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Problem-Solving Strategies and the Process Writing

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This thesis is dedicated with gratitude to the memory of the late Bouamrane Ali, professor of linguistics, may God almighty bless his soul.
Abstract

The present research provides fresh lens for viewing the writing products of second year university students as a stepping stone for the sake of investigating their thinking skills. Their search to find the appropriate word, reformulating it, adapting it to their own semantic and expressive intentions, making it their own was looked at in detail. The assumption was that students use identifiable strategies for composing such as writing more and paying attention to ideas, thinking ahead of grammar, and eliminating a sentence when unsure about grammar, translating from L1; furthermore, these strategies follow a development sequence and therefore an understanding of such strategies can be of great help in understanding the students failure in conveying a written message. Yet, if certain strategies are successful, they will be directly applied to the teaching of writing, or at least they will help ascertain why certain students succeed while others fail.

Concurrently, the research observed the change in the second year students’ writing proficiency when not only the “right” approach was implemented but also an effective feedback was provided at each stage of the composing process. The interest has shifted from the traditional emphasis on correcting and commenting a finished product to a focus That is, instead of correcting the errors, we focused on the individual, personal, private comments that the teacher gives to each and every student. What impact would that particular feedback have on the students writing, and how the responses affect the evolutions of the students’ perceptions of writing quality and their composing processes? How would they react when they receive teachers’ feedback? If they react positively, what new strategies have they built either to compose successfully or to avoid being continuously corrected? If they react negatively, how would the teachers tailor their feedback so that it would elicit better composing skills and ultimate proficiency?

The main aim of the thesis is to explore the effects of the process writing approach on the second year university of Oran students’ written output. The results showed that the students of the experimental outperformed the students of the control group. Furthermore, peer-feedback proved to be a significant tool for the development of the informants’ writing skill. A weaker, albeit significant, relationship was found between the interestingness of topics and students’ motivation which did not necessarily result in improved writing performance. The results are discussed from the perspective of pedagogical implications and writing assessment.

Keywords: Process writing -Product writing- Writing strategies- experiment- Experimental groups- Control group- Peer-feedback- Generating- focusing- structuring- drafting- Re-viewing- Self-regulation- Self-efficacy- Errors
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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Writing is a potentially powerful educational tool for the learners who are expected to express themselves all along their studies. Expressive writing, as defined in James Britton (1975) is “personal.” It is almost like thought made visible, and is close to notion like “inner speech” and “writer-based prose”. When writing expressively, students are much more concerned with getting their thoughts out and getting them down than with making mistakes. The actual state of our second year students is that they have a great difficulty in getting their messages across. Deprived of this essential tool, these students will be facing difficulties to convey their ideas at much higher levels.

Learning to write well requires frequent practice. Teachers who create opportunities for students to write about topics that they care about, for varied audiences, and for a range of purposes help provide students with practice they need. To Hillocks, (1995) frequent writing not only builds familiarity and comfort, but contributes to fluency in generating and revising ideas as well. Frequent practice writing for a range of audiences and purposes builds a foundation of knowledge about the expectations for written products. Moreover, it encourages students to make better decisions about how to approach new writing tasks. However, our students seem to be writing for the same audience all the time, and having the same goal in mind: to please the teacher so as to have a good mark.

Because of the complexity of writing, teachers have approached this skill differently. They have viewed it as a set of stages where the learners do particular tasks. Researchers find that students who have learnt to write as a process of planning, drafting, and revising in stages perform better than students who have been taught any other way. They also address writing tasks more purposefully and explore a wider range of options than students who have not been taught through a process approach.

In our university, the approach being used is the product-focussed approach. The main concern, among others, of the product writing is to prevent students from producing errors. Errors (or mistakes, or derailment, or awkward discourse) in writing are avoided by providing learners with feedback which most of the times consists of either underlining those errors or by marking the composition. Furthermore, this feedback occurs at the last step of the students writing process. Teachers also provide models either in their original version or adapted or
simplified in the purpose that students would imitate. Guided writing is scheduled so as to consolidate the targeted model.

Many researchers and also practitioners, confess that this ideal objective is unattainable in practice. He adds that students do not learn from their errors. If they do, the more mistakes they make, the more they would learn. Yet, common experience proves that the students who make the most mistakes are the ones who learn the least.

The case study of the present research involves a population of 90 students. They are second year students. They completed the first year successfully with different grades and levels. Some of them are repeating the written expression module. Most of them come from the wilaya of Oran, yet others come from the wilayas of Tiaret, Mascara, Ain Temouchent and Relizane.

But how often do our students write? How much time does the second year program allow the teachers of written expression to practise the skill of writing? Who are the teachers of written expression? How did they cope with the first year program? What assumptions of good writing do they hold? What practices are they familiar with? These and other variables are prerequisites for a thorough research. Therefore, we will devote a considerable amount of time in the consideration of the following points: (a) students’ needs, (b) students’ current level of foreign language proficiency, (c) students’ prior writing experiences, (d) students’ cultural background, (e) students’ attitudes toward writing, (f) teachers’ professional training and experience, (g) teachers’ attitudes, (h) group size and composition, (i) time allotted to writing.

The present research provides fresh lens for viewing the writing products of second year university students as a stepping stone for the sake of investigating their thinking skills. Their search to find the appropriate word, reformulating it, adapting it to their own semantic and expressive intentions, making it their own will be looked at in detail. The assumption is that students use identifiable strategies for composing such as writing more and paying attention to ideas, thinking ahead of grammar, and eliminating a sentence when unsure about grammar, translating from L1; furthermore, these strategies follow a development sequence and therefore an understanding of such strategies can be of great help in understanding the students failure in conveying a written message. Yet, if certain strategies are successful, they will be directly applied to the teaching of writing, or at least they will help ascertain why certain students succeed while others fail.
Concurrently, the research will observe the change in the second year students’ writing proficiency when not only the “right” approach is implemented but also an effective feedback is provided at each stage of the composing process. The interest has shifted from the traditional emphasis on correcting and commenting a finished product to a focus on the students’ process of composing and comprehending the nature of their writing for “writing is personal skill with each individual having his or her own specific problems” (Reid, 1993). That is, instead of correcting the errors, the research will focus on the individual, personal, private comments that the teacher gives to each and every student. What impact would that particular feedback have on the students writing, and how the responses affect the evolutions of the students’ perceptions of writing quality and their composing processes? How would they react when they receive teachers’ feedback? If they react positively, what new strategies have they built either to compose successfully or to avoid being continuously corrected? If they react negatively, how would the teachers tailor their feedback so that it would elicit better composing skills and ultimate proficiency?

Second Year University students are accustomed with the product writing. Teachers use various techniques based on this approach while gearing their attention towards the ultimate product which should be error-free, - ignoring therefore the process of composing that the novice writers go through. The problem of these learners in writing becomes a handicap since they are frequently evaluated on the basis of writing products they produce in response to various writing topics in a variety of circumstances. Henceforth, the question that is raised is: is the process writing the solution to our second year university students’ problem in writing?

To this question, the following points are hypothesised:

- if the process writing is implemented, the students thinking behaviour and attitude will change, and that will give rise to a more communicatively understandable, and therefore less academically rejected final product.

- if the students’ writing behaviour is analysed, a change may take place in the students’ thinking process when writing.

- if the students’ are made conscious of what goes wrong in their thinking process when writing, they will build up better, more effective strategies.
The research would have the taste of an unfinished work if the process writing were dealt with and not the product writing. Therefore, a significant importance will be given to this approach. However, the aim of the research is not to prefer one approach to the other, but rather to adhere to the notion of “both-and” instead of “either-or”.

Is the process writing the solution to our second year students’ problem in writing? Such a pertinent question to a problem that even the fourth year students encounter; let alone the first year students, gives the present research originality. Furthermore, students generally and second year ones particularly, find written comments problematic. How do our learners react when they receive teachers’ feedback? How do these responses affect the evolutions of students’ perceptions of text quality and their composing processes? The answer to these questions will help teachers to listen and respond carefully to students’ concerns about their progress or difficulties, and offer reasonable suggestions in response to these concerns.

We will have a diary where we keep record of every step we go through. Every input we provide will be followed by comments on how successful or unsuccessful it goes. A corpus will be collected to study students’ output.

Writing is a complex cognitive activity requiring a set of processes and strategies. Strategies are deliberate cognitive action; when elicited for a conscious report, they can be of interest for what they reveal about the way writers produce texts. In order to describe the writing process of our students as well to obtain information on individual variation in the use of “strategies” and “techniques”, there seems to be an obvious need to gain insight into the learners’ thoughts. This involves thinking about the process, planning for it, monitoring it, and self-evaluating after the completion of the process. (O’Malley, 1985). In order to capture the learners’ strategies and their reactions to the feedback they receive, report data such as interviews and questionnaires will be employed, as well as a mentalistic data- collecting techniques: think-aloud protocols.

Second year students will be also asked to have diaries where they will put down every problem they come across when composing. Teachers of written expression will be asked about the kind of feedback they provide, and its effectiveness. The students’ behaviour will also be studied in American civilization papers to see whether the learners see writing as a skill that help them to communicate.
Chapter 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Because it involves the development of a design idea, the capture of mental representations of knowledge, and of experience with subject, (Zamel, 1992), writing is among the most complex human activity. The interlocking processes of writing by novice and expert writers have been studied by such diverse disciplines as cognitive psychology, stylistics, rhetoric, text linguistics, critical literary, hypertext theory, second language acquisition and writing pedagogy. From such a wealth of approaches and themes, the present research will be concerned with what is immediately relevant to the teaching and learning of writing in the specific context: university of Oran, second year students.

This chapter aims at setting the context of investigating written learner English at the university level. A descriptive and analytical undertaking, such a project needs to be informed by general language acquisition theory, research design considerations and specifically by the results of research in writing pedagogy.

This chapter will first start with a general introduction to second language acquisition (SLA) research and writing theory so as to set the context of the issues to be dealt with. The notion and practice of product and process oriented writing will come after. The aim is to narrow down the scope of investigation so as to systematize what is known about the practice of writing pedagogy, i.e., assignments, course goals, and writing instruction procedures. This chapter will also focus on the interaction between teacher and learner, and among students so as elaborate on revision strategies, and the role of peer revision. The literature review will deal with the theory and practice of feedback that students receive on their scripts. The next section will present the different approaches to writing. Then revision will receive an important part because it is believed to play a major function in the writing process.
1.1 SLA Research and Writing Theory

1.1.1 Theory and Practice in Language Education

Whilst studying SLA research and trends, Ellis (1998) points out that much of the effort was either theoretical or pedagogical. He adds there should be a model whereby the communication between researchers and teachers can take the form of one of the three types:

- Research informing pedagogy
- Research informed by pedagogy
- Research and pedagogy interacting to address theoretical and practical concerns

Ellis (1998) favours the last type. He emphasises the last approach and argues: any SLA theory can only be applicable by language pedagogy if it is relevant to it: the good of the theory must be compatible with the aims of teaching (Ellis, 1998:51).

In the discussion of teacher professionalism, Brumfit made a proposal in 1995. When presenting his views on British education policy and on the needs for integrating global SLA research with local observation, he states: “for classroom practice descriptions to be significant, one needs to consider the classroom variables in different language teaching contexts” (Brumfit, 1995:41). What Brumfit means by this is that educational research needs a systematic program rather than focusing on fragmented projects.

The systematic program of investigation ought to have three strands. The first strand will deal with classroom practice in order to describe such variables as events, attitudes and policies as well. The second one explains the findings of the first phase. Once the gathered data are analysed, theory needs to construct models to be able to adequately structure that knowledge (Brumfit, 1995:39-40). The third strand is mostly concerned with studies that are directed at the pedagogical processes. These studies, Brumfit adds, should make a clear-cut distinction between what ought to take place in education from what is actually happening there.
Larsen-Freeman (1991) believes that for a field to arrive at valid conclusions on the learner of a language, it is highly important to study and describe the learner first. When it comes at considering the learner, she believes that variables such as learner age, language learning aptitude, attitude and motivation, personality, cognitive issues and learning strategies are not influential variables when it comes to tackle the differential success of acquiring a second language issue. Larsen-freeman (1991) thinks that future research on the one hand and language education on the other need to corroborate findings and above all test hypotheses as learning is gradual not linear.

Freeman and Long (1991) tackle another issue which deals with the need to study the ways in which instruction affects SLA. The two researchers believe that linguistic input sequence and frequency are required to “operationalize” together with those tasks that learners are exposed to in the classroom so that this process can be studied. Once these variables are studied, SLA theory will be able to integrate action research findings initiated by the teacher (Larsen-Freeman & Long, (1991); Ellis, (1995); Dornyei, (1997)).

The tasks the language educator faces both in teaching and in doing research and the tasks the language learners perform share may features. They both aim at integrating what is already known with what is being learnt about the situation or the language item being studied. However, there are also differences, and there are crucial. Prabhu (1995) suggests a four-component model to describe the interface between language learning theory and practice.

The four components are:

- The ideational that is the concepts and processes of language learning
- The operational, the pedagogical practice
- The ideological that is the social variables
- The managerial namely the pedagogical decision-making (1995: 76)

As far as the operational component is concerned, Prabhu (1995) says that the contrast between teaching and learning is that while teaching can be planned and sequenced, learning follows a route based on mental processes that are difficult to observe.
1.1.2 The Input Hypothesis

For a successful acquisition to take place, certain optimal conditions must be fulfilled. This is the conclusion of many researches led by the one done by Krashen who introduced the very idea of input hypothesis.

To the input hypothesis (Krashen, 1995), to ensure full success in language acquisition, first and foremost there must be a comprehensible input. The input hypothesis comprises five hypotheses, but the present research will be most concerned with the affective filter hypothesis and the monitor hypothesis as they are most relevant for writing research.

The main concern of the monitor hypothesis is language production that is the ability to use language. That ability is a result of a certain competence based on the learner’s acquisition. Learning aims at enabling the speakers and writers to “change the output of the acquired system before they speak or write” (Krashen, 1985: 2).

Krashen (1985) states that the user is required to be aware of the importance of accuracy and the rule stating correct forms should be present. Only then, would the monitor or editor operate Krashen hypotheses.

The main concern of the affective filter is the learner’s feelings. The affective filter hypothesizes that if the learner’s mental block is lowered; the comprehensible input will become intake. This will occur when “the speaker is self confident, and when a potential failure to produce the necessary language is not seen at risk” (Krashen, 1985). Forcing the beginners to speak will only create anxiety, Larsen freeman (1991) says. Krashen adds that in order to lower the affective filter, the speaker must focus on the message.

Most researchers concluded that the previous model of language acquisition was based on Krashen’s survey and evaluation of theoretical work in applied linguistic. It was also based on investigations of skill-specific empirical research, and the motivating subsequent work and implications of hypothesis in language education. This is particularly seen in Krashen’s summary of writing research (Krashen, 1984) and his recommendation for reading-based program (Krashen, 1993).

As far as the writing study is concerned, and in his generic SLA hypothesis of comprehensible input held for the development of writing skills, Krashen (1984) suggests that
extended reading is necessary for organizational and grammatical improvement to occur. A wealth of case studies that he analysed confirms his hypothesis. The acts of planning, rereading, scanning, revising for clarification take place more often and with better results in good writers who are found of reading. Less able writers are reported to have much more difficulty in transferring what is known as writer-based prose. More apt writers had less difficulty to consider reader’s needs. In his conclusion Krashen says that despite formal instruction of sentence level rules can help improvement in writing, for significant and successful writing development to occur, this may only be “a complement to receiving comprehensible input via reading” (Krashen, 1984:72).

In the reading-focussed work, Krashen (1993) presents the framework and application of a program that allows the extensive use of what he called “free voluntary reading. In his study of the relationship between writing instruction and learning, he states that styles do not result from more writing practice but from more reading as the rules of formal writing are far too complicated. He disagrees with the idea that “we learn to write by actually writing (Krashen, 1993:73). He claims that improved writing quality, and the ensuing discovery of one’s style, is a result of frequent reading. In his encyclopaedic survey of FL teaching, Bardos (2000) suggests the integration of reading and writing as the processes involved in both (message identification, processing, comprehension, and expression) also become part of an individual’s overall experience (2000:160).

1.1.2.1 The Nature of Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are both considered as skills, products, or processes depending on the theoretical point of view (laBerge & Samuels, 1976). Yet, sometimes different people with different viewpoints have alternative definitions of reading and writing. For instance, for some, reading and writing are seen as complex unitary skills made up of numerous subskills acquired through instruction. For others, they are the products of skill acquisition, with comprehension and composition being the observable elements. Still others consider reading and writing as processes an individual undertakes to construct meaning from print or to construct meaning using print respectively. It is the view that teachers and practitioners have about reading and writing that influences therefore how these essential productive skills are taught.
Langer (1986) states that regardless of the researchers’ and practitioners’ descriptions, the interrelationships among the language arts are complex, not readily apparent and least of all clearly understood. And, yet today they are often taken for granted. To fully understand how reading and writing are connected, it is primordial first to discuss them separately and to look at their differences as well as their similarities.

Traditionally, reading and writing were viewed as basic skills treated as separate subjects in the schools. Reading is a receptive skill, whereas writing is expressive in nature. The ultimate goal of the teaching/learning process has always been to create skillful readers and writers.

1.1.2.2 The Skills of Reading and Writing

To acquire reading and writing, traditional arts programs used to support the notion of sequentially ordered reading and writing skills. The global skills of reading include word recognition and comprehension. The skills of writing, on the other hand, are more extensive and incorporate grammar, usage and spelling as well as matters of style and forms of discourse.

Language development through reading and writing is hierarchical in nature. Phrased in another way, the learner learns to recognize letters, before he learns to decode words. He also learns to write a sentence, and then he learns to write a paragraph. Yet, as far as reading is concerned, Dowing (1982) states that there is little evidence to support the idea that there exists a true hierarchy of skills.

So that reading and writing could be teachable, they necessitate breaking down into more manageable units. This is seen in William Gray’s (1960) skills model of reading. In fact, Gray proposes that individuals learn to read first by matching sounds to letters before progressing to whole-word identification. However, Gray believes that reading is a complex unitary skill made up of numerous subskills that not only are closely interrelated but also function simultaneously. Fluency in reading is gauged through instantaneous recognition of words without conscious effort (laBerge & Samuels, 1976).
Traditional models of writing also focus on the parts in relationship to the whole. The traditional paradigm’s features include the analysis of discourse into description, narration, exposition, and argument, the strong concern with usage (syntax, spelling, punctuation, and with style (economy, clarity, emphasis) (Richard Young, 1978:31).

Textbooks which are the primary influence in classroom instruction have perpetuated traditional instruction (Arthur Applebee, 1986). Through their pages, skills are listed and the complexity of writing is highlighted by lessons where written expression is broken down into components parts. Success in writing is measured by the application of the newly acquired skills. In theory, if the students know the rules of grammar, they will appropriately apply them when composing. In practice; however, Hillocks (1987) states that decades of research into the teaching of writing reveal that knowledge of grammatical rules alone does not improve one’s writing. There are even instances where though the students know the rules perfectly, they falter when writing. This is but another issue where the students are busy trying to transfer what they want to say forgetting for that while the rules of grammar.

1.1.2.3 The Relationship between Reading and Writing

What do word recognition and comprehension skills have in common with sentence construction, paragraph development, spelling, grammar, punctuation, or text structure? Various studies have attempted to show the correlation between the skills of reading and writing. Sandra Stotsky (1983) argues that many studies have tried to demonstrate that better reading comprehension and vocabulary scores were positively related to good quality writing. The more skillful readers appear the more skillful writers.

Most studies examining the influence of reading on writing and of writing on reading generally support the idea that growth in one area will probably carry over into the other. The concern of this research however is mainly the influence of reading on writing.

Zamel (1992) states that the complementary processes of writing and reading must be integrated. She believes that to fully understand what goes on in the writing mind, one must reflect on how writers interact with texts and readers. She suggests what researchers like Krashen (1984), Raimes (1992), Hansen (1987) propose, a fully integration of reading and
writing skills development. The integration of the two skills will enable L2 writers to experience how readers interact with texts. The processes of making meaning in reading, interacting with text, and raising awareness of readers’ goals will be among the analyzed factors for practical classroom application. Through these processes, Zamel adds, students can make the process of discovering the importance of goal and audience in writing more valid.

For classroom application, she suggests the following activities: logs, reactions, and sharing with other students. She says:

Because these activities allow students to actively engage and grapple with texts, to explore how and why texts affect them, they can make discoveries about what other readers do with texts they compose. They come to realize that if reading involves reconstruction, they must help guide readers of their own texts in that reconstruction...

(Zamel, 1992:481)

Richard-Amato (2003) believes that writing and reading are two parallel processes of meaning construction, drawing on a common repertoire of cognitive, communicative and linguistic strategies. In a writing task, be it an assessment task or a usual classroom activity the students find themselves confronted to a task where they assess themselves as readers-writers where they have to make the connection they find between their reading and the writing processes in terms of what the two processes require.

The two productive skills (Robinett, 1978:175) are reciprocal and mutually informative processes serving as input and output for each other (Tierney & Shanahan, 1996). So are they because the learners find themselves writing better on account of what they have read.
1.1.3 Writing Theories

Contrastive rhetoric which was proposed by Kaplan was the most influential paradigm of writing for decades. Traditionally, the contrastive rhetoric focused on the product of writing and established prescriptive approaches to the teaching of writing.

Kaplan (1983) states that English writers have the tendency to develop their thought in a linear fashion; proposing a thesis supporting it with evidence in sequentially presented topic sentences that are developed in unified paragraphs. He says that the aim of the writing pedagogy was to compare and contrast the text organizing patterns in the L1 and L2 and thus facilitate acknowledgment of differences. The technique usually used was to imitate paragraphs so that the pattern would be practised.

According to Raimes (1991) imitating paragraphs being the model then was the dominant approach up to the mid 70s. Then the focus shifted to the writer and the context of writing and thus to a more process oriented analysis of writing and writing pedagogy. This trend moves the emphasis on language as communication focusing teacher’s attention away from form as prescribed by controlled-traditional rhetoric to collaboration between teacher and student and among students themselves.

In 1981, Flower and Hayes developed a cognitive theory of writing processes, eliciting information directly from writers via thinking aloud protocols and observation (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996:91). Their influential work proposes a model that is based on 3 tenets:

- Processes of writing such as planning, organizing, reviewing, and evaluating often interact with each other
- Writing follows a goal the writer is aware of
- Processes are performed differently by experienced and inexperienced writers

Hayes and Flowers’ theory highlights the role of a task environment made up by a rhetoric problem and the text produced. Each of the three components of the writing process namely generating, translating and reviewing is controlled by a monitor.

Such a theory generated empirical research that focused on the issue: the thinking aloud protocol. The use of such means was heavily criticized. It was argued that the validity of the
Because there was an urgent need for theory building and for validating theory in research, the two researchers Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) came with a new perspective. Their theory avoids tackling factors characteristic of novice and expert writers. Instead they suggest that different models can describe different levels and contexts. Bereiter and Scardamalia ‘s theory aims at explaining how and why differences happen in experienced and inexperienced writers’ performances.

The two researchers’ theory is known as the two-process theory. In fact two models constitute the theory. The first model is called knowledge telling, and it involves the processes of inexperienced writers. The second model is named knowledge transforming. The two models have in common one peculiar feature: in both of them, the writer considers three main factors:

- Knowledge of content
- Knowledge of discussion
- Ideas of a writing assignment

Kaplan (1996) notes that the first factor is primarily a step by step operation. This operation is engaged when the writer starts gathering ideas and the needed vocabulary. The second encompasses the writer’s identification of a unique problem and a goal so that the writing becomes essentially a process to solve the rhetorical problem. It has to be noted that the first model describes the novice writer on the one hand; on the other hand the second model deals with the expert writer.

Silva (1990) argues that the development and above all the pedagogical application of these cognitive models meant a decreasing concern with error in English as a Second Language (ESL) and EFL. He continues: the emerging paradigm of the process approach called for a much more positive and encouraging setting, a workshop-like environment (1990:15).

During the nineties, there was a great deal of writing pedagogy and research, applying and critiquing both major traditions. Raimes (1991) notes that there was a general acknowledgment of the complexity of the composing process with individual research

This recognition implies that the field needs more data on novice and expert student, on the writer’s perspectives, on the writing process applied in various classroom setting, both in L1 and L2, on the social contexts of pedagogy, and on how teachers themselves may initiate research into their practice.

1.2 On the Approach Dichotomy: Process Versus Product

It is commonly agreed upon that what is known about the ethnography of student writing comes from the theory of L1 writing. However, in their proposed models researchers like Hamps-lyons (1986, 1989, 1990), Kaplan (1983), Leki (1995) and Silva (1993), attest that not all the features in L1 in the native language may be transferred to FL and SI writing. FL and SI writing theory is characterised by its binary nature of the process of writing and the product of writing the production of various types of discourse is said to go through a process which is affected by such factors as involvement with the topic, awareness of the writer’s individual rhetorical skills, interaction with a real audience, and how feedback on ideas presented in drafts is presented. These features are partly dependent on the individual writer’s own experience or lack of this experience in the L1 and also on the importance of writing or lack of this importance in the native culture. There are yet other important variables that require deep exploration because they too affect the process of producing various types of written discourse.

1.2.1 Research Methodology

A brief look at the recent history of writing research methodology shows the influential work of Krapels (1990). The work of this researcher which is considered as the state of the art focused on L2 research conducted in 1980. It aimed at corroborating the finding of L1 studies.
She reviews the researches conducted to design reliable models. From this point she sets her researches. The repertoire of L2 research models includes:

- Case studies that involved a few participants in one writing task.
- Studies that focus on females, advanced L2 students, undergraduates, native speakers of Spanish and Chinese, and students who were not chosen randomly (often the students enrolled in the researcher’s classes).
- Studies that report on tasks ranging from one to all required tasks in a course.
- Studies that investigate the discourse of narrative and expository writing.
- Studies that vary in type of topic and in time allowed for completion.
- Studies analyzing data from product and process orientation (based on Krapels, 1990: 48-49).

