

Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 105) defines conferencing as a face-to-face purposeful conversation between a teacher and a student or a group of students. The underlying goals of conducting such discussion are chiefly meant for aiding students gain insights about their learning difficulties, their strengths and weaknesses, and planning for further efforts to make progress in their writing.

Conferencing with individual students is advantageous especially in arts and language classes especially in the students' initial years of instruction because they are not highly proficient in engaging in conversations about their own performances. Besides, the suitable time for conducting conferencing sessions with the students is at the beginning of the academic year in order to grab any opportunity for students' improvements in any learning area and to be capable of fixing emergent weaknesses earlier (Fisher & Frey, 2011, p. 79).

For Anderson (2000), conferencing enables the teachers of writing to be listeners and researchers at the same time. In addition, Graves (1983, p. 138) asserts that conferencing with the students raise personal reflections. He claims that the students may not know what they actually know until the teacher elicits some pieces of information, which turn to be informative about their learning. He also emphasises the significance of verbal communication due to its power in allowing the students express themselves and encouraging reflectivity by slowing down their thinking while speaking and sharing their attitudes during conferencing. Besides, Hyland and Hyland (2006, p.83) state that research in L1 conferencing indicates that there is a possibility to negotiate meaning and misunderstanding during revision.

In a survey by Powers and Nelson (1995) across the United States writing centres at graduate institutions, they found out that a high percentage of ESL/ EFL students request conferencing sessions with their teachers.

Other studies focused on the improvement of writing through conferences. Goldstein and Conrad (1990) discovered that conferencing have positive impact on writing improvement when the students engage in negotiating their writing with their teachers. Then they use their teachers' remarks to bring effective revisions to their writing. Williams (2004) confirmed these findings by stating that when the teacher's suggestions and advice are explicit during conferencing, the students tend to actively negotiate their writing and to note down their plans for further revisions, mainly at the surface level.

Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) scrutinised four sessions of conferences that involved a weaker and a more able student. Then they examined whether the students could apply the conferences' suggestions in their revisions. The results indicated that all the eight students followed the teachers' instruction during conferences. Also, they noticed that the weaker students seemed to literally follow the teachers' advice. However, the more able students exhibited self-confidence in taking the teachers' suggestions as a starting point for their own vision of writing.

Other research studies examined the features of successful interactions during conferences (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 83). Whereas other researchers were interested in the aims and the teacher's talk during conferences with students (M. Harris, 1995), and the main focus in other studies was the themes of conferences, particularly sentence level grammatical issues (Cumming & So, 1996). Another dimension of research was the investigation of power and control of dialogue during the conferences sessions. This dimensions incorporated the contribution of participants, the length of speech turns and the amount of participants' contributions to meaning negotiation (Cumming & So, 1996).

Another issue which is at the core of responding to writing is the role of the teacher of writing in relation to the students' writing. According to Cowan (1977), the character of the teacher of writing is schizophrenic, in a sense that he exhibits three different functions namely: teacher as real reader (i.e., audience), teacher as coach, and teacher as evaluator.

For Leki (1994, pp.59-60), some teachers may respond as readers; they choose to comment and question their students' writing only. However, this function is superficial due to the unequal powers in the roles of teachers and students. Besides, the task of the teacher of writing is to guide his students to develop their writing styles in the academic settings; mainly in the ESL/EFL classes. In these contexts, the students are in constant need for intervention and suggestions. Eventually, their writing will be judged according to given standards. Therefore, the writing teacher is supposed to act upon these contradictions to be a collaborator and an evaluator at the same time.

A fresh vision to responding to the students' writing was also provided by Sommers (2006, pp. 248-256) in her article *Across the Drafts*. In this article, a new perspective based on a study called: the Harvard Study of Undergraduate Writing was put forward. By examining her previous studies in responding to writing, Sommers came to the following limits and conclusions about previous research:

1. Comments were not given in context; that means that comments were prescribed in a way that did not take into account the fact that the students are an important partner in the whole process.
2. The focus of research about responding to writing was mainly about the roles of teachers, the provision of written comments, making questions rather than giving commands, and the language of providing such comments.

Hence, Sommers and her fellow researchers (2006) conducted a research study, which aims at the investigation of university teachers' comments through the eyes of their students. Four

hundred students agreed to take an active part throughout four years of writing across several disciplines, and with five hundred hours of taped interviews and survey data. This research designs was advocated to demonstrate the value of longitudinal studies to provide a comprehensive vision of analysing comments across disciplines and different modules.

After the analysis of the collected data, the findings revealed the following conclusions:

1. Some teachers failed to provide thoughtful commentary that would help the students develop as writers.
2. The students received comments, but without any kind of writing instruction or required revisions i.e. the provided feedback was descriptive and did not suggest tips or comments to make the appropriate corrections.
3. Feedback has a primary role, particularly in the development of the students' writing at the undergraduate level only if the teacher partners with his students by offering them constructive feedback and criticism paired with instruction. The students, in return, should be willing to consider their instructor's comments and to engage in developing their writing by applying these comments into new assignments.
4. Before having expectations from the students, the teachers of composition should reconsider the fact that writing development at university is a slow, let alone writing academically to a specialised audience. Therefore, the teachers should be humble about assigning comments to their students' papers.
5. When asked about highlighting one piece of advice to improve their writing, 90% of the participants preferred to receive more specific comments and to have the opportunity to engage in discussion with their instructors through feedback.
6. Many participants developed their writing skills when they received what they referred to as "honest tough" feedback from their teachers. Such development

appeared when the teachers engaged in questioning their students' writing and showed them that they belonged to an academic community through feedback.

7. Feedback may affirm the students as writers, but an important finding indicated that constructive criticism leads to writing development more than praise. Constructive criticism allows the teacher to uncover the students' abilities and help them invest in their writing potentials.
8. Not all comments are transferable to new writing situations because the students may be challenged to write many papers.

2.7. Definition of Self-assessment: Multifarious Definitions

Self-assessment has been a major area of interest for the last two decades due to the widespread of the notion of learners' independence and autonomy. That means that with an increase of interest in learner-centred curricula, the notion of learning autonomy contributed to self-assessment, with an emphasis on the ability of the students to assume an active responsible role in their own learning (Griffiths, 2008; Bing, 2016, p. 91). In addition to that, self-assessment was advocated as a fundamental property of formative assessment and the movement of raising achievement and quality learning through assessment for learning (Brown & L. R. Harris, 2013, p. 367). Teachers are not the only source of feedback. Students can also take a part in assessing their own work (McDonald & Boud, 2003, p. 210). Hence, quality teaching and learning should incorporate agents from both processes. In this respect, the students should effectively participate in the learning cycle by involving them in the assessment process due to the fact that it is of a paramount significance in the educational cycle (LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985).

Researchers have proposed various terms and definitions to identify and describe the process of the students' engagement in assessing their own work. For Brown and L. R. Harris (2013, p. 368), self- assessment is a broad concept that incorporates notions of assessing the

quality of one's work and the student's ability to predict his/ her score. Therefore, self-assessment may be referred to as self-evaluation, self-reflection, self-monitoring, self-grading, self-testing, self-rating, and in a general sense reflection.

Boud and Falchikov (1989, p. 529) define self-assessment as “ *the involvement of learners in making judgments about their achievement and the outcomes of their learning*” and “*identifying standards and/ or criteria to apply to their work and making judgments about the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards*”. Self- assessment is conceptualised as the ability of the students to identify the level of their achievement that is guided by criteria or tools such as feedback or rubrics to monitor their own performance (Klenowski, 1995, p. 146).

Furthermore, the concept of self-assessment for Boud and Falchikov (1989) favours strategies and techniques that yield evaluative and criterion-based judgments. However, Brown and L. R. Harris (2013, p. 368) broaden the evaluative nature of self-assessment to address quantitative criteria such as amount, speed, score, hierarchy and progression. That means that self-assessment should not be directed to indicate quality, but also the quantity estimate. For instance, a student may wonder how many task requirements he satisfied.

M. Harris and McCann (1994, p. 05) label self-assessment as “*useful information about students' expectations and needs, their problems and worries, how they feel about their own (learning) process, their reactions to the materials and methods being used, and what they think about the course in general.*” This definition highlights the involvement of the students in reflecting on a wider scale that goes beyond their needs and requirements to shape their judgments about the whole learning process.

Orsmond, Merry and Reiling (1996, p. 307) state that self-assessment “*develops ways in which students can become more critical and perceptive about their learning.*” That means

that when the students are involved in assessing their learning, they develop strategies that make them aware of their responsibility to monitor their own learning, become more autonomous, and plan strategies in order to improve in future tasks (Oskarsson, 1989). This perception of formative assessment matches Sadler's (1989) concept of taking an action to close the gap towards the desired learning goal. This action *"must be undertaken by the student...Therefore, self-assessment by the student is not an interesting option or luxury; it has to be seen as essential"*

According to M. Harris (1997, pp. 12), self-assessment is a *"key learning strategy for autonomous language learning enabling students to monitor their progress and relate learning to individual needs."* Self-assessment makes the students more engaged with their learning by increasing their awareness in terms of actual performance and needs. Sadler (1989, p.135) asserts that it is essential for the teachers to transfer assessment responsibility to their students through a process of becoming apprentices in judgement. This process involves the students in understanding the value of quality.

Kasanen and Rätty (2002) indicate that the essence of self-assessment revolves around helping the students judge, evaluate and consider their academic abilities and potentials. By advancing self-assessment, a chief role of institutions should be on aiding the students develop their own understanding and skills. Hence, Clarke, Timperley and Hattie (2003) give priority to learner-centered pedagogy in which self-assessment emphasises the process of improving learning without the focus on the evaluation dimensions. Hence, the students are in a context where they may reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Self-assessment promotes:

...inner speech, enhancing learners understanding of what their roles involve and what successful learning entails. By stepping out and reflecting on their roles and the learning process, learners develop meta-cognition, which is about understanding and being aware of one's own learning.

(Kostopoulou, 2008, p. 124)

In this research study, self-assessment is defined as an indispensable learning tool in the writing classroom. It positions the students at the heart of effective learning via understanding and using the task quality criteria throughout the process of achieving the final objective of their task. Furthermore, self-assessment is considered as a source for reflection and evidence for the teacher to make useful adjustments to lesson planning and respond to their needs.

The following section will review self-assessment of writing at higher education to contribute to our understanding of its role in the advancement of writing improvement.

2.8. Research on Self-assessment

Previous literature about self-assessment targeted the practice of the students' self-assessment in higher education (Boud & Falchikov, 1989; Dochy, Segers & Sluijsmans, 1999; Falchikov & Boud, 1989; Mabe & West, 1982, as cited in Brown & L. R. Harris, 2013, p. 368). According to Taras (2015), assessment in higher education has remained the last realm from which the students do not take any part in or they are kept on the margins of this practice. For Brow, Race & Rust (1995, p. 81), when teachers dominate the assessment practices and excluded the students from participating in them, the students can envisage themselves in "*a client role*". In this case, a sense of distrust will find its way into a perception of "*us and them*".

Self-assessment can serve as a supportive learning skill and one of the most important requirements of lifelong learning (Taras, 2010, as cited in Wride, 2017, p. 05; Leach, 2012, p. 139). In general, self-assessment brings the teachers and the students together by helping the students to have some control over their learning.

According to Elgadal (2017, p. 480), in the past few years, there was a lack of interest in researching self-assessment in language learning, particularly in second and foreign language education. At that time, it was not a trend to engage the students in assessing their own performance (Coombe & Canning, 2002).

2.9. Self-assessment of Writing

Self-assessment in writing is defined as any teaching strategy that encourages the student to reflect on, to judge the quality and/or to respond to his/ her own writing. The engagement of the process of evaluating one's writing improves the students' final product. Furthermore, it helps him/ her develop a range of writing and revision skills for further use in other assignments (Nielsen, 2011, p. 01).

Schendel and O'Neill (1999, p. 205) advocate the use of self-assessment in writing. They state that it fosters self-awareness of one's writing, provides the student with control over his/ her writing and gives a 'certain amount of rhetorical agency'. That means that self-assessment is a means to aid the students to become metacognitive about their writing and the writing process as well.

With regard to assessment in traditional modes, Bing (2016, pp. 91-92) concludes that in many cases, the students do not value the writing assignments once they are submitted and handed back. Part of this has to do with the students' perception of the roles of teachers in assessment as the only capable assessors. Even when they receive feedback and a grade, attention is on the mark only. Therefore, the students may not make a significant progress in their writing. However, self-assessment familiarises the students with the aspects or the criteria of a good piece of writing. By doing so, the students' self-consciousness may increase and they can work on areas that need improvements.

According to Miller (1982, p. 182), self-assessment promotes further revisions of one's writing. Hence, training on self-assessment in writing enables the students to use previous task knowledge of criteria in similar situations. In addition, the experience of self-assessment contributes to one's perception of writing as an essential way to express ideas and have a say in his/ her writing.

Recently, there has been a wide spread of research initiatives and empirical studies about the implementation of self-assessment in the writing classroom, mainly at the level EFL in higher education (Elgadal, 2017, p. 50). Table 2.3 will highlight previous empirical studies that attempted to advance self-assessment in the writing classroom.

Researchers	Title of the Study	Purpose	Context	Results
Kadri (2018/Algeria)	Student self-assessment versus teacher assessment: The issues of accuracy in EFL classroom	To examine the relationship between students' self-grading and the teacher's judgment of their writing	Twenty-six bachelor students at the university of Bejaia assess two assignments. These assessments were compared to their teachers	There was a great disagreement between students' and teacher's scores since the students assigned themselves higher scores
Litterio (2018)	Contact Grading in the Technical Writing Classroom: Blending Community-based Assessment and Self-assessment	To implement a revised contract grading system consisting of an agreed upon criteria and self-assessment of each assignment	36 university students took part in this study/they were divided into 3 groups: self-assessment, peer-assessment and control group	The students favoured being involved with generating assessment criteria and having clear expectations and more autonomy.
Jalil, Yousefi & Mehrnoosh (2017)	The Impact of Self-assessment and Peer-assessment in Writing on the Self-regulated Learning of Iranian EFL Students	To investigate the impact of self- and peer-assessment on self-regulated learning in writing	A case study of 20 undergraduate students (11 females/ 9 males). They studied 7 majors. The study relied on observation and a survey	The ANOVA analysis of the self-regulation scale revealed positive impacts of both kinds of assessment on writing.
Litterio (2016)	Contract Grading in a Technical Writing Classroom: A Case Study	To involve the students in collaboration with their teachers to		Though the students were involved to some extent, they still

		generate criteria related to the quality of writing assignments		preferred traditional assessment by an 'expert' regarding it as 'normative'
Xu Bing (2016/ China)	A study of the Effects of Student Self-assessment on the EFL Writing of Chinese College Students	To examine the effects of self-assessment on the students' writing through analytic scoring rubrics	Thirty-six second year non-English majors used a rubric to assess: content, organisation, language use and mechanics in their essays	There was consistency between students' and teacher's rating/ Significant improvement in content and organisation but a slight difference in vocabulary and mechanics
Fahimi & Rahimi (2014/ Iran)	On the Impact of Self-assessment Practice on Writing Skill	To investigate the incorporation of self-assessment and its impact on improving the writing skill	Forty-one Iranian female students were trained on self-assessment techniques during 4 weeks. Then a questionnaire was administered to them after the treatment period	The students' writing improved in the treatment period and they had positive attitudes towards self-assessment of their writing
Sajedi (2014/ Iran)	Self-assessment and Portfolio Production of Iranian EFL Learners	To investigate the effect of self-assessment on portfolio production	The study involved an experimental and a control group. The first one received self-assessment guide and training. However, the second did not	The experimental group outperformed the control group significantly. The students engaged in critical thinking and developed a strong sense of responsibility
Honsa (2013/ Thailand)	Self-assessment in EFL Writing: A Study of Intermediate EFL Students at a Thai	To explore whether self-assessment is a reliable and a valid tool to	One hundred university students were involved in writing and	The students showed improvement in three areas during the

	University	help the students perceive their own strengths and weaknesses	assessing their essays. They were also interviewed after the study	writing process. self-assessment proved to be a strategy that fosters autonomy
Milhinhos de Assis (2012)	Self-assessment of Writing Skills: A Reliable and Valid Tool in an EFL Classroom	To advance process learning and to encourage the students' responsibility in writing	One teacher and three B2 students participated in self-and peer-assessment of their writing process by relying on Cambridge TESOL Examination marking scale during two school terms	The students managed to assess themselves in relation to their teacher's and peers' assessment and against a set of assessment criteria
Naeini (2011/ Iran)	Self-assessment and the Impact on Language Skills	To improve students' writing ability through self-assessment	One hundred twenty one university students were divided into an experimental and a control group to undertake a self-assessment test based on the Jacob's writing scoring scale profile.	There was a significant improvement in the students' writing ability when they used the scale and the experimental group outperformed the control group
Birjandi & Siyyari (2010/ Iran)	Self-assessment and Peer-assessment: A Comparative Study of their Effect on Writing Performance and Rating Accuracy	To investigate the effects of self- and peer-assessment on paragraph writing performance and the self- and peer-rating accuracy by English language major students	Eleven paragraphs were self-and peer-rated by two experimental groups during eleven sessions	Self-and peer-assessment proved to be effective in improving performance and rating-accuracy. However, peer-assessment is more effective in improving the students' writing than self-assessment

Lam (2010/ Hong Kong)	The Role of Self-assessment in Students' Writing Portfolios: A Classroom Investigation	To investigate the use of portfolio and self-assessment as alternatives to traditional assessment of essays.	Four teachers did four tutorials with 30 students in each class, followed by self-assessment. The practitioner researcher conducted interviews with 6 students and 3 tutors	The students' motivation was boosted and many students chose to work on the demanding genre writing during the self-assessment phase across the semester. However, the students tended to think that self-assessment could only help in surface-level terms rather than issues of content and organisation
Oscarson (2009/ Sweden)	Self-assessment of Writing in Learning English as a Foreign Language: A Study at the Upper Secondary School Level	To use self-assessment to develop lifelong learning skills and to further fairer assessment practices/ how the students perceive their abilities in relation to syllabus goals and whether they are affected by self-assessment	A one year study that involved two teachers and four groups of upper secondary school. The students used grades to assess two written tasks in which two teachers and eight students took part in post-study interview	The participants showed capability in self-assessing their writing at group and individual level. There were some individual differences and participants did better at assessing their 'general ability' than their 'particular ability' (pp.218-219)

Ross, Rolheiser & Hogaboam-Gray (1999/Canada)	Effects of self-evaluation training on narrative writing	To examine the effect of self-assessment on the students' narrative writing	The study involved 148 students in 15 grades 4-6 classroom in which there was a treatment group (trained in how to evaluate their work for 8 weeks) and a control group	Treatment group outperformed the control group in assessment accuracy, narrative writing and weaker students improved their writing
Ross, Rolheiser & Hogaboam-Gray (1999/Canada)	Skills training versus action research in-service: Impact on student attitudes to self-assessment	To train teachers in how to train their students in assessing themselves through in-service skills training and action/research to help them implement the strategies presented in the workshops	Twenty-three teachers undertook 3 training workshops, a handbook of resources and information about their students' beliefs about self-assessment. However, the action research group received workshops about the processes to improve the students' self-evaluation techniques.	Action research contributed more positively to the trainees' attitudes towards self-evaluation than skill training.

Table 2.3 Research Synthesis about Self-assessment and Writing

Conclusion

This chapter presented major developments of the field of writing assessment. It described the main phases that shaped changes in the perception of writing and how it was assessed, particularly in higher education. It also provided a thorough account of how teachers have responded to their students' writing. The focal point of this part was on error correction and feedback strategies in a range of empirical studies. Gradually, this chapter examined the

available literature about the positive impact of formative assessment on teaching and learning writing. Accordingly, a synthesis about research highlighted recent endeavours and findings in the field of assessing writing formatively. The chapter provided a detailed account of research about self-assessment and how it contributed to the advancement of quality writing in various contexts.

Chapter Three

The Design and Execution of the Action Plan in the Writing Class

Introduction

This current chapter contextualises the research by highlighting the research questions that triggered this action research study. The significance of this study is that it vigorously attempts to implement formative assessment techniques in the daily practice of written comprehension and expression with one class of first year university students of English language at the University of Ibn Khaldoun, Tiaret. Included in this section are the theoretical justifications of the utilisation of pedagogical action research, the research populations including, the class profile and the practitioner- researcher profile, the data collection methods namely, the attitudinal questionnaire, the students' self-assessment checklists, the teacher's reflective journal and a Likert scale survey. Eventually, it highlights the purposes of using each research instrument in this context.

3.1. Research Questions

As it is mentioned in chapter 1, the main drive for advancing quality teaching and learning is by means of reflective practice that aims at making change in every day practice of formative assessment techniques and strategies that involve teachers and their students.

After making a synthesis about the related literature and providing the leading arguments to investigate the issue of implementing formative assessment, with a focus on self-assessment in day- to- day practice of the writing skill, the following research questions were formulated to guide this pedagogical research study:

1. What are the appropriate tools and strategies that can help implement formative and self-assessment in daily instruction and practice of writing?
2. How might self-assessment engage students in active learning of the writing process?
3. Does the implementation of self-assessment bring change to students' attitudes about improving their writing?

4. Does the implementation of formative assessment bring new insights into the practitioner researcher daily practice of teaching writing?

The following hypotheses were formulated:

1. Teacher's reflective diary and student's writing checklists would contribute to the implementation of formative and self-assessment in the writing classroom.
2. Informing the students about criteria and breaking a writing task into manageable steps would support students' learning in the writing classroom.
3. The implementation of self-assessment would contribute to students' positive perception about improving their writing.
4. Implementing formative assessment in the writing classroom would boost the teacher's engagement and productivity.

The formulation of the research questions and the hypotheses led to the identification of the research methodology that best behoves this research study, which is pedagogical action research.

Pedagogical action research is referred to as *practitioner led*, *practitioner research*, or *practitioner based research* (McNiff and Whitehead, 2001, p. 15). It is a systematic process that is driven by the practitioner researcher's critical reflection that dynamically promotes inquiry to take action about their own professional action (Frost, 2002, p. 25) for the sake of making a change, improving practice, or addressing reform (Bassey, 1998, p. 93; Dick, 2002; Hopkins, 2002, p. 42). In this very context, the central element is the practitioner researcher, who is in a position to decipher the main goal of education which is in John Dewey's words (1931),

...the process of living through continuous reconstruction of experience. It is the development of all those capacities in the individual, which will enable him to control his environment and fulfil his possibilities.

That means that the teacher researcher holds the idea that the educational environment is not a linear one. However, it is about ‘living the experiences’ of challenging the inconveniences of teaching and learning by perceiving them as an opportunity for professional self-development as well as being deeply concerned about the human and the social aspects of teaching and learning that take place in classrooms and may affect students throughout their lives outside their educational institutions (Smith, 2009, xiii-xiv, as cited in Norton, 2009). Therefore, improving teaching and learning is based on strong aspects of action research, which are reflection and change.

For change to take place in education, McNiff (2001, p. 13) indicated that a fundamental pillar of action research is the ability of the practitioner researcher to make "*an inquiry by the self into the self*". This concept is based on her encounter with Noam Chomsky's ideas about (E-language) and (I-language) articulated in his book *Knowledge of Language* (1986) to mean language as a system and a language that is produced in the speaker's mind respectively.

In McNiff's conceptualisation about action research, she claims that there should be a shift from E-theory, which is external to the creator of knowledge and is related to studying external objects to I-theory, which is a property of the practitioner belief system (Ibid, 2001, p. 21-22). Therefore, the practitioner is engaged in a reflective inquiry about his performance, and this is what Norton (2009, p. 04) refers to as *the micro level of practice*, which means that the practitioner, especially at that beginning of his professional career in higher education, starts to examine his own situation, experience, values, and aspirations.

Reflection on one's performance and attitudes paves the way for transformation that may affect the students' learning. This transformation is what Nyquist and Wulff (1996) called the *outcome stage* in the development of university teachers. As for this research study,

reflection about the effectiveness of teaching the module of written comprehension and production started when I taught a whole group of first year students at the department of foreign languages at the University of Ibn Khaldoun (2014/2015). The main issue at that time was the high level of demotivation among these students. Besides, they face difficulties in approaching their written tasks enthusiastically on one hand and my lack of experience to handle such an issue.

My decision to engage in this study is driven by my vision about the significance of promoting the daily use of formative assessment in the daily practice of the writing skill. Hence, my insight is to implement the tools of formative assessment to make my teaching a supportive element of my students' learning of writing (Kember, 1997). In addition, I want to equip my students with self-assessment tools to boost their love for lifetime learning. In this situation, my attempt to rely on pedagogical research situation does not result from an issue or a problem that I have encountered during my teaching this year, but it does occur from a pedagogical dilemma or challenges (Norton, 2009, p. 02). In this respect, the focus will be on a short-term goal which is enabling my students to develop their writing skills, techniques, and strategies at the level of the process of writing with its major components to help them generate well-crafted paragraphs. The research inspiration as I mentioned earlier is to prepare the students for a long-term goal, which is their ability to work on their own writing especially at an advanced level when it comes to generating and drafting their training reports, research proposals, and their graduation dissertations as well.

In exploring the relevance of action research to tackling the research questions, Rorty (1999) claimed that the practitioners who rely on action research to understand and make change into their environment share qualities and values like commitments and hopes, and this is the core of action research, which helps them realise their commitments and hope in educational practice. Thus, action research is about how practitioners view themselves

(ontology), how they come to know their environment and how they can generate knowledge in their field of research (epistemology), how they do things (methodology), and what they hope to achieve (educational and social change) (McNiff, 2002, p. 16).

Action research practitioners sense of identity comes from their perception of creating change in society by being involved in a situation where they can make a positive contribution, or take the initiative in order to improve any aspect of their practice in relation with others, and at the same time, examine their own practice by recognising its strengths and weaknesses so that they can have a clear view of the aspects that need improvement (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006, p.25). In this case, my major interest is how to engage my students in taking more responsibility in their learning of writing by improving my own commitment in designing formative activities and tools that can assist them in reaching the learning objectives of every single lesson I teach them and at the same time by reflecting on my practice of teaching written comprehension and written production. In addition to that, my interest results form an important value of doing action research, which is social justice. In this respect, I hold the idea that every student has the right to develop his level in writing. The final component of ontological aspect of action research is that *"Often action researchers live in social contexts where values are prized in principle but denied in practice"* (McNiff and Whitehead, 2001, p.17). Many studies proved the effectiveness of formative assessment, but the question is whether teachers are willing to invest in it by spending time and energy on researching it or applying it in their classrooms.

Once the researcher is well-aware of his values and attempt to make change into his 'living practice' and to my students, knowledge for him is no longer contained in books or data bases. Instead, he can create knowledge through his experience and interaction with his environment and practice.

People can generate their own knowledge from their experience of living and learning. Knowledge is never static or complete; it is in a constant process of development as new

understandings emerge. The view of knowledge regards reality as a process of evolution, surprising and unpredictable.

(McNiff and Whitehead, 2001, p. 18)

By engaging in action research, practitioners are able to construct a new knowledge from their experiences. Based on this fact, they are involved in unique situations and circumstances. The uniqueness of this experience extends to their ability to develop as a researcher and a practitioner thanks to the element of reflection on the events, the behaviours and the outcomes of such experience.

This ongoing motion of knowledge, self-discovery and research would never reach an end as the practitioner is in recurrent state of reflection, planning and taking action. So with every attempt to make change, there are possibilities of self-development and as Donald Schön (1984) referred to in his book the *Reflective Practitioner*, which was the basis for reflective practice within education, as the ability to reflect on any new situation or problem that we would encounter for which we did not receive any initial or previous training on how to tackle. Hence, this study is an attempt to engage in reflection about the act of teaching and learning writing inside the classroom to bring learning forward.

3.2 Reflection as an Agent of Change

As far as the methodology of action research is concerned, reflection is the main drive for changing teaching and learning behaviours. Reflection is defined as a mental process that is used to achieve various goals. By using reflection, human beings can fulfil anticipated outcomes or try to analyse and understand complex ideas or situations (Moon, 2005, p. 1). In the educational setting, John Dewey's ideas about education in America were revolutionary since he considered that conventional ways of teaching did not respond to the rapid changes in society and economy. Therefore, he supported the approach of child-centredness and the significance of developing teachers' thinking, in particular, reflective thinking (Scales, 2008, p. 10).

Dewey is often considered as the father of reflective practice. Being a reflective teacher necessitates careful thought about intended actions and their consequences. Dewey (1933, p. 15) added in his book *How We Think* that,

Thought affords the sole method of escape from purely impulsive or purely routine action. A being without capacity for thought is moved only by instincts and appetites, as these are called forth by outward conditions and the inner state of the organism. A being thus moved is, as it were, pushed from behind.

Dewey (1910, as cited in McGregor and Cartwright, 2011) believed that the central point for effective teaching is to when teachers get rid of ‘routine actions’ such as classroom management, and actively shift towards making a decision towards reflective practice. Reflection, therefore, empowers the teachers to question things and apply their own understanding in their classrooms in order to make change happen.

The shift from routine actions to reflective actions in the classroom depends on three essential attributes namely; open-mindedness to new ideas and thoughts; wholeheartedness to look for new approaches and experiment with them; and responsibility to be well-aware of the results of any planned action.

Schön (1983) extended the work of Dewey about the importance of reflective practice in improving teaching and learning. He refers to classroom situations in which teachers find themselves responding to unique events where they need to respond immediately using their knowledge and previous experiences. In his words, this competence is called professional artistry and it can take three forms in reflective practice depending on the teacher’s experience. Schön (1983) identified them as; reflection-before-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection-on-action.

3.2.1 Reflection- before-action: at the outset of preparing lessons, it is useful to reflect on alternative ways that the teacher can consider preparing and teaching a lesson. Careful

thought and time investment can pave the way for an in depth- design of a lesson plan (McGregor and Cartwright, 2011, p. 17).

3.2.2 Reflection –in- action: this type of reflection may take place during the teaching process in which the action occurs to address a particular situation or event in the classroom. Schön (1987, p. 25) also refers to when teachers act in a professional competent way if they encounter unusual events as ‘knowing-in-action’.

3.2.3 Reflection-on-action: this kind occurs after the process of teaching in which the practitioner engage in retrospection and recalling of events in the classroom. The major aim of this recollection is to analyse and interpret the obtained information in order to reflect on how the situation might have been executed (S. Burns, and Bulman, 2000, p. 5), or to design interventions for future changes (Meier and Stremmel, 2010).

Brockbank and McGill (1998, as cited in Norton and Campbell, 2007, p. 142) refer to Schön’s (1987) concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on- action as essential components of practice in the higher education context for the following reasons:

- 1/ reflection promotes teachers’ ongoing professional development and promote effective teaching and learning.
- 2/ when teachers understand the reflective process, they can transmit it to their students.
- 3/ reflective practice accessible to students empowers them to approach their learning effectively.

According to Pollard (2008, p. 14), for any classroom practice to be reflective, practitioners should fulfil the following characteristics:

- 1/ keeping a focus on the aims and results of one’s teaching.
- 2/ using a cyclical approach in order to keep an ongoing process of monitoring, evaluating and revisiting practice.

3/ using the obtained evidence to identify whether success criteria are met or to take the appropriate measures to meet them.

4/ Teacher's developing practice should stem from research insights and conclusions from one's classroom teaching.

5/ Seeking colleagues' collaboration to improve one's practice.

In this research study, I opt for the use of reflection-on-action mainly since I use a reflective diary to record the students' learning events. The recalled events are the basis for the design of the appropriate intervention that would respond to the students' needs.

Thus, it is crucial for quality teaching and learning to be built on partnership between teachers and their learners (Bryk, Lee and Holland, 1993). In this context, this study is an attempt to change the traditional view about the fact that the teacher is the only provider of knowledge and training on skills. Besides, it tries to change the view that the teacher is the only authority in assessing the students' performances by helping students to have a say on their performances by incorporating self-assessment techniques in their daily practice of writing, which in turn create opportunities for both, the teacher and the students to be partners and help one another grow in terms of learning and reflecting on practice on a daily basis.

Bringing positive change is the last component of the underpinning principles of action research. According to McNiff and Whitehead (2006, p. 51), change in education should be about having the ability to influence the students to get engaged in improving their own learning, without imposing this endeavour on them. The practitioner researcher's responsibility lies in encouraging them to think about change and aim for it by recognising its benefits throughout their lives in general. However, change is about the self and the others.