The repertoire of L2 composition findings includes claims such as the following:

- Limited competence in writing in English results from limited composing skills.
- Some composition processes of less skilled L2 writers share features of those of unskilled L1 writers.
- L1 writing processes transfer to L2.
- The processes of composition differ slightly in L1 and L2.
- In generating L2 writing, L1 is sometimes used.
- Some tasks and topics tend to trigger more L1 language use than do others (based on Krapels, 1990:49-50).

To conclude, Krapels (1990) sets an agenda for future studies. He suggests that more ethnographic research could deepen the understanding the processes as identified by the student writers themselves even though in such studies comparability is problematic. As research questions Krapels suggests that writing research focuses on the relationship between rhetorical preferences in the first language and the writing processes in the L2. The role that writing has in the L1 culture and its impact on L2 writing processes also needs to be investigated. Last but not least, the future researchers must tackle the issue of how different types of L1 writing acquisition and learning affect development in L2 writing processes.

To fully understand and evaluate the writing pedagogical issues, Silva (1990) thinks that teachers and researchers must first and foremost evaluate the approaches basing themselves
on a clear set of principles. Furthermore, they have to “conceptualize these approaches in a paradigm that takes into consideration the following items: the theory that underlies the approach, empirical research that supports the theory, and the validation of the approach (Silva, 1990:19).

Considering these three components, Silva (1990) says the evaluation of any writing pedagogical approach or set of procedures in the field of ESL composition must consider the actors and the acts of writing instructions, including the writer, the reader, the text (read or produced), the context (pedagogical and cultural), and the interaction (between actors and acts). Silva hopes that an evaluation like this will eventually result in a valid writing pedagogical theory and a “reliable research instrument for assessing how effective these approaches are. Only then will research and practice be able to establish and maintain high standard in the field (Silva, 1990:21).

1.2.2 Empirical Studies

Zamel (1992) states that the complementary processes of writing and reading must be integrated. She believes that to fully understand what goes on in the writing mind, one must reflect on how writers interact with texts and readers. She suggests what researchers like Krashen (1984), Raimes (1992), Hansen (1987) propose, a fully integration of reading and writing skills development. The integration of the two skills will enable L2 writers to experience how readers interact with texts. The processes of making meaning in reading, interacting with text, and raising awareness of readers’ goals will be among the analyzed factors for practical classroom application. Through these processes, Zamel adds, students can make the process of discovering the importance of goal and audience in writing more valid.

For classroom application, she suggests the following activities: logs, reactions, and sharing with other students. She says:

Because these activities allow students to actively engage and grapple with texts, to explore how and why texts affect them, they can make discoveries about what other readers do with texts they compose. They come to realize
that if reading involves reconstruction, they must help guide readers of their own texts in that reconstruction...

(Zamel, 1992:481)

What views teachers hold of the processes involved in making meaning have a great impact on the realization of such proposals. Caudrey (1996) conducts an electronical mail survey that aims at eliciting teachers’ answers. The major aim of the survey is to investigate how teachers define and apply processes and products in their own teaching.

The survey reveals that many teachers adopt an approach that combines the two elements: one that stresses that “the writing process is a means to an end” (Caudrey, 1996). According to many researchers this is but predictable, and it is in fact a positive finding.

It was found that other teachers apply the writing process is a rigid manner, sometimes with whole classes of students.

According to the respondents’ answers, there are instances where a singular process is being practised in other instances, however, there are many processes “encouraged to engage a more cyclical application of writing processes”.

Caudrey confesses that the sample of teachers involved in the survey was small and therefore the finding has to be sustained by other researchers. The practice of integrating various types of process approaches, the classroom sequences and syllabuses of these courses need further investigation, factors that the survey did not address.

These latter were the concern of researchers like Bloor and Saint John (1988), White (1988), Tsui (1996), and Davies (1988). These researchers were the first to believe in the emphasis of the need to integrate various types of process approaches, the classrooms sequences and syllabuses of these courses. These researchers have dealt with writing teachers who initiated task types and processes that provide insights into the “intricacies of process versus product”.

Bloor and St John have used English for special purposes (ESP) project writing task. They argue that this type of activity addresses the distinct need of the students involved and engages them in learning the language (Bloor & St John, 1980:73).
At two British universities, in their classroom, they assign their EFL student to write field specific reports that will be presented orally. This means that writing and speaking will be incorporated in an oral task. Bloor and St John (1980) assert that the task set, involved the following elements:

- A preparatory reading to set context and genres for the writing task;
- A specific purpose for reading;
- Specialized literature;
- And a procedural methodology that ensured that students were focusing on meaning (1980: 82).

The teacher’s main concern is to focus students’ attention on being readers and writers at the same time and at each phase of the production of the project they could ponder on task achievement.

Tsui (1996) reports a case study of writing ESL Chinese teacher Li who says that she was dissatisfied and frustrated as were many of her Hong Kong students with the method and technique she has been applying. The source of her frustration is the time consuming and often exhausting activities being used in the writing classes.

To track down the process and product of how teachers implemented a process approach, to tackle their frustration and to learn how to better teach ESL writing, Tsui has made a collection of data constituted by the teacher’s report, scripts by the students, observations of classroom and conference interactions, and students interviews and evaluations. The research reveals that Li first introduced process writing types of activities in her classes, then reverted to more to more traditional product type tasks and finally began to adopt modified versions of process-type tasks, showing a development in her skills and in her understanding of different students needs and skills. The research also reveals that the teacher finds herself in a situation in which she had to abandon what she planned and reacted to the needs of the students. She concludes that she has to be sure to be more flexible and more sensitive to the needs too.

Flexibility can sometimes prove taxing especially for non-native teacher (Medgyers, 1992, 1994). Albeit the teacher’s intervention in his own teaching orientation for the benefit of the learning outcome is of great importance, there is already research evidence of the need
for flexibility in the development of a writing course syllabus itself. This view is shared by many researchers among whom Davis is the most predominant.

Davis (1988) notes in his theoretical framework that the process of working out a genre-based syllabus in which students’ needs in terms of the discourse requirements of their respective fields were accounted for is an area that can benefit from collaboration between students and teachers. Davis shows that for L2 writers, writing is partly of capturing meaning about the world, and it is also an experience with which to learn about a language through writing (1988:131). In other words, Davies suggests flexibility with a duality of process and product. He states:

While doing a research, taking notes, formulating theses and gathering supporting evidence the L2 writer will gather information about the subject per se and the language with which to express knowledge about this subject.

(Davis, 1988:58)

Davis suggests an approach for both ESP and English for Academic purposes (EAP) students. He says that this approach needs integrate reading and writing. It also needs to focus on the texts types or genres that the students are exposed and are required to produce. The teacher should go in harmony with the development of the syllabus as he should engage in and open-ended collaborative analysis in order to provide the necessary experience in the target types of text (Davis, 1988:133). He focuses on the idea that to be aimful, any writing syllabus is required to stimulate confidence. According to many researchers, Davies writing approach emphasizes collaboration, yet it is doubtful that it would stimulate confidence.

Boughey (1997) tackles the idea of how activities designed for large groups of students enable them to integrate reading and writing. This is but a different type of collaboration. She studies thirty tertiary multilingual ESP students while taking part in one writing activity complemented by reading collections and studying handbooks. The researcher remarks that the teacher was able to provide more detailed feedback since the writing task was set up for groups of students. As for the students, the notion of audience was much less abstract. Add to this, they felt less shy which means that this approach provided more confidence. It must be
noted that had the task called for individual effort, the amount of research that the participants carried out would have been much smaller (Medgyers, 1994:85).

Most critics agree that Boughey’s conclusions seem well-founded. Writing as a part of a group can help students generate contest and better deal with the inherent problems of a large class. Most critics believe that if students have the option to choose writing tasks in which they would favour to work individually or as members, their reluctance to participate as members of a group can be minimized.

Singh (1992) proposes a model of a writing program that adopts the process approach. The peculiar feature of this model is that the three main steps must not be rigid but rather they can overlap or come in different order depending on the nature of the writing task or individual needs. The different stages are:

- Stage 1: planning
- Stage 2: drafting
- Stage 3: revising

Every step focuses on a set of functions and activities. In the first step, while planning the student not only generates ideas, surveys possibilities, decides on how to tackle the task but also how to order units and to choose suitable information. While drafting, the learner reviews his notes written in the first stage, and identifies the problem. Singh (1992) says:

> The overlap has already occurred in this phase because planning does not seem to include any writing. Yet, in this model, the second phase refers to text generated and it already includes a revising element in the problem identification activities.

Singh (1992:67)

In the third phase, by checking text, eliminating errors, and also by rewriting to add elements that enhance purpose and readership awareness, the writer does the revision of his
work. However, Singh seems to have given less importance to how the stages are performed by individual students and what the role of the teacher plays in his model. These two points need more elaboration according to Warschauer (1997).

Sullivan (1998) argues that most of the previously mentioned review of the products of processes has focused on studies conducted in “traditional off line classrooms”. In this kind of environment, the participants meet in regular sessions, discuss, debate, and negotiate face to face. They also write drafts, reflect on readings and on the provided feedback in student-teacher writing conference sessions that take place very often. Yet with the continuing technological development, the processes of writing are being affected. On-line classes are dedicated to writing skills development.

Warschauer (1997) has studied this new environment which is facilitated by “mediated collaboration”. Seven specific features to online communication are identified. The most important are: interaction can take place between many users; it is independent of time and place; it can be assessed across a distance.

Another researcher studied this type of environment empirically: Sullivan in 1998. From the classroom transcripts data, she uses, she finds out that the ethnically mixed class of university students engaged in more interaction as the computer-assisted setting fostered collaborative learning and social interaction.

She also finds that this did not improve language accuracy but it contributed to an increase in the quantity of language performance. She claims that interacting part of the time by computer helped the minority students have more valuable opportunities for self-exploration and expression.

The lack of triangulation in these researches Warschauer (1997) states renders the claims of the researchers needful for further validation.

1.3 Writing Pedagogy: From Theory to Practice

The writing theory that has been developed started applying its principles and views inside the classrooms. It did so first, by reflecting on syllabus and materials development and
then by describing and evaluating classroom procedures. Among the researchers who contributed in this field were Leki and Carson (1997). These two researchers were concerned with English for academic purposes and especially with the writing experiences in ESL and EFL language education. The main contribution of the researchers was to draw attention to the individual reader’s and writer’s need for simple and uncluttered text.

Researchers like Bello (1997), Cook (1996), Dickson (1995), Hoppert (1997), Kail (1988), Kerka (1996), Kirschenbaum (1998), Mayers (1997), and Ronesi (1996) express concern on such diverse issues in writing pedagogy as: general writing skills development, the ways in which reading and writing can be applied integratively for novice writers, the application of journal writing with adult learners, the setup and running of writing centres, and copying matters.

1.3.1 Composing for Communication

Raimes (1983) believes that writing is a cognitive activity that helps the learner find out what he wants. She states that the grammar and drill focused tradition of writing instruction failed to elicit real communication between real writers and readers. She remarks that the tasks labelled controlled composition did not facilitate composition as there was too much control.

During her career as a teacher of writing she has witnessed the frustration of her students (tertiary-level students of academic English) with sentence and paragraph writing. She offers three recommendations, each addressing a distinct part of the process instruction.

- The assignment for writing should not be reduced to some concrete or abstract theme or topic. The act of assigning must contain suggestions and guidance to complete it. Rather than linear, rigid entities, the process of prewriting, writing, and revising should be cyclical.
- Marking papers should not consist only of correcting grammatical errors, but should tackle the process of conferencing with students, explanation and praise.
- Reading and writing should be combined so that the learners would be enabled to predict and see that they really know a lot about textual and thematic development.
Activities like cloze-test or the ones that aim to develop a sense for tone of writing and word choice will turn the writing class into a composing and thinking class according to the same researcher.

(Raimes, 1983: 48)

Anderson (1988) who was greatly concerned with how ESP students of English as a SL working in specialized field were able to attain success during their university years and later in their chosen careers, approaches the process of composing and thinking from a science writing perspective. From a purely British social context, he claims that overwriting was a feature of much scholarly writing. When he reviewed the different researches that studied the acceptability of writing styles, complexity, content, and affiliation of scientific writing in English, and drawing on his own experience, he discovered that only a minority of authors produce clear and simple writing (Anderson, 1988:152).

Overwriting which is not defined by Anderson seems to be “a process whereby the scientist writer prefers the more complex to the simpler, the longer sentence to the shorter, a frequent use of the passive, and long nominal compound” Zinsser (1988:152). Anderson also suggests that teachers of this particular field need to assist their non-native learners in grasping the social and institutional contexts in which this register is used. The aim is to avoid using it for display of status instead of revealing knowledge (Anderson, 1998: 157).

Following Anderson’s path in addressing social and stylistic factors in ESP/ESL writing, Kroll (1991) investigates the main components of an ESL course. She focuses mainly on curriculum development, the syllabus design of a writing class, the role of reading, writing assignments and theoretical issues in feedback types, covering the full spectrum of relevant factors. She narrows down her research to tackle what may result in success and potential pitfalls for the participants. Her findings include that although writing is viewed as a process, it does generate a product whose success is not easy to predict. It hinges first and foremost on the student’s linguistic competence, his knowledge of the system, and his knowledge on how to address specific audience. She recommends:
Our real goal is to gradually wean our students away from us, providing them with strategies and tools for their continued growth as writers and for the successful fulfilment of future writing tasks they might face once they have completed their writing course with us.

(Kroll, 1991:261)

What ESL students will be able to achieve in the future can be achieved with the continued formal and informal development of the training of writing teachers (Kroll, 1991:261). Such training encompasses gathering reliable information on one’s own teaching, keeping abreast research in the field and also developing innovations. These innovations will build group dynamics with a writing course so that the community established there may be transferred to the professional communities where these students will seek audience recognition and response, kroll adds.

1.3.2 Group Work

In order to help U.S students in planning, time-tabling, and conducting a research, Zirinsky (1996) presents an extended piece of research paper where he finds out that fostering collaboration among the students improve the ensuing scripts. Zirinsky (1996) presents a process syllabus and involved groups of students at each phase of the process:

- The development of a research question, as opposed to an overall topic.
- The personalization of the research effort (meaning that students may need to understand how an expert, such as the writing teacher, goes about making a match between an editor’s call for papers and the writer’s own interest in a related question).
- The statement of the central thesis project.
- The use of sources of information.
- The planning and writing of the report.
- The peer-reading (students read each others’ papers and critiqued them as well).

As stated previously by Kroll (1991), Zirinsky (1996) claims that the process approach to writing can enable the students to develop sustainable skills for future experience.
Many researchers believe that the steps can be taken in both traditional and technological-enhanced programs. For instance, for traditional program, Young-Scholten (1994), and Blue (1988) adopted a writing centre context by turning part of the contact hours into individualized reading and writing development. Blue states that her U.K ESP students’ reactions were generally positive when they had an opportunity to participate in frequent one-to-one tuition and this factor seemed to result in more willingness.

For the technological-enhanced application, Sullivan and Pratt (1996) studied a traditional oral and a computer assisted classroom. They found out that in the computer classroom, there was less much teacher initiated and controlled discussion and all the students participated. In the oral class, only 50% participated. Students involved in peer response groups in the computer class tended to give more suggestions (Sullivan & Pratt, 1996:500).

Further researchers on the advantages of a computer assisted writing programs were done by Caudrey (1998) and Farrell (1989). Farrell focused on the procedures used in high school-writing program. Caudrey main concern was how teachers’ early interventions in the composition task of EFL university students shaped the views on revision.

From the classroom observation, Farrell found out that the project was advantageous because tutors had time and experience to observe how writers were developing their script and what types of problems they had. Furthermore, those writers were highly motivated by the technological tools.

The technique that Caudrey (1998) introduced with a small group of Danish university students in advanced writing course enabled him to monitor each student’s progress during draft sessions. Because he had access to every script while being developed, Caudrey could intervene when he felt help was needed. The researcher stated that the students were very satisfied though no qualitative or comparative analysis was done. However, some students reported that the noisy laboratory disturbed them a lot. The main criticism of this approach is that because the students know that their work is constantly “spied upon” at the keyboard they can experience even more serious writer’s block due to the affective filter which is high in these cases.

The effectiveness of this approach was provided by Caudrey when he compared the marks raters gave on three types of script namely:
The statistical overview showed that a small increase in the marks for scripts produced in the lab, the mean grade script written by the eleven students being 8.32 on 13 point scale, as opposed to 7.54 in the single draft and 7.96 in the traditional revision class. To validate the efficacy and potential drawbacks of the approach, researchers believe that further research is needed.

1.3.3 The Baseline Study

As opposed to the approaches to writing pedagogy in the classroom and the empirical research that have studied the factors that contribute to success in writing, the Baseline study is a Hungarian study that reported on task and text types currently used in secondary EFL.

The cross-sectional baseline study (Fekele, Mayor, & Nikolov, 1999) aims mainly at assessing the language teaching and testing situation in the country’s secondary schools. Nikolov’s classroom observation project (1999) tackles a writing instruction issue namely investigating the current practices of EFL teachers in incorporating writing tasks.

First, it was reported that the most frequent writing tasks observed in 118 classes were based on school learning exam test techniques such as translation and gap filling. It was found out that the overall results are far from reassuring. The situation was not positive in the writing related section of the “classroom observation project” either. Nikolov states:

This finding lends some support to the claim that examination techniques exercise a washback effect on what is going on in the classroom: if exams incorporate translation and gap-filling, teachers will tend to favour these types of tasks in their classes, too.

(Nikolov, 1999:233)
The table that listed the writing tasks observed through the three years included copying, filling in data, arranging words into sentences and sentences into paragraphs (with paragraphs arranged into larger passages observed once). These kinds of activities do complement and improve grammar and organisational skills. They were meant to elicit students’ manipulation of texts given. However, they hardly result in the development of a writing attitude needed for improving over the language in the written mode of expression.

It was reported that the aim of this study was not meant to collect information on how written tasks were developed as part of the syllabus, or what the role of groups of students was in the various stages of the writing process, or even how students received various types of feedback on their writing. Fekele states:

> The task and text type distribution information, coupled with the results on classroom management, on large use, and on the other skill areas, indicated that writing pedagogy was not a high priority in these classes and the traditional grammar-translation method impacted this skill’s treatment in the classes observed.

Fekele (1996:114)

1.4 Revision: Writer and Reader Shaping the Text

Raimes (1983) says that in the 1990s, there was a general focus on what goes on in the intricate interplay between how the student writer construes of theme, organization, and audience and how the teacher reader reassesses these notions. Such a huge, interesting field will be the area of focus of classroom practice and research. This area has continued to shape the way new generations of writers and readers approach the tasks of writing for decades.

Traditionally, revision is seen as an add-on after a sequence of clearly defined or pre-defined steps. This approach has proved useful for many students and teachers styles and preferences. This kind of individual, isolationist approach to the need and nature of revision
has proved ineffective with limitations to say the least. The following section will deal with a series of studies that focuses on revision so as to clarify the concepts that are involved in.

### 1.4.1 Revision for Grammatical Accuracy

Frodesen (1991), while studying the different views process and product oriented writing instruction had on the role of grammatical accuracy in ESL composition, highlights two major variables: learners’ attitudes and contexts. He states that to have an optimally successful writing program, teachers need to develop in the student the notion of accuracy with minimal terminology. He presents four main groups of activities that would assist learners build revision skills for grammatical accuracy. The following table summarizes the system of these groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main group of activities</th>
<th>Main goal</th>
<th>Related tasks and techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text analysis</td>
<td>Develop writing and reading</td>
<td>Distinguishing between clause types, selecting texts for studying article use, summarizing findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided writing practice</td>
<td>Solve problems diagnosed in individual learners</td>
<td>Dictation, text elicitation text conversion text completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing</td>
<td>Develop awareness of errors</td>
<td>Error detection, Correction, Read-aloud technique, Algorithms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher correction and feedback on errors</td>
<td>Identify patterns of errors</td>
<td>Keeping errors logs, conferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1.1:** Activities for Grammatical Accuracy (based on Frodesen, 1991: 266-275)

For Frodesen, revision is primarily a means that arises from a need to eliminate error. Therefore, the major goal is to help the learners polish the text being written so that their
awareness may later be used in the pre-composing stages. Frodesen adds: in selecting and developing grammar oriented activities for the classroom, the teacher should always bear in mind the students’ needs and background as well as the demands of the writing tasks (1991:275).

The error free composition is the end product. Yet, this task may be interpreted differently by the students. They may direct their attention to revising with or without attention to grammatical accuracy.

1.4.2 Revision for Text Creation

Lane (1993) explains that his major aim is to inculcate in his readers the daily experience that they are creating when they are writing. Most of all, they are doing so especially in revising what they are writing. The aim of Lane’s collection of revision techniques - After the End- has one aim: to share with the reader the discovery that when the students revise, they can see better. This realization is the source of much personal and collective benefit.

Most researchers find that Lane approaches the theme with a revolutionary idea when he states: when we write the imaginary “the End” of any text, it really is just the beginning (Lane, 1993:57).

Lane utterly disagrees with the lock step fashion which views revision as one of seven rigid processes. He, in fact, demystifies the act of revising and turns it into a flexible route to achieving goals. The following table contrasts tradition to the innovation Lane brought
Table 1.2: Lane’s Innovations Brought to the Process of Revision (Lane, 1993)

As it is shown, revising takes place at each major theoretical juncture of writing. For instance, in brainstorming the monitor may already revise what gets elicited when a theme is mapped out, branches may be crossed out and new ones maybe inserted. This would result in brainstorming new ideas that would be inserted in the map, leading directly to editing, and so forth.

It is a self-help resource that the writer uses in producing the main text. Lane structures the techniques around key processes in becoming flexible writers. Lane defines and exemplifies revision micro-strategies that language teachers can use in their classes. He uses terms like snapshots and thoughtshots. He says:
Begin by explaining to students that writers have a magic camera that they can point at the world and create snapshots that contain smells and sounds as well as colours and light.

Lane (1993:35)

Lane’s idea is to make the students imagine themselves standing behind a camera capturing specific details as well as enabling them to revise so that they include specific rather than generic information in their descriptions of a person.

According to lane, revision should not give priority to grammar. He states: it is much rather an attitudinal shift that the reader can foster in becoming part of the revising effort, not just assigning and correcting stages (1993:46).

It is clear then that the activities or at least some of them are non-directive. This kind of attitude to revision will have specific language and behaviour outcomes. The reader who happens to be the teacher has to have a voice. This recurring theme is a distinctive characteristic in Lane’s model. Lane was more interested in the quality of writing. He explains:

That’s what makes me smile –seeing this kid’s voice leap off the page, speaking to you directly like some hotline to the soul. It was also a quality in writing that was hard to break down and teach. If it was there, great. There’s a writer.

(Lane, 1993:158)

Lane’s aim is to consider this individuality in descriptive personal essay writing. To do so, he fosters students’ choice of theme and approach by confronting them to their own audiences, and by exposing them to what he calls “boring, voiceless” (1993:64) research papers that students can revitalise.
Lane’s hundred of techniques can bear the name of resource collection that can help students and teachers experiment creative revision in the language classroom. This approach aims to be holistic and thematic as opposed to the discrete grammar-focused revision approach. Between these two extremes, there are other approaches that are summarized by Grabe and Kaplan (1996). What follows will be a summary of their findings of their research into revising. This will include what the authors noted about revision processes as observed in peer-response and peer revision settings, and also responding to writing.

1.4.3 Empirical Studies

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) concede the impact of the nature, quality, and quantity of response has on students writing attitudes. According to the two researchers, the positive motivation that the process carries is a significant factor in shaping learner behaviour. It is true that response from peers not only complements other forms and manners of revision strategies, but also can determine on its own right, their success if conditions are optimal. Researches and studies have shown that by promoting collaboration, students “develop a sense of community”. Students also benefit from being exposed to “a variety of writing styles” (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996:386)

By definition, classroom writing is a private, intimate undertaking (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). However, seen in the context, it will approximate authentic settings whereby audiences and writers interact through the medium of publications, genres, text types and editorial preferences (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996: 86).

According to the two researchers, recent research in the field of peer response to learner writing focus on four factors that have greater contributions to the effectiveness of the approach (1996:387). The first factor is the individual’s belief and conviction that all that he receives from one’s peer can only be beneficial. Consequently, the teacher’s role will be paramount in this area. The teacher’s pedagogical responsibility therefore is to help create the conditions for a group to behave and act as a group. The second factor influencing effectiveness is the formal training that the students receive in peer response and revision. This factor has a great impact as it influences effectiveness. Some teachers oppose the idea of
providing students with structured and formalized guidelines in such programs. However, students appreciate writing teachers who help define the rules.

The third factor is the awareness of goals students have in asking for and in providing a response.

The last but certainly not the least factor refers to the demands that once such practice is started, participants are held responsible for their involvement.

In the study conducted by Villamil and de Guerro (1998), the second of these four factors, namely, the one that deals with training, was shown as a significant variable. Villamil and de Guerro investigated how the variable of rhetoric mode influenced peer revision.

In their first project, in order to study the revision activities of fourteen Puerto Rican university ESL students, they collected data that scatter from audiotaped sessions to script samples of first and finished drafts. They found that once they received explicit training on the terminology and principles of narrative and expository writing, 74% i.e., the majority of the revision suggested by peers were incorporated in the writing process. They also found out that narrative scripts tend to be longer than the expository ones. They add:

This trend continued to hold for each revision, further evidence of the hypothesis that it is more difficult cognitively to process a persuasive writing task

(Villamil & de Guerro, 1998:509)

To analyze the scripts and their revisions, the two researchers asked two external raters to apply five criteria for both types of writing: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics.
For the two kinds of writing, most revisions were grammar based followed by content in the narrative and vocabulary in the persuasive scripts. There was no great difference in the revisions. The researchers state that in the long run, the revision experience will be of great benefit for the students when they need strategic competence for text revision.

Though the study was not followed-up by other studies or interviews with students to validate its claims, it managed to focus the attention from error analysis to revision analysis based on what students discussed and changes they incorporated to their drafts.

Another finding that the study revealed is that no major structural changes in a text occurred. The researchers explain that for the both types of script, this is the least frequent revision change. They add:

This is not surprising; organizing ideas, arguments and topics within the development of these arguments is among the most demanding processes for professional and amateur writers. However, future research is needed to investigate how the writing classroom can address these issues at various levels of development, in L1s and L2s.

(Villamil & de Guerro, 1998:312)

Evidence suggests that some of the students were reluctant to act on the suggestions of their peers. For instance, in the study conducted by Sengupta (1998) it was revealed that Cantonese EFL students were not in favour of peer evaluation. Students in general see the task of commenting on their scripts the duty of the teacher- the expert instructor. The finding of Huang (1995) corroborates this result. In this study, twenty two Chinese University students of writing were assigned to English and Chinese discussion groups. These students were scarcely enthusiastic about providing feedback to motivate revision in a two-draft writing task. Huang (1995) concludes that to promote peer revision, a longer experience is needed to involve the students.
A different result was revealed by Mangelsdorf’s study (1992). This study which included a culturally heterogeneous mix of university students in Arizona revealed it became obvious that often peers were unable to provide the type of feedback that would be helpful to draft a script. This study also showed that the process of providing feedback helped the students to reconsider their ideas, sometimes even considering different ideas about their topics.

According to the interviewees, the process also helped the students to clarify their ideas. Mangelsdorf states:

Once the improvement in writing quality became obvious, participating students were more willing to share and act on suggestions in their revisions.

(Mangelsdorf, 1992: 278)

To establish correlation between holistic rating of EFL college writing quality and quantity of revision, Sato (1990) investigates Japanese students’ success in a picture description task. The study revealed three types of writers with three different levels. According to Sato, there were significant differences between the three levels of writers in various syntactic levels. However, it was discovered that the two tops groups made significantly more successful revisions in their final drafts. Sato suggests:

Further research is needed to study relationship between different tasks and levels of achievement, and that including variables of proficiency in the target language and of writing expertise would enhance the validity of findings.

Sato (1990:157)
1.5 Responding to Writing

1.5.1 Main Variables

At first glance, it seems that responding to an early or a final draft does not pose any trouble to the teacher because so much work and effort have been deployed in developing writing courses. Responding to writing, or giving feedback to writing is not a trouble-free spot in writing pedagogy (Hedge, 2003:76). Several attempts to understand the underlying theory have only come up with more questions. Many researchers and practitioners alike have concluded that the amount of feedback, the timing, the mode, the provider, and the subsequent application of it have kept on posing research design and pedagogical problems. The following chart shows the main variables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The participants</th>
<th>Teacher controlled one-to-one</th>
<th>Student controlled one-to-one</th>
<th>One-to-many</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The media</td>
<td>Marginal handwritten notes</td>
<td>End-of-script comments</td>
<td>Audiotape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The functions</td>
<td>To correct</td>
<td>To assist in self-correction</td>
<td>To provide authentic Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The scripts</td>
<td>One initial draft</td>
<td>Multiple drafts</td>
<td>Final versions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The outcomes</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>Continuous assessment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The framework</td>
<td>Based on impressionistic criteria</td>
<td>Based on principled criteria</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3: The Variables of Response to Writing (adapted from Allwright, 1988)

As an integral part of any pedagogy, feedback aims to "engage participants in authentic communication about the subject of tuition, and about its goals by signalling transitions in the
process of learning (Mousley, 1990:134). It constitutes part of assessment and evaluation, both continuous and task-specific. To educationalists, feedback aims at putting things right when they go wrong, that is to correct. Still other view feedback as a means to inform the learners of the progress made, and therefore, correcting syntax and organization errors.

Bartram and Walton (1991) say that albeit the written production is primarily an individual activity much can be achieved by applying tasks involving pairs or groups of students. They go further as to suggest that “red pen syndrome” should be avoided when the issue of providing feedback on student writing errors is concerned. Instead they suggest a list of areas and techniques with which to facilitate accuracy and composition improvement. These included the need to react to content, to restrict correction to specific morpho-syntactic units, to involve students in correction, and reformulation (Bartram & Walton, 1991:78). They emphasize, however, the importance of communication between teachers and students not only after a script is written but also before and during that stage.

### 1.5.2 Positive Effect of Feedback

In their qualitative research, Fathman and Whalley (1990) studied the effect of teacher feedback on grammar and composition of 72 U.S students of college ESL. The research revealed that such feedback improved the students writing. It helped students identify and correct their own writing. The research also showed that the “general comments giving encouragement and suggesting revisions” (Fathman & Whalley, 1990:186) were reported as factors which contributed to the development of rewritten versions of students’ scripts. This finding questioned the general validity of Zamel (1980) claim that teachers’ comments were often too vague to act upon. Zamel claims that teachers’ comments often lack consistency and relevance from the point of view of subsequent revision. She adds:

> Teachers tend to highlight each and every grammatical error, favouring correct yet non-communicative prose while almost totally ignoring the content of the scripts.

(Zamel, 1985:126)
A case study among EFL students in Britain was conducted by Dheram (1995) in order to collect information on students’ attitudes to and preferences for receiving feedback. The major issue of the study case was to see whether students preferred comments on grammar or content, how they responded to feedback, and what the preferences meant for future writing instructions.

Not only did Dheram analyze the questionnaire and interviews, but he also received pre-feedback and post-feedback drafts. Dheram discovered that students became aware of revision as part of discovering meaning. The most imposing finding of the research was that content should enjoy top priority in teachers’ responses.

One of the major features of the process approach is the teachers’ help. This help must be provided at every step of the composition of the script. Frankenberg-Garcia (1999) proposes an innovative suggestion: the teachers’ help could be given even before the text is produced; that is at the initial stages of the development of ideas for a composition.

This view reverberates the procedure whereby a classroom is seen as a workshop, with part of the time turned into interviewing in the writing process. Frankenberg-Garcia states:

> The text-based feedback had serious limitation because the type of feedback students need most cannot be adequately given without having hard evidence of the types of decision (good or bad) that students typically make when composing.

Frankenberg-Garcia (1999:138)

According to Frankenberg-Garcia the written text may be polished with little need for grammatical or compositional change. Nonetheless, it may not reflect writer intention if the student had major difficulty with an idea, grammatical unit or vocabulary item and decided to apply an avoidance strategy. Thus, the learner will only fossilize a problem. To deal with the actual composing problem she argued:
We need to gather information in the verbal or written feedback that is given on the processes, rather than a draft. This approach was not by no means intended to replace text-based writing feedback—rather, to complement it.

(Frankenberg-Garcia, 1999:137)

Cohen and Cavalcanti (1990), Chen (1997), Grundy and Li (1998), Leki (1990), Mosher (1998), Myers (1997), Allwright (1998) and Schultz, (1994) express concern on the form and content teachers’ feedback may take. This only shows the importance of such issue. The issue remains a great challenge to most practitioners in the field because not all feedback is satisfactory. There is what should be favoured and what should be avoided.

In her writing course for ESL students, Mayers (1997) used the technique of sentence reformulation. In the first step, she corrects her students’ writings using simple codes. When the students receive their papers, they are asked to do the necessary revisions she had pointed out. Now that the grammatical inaccuracies are resolved, the students will focus in class on the content of their peers’ writing. This program relies first and foremost on the teachers’ direction in term of language correction, but it also enables the students to exercise the role of peer editor of ideas in the sessions.

1.5.3 Student Agenda

A more radical approach proposed by Grundy and Li (1998) urges the students to take more responsibilities for their writing. Grundy and Li find the correction in writing pedagogy as a function that has little validity. According to the two researchers, there is a syndrome of “you write – I correct”. They add: this is a logical result of product-orientation.

To tackle this unsatisfactory situation, alternative techniques of response must be developed. These alternative techniques include post-it notes by teachers that students would
respond before revision, conferencing, check lists for revision that are complemented by the students’ own concerns, learner logs, portfolios, and audio-taped responses. The audio-taped response is a technique where the teacher records a corrected version of the students’ essay.

Grundy and Li (1998) say that this technique facilitates quick response and emerges the students in an authentic listening activity. Zinsser (1998) claims that professional writers write for the ear, not only for the eye and mind. Considering Zinsser’s claim, this technique seems really authentic and could result, in the long run, in raising awareness of what is commonly termed as “what sounds good” (Zinsser, 1998:72).

1.5.4 Responding to Feedback

For any feedback, its effectiveness and practicality rely upon variables such as: educational context, type of syllabus, length of assignment, number of students, and most importantly what Leki calls the “persona” of the writing teacher (1990:59). Leki sees the teacher having a set of divergent functions in responding: the real reader self, the teacher as the coach, and the evaluating teacher. These three functions are often in conflict because the writing teacher needs to evaluate how content is represented in number of scripts. Leki states that the writing teacher may become schizophrenic juggling these roles.

So that a pedagogical sound balance could be maintained, Leki (1990) suggests the following directions for feedback. First of all, a multiple-draft composition syllabus should be applied. This will ensure the integration of each assignment. It is axiomatic to provide a feedback on each draft which may be usefully incorporated by students. This will allow the teacher to intervene in the writing process when mostly needed. Next, if assignments form a well planned project, with the teacher comments applied in subsequent tasks, the writing process will facilitate long-term development. Third, teachers should give the students a set of questions that elicit information on what they see the best features of their writing. This may not appear like a teacher’s feedback because what the teacher provides is a set of questions to which the students reflect. The learners will identify what is “valuable and what is not” (Leki, 1999:61). This will enable the teacher to better focus on those elements of writing: thus bridging the gap between writer’s intention and reader’s interpretation, a significant benefit.
considering that student writers do not always have the skills to communicate their goals fully.

The last issue in teacher response to students’ writing is how students respond to responses. Phrased another way, what effect has the teacher response on students’ perceptions and implications?

Hedgcock and Lefkowitz (1996) were much more interested in the meta-cognitive processes activated by expert feedback. After collecting and analyzing data from ESL and EFL students, they establish that for feedback to be used effectively, students must be deeply engaged in the process. Their research showed that FL learners prefer the kind of feedback that helped them formulate the content and structure of their scripts. It also showed that the majority (82%) of the learners preferred “red-pen” corrections. Hedgcock and Lefkowitz state:

Apparently because this resulted in most short-term improvement in surface-level features, with FL students being of the opinion that form should proceed, and have priority over expression of meaning concepts, or original ideas.

(Hedgcock & Lefkowitz, 1996:297)

Finally, as an additional implication of feedback practice, teachers’ comments may serve as resources for teaching and exploration for students (Horvath, 1997, 1998). In some universities samples of teachers’ comments on timed essay tests were handed to students. They were asked to read, review, and ponder on them. The aim behind such project is to familiarize the learners with the discourse the raters of the essays produced and it will broaden students’ understanding of the areas that the comments elaborated on. The students will focus on what the teachers mark as positive features of the scripts.
1.6 Approaches to Writing

Through the history of language teaching and language learning in general, and foreign language teaching / learning in particular, writing instruction has received varying degree of attention. Sometimes, the skill of writing has been the focus of some approaches; while in other times it was given lesser importance, or simply neglected.

The varying degree of attention allocated to the skill of writing is due to some “thorny issues” (Raimes, 1988) that researchers have come up against in their search for new approaches. Thorny issues such as the topics for writing, the issues of “real” writing, the nature of the academic discourse community, constructive rhetoric, and responding to writing are still the debate of the present time.

Each approach has a distinctive feature highlighting in one case the rhetorical and linguistic form of the text itself; in another the writer and the cognitive processes used in the act of writing; still in another case, the content for writing; and in the last case, the demands made by the reader.

The following brief historical survey delineates some approaches to second language writing instruction that have been evident, and that show how these approaches to teaching English as a foreign language have considered the language skill of writing.

1.6.1 Focus on Form

It is a fact that most significant methodologies of teaching writing are based on the learners’ writing needs. These methodologies offer advantages as well as disadvantages. The following discussion will include some of the most predominant approaches that had a great impact on the second language writing instruction.

To start with, in the grammar translation method which dominated European and foreign language teaching from the 1840s to the 1940s, reading and writing were the major focus. Little or no systematic attention was given to the other skills, namely speaking and listening. This is all due to the fact the fundamental purpose of learning a foreign language is to be able to read literature written in the target language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:17).
writing the learners did consisted of translating literary texts into and out of the target language.

As toward the mid-nineteenth century, several factors contributed to a questioning and hence to the rejection of the dominant Grammar-Translation Method. This method was not altogether effective in preparing students to use the TL communicatively. Language teaching innovations were compelled to appear since “increased opportunities for communication among Europeans created a demand for oral proficiency in foreign languages (Richards & Rodgers, 2003:7).

It was only legitimate that reformers turned their attention to the naturalistic principles of language learning, and attempted at making second language learning like first language learning. For this reason only, they are referred to as “advocates of a natural method” (Richards & Rodgers, 2003:11). The natural language learning principles paved the way to the foundation for the Direct Method.

The most predominant characteristics of the Direct Method – the most widely known of the natural approaches- is that learning a foreign language could be achieved without translation or the use of the learner’s native language. Stated more bluntly, the direct approach refers to the fact meaning could be conveyed directly through demonstration and action, through the use of realia, pantomime, and pictures.

Through intensive oral interaction in the target language, employment of questions as a way of presenting and eliciting language, a learner can acquire a FL. This was the most popular belief of the time (16th century).

Advocates of the direct method always cite the example of Montaigne learning to speak Latin- his father’s wish’- by being entrusted to a guard who addressed him exclusively in Latin. How Montaigne learnt Latin became a widely shared example of learning a FL through direct exposure, intensive oral interaction in the TL. Employing questions as a way of presenting and eliciting language became very popular.

Though the direct method is often regarded as the first language teaching method to have caught attention of teachers and language teaching specialists, and has offered a methodology that appeared to move language teaching into the methods era, critics pointed
out that it represented ‘the product of enlightened amateurism’ for many reasons (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:13).

Teachers in the Direct Method must be native speakers or must have a native-like fluency in a FL. Rather than depending on a textbook, Richards and Rodgers say, it depends on the teacher’s skills. The fact that translation has to be avoided, teachers will “perform verbal gymnastics in an attempt to convey the meaning when an undemanding, brief explanation in the student’s mother tongue is more efficient and will save both time and effort” (Brown, cited in Richards and Rodgers, 2001).

The main concern of this method was an oral proficiency of the target language. Therefore, oral communication was seen as primary. The other productive skill was relegated to writing “exercises that were based upon what the students practice orally” (Larsen-freeman, 2000:30).

The audio-lingual method was the dominant of instruction in the 1920s and 1930s. Advocates of this method were famous behaviourist psychologists like B.F. Skinner and structuralists like Bloomfield and C.C.Fries, not to mention the advisers of the Army Specialized training program (A.S.T.P.) who were themselves both anthropologists and linguists. This program was established in 1942, and 55 American universities were involved in by the beginning of 1943.

The actual emergence of the audio-lingual approach resulted from the increase attention given to foreign language teaching in the United States toward the end of the 1950s. Richard and Rodgers (2001) state that the combination of the structural linguistic theory, contrastive analysis, aural –oral procedures, and behaviourist psychology led to the emergence of the audio-lingual method. This method brought radical changes. To some linguists, it has transformed language teaching from an act to a science.

The most important tenet of this approach is that the primary medium of language is oral: speech is language. Richards and Rodgers state that many languages do not have a written form. Bloomfield (1974) says that in some countries, such as china, Egypt and Mesopotamia, writing was practised thousands of years ago, but to most of those languages that are spoken today, it has been applied either in relatively recent times or not at all (1974:58).
It is true that people learn to speak before they learn to read or write. To Brooks (1964) language is “primarily what is spoken and only secondary what is written”. Therefore, it is assumed that speech had a priority in language teaching.

Before, the popular view was that language existed principally as symbols written on papers, and that spoken language was an imperfect realization of pure version. Raimes (1988) concludes “the view that speech was primary served a subservient role: to reinforce oral pattern of the language being taught.

In language instruction, writing takes the form of sentence drills. The types of drills used are: fill ins, substitution, transformation and completion drills. The focus is on the production of well produced sentences. This paradigm is often produced through the controlled composition. This task is designed mainly to give the learner practice with particular syntactic patterns such as the past tense is English and or lexical forma (Silva, 1990).

As far as controlled composition is concerned, Raimes (2000) argues that though the learner is introduced to passages of connected discourse to manipulate linguistic forms within the text, this does not necessarily guarantee that the student views them as authentic. Moreover, when the student is concentrating on a grammatical transformation such as changing the verb form present to past, for instance, he “needs pay no attention whatever to what the sentences mean or the manner in which they relate to each other” (Widdowson, 1978:116).

Kaplan (1980) notices that the student is led to generate connected discourse by means of combining and arranging sentences into paragraphs based on prescribed formula. In this task, the student usually imitates specific rhetorical models that include exposition, illustration, comparison, classification, argumentation, to cite but a few.

Zamel (1980) believes that by concentrating on applying accurate grammatical rules in sentence combining activities, the approach ignores the real complexity of writing. While Newton (2001) says that the curriculum in American schools underwent a marked change in the 1940s: from the traditional college-oriented classical education to the inclusion of course concerned with the problem of “everyday life”.

To conclude, the product approach to writing is in line with the audio-lingual ideology with a structural linguistic view that language is a system of structurally related elements for the encoding of meaning, and a behaviorist view that language learning is 'basically a process of mechanical habit formation' (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:57). So input that provides
important source for imitation becomes the major driving force of language learning. Consequently, the product approach sees writing as being primarily about linguistic knowledge, stressing the appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax and cohesive devices. Most of the time writing tasks encourage learners to imitate copy and transform models provided by teachers or textbooks. Accordingly, the final product which reflects the writer's language knowledge is highly valued. In this perspective the teacher plays a primary role as an examiner (Zamel, 1987).

In this approach, imitation is recognized as one of important ways of learning. So instruction as direct sources of input is given a paramount role. This approach is criticized to attach too much importance to the final products than process skills. Badger and White (2000) state:

> If we only evaluate the products based on preconceived and fixed notions about writing, we are undervaluing students’ skills and knowledge which they bring from outside, the classroom as social individuals.  

Moreover, the writing activities are no more than grammatical exercises. Writing classes are teacher-dominated. The writers are model and rules observers rather than creators of words.

### 1.6.2 Focus on the Writer

The process approach which was adopted and promulgated by many enthusiastic advocates was critiqued by some teachers and theorists. For instance, Harowitz (1986) states that the focus on the writer's making of personal meaning became an obsession to the advocates of this approach. The cognitive relationship between the writer and the writer's internal world is perceived by Horowitz as inappropriate for academic demands and for the expectations of academic readers, because the attention should be shifted from the processes of the writer to the content and to the demands of the academy.
By 1986, the process approach was included among the traditional ones. The new approach which was proposed in its place was the content-based approach. In the content-based approach instruction, an ESL course might be attached to a content course in the adjunct model or language courses might be grouped with courses in other disciplines.

Mohan (1986) says that with a content focus, learners are said to get help with the language of the thinking processes and the structure or shape of content. Raimes (1998) says that the content specific to English courses, that is language, culture, and literature is largely rejected in favour of the subject matter of the other fields the ESL students are studying.

In this approach, the research studies include analysis of the rhetorical organization of the technical writing, studies of student writing in the content areas, and surveys of the content and tasks L2 students can expect to encounter in their academic careers.

In a content-based approach, features of the process approach such as prewriting tasks and the opportunity for revision might actually be included in classroom methodology. However, the main emphasis is on the instructor's determination of what academic content is most appropriate, in order to construct whole courses or modules of reading and writing tasks around that content.

The autonomy that is a major characteristic of the previous approaches is replaced by team teaching, linked courses “topic -centred modules or mini-courses sheltered instruction and composition or multi-skill English for academic purposes EAP courses/ tutorials as adjuncts to designated content courses” (Shih, 1986:632-633).

The difference between the present approach and the others is that with the autonomous ESL class, a teacher can move back and forth among approaches. Whereas with the ESL attached in the curriculum to content, this flexibility is less likely.

At length, the process approach comes as a reaction against the product approach and is based on the recognition of the writing process as cyclical, recursive or even disorderly rather than simple and linear. The focus shifts from the text to the writer. It lays particular stress on a cycle of writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through to the 'publication' of a finished text (Tribble, 1996:37). Consequently, the teacher's role as model provider and examiner also shifts to that of a facilitator who helps in a typical four-stage process: prewriting, composing/drafting, revising and editing (ibid). The
provision of input or stimulus is considered to be less important. And it is linguistic skills, not knowledge that are primarily valued.

1.6.3 Focus on the Reader

English for Academic purposes is an approach that came simultaneously with content based approach. This approach focuses on the expectations of academic reader. In this approach, the ESL teacher runs a theme-based class, not necessarily linked to a content course. It is also characterized by its strong opposition to a position within a writer-dominated process approach that favours personal writing.

Raimes (1986) states that a reader-dominated approach perceives language teaching as socialization into the academic community not as humanistic therapy. Unlike the process approach which focuses on a known audience inside the language classroom composed by peers and teachers who respond to the ideas in a text, the audience-dominated approach focuses on the expectations of readers outside the language classroom. This approach is characterized by the use of such terms as academic demands and academic discourse community. English for academic purposes focuses not on a specific individual but on a representative of a discourse community, for example a specific discipline or academia in general.

The reader, Raimes (1986) says, is an abstract representation, a generalized construct, one reified from examination of academic assignments and texts. He is, in a word, an expert who represents a faculty audience (Johns, 1990:31).

Once the concept of the expert reader is established, the generalization about the forms of writing that will expect will follow, and so will the teaching of those forms as prescriptive patterns.

Typical recommendations of the approach that focuses on the reader are:

- Teachers must gather assignments from across the curriculum.
- Assess the purposes.
- Assess the audience expectations in the assignments.
- Present them in class.
For one thing, these recommendations indicate that there is a return to a form-dominated approach with one major difference: rhetorical forms rather than grammatical forms are presented as paradigms.

Researches generated by this approach have dealt with surveys of the expectations and reactions of academic reader with regard to genres and identifications of the basic skills of writing transferable across various disciplines.

Five classroom oriented issues have raised discussions, most of the time reflection and above all uncertainty:

- the topic of writing
- real writing
- the nature of academic community discourse
- contrastive rhetorical
- Responding to writing (Raimes, 1986).

1.6.4 The Topic of Writing

One of the major problems teachers face is what students should write about. Topics for writing are an integral part of any writing course.

In a form-dominated approach, topics are assigned by the teachers. The teacher focuses on how sentences and paragraphs are written rather than on what ideas are exposed. Therefore, any assigned piece of writing will serve as a vehicle for practising and displaying grammatical syntactic and rhetorical forms.

In a writer dominated approach, it is the learners who choose the topics, using personal experience to write about what concerns them. They may also respond to a shared classroom experience, often a piece of expository writing or to a work of literature. In a content-dominated approach, topics will be drawn from the subject matter of either a particular discipline or a particular course. This can be supplied by the content teacher when content and writing course are linked in the adjunct model or by the language teacher in theme-based EAP course.
In a reader dominated approach, the model is one of the writing across the curriculum movement. That is, language teachers examine what other disciplines assign and train their students how to respond to those assignments by reconstructing the essay prompt and by following a model of the appropriate form of academic writing.

In this approach, a thorny issue is whether to teach personal or academic writing. Approaches that focus on rhetorical form and on the reader expectations are seen as a “service to prepare students to handle writing assignments in academic courses” (Shih, 1986:617). For they are learners who will write in English as part their educational requirements and not all thereafter, this is just suitable. But there are also learners who will probably write for many different contexts in the course of their professional lives (Shih, 1986:617).

Hairston (1991) rejects the idea that writing courses should be “service courses” taught for the benefit of academic disciplines, since “writing courses taught by trained teachers do have important content: learning how to use language to express ideas effectively.”

The above issues in teaching writing are just the tip of an iceberg. They reveal some serious problems in teaching writing. There are other issues that have raised controversies in the teaching of writing. The most controversial are: real writing, the academic community discourse, and contrastive rhetoric.

1.6.5 Real Writing

In teaching writing, a great dissension and controversy have centred on the topics students write about. Horowitz (1986) initiates a lengthy debate by stating that examination writing was not a real writing. Many researchers share the same view. A major flaw of the writing process is that it “fails to give the students an accurate picture of university writing” (Horowitz 1986:58).

The issue of what university writing is and what kind of writing ESL students should do is a pointed one. Even the use of the term real relates to this issue in practice as well as in theory Raimes (1986) says.
In practice, practitioners teach two types of writing in class. The first type is writing for learning, where the learners go through the different steps: prewriting, revising and editing. The second type is writing for examination. The learners are aware of the different purposes and they do employ different strategies in both types. They recognize that the two types are distinct.

The word real was spotted by Seale in 1969. Seale makes a clear distinction between real questions and exam questions. He states that in real questions the speaker wants to know the answer. Yet, in exam questions the speaker wants to know the hearer knows the answer. The same distinction can be made in writing. In a writing class, students need be taught the two types of writing. They need to be taught how to use the process to their advantage as language learners as well as writers. In the long run, they will be able to produce an acceptable “product” upon demand (Raimes, 1986:56).