To hope for a change is essential but it takes courage to go beyond hope and bring about change. It must be the kind of courage which not only seeks to change oneself, but also the circumstances and people around you.

(June, 2000, as cited in McNiff and Whitehead, 2001)

In relation to the aspiration of making change in education, this research study aims at inspiring students to reflect on their experiences right from the beginning of their university career, take steps to shape their own learning, gain insights and change their views about the fact that realising gains and development are related to motivation and personal efforts. In addition to that, it targets the goals of enabling them to be autonomous learners by engaging them in formative assessment to take control of their learning, to assume responsibility and to lead their own lifetime learning since access to knowledge and self-development is available in the 21st century.

3.3 Research Site

The setting of this action research study was at the Faculty of Literature and Foreign Languages of Ibn Khaldoun University, particularly at the Snmetal Site, Zaaroura, Tiaret. The section is recently established as a part of the department of foreign languages in 2012. The section of English contains about 1500 students. There is one common BA level and two specialties in the Master level namely Didactics of EFL and Linguistics.

The head of the department supported this action research study since it promotes the implementation of formative assessment in the writing classroom. This approval goes hand in hand with the syllabus of written comprehension and written expression because it focuses on the daily use of assessment practices that favour effective learning (Formative assessment 40%). To ensure that this research study complies with the Algerian research policy and ethical considerations, a letter was submitted to the head of the department soliciting the participation of first BA students throughout this research study (Appendix A).

3.4 Population and Sampling Method

The central component of any research study is the sample that the researcher would base her research on and provide him with the appropriate data for his enquiry. The aim of this study is to install in the students of 1st year the necessary skills of reflecting on their

written performances throughout the different stages of the writing process and at the same time, to equip them with the appropriate techniques to do so throughout their lifelong learning process outside university.

A researcher would start with an up-bottom approach in selecting the population he would like to work with, that means that he starts with the whole population and then narrows down his choice until he makes it to the suitable sample (C. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2005, p. 92).

3.4.1. Class profile

In this study, a piloting study was conducted with the first year students to whom the objectives and the aim of the study were thoroughly explained and they were invited to fill in a questionnaire about their current understanding of writing and their expectations from the module in general in terms of learning how to write and to take part in this research study.

The choice of the sampling techniques in this research falls on the *non-probability sampling* due to the fact that this study targets a particular group, which is the case of first year students of English language. Furthermore, the intention behind the selection of such technique was based on the nature of this enquiry, which is an action research study in an educational setting on one hand, and there is no desire to generalise the findings because of the uniqueness of the case under investigation (C. Cohen *et al*, 2005, p. 102).

To meet the requirements of the research questions, a *purposive sampling* was selected in relation to a set of factors. The practitioner researcher has access to this group of students twice a week, therefore, there is an opportunity for the practitioner researcher to tackle the themes of the assigned syllabus, and the researcher can deal with the practical aspects of the action research plan without depriving the students of their right of instruction in this module.

Determining the interest of working with this class was based on reasons: (a) taking into account the necessity of carrying out an ethically informed educational research (Blaxter,

Hughes, and Tight, 2006, p. 158), the majority of students within this class agreed to take part in this research study and signed an informed consensus at the beginning of the study and the practitioner researcher got the informed consensus from the head of the department to be able to carry out her study. (b) The class was more heterogeneously balanced in terms of age, but not on gender as females outnumbered males and this fact is common with all the other classes and across levels. Out of 62 students, 50 students showed willingness, interest and agreed to take active parts in this study.

	Student's name	Sex	Age	n°	Student's name	Sex	Age
1	A.F	F	18	26	H.W	F	18
2	B. I	F	22	27	G.A	F	18
3	A.B.D	F	21	28	L.G	F	18
4	A.S.K	F	19	29	C.S	F	18
5	A.N	F	21	30	K.S	F	26
6	A.F.Z	F	41	31	B.Z.E	M	20
7	A.B.L	F	18	32	A.A.E.K	M	40
8	A.S	F	18	33	H.M	M	29
9	A.M	F	18	34	H.W.T	M	18
10	B.T	F	18	35	K.H.T	M	18
11	A.Z	F	18	36	H.M.M	M	24
12	A.H.R	F	28	37	K.Y.C	M	18
13	B.A1	F	18	38	K.L	M	18
14	B.A2	F	18	39	M.S	M	19
15	B.I	F	18	40	M.M.E	M	21
16	M.K.K	F	18	41	B.A	M	19
17	M.E	F	18	42	B.R	M	18
18	N.R	F	19	43	M.A	M	19
19	M.N	F	19	44	B.S.I	M	18
20	M.K	F	18	45	C.M.A	M	19
21	L.F	F	18	46	K.M.I	M	22
22	K.M	F	25	47	S.A.	M	18
23	K.W	F	19	48	B.M.	M	18
24	H.K	F	20	49	L.K	M	18
25	G.L	F	18	50	B.R.	M	18

Table 3.1 The Participants' details

3.2.2. Practitioner-researcher background

In any action research project, it is crucial to identify who is conducting the study. Hence, the premise of the previous statement has its roots in Schön's famous metaphor about the *typology of professional landscapes* (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006, p. 16).

The principle point of Schön's metaphor is that in the academic context, there are two categories of specialists. Academics and researchers (real theorists) are at the high ground of professional landscapes because they are able to produce theories and abstract knowledge, and practitioners inhabit the swampy lowlands because they are supposed to create practical knowledge that is used in everyday life. However, in Schön's view, practitioners' investigation of their daily practice enables them to test, criticise, and create their own theories just the same as 'professional elite' because the practitioners' knowledge is of great benefits for people, in comparison to that of academics, which remains up there (Ibid, p. 17). Therefore, the practitioner is an insider in the process of knowledge creation through his active engagement in reflecting upon his methods and interactions with his students for the sake of getting a clearer picture of the nature of the impact of reflective practice on teaching and learning, and how she/he can contribute to an environment of productive practice.

I, the practitioner researcher, hold a certificate of teaching from the High School for Teachers, Bouzareah (ENS), Algiers and I have taught for five years in high school. I have been teaching at university since 2013.

Pedagogically speaking, the interest to conduct an action research study dated back to the first time I investigated university teachers' attitudes about their willingness to implement formative assessment in their teaching of the writing skill. One of the main findings of this study was that the majority of teachers were not well-informed about formative assessment as a system with its own tools and techniques on one hand, and how to apply it in their daily practice to advance both, learning and teaching of writing on the other hand.

My engagement in this research is driven by my interest in sharing with my students the knowledge about formative assessment and getting them to rely on themselves to build their own knowledge, not only about writing, but also about areas of knowledge and skills.

3.5. Data Collection Procedures

The effective motion of any action research study is based on a cycle of planning, reflection, acting, evaluating, and modifying to make change and move to another aspect of reflecting.

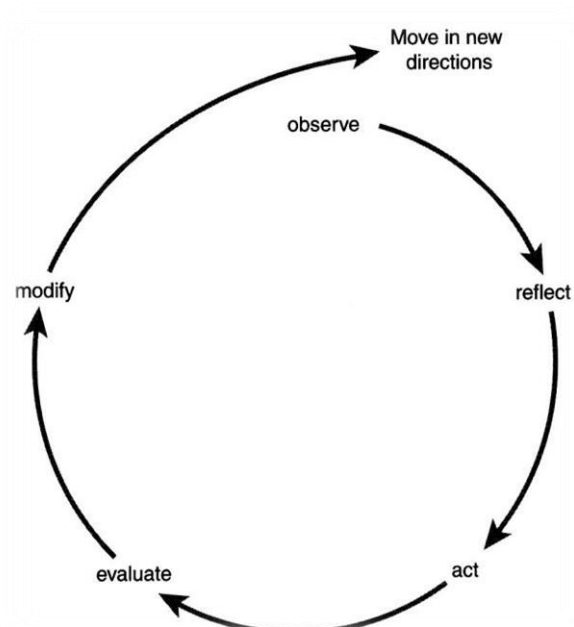


Figure 3.1 The Cycle of Action Research
(McNiff and Whitehead, 2006)

According to McNiff and Whitehead (2006, p. 79), action research is promising for teachers who want to engage in their own process of change and experimenting with new options and methods in their classrooms. However, they need to be aware of some hurdles in conducting their research. That is why it is advisable that these teachers take into account the obstacles and the opportunities in their area of research, and they should be flexible in conducting the different phases of their action.

The current action research study stems from my belief that teachers in their workplace are able to conduct their own research and inquiry with their students to promote any aspect of learning. Hence, the motive of this study stems from a concern about the fact that the acquisition of the writing skill has constituted an issue all around the world, particularly in

higher education because there are records of poor performance and achievement at the level of writing on one hand, and low levels of interest from the part of students when it comes to considering the different processes involved in practising writing such as word choice, grammar mechanics, content and the organisation of the different pieces of writing (Aragón Jiménez, Baires & Rodríguez, 2013, p.07).

In addition to that, Lamberg (1975) identified major problems of writing academically which include students' lack of strategies and techniques of approaching the composition task from the beginning until the end, they do not grasp the teacher's writing assignment though they finish their work successfully, and most of the time, they lack the ability to do proofreading. Furthermore, planning to take action in this context stems from the fact that the practitioner researcher admits that there is a "living contradiction", in which I want to boost quality teaching and learning through formative assessment, but I am sometimes caught in situations like covering the syllabus, the fear of failure or the students may not want to take part in self-assessment to reflect on their written performances. Hence, this action study began with identifying the concern of helping students articulate the different phases of the writing process take an active part in practising every single phase and have the opportunity to reflect on this experience.

This action research was conducted during a unit of instruction and was kept focused because there were some constraints in conducting the study such as lateness at the beginning of the academic year; some strikes, covering the syllabus and administrative issues like tests and exams.

Highlighting the concern of giving importance to the phases of the writing process has implications with the students' learning career as they are required to demonstrate a good level in writing when they deal with their assignments and exams in the short term, and demonstrating their ability to write academically by the end of their university studies. The

value of this concern has also to do with advancing active learning and students' responsibility by engaging them in assessing their performances against a defined goal.

To address the concerns about the articulation of the main writing phases within the writing process, the practitioner researcher identified the following stages that the students will practice during the action research study.

1. Pre-writing techniques (clustering) and stating the main idea.
2. Organising ideas into a paragraph outline.
3. Drafting.
4. Revising and editing.

The identification of the above components of the writing process was based on the fact that they identify the appropriate application of the principles of formative assessment in the course of a lesson plan that encourages effective learning that targets short and long term objectives (NCTE, 2013, p.03).

1. Students take responsibility for their own learning.
2. Formative assessment should communicate a clear, specific learning goal within the lesson.
3. Formative assessment focuses on goals that represent valuable educational outcomes with applicability beyond the actual learning context.
4. Formative assessment identifies the student current knowledge/ skills and the necessary steps for reaching the desired goals.
5. Formative assessment requires development of plans for attaining the desired goal.
6. Formative assessment encourages student self-monitor progress toward the learning goal.

7. Formative assessment includes feedback that is non-evaluative, specific, timely, and that provides opportunities for the students to revise and improve work products and deep understanding.

Then I identified how the action would take place by selecting the data collection methods in relation with the research questions. Four data collection methods were selected to answer the research questions and to meet the requirements of building solid justifications for the research findings (Creswell, 2014, p.251). Therefore, these methods are (a) Student self-assessment, which relied on techniques such as using a yes/ no checklist (b) a pre-study questionnaire, (c) a practitioner-researcher journal (teacher's notes and remarks throughout the action research study inside the classroom), and (d) a Likert-scale survey about the students' attitudes towards their involvement in the process of self-assessment.

3.6. Data Collection and Management Procedures

This action research study was undertaken during a unit of instruction. The validity of this action research plan is ensured through the application of triangulation (student self-assessment checklist, the practitioner-researcher diary, and questionnaires (pre-study questionnaire and Likert scale). According to Herr and Anderson (2005), the rigour and validity of any action research study can be ensured by considering the following five criteria in the design of the action research study.

1. Generating new knowledge (Dialogic validity)
2. The execution of research with all the involved parties (Democratic validity)
3. A suitable research methodology with evaluation of the research process (Process validity)
4. Achieving action-oriented outcomes (Outcome validity)
5. Educating both; the practitioner researcher and the participants (Catalytic validity)

Concerning the five criteria, this action research study fulfils the criteria for validity for the following reasons:

To begin with, the implementation of student self-assessment and its role in informing teaching writing and responding to the students' needs had never been researched in the Algerian context, therefore, new knowledge is generated in this area. Secondly, as the students and the practitioner researcher took active part through their continuous engagement in the research process, democratic validity is fulfilled. Moreover, the supervisor's critical insights and guidelines provide another trustworthy voice to democratic validity. According to Holly et al (2005), process validity is demonstrated when the researcher provides reasons for the use of action research. These reasons are thoroughly explained in this chapter. Eventually, to meet outcome and catalytic validity, the findings of the study should demonstrate how classroom life improves (Herr and Anderson, 2005). This account is provided in Chapter 4 in details when it comes to teacher's and students' roles in the writing class.

6/11/2018	11/11/2018	12/11/ 2018	18/11/2018	19/11/2018
Head of the department approval.	Administering the pre-study questionnaire.	Training students in self-assessment.	Lesson: Pre-writing techniques: Freewriting Brainstorming	Clustering Listing Questioning
25/11/2018	26/11/2018	2/12/2018	3/12/2018	9/12/2018
Checklist 1: Clustering and self-assessment	Intervention 1: Caring about the topic	Students' strike	Students' strike	Intervention 2: The context of writing
10/12/2018	16/12/2018	17/12/2018	06/1/2019	7/1/2019
Lesson; Written comprehension	The components of a paragraph	1 st semester test	The paragraph outline	Checklist 2: Outlining basics
13/1/2019	24/1/2019	27-28/ 1/ 2019	03/2/2019	04/2/2019
1 st semester exams	1 st semester exams	Consultation	Timetable changes	Feedback and suggestions

10/2/2019	11/2/2019	17/2/2019	18/2/2019	24/2/2019
Intervention 3: The use of adjectives	Intervention 4: The formulation of titles	Drafting the paragraph	Checklist 3: Drafting and self-assessment	Intervention 5: Capitalisation
25/2/2019	26/2/2019			
Final paragraph draft	Likert scale survey.			

Table 3.2 Data Collection Timeline

3.6.1. Self-assessment

Student self-assessment is the ability of a student to check his own performance and to judge it so as to identify his strengths and weaknesses for the sake of improving his learning. Self-assessment is suitable for this study because it involves the students in the process of comparing their own performance on generating ideas and doing writing tasks against given standards and objectives to raise their reflection about the quality of their performance to be well-aware of their current level and identify the gap that they need to close to achieve the objective of the written task (Moss & Brookhart, 2009, p. 80; Butt, 2010, p. 79).

The practitioner researcher carefully picked self-assessment tools that can be adapted to suit the students' needs and they could be used for both, process of writing and the final product for the sake of advancing formative assessment and effective learning of the writing skill (Literacy and Numeracy Secretariat, 2007, p. 06). Self-assessment includes a range of tools such as surveys, interest inventories, checklists, conferences, etc with the purpose of guiding students' reflection on doing a task. (Canadian Ministry of Education, 2006, p. 270).

One type of self-assessment techniques was used in the study: checklists. They were administered (3 times) throughout the course of the study.

3.6.1.1 Checklists

A checklist is an assessment tool that is composed of a list of statements that correspond to given criteria and whether they exist in the students' tasks. Students can check

whether they include a criterion or not by answering with "Yes" or "No", or "Done" or "Not Done", and they are used to track students' performance on a task by collecting and evaluating the data it generates in addition to their learning behaviours, attitudes, strategies, or specific skills (Rowlands, 2007, p. 61; Alberta University, 2008, p 01; Brookhart, 2013, p.77; Lauzon, 2014, p. 02).

Checklists were used in this study since they are easier to design (quality criteria and level of achievement) than rubrics with students (LNS, 2007, p.6). They also serve as tools that remind the students of following a given instruction during the process of working on their writing task, or to make sure that they have met all the requirements of a complete task, or keeping them working on that task (Gere, Christenbury, and Sassi, 2005, p. 57; Brookhart, 2013, p. 77). Besides, the use of checklists was based on their potential in highlighting whether the students understand the requirements of a task, they adjust their performance according to the given criteria, and if they have any needs and require further assistance from the teacher to meet the learning targets.

Furthermore, teaching well is the basis for students to pursue their own path of independent learning because they no longer need their teachers to assist them (Graves, 1984, pp. 43-51), and this is exactly the core idea of implementing checklists during writing as they unfold and organise the steps that the students have to take to accomplish their task. By doing so, it is an opportunity for independent learning, a reminder and a roadmap for them because students are sometimes trapped in not knowing how to go through working on a task process from beginning till the end. Checklists, on the other hand, are used to evoke reflection and transferable skills (Rowlands, 2007, p. 62) as the processes of writing are recurrent in any kind of writing throughout their academic career and the gained strategies and competences can be used in other modules as well.

Before the involvement of students in using checklists during the practical side of the study, I taught the writing concept in a session of written comprehension in which the students were introduced to the main aspects of a writing concept. Whereas in the session of written production, they were introduced to the task that they needed to accomplish based on the checklist that they needed to refer back to while writing.

The checklists were developed by identifying the learning objective that the students would reach by the end of their task. Then I state the main steps or the criteria that the students need to pay attention to when they generate their ideas. These statements were worded in clear language and specific by including only one criterion in order not to confuse them. To motivate students with different aptitudes to take part in assessing their own performance, the included statements did not exceed 8 criteria of a quality performance. Finally, the practitioner researcher handed the checklist for another instructor of writing for the sake of getting feedback before using them with students.

According to Taras (2010), self-assessment is a significant tool in learning, mainly when it is used for formative purposes. For Wride (2017, p. 04), prior to the implementation of self-assessment, the practitioner researcher should take some principles into account. They are:

3.6.1.2 Preparing the students for self-assessment

In this study, I highlighted that self-assessment occurs in a supportive classroom environment. In addition, I introduced to my students the notion of self-assessment, its importance in fostering achievement and lifelong learning. In addition, I informed them about the execution of self-assessment procedures (setting the short term objective, providing them with checklists to assess their performance, knowing the criteria of a task of quality, how to assess themselves). Furthermore, I invited them to make their own questions in order to clarify any misunderstanding.

In this context, I used a ‘Strong Self-assessment model’, which is characterised by the following aspects: (Taras, 2015, as cited in Wride, 2017, p. 08)

A/ Students carry out self-assessment based on marking sheets provided along with criteria and standards required;

B/ Tutor/lecturer provides feedback using the grading criteria, but without providing a mark or grade;

C/Students also gain peer feedback and then, taking all feedback received into account, revise and re-grade their own work and resubmit;

D/ Advantages - students self-assess without the emotional pressure of the grade, and from an informed position combining both tutor and peer feedback. According to Shepard (2005), training students in self-assessment has several benefits. To begin with, self-assessment allows the students to acquire knowledge and skills about the process of assessment and be familiar with the standards that the rater uses to judge their performance. In addition, teaching the students how to self-assess facilitates the internalisation of task criteria and the requirements of quality performance. Finally, involving the students in self-assessment enhances their responsibility for their learning and paves the way for student-teacher collaboration as well.

At this stage, the students were informed that they would engage in peer-assessment by engaging them in assessing an informal e-mail. Materials for peer-assessment were selected from Cambridge English Language Assessment Handbook for Teachers (2016 Exams). The materials for the informal e-mail were the following: A worksheet with the rubric for writing an informal email (Appendix 03) and a worksheet with an adapted Cambridge English Language Assessment Writing Marking Scheme (Appendix 04).

3.4.1.3 The selection of the task

The selection of the type of the written task was based on Cambridge English First: Handbook for Teacher (B2 Level) general recommendations for the writing paper (Cambridge Assessment, 2016, p. 30):

The selection of the topic should be based on the students' interests and experiences. Besides, the students should be familiar with the themes in order to be able to develop the relevant ideas. In the context of this study, the practitioner researcher referred to the pre-study questionnaire in which 26% of the participants pointed at their deficiency in developing the appropriate ideas for an assigned topic in English. Therefore, the practitioner researcher selected the topic of 'the students' challenges in their university life'. This assigned topic is *broad* so that the students would have a great deal of information and ideas to write about (Juzwiak, 2012, p. 21). In addition, the topic corresponds to the transitional period from high school to university. Hence, the theme represents an opportunity for the students to write about day to day issues and share their experiences with their classmates and teacher.

In the pre-study writing phase, I informed my students that they would tackle the same assigned topic throughout the writing process. Accordingly, the first session of the study was devoted to writing a paragraph about the challenges of university life. Once the study is finished, they were asked to compare their performances before and after the intervention. This principle is at the heart of assessment for learning since the students' performances are not compared against one another, but with their previous performances.

The participants' paragraphs were assessed using an adapted version of the Cambridge English Language Assessment Scale of Writing. They include four scales: content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language.

3.6.2 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are non-experimental and descriptive research methods for collecting information about phenomena that cannot be directly observed. They also serve to describe and explain the status of phenomena in order to trace change and to make comparisons (Neville, 2007, p.26). Besides, they can be used for obtaining data that are related to facts (respondents' backgrounds and experiences), attitudes, knowledge about a given field or topic, beliefs, opinions, perceptions, values, expectations, and behaviours of individuals (Parahoo, 1997, p. ; Dörnyei, 2003, pp.8-9).

Questionnaires are made up of questions. They should include clear instructions and simple direct language, which the respondents will understand and be capable of addressing the questions appropriately, space for answers if the questions are open-ended and choices if they are close-ended (Kirklees, 2004, p. 01).

In this study, a combination of open and closed- ended questionnaires was employed in order to gain data about the students' attitudes and opinions and their perceptions about their learning experiences in writing in general, their engagement in the process of self-assessment, the frequency of using tools of self-assessment by giving them the opportunity to raise new issues (C. Cohen *et al*, 2000, p. 265 ; Dawson, 2009, p.90) , especially when it comes to engaging them in their learning about writing in English (their needs, their interests, goal-setting, study skills in practising writing, and reflection on their written performances). In addition, they were meant to observe patterns about their development on working on writing tasks.

Throughout the course of the study, questionnaires were administered to the students twice at the beginning and at the end of the study. The first questionnaire was developed and a session with coordination with another teacher was held to discuss any potential refinement and further revisions. Once the questionnaires were refined, they were piloted with a group of

20 students to avoid any misunderstood or repeated items and to seek any other possible answers to be included in the final version that was administered during the first and last session of the study.

The second used type of questionnaires in this research study is a Likert-scale survey. In social and educational scientific research, it is essential to quantify the respondents' subjective attitudes by transforming them into objective ones. Hence, qualitative research techniques attempt to describe and analyse complex human characteristics such as thoughts, behaviours, reactions, attitudes, feelings and outlooks. In this respect, psychometric techniques came into prominence to address these concerns in the scientific arena of social and educational research (Joshi, Kale, Chandel, and Pal, 2015, p. 397). The aim of psychometrics is the measurement of mental attributes, behaviours and opinions, with the design, analysis and improvement of the data collection methods such as tests and questionnaires (APA dictionary, 2020).

Psychometrics provides the means for measuring human attitudes in social sciences and educational research through Likert scale (Croasmun and Ostrom, 2011). According to Willits, Theodori, and Luloff (2016), Likert (1932) developed the principle of measuring respondents' attitudes by asking them to indicate the extent of their agreement or disagreement with a series of statements about a topic. The obtained answers will be scored and summed to give a composite value that will be used in the analysis and the interpretation of findings. Likert scale is useful since the answers are not closed ended (yes/no). However, Likert scale comprises a balance of positive and negative items (strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree) and each answer is scored from one (1) to five (5).

In this research study, the Likert scale is designed to measure the respondents' attitudes towards the implementation of self-assessment in daily practice of the writing skill. The scale offers a choice of five items (strongly agree- disagree- neutral- disagree- strongly disagree)

since five items scale is also suitable for most constructs (Hinkin, 1998, as cited in Willits et al, 2016). Besides, scales with less than 6 points are effective to administer to young respondents and to address limitations in working memory (Nemoto and Beglar, 2014, p. 5).

3.6.3 The Researcher Diary

Researcher diaries or journals are one of the most important research methods that are used in action research or by teachers conducting their own research in their classrooms (Altrichter, Posch, and Somekh, 2000, p. 11; A. Burns, 2010, p. 89).

A research diary is a written device to make notes about the aspects of any research situation (Koshy, 2005, p. 97). It provides clear accounts of the events, perceptions, behaviours, discussions that take place in the classroom in the form of thoughts, personal reflections about the evolving nature of the conducted study, and their interpretation by means of personal reflective writing throughout the research process, starting from designing the research study, through data collection and analysis, to writing the research paper (A. Burns, 1999, p. 89 and Bloor and Wood, 2006, p. 150).

The fieldwork journal or diary is the place where the researcher in conversation with herself, can record hopes, fears, confusion and enlightenment. It is the place where the personal side of the field work equation can be recorded.

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, p. 134)

The diary, as a personal recording document, has the ability to engage teachers in the process of understanding themselves and questioning their experiences in relation to their practice and their learners. Making sense of their experiences can include questions about the best ways to engage students, how to help them participate in the course structure and delivery, how to use research tools and techniques to elicit information about their learning situation, needs and most of all, how students can be assisted to speak openly about everything they have concerns about (Carroll, 1994, p. 19).

Diaries are characterised by their regularity as they can be used during a specific period of time or scheduled intervals, their personal nature, in which the writer only has access to it in some cases, but it can be public if it is used as a tool or a method to generate or collect data as a part of research. Besides, it is contemporaneous and recording because it enables its user to document actions, feelings, and impressions at the time of activities or events in order not to face problems of recall (Alaszewski, 2006, p. 02).

The selection of the researcher diary as a means of collecting data throughout this study and documenting the personal experience of the researcher stems from the nature of diaries in general as a tool of reflection in languages and in learning about researching and teaching.

The nature of research diaries correspond that of action research through their mutual core principle, which is reflection about the self and action of the self. The main drive in this respect is that the practitioner researcher is an insider in conducting his own study. Thus, writing diary entries would serve as a tool for reflection and inner dialogue (Engin, 2011, p. 02). By doing so, the practitioner researcher is in constant discussion and debate about his actions, attitudes, feelings, struggles, decisions, and engagement with his students and his research process. As a result, the researcher diary is considered in this study as a "*an expert self*" (ibid, 2011, 02), and a device for "*researching the self*" (Walford, 2001, p. 98, as cited in Engin, 2011, p. 04) in which the researcher uses the diary to record and ponder upon the things that take place throughout the research journey, articulate his thoughts and interact with them to make decisions and take actions to bring change to his teaching and improve his students' learning as well.

On other hand, the researcher diary is a companion tool during the research project with its ups and downs. According to Altrichter et al (2000, p. 12), a researcher diary in the context of action research unfolds promising and disappointing paths of enquiry, learning and

discovery. Consequently, it deepens the researcher's understanding and interaction of all the aspects of the research (Borg, 2001, p. 156) because the researcher is involved in writing about himself in relation to analysing data, understanding concepts, managing methodology and interpreting all the events that take place (Bloor and Wood, 2006, p. 151).

Another useful dimension for the incorporation of diaries in this study is the fact that research diaries are narrative accounts in nature, in which the researcher can engage in narrative reflective writing to become connoisseur of his own thinking, reflection patterns and their full understanding of their research (Janesick, 1998, p. 03) and a significant element that can contribute to practitioner researchers' professional conduct because human stories and teacher's lived experiences, especially in the domain of social sciences and humanities, have been acknowledged as a rich source of data (Borg, 2001, p. 160) that can contribute to the understanding of a whole picture of the educational sector and the course of educational research as they are from the outset until the phase of completion.

The narrative account of diaries also has the ability to empower researchers with the ability to expose their "subjective biases" to their audience with all its imperfections to convince them that the researcher experience is real (Burgess, 1981,)

Diaries tell the truth, the partial truth, and a lot more beside the truth...In them, you seek – and often find- an atmosphere, a mood of the moment, which could be acquired in any other way.

Pilmott (2002, p. 02)

Pilmott highlights an important aspect of research diary, which is finding the suitable atmosphere or mood to express one's ideas, feelings, struggles and disappointments, and no data collection method can do the researcher any good like the diary does when it comes to the psychological part of working throughout the research journey. Research diaries are an escape in an age of fragmentation at university in which the researcher does not have the opportunity to discuss his research procedures and process, and the issue of isolation, which

makes it hard to keep in regular touch with other colleagues in the field of academic research. Therefore,

Writing in a journal is thus a way to attend to the self, to care for and feed oneself. It can be a place to dump anger guilt, or fear...it can be a place to clarify what is we feel angry or guilty about. It can be a place...support ourselves, and it can be a place to transform silence into language and action.

(J. E. Cooper, 1991, p. 105, as cited in Borg, 2001, p.165)

In this study, I aimed for the combination of descriptive and reflective diary that is combined with observation during the session of written production. Here, I could observe myself and my students while working on their tasks and at the same time reflecting on their answers to provide them with immediate feedback.

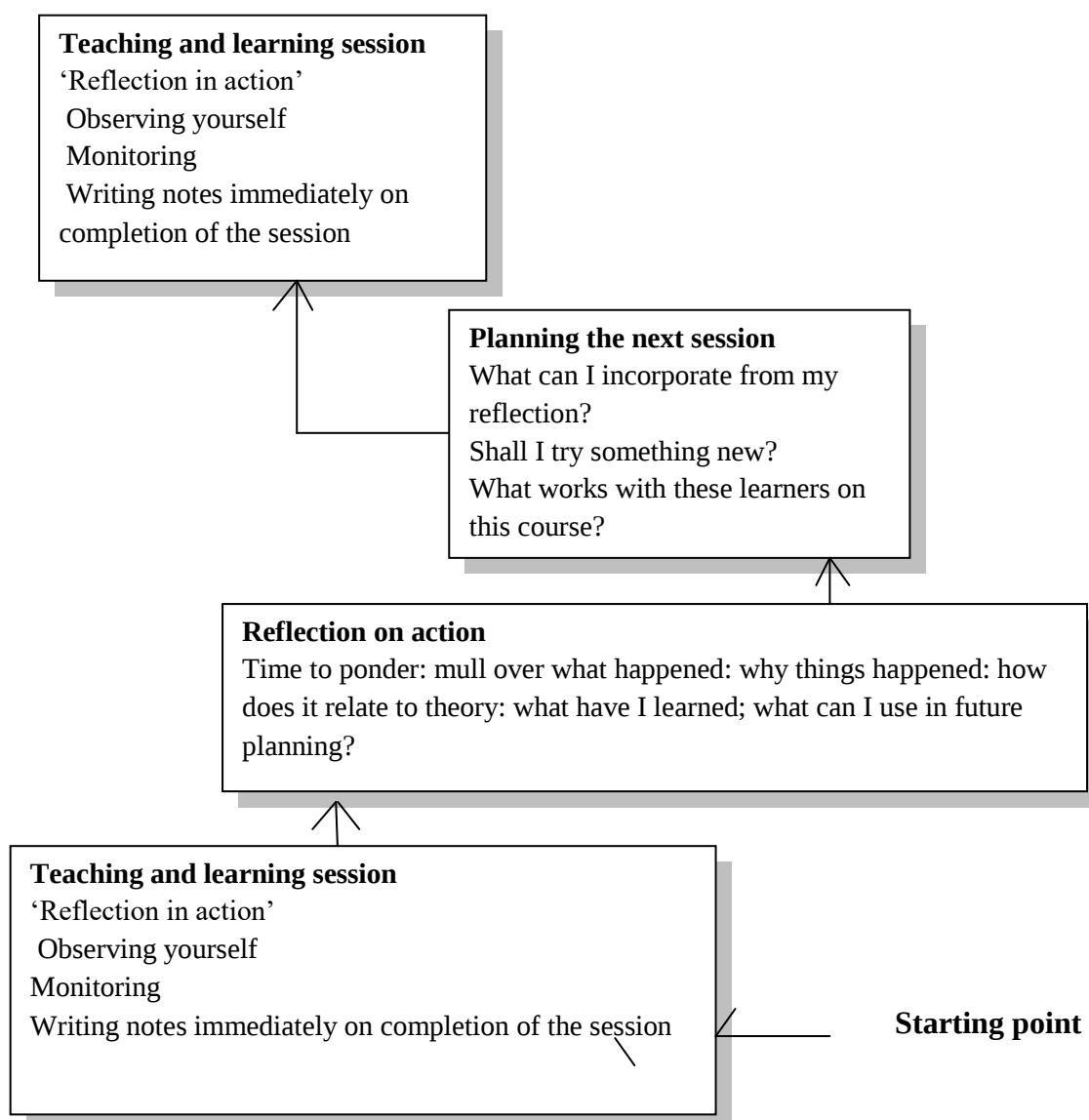


Figure 3.2 Using reflection *in* and *on* action to improve teaching and learning
(Scales, 2008, p. 12)

Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the endeavour to conduct an action research study in which the major aim was to advance the implementation of formative assessment as a system that advances effective teaching and active learning. Accordingly, this study attempted to help first year bachelor students master different techniques and steps of the writing process (clustering, paragraph outline, drafting and editing) through student self-assessment. For this end, it also tackled the theoretical justification for the selection of action research and reflective teaching as methodological approaches. The research plan involved the practitioner researcher and the participants as equal partners in improving both; reflection on teaching and students' learning to bring change. Ultimately, it provided detailed explanation of the utilisation of various data collection methods. The tools included student self-assessment checklists that were used during the writing process, an attitudinal questionnaire, a practitioner researcher's reflective diary and a Likert scale survey at the end of the action research study.

Chapter Four

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

In this research study our main objective is to identify the correlation between students' self-assessment and teacher assessment and its impact on their writing process. This chapter describes the results of the action research study in the writing classroom. The obtained data will enable a clear account of the active participation of both, my students and I as a practitioner researcher in this study. The results will specifically address the research questions of this thesis. The first research question focuses on identifying the best practices that advance the implementation of self-assessment in the writing classroom. The aim of the second research question is to highlight how self-assessment may engage the students in assuming an active part in their own learning. The third research question addresses the participants' attitudes towards their involvement in assessing their own performances throughout the study. The last question examines whether the implementation of self-assessment would bring change my daily teaching in the writing classroom.

This chapter uses data obtained from the participants' pre- study questionnaire and Likert Scale Survey answers, their self-assessment checklists and my reflective journal in order to elucidate how an action plan engages my students in assessing the quality of their performance against given criteria and teacher assessment. Accordingly, the findings offer possible explanation for changes in their attitudes towards self-assessment. Additionally, the chapter demonstrates the impact of reflection on action on the enhancement of the relationship between assessment, learning and teaching in the writing classroom.

Included in this section are descriptions from the participants' pre- study questionnaire and Likert scale attitudes, and the correlation between the participants' self-assessment and the teacher assessment, including tables, graphs and statistics. Data analysis attempts to make

sense of the questionnaire and the Likert scale answers, the mean and the standard deviation of students' self-assessment and teacher assessment and the practitioner researcher's reflective journal.

4.1. Data Analysis

This section will provide a detailed account of the obtained data. It will also discuss the procedures of data analysis and interpretation.

The data analysis process consists of three stages of data analysis, as defined by Creswell (2007). These distinct stages are data organisation, data reduction, and data representation. The first stage which is data organisation consists of data preparation and data management. It results in organising the obtained data into separate folders since the study incorporates the participants' attitudinal questionnaires, artifacts about their written performances and self-assessment checklists. The second stage, which is data reduction, results in describing, summarising and coding (category formation). Moreover, it displays the findings in illustrative formats such as tables, charts and graphs. The final stage or data representation showcases the core of data analysis since it provides a detailed account of interpreting the findings and drawing meaning in light of previous literature and in relation to the researcher's views about the research theme.

The stage of data analysis and interpretation has the potential to unveil significant information so that we can make sense of the participants' attitudes and experiences. Furthermore, we can understand the relationships between the various elements of the study (Willing, 2014, p. 136).

A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods would provide a complete view of the research study (Creswell, 2014). Quantitative data analysis is used in four formats: percentages of the attitudinal questionnaire, the correlation between the practitioner

researcher's assessment and the participants' self-assessment by calculating the mean and the standard deviation, and the level of agreement in Likert scale.

4.2. Questionnaire results

This section reports the answers of the pre-test questionnaire of the 50 participants from the following dimensions: participants' attitudes towards writing and its main challenges, background information about the adopted approaches of writing, and whether my students have already dealt with self-assessment in their previous phases of studying English. The significance of utilising a questionnaire as a data collection method lies in it being useful in making decisions about the components of the self-assessment checklists. It also supports the understanding of my students' needs.

4.2.1. Results of the participants' attitudes towards writing

Fifty students completed the questionnaire. The first part sought information about whether my students enjoyed writing or not. They were required to justify their answers as well. The results showed that 88% of the students enjoyed writing in English and 12% of the students did not.

Norton (2009) asserts that analysis of open-ended questions is carried out through a thematic analysis, which includes three distinct stages. The first stage which is immersion, results in reading and noting the participants' answers in general without making a reference to the main question. The second stage or the generating categories stage consisted of reading each participant's response separately in order to generate any possible themes and to identify new themes throughout the process. This process gave me 14 categories for both questions. (The acceptable number of categories should be between 10 and 15 categories). The third stage involved merging categories in which categories were relabelled as themes after being described accurately. They were reduced into 10 categories (Table 4.1).

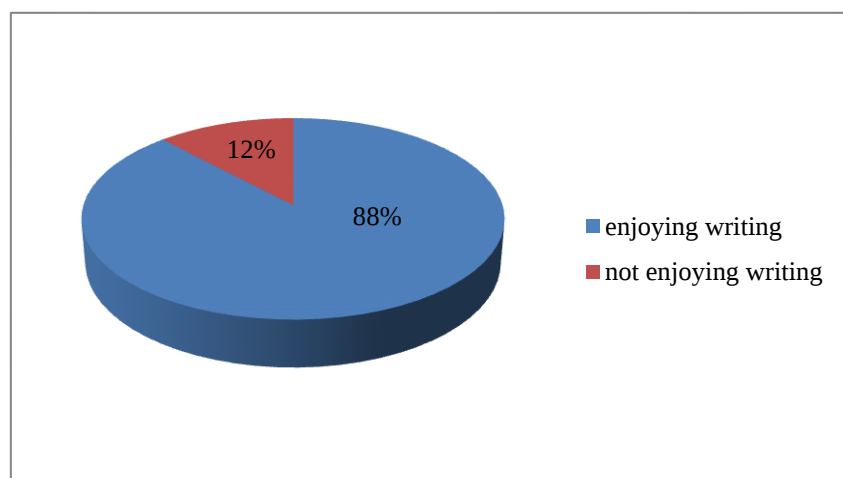


Figure 4.1 Students' attitudes towards writing

I enjoy writing in English	I do not enjoy writing in English
1. Writing helps me express my thoughts easily (22.72%). 2. Writing helps me learn English (11.63%). 3. Writing develops my skills in English (18.18%). 4. Through writing, I learn new things that I can use in other modules (9.09%). 5. Writing evokes my imagination and develops my creative writing skills (18.18%). 6. Writing helps me put new vocabulary and grammatical rules in use (6.81%). 7. Writing helps me practise my English and see if I am making progress (9.09%). 8. I can make contact with my audience through writing (4.44%).	1. Writing in English is a difficult process (33.33%). 2. Writing shows my weaknesses in grammar and it embarrasses me (66.66%).

Table 4.1 Participants' justification for writing enjoyment or not

Question two probed how much time the students devoted for writing outside the classroom setting. Unsurprisingly, 14% of the students did not practise writing in English at

all. This may possibly indicate that these participants practice writing when they are assigned by their teachers only. Additionally, 50% of the participants spent less than an hour in writing per week. In contrast, 24% of the students admitted that they devoted from one to two hours writing and 12% only spent more than two hours writing per week.

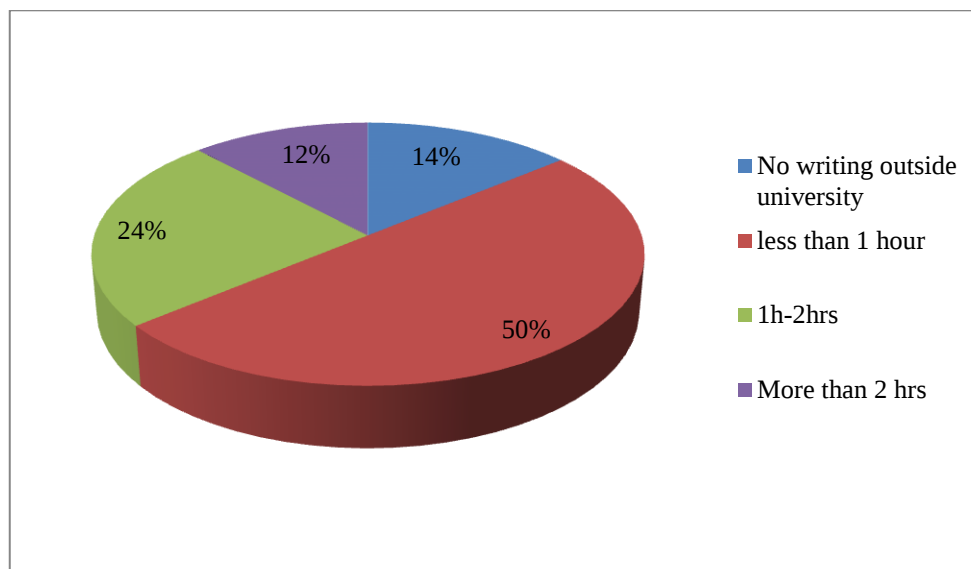


Figure 4.2 Time devoted to writing outside university

Question three was designed to find out about the resources that the participants used during the process of writing. The aim was to establish whether the participants relied on certain types of resources that identified their preferences and needs. The results revealed that the majority of the students (76%) relied on dictionaries to work on their written assignments inside and outside the classroom setting. The results indicated that the students have deficiencies in terms of vocabulary knowledge that is why they keep consulting their dictionaries during writing. Online resources such as websites were the second main resources with (72%). The participants also referred to their teacher's handouts to do their writing (54%). Finally, they only (36%) of the students consulted books about English language writing.

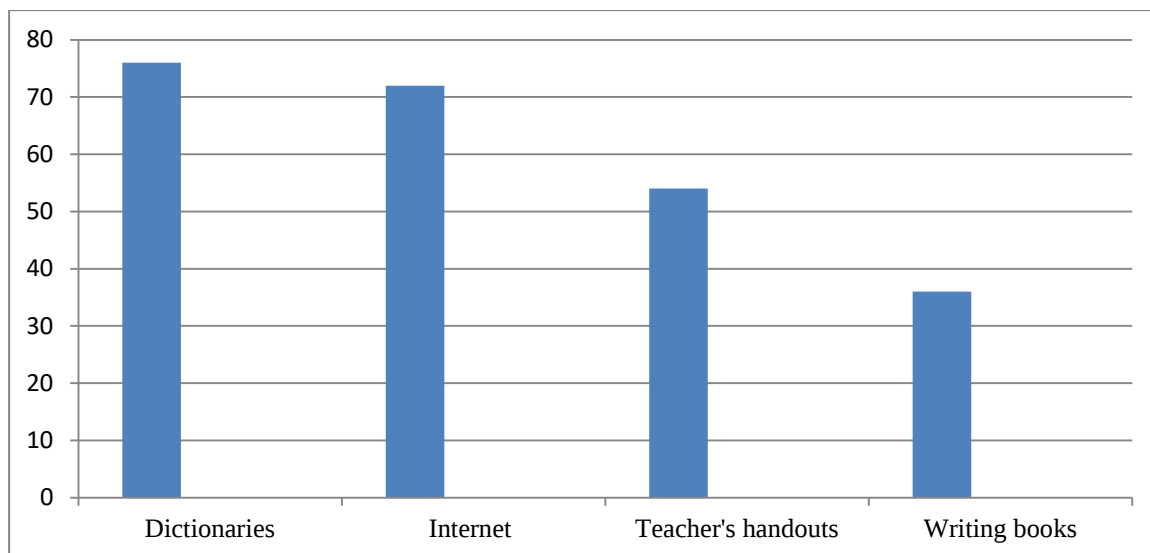


Figure 4.3 Students' resources dependence

Advancing the process of writing is the main focus of this study. Writing cannot be tackled distantly from reading. The results of question four suggest that the majority of the participants did not develop a reading habit in English (60%). The second group of the students admitted that they read in English when they are given assignment in the module of literature only (38%). Surprisingly, only 02% reported that they developed a regular exposure to reading in English, mainly short stories.

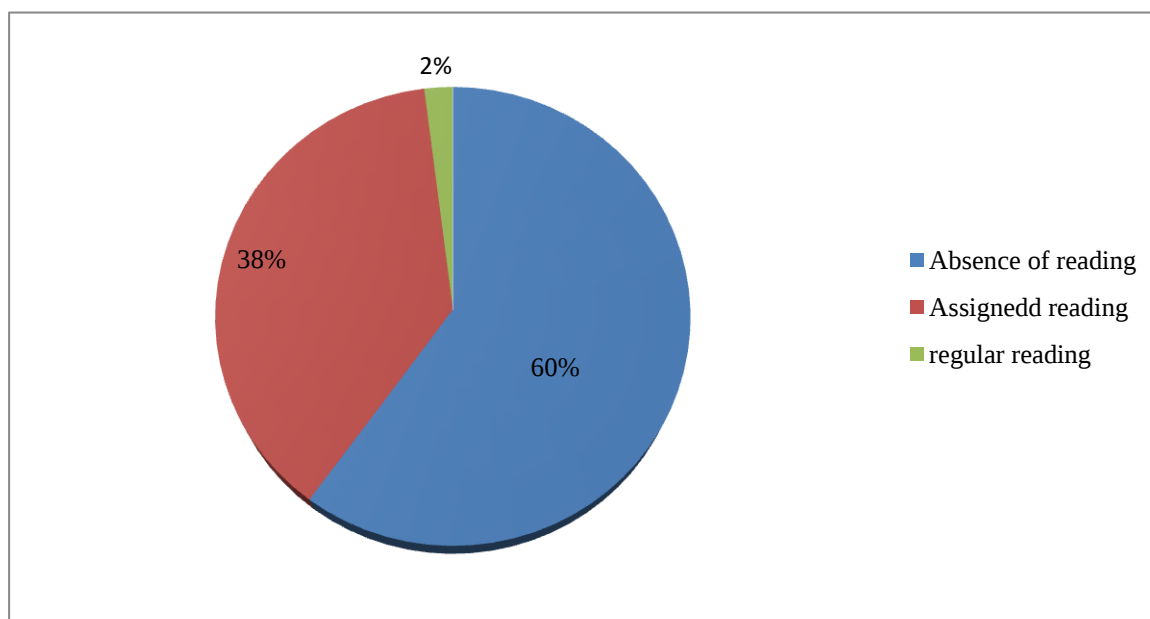


Figure 4.4 Students' reading habits

Given that the key focus of this study is also the different stages of the process of writing, it seemed crucial to explore the participants' omnipresent challenges when it comes to writing in English. The generation of categories led to the identification of 09 categories, which were merged into 06 categories.

The results showed that there were six challenges that the students encountered during their writing: tackling the topic and finding the relevant ideas (26%), vocabulary (20%), avoiding grammar and spelling mistakes (18%), basic outlining (16%), negative transfer from L1 to English (14%), and time management skills (6%). The results here are somehow similar to a study that tackled undergraduate university students' most difficult aspects in writing in the Algerian context. This is a study by Aliouchouche (2017). The results of this study also indicate that Algerian students encounter many difficulties while writing in English. The majority of respondents referred to their limited vocabulary, difficulty to get relevant ideas, organisational issues, using English accurately, and grammar issues respectively.

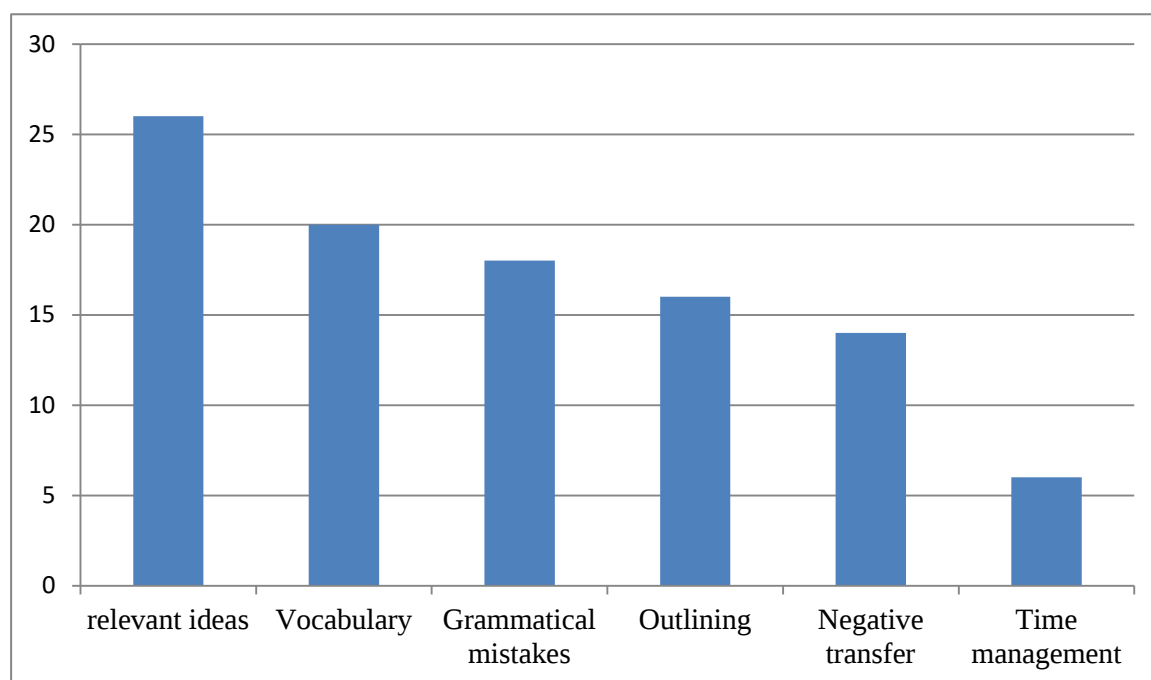


Figure 4.5 The participants' writing challenges

The results suggest that the students were well-aware of their deficiencies in writing. These issues are not specific to one area, but they are encountered throughout the writing process. For instance, tackling the assigned topic by generating any related ideas does not seem a straightforward task for the participants. The participants mentioned that it is always about the start and how much information you know about the topic.

The aim of question six is to check if the students were informed about the objectives of their writing lessons and tasks during the session. The majority of the participants (70%) declared that their teachers did not inform them about the aims that they would achieve by the end of the lesson or when they finish working on a written task. Only 30% of the participants admitted that their teachers did so.

Question seven is related to students having experience about guided writing (dealing with a written task using a step by step sheet), 60% of the participants stated that this kind of writing instruction was the norm during their secondary education phase. The writing sessions were at the end of each unit in which the students had to invest what they had learnt throughout the unit in the assigned task (A situation of integration). Furthermore, the students worked in pairs under the guidance of their teachers in a rubric entitled Think, Pair, Share in which they were asked to follow the guidelines to write about the unit theme using functions such as comparing, advising or informing. Moreover, the writing development section in their textbook provided them with a writing activity in which the students were guided through various steps in order to complete their task. The writing development section generally involves these steps (generating ideas, writing the text, error checking by a partner). 30% of the participants admitted that writing tasks were assigned as homework assignments and then the teacher would pick a student's piece of writing to be corrected on the board.

The objective of question eight was to identify whether the students were used to get regular descriptive feedback about their written products. The majority of the participants

(72%) stated that they did not and 28% admitted that they did. Question nine aimed at highlighting if the students had the notion of criteria in their previous writing experiences. In this regard, 80% of the students stated that their teachers informed them about the criteria of assessing their writing in the form of (content, organisation and excellence) with the marks assigned to each criterion. 20% of the participants admitted that they had no idea about the criteria and the main focus was on the information they provided and grammatical and spelling mistakes they committed.

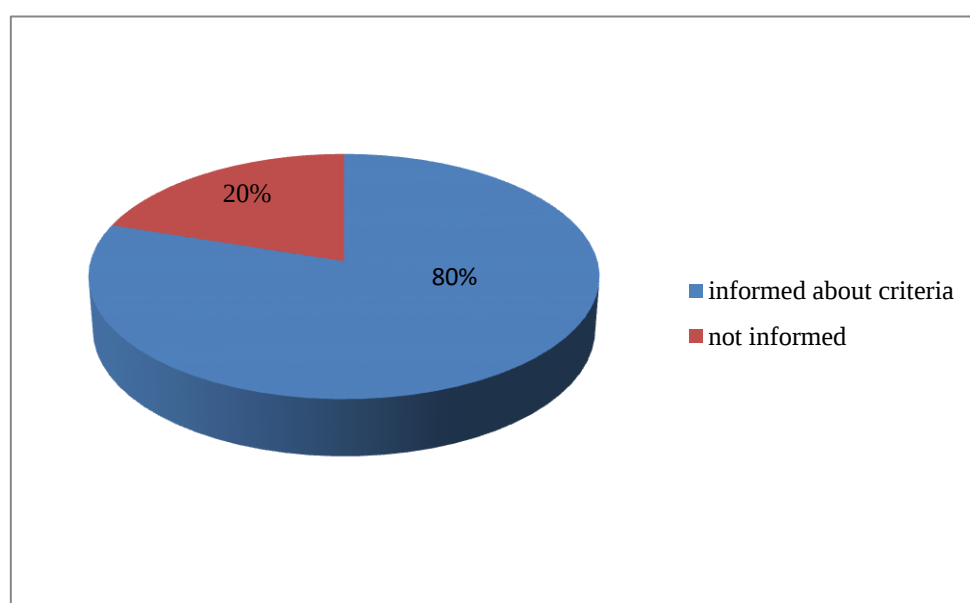


Figure 4.6 The participants' awareness of writing criteria

The last question on whether the participants dealt with any activity that involved the process of self-assessment revealed that only 22% of the participants did so. Three participants reported that their teachers of English at middle school trained them on using self-assessment by referring to their textbook *On the Move* at the end of each exit file entitled Learning Log. This rubric incorporates a set of objectives in different language skills. The pupils, at this level, ticked the appropriate column by finishing the sentence "I can..." to identify the degree (very well/ fairly well/ a little) of achieving the objectives of this file. Seven participants stated that their first encounter with self-assessment was during their

Baccalaureate year. They were asked to work on previous Baccalaureate exam exemplars and compare their answers with their teachers'. In addition to that, the participants dealt with a Language Assessment Rubric at the end of each unit in their textbook *New Prospects*. At this phase, they were asked to fill in a checklist by ticking the appropriate column to see if they achieved the unit objectives. Then they handed these checklists to their teachers. One participant stated that he was trained on self-assessment during training on how to write reports in Arabic during his university studies for a degree in communication. The majority of the participants (87%) admitted that they have no idea about the process of self-assessment.

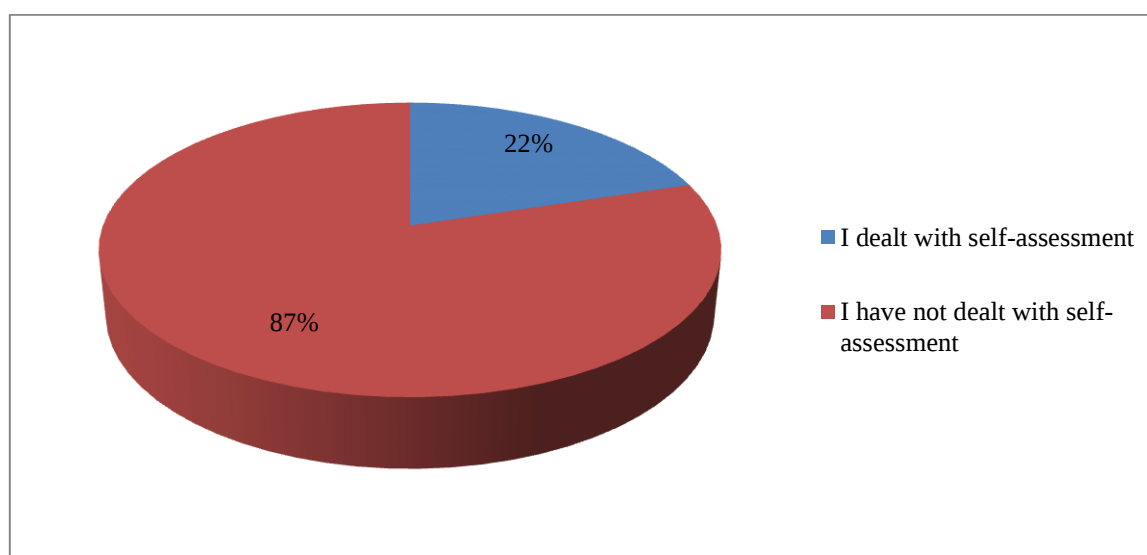


Figure 4.6 The participants' previous self-assessment experiences

In this section, the obtained findings from the participants' questionnaires are interpreted and discussed in details.

The findings indicate that the participants exhibit positive attitudes towards the writing skill. They are well-aware of the importance of writing as a prerequisite for the mastery of English in general as well as the crucial role of writing in the other modules; writing is a decisive factor for success at university since the majority of assignments and exams are in a written mode. Furthermore, writing reinforces other skills such as reading and the applications of grammatical rules. However, the participants' positive attitudes towards writing do not

always concur with the time they devote to practising writing outside university. In this prospect, we consider that the majority of the participants (64%) allocate less than an hour to write in English, thus their writing is mainly done in the classroom or they restrict themselves to teacher's homework. Besides, the majority of the students did not develop a reading habit in English yet. This phenomenon is omnipresent across the world since many empirical studies highlight the increasing numbers of newly-enrolled university students do not possess adequate reading habits. Besides, this fact hinders them from responding appropriately to the requirements of their disciplines (Chanock, Horton, Reedman and Stephenson, 2012; Divoll and Browning, 2013; Bharuthram and Clarence, 2015, as cited in Bharuthram, 2017, p. 50).

In this study, lack of participants' time devoted for writing and reading identify the reasons to use given resources during the writing process. Accordingly, the participants rely to a great extent on their dictionaries to find the appropriate words to accomplish a written activity. They also consult the internet to a great extent since they can easily get access to infinite number of ready-made paragraphs. Unsurprisingly, this is an indicator of why a small percentage of participants (36%) refer to writing textbooks. Books of writing provide students with concepts, rules, genres of writing, how to accomplish a writing task and writing activities. That means that they should make efforts by going throughout the complex nature of writing in a foreign language.

In this respect, many research studies about writing show that it has represented challenges for EFL students (Tuzlukova and Al Seyabi, 2014). Recent empirical studies in North Africa and the Arab world such as (Abu Rass, 2015; Ahmed, 2010; Umair, 2011) assert that EFL students, at various levels of education, still face issues when dealing with writing such as linguistic knowledge deficiencies, translation from L1 to English, cohesion, poor academic style and self-confidence (Abouabdelkader and Ahmed, 2016). In this study, the majority of the participants acknowledge that writing is a multifaceted and a demanding skill

that incorporates several skills, processes and knowledge. In view of this fact, they encounter numerous issues and handicaps. These challenges are particularly related to the following aspects:

1. Topic: Nunan (1999) considers writing as the major challenging skill for natives, and a much more challenging skill for foreign learners. Thus, many EFL students may struggle when they attempt to generate appropriate ideas for their writing assignment. Raimes (1983) indicates that *“when students complain about how difficult it is to write in a [foreign] language, they are talking not only about the difficulty of finding the right words ...but also about the difficulty of finding and expressing ideas in a new language.”*

2. Vocabulary: The learners cannot approach any assigned topic without having rich repertoire of English vocabulary since *“...a large vocabulary is of course essential for mastery of a language. [Foreign] language acquirers know this; they carry dictionaries with them, not grammar books, and regularly report that the lack of vocabulary is a major problem”* (Krashen, 1989, as cited in Maximo, 2000).

In the same line of thought, finding the appropriate use of words during the writing process constitutes another challenge for EFL learners. Here, the learners are supposed to retrieve words, know their different meanings and use them to create a context of writing (Essays, 2018). Moreover, the choice of words is considered as an indicator of the quality of written performances (Raimes, 1985).

3. Grammar: The issue of correct grammar is an omnipresent issue among EFL students. In this case of study, the participants' main problems are related to spelling mistakes, appropriate use of tenses, capitalisation and subject-verb agreement.

4. Outlining and organisation: To the best of the researcher's knowledge, the Algerian university students have already encountered the main notions of outlining and organisation (paragraph outline, essay outline, and transitional words and expressions) in secondary

education. However, they remain problematic issues for first year students. The students cannot organise their ideas into a coherent piece of writing that is congruent with the convention of writing in English, particularly the formulation of sentences (topic sentence, supporting sentences, concluding sentence, and the use of transitional words). The findings in the study at hand are in line with a number of empirical studies in the Arab world which indicate the students' outlining and organisation deficiencies in writing (Azennoud, 2000; Al-Jarf, 2001; Bouziane, 2002; Dastjerdi and Samian, 2011). In a study about EFL university students' writing difficulties, Ahmed (2010) found out that organisational challenges topped the students' essay issues. Furthermore, Al-Jarf (2001) revealed that Saudi students' encountered cohesive ties issues in their writing due to their poor linguistic knowledge and their inability to use cohesion rules appropriately.

5. *Transfer from L1:* The issue of word by word translation from L1 is another common practice that the participants usually encounter when they write in English. This is maybe due to students' lack of exposure to input related to the target language. In addition, the mere fact of L1 interference can be linked to poor linguistic knowledge and use of words (nouns, prepositions and articles) in their suitable contexts. Moreover, direct translation from L1 can be attributed to lack of reading. This finding is consistent with other research studies in EFL contexts such (Diab, 1996; Abi Samra, 2003; Van Vu, 2017). For instance, a thorough review of literature about Arab students' negative transfer revealed that misuse of definite articles, prepositions, adjectives, adverbs, word order, tenses, relative clauses, use of pronouns, and redundancy in essay writing are major sources of L1 interference in English writing (Sabbah, 2015).

6. *Time management skills:* The participants, in this case, struggle to manage their allotted time when they work on a written assignment. That means that they lack the essential

skills that help them distribute time efficiently on the stages of writing. Part of this challenge may also be attributed to the students' engagement in drafting immediately.

The third section of the questionnaire investigated the participants' experiences in the writing classroom and the modes of assessment as well. The majority of the students confessed that they were not informed about the objectives of studying and practising writing. This finding indicates that writing is merely considered as an activity at the end of the unit or the project.

Fortunately, the majority of the participants admitted that they developed written products by following the main stages of the writing process namely (brainstorming ideas about the assigned topic, drafting, and editing errors). Furthermore, they were trained on writing their own drafts and seek a partner's error checking before sharing their written products with the whole class. This mode of teaching writing is widespread in exam classes (Baccalaureate Exam) since the official exam is written and its final section is about written production, which is a decisive element for success in English (it consists of 06 points out of 20). That is why teachers of English give importance to teaching reading, grammar and writing since they are the major components for exam classes, either in middle or secondary schools. In some cases, writing was considered as a mere activity since some students were assigned to deal with writing in their homes. This finding can be related to teachers' perceptions towards writing and to the coverage of the syllabus.

Unsurprisingly, when asked about the frequency of getting feedback about their written products, the majority of the participants pinpointed the fact that they did not get regular constructive remarks or descriptive feedback about their written performance. This current situation is not exclusively omnipresent in the Algerian context since delivering feedback and using it to make positive change in teaching and writing has been a constant issue across the world. According to Dassa *et al*, (1993), "*indeed they pay lip service to [formative*

assessment] but consider that its practice is unrealistic in the present educational context.” In this prospect, delivering feedback is not a straightforward process that every teacher can handle effectively. However, providing descriptive feedback is a whole system with multifaceted aspects. In addition to that, the participants referred to the fact that even when provided with criteria, they were vague such as content, organisation and excellence. In this regard, the students need to know the descriptions of every criterion to be aware of their teachers’ assessment and the requirements of their written tasks.