In fact, while students need to learn to pass an exam, they also need to perceive writing as a tool for learning, a tool that can be extremely useful to them throughout their professional and personal lives.

All in all, there is a difficulty in authentic writing and the topics and tasks initiated by teachers can by no means be considered as unusual. First and foremost, a study of the essential characteristics of real university writing assignment should be agreed on and so should the context of a real academic task. And even after this agreement, the whole area of the types of writing are expected to do and the types of writing practitioners should teach is one surrounded by controversy, (Harris, 1989:117)

1.6.6 The Nature of the Academic Community Discourse

It is widely acknowledged that the demands of the academic discourse community is paramount in determining the nature of real writing and the topics practitioners assign. These demands are of great help to the teachers as they provide a set of standards. Consequently, to determine the course content, the readings, the models and the instruction of rhetorical forms, L2 teachers look to other disciplines.
A decisive question here would be: should the teachers put their trust in this community or should they rather attempt at influencing and changing the academic community for the benefit of their learners? (Auerbach, 1986, 1990; Peirce, 1989).

According to Johns (1990) teachers who consider the conventions of the discourse community will most likely begin with the rules of discourse in the community. Because the academic faculty, John adds, insists that students talk like engineers for example, surrendering their own language and mode of thought to the requirements of the target community. The words rules and surrender reveal that the discourse community exercises certain power. What the teachers are doing is enabling their students to fit in this community. It is rather a prescriptive view where the learner is taught to fit in a status quo rather than challenge what is being.

Patricia Bizzell (1989), on the other hand, sees the academic community as synonymous with “dominant social class”. She recommends that students not be directed towards assimilation. On the contrary, she adds, they should be directed towards a “critical distance” on academic literacy so that eventually elements from students’ native discourse can be granted legitimacy in the academic community.

Still another problematic issue is whether the academic discourse community is regarded as benign, open, and beneficial to the students or on the contrary powerful and controlling as Giropux (1986) puts it « often more concerned with ways of excluding new members than with ways of admitting them.

These two opposing views point to the validity of Berlin’s (1988) statement that every pedagogy implies a set of tacit assumptions about what is real, what is good, what is possible, and how power should be attributed. According to Raimes:

Teaching writing is inherently political, and how we perceive the purposes of writing vis-à-vis the academic writing will reflect our political stance. Reflecting our stance too is how we interpret the information that comes to us from the academic community.

In Johns’ survey of members of faculty published in 1981, 200 members were asked to respond to the question: which is more important for success in your classes, a general knowledge of English or English specific to the discipline. The majority of the faculty members ranks general knowledge of English above specific purposes English.

In interpreting the result of the survey, the researcher finds a number of reasons for the general English preference. The most compelling is that most faculty members do not know the nature and breadth of ESP, they tend to think of it as an aspect of the discipline that has to do with vocabulary alone (Johns, 1981:54).

The validity of a discourse community is questioned. Even the existence of an academic discourse community is a “thicket in which we could be tangled for a long time” (Raimes, 1986:87).

1.6.7 Contrastive Rhetoric

Researchers like Eggington (1987), Hinds (1987), and Tsao (1983) agree that published research in contrastive rhetoric informs teachers about the different ways in which the written products of other languages are constructed. The declared attention of contrastive rhetoric research is not to provide pedagogic method but rather to provide teachers and students with knowledge about how “the links between culture and writing is reflected in written products” (Grabe & Kaplan, 1989:271). Kaplan (1962) says that contrastive rhetoric is a useful consciousness-raising device for students. Indeed teachers can discuss what they have observed about texts in different cultures and have students discover whether research findings hold true in their experience of their L1 texts.

It is certainly not easy to look for a theory when teachers have to adjust themselves in a situation where conditions have to be fulfilled. In this matter Raimes states:

The thicket that contrastive rhetoric presents for teachers as they wander into the woods of theory is the question of the value of teaching writing prescribing one form of text—English form—not just as an alternative, but as the
one privileged form of text, presented as the most logical and desirable, with which other learned systems interfere.

Raimes (1990:150)

In dealing with how readers read and judge ESL students' essays, Land and Whitley (1989) discover that non-native speaker readers could “accommodate to more kinds of rhetorical patterns” than could native-speaker readers. Moving away from courses that are either retributive or instructive, and away from composition as colonization, the two researchers say “we need they say to recognize, value, and foster the alternative rhetoric that the ESL student brings to our language, not treat them only as features that interfere with language learning (1989:286).

Land and whitely (1989) fear that in teaching standard written English rhetorical conventions, students are being taught to reproduce in a mechanical fashion the teachers’ preferred vehicle of understanding. It is the same problem with multiple literacies which are posed against the idea of one dominant cultural literacy (Hirsh, 1987). A broad use of contrastive rhetoric as a tool of raising classroom consciousness can point to linguistic variety and rhetorical choices. However, a narrow use would emphasize only prescriptions targeted towards counteracting L1 interferences, Hirsh believes.

Cunning (1989) investigates the factors of writing expertise and second-language proficiency of L2 writers. He discovers that the qualities of L2 writer and their writing behaviour “warn against such a narrow use of contrastive rhetoric”. He states:

Pedagogical prescriptions about the interference of the mother tongue in second-language performance—espoused in audio-lingual methodologies and theories of linguistic transfer or contrastive rhetoric—appear misdirected since students’L1 is shown to be an important resource rather than a hindrance in decision making in writing.

Cunning (1989: 127-128)
1.7 Models of the writing process

There are certainly differences between expert and novice writers. To comprehend these differences and their impact on the writing process, a number of researchers have proposed models of the writing process. The most predominant are those introduced by Perl, (1979); Hayes and Flower, (1980); Flower and Hayes, (1980); Sommer, (1980); Zamel, (1983); Raimes, (1985). Most of these researchers - if not all - frequently use retrospective interviews or think-aloud protocols. In think-aloud protocols, researchers observe writers who say their thoughts as they write. By this method, researchers gain insights into the mental activity and decision making processes of the writers as they carry out a writing task. Or to put it more bluntly, it is meant to discover what people really do when they write. This is unusual even strange because as White and Arndt (1991) state people probably never ask themselves what they do when they write. White and Arndt add: “Nor is it likely they will ever know, because writing is a thinking process, and certain aspects of thought are inaccessible to consciousness” (1991:12).

White and Arndt use another term for the think-aloud protocol, namely “composing aloud”. They argue that some surface manifestations of the writing process can be glimpsed though thanks to composing aloud. Compared to the wealth of the mental effort that goes in producing it, the written thought remains “meagre” (White and Arndt, 1991:12). It becomes a frustrating situation for writers to see that the reader fails to understand or follow from the written page the meaning after such huge mental effort.

Composing aloud or think-aloud protocol is therefore an attempt to recreate the thought process which underlies a piece of written text. Harmer (2001) states:

“Not only can it help to reconstruct the thinking that went into the writing, and thus supply important clues for improving the coherence of the text; it can also give us a fascinating insight into what goes on as we struggle to translate meaning into words”.

The differences between expert and novice writers have been the main focus of the researchers of the writing skill. In attempting to capture these differences that have a great influence on the writing process, many researchers have proposed models of the writing process. Though, as Weigle (2000) states, models of complex cognitive activities such as writing can never be completely accurate, they are, however, expedient for considering the various factors that affect the process. The following questions are addressed by these models:

- What are the cognitive processes, or mental activities, involved in writing?
- What sources of knowledge does the writer draw upon in writing?
- What other factors influence the writing process?

Weigle believes that these issues are extremely important because they define the skill or skills involved in writing by describing the processes accurately and precisely. They point out possible areas where individual differences in skill may be found. This, in turn, will provide useful information about the differences between skilled and unskilled writers.

1.7.1 The Model of Hayes and Flower (1980)

The model of Hayes and Flower (1980) is an early and influential model of the writing process. The two researchers describe the writing process in terms of the task environment, which include the writing assignment and the text produced so far, the writer’s long-term memory, including knowledge of the topic, knowledge of audience, and stored writing plans, and a number of cognitive processes including planning, translating thought into text, and revising (Weigle, (2000); White & Arndt, (1991); Hedge, (1999)). The breakthrough that the model of Hayes and Flower brought is the fact that writing is a recursive and not a linear process. Hedge (1999) reports that the process of writing contains a number of stages that include being motivated to write, getting ideas together, planning and outlining, making notes, making first draft, revising, replanning, redrafting, editing, and getting ready for publication. However, she disputes the idea that the writing process is linear moving from planning to composing to revising and to editing. She concludes that it would be more accurate to characterize writing as a recursive activity in which the writer moves backwards and forwards between drafting and revising with stages of replanning in between.
Shaughnessy (1977) describes the writing process as ‘a messy process that leads to clarity’. Frank Smith (1982) represents the writing process in terms of the ways in which the text is moved around, modified, cut, or expanded.

![Figure 1.1: The Messy Process of Writing (Tricia Hedge, 1999:21)](image)

Asserting the fact that the writing process is recursive and not linear, Weigle concludes that instruction in the writing process may be more effective than providing models of particular rhetorical forms and asking students to follow these models in their writing.

Though a number of other researchers have proposed models of writing since the Hayes and Flower model was first introduced, we will focus on just two: the model of Hayes (1996) which is an updated version of the model of Hayes and Flower, and the model of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987). These two models complement each other since they focus on different issues in writing. Weigle states that the Hayes model attempts to outline the various influences on the writing process especially those internal to the writer. Bereiter and Scardamalia model, on the other hand addresses the different processes followed by expert versus novice writers.

Although both of the models are based on first-language writing, they have important implications for second language writing, and they provide useful insight about the development of the writing ability, and the differences between skilled and unskilled writers (Harmer, 2001:254). According to Zamel (1982) many facets of the pedagogy developed for teaching L1 writing and composition were also applicable to teaching L2 writing. For example, invention, rewriting, producing multiple drafts of essays, peer review of
compositions, and revising became a staple of ESL writing classes because by means of these activities, NNS students engaged in the writing processes and were given more opportunities to explore and discover.

Figure 1.2: The Hayes-Flower (1980) Writing Model

Hayes’ (1996) model of writing sees the writing process as consisting of two main parts: the task environment and the individual. The task environment is divided into the social environment and the physical environment. The social environment consists of the audience for one’s writing, as well as any collaborators in the writing process. It must be pointed out that the audience can be either real or imagined. The physical environment includes “the text written so far”. This text influences and shapes the writer’s effort, and the composing medium, for instance handwriting or word processing.

Word processing, Weigle (2000) states, has been included in the model in part because of the profound influence technological innovations have had on both the cognitive and social
aspects of writing. Some studies as the ones conducted by Gould and Grischkowsky (1984), Hass (1987) have found differences in the planning and editing processes of writers using word processors as opposed to pen and paper.

In the model of Hayes, the major focus is on the individual rather than the task environment. Individual aspects of writing involve interactions among four components: working memory, motivation and affect, cognitive processes, and long-term memory. Raimes (1980) says that Hayes’ model of working memory is based upon a well known conception of working memory developed by Baddeley (1986) with some modifications. According to Hayes the working memory is composed of three components:

- Phonological memory (its stores auditory and verbal information that is speech)
- The visual-spatial sketchpad (this stores visual or spatially coded information, for instance written words or graphs)
- A semantic memory (it stores conceptual information)

In this model, Hayes believes that motivation and affects both play important roles in writing. Speaking more specifically, a writer’s goals, predispositions, beliefs and attitudes, and cost, and benefit estimates may influence the way a writer goes about the task of writing and the effort that will be put into the writing task (White & Arndt, 1997). In a research conducted by Dweck (1986) and Palmquist and Young (1992) that Hayes cites, these researchers suggest that students’ beliefs about the causes of successful informer influence the amount of effort they are willing to exert. Hayes says:

If writing ability is as an inherent and relatively unchangeable talent, students tend to be more anxious and to think less of themselves as writers. Similarly, students who experience failure tend to work harder if they believe that success is due to effort, while they tend to give up and work less if they believe that success is due to innate abilities.

Hayes (1996:25)
In the Hayes model, the cognitive process includes: text interpretation, reflection, and text production. Text interpretation is a process by which internal representations are created from linguistic and graphic input (White & Arndt, 1997). It includes listening, reading, and scanning graphics. Reflection is a process by which internal representation are created from existing internal representations. In text representation, Weigle says, new linguistics (written or spoken) or graphics output is produced from internal representation. These three processes are involved not only in drafting a piece of writing but in revising one’s writing as well.

Figure 1.3: The Hayes (1996) Model
Hayes (1996) emphasizes the importance of reading as a central process in writing. He discusses three types of reading that are essential in writing. The first type is reading to evaluate. Here, the writer reads his text critically to detect possible problems and to discover potential improvement.

Hayes model to evaluate includes cognitive process involved in reading such as decoding words, applying grammar knowledge, etc., and the possible problem and discoveries that reading to evaluate can lead to (Weigle, 2000:27).

Various researchers such as, Hayes, (1996); Raimes, (1996); Bereiter and Scardamalia, (1987); and Weigle (2000) have demonstrated that inexpert writers tend to revise local errors, but not global errors, that is at the sentence level ignoring errors of content and organization. According to Hayes, a writer may fail to revise on a global level because of three reasons. First of all, writers may not be able to detect global problems because of poor reading skills. Second, writers may not have adequate working memory to attend both global and local errors. Last but not least, writers may have adequately developed task of schema for revising. In other words, they may not be aware of the need to pay attention to global errors.

The two other kinds of reading involved in writing task schemas include not only formation about tasks goals, the processes necessary for accomplishing the task, but also how to sequence the processes, and how to evaluate the success of the task. The schema of revision is a good example of a task schema. Because one must have something to write about, topic knowledge therefore becomes essential for writing. Of equal importance, knowledge of the audience includes considerations of many of the social and cultural issues. Similarly, genre knowledge includes knowledge of a given situation for a given goal (Weigle, 2001:28). Linguistic knowledge includes knowledge about the language resources that are brought to bear in the writing process.
The Hayes model is considered complete in many aspects (Weigle, 2001). However, two major shortcomings seem to prevail as far as second language writing is concerned. The first one is concerned with the lack of specificity in defining the situational variables involved in writing. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) adapt a model of communicative language use for academic purposes by Chapel et. al., (1993). In this model, Grabe and Kaplan frame the task environment in terms of participants, settings, task, text, and topic; unlike Hayes who simply lists states that writing is a “social act” and lists the audience and collaborators as factors.

Furthermore, Grabe and Kaplan (1996) provide a detailed taxonomy listing examples of the variables of setting, task, text, and topic for academic writing. As an example for settings,
they list places like classroom, libraries, computer centres. On the other hand, for tasks they enumerate such things like lectures, notes, letters, essays, and laboratory reports.

The second shortcoming of the Hayes model is the “lack of attention paid to the linguistic knowledge” Raimes (1996). This lack of attention is, however, avoided in the Grabe & Kaplan (1996) model. They provide a well-detailed list of the components of language learning relevant to writing. Hymes, (1972); Canale and Swain, (1980); and Bachman, (1990) divide language knowledge into three types of knowledge:

- linguistic knowledge
- discourse knowledge
- And sociolinguistic knowledge

Linguistic knowledge includes knowledge of the basic structural elements of the language, sociolinguistic knowledge includes knowledge of the ways in which language is used appropriately in a variety of social settings, and discourse knowledge refers to the knowledge of the ways in which cohesive text is constructed.

In the model of Hayes, what is considered language knowledge is contained in “task schemas and genres knowledge, yet, it is detailed” states Weigle (2001).

The Hayes’ model remains significant because of its:

Thoroughness in describing the various factors that influence writing, particularly in terms of motivation/affect, cognitive processes, and long-term memory. When supplemented by factors discussed by Grabe and Kaplan, the Hayes model has particular implications for second language writers.

(Weigle, 2001:29)

The following is the taxonomy of language knowledge adapted from Grabe and Kaplan, (1996:220-1) cited by Weigle (2001:30).
I. linguistic knowledge

A. Knowledge of the written code
   1. Orthography
   2. Spelling
   3. Punctuation
   4. Formatting conventions (margins, paraphrasing, spacing, etc.)

B. Knowledge of phonology and morphology

   1. Sound/letter correspondences
   2. Syllables (onset, rhyme/rhythm, coda)
   3. Morpheme structure (word-part knowledge)

C. Vocabulary

   1. Interpersonal word and phrases
   2. Academic and pedagogical words and phrases
   3. Formal and technical words and phrases
   4. Topic-specific words and phrases
   5. Non-literal and metaphorical language

D. Syntactic/structural knowledge

   1. Basic syntactic patterns
   2. Preferred formal writing structures (appropriate style
   3. Tropes and figures of expressions
   4. Metaphors/similes

E. Awareness of differences across languages

F. Awareness of relative proficiency in different languages and registers

II. Discourse knowledge

A. Knowledge of international and intersentential marking devices (cohesion, syntactic parallelism)

B. Knowledge of informational structuring (topic/comment, given/new, theme/rhyme, adjacency pairs)
C. Knowledge of semantic relations across clauses
D. Knowledge of recognizing main topics
E. Knowledge of genre structure and genre constraints
F. Knowledge of organizing schemes (top-level discourse structure)
G. Knowledge of inferencing (bridging, elaborating)
H. Knowledge of differences in features of discourse structuring across languages and cultures
I. Awareness of different proficiency levels of discourse skills in different languages

III. Sociolinguistic knowledge
A. Functional uses of written language
B. Application and interpretable violation of Gricean maxims (Grice, 1975)
C. Register and situational parameters
   1. Age of writer
   2. Language used by writer (L1, L2, …)
   3. Proficiency in language used
   4. Audience considerations
   5. Relative status of interactants (power/politeness)
   6. Degree of formality (deference/solidarity)
   7. Degree of distance (detachment/involvement)
   8. Topic of interaction
   9. Means of writing (pen/pencil, computer, dictation, shorthand)
D. Awareness of sociolinguistic differences across languages and cultures
E. Self-awareness of roles of register and situational parameters.

1.7.2 Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987)

The Bereiter and Scardamalia model is an “influential mode” (Raimes, 2000) that proposes a two-model description of writing that tackles an “apparent paradox” (Weigle, 2001) in writing. In order to explain and resolve this apparent contradiction, the two researchers propose a distinction between knowledge telling and knowledge transforming.
Horowitz (1986) states that knowledge telling is similar to “improptu speaking” because it involves very little planning or revision. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) call this kind of writing “natural” or “unproblematic” because it can be done by any fluent speaker provided he has a grasp of the writing system. An example of this kind of writing is the writing of children and adolescent. This is a process that can be used to generate ideas – a fundamental problem in writing when the writer is deprived of a conversational partner. Bereiter and Scardamalia cited by Weigle (2001) stress the importance of the interactive elements in conversation that are absent in writing:

> When people converse they help each other in numerous, mostly unintentional ways. They provide each other with a continual source of cues- cues to proceed, cues to stop, cues to elaborate, cues to shift topic, and a great variety of cues that stir memory. They serve as text grammarians for one another, raising questions when some needed element of a discourse has been omitted.

>(Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987:55)

To overcome this huge obstacle, novice writers rely on three sources of input to come up with appropriate content. The first source is the topic that is the assignment in a school setting. The second is the writer’s discourse schema; in other words his knowledge about the forms of writing which includes “what elements to be included to fulfill the task, and how they should be arranged” (Elbow, 1998). Raimes (1991) states that for writing an opinion essay the student would likely have to provide a statement of opinion and one or more facts in support of the opinion. The third source of input is the text written so far. This can be used to generate additional ideas. By re-reading what one has already written so far, ideas will on their own accord. Paul Auster in his book “Oracle Night” describes this difficulty of getting started, of generating ideas, and looking at the words already written or even at how pages are designed, or how the flow of ideas gets started. He says:
I put a fresh ink cartridge in my fountain pen, opened the notebook to the first page, and looked and looked at the top line. I had no idea how to begin. The purpose of the exercise was not to write anything specific so much as to prove to myself that I still had it in me to write- which meant that it didn’t matter what I wrote, just so long as I wrote something. Anything would have served, any sentence would have been as valid as any other, but still, I didn’t want to break in that notebook with something stupid, so I bided my time by looking at the little squares on the page, the rows of faint blue lines that crisscrossed the whiteness and turned it into a field of tiny identical boxes, and as I let my thoughts wander in and out of those lightly traced enclosures, I found myself remembering a conversation I’d with my friend John Trause.

(Paul Auster 1988: 33)
What the figure shows is the fact that the writer uses a mental representation of the writing assignment to call up all that he knows about the topic; that is the content knowledge.

Besides this, he needs a schema for the type of discourse required by the assignment. Whether it is an argument or a description or a process or a cause an effect essay, he will select the types of components of the discourse required by that kind of writing.

Content and discourse cues also called topic and discourse identifiers, in the assignment are used to search one’s memory for relevant content items. These ideas or content items will be tested if appropriate or inappropriate. If they are accepted, they will be written down.
The cycle repeats itself, but this time using the text written so far rather than the original mental representation of the assignment as a source of for additional memory probes. The writing process ends when the memory probes fail to find any additional appropriate content.

Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) quote a 12-year old learner who describes this process. He states:

I have a whole bunch of ideas and write down until my supply of ideas is exhausted. Then I might try to think of more ideas up to the point when you can’t get more ideas that are worth putting down on paper and then I would end it.

(Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987:9)

As opposed to the process of knowledge telling which is described as “natural and efficient” (Hedge, 2001), knowledge transformation implies much more effort and skill. Moreover, it is achieved unless great deal of practice is involved. In knowledge transformation, the process of writing involves putting one’s thoughts to the paper as they occur. It also involves writing to create new knowledge. Hedge (2001) states:

In this kind of writing, the process of writing itself frequently leads to new knowledge and may change a writer’s view of what he is trying to communicate.

(Hedge, 2001)
The figure 1.6 shows Bereiter and Scardamalia’s model of knowledge transformation. It shows the different steps involved in the process. The first step in the process of knowledge is transformation. In the process of knowledge transformation the problem is analyzed and a goal is set. This leads to problem-solving activities in two domains: the content problem space and the rhetorical problem space.

In the content problem space, issues of belief and knowledge are dealt with; while in the rhetorical problem space, the writer works on how to best achieve the goals of the writing assignment. A writer trying to find a solution to a content problem may lead him to a rhetorical problem and vice versa (Weigle, 2001:34).
Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) say that there is a two-way interaction between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text. The solution is the rhetorical and content problems become the input to the knowledge telling process during which the actual text is produced (1987:12).

Grabe and Kaplan (1996) state that Bereiter and Scardamalia two-model process provides an explanation for the differences between skilled and unskilled writers. In other words, skilled writers use writing strategies that are substantially different “not just more refined” from those used by unskilled writers. Furthermore, it provides an account for “why tasks differ in difficulty” even for skilled writers.

Scollon (1991) states that when the information requirements of a task are great and the writer is inexperienced with a particular genre, the task will require more cognitive effort to resolve issues in both the content and rhetorical problem spaces. Weigle (2000) believes that that model has limitations; for instance it does not provide an explanation for how one makes the transition from knowledge telling to knowledge transformation. In spite of these limitations, the distinction between knowledge telling and knowledge transformation remains useful for writing pedagogy, Weigle says.

Therefore, writing tasks that are familiar and can be addressed satisfactory through a knowledge telling process may be accessible to inexperienced writers. Yet, it may not distinguish between better and poorer writers. And so will not tasks that are complex enough to elicit a knowledge transforming strategy. If the task involves a genre that is very familiar to writers who are otherwise skilled may not be able to perform well, Weigle adds.

1.8 Text Revision: The Cognitive Psychological Approach

The revision of the text has been a research area as such in the cognitive psychology for 25 years or so, that is since the publication of the so mediated model of Hayes and Flower (1980) in which the writing process of texts written by professional writers is thoroughly analyzed. This process is described as a four macro-process made of:

- Planning
- Translating
Because revising has been allotted the status of a macro-process, the model of Hayes and Flower has given rise to a series of researches on revising. Though there have been so many researches on this particular field, little progress, if at all, has been witnessed as there was not even an agreement on what the word revising means.

Roussey and Piolat (2005) state “at present the process is rather conceived as”. This suggests that the conception of the word revising which they present is not adopted by all the researchers. The question “what does the word revising mean?” is still not answered. Actually this word means different things to different people. Sometimes even to the same researchers, it means two different things.

Revising is considered rather as a major step in the writing process, as planning, or translating, or monitoring, or a group of treatment implied in the control of the process (Roussey & Piolat, 2005:123).

The big characteristics of the writing process will be examined as it is conceptualized in the cognitive psychology so that revising would be given its context. Then, the main conceptions and definitions of revising, the methods used to study it will be dealt with. Finally, the different steps implied in revising will be represented.

### 1.8.1 The Writing Process

The writing of a text is generally considered as a social, strategic process guided by different aims and submitted to multiple constraints that are “cognitively too demanding” (Raimes, 1996). It requires too much attention and resembles a “problem-solving process that is decomposable into a sub-process that interacts according to a certain dynamism” (Hemley & Ganier, 2002).

Before the model of Hayes and Flower had appeared, two approaches were prevailing. The most ancient corresponds to a prescriptive version which was represented in the domain of pedagogy. It sees the writing process of a text as a series of successive steps organized
linearly (a linear process): pre-writing, writing and rewriting (Matsuhashi, 1997). This representation is generally qualified as the “traditional linear-stage model of composing” (Witte, 1985:257).

This approach is present in Murray (1978) for instance who considers the discovery process which takes place while writing comprised of three stages:

- Prevision
- Vision
- Revision

To Murray, revising is what happens after the production of the first version of a text.

The second approach, which comes from the cognitive psychology, is essentially concerned with the production of a text as a process of translating or formulating that assures a passage of a conceptual representation (the message) to a textual representation (Fredeiksen, 1977).

In the models that represent this approach, revising was absent and the only steps that were postulated correspond to, on the one hand; generating and planning of the message, and to the translation of the conceptual text, on the other hand (Fredeiksen, 1977; Flower & Hayes, 1977; Kintsh & Van Dijk, 1978).

The publication of the model of Hayes and Flower has allotted revising the status of sub-process in the writing process. This conception witnessed its peak with the publication of the model of revision of Hayes, Flower, Stratman, and Carey (1987). It has prevailed until the actualized version of Hayes and Flower and the model of Kellog (1996) were published.

In the model of Hayes (1996), the sub process of revising is substituted by text interpretation. In the model of Kellog (1996) the word revising has totally disappeared. It is neither an activity nor a sub-process. Kellog has postulated a new sub-process made of two stages: reading and editing.
1.8.2 The Different Conceptions and Definitions of the Word Revising

It is not an easy task to define what researchers meant by revising because this concept differ from researcher to researcher, from a model to another model, from a paper to another paper and within the same paper as it can be seen in this article by Hayes and Coll:

Because of the common usage, we have used revising to refer to the whole process with which the reviser tries to improve a text. At this level of explication, however, we want to use this term in a more narrowed meaning like the strategy with which the writer tries to solve a textual problem while preserving the maximum of the original text.

(Hayes & Coll 1987:56)

In English the terms revising, revision and reviewing are used to mean three different things. The word revision is generally used to refer to the process which consists of re-examining in a systematic way a text in order to improve it (Hayes & Coll, 1987).

Revising means a comeback, a return to the text accompanied with modifications or a correction. Reviewing is the return to or the re-examination of a text or a passage that may or may not be modified (Flower & Hayes cited by Hayes & Coll, 1987).

According to White (1989), the fact that revising is associated to the idea of modification of a text has led to define it as an activity of re-transcription.

The cognitive psychology has highlighted three main conception of the term revising.

- Revising as an Effective Modification of a Text

According to some researchers, revising means a return, a comeback (Piolat, 1997) to the text which will end up in an effective modification of the text. This conception is clearly
shared by Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983) when they write that their model C.D.O (compare, diagnose, and execute) describes the process which intervenes in the activity of revising. Nonetheless, they refuse to qualify it as a model of revising because according to them the word “revising refers to something that happens on a text” Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983). The model is about a cognitive process which can lead to the modification of the text. This conception is more accentuated in Monahan (1984) and Matsuhashi (1987) who use the word revision in plural to refer to the effective modifications that are brought to the text. Matsuhashi proposes a comfortable operational definition of revision:

A revision is an episode in which the writer interrupts his forward progressive movement of the pen and does an effective modification in the already written text.

(1987:158)

To all the researchers, the word revision obviously means a modification of the already written text.

- Revision as a Sub-Process of the Writing Process That Aims at Improving the Already Written Text

For Hayes and Flower (1980, 1986) and Hayes and Coll (1987), revision may be defined as a sub-process of the writing process which tends to improve the already written text. For Hayes and Flower, revision consists of a systematic examination of a text but does not interrupt the current process. This takes place after an episode of monitoring and translating. It has to be distinguished from editing which does interrupt everything. Stated in another way, it interrupts the whole process. Revision depends on the expertise of the subject, the aim followed and the strategies used.

Hayes and Coll (1987) adopt this definition in their paper but also use the word revising to refer to a strategy adopted by the writer to solve a problem that he had detected in the text while trying to preserve the maximum of the original text. This distinction aims at differentiating purely and simply revision from rewriting.
It is highly necessary for Piolat (1997) to distinguish between revision and reviewing. Reviewing, being a step of the process of revision which implies re-reading of certain parties of the already written text, while revision means: to do whatever changes at whatever time of the writing process (Piolat, 1997). It is a cognitive process of resolving a problem in the sense that it implies:

- Absences of correspondence between the text wished to achieve and the actual one
- The decisions concerning the manner to operate the wished changes
- The process which realizes these changes (Roussey & Piolat, 1997:345).

More recently, Chesnet and Alamargot (2005) define revision in the same way as planning or formulating, that is, a writing component. According to these researchers, revision consists of evaluating a piece of writing at any time of the writing process, at various times, and aiming at improving it by correcting the problems if detected. Revision is therefore conceived mainly as a sub-process of the writing process which may or may not end up with some modification of the already written text.

**Revision as a Controlling Component of the Writing Production**

For Hayes (1996) revision should not be considered as a basic process of the writing process but rather as a process component made of many sub-processes and a structure of control. This controlling structure is motivated by the purpose of improving the text. Furthermore, it determines at which moment the sub-processes must be implemented and at which order.

In the same way, Roussey and Piolat (2005) consider that revision, with planning, a component of the control of the written production. It can fulfill different tasks depending on the forms of interaction between the two processes and can play different roles as checking and programming. It can be applied at different levels such as reacting to a written text or proactive in starting the processes (Roussey & Piolat, 2005:358).

It is defined by these authors as a process which assures many functions as: checking and improving of the finished product, the supervision of the other processes-planning goals, programming the treatment etc. It can also supply certain inefficient processes which lack planning and anticipation.
1.8.3 The Method of the Study of Revision

Revision is generally studied thanks to four methods which can be used separately or conjointly: the study of the product, the chronometric analysis of the writer’s activity, the thinking-aloud protocol and, the added task (two or three tasks).

The study of the product consists of describing precisely the whole modification brought to a previous version of a text by the writer. This text may be written by the writer himself or another writer. The corrections done are characterized with the help of a typology that permits to define the correction done at the linguistic level (letters, words etc.), and the type of correction done (adding, omitting substituting, etc.) based on the principle that a written text is a mirror of the writing processes that have permitted to compose that text. The study of the product allows investigating the cognitive processes that have been called upon to compose the studied text. It also allows evaluating the efficiency of revision.

The chronometric analysis of the revising activity is based on the principle according to which every process happens in the time. It consists of situating physically and temporarily the behavioral hints that are collected (graphic activity, pauses etc.) so as to describe the dynamism of the process of revising. It helps to determine at which moment and at which place in the text starts an episode of revision, at which place the modifications take place. Furthermore, it also helps determine the duration of the episode, the pauses and the writing of the modifications.

The activity consists of filming the writer in the process of revision: where he thinks he starts revising the written product, what he does, where he pauses, how long the pauses are. A recent technique is the one recording the eye movement while the writer is in the process of revision (Chesnet & Alamargot, 2005).

Thinking-aloud protocol is a method borrowed to the domain of the study of problem-solving. Its principle consists of asking a writer to verbalize at a loud voice all that he thinks while (concurrent) or after (differed or retrospective thinking-aloud protocol) a revision of a text. The aim is to capture the content of the memory of work and to identify the high level mental processes involved in revision. The data is collected, transcribed and then analyzed as
major data or an extra to the analysis of the product or the temporary analysis of the activity of revision (Chesnet, 2005). This method whose use is contested by many researchers because of the risk of high level of interference which it introduces in the process of revision has only contributed to identify the main sub-processes, the strategies and the sub-aims implied in the process of revision. For instance, Hayes and Coll (1987) conclude from a study these protocols that the diagnostic of a detected problem during a revising activity is an optional strategy essential available for the expert writer. They believe that the sub process should not be presented in a model of the process of revision as a compulsory step between the detection of the problem and its eventual correction. The production of the concomitant verbalization constitutes a verbal production activity by itself (Piolat, 2001).

The technique of the added task consists of asking a writer to realize two tasks at the same time. The one which is presented to the writer is the main task; the other which does not have the priority is called the secondary or minor task. Generally, the task of composing is presented as the main task. The other, for instance press the button as soon as possible when the writer hears a signal is the secondary task. This technique which was initially used to study the memory of work, aims at measuring the cognitive effort made by the writer to accomplish the current process. The more the current process (for instance re-reading the passage to detect errors) mobilizes the writer’s cognitive and attentive resources, the more the secondary task performances decrease. The decrease, even the deterioration of the second task is then used as an indicator of the efforts made by the writer at a certain moment of the process of revision.

A variant, the technique of a triple task consists then to ask the writer to accomplish three tasks at the same time (Piolat, Kellog, & Farioli, 2001). The writer revises a text is the main task; react to a signal (a sound) is the first secondary task, and indicate the nature of the current cognitive activity with the help of a system of responses established beforehand is the second secondary task.

The use of the four techniques, either one at a time or all together, has permitted to identify the cognitive activities and the process implied in the revision of a text.

The following four models of revision are considered as the most important and the most representative in the cognitive psychology.
1.8.4 The Model of Hayes and Flower (1980)

Though the model of Hayes and Flower (1980) is not the first one to describe the process of revision, it is considered as the veritable starting point of all the models that were proposed later on.
In the model of Hayes and Flower, revision or more exactly reviewing the text is seen as a sub-process divided into two sub-processes: reading and editing. The sub-process of editing is entirely devoted to a systematic and automatic examination of what the author has drafted. It acts as detector and corrector of the different types of problems such as violations of the writing conventions, inadequacies of meaning, inadequacies related to the aim set by the writer, etc. It is seen as a production rule made by two parts:

- A condition
- An action

The condition specifies the type of discourse and so the limit of tolerance of the violation of the language rules. It has a system of detection of what is considered as a mistake to the type of discourse. For instance, forgetting a capital letter will be considered acceptable for personal note-taking, but to be corrected imperatively for a job application. In the second case, the production rule can be represented as follows:

- Condition: (job application) small letter at the beginning of the sentence
- Action: replace the letter with its equivalent in capital

As soon as the detecting conditions of a mistake are fulfilled that is, as soon as a mistake is detected, the rule is automatically set off and an action more or less complex is executed to correct it. This process is automatic and can interrupt any other current process such as planning or editing.

Hayes and Flower (1980) insist that the sub-process of editing has to be distinguished from the sub-process of revision. Editing refers to an activity of systematic examination and improvement of the text or part of the already written text. This generally takes place after a good period of translation.

Hayes and Flower (1980) find that the researchers’ discussion of the nature of the reviewing process is inconsistent. They state that their discussion presents two accounts that are not compatible with each other. Reviewing, according to Hayes and Flower consists of two sub-processes: reading and editing. However, only editing was fully described. Hayes and Flower assume that editing is a production system that responds automatically to faults.
such as misspelling, factual inaccuracies, lack of clarity, or inappropriate tone. Once editing is triggered, the other processes are immediately interrupted. Other procedures to fix the detected problem are initiated. The view that the problem detection automatically triggers problem correction has not survived critical evaluation. As Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001) point out:

> Of course, through extensive practice, certain aspects of editing may become automated. However, it seems unlikely that the activity of editing as a whole would ever become completely automatic even in highly practiced individuals.

Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001:158)

The second account of the nature of reviewing that Hayes and Flower provide is that reviewing and editing are processes that have distinctly different properties. While reviewing is described as reflective activity in which the writer decides to devote a period of time to systematic examination and improvement of the text” (Piolat, 1997:18), editing is viewed as a rather automatic process. Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001) find that these two accounts are inconsistent.

1.8.5 The Model CDO of Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983)

The model CDO (compare-Diagnose-organize) of Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983) describes the components and the organization of the sub-process of the writing process which according to them are frequently involved in the revision of the text.

According to this model, the sub-process CDO can be compared to a feedback loop that is triggered when an incompatibility is detected between two mental representations stored in the long memory: the representation of text already written and the text representation of the expected text.
The triggering can happen at any time during the writing process and can interrupt the other sub-processes. In this case the end of the CDO process will come into a return to the interrupted activity. The process starts therefore, with a comparison between two representations (compare) which will result in detecting (or not) a mistake, an incompatibility between what is already written and what should have been written. In the case of detection, the focus of the writer moves and initiates the second sub-process included in the process: the process of Diagnose whose function is to determine the cause of the mismatch. The intervention of the second sub-process can lead to many results. In the case of failure, no decision of modification is taken and the process CDO is interrupted. In the case of success, however, (i.e., identification of the cause) three possible decisions can be taken by the writer:

- The decision to modify the text which the most frequent one.
- The decision to modify the initial intention rather than the already written text. This implies leaving the process CDO.
- The decision to modify the two, that is, the text and the initial intention.
Figure 1.8: The Model CDO of Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983)
When the process results with the decision of modifying the already written text, the third sub-process, Operate is activated. This latter is divided into two sub-processes. The first one corresponds to a sub-process: choose a tactic which decides either to operate different types of changes: modification of lexis, addition or omission to cite but a few. In this latter only, to Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983) revision will be made on the already written text because of the interaction of the second sub-process: the process of Generate change.

When a modification occurs on the text, this will lead to a modification of the representation of the already written text and again to the triggering of the CDO process until the incompatibility with the representation of the text is solved or the failure of the whole process.
1.8.6 The Model of Hayes, Flower, Schriver, Stratman and Carey (1987)

The model of Hayes and Coll (1987) as compared to the model of Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983) is a model which specifically designed to describe the process of revision in the writing process.

Figure 1.9: The Model of Hayes, Flower, Schriver, Stratman and Carey (1987)
The right part of the diagram represents the knowledge which intervenes in the revision process; whereas the left part describes the process used by the writer. The revision process itself is subordinate to a first process: task definition which determines the manner with which the writer represents the revision task. The process produces a representation which he preserves in the long term memory. This representation has a metacognitive knowledge, and plays the role of regulation as it defines the goal of revision, the level (global or local) on which it is supposed to focus as well as the global strategy adopted to revise the text.

The definition of the task may be modified or not during the procedure of the revision process. Because it is located upstream of all the others, the latter process plays a crucial role since it determines the priorities (the sub-goals) of the writer.

The second process, the Evaluation process operates from the representation that the writer has made or planned as a task. It may be conceived as a particular type of the process of reading comprehension whose function is not really to comprehend, understand, that is to construct a representation of what the text means, but to evaluate the text and detect the problem that it contains.

The problems are various. They range from spelling mistakes, grammar mistakes, ambiguity, incoherence, mistake of logic, organisation problems to misappropriate tone. Different levels of treatment like identify the word, elaborate the inferences, apply the grammatical rules etc. are supposed to intervene during the process.

The process of evaluation may be applied on the text of another writer, on his own text or on the plans of the text. It is composed of three sub processes:

- The process problem representation
- The process of detection
- The process of diagnosis

The issue of the process of evaluation is the representation of the problem which can be either well or badly defined.

The revision process itself (that is, the modification of the already written text) can intervene unless a problem is detected. On the other hand, it is necessary that the cause of the
problem must be identified so that the processed is triggered. In fact, the evaluation can result into the detection of a problem that the learner is not able to name or to diagnose. This constitutes an important difference with the mode of Scardamalia and Bereiter (1983).

When a problem is detected according to the way the writer represents the task of revision, a process of strategy selection leads the writer to adopt a strategy towards the encountered problem. This process is then similar to a solving problem process. This strategy may either postpone the modification at the moment and look for extra information, define a new aim, or modify the text (Chanquoy, 2001). When the decision to modify is taken, the writer has two options: rewrite completely the text or, revise it.

The process of rewriting refers to the fact that the writer decides to preserve the meaning and to abandon the whole surface structure of the passage or a text to initiate a new process of editing. The rewriting of that text may be realized in two different ways; either by producing a new version (redrafting), or by paraphrasing the old version (paraphrasing).

Revision in the narrow sense of the term denotes the implementation of a strategy which aims at solving the problems in the whole or parts of the text so as to conserve the maximum of the initial text. More precisely, this process refers here to the decision process of the use of information from diagnosis to eliminate the problem (Piolat, 1997:229).

According to Piolat (1997), the information that sets off the process of revision is provided by the sub-process of Diagnose. Operating from the representation of the diagnosed problem, the sub-process of revision proceeds at recuperating the solution from the long term memory (the Mean) corresponding the problem to be solved (the End). For instance, if a problem is detected and the diagnose is: “this passage is redundant”, this will activate automatically the solution in the long term memory: delete this passage or this element.
1.8.7 The Model of Hayes (1996)

The model of Hayes (1996) constitutes a tentative improvement and clarification of the two previous models namely the model of Hayes and Flower (1980) and, the model Hayes and Coll (1987). In this model, three sub-processes of the writing process which were presented in the above mentioned processes namely Planning, Translating, Reviewing are
replaced respectively by Reflection, Text Production and Text Interpretation. In this new model, the sub-process of revision in the previous process is therefore substituted by the sub-process Text Interpretation.

According to Hayes (1996), the function of this sub-process is to create an internal representation from linguistic and graphic information input. In the new model revision is no more considered as a basic sub-process of the writing process but a process implying three basic sub-processes:

- Interpretation of the text
- Reflection
- Text production

All these are organized and managed by a control structure that determines which sub-processes have to be activated and at which order.

This structure is conceptualized as task schema which is defined as a whole production of rules acquired with experience and which trigger mutually when indications present in the environment activate the schema. This knowledge relates to the goal of revision (improve the text), to the whole activities to be accomplished (critical reading, problem solving, etc.) to the setting (determination of the sub-goals implied in the management of the focus) to the different patterns, and to the quality criteria not to mention to the problem-solving strategies to solve specific problems (Monahan, 1984).

Here, the reading process is central, extremely important, but not specific to the process of revision.

In this model, revision is not considered as a basic sub-process of the writing process but rather a macro process composite a controlling activity of the writing process that involves the process of drafting as well as basic cognitive sources in the memory of work (Chanquoy, 2001).

Many of researchers have expressed their reluctance regarding the definition of the term 'revision'. For instance, Fayol and Gomber (1987) write that it seems that a relative consensus led researchers to consider that the revision of the text consists of three stages: detection,
identification, modification (1987:87). Twenty years later, research did not manage to agree on a minimal definition of the word:

sometimes used to designate a sub-process of the writing process; sometimes a component of the production control, sometimes a genuine change of part or all the text; sometimes a systematic review or return on a part of text with a systematic change; sometimes a controlled activity or automatic activity: revision is an ambiguous word to say the least.

(Roussey & Piolat, 2005:146)

Two explanations may clarify the absence a sound definition: Revision is conceived as referring more to the control of the writing process than to a specific sub-process of the writing process (Roussey & Piolat, 2005)

**Conclusion**

Through this chapter, issues in writing theory and pedagogy as proposed by leading practitioners have been addressed. This is due to the fact that the interest in writing in general is still a field of controversy. This interest has never stopped challenging empirical research with varying concerns about the course, goals, tasks types, classroom procedures and revision techniques.

To consolidate the results, researchers have turned to the development of an ethnography of writing that can explain how instructed writing development takes place as writers interact with themes, expert teachers and peers.

The contrastive rhetoric has enabled the L1 writing theory to inform the L2 writing theory, yet highlighting the need for verifiable research into language varieties. The
development of L2 writing theory and pedagogy has been highly motivated by the practice of task-based learning.

Native speakers of the TL have conducted the majority of L2 writing development studies. They have questioned the validity of some of the claims made about innovations in the writing curriculum and syllabus.

The chapter has dealt with the major approaches to the teaching of writing; mainly the ones that have focused on the reader, the writer, the content.

This chapter has tempted to provide a brief review of empirical findings and theoretical positions concerning the conditions that lead the writer to revise. This will pave the way to the next chapters so as to explore what is it that leads writers to change what they have written or what they intend to write. Why do our learners fail to detect their own mistakes? The major point would be how to teach the learner to better detect errors in his or someone else’s compositions.
Chapter 2

THE CASE-STUDY

Introduction

Undertaking a research that is motivated by the sole aim which is to help students of FL develop a language skill is required to have a global precise idea of their needs, the requirements of the discourse community, and a variety of procedures whereby they can be met. By the same token, the researcher is challenged by the task of placing a skill and its many subskills in the wider context of language learning and use. As with any skill at any level, the development of EFL writing skills at university also has repercussions for continued growth and motivation. This situation requires more attention. The students may become much more or much less motivated to study and perform. It all depends on the opportunities they are given in preparatory courses.

The starting point of the present research was the realisation that the majority of the second year students fail in conveying a message in their written assignments. The written assignment is usually a short paragraph, which ranges from eighty to one hundred and twenty words, or an essay that may exceed three hundred words. This failure is observed in the output they have to produce, be it during their lessons, in their homework, or even in their final, most salient examination.

Whether the students are describing, narrating, comparing or giving a piece of advice, whether they are writing a friendly letter or a formal one, whether the written assignment is a dialogue, a paragraph, or an essay the difficulty of expressing their intentions is persistent.

The lack of achievement is often evidenced by those who are not able to write coherent paragraphs, or essays; by those whose writing cannot be interpreted in one way or another, or even by those who cannot complete one sentence without writing the equivalent of an English word in Arabic or in French. In other words, they are incapable of making use of language, and yet the first use of language is to communicate.
It becomes a double-frustrating situation when the teachers cannot make sense of their students' writing and what they have in mind. Furthermore, the students' writing enables the instructors to evaluate their teaching. It helps them see whether the grammatical structures, and the vocabulary studied so far, have been grasped or not. It is such a great handicap to see that the learners are not writing, or do not dare write because they fear this skill. Such learners will never stand a chance of being adventurous with the language, to go beyond what they have just learnt, in a word to take risks. Indeed, when writing, the novice writer is in a constant struggle choosing the right way to say his ideas. It is really a demanding task because he has to select the right word, the right sentence to convey his message the way he wants it to be received. There could be many reasons for this phenomenon which is common in the whole country but it occurred to the researcher that four questions are relevant. First, are the students being taught the skill to write or the strategies to be applied when writing? Second, are the students given enough guidance to produce the final, free, personal outcome? Third, do the writing activities attempt to achieve the expected syllabus objectives? Last, but not least, how can we help the learners overcome the difficulties they usually encounter when starting a written assignment? What if the process approach is applied? Will this be a possible solution?

By narrowing these questions and interpreting them deeply from a purely practical view, the present research design emerged. It was decided to investigate mainly the reasons why the learners cannot get their message across in written discourse.

A glance at the syllabus shows that the expectations are huge, whereas the actual achievement at the level of writing is unsatisfactory if not insignificant. How can this fact be explained? Is the syllabus too demanding? Are the activities used in this same syllabus to achieve the objectives ineffective?

The writer will also investigate the intentions of the informants and what they actually perform in their papers. Do the ideas written on the pages go in harmony with the learners' intentions? If not, is there, then, a gap between the ideas and the intentions? What are the features that hinder the learners' intentions? Is this hindrance due to the fact that the learners tend to translate word for word, and this kind of translation gets their ideas all mixed up? Consequently, it becomes impossible for the reader to grasp the message. Does the problem lie in the organisation of the written discourse that the learners lack? Therefore, one tends to assume that the teachers, for some unknown reasons, are busy doing something else rather
than teach the essence of language function i.e., communication. Is this weakness in written communication rooted in the fact that the learners lack the basic and most fundamental knowledge of language including - among other features - lexis and the grammatical structures?

The learners use Arabic words or even French words whenever they are trapped in a “tight corner”. Is there a message beyond this simplification, beyond this “strategy”? Aren't they able to avoid being trapped in such situations? Is the whole problem a matter of strategies?

A review of literature indicated which variables were likely to be relevant to successful message conveying. It was decided that the dependent variables concerning the description of the population would be: age, sex, motivation, attitudes towards the language being learnt, the environment which obviously includes the school and the place pupils live in, not to mention the mutual effect, be it positive or negative, between these variables.

Motivation is an essential factor for learning a foreign language in general. Motivation, as it is, can be integrative or instrumental. It can also be extrinsic or intrinsic.

Of equal importance to motivation, there is attitude. It is composed by all the affective factors that are concerned with the learner's stand towards both the target language and the native users of this language.

The place has a tremendous effect on both the learners and the teacher. A place like Oran where many facilities are available is by no means similar to remote places which, as far as education is concerned, can be described as a sterile environment.

2.1 Data and Participants

To fully describe the institutional and curricular role that EFL writing pedagogy plays at the University of Oran, Department of Anglo-Saxon languages, section of English, qualitative and quantitative data had to be collected. The data comprise the following sources:

- The language development curriculum specifications of the section of English;
- Syllabuses of recent formal writing courses;
- Students’ portfolios containing narrative, descriptive and argumentative essays;
- Writing textbooks reviewed, adopted and otherwise used during the development of the class in writing skills;
- Handouts used in writing skill classes;
- Notes on classroom activities;
- Notes on employing various techniques and formats to provide feedback on student writing;
- Notes on students’ activities in office hour meetings.

These materials and documents have been collected, prepared, and sorted out continuously. They are authentic records of individual activities. Applying them for research analytical purposes will only enhance the validity of the ethnographic objective of the present research. It is an attempt to evaluate the pedagogy in writing. It is hoped that the results of this endeavour will motivate further empirical research in the field, for the benefit of all concerned.

2.2 The Population

The subjects who constitute the experimental group in this research are second year students of the University of Es Senia, Oran. In this university, the students of the second year are alphabetically divided into 10 groups of 40 students in each group. The experimental group consists of eighty (80) students ranging from 19 to 26. They are from the fourth (4th) and fifth (5th) groups. Some of the students are adult learners, teachers in other departments. There are also some African students; most of them are from Mali or Niger.

This population represents a typical EFL population with very limited exposure to L2 outside the classroom context.

So that claims for difference in the performance on the dependent variable have both on internal and external validity (Seliger & Shohamy, 2000), a control group consisting of forty (40) second year students of the same university, same age and same area was introduced. The students of the control group belong to the third (3rd) group.
The case study will compare the performance of two similar, but non-randomly assigned second year students. The experimental and control group classes were determined by a toss of a coin. The instruction will be of the same length and will cover the same topics and writing activities for both classes.

Indeed, this control group represents the same population as the experimental group. So, the same individuals will be compared with and without treatment. The control group will not receive the treatment which consists of the instruction of the process approach to writing and all that it implies. Yet, the control will typically take both the same pre-test and post-test as will the experimental group. The control group will be doing the same activities as the experimental group but with the instruction of the product writing approach.