To the best of the researcher’s knowledge, teachers know how to administer summative assessment (tests and official examinations). However, it is not always the case for formative assessment and the implementation of its practices in schools. Moreover, teacher education programmes incorporate teaching methods and techniques, lesson planning, educational psychology, but without training them on how to design and administer assessment formatively.

Another obstacle that impedes teachers from implementing formative assessment in their writing classes is the class size and the coverage of the syllabus. Teachers are faced with large classes and a heavy syllabus to be covered throughout the academic year, with the minimum sessions allotted for English (3 hours per week for scientific streams/ 4 hours for philosophy and languages streams). For Black (2001, p. 13), “*a curriculum that is overcrowded, in situations where teachers feel compelled to “cover” all topics, is an obvious contributor to such difficulties.*” Therefore, it becomes demanding to provide every single student with a differentiated descriptive feedback and respond to his needs.

In the same vein, results about any previous experience about self-assessment, the majority of the participants reported that they have never been trained on assessing their own performances in the English language classroom. Though policy makers and textbook designers advocate the implementation of kinds of assessment that promote effective teaching

and learning, assessment remains outside the circle of teaching and learning writing since both; formative and self-assessment are not widely implemented in the daily practice of writing. Furthermore, teachers are left to make initiatives such as assessment work without any assistance or guidance (Black and Wiliam, 2010, p. 82).

4.3.The Correlation between the Practitioner Researcher's assessment and the Participants' self-assessment

Before undertaking the self-assessment process, I explained to my students the criteria that raters of writing use when they evaluate writing. The main aim of this procedure was to familiarise them with quality indicators to be able to assess their written performances. Then, I trained them in assessing a piece of writing against a checklist from (Cambridge Assessment B2 Level). The cycles of self-assessment involves three stages: the pre-writing stage (clustering), writing a paragraph outline, and editing their written paragraphs.

The relationship between each participant's self-assessment and the teacher-assessment is calculated using statistical processing software (SPSS). The results of the three cycles of self- and teacher assessment are included in this chapter. The correlations are used in order to find if there is a close relationship between the two types of assessment, and whether the checklist criteria have a positive impact on the quality of the students' writing. The means and standard deviation of different components of both checklists (students' self-assessment checklist/ teacher assessment checklist) are compared. The aim of this comparison is to find out whether there is a correlation or a difference between the way I and my students assessed themselves throughout the three stages of writing. That means that both scores are computed so as to test their significance.

4.3.1. Results of the Correlation

Table (4.2) shows the results of four correlations of students' self-assessment and teacher assessment at the pre-writing stage (clustering). The magnitude of these correlations is

larger than the critical value ($p < .01$). This fact indicates that the obtained results are statistically significant ,i.e., the students' self-assessment of their written performance is closer to my assessment. The standard deviation (SD) is also used to provide an accurate analysis of the obtained results because it is the most commonly used measure of spread in statistics.

	Students' self-assessment		Teacher assessment	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic.	1	0	0,96	0,19
I provided four basic ideas related to my main topic.	0,96	0,19	0,86	0,35
I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas.	1	0	0,82	0,38
I provided one specific detail to each example.	0,9	0,30	0,78	0,41

Table 4.2 Correlation between students' self-assessment and teacher-assessment at the clustering stage

Figure 4.7 (Clustering phase) shows that there is a positive correlation between students' self-assessment and teacher assessment since the standard deviation of students' self-assessment and teacher assessment are closer when it comes to the general idea (Students' standard deviation = 0, Teacher standard deviation =0.19), providing basic ideas (Students' standard deviation =0.19, Teacher standard deviation= 0.35). Some students overestimated their performance (Student SD=0, teacher SD=0.38) in providing basic examples because they could not assess their performance at this stage accurately and their assessment did not correspond the teacher assessment.

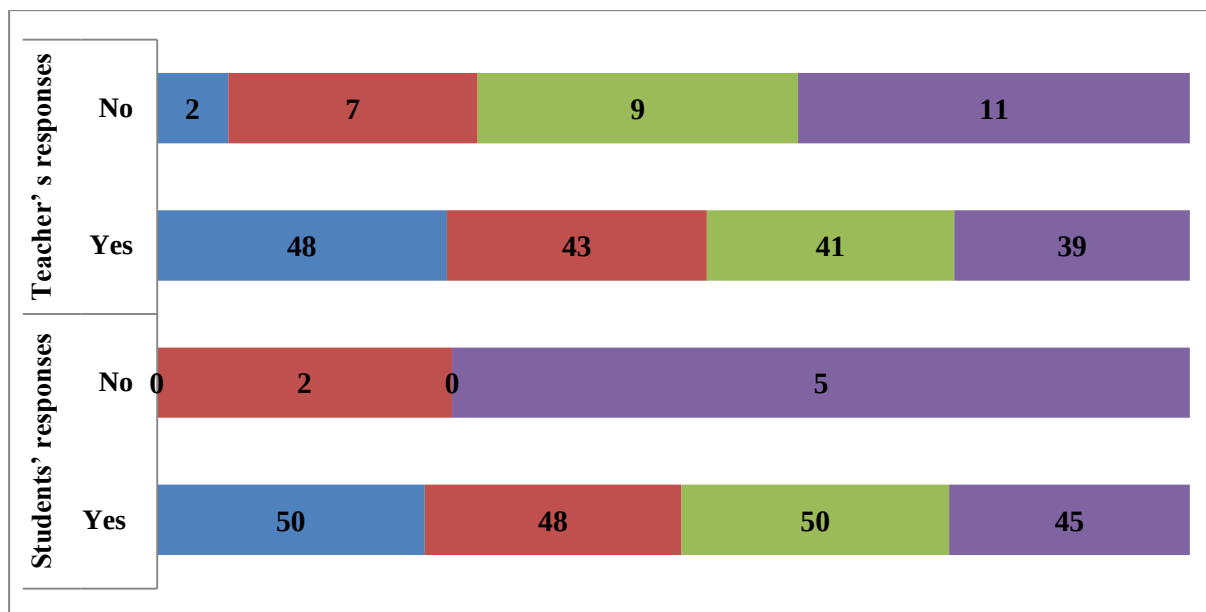


Figure 4.7 Students' self-assessment versus teacher assessment (Clustering phase)

The second phase of the correlation between the students' self-assessment and teacher assessment deals with the outline of a paragraph.

	Student's self-assessment		Teacher assessment	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic.	1	0	0,88	0,32
I could formulate the main idea.	0,88	0,32	0,88	0,32
I could provide three supporting ideas at least.	1	0	0,84	0,36
I could provide one example for every supporting idea.	0,9	0,30	0,68	0,46
I could provide a concluding sentence.	1	0	0,78	0,41
I could provide complete sentences.	0,74	0,43	0,66	0,47

Table 4.3 The correlation between students' self-assessment and teacher assessment (paragraph outline)

The second phase is about outlining basics. There is agreement between the students' standard deviation (0,32) and the teacher's standard deviation (0.32) at the level of formatting the main idea and providing examples (Students' standard deviation=0.30 and teacher's standard deviation=0.46) and at the level of providing full sentences (Students' standard deviation=0.43 and teacher's standard deviation=0.47). However, the students underestimate their performance since they could not assess whether their main idea responds directly to the assigned topic (Students' standard deviation=0/ Teacher standard deviation=0.32)

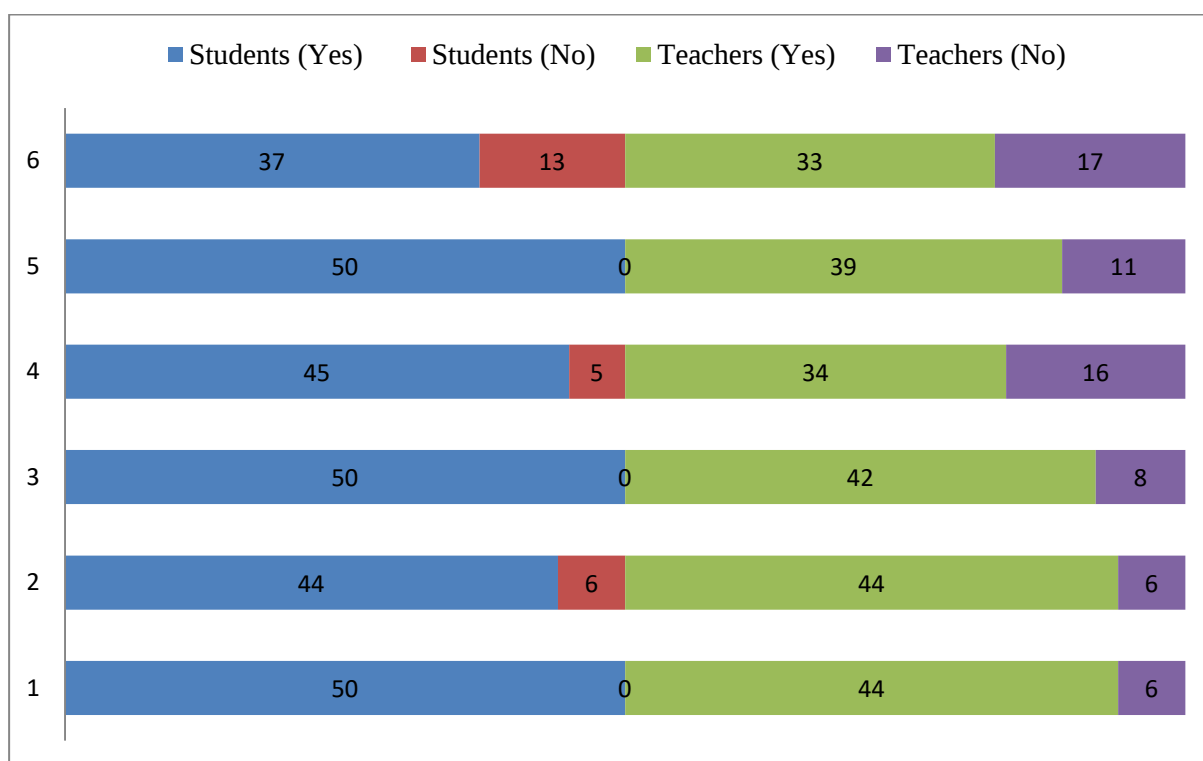


Figure 4.8 The correlation between students' self-assessment and teacher assessment (paragraph outline)

The last phase of assessment has to do with the correlation of the students' self-assessment and the teacher assessment at the level of editing.

	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
My paragraph has a title and an indentation	0,96	0,19	0,84	0,36
My paragraph has a topic sentence, three supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence.	1	0	0,96	0,19
My topic sentence has a topic and a controlling idea.	0,98	0,14	0,88	0,32
My paragraph is backed by examples.	0,9	0,3	0,84	0,36
There are transitional words between sentences.	0,74	0,43	0,8	0,4
Commas are used where necessary.	0,88	0,32	0,82	0,38
Verb tenses are used appropriately	0,9	0,3	0,84	0,36
All sentences contain at least one subject, one verb and express complete thoughts.	0,88	0,32	0,8	0,4

Table 4.4 The correlation between students' self-assessment and teacher assessment (Editing stage)

The final phase of self-assessment consists of an editing checklist. Table 4.4 indicates that there is a correlation between the students' self-assessment and the teacher assessment at the level of providing a title and indenting (Students' standard deviation= 0.19, teacher's standard deviation=0.36), the structure of their paragraphs (Students' standard deviation= 0, teacher's standard deviation=0.19), parts of the topic sentence (Students' mean=0.98, teacher's standard deviation=0.19), parts of the topic sentence (Students' mean=0.98, teacher's mean= 0.88), using examples and illustrations (Students' mean= 0.30, teacher's mean=0.88), using examples and illustrations (Students' mean= 0.30, teacher's mean=0.36), the use of transitional words (Students' mean= 0.43, teacher's mean=0.40), the appropriate use of commas (Students' mean=0.32, teacher's mean=0.38), Verb tenses (Students' mean=0.9, teacher's mean=0.36), and complete sentences (Students' mean=0.88, teacher's mean=0.8).

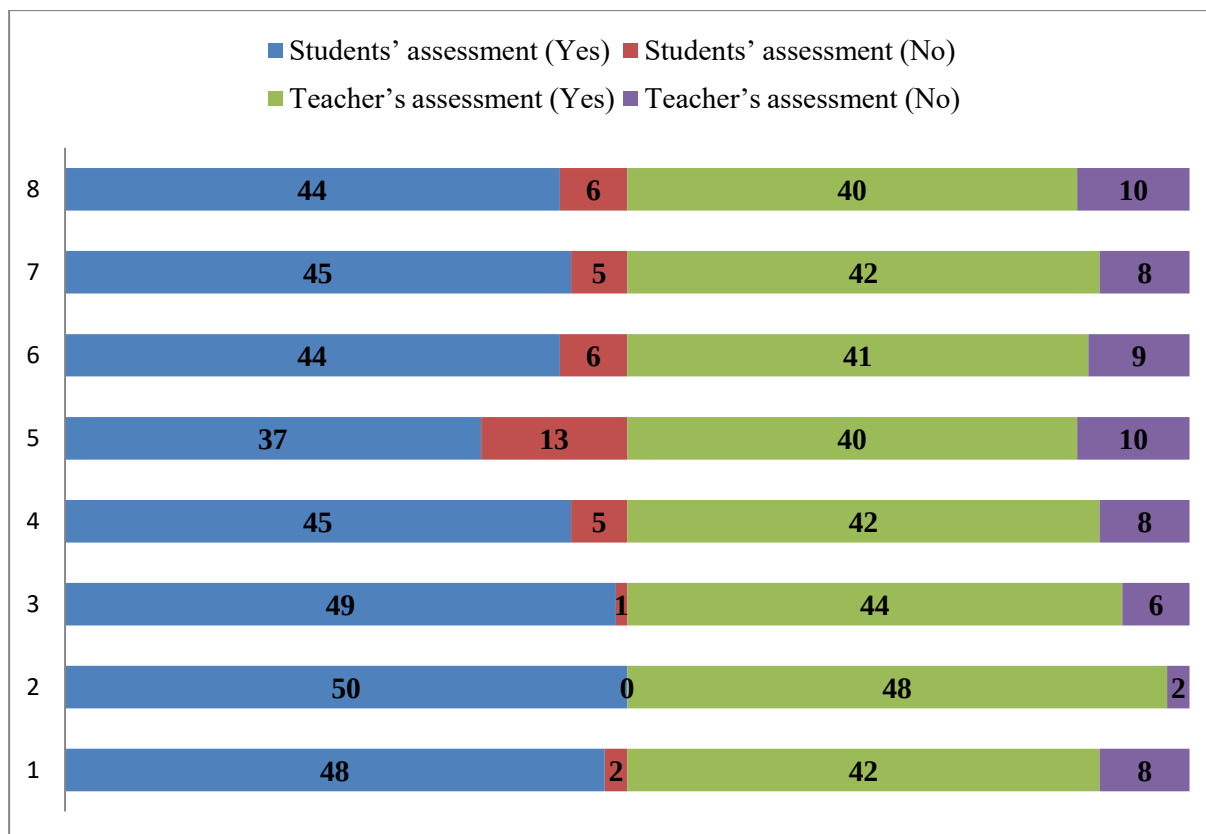


Figure 4.9 The correlation between students' self-assessment and teacher assessment (Editing phase)

4.3.2. Discussion and Interpretation of the Correlation Results

The statistics displayed in Figures (4.7/4.8/4.9) show great agreement between the scores generated by the students and the teacher for the three assignments (clustering, paragraph outline, and paragraph editing). The findings suggest that the students are able to assess their own written performances accurately, as most of them could assess the quality of their work. The main factors that facilitate students' self-assessment lay in the following points. First of all, before taking part in the process of assessing their own written works, the students were continuously reminded of the objective of every lesson and were trained in assessing a piece of writing using a rubric. In this prospect, I involved them in the role of a rater who examines whether given criteria are met or not by the students. Hence, the results of this study are supportive of previous claims that training students in self-assessment can have a positive impact on their performance (McDonald and Boud, 2003).

In addition, my students changed their attitudes towards marking their written work since they used to think that writing is assessed on content only. Thus, they became familiar with the components that any teacher of writing would consider when she/he responds to their writing. For instance, I emphasised the requirements of the assigned topics including: responding appropriately to the assigned topic, the structure of writing an informal letter, the choice of words and adjectives, and the tone of the writer. Moreover, being trained in assessing a written work highlights for them the fact that they should invest what they study in the sessions of writing since these concepts become the criteria that they would be assessed against later on.

Secondly, the accuracy of the self-assessment checklist plays a vital role in the assessment process. The checklists include a description for every criterion rather than a broad term that may confuse the students while assessing their work such as content, organization and language mechanisms. Empirical studies by Andrade and Du (2007), Andrade and Brooke (2010), and Fastre *et al* (2010) support the claim that when students are provided with criteria-referenced self-assessment, they improve the quality of their performance and their grades as well.

Moreover, I did not involve my students in assessing their written performances without preparing them for this task i.e. during the sessions of written expressions, my students developed prior knowledge in the areas to be assessed in such as pre-writing techniques (freewriting, brainstorming, clustering, listing and questioning). Furthermore, the sessions of written comprehensions get them familiar with basic outlining by exposing them to different texts. Finally, they dealt with a lesson about the importance and the everlasting impact of editing on their writing throughout their academic career.

In the same line of thought, breaking the main objective of a written task into manageable steps (the checklist descriptive criteria) facilitates self-assessment and the

accomplishment of the whole task. Some students may not perceive learning as a progressive process and that achievement takes place thanks to interconnected elements. Besides, self-assessment functions effectively in appropriate conditions such as timing. Throughout the study, the students assess their own work when they were working on their tasks. This fact enables them to make adjustments to their performances and to get timely feedback from their teacher. Timely feedback is appropriate in this case since the participants were provided with immediate remarks so that they could adjust their work.

4.4. The Analysis of the Practitioner Researcher's reflective Journal Entries

Using reflective journal as a tool to investigate my attempt to implement self-assessment and reflective practice in my writing classroom helped me adopt a more reflective and critical attitude towards my practice. The reflective journal entries were analysed according to some adapted categories by Ho and Richards (2008).

4.4.1. A demanding experience of research, failure and ongoing trials

Undertaking this research study empowers me as a practitioner researcher and a novice teacher of writing. Throughout the study, I encountered multiple challenges such as the dearth of research on self-assessment and the enhancement of writing in the Algerian context in general. Besides, I attempted to use analytical rubrics as another tool for self-assessment since the strength of this tool lies in its detailed description of its performance levels. In this vein, I devised two rubrics; the first one was used to train the participants on self-assessment and the second one was handed for them to assess the quality of their paragraphs. However, it seemed difficult for the participants to use analytic rubrics in an effective way. Therefore, I decided to rely on self-assessment checklists as the main tool since time was a decisive factor in this research study.

4.4.2. Informing teaching and students' needs

Keeping a reflective journal for teaching purposes provided me with a new role in my writing classroom. The major change was that I developed what Slimani-Rolls called (2019) *the notice skill* i.e. while the participants were writing and assessing their work, I assumed the role of a keen observer of their writing. My students were provided with feedback to adjust their performances at the level of content. However, there were issues that I reflected upon such as developing the students' writing style and how various elements function harmonically to generate a well-crafted piece of writing. In this prospect, the observations serve as evidence that I took into account to make decisions in order to respond to my students' needs. For instance, when dealing with clustering, my students did not have the notion of the kind of the assigned topic that would assist them in collecting the relevant ideas. Besides, the majority could not identify the context of their topic (the purpose and the audience). Therefore, I planned two lessons (Appendices F & G) entitled caring about our topic and the context of writing. In the first one, the participants dealt with the kinds of writing topics (broad, carefully-defined and narrow) and in the second one, they dealt with a written comprehension session in which they identified the purpose and audience for some passages. Outlining basics posed another challenge for my students due to the fact that I noticed two patterns in their writing namely: the use of adjectives and the formulation of titles. In this regard, I noticed that my students use vague words when they write about their challenges at university (marks, credits, transportation, money, modules, teachers, shifts, colleagues, campus and time) and the majority of my students choose "My Challenges at University" as a title for their outlines. Hence, I addressed these issues by devising a lesson that target these needs in my classroom (Appendix J). The last phase of self-assessment also gave me some clues about her students' difficulties in writing. For example, the participants did not apply capitalisation appropriately and spelling mistakes are recurrent in their writing.

When it comes to informing teaching, reflection on action helped me make some decisions rather than following the syllabus blindly. I was empowered to step out of my comfort zone and engage in eliciting evidence of learning inside my classroom to identify learning gaps. Then, I planned my instruction (syllabus modification/ writing lessons) so that I could close the gap and start another cycle of reflection on my students' performances.

4.4.3. New visions leading to new roles in the writing classroom

Using retrospection as a means for self-evaluation and self-criticism is beneficial since the focus is not only on the students' learning, but also on the practitioner researcher himself/herself. In this context, the mode of teaching shifted from being teacher-centered into student-centered. I could change patterns related to the teacher speaking time, lesson planning, attitudes towards the students' roles, and problems within the university context.

The previous mode of teaching was much more related to lecturing. Though the writing lessons included activities for the students, I tended to dominate the classroom discourse and tried to explain everything. However, throughout this study this pattern was replaced by developing a tendency towards engaging the students. Instead of trying to explain everything, I observed that my students started to assume an active part through doing their written tasks and I started to check for their understanding by means of their performance. In addition, lesson planning revolved around addressing my students' needs and providing them with opportunities to practice their writing in a supportive caring environment.

The whole research process strengthened the relationship between my students and me. Through self-assessment, the students were encouraged to speak their minds and share their challenges at university. I became empathetic and sympathised with their daily struggles at various levels (social, economic, academic, professional and personal). Moreover, approaching them with descriptive feedback and constructive remarks enhanced their willingness to work on their task. Being a supportive teacher also includes furthering their

learning of writing. The participants complained about lack of English language resources in the faculty library since the section of English is newly established. Hence, I provided them with various interesting references such as downloaded e-books and reliable web sites in order to boost their interest in writing and promote independent learning as well.

4.4.4. Developing the practitioner researcher's self-awareness

Engaging in regular reflections on action enhances the practitioner researcher awareness of personal growth at various levels. Throughout the research study, I developed a positive attitude towards addressing unquestionable assumptions that I used to possess before reinforcing my knowledge about action research and teachers' research. As a novice teacher, I used to follow the syllabus of teaching written comprehension and expression blindly. However, I tried to approach teaching writing differently this time. Hence, the main drive of this module revolves around my students' needs in writing (content, grammar mechanics, organisation, editing and revising), and developing their writing skills (responding to the assigned topic, pre-writing techniques, outlining, writing structures...etc). This vision stems from my belief that, right from the outset of their university career, the students should acquire writing skills and be well-aware of the writing process that generates a well-crafted product. Besides, I become well-aware of my own weaknesses and I am no longer afraid to face them and look for solutions.

4.5. The Analysis of Likert Scale Survey

The results described in Table (4.5) have been calculated by applying formulas about analysing data gathered from Likert scale questionnaire and symbols are used to refer to key items in calculating the Median (Mdn) and the (IQR).

According to Brown and Rogers (2014), *“the median is the point in the distribution below which 50% of the values lie and above which 50% lie.”*

Since the number of the participants is 50, the calculations were done manually in this case., $IQR < (1, 0)$ which means opinions are not polarized. This means that opinions are not polarized but there is consensus and as long as the median (MDN) is 4 since the majority shows agreement towards the answers.

		Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly Agree 5	Mdn	IQR
1	Self-assessment helped me understand the objectives of studying and mastering the writing skill at university	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	02 (4%)	27 (54%)	21 (42%)	4	1
2	I am aware of my strengths and difficulties when I check my performance on a written task	00 (0%)	04 (8%)	07 (14%)	30 (60%)	09 (18%)	4	0
3	Self-assessment showed me that it is possible to reach the desired goal of a writing task	00 (0%)	02 (4%)	04 (8%)	27 (54%)	17 (34%)	4	1
4	Self-assessment showed me that breaking a task into manageable steps can help me accomplish the writing task successfully	00 (0%)	01 (2%)	04 (8%)	27 (54%)	18 (36%)	4	1
5	Self-assessment highlighted the writing rules that I should follow and apply to improve my writing	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	03 (6%)	30 (60%)	17 (34%)	4	1
6	I wish that every lesson of writing was accompanied by a self-assessment task	00 (0%)	01 (2%)	07 (14%)	20 (40%)	22 (44%)	4	1
7	Using self-assessment to learn how to write effectively was useful in other modules and tasks	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	05 (10%)	31 (62%)	14 (28%)	4	1
8	By relying on self-assessment, I am confident that I can learn English effectively	00 (0%)	03 (6%)	05 (10%)	27 (54%)	15 (30%)	4	1

Table 4.5 The Likert scale results about students' attitudes towards self-assessment

The above results from Likert scale indicate agreement in general. Assessment serves as an indicator of the achievement of teaching and learning goals. The objective of question one is to know whether dealing with self-assessment in the writing class make my students aware of the objectives of studying and mastering the writing skill at university. Findings show that there is an agreement from the part of the participants (agree= 54%, strongly agree= 42%).

Accordingly, the self-assessment checklists were accompanied with a learning objective that the participants would achieve by the end of dealing with the writing task and the self-

assessment steps. In addition, I kept reminding the participants of the transferability of achieving these goals throughout their academic career and other modules as well. Having a good academic writing style is a recurring and an essential element of adequate performance. Therefore, self-assessment of the main components of the process of writing (brainstorming, purpose; audience, basic outlining, drafting a paragraph, and editing) provides them with the understanding of basic requirements that will be demanding in coming years of instruction. Only (4%) of the participants are not determined about whether self-assessment enables them to understand the aims of studying writing or not.

The second statement aims at revealing if self-assessment facilitates the participants' evaluation of their overall performance on a given task. Results demonstrate that the majority of the participants exhibit agreement with this statement (Agree=60%, strongly agree= 18%). That means that informing the participants about quality characteristics of a writing task gives them the opportunity to engage in reflection about their performance. In this prospect, the participants were able to take an active part in the process of reflecting on the quality of their performance. In addition to that, they could judge the degree to which their performance approach or reflect the intended goals and criteria. Moreover, self-assessment shows the participants that their teacher is not the only source of informative feedback and evaluative judgments.

...Students, too often, view feedback as the responsibility of someone else, usually teachers, whose job it is to provide feedback information by deciding for the students how well they are going, what the goals are, and what to do next.

Hattie and Timperley (2007)

Instead the students, through their exposure to self-assessment, would nurture their ability to develop the basic evaluative skills against criteria or a model of quality performance. Thus, they are entitled to take ownership over their own learning in the writing classroom.

Statement three intends to highlight the relationship between self-assessment and achieving the learning goal of a task. The participants (Agree= 54%, strongly agree= 34%) admitted that the procedure of assessing their performance against given criteria paves the way for them to achieve the intended learning goal. In this context, the practitioner researcher provided the participants with the “scaffold”, which is the self-assessment checklist. This checklist accompanied the participants in the process of executing the task and as an indicator of the quality of their products. Hence, the students checked their performance on given criteria in order to realise and “build” their learning goal. Here, self-assessment is the medium that assists the participants in monitoring their progress.

When asked about the role of self-assessment in facilitating the accomplishment of a task, the participants confessed (Agree= 54%, strongly disagree=36%) that it has positive impact on approaching their task successfully. The components of the self-assessment checklist are sub-goals that guide the learners towards reviewing their progress. In addition, self-assessment checklists reinforce the implementation of the trichotomous relationship between teaching, learning and self-assessment. In this prospect, the participants dealt with the writing skills in the theoretical session. Then they were supposed to practice these skills and ended up by dealing with self-assessment. Therefore, while dealing with the process of self-assessment, the participants are reminded of the elements that they should accomplish to realise the final objective of the task at hand.

Statement five attempts to examine the participants’ attitudes towards the role of self-assessment in informing them about the rules that they should follow and apply so that they can improve their writing. The vast majority of the participants agreed with this statement (Agree= 60%, strongly agree= 34%). In this case, self-assessment provides the participants with a description of the dimensions that they should have followed to work on their tasks

successfully. At the same time, these dimensions serve as a reminder for the learners to polish their writing and to apply them in their writing since they are indicators of quality writing.

It is interesting to know whether the participants perceived the significance of self-assessment in the writing process. They approved (Agree= 40%, strongly agree= 44%) the incorporation of self-assessment in every lesson of writing production. This finding indicates that the participants appreciate the positive role of self-assessment as a supporting tool. Not like other type of assessment, self-assessment was not a threatening element since the whole process did not involve grading or was used for managerial purposes. However, self-assessment represents an option to promote quality learning and students' active engagement in their own learning. That means that the students were given the opportunity to monitor their own learning by checking the quality of their learning and identify their learning gaps and deficiencies. Moreover, by providing them with criteria of success for each task, they could highlight what it takes to reach the final objective as well. Furthermore, dealing with self-assessment regularly gives the students a sense of responsibility because they are not a marginalised element in the assessment cycle.

Statement seven intends to investigate the transferability of the participants' experience in self-assessment and writing in other modules. The results indicate that 90% (Agree= 62%, strongly agree= 28%) of the participants consider the process of self-assessment useful in dealing with writing requirements in their studies. Accordingly, the students are engaged in a process of self-reflection that advances the participants *self-discovery* and *awareness* (Harrington, 1995). That means that self-assessment reveal the students' potentials in judging their own performance and developing an awareness of the required elements to meet their goal. Notably, self-assessment does not end within the accomplishment of the task goals. However, the process of continuous revision and improvement accompany the students in other tasks since various skills recur in the writing process. Hence, they can approach other

writing tasks with confidence since they are well-aware of the requirements of both, process of writing a paragraph and the qualities of the final product.

The aim of the eighth statement is to identify whether self-assessment helped reinforce the participants' self-confidence that they can learn English effectively. The participants (Agree= 54%, strongly agree= 30%) state that self-assessment is a supportive tool when it comes to boosting their learning. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, the incorporation of self-assessment checklists in the writing process has miscellaneous positive effects on the participants' self-confidence and self-esteem. First of all, self-assessment entitles the participants with a proactive role in their learning since all the participants were provided with checklists to review their progress throughout the study. As a result, they are partners in the assessment cycle, rather than recipients of feedback only. Besides, self-assessment is effective in comparison to feedback due *“to the fact that few teachers have sufficient time in the typical school day to regularly and promptly respond to each student's work...students themselves can be useful sources task feedback via self-assessment”* (Andrade, 2010, p. 3; Andrade, Du and Wang, 2008).

Secondly, self-assessment is a key to engaging shy learners since not all students can speak openly about their weaknesses and deficiencies in front of their classmates. Besides, student self-assessment is embedded in instruction learning throughout the academic year. Therefore, learning needs and deficiencies can be addressed immediately, not left to the end of the term.