This particular control group is used to provide the research with a comparison of the experimental group regarding improvement in L2 writing ability. The idea of checking the true effects of the process approach instruction instead of resolving to simply observe the students change over the two semesters became the sole concern of the research.

2.3 Reasons behind the Choice

The participants were one hundred and twenty (120) (90 female and 30 male) university students, of whom 80 were assigned to the treatment groups and 40 were assigned to the control group. The participants were 2nd year grade students who were registered in the Department of English at the University of Oran. Their ages ranged from 19 to 26 years. We did not allow participants to choose to be in either the experimental or control group. To avoid an experimental bias, participants were unaware of the purpose of the study.

2.3.1 Participants Selection

During our long teaching experience, we observed that the highest university dropout rates occur during the first year of study. Some students drop out voluntarily by the first semester of the first year of study. Accordingly we were motivated to do the experimental
study with second year students. Regardless of such motivation, the selection process for the participants in this experimental study began by determining participants’ reading ability and grade level. A pre-test of grade point was given to 2nd year students.

Second year students were selected to be under the experimental study on the basis that prior knowledge was required to successfully perform some writing process tasks. The pre-test indicated that they possessed a quite good range of knowledge on individual topics, so that conscious effort was made to encourage direct communication of knowledge between participants.

The second reason behind the choice was that second year students have reached the stage from paragraph to essay and were therefore able to produce an essay. It is in the second year that they are allowed to express themselves in writing. Therefore, the kind of writing would be an interesting output to ponder on. There is no actual composing or expressing one’s ideas as such during the first year. The sole aim of the first year is to tackle the English sentence thoroughly and proceed to paragraph writing.

2.4 Age

The role that age plays in the development of language by second language learners is a hotly debated issue. And so is the relationship between age and other learner variables such as motivation and aptitude. Yet, opinions differ on the extent to which the age of the students affects language development. Researchers have not succeeded to put an end to the controversy. Hyltestan and Abrahamsson (2003) both state that the entirely successful adult learner and the slightly unsuccessful child deviate from the unspoken norm (p.539).

Marinova-Todd, Bradford Marshall and Snow (2000) agree that the younger-is-better notion may be a result of misinterpretation of the facts, misattribution of causality, and misemphasis on poorer adult learners while underemphasizing good older learners.

In an attempt to study the age related differences in language development by speakers of other languages, Oyama (1976) studied sixty Italian-born immigrants in the US. The data he collected consisted of tape recordings of the sixty immigrants reading aloud and telling an unrehearsed story. They were evaluated on a five point scale from foreign accent to heavy
language accent. The findings indicate that the younger you are exposed to a foreign language (in this case English) the closer your pronunciation gets to that of the native speaker.

Other studies have shown that albeit younger learners often succeed in the long run, adults learn more quickly initially. For instance, Hoefnagel-hohte (1978) who studied the progress of beginning students of Dutch at varying ages newly residents of the Netherlands discovered that the adolescent and adult students were well-ahead of the children in the development of their new language.

However, after almost a year, the younger learners had caught up with the levels of the adults students; they even went beyond their levels.

In a study that investigated the levels of attainment of students in a French bi-lingual program in Canada, Harley (1986) found out that adult learners demonstrated greater overall control of the verb system than students after 100 hours of instruction. He also discovered that younger learners achieved higher levels in the end.

Burstall, Jamieson, Cohen, and Hargreaves (1974) did a study that involved 17,000 students of French in Britain over a period of ten years. The results of this study indicate that the benefits of early instruction for language development are short lived.

Fathman (1978) made a study of language performance, and also of the order of learning specific language instructions. She discovered that age did not affect the order of language development by those who already speak other languages. She found out that young learners did better in learning phonology and adult learners did better on morphology.

The results of the study by Newfield (1978) indicate that adults could acquire native-like pronunciation. Swain (1981) who studied the Canadian immersion program concluded that an earlier start had much less affect than expected.
2.4.1 Explaining Age-Related Differences in Language Development.

Many researchers tried to explain age-related differences in language development. Some explained the phenomenon by the existence of a critical period for language development during which language is acquired more easily than at others stages of life. Birdsong (1991) states that once this stage window of opportunity is passed, the ability to learn declines (p.1). According to Lenneberg (1967) this period lasts until puberty at which time the brain begins to lose plasticity. Lenneberg adds that this might be connected with the process of lateralization. Other researchers argue that the process of lateralization occurs much earlier than puberty. Therefore, age related differences must be observed elsewhere (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, 1982).

Long (1990) explained that this situation is due to the process of myelination which progressively wraps the nerves of the brain in myelin sheaths as the brain matures. According to Long, myelination delineates learning pathways in the brain and reduces flexibility.

The debate is so intense. There is too much evidence that favours the fact that younger students are far more successful than much older students; yet, there seems that one of the biological explications proffered to account for age related differences in language development is without its controversy.

Exceptions to the rule are presented here and there. The example of Julie, an English woman of 21 years old, being totally immersed in the Egyptian society learnt to converse in Arabic outside the home in 45 days. Such examples render any dogmatic assertions on the subject unsustainable. Bialystok and Hakata state that biological restrictions such as brain maturation should not be easily overturned (1999:177). As a consequence, the term sensitive to modify the period was suggested instead of the word critical. This is but a proof that indicates that there is no abrupt or absolute criterion after which L2 acquisition is impossible but rather a gradual process with which the ultimate level of L2 attainment becomes variable (Loup et al, 1994:74).

Krashen and Terrell (1983) have tried to explain the differences in language development between younger and adult learners by hypothesizing as the main reason the affective filters. Explaining the child’s superiority in language development over the adult is
but an over-simplification according to Gregg (1984). Schumann (1975) states that affective variables may play a more important role than does biological maturation in problems associated with adult second language acquisition (1975:209). Among the affective variables, the researcher includes language shock and culture shock. Language shock is defined as the shock which leaves the learner feel ashamed, anxious, and inadequate; while culture shock leaves the learner feel rejected, disoriented, and uncertain of identity and status.

Affective variables include social pressures too. To Schumann (1975), there is the concept of social distance which refers to the similarity and dissimilarity of cultures which come into contact with each other. Ellis (1985) agrees that adult are more concerned with social pressure than children as children feel less bound to cultures than adults (p. 109). Because they feel free from peer pressure, children, learn more successfully. Adults tend to remain deliberately distinctive by maintaining a distinctive accent or by retaining their identity. Highly motivated, young learners do their best to be accepted by their peer groups.

Burling (1981) explains that because of generalized social changes there will be differences of language development between a child and an adult when learning Swedish. The child talks a narrower range of topics, with less style shifting and less active vocabulary than was expected of himself. Indeed, the child is not aware of his limitations. The adult knows that he is limited; therefore, he is likely to abandon and conclude that he has lost the capacity to learn a language (Burling, 1981:284).

Another variable that affects age-related differences in language development is the cognitive differences between children and adults. Krashen (1985) reports that the adults’ foster initial progress can be explained in terms of their ability to obtain more comprehensible input by means of their greater experience, knowledge, and ability to negotiate communication. Ellis (1988) endorses the same findings and adds that adult learners are able to learn the language by consciously thinking about the rules. The same result was put forward by Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle (1978) who concede that cognitive factors may help to explain the differences between adults and young learners. Adults are capable of rationalizing the new language and of utilizing the patterns of their first langue for immediate communicative purposes. Equipped with a larger repertoire of language learning strategies, established with experience, they can choose and apply the most appropriate in each and every particular situation. Furthermore, they are more likely able to exercise better metacognitive control over their learning by timing their pace, monitoring, and evaluating
their progress. Nonetheless, Dulay, Burt, and Krashen object that cognitive considerations could explain the fact that in the long run children typically outperform adults in language development.

Norton and Toohey (2001) contend that learning situation which is a considerable variable in successful learning affects the students differently according to their age.

There are two learning situations. The first which is recommended by Krashen and Terrell (1983) is the naturalistic one. In this situation, the students learn by being immersed in the target language. This way is similar to a child acquiring his mother tongue. The second is the formal classroom situation. Classroom situation can vary according to the period of time it is due to take place (day or night), according to the method used (the Grammar Translation Method, Direct Method, Audio-Lingual Method...), and according to the means it use (face to face or e-learning). These differences may favour more adult learners than young learners depending on factors such as prior learning experience, learning style, metacognitive ability to control their own learning, motivation, what is exactly they are trying to learn, and the personal demands which they have on their time and energy (for instance, from family or job) Griffiths, 2008:40).

Griffiths (2008) admits that besides maturational, socio-affective, cognitive, and situational explanations for age-related differences in language learning, there is a potentially almost infinite number of individual variables which might conceivably affect a student’s ability to learn. Among the most commonly listed ones are gender, culture, personality, learning style, attitude, beliefs, motivation, aptitude, autonomy, and prior learning experience as well as personal factors such as family, job, and health.

Many researchers like Corder (1975), Widdowson (1980), Finocchiaro (1983), Yule (1996), to name but a few, have proved that age is a major variable in acquiring a language; be it a second or even a first language. Consequently, in the literature of second language acquisition (SLA), the reader finds articles and books conducted towards that particular variable. As an instance, titles such as « Language Development in Children » by Elizabeth Ingrain (1969) or « Linguistics and Children’s Interests » by Richards Handscombe (1973), « On Learning a Foreign Language as an Adult » by Charles Fries (1980), to cite but a few, have become great references on this particular variable.
Lado (1963) makes a clear-cut distinction between four (4) age groups: young children, teenagers, adolescents, and adults. He insists that each group has its own characteristics that have to be taken into account by the teacher. Activities such as imitation and repetition that are paramount for language learning are a source of pleasure and enjoyment for young learners. On the other hand, they may not only bring boredom but also a feeling of being fooled upon to adult learners.

According to Wilkins (1983), age is a relevant variable because with age comes a change in the potential for learning languages. Many researchers have built up their studies on a commonly shared hypothesis that the change that comes with age is for the worse. Indeed, with the increase of age there is a decrease of the capacity for language learning. This hypothesis is taken so seriously that most methodologists insist on foreign language teaching to start at early age in primary schools (language Awareness Studies).

Wilkins (1983) believes that age is a significant variable in language learning. Yet, to this moment researchers have not proved efficient to confirm whether the children learn a foreign language better than teenagers or adults, or the other way round. Some researchers have shown that when the child reaches adulthood, he is more concerned with his body changes, his image in the society, his attitude and role, etc. So many factors that lead to conclude that he is not “that motivated” for learning a second language or a foreign language (Bouhadiba, 2010). Dated researches such as the one conducted by Carroll (1958) showed that the group of informants who were in their thirties had a decreasing rate of learning with age, but their motivation and aptitude were there to stand as more significant variables than age.

The amount of achievement at a particular age is another problem that has to be solved or at least studied further. Yet, one has to consider many salient factors, such as a child with a much longer time, and most of all under the right, and favourable conditions, can be expected to have a high level of proficiency; with a greater concentration, an effective systematic learning, he might be able to achieve more in a short time.

When dealing with the same variable, Finicchiaro (1974) raised many questions related mainly to two groups of age and the characteristics of each. From the first question, we can deduce that the younger the learners are, the more imitation, games, and songs are preferred. Furthermore, if the learners are adult, then the teacher has to bear in mind that the mother
tongue is already well established and therefore he can make good use of it. In addition to this, this type of learners needs to be helped, monitored to analyse the language being learnt.

Figure 2.1: Factors Which Interact With Age to Influence Language Learning (Carol Griffiths, 2008: 41)

In this research the learners, are aged between nineteen (19) and twenty six (26), which is a comfortable period. Being adult, they have their personal interests that might deepen the gap between them and what is programmed in the syllabus. Stevick mentions it clearly to both the teachers and programmes-makers when he states:

They should not be expected to be charmed with the kinds of games that are usually administered to children. Neither
should they be expected to endure the dullery that adults have been trained to endure...

(Stevick, 1984: 46)

On the other hand, one can take advantage of the characteristics of this particular age, for students are capable of high enthusiasm and almost unlimited interests to lead them towards more creative activities.

2.5 Gender

Researchers view gender as one of the most fascinating and at the same time one of the most controversial topic in language learning. Its impact upon ways that sexes think, reason, and solve problems has been the focus of many well-founded researches. It must be admitted, however, that the amazing, breathtaking development in technology has greatly helped to bring to the open new insights into the differences of male and female brain functioning structure, how they develop differently, and how they process information differently (Tyre, 2005).

The concern of this research is not gender differences per se, but rather the processes that may contribute to bringing about language performance differential between boys and girls, women and men.

Dornyei (2005) argues that boys and girls behave in striking different ways while learning a second language in particular. Quantitative studies in gender have helped a lot language educators who are interested in enhancing the achievement of learners. The focus of those studies was those peculiar different ways and their impacts on language learning and pedagogy in particular. Some factors related to the human state and traits; others are environmental or situational, dependent on the context or setting.

The departure point, therefore, includes the realization that the socialized views of gender differences will impact the teaching.
2.5.1 How Gender is defined

Broadly speaking, gender is often used to denote the biologically based, dichotomous variable of sex. That is, male and female. It also denotes the socially constructed roles which are created by the different ways in which sexes are raised from both and socialized with a certain culture (Ellis, 1994).

Researchers do not consider gender as an important variable in second language learning. This could be explained by the fact that the effects of gender, roles, relations and identities are omnipresent. Sunderland (1994) states that because the effects of gender roles are everywhere, ironically in much writing and thinking on ELT, gender appears nowhere (1994:211).

Sunderland sees that gender as a very important variable with a potential that can affect language learning. He adds that issues like literacy practices, language tests, tests performance, self esteem, styles and strategies are gendered since male and female students are observed to behave or feel differently.

The main concern of most researchers is whether there are significant variations based on gender in how students learn a language. Some researchers, mainly biological researchers, focused on neurological and hormonal differences in the brain of males and females. These researchers reported that females have more nerve cells in the left half of the brain (left hemisphere) where language is centred (Legato, 2005). Tyre (2005) reportes that women use more of the brain to listen and to speak which make activities essential to communication easier for them (p.183). While performing brain scan imagery, neuroscientists discovered that women use the same area of the brain as men to process language but, depending on the linguistic task, women often use both sides of the brain and, given identical assignments, women activate more areas in their brain than men do (Legado, 2005). Most importantly, Tyre (2005) states: research confirmed that girls have language centres that mature earlier than boys (p. 59).

Psychological studies stress gender-specific socialization and expectations which mould gender roles, attributes, and behaviour of children from an early age (Beal, 1994; Legato, 2005). Beal claims that children first learn to talk in a social context that varies by gender (1994:223).
Studies have reported that parents tend to talk more to baby girls than boys. They also respond more to girls’ early attempts to use language. Reese and Fivush (1994) state that parents have longer and more complex conversations with daughters and encourage more responses from them than sons. Nyikos (2005) argues:

Much of the perceived female superiority in language capability may be due to the added effort which adults tend to lavish on baby girls compared with baby boys. In the crucial early years of life, female brains may be better stimulated due to the subconscious expectations of adults.

(2005: 75)

Psychologists avoid giving clear cut decisions concerning the key factor in any relative success that women and men of any age have in language learning. This is mostly due to socio-cultural influences shaping young people as gendered being. The socio-cultural influences include many cultural expectations of male and female roles and attribution of certain qualities. Each should possess both in society and in the classroom.

Constructivist views give learning its social environmental dimension where students are to work collaboratively to achieve the common goal as they construct their understanding and responses to specific tasks. Slavin states:

When we push language acquisition into the social space, we deal with group dynamics and the interplay of social status, personality, learning preferences and individual preferences of many kinds.

(1996: 214)

The vantage point of these cooperative tasks in the classroom is that they reveal a wide range of learning preferences, strategies, and styles which require individuals to work together to negotiate solutions to problems.

Vygotsky (1978) views that the construction of knowledge occurs as a result of social interaction. Furthermore, the socio-cultural theory (Vygostsky, 1978; Donato and McCorick,
2.5.2 Research into Gender in Language Learning

Though many factors determine the case and degree of success in language learning, many interesting findings have demonstrated gender impact upon this process. Oxford, Nyikos and Ehram (1988) argue that women have an early persistent advantage over men with respect to skills and social integration. Besides been more polite, women are keen on encouraging partners to talk, and they are keen on remembering more details. They tend to accept cultural norms and their desire for social approval motivate them to strive for higher grades than men (Nyikos, 1990; Oxford and Nyikos, 1998).

Women have a great desire for social connection and greater valuation of communicative competence. To attain this aim, they use more social interaction strategies. In fact, they use language learning strategies and formal rules-related practice strategies than men. They also have a greater tendency to have social interactive learning styles and practice strategies in groups. Oxford (1995) states:

> this sharing may partially explain why research has consistently found that women report at least equivalent but often greater use of learning strategies than men especially strategies for authentic language use, for communicating meaning, and for self-management as well as for general, social, and affective strategy purposes.

(1995: 77)

A study conducted by Gu (2002) reported that females give a greater relative importance on, and invest more time in language learning than males. This is due to the fact that women see greater potential benefit from languages in their future careers and personal
lives. Green and Oxford, (1995); Jimenez Catalan, (2003) found that females use emotionally supportive affective strategies such as self-encouragement, setting up rewards for their own progress. Furthermore, they tend to reassure themselves that they lack sufficient background knowledge when facing difficulties.

Generally speaking, women are more willing to test the usefulness of a wider array of strategies and consistently use more of them than men (Oxford, Lavine, Felkis, Holloway, Mejor, and Saleh, (1996). Men, however, are more career oriented. They give less importance to study languages than to their primary major. They are more goal-oriented and more instrumentally motivated for studying what will be on the next test. They monitor their progress by timing their reading pace. They adopt rather visual strategies such as forming a mental image of a word and labelling objects (Nyikos, 1990). They tend to work more alone, summarizing the readings and defining unfamiliar words to themselves (Oxford and Young, 1997). Men also tend to use rote memorization, repetition, and translation more often, all these tend to be used more heavily by less successful language learners (Nyikos, 1987). Nyikos discovered that women are more flexible in their use of language learning strategies and favour communicative strategies, both of which are qualities of good language learners.

These studies and researches have made it clear that the differential language learning success is immensely influenced by a combination of nature and nurture, to the degree that these choices are reflective of a deeper match between gender and innate cognitive abilities. Gaining understanding of relative cognitive strengths of each sex will give insights to the practioners to help students discover, design and use appropriate strategies that enable will teachers and students to share responsibilities for optimal learning in the classroom.

Out of 120 students, 93 are girls. That is nearly 77.50 % of the three groups are girls. Besides, they outperformed the boys in all the modules. Among the 20 best annual marks, 18 are scored by girls.

Although the present research does not study female versus male success rates, it is worth noting that it is a generally accepted fact that females enjoy a high rate advantage over males.

There are studies that reported sex-related differences incidental to their main focus. Faraday (1982) found that female subjects significantly outperformed male subjects in
listening comprehension test in his study of 800 students. Eisentein (1982) also showed that females performed better than males on a dialect discrimination task: i.e. they could recognise dialects of greater or lesser prestige.

2.6. Motivation

Decades on motivational research, on the one hand, and on writing research, on the other, have emerged into a great development in both fields separately. Yet, studies on the motivational aspects of writing are but recent. Though recent, these studies have particularly investigated the most salient motivational variables, their relations to writing in particular, interest, self-efficacy, and self regulation.

The practitioners’ usually posed questions are:

- Why are learners so often demotivated?
- How can their motivation be enhanced?

Such pertinent questions trigged off research on motivational aspects of academic writing.

2.6.1 Motivation and Writing: What Relation

The research field on motivation is so vast that it is almost impossible to analyze its various aspects. Wiegfield and Eccles (2002) suggest a useful way of organizing the variety of motivational constructs. Such an immense field can be divided into three main areas. Then, their inter-relationship can be considered.

The first area focuses on the motives that activate a student’s behaviour. Among these motives, there are the goal orientation (mastery vs performance vs avoidance goals) needs, values, and interests.
As an illustration of this area, Boscolo and Hidi (2002) choose the example of a middle school student and a novelist. The former is interested in expressing his ideas on an assigned topic in written form. The latter intends to narrate an involving story. Both are unmotivated. The student lacks motivation because he has an assigned task to do. The novelist lacks motivation because of a different reason. However, the two of them have an orientation to write or not to write.

The second area regards the writer’s perception of his abilities to write in relation to the difficulty of the task and the resources of the context. The two writers have different worries and constraints. The novelist, on the one hand, will face critics, comments, and responses to his work. The student, on the other, has to face his teacher’s evaluation.

The two authors have positive and negative representations of themselves as writers. The representation the two writers have includes self-efficacy and self perception of competence.

The final area regards the strategies the writer uses when writing. The professional and the novice writers alike adopt certain strategies when facing a given task. They both try to manage their time by planning it, or by adopting metacognitive tools, or by resisting the temptation of quitting the task altogether. In other words, they regulate their cognition, affect, and behaviour to achieve the objective of a writing task.

Motivational researchers like Hidi, Berndorff, Ainley, (2002); Pajares, Britner, and Valiante, (2000); Zimmerman & Kitsantas, (1999), confirm that these three areas are rarely, if ever, separate from one another. Whether a writer is willing or not willing to write is tightly linked to his self-perception ability as well as to the tools he can adopt for self-regulation.

Hidi et al (2002) studied the 6th graders. They found out that their general interest in writing and liking and self-efficacy of writing several text types were closely related both before and after the intervention. This is but a proof that these variables develop in concert and may have reciprocal influence on each other (Hidi, p. 72).

Motivation is seen as a contrast with multiple meanings. The conceptualization of writing is complex too. Cognitively oriented researchers like Bereiter and Scardamalia, (1987); Collins and Gentner, (1980); Graham and Harries, (1982); Harris and Graham, (1992, 1996); Hayes and Flower, (1980), view writing as interrelated processes of different levels of
complexity. However, social constructivism oriented researchers like Englert, (1992); Hiebet, (1994); Nelson and Calfee, (1998); Spiver, (1997) emphasize the connection between writing activities with the social and cultural context in which people are motivated to write.

To say the least, these different perceptive did not put any particular emphasis on the motivational aspects of the activity. Hidi (2002) states:

However, through analyses of the processes of writing, they have highlighted two main potentially de-motivating features of academic writing which help answer our first question: why are students so often not motivated to write?

(2002:2)

When showing the complexity of the writing processes and above all the difficulties the students have to deal with, the cognitive approach has largely contributed towards understanding the students' demotivation. Writing is a too demanding activity for novice writers. Various kinds of writing difficulties have been discovered to which effective instructional strategies have been identified (e.g. Bereiter and Scardamalia, (1982, 1987); Harris and Graham, (1992, 1996)).

A writing task generally requires the use of strategies of knowledge integration. It also requires the creation of unique combination and links between the writer’s prior knowledge and the new topic. It was found out that expert writers are able to recognize and overcome difficulties when they write. They can overcome the problem of clarity and inconsistency by, for example, linking paragraphs in a good way. The novice writer knows his weaknesses only through a teacher’s feedback on his writing. Hidi states:

These two types of perceptions are apparently very different: for an expert writer a difficulty is basically perceived as a problem to be solved, whereas a novice student sees a problem as an obstacle which makes a writing task “dangerous” and unattractive.

(2002: 72)
Another de-motivating aspect of school writing is the fact that the traditional curriculum includes not only the rigidity of genres but also the separation of writing from other school subjects (Boscolo & Carotti, 2003).

In 1975, James Britton published a study on English adolescents’ writing entitled “the development of writing abilities (11-18)”. In this study, writing was not analyzed according to the traditional literacy categories of narrative, argumentative, etc. It was analyzed on the basis of a destruction between informational and literacy uses of language. Britton used a system that includes three main categories:

Transactional: also called informational; it is used to persuade, record, and convey information or ideas.

Poetic or imaginative function: language is used to express an experience in literary form. This includes stories, plays, and poetry.

The expressive or personal function: it regards the uses of language that focus on a writer’s interests and feelings.

Britton applied the function categories to his corpus of writing samples. He discovered that transactional or informational writing accounted for 63% of school writing and that students did little poetic writing and produced even less expressive texts.

Durest and Newell (1989) acknowledged that Britton’s work is seminal for two main reasons. It has not only constructed a reliable category system that describes student writing across different subject areas but also has focused on limited functions of writing in school and making it easy to foster reasoning and exploration of ideas. Boscolo and Carotti (2003) describe the general situation of writing through school levels and grades. According to the two researchers, writing tends to be reduced to a very limited number of academic genres.

At the elementary level, the learner does a variety of writing that scatters from free writing to personal narratives to report of classroom experiences.

In both middle school and high school, the variety of genres shrinks progressively and students almost excessively write compositions on given topics or reports that are selected by the teacher. The two researchers note:
These two types of compositions tend to focus on literary and historical questions, about which students are required to elaborate what they have learnt from the study of literature and history.

(1989:132)

Students are asked to write compositions where they are required to express and sustain their opinions. In such demanding task, students express appropriate ideas in a correct form and demonstrate that they have learnt. Writing here is a rhetorical exercise used as an evaluation tool.

Like reading, writing is a cross-disciplinary activity. It is used to produce texts within disciplines different from language skills such as a scientific report. It is also used to record and organize knowledge such as notes, outlines and summaries. Reading, however, develops its cross-disciplinary identity quite early. Writing, on the contrary, at all school grades is essentially perceived by teachers and students alike in its disciplinary function. Furthermore, this perception is strengthened by teachers’ methods of teaching and evaluating writing.

The teachers’ attention when writing is used as an aid such as in the case of essays or scientific reports is focused on evaluating the amount of organization of knowledge conceived by the text. Notes, outlines, and summaries are considered as personal strategies used by the learner. They are not evaluated.