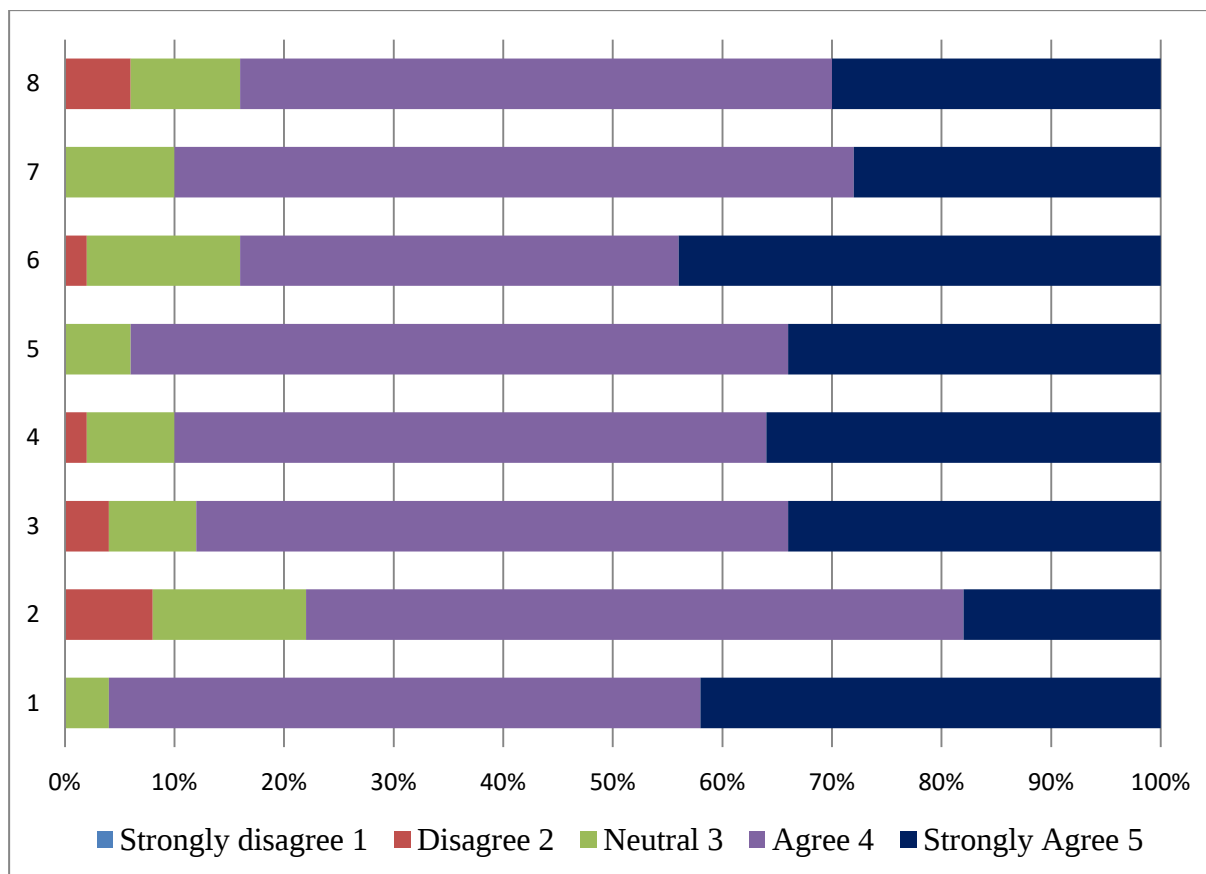


Figure 4.10 Students' attitudes towards self-assessment

The participants were also asked to add anything they wished to. Twenty five students added some comments and opinions towards the sessions of writing and self-assessment as well. First of all, some students expressed their gratitude for me stating that they were treated very well in my classes and that they appreciated the fact that I cared for them. One of my students admits that she is thankful since I do my best to explain the lessons thoroughly. Besides, she notices my energy and likes the way I speak and articulate since she has a listening deficiency. As far as self-assessment is concerned, my students state that they experience writing from a new perspective because self-assessment showed them that their writing is evaluated on various elements. In addition, self-assessment guides them throughout the writing process so that they need to pay attention to the mistakes they commit and how they can use the criteria to fix them. In the same vein, assessing their own writing help my

students get rid of their confusion since they are informed about the ultimate objective and what it takes to achieve it (Clear criteria).

4.6. Delimitations

Throughout the course of this research study, some delimitations occurred. A widely recognisable delimitation of any action research study is the principle of transferability (Holly, Arhar and Kasten, 2009). Taken into account the sample of my study (50 students) and my classroom context, the obtained data and the discussion may not be applied in another environment. One possible explanation for this fact is that the main aim of teacher research is to understand one's practice and engage in reflective process that would enhance teaching quality and learning gains (Borg, 2006).

Time was also another obstacle in this study. It is worth noting that the course of my study was interrupted several times because of students' strikes and official exams. This may have resulted in reducing my students' engagement within the self-assessment tasks. In addition, I had to cover the syllabus as well.

Finally, some of the data were subjective since I relied on the reflective journal in this action research study (Holly et al., 2009). I may report interesting facts about my experience as a practitioner researcher in the writing classroom and I may not cover some insights due to limited knowledge or experience.

Conclusion

This chapter has tackled the different ways the obtained data was collected and grouped in order to be meaningfully analysed. The examination of themes and data obtained by using the mean and the standard deviation form the basis for understanding the role of self-assessment in the students' writing process and their attitudes towards this experience as well. Hence, this chapter presented the findings of an action research study in the writing classroom. The purpose of the study was to investigate whether the students can accurately

assess their own written performances against given criteria and whether this experience advances active engagement in their own learning. The participants' self-assessment process highlighted that training students in self-assessment and providing them with accurate description of the self-assessment checklist have the potential to increase the quality of self-assessment. Furthermore, Likert Scale Survey findings indicate that the participants developed positive attitudes towards self-assessment since it was a beneficial tool in several ways. Self-assessment showed them that learning happens in a progressive way. Besides, learning gains can be achieved when the students develop awareness about meeting achievable minor steps of a task.

Chapter Five

Recommendations for the Implementation of Assessment for Learning in the Writing Class

Introduction

The main results of this research study indicate that when formative and self-assessment are implemented in teaching writing, the students can apply quality criteria throughout the phases of the writing process (Clustering, paragraph outline and editing). Involving the students in assessing their own writing also provides a basis for reflection-on-action. Furthermore, self-assessment empowers both; the students to take active part in their learning and the practitioner researcher to make change in the writing classroom. Therefore; this chapter will propose a thorough account of essential recommendations to implement formative assessment in the writing classroom. It suggests that formative assessment should be a significant element in pre-service programmes and a requirement for effective self-development initiatives. Then it outlines another approach for teachers' self-development, which is taking the roles of researchers in their classrooms. Teacher research offers opportunities for practitioners to probe their potentials as educators who are capable to bring change to their practice and to their students' learning. The chapter ends with practical suggestions to support teaching and learning in the writing classroom. It begins with an emphasis on building students' repertoire of vocabulary and intercultural awareness through reading circles. Besides, it pinpoints how technology can foster the students' interest in writing. The chapter proposes the consolidations of writing practice through student journal writing, writing workshops and teaching writing strategies.

5.1. Pre-service Teachers and Assessment

There are key issues that teachers face in EFL writing classes, namely ambiguous objectives, scarcity of coordinating sessions among teachers, large classrooms, absence of objective marking methods, and lack of writing practice (Sadiqi, 1986, as cited in Bouziane, 2017, p. 311). Scholars, in this prospect, argue that there is a close link between these issues and a poor command over the assessment systems in the classroom (Black and Wiliam, 1998).

In the domain of language assessment, teachers may not be familiar with any kind of assessment literacy. Stiggins (1991) coined the term assessment literacy. In literature on educational assessment, assessment literacy, assessment knowledge, and assessment competence have been used interchangeably to indicate teachers' thorough comprehension of the processes of assessment, their ability to design different types of assessment with quality criteria, their capability to judge the quality of the students' performance, and the use of evidence to adapt their teaching (Hay and Penney, 2013, pp. 69-70).

There are some language teachers who do not handle assessment practices effectively. Scholars acknowledge that this alarming situation is due to absence of courses on testing and assessment that target pre- and in-service teachers (Benmostefa, 2014, p. 168), or lack of opportunities for teacher training in formative assessment, mainly when it comes to formulating descriptors and criteria (Song and Koh, n.d; Webb, 2009, p.3). In the same vein, even when pre-service teachers are provided with opportunities to develop their assessment capacities within training programmes, they tend to be insufficient for deep understanding and application in real contexts (Schneider and Bodensohn, 2017, p. 128). Or they are inadequate in theory and practice (Taylor, 2009).

Stiggins (2010, p. 233) states that *“both teachers and administrators tend to have a very thin grounding in the kinds of assessment knowledge and skills they need because preservice programmes offer so little relevant assessment training.”* Hence, policy makers and administrations should empower teachers to be able to take an active part in crafting their own assessments (Rea-Dickins, 1997, p.3), and assisting them in developing high quality assessment tasks as well (Webb, 2009, p.3).

Similarly, Bouziane (2017, p. 312) calls for the establishment of national assessment boards that are in charge of ensuring the assessment quality, the design of test rubrics, the training of teachers. Moreover, he emphasises the fact that pre- and in-service teachers should

undertake assessment trainings in order to diversify assessment strategies in their classrooms. Besides, he recommends that researchers should be encouraged to deal with themes such as criterion-referenced assessments and descriptive rubrics. Accordingly, these tools should be shared with the students to know about the performance their teachers are expecting from them. Finally, he proposes the launching of master and doctoral trainings about assessment to advance research that will highlight any weaknesses within the system and provide adequate solutions.

5.2. Teacher Professional Development and Assessment

The 21st century requires several forms of teaching; teaching today is no longer about delivering knowledge and information in a given discipline. However, teaching aims at educating citizens who are pro-active, self-regulated, autonomous, responsible, and competent in various levels (Bautista and Ortega-Ruiz, 2015, p. 241). It is also essential to train learners who can deal with challenging learning situation, develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and take part in successful communication and cooperation (Darling-Hammond, Hyler and Gardner, 2017, p. 1; Burnaford, Brown, Doherty and McLaughlin, 2007). In addition, teachers, nowadays, encounter students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, in which they are required to possess solid knowledge and skills to handle teaching and make the appropriate decisions to foster learning (Darling-Hammond, 2006, p. 304).

Another important aspect of the 21st century is that the sector of education is changing and teachers are expected to respond effectively to occurring changes and reforms (OECD, 2009, p. III) including: planning and implementing evidence-based frameworks such as assessment for learning, fostering effective learning, meeting goals, and updating one's knowledge and skills in light of current research and innovations (Joyner and Reed, 2005, p. 1). Furthermore, even if in-service teachers undertook pre-service training in their domain,

they could not entirely prepare teachers for potential challenges in their teaching practice (Knight, 2002; OECD, 2009, p. III). Therefore, maintaining teacher quality is a solid indicator of effective learning (Darling-Hammond, 2000) that can be achieved through teachers' engagement (Guskey, 2002) and professional development (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, S., Scarloss and Shapley, 2007), which in turn contribute to the improvement of any educational reforms and initiatives (Guskey, 2000, p.4).

According to Mitchell (2013, p. 390), professional development is “*the process whereby an individual acquires or enhances the skills, knowledge and/ or attitudes for improved practice.*” This definition puts forward the aim of professional development, which is the intention of the practitioner, in this respect, to bring change to his teaching. This positive change can be embedded in developing and updating acquired skills, or even at the level of changing teachers' attitudes towards embracing new beliefs and attitudes. Darling-Hammond et al (2017, p. 2) add,

Effective professional development is a structured professional learning that [also] results in improvements in student learning outcomes. We conceptualize professional learning as a product of both externally provided and job-embedded activities that increase teacher's knowledge and help them change their instructional practice in ways that support student learning.

Effective professional development is about the engagement of practitioners in a form of on-going learning opportunities or training. Teachers can receive support from their universities or peers. Assisting teachers can also be in the form of seminars, workshops in order to help them develop their competencies and implement new methods in their classrooms. The effectiveness of any professional development programme is judged on the advancement of quality learning in a given context.

Professional development programmes can be implemented in order to address a set of purposes (OECD, 1998):

1. To keep up with research and current findings in one's field of specialty
2. To polish one's knowledge and skills in relation to new trends and bring about change into his/her practice.
3. To assist schools and universities in implementing new initiatives such as curricula.
4. To boost coordination and cooperation among teachers and other expertise such as scholars.
5. To support teachers in becoming more confident and effective in their classrooms.

In this study, the focal point is to recognise the need to develop practitioners' competencies in formative and self-assessment.

According to Trumbull and Gerzon (2013, p. 2), assisting teachers in developing their competencies in formative assessment has the potential to improve students' learning. Hence, *"Teachers need pupil self-assessment issues to be further built into both initial training and continuing professional development"* (Sebba, Deakin-Crick, Yu, Lawson, Harlen, and Durant, 2002, p. 19). In this prospect, the implementation of any professional development initiative depends a great deal on improving three features related to the practitioner's

- (1) Basic knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs
- (2) Improving their practice inside the classroom
- (3) Advancing their students' learning (Yoon et al, 2007, p. 4; Desimone, 2009, p. 185).

With regard to teachers' engagement in professional development on formative and self-assessment, teachers' beliefs and attitudes are significant in this context since their beliefs play a vital role in selecting their pedagogical and assessment practices (Song and Koh, n.d).

Teacher professional learning is a complex process, which requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine where each one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs and the perusal and enactment of appropriate alternatives for improvement or change.

(Avalos, 2010, p. 10)

Taking part in any attempt to make change is closely linked to an individual's willingness to embark in this journey. The practitioner should be committed to question his/her assumptions and beliefs in order to collaborate with others to refine their practice and make positive change. The entire process of changing one's belief and making action is channelled to the benefit of students' learning.

Professional development on formative assessment is a toiling task that requires full engagement and commitment from in-service teachers training since the implementation of formative and self-assessment practices goes beyond few seminars and workshops. Practitioners should get support and be prepared to apply the theoretical assumptions in their own classrooms (Heritage, Kim, Vendlinski, and Herman, 2009). Besides, teachers should be well-aware of the fact that carrying out formative assessment *"cannot be a simple matter. There is no quick fix that can alter existing practice by promising rapid rewards...This process is a relatively slow one and takes place through sustained programs of professional development and support"* (Black and Wiliam, 2010, p. 88).

In the same vein, the enactment of any initiative depends a great deal on intensive training and guidance (Borko, 2004). In a study by Darling-Hammond et al (2009) on the appropriate amount of time for professional development in education, the study reports that in-service teachers should devote at least 50 hours in order to internalise the innovative practice (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos, 2009). As a result,

Formative assessment practice requires teachers to think differently about the relationship between instruction and assessment, to see feedback as central mechanism in promoting learning, and to come to regard students as partners in the learning process. Such fundamental shifts in practice take time, commitment, and patience on the part of both teachers and administrators.

(Wylie and Heritage, 2010, p. 118)

In order to embrace the inclusion of formative assessment in day-to-day classroom routine, practitioners should first have positive attitudes towards the potential of formative

assessment in informing their instruction and improving the students' learning. To function formatively, teachers need time to develop their competencies to elicit evidence and analyse it. Then use it so as to provide students with feedback and adjust their teaching (Leahy and Wiliam, 2009). In the same line of thought, administrators and staff should support teachers' endeavour to implement formative assessment by observing them in their classrooms. When reflecting collaboratively on one's performance, teachers are empowered to revise and refine their practice (Darling-Hammond et al, 2009; Borko, 2004).

5.3. Characteristics of Effective Professional Development Programmes

Empirical research on professional development (Garet, Birman, Porter, Desimone, and Herman, 1999; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, and Yoon, 2001; Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, and Birman, 2002; Hirsh and Killion, 2007; Desimone, 2009; Darling-Hammond et al, 2009; Desimone, Smith, and Phillips, 2013; Darling-Hammond et al, 2017) indicate that professional development programmes can be beneficial if they include the following aspects (Trumbull and Gerzone, 2013, p. 3):

5.3.1. Intensive and ongoing

According to Lipowsky and Rzejak (2015, p. 32), research studies that examined the relationship between the time (in hours) devoted to teacher training and students' achievement show inconsistent results. That means that short courses, workshops and seminars are not effective for the implementation of in-depth and lasting-effect changes in teachers' performance and students' learning (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, and Fung, 2007; Darling-Hammond et al, 2009, p. 5). This is because teachers need time to internalise the notions and innovations they encounter during their training. Besides, they can take their time to reflect on what they have learned and apply them in their classrooms (Garet et al., 2001; Walter and Briggs, 2012; Higgins, Cordingley, Greany, and Coe, 2015).

5.3.2. Content-focused

Impactful professional development should focus on teachers' subject area content (Garet et al., 2001; Blank and De las Alas, 2009; Desimone, 2009) and how to teach this subject matter or how to implement it in daily instruction (Lambert, Wallach, and Ramsey, 2007). This is because teachers should be well-informed about the subject they teach in order to be able to respond to their students' needs.

5.3.3. *Embedded in practice*

Effective professional development does not consolidate teachers' subject area content only, but it should entail opportunities for classroom-based focus on teaching practice as well. To this avail, teachers can apply what they have learned in real classroom situations. (James et al., 2006; Timperley et al., 2007; Blank and De las Alas, 2009; Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos, 2009; Desimone, 2009). That means that teachers should be empowered to *“move from consumption to creation ...so that they can contextualize the thinking and the strategies they may apply in their classrooms”* (Perkins, 2019).

5.3.4. *Peer-collaborative*

The sustainability of effective professional development also depends on collaboration among teachers (Borko, 2004; Timperley et al., 2007) through professional learning communities (PLCs) (Trumbull and Gerzone, 2013, p. 4) or community of practice (Sims and Fletcher-Wood, 2018, p.5). These communities are groups of teachers who discuss and reflect on teaching continuously. They accept to be observed and given feedback so that they improve their teaching and assessment practices (Lipowsky and Rzejak, 2015, p. 40). These communities are meant to advance active and interactive learning experiences (Hunzicker, 2010, p. 6). In these communities, teachers receive support and feedback from their fellow teachers and experts (Higgins et al., 2015). In an empirical study by Van den Bergh, Ros and Beijaard (2014), teachers' feedback behaviour improved and became goal-oriented after 16 primary teachers undertook a long period of instruction about theories of providing feedback.

The participants enhanced their self-confidence because they could use questioning and feedback effectively with their students. Throughout the programme, the participants discussed video clips in which teachers applied these theories and reflected on how they would implement these innovations in their classrooms. At the end, some videotaped classes were discussed with peers and researchers. Therefore; the cycle of input, opportunity for practice and discussion with colleagues and researchers proved to be effective for teachers.

Professional development communities are interactive when teachers feel encouraged to share their insecurities without being judged by their colleagues or experts. They can also seek opportunities to collaborate with others to find solutions for their problems or classroom challenges (Guskey, 1995). Furthermore, if these communities are interested in fostering change in teachers' practice, teachers should be trained on how to develop a responsive attitudes towards their students' learning (Timperley, 2008, p. 19).

5.3.5. Active

According to Timperley et al (2007), teachers' willingness to actively engage with new knowledge and concepts is another indicator of the effectiveness of professional development programmes. In addition, professional development programmes should target *how* and *what* teachers learn (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017, p. 7). Trotter (2006) suggests essential themes for designing PD trainings. First of all, teachers' prior knowledge and experiences should be integrated and built upon throughout the training period. Moreover, teachers should be involved in selecting learning opportunities that take into account their interests, their classroom teaching challenges and their needs. Eventually, teachers should engage in the process of inquiry and reflection to learn effectively. This fact also entails teachers' willingness to be researchers in their own classrooms.

5.4. Teachers as Researchers in their Classrooms

Teachers have assumed various roles in their classrooms; knowledge provider, facilitator, classroom supporter, leader (Fareh and Saeed, 2011, p. 153) a technician, a thinker, a reflective practitioner (Sönmez and Akyel, 2017, p. 735). Furthermore, Lerner (2004, p. 32) argued that teachers should not be satisfied with their status quo and assume an inquisitive attitude that is identified in the teacher as a researcher.

Teacher researcher promotes reform and change in educational settings (Rust, 2009), hence, H. D. Brown, (2001, p. 445) emphasises the fact that teachers are entitled to this role since *“you are an agent for change in a world in desperate need for change: change from competition to cooperation, from powerlessness to empowerment, from conflict to resolution, from prejudice to understanding.”* i.e. teachers should be empowered to undertake their own journeys to explore their environments and use their potentials to make change in their classrooms. In addition, teachers are in an ongoing process of learning from their own teaching in which they encounter daily challenges and problems for which they have to seek answers and solutions (Darling-Hammond and Bransford, 2007).

In this respect, Tudor (2001, p. 9) also calls for the empowerment of teachers by entrenching the notion of practitioners as observers of their classroom practice, rather than relying solely on researchers to provide an understanding of what happens inside the educational settings. Therefore, many scholars and researchers foster the advancement of teacher research including (Freeman, 1998; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1999; Burns, A. 1999; Allwright, 2003; Borg, 2006; Bullock and Smith, 2015; Dikilitaş, Wyatt, Hanks and Bullock, 2016; Burns, Dikilitaş, Smith and Wyatt, 2017; Dikilitaş, Wyatt, Burns and Barkhuizen, 2019).

The field of language teaching witnessed the emergence of the notion of teacher-research during the 1980s. This concept came to prominence due to raised doubts about the limitations of longitudinal and large scale methods in language teaching and learning

(Allwright and Bailey, 1991, as cited in Sönmez and Akyel, 2017, p. 735). Consequently, these methods failed to address the problems faced by language teachers since they marginalised teachers in their contexts (Borg, 2010).

According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999, p. 22), teacher research refers to the practices that teachers undertake intentionally in order to engage in self-criticism about their teaching. It extends beyond reflecting on one's practice to observe problems within their context and analyse them so as to use the evidence for making change in their educational environments (Kincheloe, 2003; Loughran, 2002) and grow professionally (Borg, 2006, p. 23). Dikilitaş et al (2019, p. xvi) supports the view that

There are various models and processes available in the literature, such as (exploratory) action research, participatory practice, reflective practice, and lesson study, each of these is best achieved by being contextualised within local, personal and institutional conditions and carried out through methodologies that it with constraints on teachers' time, syllabus and assessment demands, and policy expectations.

Various labels have been used in order to acknowledge teacher-research in their classrooms, under the term 'practitioner inquiry' (Hanks, 2016, p. 20) namely;

1. Action Research (Elliott, 1991; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; Zeichner, 1993; McNiff and Whitehead, 2002, 2010)
2. Exploratory Action Research (Smith, R. 2015; Bullock and Smith, 2015)
3. Exploratory Practice (Allwright, 2005; Slimani-Rolls, 2019)
4. Teacher-research (Cochran-Smith and Lytle , 1999)
5. Practitioner Research (Zeichner and Noffke, 2001)
6. Self-study (Bullough and Pinnegar, 2001)
7. Collaborative Inquiry (Bray, 2000)
8. Critical Inquiry (Aaron et al, 2006)
9. Reflective Practice (Richards and Lockhart, 2009)

5.4.1. The Significance of Teacher Research

Recent research evidence highlights the potential of teacher research in empowering teachers' practice, professional development and research skills. In a longitudinal study by Slimani-Rolls (2019) about Exploratory Practice (EP), six language teachers actively participated in a project to implement EP in their daily practice (2014-2016). The participants were informed about the underlying principles of EP and were asked to observe each other in order to create opportunities for collegiality and discussions. Besides, mentors held meetings with the teacher researchers every six months to shed light on their challenges and suggest ways to better implement EP in their classrooms. During the first year, teachers were encouraged to develop the skill of professional notice and at the end they made poster presentations about their collaborative work, peer observations and group discussions. During the second year, teachers were given much space to conduct their own explorations and were encouraged to write abstracts to be presented in conferences. By the end of this year, these teachers presented their works in external workshops or conferences and were asked to write about their experiences. Then the project was voluntarily extended for a third year in order to train teachers in writing narrative diaries which were published later on (Slimani-Rolls and Kiely, 2018).

In another study by Fareh and Saeed (2011), collaborative action research was implemented in two classes of Arab students learning English throughout a whole semester. In this prospect, the practitioners engaged with the students in action plan to change the students' attitudes towards communicating in English only. Besides, both researchers would meet to discuss possible interventions to modify their teaching based on the participants' comments. During the fourth week, the teachers realised that their students exhibited positive attitudes towards speaking English and boosted their self-confidence. At the end of the semester, each student made an oral presentation and expressed their approval of the implemented action research.

Other recent studies about the empowerment of teacher researchers include empirical studies by Bullock and Smith (2015), Burns et al (2017), Saglam and Dikilitaş (2018), Barkhuizen, Burns, Dikilitaş, and Wyatt (2018), and Dikilitaş et al (2019). In these studies, teachers from different educational sectors (primary education, high school, and university) were involved in practices that promote the engagement of teachers in research and collaborative research communities. At the end of these studies, teachers could enhance their understanding of various teacher research methods such as action research, collaborative action research and Exploratory Practice. They could also challenge their current practices and bring change to their teaching and students' achievements. Moreover, they developed positive attitudes towards mentoring and collaborative research with their colleagues and could use their classroom environments to develop professionally and promote quality teaching.

Indeed, teacher research can be beneficial in several ways. According to Davies (1999), when teachers engage in research in their classrooms, they would experiment with evidence-based practice (EBP), in which they become well-aware of making effective decisions that are based on sound research evidence and their research practice. In addition, being researchers in their own classrooms, teachers strengthen their knowledge and expertise that are generated from experience and reflect on their students' learning processes to interpret them and inform their teaching (Kincheloe, 2003, pp. 18-19). In the same way, teacher researchers benefit from renewal enthusiasm in teaching, mainly after periods of burnout (Atay, 2008) and a commitment to grow professionally (Kirkwood and Christie, 2006). Therefore, Buckingham (1926, p. iv) supports the engagement of teachers in research,

The teacher has opportunities for research which, if seized, will not only powerfully and rapidly develop the technique of teaching but will also react to vitalize and dignify the work of the individual teacher.

By developing an inquiry culture, research would not empower teachers' practices inside their classrooms and schools only, but it would also encourage them to step out of their comfort zone in order to address contextual issues. Hence, enhancing the roles of teachers as researchers is crucial for three reasons. To begin with, it is mandatory for teachers to do research in their classrooms since they are making decisions about what and how to teach. Thus, doing research can inform teachers and policy makers about the consequences of such decisions on teaching quality and students' learning gains. Secondly, by doing research, teachers would develop a culture of evidence-based decisions rather than following guidelines about best practices that are expected to yield guaranteed results. In this regard, research immerses teachers in responding to their local challenges and enhances sustainable improvement as well. Finally, new trends about the effectiveness of professional development call for engaging teachers in developing sustainable inquiry skills within their schools and in communities of practice (Robinson, 2003, p. 28).

5.4.2. Conditions for Teacher Research

Borg (2006, pp. 23-24) argue that through his own research in the available literature in English Language Teaching (ELT) and his advocacy of teachers' research, he identified a set of conditions that foster teacher research namely (1) awareness, (2) motivation, (3) recognition, (4) knowledge and skill, (5) choice, (6) community, (7) dissemination, (8) mentoring, (9) time.

5.4.2.1. Awareness: Research is not exclusively restricted to academics. Even teachers can undertake research about themselves (self-inquiry/ self-criticism) and about their classrooms since the major aim of teacher research is to understand and make change rather than looking for proofs in their environments. That is why teacher researchers should go beyond the conventional vision about the role of teaching only to be able to engage in research.

5.4.2.2. Motivation: To engage in research, teachers need to see its benefits in their work. One way to do that is to encourage teachers to participate in formal programmes of study or to pursue their postgraduate studies. These options provide teachers with exposure to research assumptions and skills in their area of specialty.

5.4.2.3. Recognition: if teachers do not recognise the importance of research in bringing new visions and change into their classrooms, they simply would not make any initiative to undertake research. However, if they regard their classrooms as settings for knowledge generation, they may easily embrace the idea.

5.4.2.4. Knowledge and skill: To conduct research in their classroom, practitioner researchers should possess a range of research knowledge (research methodology, data collection methods and procedures, and analysing obtained data) so that they can significantly address issues and better understand and interpret their findings to inform their teaching and their students' learning.

4.4.2.5. Choice: teachers should also be given the opportunity to make choices when they engage in research i.e. they should have a say in shaping the research inquiry they are a part of rather than imposing upon them. This procedure works effectively when teachers are also provided with support from other colleagues or researchers.

4.4.2.6. Community: teacher research can be productive when teachers are part of professional community. Conducting research within a community of practice enhances practitioners' engagement since they can receive support from their colleagues and institutions. Support includes the appreciation of the value of teacher research, collaboration with colleagues, and discussions about research with other teacher researchers as well. Besides, developing an institutional culture of the value of teacher research is mostly needed to advance research in language classroom. If practitioners are not encouraged by their

administration to conduct research, they may join international associations that provide collegial support via online discussions.

5.4.2.7. Dissemination: practitioner researchers should consider sharing their research findings with their community or with international audience. Teacher should be informed about the possibility of publishing their work so that other teachers would benefit from their experiences. Teachers may disseminate their research through oral presentations and written reports as well.

Support and collaboration among colleagues may include other aspects that would have an impact on the students' learning. Unfortunately, one of the major findings of this study is that my students lack a solid reading foundation. They also reported that they have deficiencies in vocabulary and negative transfer from L1. In this regard, one way to address these issues is by raising students' awareness of the importance of developing reading habits.

5.4.2.8. Mentoring: the role of a mentor is essential in the sustainability of teacher research because practitioner researchers need support from an expert. In this prospect, it is recommended that a more experienced and a skilled colleague can assume the responsibility of mentorship. Mentors can show their support through various functions throughout the research process. They assist teacher researchers in designing their research inquiries and identifying a focal point. They may also provide constructive feedback when collecting and interpreting obtained data. Accordingly, the mentor can observe the mentee and comment on written work such as reports for guidance.

5.4.2.9. Time: For sound teacher research to take place, time is an indispensable factor. Practitioner researchers should be well-aware of devoting time and efforts to work on various stages of their research such as planning, executing and sharing research findings.

5.5. Building Students' vocabulary Repertoire through Reading Circles

Coordination among teachers in charge of different subjects is essential to promote reading habits at university. It is widely acknowledged that engaging the students in reading develop their skills in reading comprehension (Ralenala, 2005) due to the fact that this habit familiarises them with a variety of text types, textual elements (Bharuthram, 2017, p. 51), and new technical vocabulary (Acheaw and Larson, 2014; Chiang, 2016; Scott and Saaiman, 2016, p. 3, as cited in Molotja and Themane, 2018, p. 2; Angelos and McGriff, 2002; Iwahori, 2008; Wema, 2018, p. 30). Moreover, reading develops the students' topical knowledge (Renandya and Jacobs, 2002). Hence, "reading habit is best formed at a young impressionable age in school, but once formed it can last one's lifetime" (Greene, 2001). In this regard, teachers and academics should instil in their students a love for reading and an "environment that fosters the intention to read" (Bharuthram, 2017, p. 51).

One way to address the issue of lack of reading among university students is through the implementation of (Literature) reading circles (Avci, 2019; Jacobs, 2015; Soliman, 2015). According to Hill (2007), literature reading circles are groups of students who engage in reading a piece of literature in order to discuss and analyse it in depth. They can also share their perspectives and various interpretations of this work.

Reading circles have the potential to promote the students' connection to their university, mainly with their teachers and classmates (Jacobs, 2015, p. 10). This connection promotes student-directed dialogue about books in which the students actively participate in constructive discussions that foster oral language, literary growth for English language learners (Carrison, Ernst-Slavit, and Spiesman-Laughling, 2009) and enhance content area vocabulary (Wilfong, 2009).

Reading can also enhance the students' knowledge about writing. According to Graham (2008, p. 4), reading various kinds of texts in the writing classroom such as autobiographies,

biographies, and stories highlights the characteristics of good writing. Careful selection of various texts shows the students how language is used in a given context (Purpose, audience and tone).

Fostering the role of reading in the writing class can be achieved through the sessions of written comprehension. For instance, the writing teacher may select texts that best illustrate writing notions. Then s/he may train the students in using these notions in their writing. In this respect, writing teachers may refer to the following writing books since they provide comprehensive accounts of writing (including grammar and mechanics, paragraph and essay writing, revision, and a writer's reader section about literary works):

1. Anker's (2010) *Real Writing with Reading*.
2. Brandon's and Branson's (2011) *Paragraphs and Essays with Integrated Readings*.
3. Feng-Checkett's and Checkett's (2010) *the Write Start*.
4. Juzwiak's (2012) *Stepping Stones*.
5. Robitaille's and Connelly's (2007) *Writer's Resources*.
6. Scarry's and Scarry's (2011) *the Writer's Workplace with Readings: Building College Writing Skills*.

One effective side of this approach for teaching writing is that the students are in direct exposure to authentic texts written by native speakers and can notice how texts are written. Hence, they are likely to apply acquired knowledge about writing in their assigned topics. Furthermore, these recommended books incorporate thorough explanations of the content so that the students can consult them for self-study if they wish to.

5.6. Fostering Technology in the Writing Classroom

Quality teaching is closely related to nurturing a responsive attitude in the classroom. Thus, there are many skills that the writing teachers are supposed to help their students develop in the 21st century, mainly because the students are digital natives. The terms ‘digital natives’; ‘the net generation’, ‘Google generation’ or ‘the millennials’ refer to people born after the 1980’s. They grew up in environments in which they are surrounded by technology and interact with it since childhood (Čut, 2017). In this regard, Wallagher (2016) asserts that a report by PBS (2013) indicated that 74 percent of teachers approve the use of technology in their classrooms since it supports students’ learning and 68 percent of teachers showed willingness to implement technology use in theirs as well. According to MacArthur, 2006, as cited in Troia, 2014, p. 11)

To prepare students for 21st century writing tasks, teachers must help students take advantage of the available tools and modes through systematic and purpose-driven instruction that aims to identify and put to use appropriate tools for the most suitable tasks throughout the writing process...Students who struggle with writing are likely to benefit from the thoughtful use of technology to eliminate or diminish the barriers they encounter to successful text production.

To foster students’ interest and enjoyment in the writing classroom, teachers of writing can select from a range of technological tools and applications. These devices can be downloaded from the internet and used throughout the writing process. According to Graham and Perin (2007), electronic devices can be used to encourage mixed ability classes since they support the students during the writing process. For instance, using word processing can be beneficial in two ways.

1. Modifications can be made easily.
2. Word processing provides spelling and grammar checking.

Other electronic devices for writing teachers are listed in Table (5.1) with their function (s) throughout the writing process.

Electronic	Function/ use during the writing process
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device/ application	
Freeplan software Vue software	Designing diagrams and mind-mapping. They are used during the pre-writing stage (Clustering). The students can save their final products in PDF or image format.
Evernote	Writing notes and outlining. Evernote can be used for pre-writing stage (Freewriting). The students can save their writing in files and can have access to the internet to download or add content.
Hemingway app	Editor for writing improvement.
Dropbox Google Drive	Students may share files among themselves/ teachers. Developing collaborative writing since it facilitates sharing ideas and projects. Publishing learner's work and offering them eLearning feedback and peer-to-peer support (Pappas, 2014).
Grammarly	Grammar and spelling checker / proofreading service. Explaining kinds of mistakes and how students can avoid making them again (grammar, punctuation, spelling). Plagiarism checker. Self-editing (Eg., genre/ sentence length)

Table 5.1 Free applications and softwares for the writing classroom

Blog writing is another great way to get students interested in writing. Wallagher (2016) reports that Edublogs website stands as the leading platform for educational blogs and e-Portfolios today. Edublogs is a hub for teachers and students to use blogging in the classroom. Waters (2014) conducted a study to identify users of Edublogs. The survey involved 587 respondents (64 percent were teachers/ 11 percent were students/ 22 percent were a mixture of educators). Major findings suggested that:

1. Universities are increasingly using blogging as learning and teaching tool.
2. Many schools opted for using blogs as an ePortfolio platform.

Therefore, teachers can implement blogging in their classrooms for the following reasons (Wallagher, 2016). To begin with, teachers can use blogs to save writing lessons or provide the students with additional references for self-study. Moreover, blogs can be used to post student's written work to share it with the rest of the class. Furthermore, students can use the comment section on the blogs in order to discuss or have feedback about their writing. Finally, students can access blogs to know about writing techniques and online publishing so that they can launch their own writing blogs.

As a trainee at Coventry University, I had the opportunity to write about my experience at this university and I shared my story 'One Experience, Different Perspectives' with my classmates on Dr. Cribb's blog (2016) *erhelloeveryone* blog. Teachers may also boost students' writing via writing journals.

5.7. Keeping Journals to Nurture Interest in Writing

Approaching writing in a foreign language is not always tempting, particularly for struggling writers. One way to address this issue is by introducing learning journals in the writing classroom. A learning journal can be personal and serve informal purposes since no grading is involved. According to the University of Worcester Study Skills Advice (2016), "*it is a collection of notes, observations, thoughts ...built up over a period of study, an experience or fieldwork.*" Priest and Sturges (2005, p. 2) assert that writing journals are learning tools that guide the students' into questioning their learning experiences in a safe environment.

According to Moon (2003, p. 4), an extensive body of research has dealt with student teachers' journal writing, such as (Jaeger, 2013; Insuasty and Castillo, 2010; Shin, 2006). Thus, the practice of writing through journal keeping can be beneficial for students' learning as well. Bowman (1983) provides an insightful account of the potentials of keeping a journal:

One of the most engaging uses of personal student journals is as a mirror of the mind. In this mode, journals invite learners to find language deep within self to array one's hopes, dreams, disappointments, concerns, and resolves...The result is that students often express

astonishments and delight at the kaleidoscopic self-portraits which emerge from the pages of the notebooks as they journey through a course.

In his definition, Bowman (1983) suggests that journal writing is a reflective liberating medium that empowers the students to take a step towards discovering their inner voices when it comes to have a say about their feelings, aspirations and experiences throughout their learning journey.

Wolf (1989) points at the fact that writing a journal is a means of observing how students observe themselves growing and changing as well.

Writing journals have other purposes. By reviewing available literature about different purposes of writing a journal, Moon (1999) could identify around eighteen purposes for journal writing depending on the teacher's goals or the students' own goals. The following purposes support the implementation of keeping a journal in the writing classroom:

1. To give the students an opportunity to improve their writing skills.
2. To boost students' creative writing skills.
3. To develop students' 'voice' in writing in a foreign language.
4. Recording students' own learning experiences.
5. To foster self-development and self-empowerment.
6. To evoke questioning attitudes within students.
7. To enhance students' reflection and critical thinking.
8. To enhance students' engagement in their learning.
9. To enhance planning and progress in the learning process.
10. To give students a sense of ownership of their learning.

5.8. Responding to Students' needs through Writing Workshops

A supporting writing classroom depends on responsive attitudes towards the students' learning. Teachers can use writing workshop as a strategy that enhances students' engagement with writing. This approach was invented by Calkins.

According to Mulvahill (2018), a writing workshop is commonly used in learner-centered classrooms in which the students improve their writing when they are in an environment that has the following conditions:

1. Encouraging students' ownership of their own writing.
2. The students are guided by a proficient writing teacher.
3. The students support one another in a community of learners.

According to Phillippakos, MacArthur and Coker Jr (2015, p. 6), collaboration among learners can occur during all the phases of the writing process. Previous research indicate that engaged communities of writers has positive impact on the quality of students' writing (Graham *et al*, 2012). Collaboration should also allow students to provide peer review and feedback since they lead to positive effects on writing too (Cho and MacArthur, 2011).

Writing workshops can be an important element of the writing classroom if teachers apply its underpinning principles. These guidelines were proposed by Graves (n.d, as cited in Victoria University, 2019) who emphasised the process nature of writing, and taking into account the students' interests and choice of topics as fundamental requirements for effective writing workshops.

5.8.1. Underpinning principles of writing workshops

Calkins and Ehrenworth (2016, as cited in Victoria University, 2019) recommend the following principles for successful writing workshops.

5.8.1.1. Time

Teachers should provide their students with the ‘luxury of time’ in which they can devote appropriate time for the components of the writing process (generating ideas, drafting and revising). Hence, the teachers developed an appreciative attitude towards the creative processes of writing. A typical workshop devotes ten minutes for instructing students, half an hour for composing and drafting (conferencing and small group instruction), and from five to ten minutes for students to share their writing with their peers.

5.8.1.2. Choice

Students should be given choice when it comes to selecting the theme for writing, genre and strategies so that the students can take ownership of their writing and get engaged in the writing task.

5.8.1.2. Responding to students’ writing

Teachers may respond to their students’ writing by providing descriptive feedback during the process of writing. Graham and Sandmel (2011, as cited in Calkins and Ehrenworth, 2016, p. 9) identified the elements that the process of writing requires feedback for namely; “*the critical role of process in writing, collaboration, personal responsibility, authentic writing tasks, and a supportive learning environment*”.

5.8.1.3. Explicit instruction

Teacher can provide explicit instruction via three modes: mini-lessons, conferences and small group work. In this regard, teachers may tackle required strategies to write a given genre or provide them with models to identify the structure of this genre explicitly. For instance, mini-lessons should be brief and focus on a learning aspect that students are struggling with. Mini-lessons also suggest strategies that the students may use to write successfully. Conferences,

however, occur during the writing process when the teacher moves around groups in order to check whether they reach the intended writing goals. If not, the teacher suggests tangible strategies that the students may employ in future writing assignments (Calkins, 2011). Or they may ask students to group themselves in four to six students to conference them about a common issue in their writing.

5.8.1.4. *Clear goals*

Teachers provide their students with models on a given genre in order to set clear goals and to help the students apply the structure of the taught genre in their writing. The essence of the writing workshop is that it regards the students as a community of developing writers. During a writing workshop, the students should be able to share their drafts with the rest of the class. In addition, it is an opportunity to raise the students' engagement in classroom discussion and peer-feedback. Students can provide constructive comments about the strengths of their peers and suggest remarks for improvement. They can also share their own writing techniques and strategies that other classmates would take into account in their future assignments. The teacher can set the scene for peer-conferencing as well. Peer-conferences can be reader-led or writer-led. (Victoria University, 2019). For example, a reader-led conference follows these steps:

1. Students exchange their drafts with their peers.
2. Students read their classmates' drafts using quality criteria checklist (the requirements of a genre, grammar and mechanics, and spelling mistakes) or a list of questions.
3. Students should note any comments about their classmates' drafts.
4. Both students take turn in providing each other with feedback and explaining it based on the drafts.

An example of a writer-led conference includes the following steps:

1. Both writer and reader read the text silently.

2. The writer reads his/ her draft with the rest of the class loudly.
3. After reading, the writer asks the reader whether he/she includes specific criteria in his/her writing and then she/he modifies her/his text. Questions may include: the title of the text, interesting ideas about the assigned topic, clear meaning, the best thing about this draft, and if there is any suggestion for improvement.

At the end of the workshop, the teacher should inform the students that he/she appreciate what they have achieved so far as developing writers. Or this can be done through the author's chair strategy in which a student is asked to thank his/her peers for their achievement and remind them to apply constructive feedback in future writing. The teacher can further encourage his students by publishing their writing. The students' writing can be recognised by means of making a fair at the department or having the students' consent to publish it in the classroom blog for wider audience (ibid, 2019).

5.9. Teaching Students Strategic Writing

Writing, as a mental activity, is solitary since it happens inside the writer's head. Thus, the process of thinking and executing the different stages of writing are invisible (Graham, 2006). In addition to that, teachers cannot address all the writing genres and contexts throughout the academic year. Therefore, classroom practice should support strategic writers who can respond to different writing contexts successfully (Dean, 2017, p. xvii).

One way to help students apply these processes effectively is by teaching them writing strategies. According to Atwell (1982, p. 85), teachers should shift their focus from teaching a lesson and evaluating its outcomes into keenly observing their students throughout the learning process by catering to their needs and responding to them. Therefore, teachers can create writers community that brings teacher and students into learning inquiry.

Dean (2010) considers that strategies assist the students in finding solutions to the problems or the challenges that occur during the writing process. Strategies, in general, are classified into three categories:

1/Cognitive learning strategies: boost learning in general.

2/Writing strategies: are mainly used during the writing tasks

3/ Self-regulatory strategies: help the students focus on their writing and accomplish it successfully. Table (5.2) highlights some examples of strategies:

Cognitive Learning	Writing	Self-regulatory
Inquiry into journals/ books	Outlining by hand	Setting deadlines
Note-taking	Drafting on computer	Monitoring progress
Reviewing notes	Reading aloud	Adjusting deadlines
Annotating notes	Asking colleagues to review	Rewarding myself
	Outlining on computer	Selecting a different order
		Adding additional rereadings
		Drafting at home

Table 5.2 Types of strategies for writing

Before training students in strategy practices, they should be informed that strategies have the following aspects (Dean, 2017, p. 6):

1. The notion of strategy is linked to process. Strategies are tools that writers used during inquiry, pre-writing, drafting, editing, revising and publishing so that a written task can be well-crafted.
2. Strategies are transferable; if acquired successfully, strategies can be adaptable in various writing contexts because a strategy is not unique to a specific genre or product.
3. Strategies can be used independently; though strategies are learned inside the classroom and used in a specific context, the students can take ownership of the strategy and tailor it according to their learning preferences.

In her book entitled *What Works in Writing Instruction*, Dean (2010) asserts that students may be unaware of already possessed writing strategies. Therefore, it is for teachers to help their students recognise them support their use. Then she outlines the advantages of teaching students to integrate strategies in their writing process. To begin with, strategies lead to the students' achievement of learning goals since they provide them with guidelines to reach the purpose of a learning purpose. Strategies, therefore, can help distinguish between

experienced and novice writers in our classrooms. In addition, teaching students about strategies consolidate students' knowledge about the aspects of good versus poor writing and nurture positive attitudes towards writing in general (Graham, Harris and Troia, 1998). Teachers can observe how students with poor strategies struggle with their writing, not knowing how to handle the different stages of writing. But, with direct instruction on how to use various strategies, students started the foundations of becoming experienced strategic writers. Furthermore, acquiring writing strategies prepares students to write across topics and genres. Though some teachers may think that intensive writing can lead to successful writing, it is only one requirement for it. Students need assistance to develop ways that show them that writing goes beyond 'putting words on paper' to developing strategies. Students also need to develop cognitive strategies that enable them to write effectively and confidently in many kinds of writing. Troia (2014, p. 16) states that "*strategy instruction provides students with cognitive routines for managing the complexities of writing tasks and can help them gain greater awareness of their writing strengths and challenges.*" Finally, the acquisition of regulatory strategies accompanies them future writing situations as well.

Teachers of writing may follow these guidelines to instruct their students about a writing strategy (Graham and Perin, 2007; Rogers and Graham, as cited in, Graham, 2008, p. 5):

1. The teacher should explain the strategy and its aim in the writing process.
2. The teacher should inform the students about the function of the strategy.
3. The teacher should demonstrate to students how to apply the strategy in their writing. Students need direct instruction in these strategies in order to show them what/ how to work with this strategy. A practical manner to support students' strategy use is through graphic organisers and think sheets (Graham and Perin, 2007). For example, a think sheet for planning the stages of a paper can provide

the students with clear guidelines about the purpose and the audience of this paper, identifying relevant content, and order the ideas according to their significance (Graham, 2008, p.5).

4. The teacher should train the students in practising the strategy and provide help if needed.
5. Training students in strategy application until they can use independently.
6. The students should be encouraged to apply the strategy in new situations.
7. The students should reflect on how the strategy improves their writing.

Graham et al (2012) provides a framework that teachers of writing may follow to guarantee effective writing instruction that is composed of four guidelines in Figure (5.1).

1. Provide daily time for students to write.
2. Teacher students to use the writing process for a variety of purposes.
 - a. Teach students the writing process.
 - b. Teach students to write for a variety of purposes.
3. Teach students to become fluent with handwriting, spelling, sentence construction, typing, and word processing.
4. Create an engaged community of writers.

Figure 5.1 Recommendations for effective writing instruction

The following lesson plan bridges theory with practice. It is a continuation of the previous unit of writing a paragraph. This part deals with the first basic pattern of development titled Description. This lesson plan addresses knowledge and information about the characteristics of the descriptive genre, skills of writing a successful descriptive paragraph, and embedded formative assessment in teaching and learning (self-assessment and an analytic rubric).

5.10. Lesson Plan

Lesson Objectives

- 1 | Familiarising students with the development pattern of description.

2 | Training the students in identifying the characteristics of the genre of description (Dominant impression, objective versus subjective description, sensory images, spatial order, and figurative images).

3 | Helping the students build a self-assessment checklist.

4 | Training the students in using the analytical rubric for writing a descriptive paragraph (including broader dimensions).

The Components of the Lesson Plan

1 | **Quiz:** What do you know?

Before studying description, it is a good idea to test your understanding of this pattern of development. You may have more prior knowledge than you think.

A | **Description** is mainly about presenting events in a chronological manner

yes no

B | **Description** uses a lot of

Nouns adjectives articles

C | **Description** is mainly used with another pattern of development

-Exemplification -Narration -Process -Cause and effect

2 | Definition of Description

Description is the representation of the nature of things by creating vivid images in the reader's mind using specific details (Feng-Checkett & Checkett, 2010). Detailed description can be highlighted through the use of sensory images (sight, smell, hearing, touch and taste).

3 | Sensory images

Example: In this text by Joseph H. Suina, he describes his childhood home. Work in pairs and identify how the writer uses sensory images to provide details.

During those years, Grandmother and I lived beside the plaza in a humble one-room house. It consisted of a traditional fireplace, a makeshift cabinet for our few tin cups and dishes, and a wooden crate that held our two buckets of all-purpose water. At the far end of the room were two rolls of bedding we used as comfortable sitting "couches." Consisting of thick quilts, sheepskin, and assorted blankets, these bed rolls were undone each night. A wooden pole the length of one side of the room was suspended about 10 inches from the ceiling beams. A modest collection of colorful shawls, blankets, and sashes draped over the pole making this part of the room most interesting. In one corner was a bulky metal trunk for our ceremonial wear and few valuables. A dresser, which was traded for some of my grandmother's well known pottery, held the few articles of clothing we owned and the "goody bag." Grandmother always had a flour sack filled with candy, store bought cookies, and Fig Newtons. These were saturated with a sharp odor of moth

balls. Nevertheless, they made a fine snack with coffee before we turned in for the night. Tucked securely in my blankets, I listened to one of her stories or accounts of how it was when she was a little girl. These accounts seemed so old fashioned compared to the way we lived. Sometimes she softly sang a song from a ceremony. In this way I fell asleep each night.

Sensory images	Examples from the text
Sight	
Hearing	
Touching	
Taste	
Smell	

4 | The Dominant Impression

A descriptive text that appeals to the reader's mind and provides specific details that highlight the main idea of your paragraph should maintain a sense of a *dominant impression*. According to Scarry & Scarry (2011), when you want to describe a person, a place or an object, you should precisely know what impression you want to create and achieve with your supporting details. Therefore, a dominant impression is “*the overall impression created by a descriptive piece of writing. This impression is often summed up by one word or a phrase in the topic sentence.*”

Exercise: Read the following texts and underline the *dominant impression*. Then identify the supporting details that explain it.

Text 1

My Favorite Place

Richmond Beach was my spiritual hangout in my childhood. It is a rocky beach in the city of Richmond Beach, which can be accessed by a long downhill drive (by car or bicycle) from the city of Edmonds. Or, as I did often, took the 30-minute walk from my house to the calm waters through a tranquil stroll through the woods of Woodway. It used to be a place inhabited by Native Americans, but now it is occupied by mostly Caucasian people. However, a totem pole stands in tribute to the tribes that used to call the beach home. With the sagebrush, chattering birds, train tracks, the croak of frogs, wind, herons, various shells, a cave along the beach, and a fantastic view of the Olympic Mountains, Richmond Beach is at once ordinary and extraordinary. Being there brings you into another state, in which you want to introspect, be calm, and be positive. In high school, I was not a very social person. I did not have so many friends, and I did not feel like I belonged in a group most of the time. But when I went to Richmond Beach, these worries were left behind. It seemed like a mystical place to me, and in a way, it still does.

Text 2*Memaw's Rocker*

My grandmother's rocking chair sits empty in the corner of the living room. The simple unpainted cane rocker would be of little interest to an antique dealer, but I wouldn't part with it for the world. The seat is cupped slightly from years of use: afternoons and evenings when she sat shelling peas, darning socks, or knitting sweaters. The arms are sanded smooth from the constant motion of her thin arms. The chair is silent now, but if I close my eyes, I can still hear the squeak of the rocker against the pine floor and hear the click of her knitting needles. They were sounds that always comforted me and made me feel as if everything were right with the world. Even today, I can't look at the rocker without seeing my Memaw smiling at me over the rim of her glasses and hearing her say she loves me.

Text 3*Clearwater Lake*

Fishing on Clearwater Lake puts me in touch with nature. Clearwater Lake is a small lake nestled in the Adirondack Mountains. The glassy lake is ringed with aspen, larch, birch, and fir trees, and in the fall, the mountainsides are on fire with brilliant oranges, reds, and yellows. I arrive at the lake early, with mist still clinging to the surface of the water like smoke. I slide my canoe silently into the clear, cold water, step in, and push off the sandy bank. Each stroke of the paddle pulls me farther out into the lake, the wind crisp and cold against my cheeks. The world seems to go silent around me; only the sound of my paddle moving through the water breaks the silence. Once on the lake, I am cut off from the world of work and school and family, and I'm free to meditate on the beauty and tranquillity of the spot.

5 | Objective versus Subjective Description

When you analyse your assigned topic, you should be able to identify the way you will respond to it. In writing a descriptive paragraph, you should take into account your audience and how you address them. Therefore, it is essential to make a distinction between objective and subjective description.

Objective description provides information and facts, without giving much importance to the writer's voice and feelings. In this kind of description, there is no attachment or reaction from the writer towards his described person (object, event, or object). However, subjective description takes into account the development of the topic and the writer's reactions (internal feelings and personal reactions).

Exercise: Identify whether these texts are described objectively or subjectively. Justify your answer by highlighting (at least 3 examples) from each text.

Text 1

The kitchen table is rectangular, seventy-two inches long and thirty inch wide. Made of a two-inch-thick piece of oak, its top is covered with a waxy oilcloth patterned in dark red and blue squares against a white background. In the right corner, close to the wall, a square blue ceramic tile serves as the protective base for a brown earthenware teapot. A single white placemat has been set to the left of the tile, with a knife and fork on either side of white dinner plate, around nine inches in diameter. On the plate are two thick pieces of steak.

Text 2

Our lives at home converged around the pleasantly-shaped kitchen table. It was the magnet that drew our family together quite warmly. Cut from the sturdiest oak, the table was tough, smooth, and long enough for my mother, my two sisters, and me to work or play on at the same time. Our favorite light blue ceramic tile, stationed in the right corner, was the table's sole defense against the ravages of everything from a steaming teapot to the latest red-hot gadget from the Sears catalogue. More often than not, however, the heat would spread quickly beyond the small tile and onto the checkered oilcloth, which just as quickly exuded a rank and sour odor. Yet no matter how intensely the four of us competed for elbow room at the table, none dared venture near the lone dinner place arranged securely to the left of the tile. There was no telling when HE would get home from work, but, but when he did, he expected the food to be ready-steaming hot. He liked to eat right away –steak mostly- two bloody but thick pieces.

6 | Achieving Coherence through Spatial Order

In description, you should apply spatial order. When you organise your supporting ideas, they should be arranged in one of the following orders: from top to bottom; from bottom to top; from left to right; from right to left; from outside to inside; from inside to outside; from nearby to farther away, or even around in a circle (Scarry and Scarry, 2010). Look at the following example in which Virginia Paxton used spatial order to describe a hotel room in Bogota, Colombia.

The room was about the size of New York's Grand Central Station. It had been painted a fiendish dark green. A single light bulb hung from the thirteen-foot-high ceiling. The bed was oversized. The desk was gigantic, and the leather-covered chairs engulfed us. Although hot water ran from the cold faucet and cold from the hot, we were delighted.

In this text, the author is trying to evoke the readers' imagination to visualise the hotel room in his/ her mind. She begins the description by providing a general description of the size and the colour of the room, the ceiling and the light. Then she describes the furniture by giving details about it (bed, desk and chairs in the room). She ends up by mentioning the water tubs. This description is full of humour since the hotel room is strange, but they enjoyed their time!

Exercise: Work in pairs: Put the following sentences in the right spatial order.

1/ The Statue of Liberty, now completely restored, is a marvel to visitors from all over the world. (*Order the items from bottom to top*)

With current restoration finished, the crown continues to be used as a place where visitors can get a good view of New York Harbor. _____

The granite for the base of the statue was quarried and cut many miles from New York City and then taken by boat to Bedloe's Island, where the statue was built. _____

The torch has been repaired and will now be illuminated by outside lights, not lights from inside the torch itself. _____

The seven spikes that rise above the crown represent the seven seas of the world.

The body was covered with copper that was originally mined on an island off the coast of Norway.

2/ The runway models in the designer's winter fashion show presented a classic look.

(Order the material from top to bottom.)

The skirts were beautifully designed and made of quality fabrics. _____

The shoes were all high-heeled basic black pumps. _____

Exquisite silk scarves flowed as the models walked past the audience. _____

Meticulous attention was paid to hairstyles and makeup. _____

The sweaters were all made of cashmere in vibrant colors. _____

8 | Self-assessment

According to Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), effective learning occurs when the students are involved in their own educational experiences. Therefore, enabling the students to participate in creating their own assessment grids/ procedures, they will develop a conscious knowledge about the ways that help them learn better. In this respect, the students will be asked to refer to their lesson about the pattern of description to create their own yes/no checklist with quality criteria of a well-written descriptive paragraph.

Excercise: Review the lesson of the pattern of development and make a checklist for the following assigned topic.

Assigned topic:

			Yes	No
	1.Characteristics of the pattern of description			
	Have I identified my dominant impression?			
	Is my dominant impression precise, and not vague?			
	Have I provided at least 2 sensory images?			
	Is my description subjective?			
	Have I used a range of expressive adjectives to create strong mental pictures?			
	2. The organisation of my paragraph			
	Have I included my dominant impression in my topic sentence?			

	Have I included supporting details to back up my dominant impression		
	Are my supporting ideas in a logical order?		
	Have I formatted my concluding sentence?		
	3. Voice		
	Does my voice reflect my feelings and personality about the assigned topic?		
	Does my word choice reflect my purpose and address my audience?		
	Have I used figures of speech (simile, metaphor) to strengthen my voice in the paragraph?		

Figure 5.2 Self-assessment checklist about description

9 | Rubrics

The students can also be trained in using a more challenging self-assessment tool. Rubrics provide the students with detailed explanation of levels of potential performance and what to do to achieve quality performance.

The following rubric provides an exemplar to be used throughout the writing process to assess their writing and address their weaknesses in order to reach a successful performance on the task.

	4- Excellent	3- Very Good	2-Satisfactory	1-Needs Improvement
Ideas	*“paints a picture” for the reader *well-focused on the topic *clear ideas are well-supported with interesting and vivid details	*creates some clear images for the reader *focused on the topic *ideas are well-supported with details	*sometimes strays from the topic *ideas are not well-developed *more details are needed	*poorly focused on the topic *ideas are unclear *few details are given
Organization	*well-focused on the topic *logical organization *excellent transitions *easy to follow	*generally focused on the topic *some lapses in organization *some transitions *usually easy to follow	*somewhat focused on the topic *poor organization *few transitions *difficult to follow	*not focused on the topic *no clear organization *no transitions *difficult to impossible to follow
Introduction	Introductory paragraph clearly states subject of essay and captures reader's attention.	Introductory paragraph states subject of essay but is not particularly inviting to the reader.	Introductory paragraph attempts to state subject of essay but does not capture reader's attention.	No attempt is made to state the subject of the essay in an introductory paragraph.
Word Choice	*precise, vivid and interesting word choices *wide variety of word choices	*fairly precise, interesting and somewhat varied word choices *wording could be	*vague, mundane word choices *wording is sometimes repetitive *more descriptive	*very limited word choices *wording is bland and not descriptive

		more specific	words are needed	
Sensory Detail	Essay includes details that appeal to at least three of the five senses (taste, touch, sound, sight, smell).	Includes details that appeal to fewer than three of the five senses.	Includes details that appeal to only one of the five senses.	Includes no details that appeal to one of the five senses.
Figurative Language	Writer effectively uses simile, metaphor, and personification to describe the subject.	Writer uses one example of simile, metaphor, or personification to describe the subject.	Writer may try to use simile, metaphor, and personification but does so incorrectly.	Writer does not include simile, metaphor, or personification in essay.
Sentence Fluency	*uses complete sentences *varying sentence structure and lengths	*uses complete sentences *generally simple sentence structures	*occasional sentence fragment or run-on sentences *simple sentence structure is used repeatedly	*frequent use of sentence fragments or run-on sentences *sentences are difficult to understand
Conventions	*proper grammar, usage *correct spelling *correct punctuation *correct capitalization	*few errors of grammar and usage *mostly correct spelling, punctuation and capitalization	*errors in grammar, usage and spelling sometimes make understanding difficult *some errors in punctuation and capitalization	*frequent errors in grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization and punctuation make understanding difficult or impossible
Voice	*voice is fitting for the topic and engaging *well-suited for audience and purpose	*voice is fairly clear and seems to fit the topic *suited for audience and purpose	*voice rarely comes through *not always suited for audience and purpose	*voice is weak or inappropriate *no sense of audience and purpose

Figure 5.3 An analytic rubric about description

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Further Reading

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Conclusion

This chapter dealt with essential recommendations for effective implementation of formative and self-assessment in the writing classroom. It, mainly, addresses the significance of incorporating underpinning guidelines about classroom assessment in pre-service

programmes and teachers' self-development initiatives. Then this chapter tackled teachers' involvement in research inside their language classrooms and how teacher research might empower them to bring change to their daily practice and to their students' learning. Yet, steps towards change are closely related to some conditions that have to do with teachers' willingness and recognition of the potentials of research. The last section of this chapter recommended effective practices that further students' engagement with writing. Therefore, it proposed reading circles to help the students widen their vocabulary repertoire and enhance their knowledge about writing genres and style in the target language. It also emphasised the role of technology as a responsive procedure that boost students' interest in writing in the 21st century. The chapter ended with suggestions that promote the practice of writing such as students' journal writing, using writing workshops, and teaching students writing strategies that would help them become independent strategic writers.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This action research study was designed to implement formative assessment and student self-assessment in a supportive learning environment, and to identify factors that enhance the students' active role in assessing their own performance in the writing class. Moreover, this thesis had the aim of exploring the potential of assessment in responding to the students' needs and informing my daily decision-making in the writing classroom.

Taken together, the results of the four data collection methods and analyses demonstrated that when the students were empowered to assess their own performance and used self-assessment checklists as an integral part of their learning, they reached the final objective of the writing task at hand. Effectively, the process of student self-assessment and teacher reflection-on-action provided reliable and rich sources to make the transition from a teacher-centred classroom into an environment that is built on advancing active learning and addressing the students' needs. Therefore, it is no longer the coverage of the curriculum that drives instruction, but my endeavour to question my previous assumptions about my roles and challenge them in my writing class. Engaging in the process of reflecting on my teaching and students' learning inspired me to continuously refine my practice.

In terms of the obtained findings, some limitations of the current action research study require mention. The first limitation is that the process of student self-assessment was relatively short since the students were involved in assessing their writing during three sessions (clustering, paragraph outline, and editing). Second, because this study was conducted during the academic year and I had to take into account the coverage of the syllabus of written comprehension and production, it was not possible for me to undertake a differentiating approach to address miscellaneous needs. Unfortunately, differentiation could have provided me with an in-depth insight into my students' learning profiles, potentials and learning requirements.

The limitations of this action research study pave the way for new research to emerge in the Algerian context. For instance, future studies can examine the implementation of student self-assessment in the writing class using longitudinal design. I argue that teaching writing in the undergraduate level is an opportunity for the practitioner researcher to explore the impact of self-assessment on development of the writing skill of EFL students. Throughout a period of three years, the students have sufficient time to be trained in self-assessment and use it continuously to assess their achievement (paragraph, patterns of development, and the academic essay).

The second area that is worth examining is the utilisation of different tools of student self-assessment. In this study, the participants found it challenging to use the analytic rubric to assess their writing since they were not familiar with using it. Therefore, it is essential to train the participants in using analytic rubrics, particularly with Master students in specialty subjects in which writing is of a paramount importance such as Didactics of English, educational psychology, and writing techniques.

Another interesting area of research is the use of exit cards. Many research studies (Eg, Black et al, 2001; Black and Wiliam, 1998, 2004) investigated the impact of formative assessment on the students' learning. However, there is a dearth of research on using the information obtained from the students' learning to inform effective instruction. In this respect, exit cards are an invaluable alternative to final tests or quizzes in a sense that the students are partners in the teaching learning process. The students can have a say about their learning excitement moments and the fears (weaknesses, needs, etc) by expressing themselves on the exit cards. The content of the exit card would challenge the practitioner researcher to modify their instruction on a daily basis to see if they can make change in their instruction to make it appealing.

From a developmental perspective, assessment literacy and continuous mentoring should be a reality today. In a changing world, practitioners should be up-to-date. Thus, a longitudinal study may examine the impact of mentoring teachers of writing in the area of implementing student self-assessment in their subjects by observing them and making post-sessions intervention schemes. This study may be essential in the current circumstances since many universities still rely on Master students to teach undergraduate students. In some cases, Master students hold a degree in linguistics without the adequate training in teaching and assessment literacy.