Hidi (2003) states that this institutional conceptualization of writing will limit the students’ opportunity to write, to discover interaction between subjects, and to use writing as a communicative tool, and thus, to find writing an interesting activity, not only an academic task.

As a matter of fact, the importance of writing is rarely understood by the learners. They are unaware of this communicative tool that enables them to fix, use, change, and relaborate their ideas and knowledge (Boscolo & Carotti, 2003). Most of all, this skill is a tool that creates collaboration with other people, schoolmates as partners in the constitution and negotiation of meaning outside and inside the classroom context. Unfortunately, this type of writing is hardly encouraged by teachers. The above negative view of academic writing instruction does by no means mean that students are hardly ever interested in this skill. There
are, as a matter of fact, occasions where learners write with interest and satisfaction. This, unfortunately, is often due to the writer’s own engagement in the topic rather than to the writing instruction aimed at fostering motivation. Hidi states:

The motivational salience of written composition tends to decrease progressively, except when it involves an interesting topic, and written production often becomes a routine and rigidly scheduled task, aimed almost entirely at assessment. (2002:142)
Figure: 2.2: The Components of Motivational Teaching Practice in the L2 Classroom (Z. Dornyei, 2001: 29)
2.6.2 Trends in Research on Motivation and Writing

In spite of the significant increase of motivational research over the past two and a half decades, on the one hand, and the remarkable development of writing studies, on the other, the topic of the intersection of the two fields has been only partially explored. In fact, studies on the motivational aspects of writing are scarce because most motivation researchers have been focusing on students’ general orientation to learning as learning goals, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, expectancy, self-efficacy rather than on students’ approach to specific disciplines. Whereas, the cognitive approach has been mainly concerned with the investigation of cognitive processes that had a great influence on the teaching of writing. The result of this investigation was an implicit concern with motivational problems. As a logical conclusion, teachers have been more concerned with how to improve the learners’ ability to write than with how to increase their interest in writing. The other more important approach to writing, namely the socio-constructivist approach, believes that motivation is inherent in writing as an authentic activity. In other words, this approach neglects the motivational aspects of writing.

Motivational issues of academic writing trigged research curiosity and concern over the past two and a half decades. At first, the discovery of interest as an individual’s affective response to specific features of the environment was highlighted by Hidi (1999); Renninger, Hidi, and Krapp, (1992). From the late 1980s, the role of this variable in learning in specific domains, including writing, began to be studied. The second concern was to apply Banduras (1986) socio-cognitive theory of human agency. Students usually find the writing tasks not only complex, too demanding but also risky. Therefore, Pajares and Johnson (1994) Schunk and Scharts (1992), Zimmerman and Bandura (1994) agree that writing has to be investigated in terms of a writer’s beliefs of his ability to compose a good text. The complexity of writing which requires careful planning and control of time and resources has stimulated studies in another important motivational aspect which is self-regulation (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2002)
2.6.3 Writing on an Interesting Topic versus Writing as an Interesting Activity

What makes a writing task an attractive one to students? The answer to this question may contribute to a long lasting positive orientation to writing. In the light of the distinction between situational and individual interest, a study on the role of interest in writing was conducted by Hidi and McLaren (1990). The hypothesis of the study was that situational interest, namely the interestingness of themes and topics, has both an influence on the learners' comprehension and an influence on the learner's production of expository texts. The findings of that study were: positive effect of topic and theme interest on the quality and quantity of the written expositions was confounded by knowledge factors, that is, the level of the students' knowledge of the content they were required to write about. To Hidi and McLaren (1991) interest is generated by text topic. However, Benton, Sharp, Downey, and Khramtsova (1996) see interest on topic as an individual difference that is to say, the writer's high and low level of topic interest is associated with particular aspects of writing quantity. The studies reveal that the basic motivational source of writing is the topic and how far it attracts the learners. Interest is commonly viewed as static, that is, students are viewed to be interested or uninterested in a topic. Hidi (2003) considers interest in writing on a specific topic as an example of situational interest that is triggered by a stimulating and involving topic. The type of task in which the topic is treated is an aspect of situational interest. Hidi, Berndorff, and Ainley (2002) claim that the social activity determines the interest. When the students find the social activity meaningful, and they view themselves competent, the task will be performed with a great interest. Bruning and Horn (2000) state:

Interest is a student's orientation to writing, which is trigged, stimulated, and to some degree maintained, by attractive features of the activity which emerge in a specific situation, such as the possibility of using writing in an unusual and enjoyable way, a writing task of which students can perceive the usefulness, collaborative planning.

(2000:125)
Therefore, interest is the result of the activity in a situation (Khramtsova, 1996). The learner will be interested in writing if the instructional situation allows him to discover and practise the attractive, unusual, and challenging aspects of the task. The traditional writing tasks do not provide that challenge; the learner will experience and enjoy the new aspect of writing where he finds himself more competent and capable to face the difficulties of writing.

2.6.4 The Self Perception of Competence in Writing

Researchers like Brophy, (1999); Harter, (1992); Pajares and Valiante, (1997); Renninger, (1992); Shell, Colvin, and Bruning, (1989, 1995) have conducted researches on students’ self-perception in the 1990s. They focused mainly on the role perceived competence and control in students’ motivational orientation and their relationship with the stimulating features of an instructional environment. Bruning and Horm (2000) define a learning environment of writing as being one that provides students with tasks and activities at an appropriate level of difficulty and autonomy. For students to perceive themselves as competent, they should be able to choose and manage challenging yet solvable tasks and problems. Gambrel and Morrow (1996) believe that the students’ self perception will foster their engagement and motivation in literate activities.

Studies on writing apprehension were conducted in 1970s. Within these studies, writers’ self-perceptions of competence were tackled. Daly and Miller (1975) defined apprehension as the tendency to avoid writing situations or to react in an anxious manner if forced into them, because of the anticipation of negative consequences (1975:243). The authors make a clear-cut distinction between dispositional or trait-like form and situational anxiety. The former can be measured by self-report questionnaire and the latter was perceived to be transitory and dependent on the particular characteristics of a writing situation.

However, the two forms were seen complementary. As a trait, writing apprehension was measured by a 26 item questionnaire that includes items like:

- I am nervous about writing.
- I don’t like my composition to be evaluated.

Used by many researchers in the late 1970s and 1980s, this construct showed that:
> Low apprehension writers scored significantly higher on test of grammar, mechanics, and writing skills.
> High apprehension students tend to develop avoidance behaviour.

Kean, Glym, and Britton (1987) find that differences in writing competence is only partially related to apprehension. They state that writing apprehension affects writing quality when the writer is limited by time constraints. Other scholars like Faigley, Daly, and Witte (1981) state that the quality of writing is affected when the writer writes personal texts. Madigan, Linton and Johnson (1996) introduce the term “paradox of writing apprehension” to refer to the writer’s feeling of distress not accompanied by any objective shortcoming of writing.

Researches on self-efficacy have been gaining ground over writing apprehension. This is due to the fact that studies in writing apprehension represent an isolated research area. It is also due to the fact that self-efficacy for writing represents the individuals’ beliefs of their ability to write certain types of texts (Pajaras & Johnson, 1996).

A relationship between self-efficacy for writing and writing measures has been discovered. For instance, Schunk and Swartz (1993) discovered 4th and 5th graders’ writing self efficacy was highly productive of their writing skills and use of strategies. They concluded that self-efficacious writers are more likely to choose and persist at writing tasks than students who do not feel competent. Other investigations conducted by McCarthy, Mever, and Rinderer, (1985); Meier, McCarthy, and Schmeer, (1984) for example, show that adult learners’ self efficacy was predictive of their writing performance, intrinsic motivation to write, and self regulatory processes. Zimmerman and Bandura (1984) found out self perceptions of writing competence is linked to the writers’ goal setting. That is, increased levels of writing self-efficacy resulted in higher goals that learners set for themselves.

Bandura and Schunk (1981) argue that increased interest was an outcome of increased self-efficacy. Though the two motivational factors-interest and self-efficacy- develop separately, Hidi et al (2002) state that the two may reciprocally influence each others’ development.
2.6.5 The Self Regulation of Writing

Self regulation consists in coordinating cognitive, metacognitive and linguistic processes when composing. A writer selects sources to gain information, he chooses which ideas are to be included and which ideas are to be excluded, and he adopts strategies about how to manage his time. This is but self regulation at several levels. In addition to these aspects- cognitive and Metacognitive- self regulation also includes motivational aspects such as positive feelings about the writing tasks. Risenberg (1997) says that the writer should have interest and self initiated thoughts that would lead him to activities that attain various literacy goals such as improving their writing skills and the quality of the text they create.

The socio-cognitive model (Bandura, (1986); Zimmerman & Kitsantas, (1999, 2002); Zimmerman & Risenberg, (1977) ) views self regulation as a motivational factor that involves three elements:

- The person
- The behaviour
- The environment

Therefore, several self-regulatory activities can be identified and grouped according to these three elements.

The person: by setting specific objectives and managing time for the writer’s task, the writer controls the writing activity internally.

The behaviour: when choosing the best ways to express his ideas, the writer is controlling his behaviour.

The environment: when he chooses a quiet place, or the right time to write, the writer is selecting a suitable environment.

The strategies of a self-regulated writer, Zimmer and Kitsanas (1999) state, can be described in the frame of a recursive writing model such as Hayes and Flower’s (1980). Hayes and Flower’s model consists of three phases:

- Planning
Zimmerman and Kitsantas (1999) hypothesize that the development of self-regulation goes through four progressive levels.

The first level: observation. Learners observe a model. For instance, they observe his teacher who shows how best to combine simple sentences to a complex one.

The second level: emulation. Learners practise what they have seen, that is copying the teacher’s model of demonstration.

The third level: self-control. Learners plan and use strategies and self-monitors the process. The learners’ self-satisfaction is surpassing the model.

The fourth level: self-regulation. Learners adapt their performances to various internal and external conditions. At this level, the primary sources of motivation are high levels of self-efficacy and interest in writing. Zimmerman and Kitsantas state:

A major aspect of self-regulation is the ability to shift from processes goals to outcome goals, that is, from the steps through which a skill is achieved at a proficiency level to the target a writer wants to achieve.

(1999:98)

In their studies, the two researchers demonstrate that teaching various aspects of self-regulating strategies contributes to improving their students’ writing performances, attitude to writing and self efficacy.
2.6.6 Writing as a Meaningful Activity: The Socio-Constructivist Approach

The socio-constructivist approach considers writing as a process of the construction of meaning (Gambrell, Morrow, Neuman, & Pressley, (1999); Hiebert, (1992); Kostouli, (2005); Nelson & Calfee, (1998)). Advocates of this approach have stressed the importance of two instructional conditions that help students construe writing as a meaningful activity. The first condition is to overcome the traditional isolation of academic writing and to link it closely to other classroom activities. By participating in classroom activities, a student is able to construe what it means to be literate. Thus, writing is portrayed as a multi-disciplinary activity. Petraglia, (1995) states:

Although occasions to write in school tend to be related to the teaching skills, writing can be used for many objectives and in various subjects, such as science, social studies, and mathematics; that is, across curriculum.

(1995:58)

Simulating occasions for engaging in writing and a positive teacher attitude are considered paramount means for helping a student develop a sense of competence and control as a writer. Mason and Boscolo (2000) went further as to state that those two paramount means will also help the learner develop a sense of the self as a literate person who is a member engaged in the social practices of the community of discourse of the classroom.

The socio-constructivist considers genre as a typified response to situations that are construed socio-culturally as recurrent in contrast to the idea of the text types as fixed and general models of writing. It contributes to limit the isolation of academic writing (Freeman, Medway & Paré, (1999)).
According to the socio-constructivist view of genre, the amount of text types is closely linked to the amount of reasoning situations in and out school. It will be meaningful to compose whenever writing is required to express, elaborate, and communicate feelings and ideas, information and events, rules and instructions. That is when it makes sense to write (Bromley, (1999); Burnett & Kastman, (1997), Gambrell & Morrow, (1996), Hiebert, (1994)).

The second condition regards the social nature of writing. Writing can have a motivational relevance for students if it is exploited as a social activity where students are involved in a collaborate way to write a text. According to Boscolo and Ascorti, (2004); Daiute, (1989); Hidi et al., (2002); Higgins, Flower, and Petraglia, (1992); Mclane, (1990); Morrow and Sharkey, (1993); Oldfather and Dahl, (1994); Spivey, (1997), classroom collaboration is one of the best conditions for creating a community of discourse practices through which students can discover their identities as learners.

Our informants are highly motivated. Some of them chose to study English after they succeeded in the baccalaureate. Most of them, however, were injected in this department on the basis of their grades in the baccalaureate.

Motivation becomes a vital element for speaking a foreign language so as to have a good command of the environment, and not the other way around. In other words, one learns the foreign language to influence the behaviour of others in ways that benefit him. The target language, hence, becomes the sole wherewithal to « exercise control over events, and people outside ourselves » Corder (1979). In the same vein, Wilkins states:

If, to satisfy our needs, to influence the actions and thoughts of others, to pursue our occupation and our recreation, it is necessary to use a foreign language, then we will learn that foreign language more rapidly and effectively than under other Conditions.

(Wilkins 1983: 181)

An immigrant, for instance, who is living in a community of the foreign language, will benefit from the conditions of his actual circumstance. As a matter of fact, these conditions will constitute an environmental pressure that will bias him towards learning the host language.
However, this kind of pressure does not exist for those -as in the case of our pupils - learning a foreign language at home. As a conclusion, one can say that the former learns more effectively and more rapidly than the latter. The reasons why a person is learning a foreign language become his paramount motivation.


One is integratively motivated, as the name denotes, when he wishes to identify himself with, or become integrated into the society whose language is being learnt. Similarly, the person who wants to widen and deepen his knowledge of the culture of a particular people, or to make contact with people for one reason or the other, or who wants to live in the host country, has an integrative motivation.

On the other hand, learning a language to pass an exam, or to use it either in one’s future occupation, or as a means of interaction when going on holidays, or -as it is - because the educational system requires it, are examples, among others, of instrumental motivation. Namely, learning a foreign language for purely utilitarian purposes such as furthering a career, improving social status, meeting an educational requirement, is more clearly perceived as utility according to Corder (1983: 203).

Unlike instrumental motivation which is common to adults, integrative motivation may occur at all levels of learning.

To sum up, those having the former motivation outperformed those having the latter one.

Our informants are not integratively. They are more instrumentally motivated. One has to admit that they are solely concerned with finishing their studies that would open up further educational horizons, or work opportunities. This examination includes various modules. At present, then, they are interested in having good marks. In the long run, however, our learners might need this language for research purposes. They will mostly need the ability to consult and exploit documents and literature written in English. So the stress should be laid on the written aspect.
2.7 Attitude

Many educators and researchers alike believe that attitudes develop as a result of experience, both directly and vicarious. Language attitude has been proposed to account for variation in the level of achievement in second / foreign language acquisition. In the immediate environment that is in a typical language learning situation, there is a number of people whose attitudes to each other can be significant: the learner, the teacher, the learner’s peers and parents, and the speakers of the language. Each relationship may well be shown to be a factor controlling the learner’s motivation to acquire the target language. As an example, Caroll (1967) spotted the importance of the attitudes of parents. In his study of foreign language majors, he found:

The greater the parents’ use of the foreign language in the home, the higher the mean scores of the students. Thus, one reason why some students reach high levels of attainment in a foreign language is that they have home environments that are favourable to this, either because students are better motivated to learn, or because they have better opportunities to learn.

(Caroll, 1967:138)

Caroll’s finding proved that Gardner’s claims were substantial. In fact, Gardner (1959) shows that Montreal English speaking students reflect their parents’ attitudes to French speakers. Feenstra (1967) shows a relationship between Montreal English speakers’ attitudes to the French Canadian community and their children’s achievements in learning French. Many studies have highlighted the importance of the attitude of the teacher to the learner’s achievement. Teacher expectations have been shown to make a great deal of difference to student success. In one experimental research, teachers teaching retarded children have attempted to present a much greater number of new lexis to students they were erroneously
informed to be faster learners. The result was that these learners learnt more words than the slow learners.

Peer groups are also of equal importance in language acquisition. Shy (1967) studied the social dialect in Detroit. He showed how various dialect patterns cluster according to age, sex, and socio-economic status. While studying certain phonological features in the speech of people in a Piedmont community, Crocket and Levine (1967) showed these phonological features clustered among friends.

One of the most important attitudinal factors is the attitude of the learner to the language and to its speakers. Lambert and Gardner, (1959) Anisfeld and Lambert, (1961) Lambert, (1963); Lambert et al, (1963); state that integrative motivation to language learning is highly important. They claim that there are two kinds of motivation for language learning: instrumental and integrative. They argue that the presence of integrative motivation is necessary to the successful mastery of higher levels of proficiency, signalled by the development of a native-like accent and the ability to “think like a native speaker”.

Most of the studies tackling this construct have used an open-ended or Multiple Choice Questionnaires to establish the presence or absence of integrative motivation. The questionnaire was implemented to ask for reasons for which someone is learning the language in question. According to Bernard Sposky (1972), reasons are considered instrumental if they suggest the language is being used for such a purpose as to fulfil an educational requirement, to get a better position, or to read material in the language, and are considered integrative if students suggest the desire to become a member of the community speaking the language.

For example, Lamber and Gardner (1959) studied the English speaking Montreal high school students and their learning of French. They argued that the orientation index was considered integrative if students believed that learning French would help them in understanding the French community people and their life, that it would permit meeting and conversing with more and varied people. If the learners choose the reason that it would be useful in obtaining a job, or it would make better educated persons, the researchers concluded that this motivation is instrumental.
In this research, among the eight given reasons, four were classified as integrative, and four as instrumental. Ainsfeld and Lambert (1961) report that there were some difficulties of the interpretation of such a questionnaire.

Handling the notion of integrative motivation has many positive points. The first advantage is linked with the point of view of the development of a theory of second language acquisition. Richard-Armato (2003) states that it is necessary to be able to specify each of the factors that are believed to account for variation proficiency. The second advantage is related to studies on socialization. To possess precise data or the degree to which an individual’s proficiency in language is highly necessary as the data will serve as a measure of one’s attitude towards a social group. Lambert’s work with the matched-guise technique (Lambert et al., (1960); Anisfeld et al., (1962); Lambert et al., (1963); Peal and Lambert, (1965) highlighted the value of getting at social attitudes through the use of speech samples.

In social psychology, there is a clear-cut distinction between an individual’s membership group, that is the group to which he belongs, and his preference group, the group in which he wishes to attain or maintain membership. According to Richard-Armato:

An individual may choose the speakers of his own language or the speakers of the second language as his reference group. Integrative motivation is related to a choice of the second-language group.

(2003:113)

What is the general opinion in the students’ home community about language learning in general?

« He, who has learnt a language of a people, has become safer from their evils » This Arabic proverb denotes the importance of learning foreign languages in general. However, it is so broad that it embeds more than a single objective. It can be oriented politically, but also socially, scientifically, culturally, and so forth.
What can be said about the learners is their attitude towards the speakers of the target language and the target culture. In general, it is somehow a positive attitude since, as an instance, the USA is taken for granted to be the model of democracy, modernisation and the best way of living; though, the Gulf War and the Desert Fox campaign have considerably reduced this image.

2.8 First Year Program

Sentence Patterns with Intransitive Verbs

- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Verb
- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Adverbial

Sentence Patterns with Transitive Verbs: the Direct Object

- Sentence Patterns: Noun + Verb + Noun
- Sentence Pattern: the Case of Pronouns

Sentence Patterns with Certain Transitive Verbs: two Objects

- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Verb + Noun
- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Verb + Noun + To/For phrase

Sentence Patterns with Certain Transitive Verbs: Objective Complements

- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Verb + Noun + Noun/Adjective

Sentence Patterns with Linking Verbs

- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Linking Verb + Adjective
- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Linking Verb + Adverbial
- Sentence Pattern: Noun + Linking + Noun

Expanding the Noun Clause and the verb clause

- Expanding the Noun Clause: Determiners
Teachers of English as a foreign language have given priority to composing correct sentences. Through this means, they inoculate in their learners the knowledge of the system of language. Drills are used to make this process – the process of composing correct sentences – habitual. They stress making those sentences meaningful by presenting them in situations. Widdowson (1980) remarks that one is teaching the language system i.e., langue. Parole is not neglected as it is realised in the situational presentation of the correct sentences. The question that rises on its own accord is: what kind of parole is it? It is an artificial parole since the latter occurs only as a result of some kind of social interaction: it does not just exemplify the operation of linguistic rules.

In this particular case Widdowson (1980) mentions the words usage and use. He says that if the former helps to exemplify an item of the language, it does not communicate.
The sentences that the teacher uses in his lessons are considered as examplifactory expressions by Widdowson, and are called text sentences. They are meaningful as sentences but meaningless as utterances. They have – as it were – no value of communication.

Language use on the other hand, is the use of sentences in the performance of utterances, which give these linguistic elements communicative value.

To give value to the sentences, teachers often create a certain context but the focus is still on grammatical items. Widdowson (1980) sees that teachers direct their attention to developing the knowledge of the language system, i.e., langue; using parole as an exemplification so that learners grasp what one wants to teach.

### 2.8.1 The Sentence-Level Syntactic Approach

Designers of first year program preconize that a sentence-level syntactic approach to composition can significantly enhance measures of overall writing quality. Such claims were sustained by experimental research where experimental subjects to whom sentence-combination treatments were administrated in different grade seven (Schuster, (1977); Pedersen, (1977); Combs, (1975); O’Hare, (1971)) and in college (Kerek, Daiker, & Morenberg, (1980); Waterfall, (1977); Swain, (1977)). In those investigations, more questions were raised than answered. For instance, Faigley notes:

In spite of the collective successes of sentence-combining experiments, much about sentence combining remains to be understood. Little is known about what is essential for sentence-combining practice work, what accounts for its effects,… and how gains in syntactic maturity affect overall writing quality.

(1979:196)
Faigley (1979) adds that most advocates of this approach ignore the outcomes of sentence-combining experiments because they lack certain familiarity with other methods of writing instruction analogous to sentence combining. Faigley favours an approach developed by Christensen (1967) called generative rhetoric paralleled sentence combining. He reasonably compared the two approaches by stating that to understand the former approach is to gain some insight into the effect of the latter.

Williams (1989) criticizes advocates of the sentence-combining approach who maintain that increasing syntactic knowledge and fluency can affect global writing skills. He concludes:

> To date, there is no solid evidence to support the idea that teaching students to write better sentences will lead to their writing a better essay.

(1989:130)

In sentence-combining instruction the students are required to

- Transform independent clauses to dependent clauses and nonclauses
- Join them into other clauses and elements for the purpose of creating structures and writing styles characteristics of experienced writers.

The students are assigned “cued” sentence-combining exercises which prescribe specific transformation through a system of signals or cues. The aim of the cued exercise is to compose a single, complexly structured sentence. There are also open sentence-combining exercises which contain no cues. These exercises comprise passages of syntactically simple and redundant but rhetorically related propositions that the students are invited to combine in any appropriate manner. The intended product of the task is a cohesive passage which is syntactically more complex than the original passage.
2.9 The Learner’s Previous Experiences

The learner is acquiring two languages at the same time English and French, not to mention the mother tongue. The former is a foreign language, whereas the latter used to be a second language in our country; though it has been losing ground recently for various reasons. From a political standpoint, French is a foreign language (FL) in Algeria. From a socio-linguistic standpoint, French is a second language (SL) in Algeria.

2.9.1 French

The interlingual, commonly known as contrastive analysis, is a process by which two languages or more are contrasted. It may involve the mother tongue and the foreign language, or even the foreign language and the second language. This process will demonstrate that because French and English are genetically related, they are much closer to each other than the mother tongue, Arabic or Berber. Therefore, they share more features at various levels compared to the mother tongue. As a matter of fact, though French and English are genetically related, linguistic similarities and differences:

cannot be asserted for languages as wholes, but only level by level, system by system and category by category.

(Halliday, Streven, & McIntosh cited by Corder, 1983:147)

Contrastive analysis is of prime value because:

It has been suggested with a great deal of force that what our learner is concerned with is not so much acquiring the rules of the second language, as learning the differences between the mother tongue and the second language.

(Corder, 1983:148)
The learner benefits tremendously from this experience, as he will for instance, use strategies used for learning French. He will easily acquire the English sequential ordering of the main functional elements of the sentence, as it is the same as the one of French: S.V.O i.e., Subject -Verb - Object. The system of writing in itself is the same, and so are the system of sounds and certain structures.

A point that must be hastened is that this kind of assumed similarity may and will lead the learner to use translation equivalents such as actually and ‘actuellement ’ and which, as it is commonly known, are not translation equivalents. The so-called ‘faux-amis ’ (false friends), are frequent cases in our learner’s writing.

2.9.2 The Mother Tongue

While the sequential ordering of the main functional elements of the English system is S.V.O, Arabic belongs to the V.S.O i.e., Verb - Subject -Object languages. The Arabic alphabets do not belong to the same system as that of English. At first glance, a layman would assume that the two languages are totally different.

According to Corder   (1983), however, languages do, at varying degrees, share features in common; they are in a linguistic sense related. English and Arabic are two languages of different kinds; yet, one does find some similarities mainly at the level of pronunciation (،،،،)

As previously mentioned, the learner in this research, has a great opportunity of success in acquiring English because he is learning French, a language that shares many features with English. The student will, therefore, apply the old rules in learning the new system. This, however, is a two-edged-sword
Where the nature of the 2 tasks happens to be the same, of course, the tendency to transfer is an advantage. This is called ‘positive transfer’ or facilitation.

(Corder, 1983:132)

In the case of the mother tongue, the pupil is applying rules that do not fit the system of English. This kind of transfer is a negative one and is also called interference.