Ultimately, this research study provides an in-depth vision on how to integrate formative assessment in its natural setting to maintain a rectangular relation between effective teaching, active learning and assessment that drives instruction as well. Fortunately, this research study contributes to the dearth of research about the role of student self-assessment in informing teacher's decision-making, lesson planning and student's needs in the writing class.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Informed Consent to Conduct my research

The University of Ibn Khaldoun Tiaret
Faculty of Letters and Languages
The Department of Foreign Languages
The Section of English



SN metal Zaaroura
Tiaret, 14000, Algeria

Dear [redacted]
Head of the Department of Foreign Languages

I am Miss. [redacted] at the University of Ibn Khaldoun and a doctoral student at the University of Djillali Liabes in Sidi Bel Abbas. This research is being supervised by Professor [redacted] under the title of *'Implementing Formative Assessment in Teaching Writing: an Action Research Study of First Year LMD Students at Ibn Khaldoun University, Tiaret'*. I am requesting permission to conduct an action research study with 1st year students in the module of written comprehension and written production to implement formative assessment in daily teaching and advance self-assessment as well.

The students will be required to take part in this study through their active engagement in the process of reflecting on the different writing skills within the writing process by training them to use self-assessment techniques such as checklists, rubrics, and to fill in questionnaires in which they express their attitudes and opinions about the assigned task, meeting the learning target and the learning experience itself.

All information gathered about the students will be confidential and the students have the right to withdraw from this study at any time they wish to.

The findings of this study will be published in a doctoral thesis.

Yours faithfully,

Signature of the Consenting Party

[redacted]
[Signature]
[Stamp: Département des Lettres et Langues Etrangères]

Appendix B: Pre-test Questionnaire about Writing and Self-assessment

In order to better understand your learning experiences, your opinions, your needs, your interest, and your struggles in the module of writing, please complete the following questionnaire. Thank you!

Name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: _____

Level: B.A

1 | Do you enjoy writing Yes ____ No ____

Why? _____

2 | How much time do you devote to writing outside university?

45min-1hr ____

1hr-2hrs ____

More than 2hrs ____

3 | What resources do you use to improve your writing? Tick (✓) the appropriate answers

Teacher's handouts ____

Books of writing ____

Online resources ____

Dictionaries ____

Others ____

None ____

4 | Have you ever developed a reading habit to develop your English language skills?

5 | What makes writing difficult and challenging?

II- Self-assessment

6 | Has (ve) your teacher (s) of writing informed you about the objectives of studying writing?

Yes ____

No ____

7 | Before writing, have you ever been provided with guidelines on how to write step by step?

Yes ____

No ____

8 | Have you ever been informed about the characteristics of good versus bad writing before dealing with a written task Or provided with informative feedback?

Yes ____

No ____

9 | Did the teacher (s) of writing clarify/ explain to you on what basis your written performance was evaluated?

Yes ____

No ____

10 | Did you know how to assess your own writing performance (or any other skill)?

Yes ____

No ____

If yes, mention the year and the skill below (how so)

Appendix C: Training students in self-assessment

From: David

Subject: Touring holiday

Some college friends of mine are visiting your area soon for a week's touring holiday. They would like to travel around and learn about your local area and its history.

Can you tell me about some of the places they could visit? What's the best way to travel around by car, bike or coach?

Thanks,

David

Write your e-mail.

Writing | Sample Paper 1

Candidate F

Dear David,

I'm glad your friends are visiting my area soon for a week's touring holiday. I have many ideas what I can show them and tell about.

In my opinion the best way to travel around will be by bike because of small distances between the places and views are amazing.

My area includes also beautiful Baltic Sea which many tourist visit especially in summer. Your friends could sunbath or swim if they would like but the water is quite cold in the season. Beautiful sightseeing of sunrise is the best memorise!

You wrote that they are interested in history of my local area. That's great! We have museum of our local history where I can go with them. Tickets are not so expensive and I can think about some discount.

What do you think about it? Would you mind send me some your ideas?

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Best wishes,

Sam

Examiner Comments

Subscale	Mark	Commentary	Yes	No
Content	1	The candidate responds to the questions that have been asked and gives details about the places David's friends can visit.		
Communicative achievement	2	The response is written in an informal polite way. The expressions for opening and closing an informal e-mail are used appropriately.		
Organisation	2	The text is well organised and uses the input e-mail well to structure the response		
Language	3	There is a range of everyday vocabulary that is relevant to the topic of tourism The candidate used correct sentence structure. The candidate used correct spelling.		

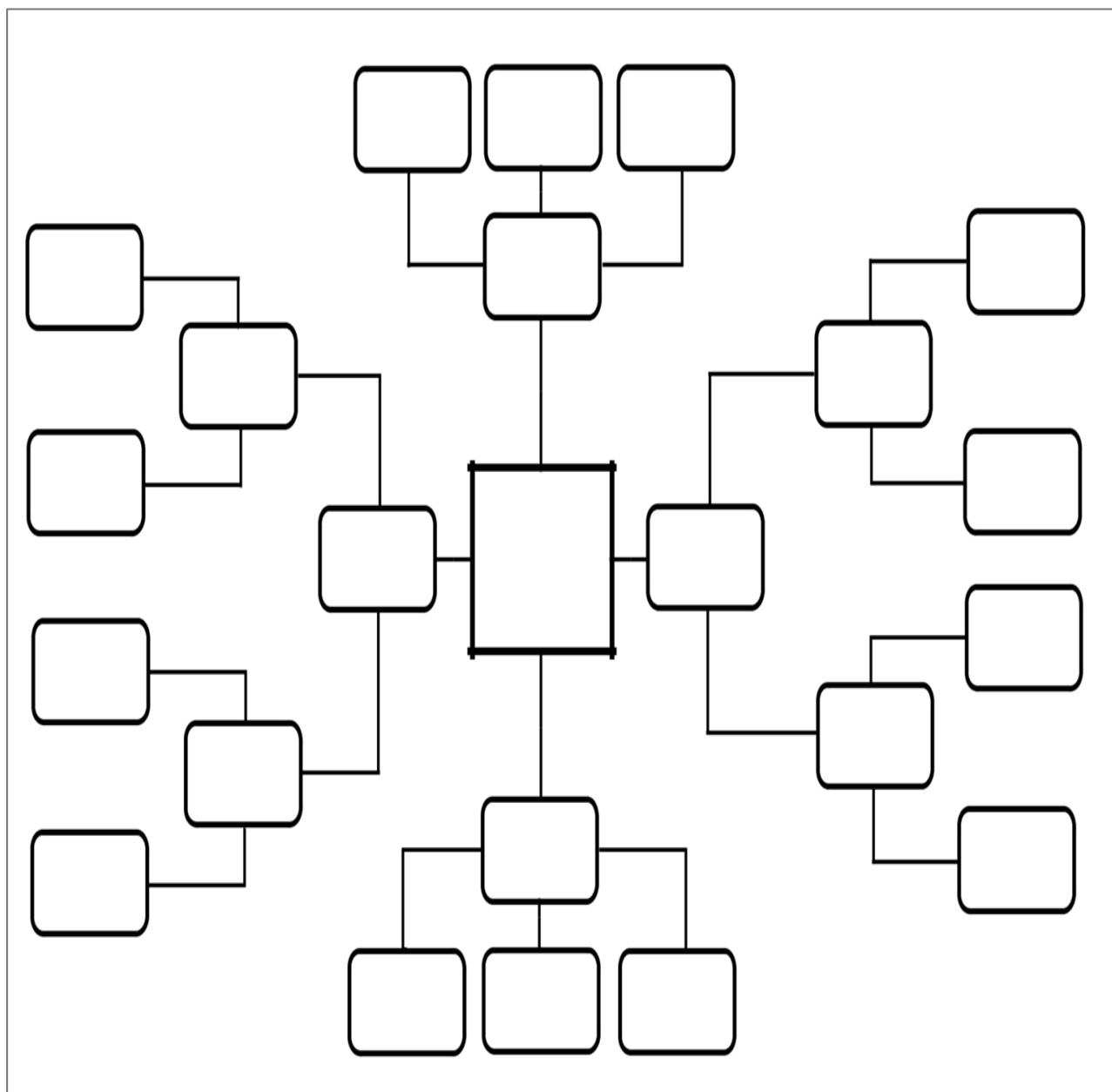
Adapted from Cambridge English: First Handbook for Teachers (p.41)

Appendix D: Writing process 1: Clustering

1. Preparing to Write
Pre-writing Techniques: Clustering

Lesson objective: By the end of the session, you will be able to collect ideas using the clustering technique.

Task: Write about the various challenges that you face in your university life.



Appendix E: *Student self-assessment clustering checklist*

While filling in the above mind-map, check whether you are applying the characteristics of a good cluster of ideas by ticking the following checklist.

	Statements	Yes	No
1	I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic.		
2	I provided four basic ideas related to my main topic.		
3	I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas.		
4	I provided one specific detail to each example.		

Appendix F: Kinds of Assigned Topics

1 | Introduction

A combination of a range of components leads to successful writing. One of these factors is the personality of the writer, particularly "*his belief in the importance of [his] topic and confidence in his own ideas*" (Scarry & Scarry, 2010, p.5). The student's attitudes about the assignment itself play an active role in practising writing and generating a well-crafted piece of writing that shows the ability of the student to handle the process that contributes to a good product at the end. In this context, the core of interest is going to be the topic (the theme/ the subject) of the writing assignment and the elements that have a direct link to it.

2 | Understanding the Assignment

The first key to pay attention to is analysing the assignment because every writing task has its own requirements and characteristics. Thus, can you think about 04 requirements that you need to be clear about first?

3 | Choosing a Topic

You will be given assignments to write about, or a range of suggestions to choose from. What makes a paper interesting is your ability to think about the topic carefully and find an area that you can develop your ideas in. The focus on developing your topic is mainly based on understanding some terms that are commonly used in assignments, For instance, *Compare*: examine the similarities and the differences in two topics, on the emphasis on similarities.

Contrast: Examine the differences in two topics.

Discuss: Present various sides of, focus on, or explain one topic.

Explain: Make clear, give the reasons for, or analyze a topic in step –by- step fashion.

Prove: Provide evidence to persuade the reader that a statement is true.

Summarize: Restate the main points of an issue or article in a shortened form.

4 | Narrowing the Topic

According to Scarry & Scarry (2010, p. 05), the most important task in the module of written production is to consider every assignment as an opportunity to do the following:

- 1/ discover that you have ideas worth expressing.
- 2/ explore topics that you care about.
- 3/ incorporate the ideas of others into your own work.

Some assignment topics are *very broad* or *general*. Other topics are more *carefully defined*, and in other cases, a topic may be *very narrow*. As a university student, you should recognise

the type of topic. To work effectively with the topic, you should know how much further narrowing you need.

Activity 2: Which of the following topics is *broad*, *limited*, and *narrow*? Justify

- Discuss the advantages of technology
- Discuss technology
- Discuss the impact of social media on procrastinating your homework.

If you are assigned a broad or limited topic, you will need to narrow it to a more specific topic. The scope of your topic should fit the required length of the composition because your instructor will usually require a certain length for your writing assignment. Here are some common examples for doing university writing assignments. (Typed and double-spaced):

- ♠ An academic paragraph
- ♠ A short essay
- ♠ A report
- ♠ A long essay or a research paper

5 | *Selecting a Topic that Works for You*

When you have a choice of topics, *be sure* to consider which topic will work best for you. In other words, decide which topic will *motivate* you to write and give you *the best results*. Here is a list of criteria that you can use to evaluate topics:

- ♠ Does the topic appeal to you immediately?
- ♠ What can you learn from this topic about yourself or the world you live in? Would you like to explore this topic and learn more?
- ♠ Do you know a lot about this topic?
- ♠ Is this a topic that you would like to discuss with other people? Would you like to show your finished composition to others? (The desire to share your ideas with other students will motivate you.)

6 | *Determining the Writing Context*

Determining the writing context means examining the assignment from the angle of *purpose*, *audience* and *tone* you wish to use in accordance with the genre of your writing. As a writer, you have lots of options to choose from in how to present your ideas.

Ask yourself questions such as these:

- ♠ Do I want to persuade or inform my readers?
- ♠ Is my audience predetermined or can I choose who I want my readers to be?
- ♠ Do I want this piece of writing to be a serious one or a humorous one?

Activity 3: Journal writing

Reflect on your learning experience today and send it to me via: writetechm2@gmail.com

Appendix G: Context of Writing: Purpose and Audience

Lesson objectives

1 | By the end of this lesson, you will be able to identify common purposes in your university writing career and the audience you address through your writing.

Introduction

Writing surrounds us in every single aspect of our daily life! Writing can range from writing in informal ways (letters and e-mails to your friends) to formal and more complex writing (inquiry letters, motivation letters, standard essays, and research papers). Therefore, you are required to master the conventions of every form of writing. A well-written text requires a harmony of some aspects to fulfil successful writing.

2 | *Purpose of writing*

When you are at the outset of developing your assigned topic, you should consider the following questions that will help you identify the purpose and the audience of your text.

- Do I want to inform my readers or persuade them?
- Is my audience predetermined or can I choose who I want my readers to be?

Therefore, *purpose (intention) includes why you are writing, what your goals are, and what you hope to accomplish. Understanding your purpose will help you determine what to include and what to leave out of your writing and will help you shape your topic sentence or thesis.*

The purpose of your writing is to inform, to persuade, or to entertain

♠ *To inform:* For many of your university writing assignments, you will be asked to provide information on specific issues or topics. In order to increase your reader's knowledge and understanding of your topic, you should provide clear and accurate information. You may write on

♣ a detailed description of Picasso's the Women of Algiers.

♠ *To entertain:* Here, you go beyond mere facts and information. Instead, you want to stimulate your reader's imagination and emotions. In order to do this successfully, make your ideas as creative and vivid as possible. (Note: Entertainment includes ideas that are humorous, dramatic, tragic, or inspirational)

♠ *To persuade:* you will be asked to challenge (and hopefully change) your reader's opinion on specific issues or topics. In order to do this, you will have to show clear thinking and provide good evidence for your position.

♣ Convince your college to use renewable energies.

Activity: Read the following texts and identify their purposes. Justify your answers by providing examples from both texts.

Text 01: Ernesto's Restaurant

Ernesto's Restaurant, located at 2100 South University Avenue, specializes in Mexican food. Some of the most popular dishes are fajitas, burritos, chimichangas, and chiles rellenos, and the prices for entries range from four to six dollars. Ernesto's also offers a children's menu (priced two to three dollars) with items such as chicken bites, hamburgers, and grilled cheese sandwiches. The restaurant is decorated with tropical plants and travel posters of Mexico. The atmosphere is casual, and the clientele is mostly students and families.

Text 02: A Great Mexican Restaurant

Ernesto's Restaurant, located at 2100 South University Avenue, offers superb Mexican cuisine. Ernesto's specializes in authentic south-of-the-border dishes such as sizzling fajitas, ample burritos, succulent chimichangas, and flavourful chiles rellenos. The portions are large and delivered to the table piping hot. All entrées are reasonably priced, between four and six dollars. In addition, the kids' menu, priced between two and three dollars, offers traditional kid favourites such as chicken bites, hamburgers, and grilled cheese sandwiches. The restaurant is tastefully decorated with lush tropical plants and travel posters of exotic Mexican locations; mariachi music completes the atmosphere. Ernesto's casual atmosphere makes it a popular spot with both students and families. Word of mouth has quickly spread about this great dining establishment.

3|

When you write, you should always keep in mind that you are writing for *someone*. At university, you may write for broader audience including **personal**, **professional** and **academic** audience. When you work on your assignments, you may address your teachers and your peers as well. You may also address large academic audience in which you may write for your administration, department and researchers. Your aim here is to provide information that can be trusted. Forms of academic writing include essays, reports and research papers.

Activity: Read the following text and identify their audience. Justify your answers.

Free Wheeling

Riding my bike to school is a great alternative to driving a car. First, the purchase price of my brand-new, top-of-the-line touring bike, \$800, was well within my budget compared to the thousands I would have had to spend to purchase even a dilapidated second hand car. Second, my bike saves me money every day on maintenance costs because I don't have to pay for insurance, repairs, or gas. It's also convenient to ride my bike because I don't have to purchase a parking decal or spend twenty minutes hunting for a parking place; I can park my bike next to my class and not have to fight the homicidal crowds in the parking lot. Next, riding my bike is a great form of exercise since it provides a cardiovascular workout, burns fat, and tones my muscles at once. Lastly, riding my bike is enjoyable because it puts me in touch with the beauty of nature in a way that I never would be if I were shut up inside a car with the windows rolled up. Riding my bike benefits me and benefits the environment, and that makes me feel good.

The Advantages of Bike Paths

The city should strive to improve its bike paths. By constructing more bike paths, the city could reduce the number of bike-related injuries and fatalities, thereby improving the health and safety of its citizens. Improved bike paths would encourage more citizens to bike to and from work, and fewer cars on the road would help reduce congestion and reduce the amount of money the city spends on road widening projects and road maintenance. In addition, the construction of bike paths and greenways encourages citizens to get out and appreciate their neighbors and their community, thus improving the overall livability of a city. A city with bike paths is also attractive to new businesses looking for a pleasant environment for their workers. Moreover, bike paths and greenways can help revitalize downtown businesses by encouraging use without increasing the need for parking places. Bike paths are an economical way to improve safety, stimulate business, and keep voters happy.

References

- Feng-Checkett, G., & Checkett, L. (2010). *The write start: Sentences to paragraphs (4th ed)*. USA: Wadsworth.
- Robitaille, J., & Connelly, R. (2007). *Writer's resources: From paragraphs to essay*. USA: Wadsworth.
- Scarry, S., & Scarry, J. (2011). *The writer's workplace with readings: Building college writing skills (6th ed)*. USA: Wadsworth.

Appendix H: Writing process 2: The outline of the paragraph*Outlining Basics*

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to write a detailed paragraph outline.

The assigned topic: Write a paragraph outline about the various challenges that you face in your university life.

-Refer to your clustering and lesson 7 (outlining basics), then make your own detailed outline.

(1).....

The main idea

.....

Supporting idea 1:

.....

Example 1:

.....

Supporting idea 2:

.....

Example 2:

.....

Supporting idea 3:

.....

Example 3:

.....

Concluding sentence:

.....

Appendix I: Student self-assessment outlining checklist

Please, take some time to fill in the following checklist to see whether you accomplished these parameters or not

	The statements	Yes	No
1	My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic		
	I could formulate the main idea		
3	I could provide 03 supporting ideas at least		
4	I could provide one example for every supporting idea		
5	I provided a concluding sentence		
6	I could provide complete sentences		

Appendix J: Writing a Paragraph Title

Some students may write a successful paragraph, but they overlook writing a great title for their paragraph. Or they may struggle to find an interesting one and decide to leave out! However, titles are important means that evoke the audience (the readers) attention to carry on reading the full paragraph. Therefore, the student should bear in mind that titles are the first part of the paragraph to be read and it is the key to impress the reader as well.

1 | The Importance of Formulating Great Titles

♠ A well-written title contributes to the ideas that you developed in your paragraph. Your title is, therefore, the first element that will inform your reader about the paragraph content.

♠ When you formulate a good title, you show your teacher (marker/ assessor/ peers) that you have responded to the assigned topic.

♠ A well-crafted paragraph title captures the reader's attention and interest by giving him an idea about the main topic of your paragraph (Maxine and Keene, 2003).

♠ formulating the topic at the outset of writing can help you identify the relevant ideas of your assigned topic. Alternatively, creating your title at the end of your paragraph drafting can be used to check if you kept working on the same main idea throughout your piece of writing (University of Manitoba, n.d).

2 | Creating a Great Title

Leahy (1992) designed an exercise to assist the students in creating great titles through a process of 20 steps. This process depends on brainstorming and revising to help the students who struggle in coming up with an interesting title.

- 1/ *Copy out of your draft a sentence that could serve as a title.*
- 2/ *Write a sentence that's not in the draft to use as a title.*
- 3/ *Write a title that is a question beginning with What, Who, When, or Where.*
- 4/ *Write a title that is a question beginning with How or Why.*
- 5/ *Write a title that is a question beginning with Is/ Are, Do/ Does, or Will.*
- 6/ *Pick out of the essay some concrete image- something the reader can hear, see, taste, smell, or feel- to use as a title.*
- 7/ *Pick another concrete image out of the essay. Look for an image that is a bit unusual or surprising.*
- 8/ *Write a title beginning with an -ing verb (like "Creating a Good Title").*
- 9/ *Write a title beginning with On (like "On the Titles of Essays").*

- 10/ Write a title that is a lie about the essay. (You probably won't use this one, but it might stimulate your thinking.)
- 11/ Write a one-word title- the most obvious one possible.
- 12/ Write a less obvious one-word title.
- 13/ Write a two-word title.
- 14/ Write a three-word title.
- 15/ Write a four-word title.
- 16/ Write a five-word title.
- 17/ Think of a familiar saying, or the title of a book, song, or movie, that might fit your essay.
- 18/ Take the title you just wrote and twist it by changing a word or creating a pun on it.
- 19/ Do the same with another saying or title of a book, song, or movie.
- 20/ Find two titles you've written so far that you might use together in a double title. Join them together with a colon (:).

Reference

- Leahy, R. (2003). Twenty titles for the writer. *College Composition and Communication*, 43(4), 516-519.
- Maxine, H., & Keene, M. (2003). *Successful writing* (5th ed). New York: Norton.

Appendix K: Capitalisation

Aims: To enable students identify the cases of applying capitalization.

To enable learners use capitalization in the appropriate situations.

The application of the principles of formative assessment throughout the lesson (NCTE, 2013, p.03)

Principle 1: Students take responsibility of their own learning.

- In this lesson, students will be engaged in self-assessment by checking their answers to the handed checklist about capitalization.

Principle 2: FA should communicate a clear, specific learning goal within the lesson.

- The major objective from this lesson is to train students on using capitalization appropriately and in context.

Principle 3: FA focuses on goals that represent valuable educational outcomes with applicability beyond the actual learning context.

- The notion of capitalization is one of the fundamental skills that a student needs to know because he will need it capitalization throughout his use of language when it comes to writing.

Principle 4: FA identifies the student current knowledge/ skills and the necessary steps for reaching the desired goals.

- The choice of this lesson was due to the fact that, in the first meeting with students, some of them approached the teacher for including this lesson because they need detailed account of the rules of using capitalization.

Principle 5: FA requires development of plans for attaining the desired goal.

-

Principle 06: FA encourages student self-monitor progress toward the learning goal.

- The students will be given a checklist to assess their own performance and the teacher will conduct a focus group to ask them about reflecting on their level of performance or they will be handed questionnaires to answer some questions.

Principle 07: FA includes feedback that is non-evaluative, specific, timely, and that provides opportunities for the students to revise and improve work products and deep understanding.

- The teacher will check and monitor the students' performance on the activity and provide feedback that would lead them improve their performance. In addition, she will provide them with extra activities to do at home and they can check their own answers through her Facebook page Englishphile.

Class Activities

1. Read the text and supply it with capital letters where necessary. Justify your answers.
2. Compare your answers with the provided checklist once you finish your activity.

Materials

1. A text entitled ‘‘ Mother of Hope’’
2. A checklist of the rules of capitalization.

Procedures

1. The teacher will inform the students about the title and the goal of the lesson (short term one and long term one). Then she will tell them about the definition of capitalization and ask them to provide some examples if they have been already introduced to this concept.
2. The teacher explains the activity and tells the students about their role as self-assessors.

mother of hope

mother teresa is a roman catholic nun in calcutta, India. she works with many nuns who belong to the order of the missionaries of charity. the order feeds the poor and has established schools, orphanages, and youth centers.

Mother teresa was born agnes gonxha bojaxhiu on august 27, 1910, in Skopje, the capital city of macedonia. Her family was very religious and helped the hungry and the homeless. When she was nine, her father died, and her life became difficult. However, the family was happy and full of love.

At eighteen, agnes became a nun at the loreta abbey in dublin, ireland, and adopted the name mary teresa. A few months later, she became a teacher at the loreto Convent School in calcutta, india, where she taught the daughters of wealthy people. Later, she was named the principal of the school and was called mother teresa.

Mother teresa is admired all over the world for her charity work. In 1979, she was awarded the nobel peace prize in norway. Young Norwegians presented her with thousands of dollars they collected to help her in her work. At harvard university graduation ceremonies, Mother teresa received an honorary award. The day before the ceremony, she spoke to the graduates, who listened with great respect and gave her a standing ovation. In november 1995, in a ceremony at st. paul’s church in san francisco, thirty nuns became volunteers for Mother teresa. Indeed, mother teresa is respected by people in all walks of life.

Adapted from Oshima & Hogue (2007, p.4-5)

3. The teacher monitors some students work on this activity and once they finish, the teacher will provide them with a checklist of the right answers so that they can assess themselves and report the score of their performance on this activity.

Rules	Examples
1. The first word of a sentence 2. All proper nouns. Proper nouns include a. Names of people and their titles But not a title without a name. 3. Names of specific places you could find on a map 4. Names of days, months, and special days But not the names of the seasons. 5. Names of specific groups of people (race, nationalities, and ethnic groups), languages and religions. 6. Names of specific structures such as buildings and bridges 7. Names of specific organizations (schools, businesses, and clubs) 8. Titles of compositions, stories, books, magazines, newspapers, plays, poems, and films. Note: <u>Underline</u> or <i>italicize</i> the titles of books, magazines, newspapers, plays and films.	Examples Mother Teresa is a Roman Catholic nun. She works with many nuns. The order feeds the poor. Mother Teresa Eg, Diana, Princess of Wales Dr. Norman George Professor Richard Stiggins Mr. and Mrs. McNiff the general, the prime minister, the math professor, the prince. Calcutta, India Macedonia Dublin, Ireland Norway San Francisco August November Independence Day winter spring Roman Catholic Norwegians Moslem Caucasian St. Paul's Church Golden Gate Bridge Kensington Palace the Order of Missionaries of Charity Loreto Abbey Loreto Convent School Harvard University Mother of Hope <i>Moby Dick</i> <i>Vogue</i> <i>the Guardian</i> <i>Hamlet</i> <i>the Battle of Algiers</i>

9. Specific awards Other cases 1. The pronoun I 2. Abbreviations and acronyms, which are words formed from the first letters of the words in the names of organizations. 3. Proper nouns a. Names of gods and deities. b. Names of geographical areas. But not the names of compass directions. c. Names of school subjects with course numbers. But not names of classes without numbers, except languages.	Nobel Peace Prize Football World Cup The nuns and I try to care for poor people. UNICEF WHO AIDS FIFA Allah God Shiva the Middle East the North the East Coast Drive east for two blocks, and then turn south. Writing Techniques 1S German 1 computer science business English composition Berber conversation
--	--

The teacher will explain any notions or misunderstanding and give them some extra activities about capitalization.

References

Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2007). *Introduction to academic writing*. USA: Longman.

Appendix L: The measurements of students' self-assessment and teacher assessment

I-The pre-writing self-assessment checklist

	The statement	Students' self-assessment		Teacher assessment	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic	50	00	48	02
2	I provided 04 basic ideas related to my main topic	48	02	43	07
3	I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas	50	00	41	09
4	I provided 01 specific detail to each example	45	05	39	11

II-Outlining basics

	The statements	Students' self-assessment		Teacher assessment	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
	My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic	50	00	44	06
	I could formulate the main idea	44	06	44	06
	I could provide 3 supporting ideas at least	50	00	42	08
	I could provide 01 example for every supporting idea	45	05	34	16
	I could provide a concluding sentence	50	00	39	11
	I could provide complete sentences	37	13	33	17

III-Editing checklist

	Statements	Students' self-assessment		Teacher assessment	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	My paragraph has a title and an indentation	48	02	42	08
2	My paragraph has a topic sentence, 3 supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence	50	00	48	02
3	My topic sentence has a topic and a controlling idea	49	01	44	06
4	My paragraph is backed by examples	45	05	42	08
5	There are transitional words between sentences	37	13	40	10
6	Commas are used where necessary	44	06	41	09
7	Verb tenses are used appropriately	45	05	42	08
8	All sentences contain at least one subject, one verb, and express a complete thought	44	06	40	10

Appendix M: Post-study Likert Scale Survey about Student self-assessment

Dear students,

This research study aims at investigating the students' attitudes towards their engagement in self-assessment in their writing class. Having now dealt with using checklists and an analytic rubric to assess your performance on the components of the writing process (understanding the assigned topic, the context of writing, pre-writing techniques, basic outlining, drafting a paragraph and editing), please complete the following questionnaire by ticking (✓) the appropriate box.

		Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
1	Self-assessment helped me understand the objectives of studying and mastering the writing skill at university.					
2	I am aware of my strengths and difficulties when I check my performance on a written task.					
3	Self-assessment showed me that it is possible to reach the desired goal of a writing task.					
4	Self-assessment showed me that breaking a task into manageable steps can help me accomplish the writing task successfully.					
5	Self-assessment highlighted the writing rules that I should follow and apply to improve my writing.					
6	I wish that every lesson of writing was accompanied by a self-assessment task					
7	Using self-assessment to learn how to write effectively was useful in other modules and tasks.					
8	By relying on self-assessment, I am confident that I can learn English effectively.					

Please, feel free to add any comment, opinion or suggestion about your experience in using self-assessment in writing.

Appendix N: Students' answers sheets

Student 1: A.F

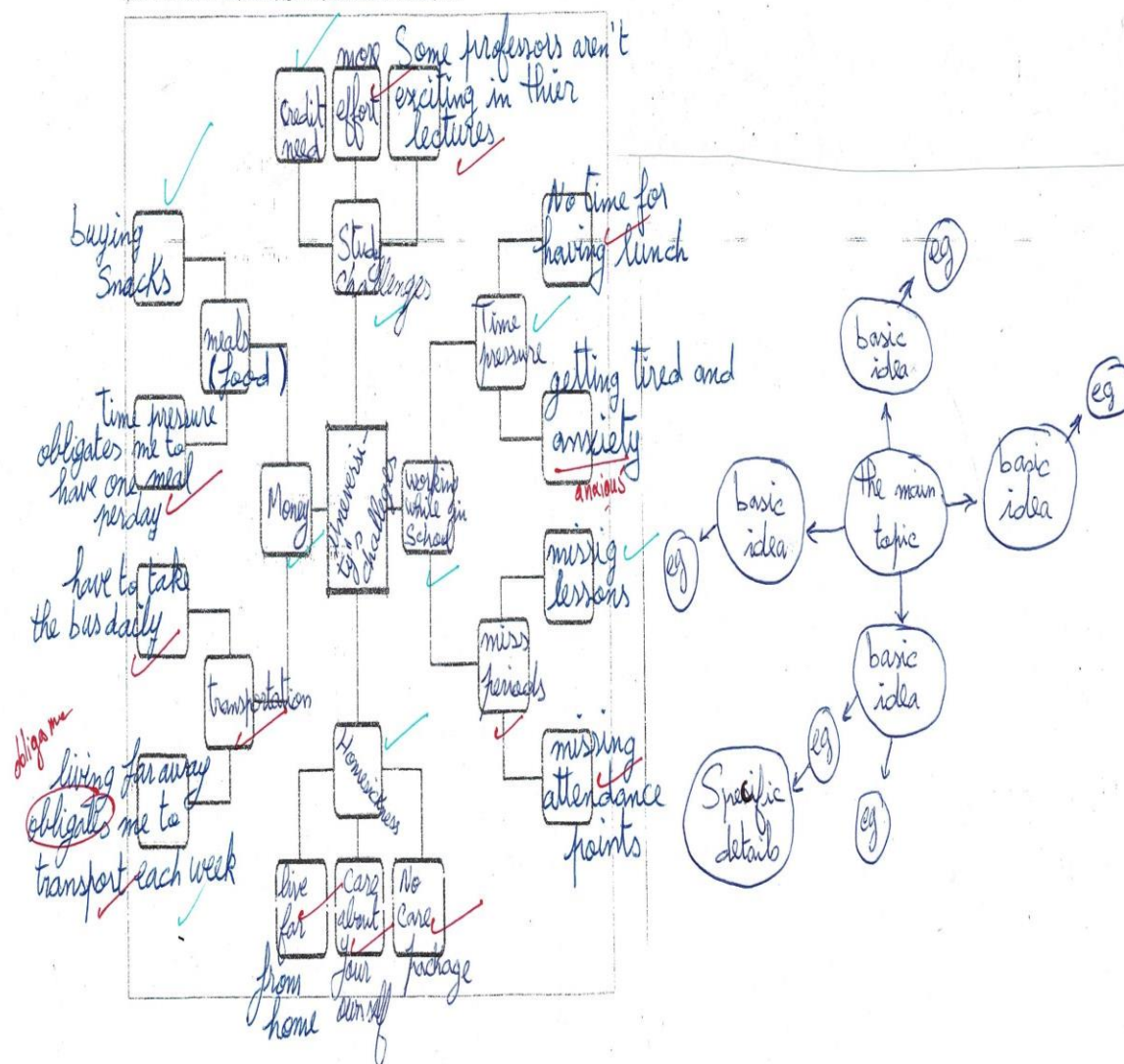
The student's name:

1. Preparing to Write

Pre-writing Techniques: Clustering

Lesson objective: By the end of the session, you will be able to collect ideas using the clustering techniques.

Task: Write about the various challenges that you face in your university life.



Student 1: A.F

2. *Self-assessment: While filling the above mind-map, check whether you are applying the characteristics of a good cluster of ideas by ticking the following checklist*

	Statements	Yes	No
1	I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic.	☒	☐
2	I provided four basic ideas related to my main topic.	☒	☐
3	I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas.	☒	☐
4	I provided one specific detail to each example.	☒	☐

Student 2: B.I

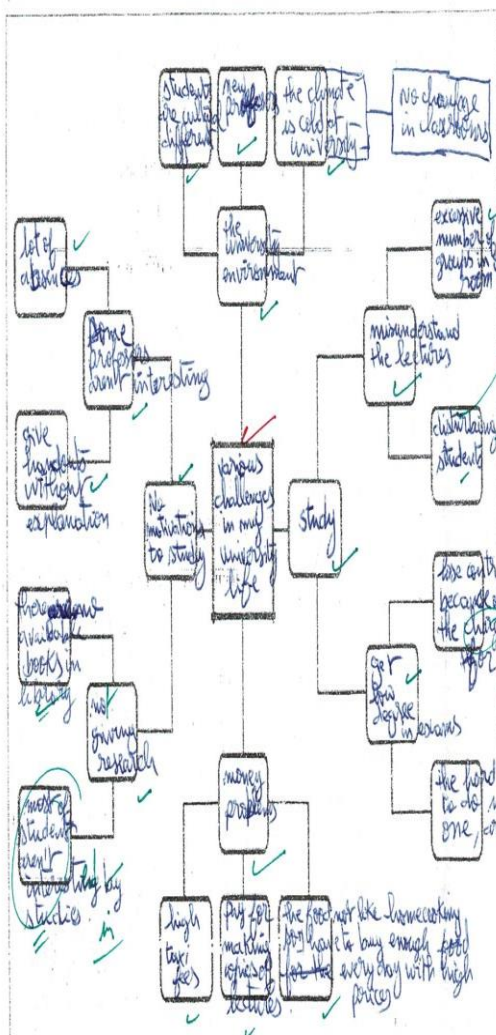
The student's name:

1. Preparing to Write

Pre-writing Techniques: Clustering

Lesson objective: By the end of the session, you will be able to collect ideas using the clustering techniques.

Task: Write about the various challenges that you face in your university life.



Student 2: B.I

2. *Self-assessment: While filling the above mind-map, check whether you are applying the characteristics of a good cluster of ideas by ticking the following checklist*

	Statements	Yes	No
1	I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic.	/	
2	I provided four basic ideas related to my main topic.	/	
3	I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas.	/	
4	I provided one specific detail to each example.	/	

Student 3: A.B.D

The student's name: _____

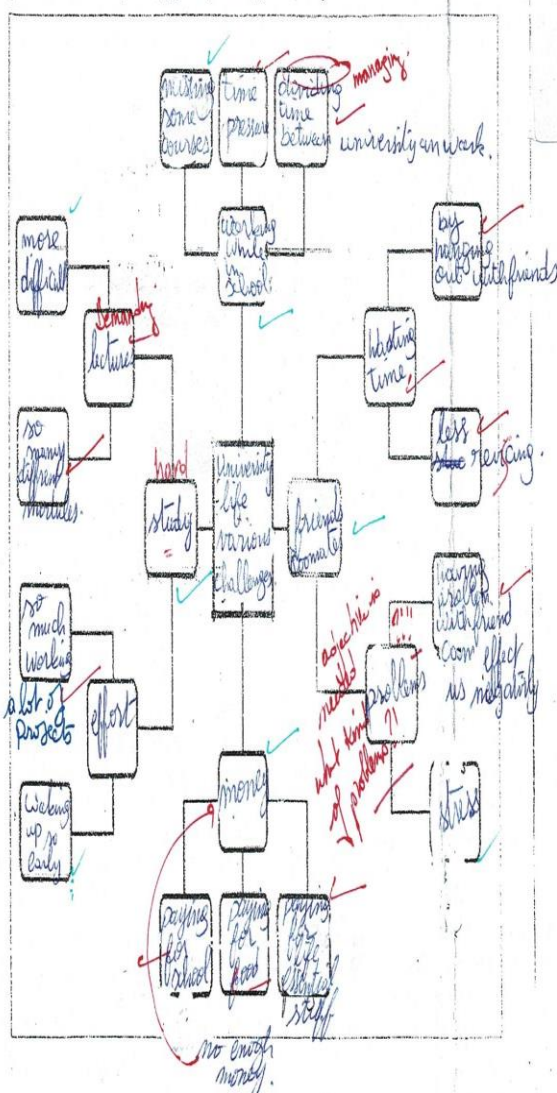
p: 04

1. Preparing to Write

Pre-writing Techniques: Clustering

Lesson objective: By the end of the session, you will be able to collect ideas using the clustering techniques.

Task: Write about the various challenges that you face in your university life.



Student 3: A.B.D

2. *Self-assessment: While filling the above mind-map, check whether you are applying the characteristics of a good cluster of ideas by ticking the following checklist*

	Statements	Yes	No
1	I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic.	X	
2	I provided four basic ideas related to my main topic.	X	
3	I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas.	X	
4	I provided one specific detail to each example.	X	

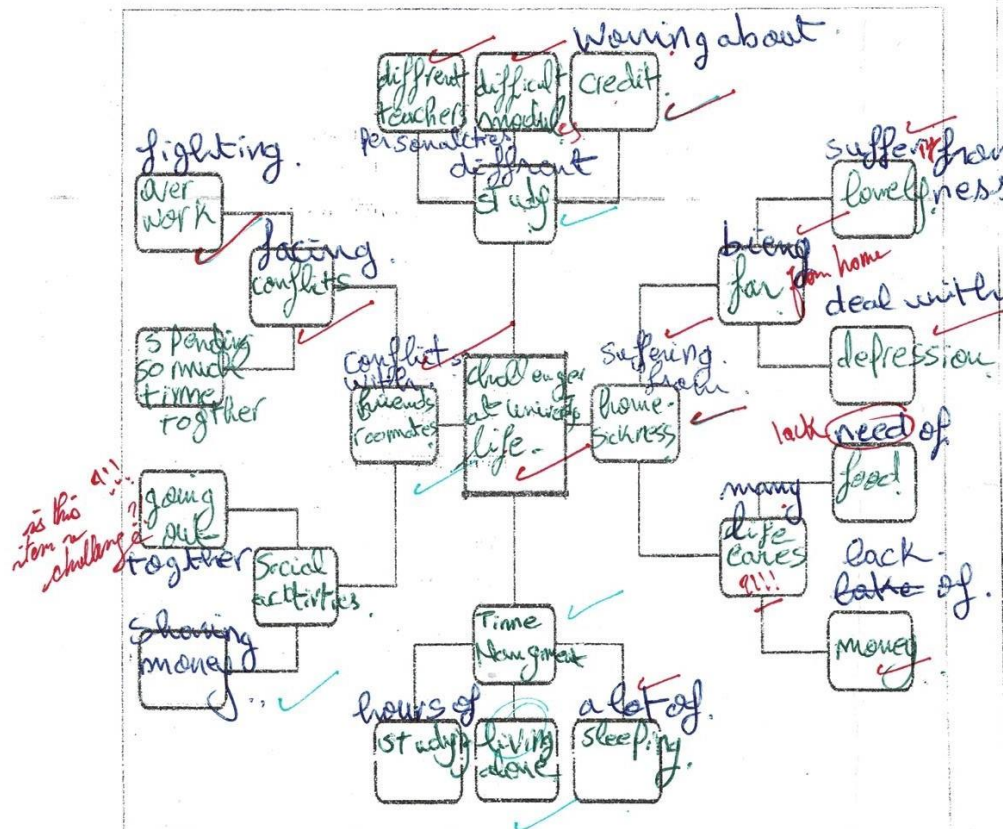
Student 4: A.S.K

The student's name: _____

I. Preparing to Write Pre-writing Techniques: Clustering

Lesson objective: By the end of the session, you will be able to collect ideas using the clustering techniques.

Task: Write about the various challenges that you face in your university life.

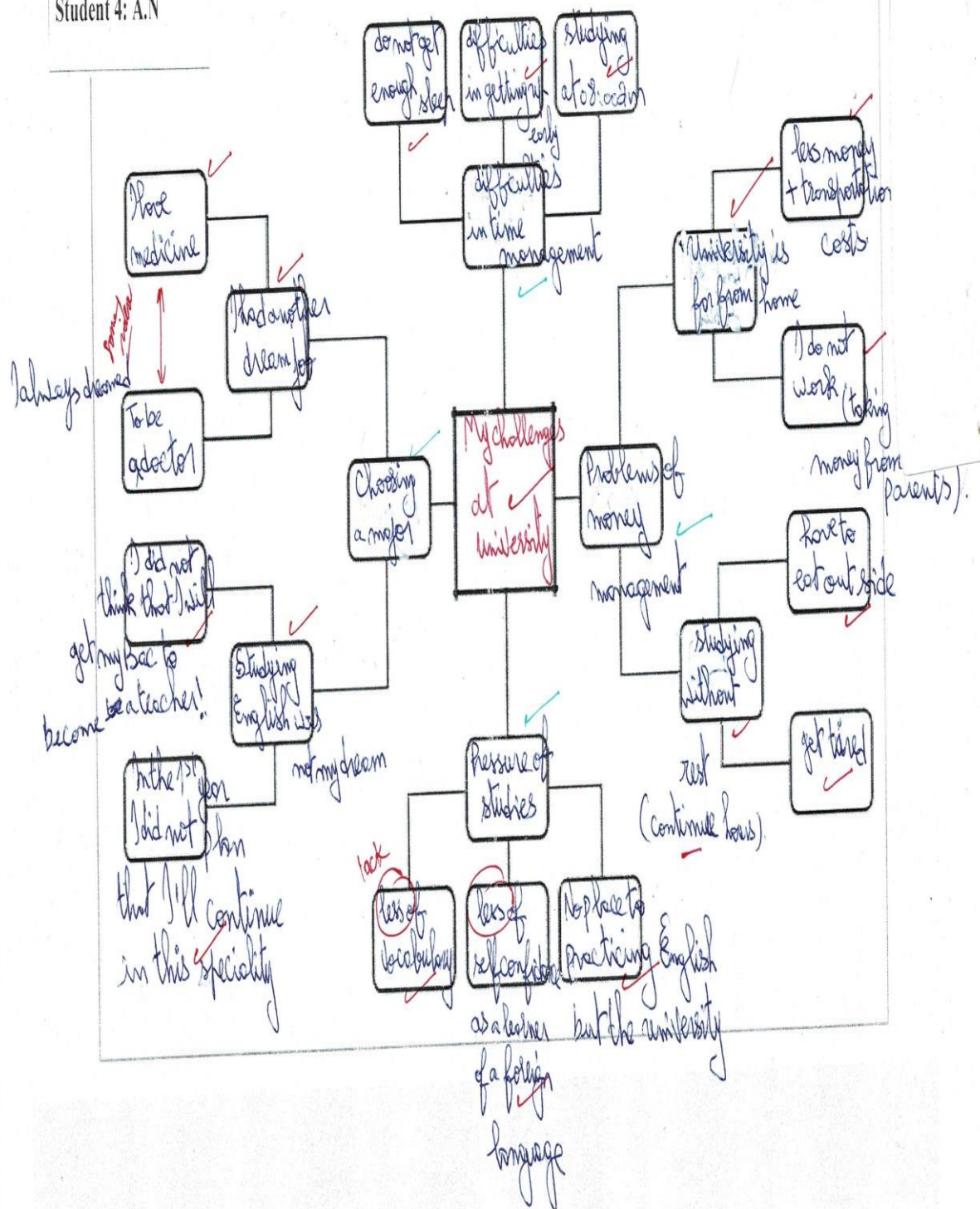


Student 4: A.S.K

2. *Self-assessment: While filling the above mind-map, check whether you are applying the characteristics of a good cluster of ideas by ticking the following checklist*

	Statements	Yes	No
1	I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic.	X	
2	I provided four basic ideas related to my main topic.	X	
3	I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas.	X	
4	I provided one specific detail to each example.	X	

Student 4: A.N



Student 4: A.N

2. Self-assessment: While filling the above mind-map, check whether you are applying the characteristics of a good cluster of ideas by ticking the following checklist

	Statements	Yes	No
1	I highlighted the main idea of the assigned topic.	X	
2	I provided four basic ideas related to my main topic.	X	
3	I provided 4 basic examples related to my basic ideas.	X	
4	I provided one specific detail to each example.	X	

Student 12: A.H.R

The University of Ibn Khaldoun

The Section of English

Written Expression



Outlining Basics

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to write a detailed paragraph outline.

The assigned topic: Write a paragraph outline about the various challenges that you face in your university life.

-Refer to your clustering and lesson 7 (outlining basics), then make your own detailed outline.

(1) Sweet Dreams and Tough Truth.

The main idea

The various challenges that faced student in his university life.

Supporting idea 1:

We have the challenge of money, students sometimes pay for everything.

Example 1:

For example, when we arrive late to the campus, we are obliged to pay our food.

Supporting idea 2:

The most common challenge is homesickness especially for those who are far from home.

Example 2:

Such as me I back home after a week. [will you provide some details]

Supporting idea 3:

Time management - is a big challenge for all students.

Example 3:

For example, I make every thing late not in its time like praying, sleeping.

Concluding sentence:

The university life is so hard but it taught me a lot and have helped me to become the person I am today.

Student 12: A.H.R

Please, take some time to fill in the following checklist to see whether you accomplished these parameters or not

	The statements	Yes	No
1	I could formulate the main idea	☒	☒
2	My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic ✓	☒	
3	I could provide 03 supporting ideas at least ✓	☒	
4	I could provide one example for every supporting idea ✓	☒	
5	I provided a concluding sentence ✓	☒	
6	I could provide complete sentences ✓		☒

Student 4: A.N

The University of Ibn Khaldoun

The Section of English

Written Expression

 Outlining Basics

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to write a detailed paragraph outline.

The assigned topic: Write a paragraph outline about the various challenges that you face in your university life.

-Refer to your clustering and lesson 7 (outlining basics), then make your own detailed outline.

(1) Is university worth it all?

The main idea

My university life is a daily journey of struggle where I face a lot of challenges.

Supporting idea 1:

For me, university is academically challenging.

Example 1:

I have problem in my listening skills, and I have got a low level in English vocabulary.

Supporting idea 2:

The second challenge is the financial situation.

Example 2:

For example, since the university is far from home, sometimes I am obliged to get outside and it demands also the costs of transportation and to make researches.

Supporting idea 3:

My major challenge is time management and balancing my academic work and my social life and socialising.

Example 3:

For example, studying at university demands meeting and having new friends and that's kind of hard for me, and it is really a problem to be on time mainly in the early sessions.

Concluding sentence:

Even though I face some struggles in my university life, but I can do it because learning the English language deserves all the sacrifices.

Student 4: A.N

Please, take some time to fill in the following checklist to see whether you accomplished these parameters or not

	The statements	Yes	No
1	I could formulate the main idea ✓	✓	
2	My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic ✓	✓	
3	I could provide 03 supporting ideas at least ✓	✓	
4	I could provide one example for every supporting idea ✓	✓	
5	I provided a concluding sentence ✓	✓	
6	I could provide complete sentences ✓	✓	

The University of Ibn Khaldoun

The Section of English

Written Expression

Student 9: A.M

Outlining Basics

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to write a detailed paragraph outline.

The assigned topic: Write a paragraph outline about the various challenges that you face in your university life.

-Refer to your clustering and lesson 7 (outlining basics), then make your own detailed outline.

(1) Do You Think That University is Wonderland?

The main idea

The worst period of my life is university. I'm going through a lot of challenges, such as money, transport and social contacts.

Supporting idea 1:

First, I have several ^{assignment} researches for money resources because I need more than I have from it at university.

Example 1:

* Food and ^{transportation} movement / Study projects.

Supporting idea 2:

Secondly, The transport is a problem for me because I live so far that I have to pass 45 min by bus twice a day.

Example 2:

If I'm late, I'll waste the day's lessons. / On winter, I have to wake up at 6:00 and leave home at 7:00 when it's dark as night.

Supporting idea 3:

Finally, the hardest difficulty for me which is communication! If you don't have a group at university, you are lost.

Example 3:

I can never start a conversation / I feel not comfortable of asking my classmates if we are not close enough.

Concluding sentence:

"What does not kill you makes you stronger", it's true that money, transport and social contacts are struggles for me, but I'll overcome it.

Student 9: A.M

Please, take some time to fill in the following checklist to see whether you accomplished these parameters or not

	The statements	Yes	No
1	I could formulate the main idea ✓	✓	
2	My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic ✓	✓	
3	I could provide 03 supporting ideas at least ✓	✓	
4	I could provide one example for every supporting idea ✓	✓	
5	I provided a concluding sentence ✓	✓	
6	I could provide complete sentences ✓	✓	

Student 11: A.Z

The University of Ibn Khaldoun

The Section of English

Written Expression



Outlining Basics

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to write a detailed paragraph outline.

The assigned topic: Write a paragraph outline about the various challenges that you face in your university life.

-Refer to your clustering and lesson 7 (outlining basics), then make your own detailed outline.

The main idea

(1) University challenges : mixed blessings
 I face many challenges since University is a new experience for me.

Supporting idea 1:

Among the problems which I faced during my studies is "homework" new.

Example 1:

one of the initial challenges that student face is missing home specially for those whom lived far from the university provide details please!!

Supporting idea 2:

My major challenge has always been time management.

Example 2:

It is hard for me to cope with my time - late throughout the semester since I have to meet my homework submission deadlines for several teachers.

Supporting idea 3:

Health problems are also a challenge for me.

Example 3:

very good such as depression, stress level, change of mood, tiredness, loneliness, inadequate sleep.

Concluding sentence:

University can teach us skills and give us opportunities, but it can not teach us sense, nor give us understanding. sense and understanding are produced within one's soul (Reformulate).

Student 11: A.Z

Please, take some time to fill in the following checklist to see whether you accomplished these parameters or not

	The statements	Yes	No
1	I could formulate the main idea ✓	☒	
2	My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic ✓	☒	
3	I could provide 03 supporting ideas at least ✓	☒	
4	I could provide one example for every supporting idea ✓	☒	
5	I provided a concluding sentence ✗	☒	
6	I could provide complete sentences ✓	☒	

The University of Ibn Khaldoun

The Section of English

Written Expression

Student 8: A.S

Outlining Basics

By the end of the lesson, you will be able to write a detailed paragraph outline.

The assigned topic: Write a paragraph outline about the various challenges that you face in your university life.

-Refer to your clustering and lesson 7 (outlining basics), then make your own detailed outline.

(1) University Struggle: Is there any reason for failures?

The main idea

Since I get in university many challenges come on my way.

Supporting idea 1:

First, time table or time management is the biggest problem for me and for all students.

Example 1:

began lessons at 8:00 o'clock, we can not take a rest to eat or refresh, being late all the time.

Supporting idea 2:

Second, department problems is also ^{another} some of the main problems that we face at university.

Example 2:

most of classrooms big and many of us are studying in a big number in small classes so you can't even find a place in case to be late.

Supporting idea 3:

Third, relationships between students and professors and this play a big role in university.

Example 3:

There are some professors who do not consider students as adults and they keep punishing them not all but the most.

Concluding sentence:

Finally, I can say that may the administration take some demands into consideration and to succeed you might suffer.

Reformulate your concluding sentence.

Student 8: A.S

Please, take some time to fill in the following checklist to see whether you accomplished these parameters or not

	The statements	Yes	No
1	I could formulate the main idea	✓	
2	My main idea responds directly to the assigned topic	✓	
3	I could provide 03 supporting ideas at least	✓	
4	I could provide one example for every supporting idea	✓	
5	I provided a concluding sentence	✗	✓
6	I could provide complete sentences	✗	✓

Student 4: A.N

Is university worth it all?

College can offer happy experiences, fond memories, and the best time ever for most student, but there is always some challenges that may come our ways.

↔ For me as a foreign language student. First of all, university is academically challenging because sometimes

I can not even get what the teachers say, maybe because they talk very fast or I just have got a problem with my listening skills but what I am sure about is that I have a very low level of vocabulary and that do really stress me all the time. In addition, honestly I feel that the financial situation of the students like me is rapidly getting worse.

Even though I take money from my parents and I have a grant as all the Algerian university students but sometimes it does not meet the need, so I am obliged to spend money on transportation, to buy food for myself, and sometimes to make researches about some anonymous themes. In addition, I really have difficulties in time management, adding to wasting my time waiting for means of transportation to arrive, I really get problem in balancing my academic work and my social life. Next, in my university career, I face a lack of time + sometimes I do not even have time to get food. We all know that the main reason to go to university is to get an academic qualification, but

personally, I think that the social side of things and developing as a person are equally important. ^I ~~in~~ ^{at} university, we are left to our own devices unlike in the previous levels where we were told what to do and how to do it; Add to that, it is important to socialise and meet new friends and that's my dilemma! maybe for me it takes just longer than other people. In the end, the most known problem that I face in my university life is "Depression", which comes as a conclusion of all the previous struggles adding to the stress about final marks.

Finally, even when I can get stressed to the limit sometimes, but the good times outweigh the bad ones.

Student 4: A.N

Editing Checklist

Editing Checklist

Thank you for taking time to check whether you provided the appropriate criteria for writing a good paragraph (format, organisation, grammar and mechanics, and sentence structure) and to edit your draft.

1. **FORMAT: My paragraph has a title and an indentation.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

2. **ORGANISATION: My paragraph has a topic sentence, 3 supporting sentences (at least), and a concluding sentence.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

3. **My topic sentence has a topic and a controlling idea.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

4. **My paragraph is backed by examples.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

5. **There are transitional words between sentences.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

6. **GRAMMAR and Mechanics : Commas are used where necessary.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

7. **Verb tenses are used appropriately.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

8. **SENTENCE STRUCTURE: All sentences contain at least one subject, one verb, and express a complete thought.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Student 9: A.M

Do you think that University is Wonderland?

✓ I believe that nothing is easy in life, and as a university student, I have my own problems and challenges that I daily face. They are mainly money, transport and social contact problems.

To start with, the difficulty that maybe the majority has ^{is} "money". ^{such as} Actually, almost everything at university costs money: food, drinks, researches and even the way to it by buses which daily repeat and makes my pocket empty. ^{Re-write}

Thus, I live 20 miles away from university so I have to go through the same boaring road for 45 minute every day! Twice. It's like hell for me, especially that I have to go with ~~A~~ other buses with money to reach it, so it's about an hour and some. ^{During} There is also winter, when I have to wake up at 6:00 to reach the bus at 7:00 when it's dark at night.

Moreover, these two situations above usually make the person less popular, i.e. who wants to be a friend for real - not fake - with a poor girl who keep moving and has no time for friends time in her scedual? here is my third issue: communication! I'm doing a great job in keeping shy and silent, while I have to let it go.

As a conclusion, there is always something that matters with me at university, ruining it for me, including some specific things like money, transport and contacts, but I'm getting stronger because what does not kill you makes you stronger.

Editing Checklist

Student 9: A.M

Editing Checklist

Thank you for taking time to check whether you provided the appropriate criteria for writing a good paragraph (format, organisation, grammar and mechanics, and sentence structure) and to edit your draft.

1. **FORMAT: My paragraph has a title and an indentation.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No
2. **ORGANISATION: My paragraph has a topic sentence, 3 supporting sentences (at least), and a concluding sentence.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No
3. **My topic sentence has a topic and a controlling idea.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No
4. **My paragraph is backed by examples.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No
5. **There are transitional words between sentences.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No
6. **GRAMMAR and Mechanics : Commas are used where necessary.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No
7. **Verb tenses are used appropriately.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No
8. **SENTENCE STRUCTURE: All sentences contain at least one subject, one verb, and express a complete thought.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles:

☒ Yes

☐ No

My University Experience (Not as expected).

Usually students think that the baccalaureate exam is a pass ticket to the place of their dreams called the university but the reality is not the same. Personally, my university life is full of challenges that I was not expecting. The first one is that I have a poor time management due to an over changed timetable of classes. Normally, our classes start from 8 to 11:30 o'clock without having a pause time between them. ^{this fact} which leaves me feeling tired after I finish them. As a result to that, I cannot practise my hobbies and I tend to procrastinate my work more often. Then, I struggle with the stress of the studies, which become my nightmare over time because in addition to the stress of exams and the daily tasks that we are obliged to do, my fear of public speaking gets the best of me when it comes to oral presentations that are so important in our speciality. Last but not least, the fact of transferring universities affects my studies in a way that trying to adapt with my new teachers and colleges while trying to follow what they have studied before leaves me behind the normal schedule of lessons. Finally, it is logical for everyone of us to experience this kind of problems in order to get a good education and assure a good future so I am hoping that I stay motivated and focus on the bright side of the university more because it is the recipe to success.

Student 29: C.S

Student 29: C.S

Editing Checklist

Thank you for taking time to check whether you provided the appropriate criteria for writing a good paragraph (format, organisation, grammar and mechanics, and sentence structure) and to edit your draft.

1. FORMAT: My paragraph has a title and an indentation.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

2. ORGANISATION: My paragraph has a topic sentence, 3 supporting sentences (at least), and a concluding sentence.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

3. My topic sentence has a topic and a controlling idea.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

4. My paragraph is backed by examples.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

5. There are transitional words between sentences.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

6. GRAMMAR and Mechanics : Commas are used where necessary.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

7. Verb tenses are used appropriately.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☒ No

8. SENTENCE STRUCTURE: All sentences contain at least one subject, one verb, and express a complete thought.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

University life: Is it an obstacle?

Student 26: H.W

The time ~~students~~ spends at university is a delightful experience for them, but they also face numerous ~~problems~~ while completing their education. The situation of every student is different from one another. However, some common challenges are seen that almost every student face and which I have been through. To begin with, the pressure of studies is what I've always been facing especially at university. Teachers give up a lot of homeworks and presentations that have to be done all together at a short amount of time also. The timetable is really full than the one we used to have in high school, which makes me very occupied and exhausted physically and mentally. To follow, the lack of money at university is almost everybody's issue because of cost of transport and meals, since the university is so far from home I have to take a bus or car everyday and also get hungry and have to buy food. A rather worse is the delayed scholarship that never comes at time and not even enough for me and others. Most important, is trying to socialize; finding friends at university is very hard and picking the right ones is harder. In addition, of the difficulty of being an active member in class in fear of being judged by other or I mess up. To sum it all up, overcoming all university challenges and obstacles improves our general growth and how we socially interact with others, which effectively improves our relationships and career.

uncountable noun.
no S

after super
very long
sentences.

do write

2 day
long
sentences

Student 26: H.W

Editing Checklist

Editing Checklist

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Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes ✓

☐ No

2. **ORGANISATION: My paragraph has a topic sentence, 3 supporting sentences (at least), and a concluding sentence.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes ✓

☐ No

3. **My topic sentence has a topic and a controlling idea.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes ✓

☐ No

4. **My paragraph is backed by examples.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes ✓

☐ No

5. **There are transitional words between sentences.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes ✓

☐ No

6. **GRAMMAR and Mechanics : Commas are used where necessary.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No ✗

7. **Verb tenses are used appropriately.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes ✓

☐ No

8. **SENTENCE STRUCTURE: All sentences contain at least one subject, one verb, and express a complete thought.**

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☐ Yes

☒ No ✓

Student 8: A.S

University Struggle! Is there any Room for fairness?

Challenges and struggles are part of everyone's life. I face many problems. Since I get in university ^{and} many challenges come on my way. First, time table is the biggest problem for all students, we began lessons at 08:00 o'clock. So we being late all the time, and we don't have much time to take a rest.

Second, Department problems is also a major problem because of the needs of classrooms, we found a big number of students study in small classrooms.

Third, relationships between students and professors. We see that many professors consider students as children not as adults. They punish them for not doing homework or being late as they don't know the challenges that we face.

Finally, I can say that may the administration take our demands into consideration and reach the good situation for our university life.

Editing Checklist

Thank you for taking time to check whether you provided the appropriate criteria for writing a good paragraph (format, organisation, grammar and mechanics, and sentence structure) and to edit your draft.

1. FORMAT: My paragraph has a title and an indentation.

Plusieurs réponses possibles.

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2. ORGANISATION: My paragraph has a topic sentence, 3 supporting sentences (at least), and a concluding sentence.

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Plusieurs réponses possibles.

☒ Yes

☐ No

المخلص: تهدف هذه الدراسة البحثية إلى إبراز دور التقويم التكويني و التقويم الذاتي في تدريس مقياس التعبير الكتابي لطلبة السنة الأولى ليسانس في السياق الجامعي الجزائري. فيما حاول العديد من الباحثين المساهمة في ترقية تعليم محتوى و مهارات هذا المقياس من خلال الإعتماد على أساليب كالتغذية الراجعة، إلا أنهم في العديد من المرات أغفلوا الدور الفعال الذي يمكن أن يلعبه الطالب في عملية التقويم، لذلك فإن هذه الدراسة تسعى إلى إظهار التأثير الإيجابي للتقويم التكويني وذلك بإشراك الأستاذ الباحث و المتعلمين على حد سواء في عملية التقويم من خلال تولي المتعلمين لمهمة تقويم أدائهم خلال عملية الكتابة لبلوغ الهدف التعليمي، وكذا استعمال مؤشرات الطلبة التعليمية للاستجابة لاحتياجاتهم التعليمية. تجدر الإشارة إلى أن هذه الدراسة ركزت أيضا على الدور المهم لعملية التبصر في إحداث التغيير الإيجابي في أداء الأستاذ الجامعي نظرا لتركيزها على تحديد النقائص وإيجاد الحلول المناسبة لتدريس فعال.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التقويم التكويني، التقويم الذاتي، التبصر، التعبير الكتابي

Résumé: Cette étude de recherche vise à promouvoir l'évaluation formative et l'auto-évaluation dans l'enseignement du module d'expression écrite aux étudiants de première année de licence dans le contexte universitaire algérien. Bien que de nombreux chercheurs aient tenté de faire progresser l'enseignement des compétences rédactionnelles en s'appuyant sur des techniques telles que la rétroaction, ils ont négligé le rôle efficace que l'apprenant pourrait jouer dans le processus d'évaluation. Par conséquent, l'objectif de cette étude de recherche est de mettre en évidence l'impact positif de l'évaluation formative grâce à l'engagement des deux; le chercheur praticien et les apprenants dans tout le processus d'évaluation. Les apprenants ont assumé la responsabilité d'évaluer leurs performances pendant le processus d'écriture afin d'atteindre l'objectif d'apprentissage. De même, les indicateurs d'évaluation des apprenants ont été exploités pour répondre à leurs besoins. Cette étude s'est concentrée sur le rôle important de la réflexion dans le changement de la performance du chercheur praticien grâce à son potentiel à identifier les lacunes et à y remédier efficacement.

Mots clés : l'évaluation formative, l'auto-évaluation, la réflexion, l'expression écrite

Summary: This research study aims at promoting formative and self-assessment in teaching the module of written expression to first year bachelor students in the Algerian university context. Though many researchers attempted to advance teaching the writing skills by relying on techniques such as feedback, they neglected the effective role that the learner can undertake in the process of assessment. Therefore, the endeavour of this research study is to highlight the positive impact of formative assessment through the engagement of both; the practitioner researcher and the learners in the whole process of assessment. The learners assumed the responsibility of assessing their performance during the writing process in order to achieve the learning objective. In the same vein, evidence from the assessment process was used to cater for their needs. This study focused on the significant role of reflection in making change to the practitioner researcher's performance thanks to its potential in identifying weaknesses and addressing them effectively.

Keywords: formative assessment, self-assessment, reflection, written expression