2.10 How Writing is taught at the University of Oran

In this section, a detailed account of how the teachers of the University of Oran conduct the teaching of writing will be presented. The stages of the teaching cycles in some classes-chosen randomly- are explored through a model of ‘curriculum macrogenre (Christie, 1997).

According to Christie, a curriculum macrogenre constitutes a sustained sequence of curriculum genres happening over several days or weeks in which new understandings and new forms of consciousness are taught and learnt (Christie, 1997:147).

Christie’s model provides a structural hierarchy with several levels of abstraction. This structural model scatters from a ‘macro genre’ at the top, to ‘genre’ to elements of schematic structure’ to phases’ (within elements of schematic structure). To Christie, phases are steps within an element of schematic structure which help achieve the goals of the element of structure and are often signalled by shift of linguistic choices associated with at least one of the three metafunctions posited in a SFL model of grammar, i.e., ideational, interpersonal, or textual metafunction (Christie, 1997:14-15). Christie’s model was adopted in order to identify the teaching cycle steps and to show how teachers structure their lessons.

To teach a particular language function be it narrating, describing, arguing, reporting, expressing opinion, comparing and contrasting and so forth, the teacher spends five lessons (of 90mn each). The following table shows the different learning/teaching stages, with each
stage identified according to separate class activities and specific linguistic markers. In the different stages, the teacher plays a crucial role in directing the students.

**Stage 1**

**Introduction:**

The teacher introduces nature and function of the language function to study, telling the students its format and structures, and provides an overview of the steps to be taken in writing an argumentative essay for instance.

**Stage 2**

**Descriptive essay through model analysis:**

The teacher teaches structures and format of the target essay in detail by using model texts to support explanation. He puts a special emphasis on what constitutes a good introduction in an argumentative essay.

**Stage 3**

The teacher summarizes what he has covered previously. He provides more models for imitation. He divides the class into groups and assigns each group a specific topic. Each group is asked to conduct group discussions on how to classify their ideas about arguing, ranging from the most to the least important. The lesson ends with each group presenting its ideas.

**Stage 4**

**Individual writing of the essay:**

Subsequent ideas were selected and agreed on. Each student starts writing his own essay while the teacher moves around to provide individual help. Most help is limited to answering the students’ questions: sir how do you say..... in English?

Independent writing in students’ own time. Students finish the work at home.

**Stage 5**
Correction

A student writes his essay on the chalkboard. Students correct. Collective correction would sometimes lead to the improvement of the student’s essay.

As far as the teacher and student talk is concerned, the model used to analyse refers to the model of classroom discourse proposed by Sinclair and Goulthard (1975), with reference to Tsui (1994) and Ng (1996). The pattern of classroom at the University of Oran comprises eight (8) types of interaction.

Types of interaction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern, initiated by</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiation-Response</td>
<td>T-IR</td>
<td>S-IR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation –Response-follow- up</td>
<td>T-IRF</td>
<td>S-IRF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initiation-Respone-Follow-up-Response –Follow-up</td>
<td>T-IRFRF</td>
<td>S-IRFRF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform</td>
<td>T-i</td>
<td>S-i</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All Initiation-Response of interaction (T-IR, T-IRF, T-IRFRF, S-IR, S-IRF, and S-IRFRF) represent different forms of exchange which reflect the depth of classroom interaction initiated by the teacher and the students respectively, while the inform types of interaction (T-i, S-i) represent forms of discourse which convey information or knowledge monologically. The informs in this study include information and knowledge imparted in a teacher’s monologue (teacher-initiated inform). They also include reports and presentations in students’ monologues (student-initiated inform). All types of interaction, both exchanges and informs, are identified according to linguistic markers proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975).

Observation of the classes shows that teachers and students at the University of Oran is of a particular pattern. The teacher is the main initiator in class, presenting information. For instance, in the Teacher-initiated informs, the frequency is high. This reflects the fact that the
teacher relies mostly on a monologic lecturing mode. However, in Teacher-initiated exchanges, the initiated exchanges are low. This may be explained by the fact that the teacher does not very often use elicitation techniques, or invites students to respond to his questions.

When interviewed, the teachers expressed their strong will to foster their students’ independence preferring to guide them in ways of exploring new knowledge instead of simply telling them the ‘facts’. They explained that they stressed the skills of independent research. As an example, they usually set activities which require their students to collect data for their writings. Most of the teachers consider the importance of writing as it would be useful in other subjects or in their students’ careers. All in all, they strive to equip their students with the ability to work independently and apply their writing and research skills in real life.

One of the teachers explained: I provide my students with the required and relevant information they need before setting the task. I insist on the fact that their writing should be clear. I insist on grammar so that the students would not make mistakes.

The conclusion that can be drawn from the observation and the interview is that the teacher at the University of Oran emphasizes the end product in teaching writing. He expects his students’ work to be clear, logical and accurate. Considering the local system and its limitations, the teacher believes that it is inefficient and unwise to let the students explore freely. He concedes that the role of the teacher is actually teaching and leading his students though sometimes they may act as collaborators and helpers in the classroom. Consequently, he provides all the learning materials and information necessary, and allows a monologic mode. At the same time, he sets his class to work in groups because he wants his students to learn from activities apart from lectures. He believes the sole focus of teaching writing is teaching students to apply their language skills.

To save time and to use his teaching efficiently, the teacher sometimes distributes handouts before the lessons to help the students in their preparation using many examples to demonstrate the structures and the features of writing an argument. At times, students are allowed to work in groups so as to analyse parts of the argument or to discuss the information they have collected or even to plan ways of collecting data. Then, the representative of each group presents the findings to the class. Last but not least, each student is asked to produce his own essay individually as homework.
By and large the students made positive comments on their teaching. They appreciated the handouts where details information helped them gain the understanding of the structure of the argument. One student spoke for many when he said that,

“Yes the teacher did help us. For instance, for the format, we know now how to divide the essay and what to include in the introductory paragraph and how to write the concluding paragraph. He provides us with special verbs that are usually used when writing an argument. Before, we did not know that in the concluding paragraph we have to restate the thesis statement and provide a sense of completion to the essay. He also provides us with fresh topic to write about.”

However, one student was critical of the way of teaching, saying,

“I think that the teachers should not just feed the students everything that we are going to learn. It is a kind of spoon-feeding that we don’t appreciate. Teachers should first know what the students’ needs are. They should also let the students talk about their understanding of the different language functions. At least we can talk about it first and have an interaction. The teacher will know whether the students have really understood the requirement of such language function or at least he will know the students’ misunderstanding beforehand and so he will know what to do and which parts to focus on when he teaches.”

In brief, the students generally appreciate the teaching way of their teachers; however, some expressed a preference for more interaction so that learning will become an active and attractive process.

2.10.1 The Textbook

As there were no textbooks for the teaching of English writing at the University of Oran, the methods of teaching writing varied among different teachers. Some might use a set of routine procedures. First they taught how to write narration, then a description, and then argumentation. That is, each time they move from the easiest to the most difficult. This is
consistent with Mary Finocchiarro’s (1974) concept of gradation. Others might use a free method. For example, one teacher might bring a text written by a professional writer. He then teaches the writing items that are exemplified in that text, be it the use of the comma for instance or how to express an opinion etc. After that, he would sort out the major points of discussion and deal with the text function. Here, the input that is the text is used as a model so that the students would imitate. In short, the teacher starts dealing with the language function that he introduces in the input (the model). After his lesson, he would choose a topic or let the class choose one. After a discussion, the students are asked to write and submit their writing for the following session.

The only textbook that was available was the one written by a research team composed by Férida Lakhdar-Barka, Amina Rahal, Khadoudja Belkhenchir, and Naima Kaid-Slimane. The textbook is entitled English Writing Practice: from sentence to essay. It is a workbook that aims at giving the students the opportunity to develop both their linguistic and communicative competence through practice of formal and functional aspects of language (Férida Lakhdar-Barka et al, 2006:7).

The textbook is divided into five parts. The first part is devoted to a review of basic points concerning the sentence. The authors’ aim is to provide the students with the opportunity to revise structural patterns, sentence linking and combination, sentence-transformation and editing.

The second part is devoted to the manipulation of the English paragraph. It introduces the paragraph, its structure, and various methods to develop it. This part mainly tackles the topic sentence and how to identify it. It also deals with how to develop the topic sentence and how to provide the concluding sentence.

The third part deals with the essay. This part stars with a brief definition of the different parts of the essay; namely, the introductory paragraph where the thesis statement is worded. In this part, the authors suggest a few essay topics to write on.

The fourth part, prompts for writing and focuses on creative writing. It deals with both academic (paragraphs and essays) and non academic writing (poems, letters, riddles).

To the question “what does it mean to teach by the textbook?” Freeman (1979) seems to have an obvious answer which consists of “a prevailing image of a teacher who begins
instruction on the first page through the entire text over the course of the academic year”. For others, the phrase “teaching by the book” suggests an image of close—if not slavish—adherence to a textbook, content, order, and proposed activities and tasks, and implies that the textbook is the central—if not the only—material used during instruction.

Interviewing the teachers at the University of Oran, it was discovered that there were four styles of textbook use adherence to both content and order of the book:

- The first style includes those teachers who strictly adhere to both content and order of the book. That is they start with the first lesson of the book at the beginning of the year and work straight through the book lesson by lesson.
- The second style, the teachers preserve the order of topics in the text, but skip certain portions.
- The third style is characterised by changing the order in which chapters or topics are presented.
- The fourth style includes those teachers who prefer considering the broad lines and improving the book by choosing (updating the book) new up-to-date- topics that may or may not interest their students.

While observing and interviewing the teachers in charge of the Written Expression module, it was noted that the source of knowledge (the authority in class) was not so much the teacher. It was the textbook. However, there was not enough information to sharpen the global understanding of the match between textbook topics and instructional topics in other than a very broad general way. It is clear that the actual textbook plays an important part in teacher planning and classroom instruction.

Data that directly bear on the use of different portions of the textbook commonly assert that textbook sections (e.g. the sentence review, the simple sentence, the compound sentence, the complex sentence, parallelism, dangling verbals, punctuation, variety, unity, clarity, sentence combining) are used differently. Data characterize English “Writing Practice: from Sentence to Essay”, the textbook in use at the University of Oran as an exercise book. Teachers responding to interviews state that introductory sections – broadly speaking the sentence review -of the book are frequently skipped over during instruction. Some teachers claim that the students have already grasped the different basic patterns of the English
sentence. It would be a waste of time to do it all over again. Therefore almost all this section is skipped deliberately.

Data gathered regarding coverage of chapters, lessons, and parts of lessons, on average teachers use 50 percent of the lessons during the year. They admit that they do not consistently finish the book. They prefer tackling the students’ compositions that consume both time and effort.

As far as the within-lesson use is concerned, there are five sections of the textbook:

- Student exercises
- Teacher directed sections (e.g. introductory or development sections)
- Enrichment
- Review
- Additional practice

The teachers exhibit a wide range of postures while using the textbook. There are those who adhere closely to the book, those who were extremely autonomous from the adopted writing textbook, and those who stay in between. While some make a detailed use of the introductory sections, with the belief that mastering the English sentence is the most important part that would lead to better writing, others skip this section and direct students’ attention to either the paragraph or essay writing. Some teachers omit certain language functions as reporting, comparing and contrasting mainly because of a lack of time.

Others adhere to the textbook quite slavishly because they find providing students with handouts an obstacle course.

Textbooks, Allwright (1990) states, have very often made the learning process too predictable, while involving the teacher too much and the learners too little. Allwright did not mean that all textbooks would be levelled uniformly. He means that a textbook should not be construed as a limitation imposed upon the teaching approach to the syllabus. Both teachers and learners should first decide whether the syllabus should be based on content or on skills, oriented toward process or toward product, defined linguistically or defined communicatively. This would be possible only after a careful needs analysis.
Involving the students in defining the objectives in the syllabus will enhance flexibility, creativity, and improvisation in determining the essence of the syllabus. O’Neil (1990) asserts that corresponding materials would be generated and expanded gradually into textbooks which will provide a working framework for genuine creativity in their use.

Producing in-house materials became an established tradition in the late 1980s according to Hutchinson and Waters (1990: 106). The two researchers proposed a model to evaluate the already available materials in response to the established tradition. They advise that writing one’s own materials should be regarded as the last resort when all other possibilities of providing materials have been exhausted (1990:125). Williams (1981) shares the same belief and proposes that teachers who produce in-house materials should first peruse the literature to appreciate the negative effects of wrong textbooks. He adds: teachers should not believe that writing materials is just as feasible as teaching (1981:132).

2.11. Research Methodology

2.11.1 The Pre-Test

A pre-test was implemented to the experimental groups and the control group beforehand. The test consisted of a written task based on a reading the students have had. Right from the beginning of the year, the second year students were given a short story to read. The story is entitled: Mrs Bixby and the Colonel’s Coat.

Mrs Bixby and the Colonel’s Coat is a short story that was extracted from Roald Dahl’s book Completely Unexpected Tales. It is a short story of sixteen (16) pages. This short story was mainly chosen because it is highly entertaining. It is different from the usual assignments that are considered as chore by our students in general and by the second year students in particular.

The reading was assigned to the three groups because the students often encounter difficulty in finding a topic to write on. As mentioned earlier in the first chapter, reading will be a supporting aid as it will provide the students with a story which is different from what
they are used to in their culture. It is an interesting prompt that will engender a vivid reaction because of the nature of the story. This is also another reason why the story was chosen.

Roald Dahl narrates a story of a woman Mrs Bixby who had a lover, the colonel, discovered that her husband Mr Bixby had a mistress when her love story with the colonel came to end. The students’ reactions were diverse, very interesting, and very unexpected to say the least. The goal was to raise a debate.

The story was also chosen –by the researcher- because it was attractive, entertaining and most of all easy to be understood by the majority of the students. Because the story has an open-end, it must be confessed that many students raised many questions. Indeed, many of the learners, especially girls, asked many pertinent questions to which the researcher has hinted to the possibilities of understanding the story. For instance, the researcher states: maybe Mr Bixby knew about his wife’s love affair long ago. The researcher, behind his suggestions aimed at urging his students to read between the lines, so to speak.

The pre-test consisted of three questions from which the students were to choose only one. The three questions were:

- Summarize the story
- Imagine an end to the story, or suggest another end to the story
- What would you do if you were in the place of either Mrs Bixby or Mr Bixby?

By summarizing the story, the students are expected to retell the story that they have read and, most of all, that they have understood. It is more retelling that summarizing because we take into account the fact that the students are not supposed to be “tested” on something they have not been taught.

For the second question, the students are required to have read and understood the story. The fact that the story has an open-end will urge the learners to imagine what would happen. In other words, they will finish the story. They might as well end the story as they will wish it to end. It might have a dramatic ending or a happy ending.

As far as the third question is concerned, to react as one character might react there is a need for understanding the story. The reaction of the students will be understood because of one’s own culture. Though Mrs Bixby had been faithful to her husband, the girls forgot all
about her deeds and put the whole blame on the husband. Some African students (students from Mali and Niger) reacted differently. Ignoring the wife is not enough for them. They wanted a more severe punishment. There was no place of forgiveness.

The task was assigned in a stress free environment where students were allowed to talk to their friends if need be. They were also free to use dictionaries and the like. Many times the students were seen discussing the story, explaining certain points to each other in their mother tongue. They were given time in class to jot down notes and begin to write. The papers, all of them handwritten, were handed in the next day. From the researcher’s point of view, the papers can be treated as rough drafts. They have all the signs of early drafts and seemed to cry out for revision.

The rough drafts that follow were selected randomly. These are authentic student writings, illustrating their way of answering the above three mentioned questions. These examples are presented ‘warts and all’ without correction on language or spelling.

Leila

In the end of the story, Mr Bixby was very angry because she thought that the pawnbroker cheeted her. She went out of her husband’s office. At that moment, she met Miss pulteny, the secretary-assistant.she was like a queen in the beautiful black mink coat that the colonel had given to Mrs Bixby.

Mrs Bixby by realize the relationship betw her husband and Miss pulteney.

If I were Mrs. Bixby I would never regretted, because from the beginning I’m the wrong one. I would try to convince my husband of my reasons and why I do this. I lost the colonel, so i try not to loose my husband.

Bio Sanda Amina (Benin)

The story of Mr Bixby and Mrs Bixby was a sad end for Mrs Bixby. After coming back from Baltimore with separation of the colonel, she was confronted to another disappointment. Her mink which the colonel gave her created some troubles because she couldn’t move with it at home. In order to avoid any problems, she brought it to the pawnbroker who gave her a ticket. Believed that she found the solution to her problems, the ticket was taken by her husband.
Mrs Bixby revolted but at the end she couldn’t empede him to take the ticket shown at the beginning to him as a lottery ticket. When her husband brought the mink, he exchanged it by a neckpiece of fur. Be impatient to see her mink, she came in her husband office to see the surprise. Unfortunatlly, she saw that it was not the mink but a ridiculous neckpiece of fur. Angrily, she left from her husband office in order to kill the pawnbroker who, for her exchanged the mink. But outside in her way of lunch she saw the secretary of Mr Bixby like a queen in the mink coat which the colonel gave her. So, she discovered that her husband had a relationship with his secretary.

(Miss Bio Sanda was the only student who seen revising her writing.)

Hamri Halima

The writer let the end implicit

The writer let the end of the story implicit, but if the reader understand the story from the beginning especially the part when Mrs Bixby showed the ticket to her husband and how he assisted to go to the pawnbroker, surely the reader understand that Mr Bixby had a secret (something hidden).

He gave the coat of mink to miss Pulteney and a neck-piece to his wife, and he told her that he would be late that night, and of course, he had an affair with his secretary-assistant especially it was Christmas day.

The end of the story of Mrs Bixby and the colonel’s coat was a wonderful end. Believe me it makes me happy especially when Mrs Bixby saw the secretary assistant wore the coat. I imagine myself there and laugh on her because I feel pity on Mr Bixby who was a slave and a victim of a lecherous woman of no importance.

At the end, Mrs. Bixby understand the trick especially when she saw miss pulteney wore the coat and walked as a queen.

And in that case it depended on Mrs Bixby what she should do because she became a real victim, so she had to choose either to have others dirty dogs like the colonel or challenge Mrs pulteney to get her husband; what seems to me that she doesn’t think about divorce at all because she know that she will lose every things.
Hamadi Zohra

Mr. and Mrs Bixby lived in a small house in New York City. Mr Bixby was a dentist. Once a month, on Friday afternoons, Mrs Bixby used to visit her aunt Maude, in Baltimore, and turn back home, the day after. One day during Mrs Bixby visit, she met a charming gentleman known as: colonel, who was the wealthiest in the city. Firstly, they became friends. Then their relationship grew more and more. They still see each other eight years. So, her aunt was just an alibi to meet her beloved. Once the colonel sent her an expensive coat within a letter saying no more meeting.ing the same coat given by the colonel to her. First, she had been shocked, but the coat helped her to forget. At that time she was thinking of either keeping the coat or abandoning it. After she decided to keep it and to foolish her husband. Minutes after she put the coat in a pawn broker, she was home. Then she told her husband that she found the ticket of the pawn broker. After a discussion, they decided that the husband went to get the present. The day after, Mr Bixby got the present: at the same time his wife was anxious about it, so she went to his office. Here was the unexpected thing: Mrs Bixby found an other thing else: a neck piece. So she was surprised but did not want her husband to notice. The strange matter was: when Mrs Bixby ledt the room, she met her husband’s secretary wearing the same coat given by the colonel to her. So, she understood that both she and her husband did deceived each other at the same time.

Bouhzam Imene

The and the story (change)

Mrs Bixby when she knew the truth that her husband betrayed her with the colonels’. So she lost her husband, her dirty dog the colonel and her expensive coat, this truth made her crazy and in bad sycology situation so, she entred the hospital for mad because she became a crazy women anu une care about her. There she became more dangerous and she wanted all the time to kille the men like the doctors and the officers. This tragedy made her husband who was there remorse for all what he did. One day he went to see her, but she become more crazy and more dangerous, this let the doctors refuse any visitor until she became good recovered.

After 2 years, she started to become normal person, and she demanded to see her husband who refused to see her, so this made her planning for revenge. When she went out she killed him and she endemened to perpetual to prison until her death.
In studying students approaches to this reading-to-write task (the pre-test), the researcher has pondered on the following issues:

- How did the instructor represent the task of writing an essay based on a particular source (the story) and the process of writing in the classroom?
- What are the possible ways that student-teacher interactions can influence how students negotiate and construct meaning in reading and writing?

What were students interpretations of writing an essay based on sources: that is to say, what sorts of experience and knowledge would they draw on as primary information in completing the task?

The experience and knowledge may include the story the students have read, and their ways of reading and writing related to their social and intellectual background. As James Banks (1996) points out students' knowledge includes the concepts, explanation and interpretation that derive from personal experience at home or within their community; facts, interpretation that are disseminated through mass-media; and the kinds of generalizations and interpretations that students find in school, including textbooks, and teachers’ lectures. Banks adds:

> Although students may adopt a particular stance, conveying what might be construed as their own ideas in authoring a text, the ideas they hold are expressions of shared commitments and beliefs that are rooted in class, race, and gender.

(1996:132)

To fully understand the prescribed reading, though the reading was meant to entertain the students, we introduced the following questions to enhance the students appreciation of the story. These questions also raised a hot debate during the observation session.

- What character (s) was your favourite? Why?
What character (s) did you dislike? Why?
Does anyone in this work remind you of anyone you know?
Are you like anyone in this work?
If you could be any character in this work, who would you be?
What quality (ies) of which character (s) strikes you as a good characteristic to develop within yourself over the years? Why? How does the character demonstrate this quality?
Overall, what kind of feeling did you have after reading a few paragraphs of this work? Midway? After finishing the work?
Do any incidents, ideas in this work remind you of your own life or something that happened to you? Explain.
Do you like this piece of work? Why or why not?
Are there any parts of this work that were confusing to you? Which parts? Why do you think you got confused?
Do you feel there is an opinion expressed by the author through this work? What is it? How do you know this? Do you agree? Why or why not?
Do you think the title of this work is appropriate? Is it significant? Explain. What do you think the title means?
Would you change the ending of the story in any way? Tell your ending. Why would you change it?
What kind of person do you think the author is? What makes feel this way?
How did this work makes you feel? Explain.
Do you share any of the feelings of the characters in this work? Explain.
Sometimes a work will leave you with a feeling that there is more to tell. Did this work do this? What do you think might happen next?
Would you like to read something else by this author? Why or why not?
What do you feel is the most important word, phrase, or paragraph in this work? Explain why it is important.
If you were an English teacher, would you want to share this work with your students? Why or why not?
2.11.2 Triangulation

To ensure the trustworthiness in this research, the researcher will endeavour to make the assertions which are about to be made trustworthy. This is only possible if different techniques drawn from qualitative approaches for providing validity checks on action research data are used. The purpose of using such techniques is to test out the trustworthiness of the data collected and to encourage reflections on them as part of the process of data analysis.

One way of ensuring the trustworthiness in the present research is to use triangulation. Anne Burns (1999) states that triangulation is one of the most commonly used and best ways of checking validity. The aim of triangulation is to gather multiple perspectives on the situation being studied.

Triangulation is a term which is being used in different senses by qualitative researchers. R.B.Burns (1994) states that triangulation is a way of arguing that ‘if different methods of investigation produce the same result then the data is likely to be valid’ (1994:272).

According to Silverman, triangulation is:

Comparing different kinds of data (e.g. quantitative and qualitative) and different methods (e.g. observation and interviews) to see whether they corroborate one another....this form of comparison, called triangulation, derives from navigation, where different bearings give the correct position of an object.

(1993:156)

Other contemporary researchers have different interpretation of triangulation. Elliot and Adelman, for instance, define triangulation as follows:
Triangulation involves gathering accounts of a teaching situation from three quite different points of view, namely those of the teacher, his pupils, and a participant observer.

(1976: 74)

Researchers, in general, and action researchers, in particular use various methods and the perceptive of different participants so that they would gain a much richer and less subjective picture than they get by relying on a single data gathering technique. Cohen and Manion (1994) admit that using a single method gives the researcher only a partial view of a complex social situation, such as a classroom, where people interact. They add: any one data gathering technique is not in itself neutral, but a filter through which experiences are sampled. By using multiple methods, the researcher will gain confidence as his results will be corroborated by the results of future researches.

Denzin (1978) mentioned different forms of triangulation which could be of great value in collaborative action research:

- **Time triangulation**: data are collected at one point in time (cross-sectional) or over a period of time (longitudinally) to get sense of what factors are involved in change processes.
- **Space triangulation**: data are collected across different subgroups of people, to avoid the limitations of studies conducted within one group
- **Investigator triangulation**: more than one observer is used in the same research setting. This helps avoid observer bias and provides checks on the reliability of the observations.
- **Theoretical triangulation**: data are analysed from more than one perspective.

Because it is the researcher’s belief that triangulation is a valuable tool that enhances validity, the present research has used the following methods to gather data:

- **The case study**: the research relies on case study as a research methodology, resulting in a limited number of subjects (two experimental groups and a control group).
The writing tasks of the study include the following language functions: narrative/descriptive, expository and argumentative. The time allotted would be as much time as needed.

The data will be collected from process and product oriented sources (the experimental groups and the controlling group). Data on the composing process will consist of direct observation, protocols based on composing-aloud sessions, and also retrospective accounts of composing drawn from interviews and questionnaires.

To see the effect of the implementation of the process writing, in other words to measure the students’ achievement, portfolios will be used, and the post-test to assess the general results of the present research, and to draw the conclusion of the experiment.

There will be another teacher observing (investigator triangulation).

The whole research relies on implementing the process writing. Therefore, after each language function has been dealt with, a questionnaire will be handed out to the students. The aim of this questionnaire is to gauge the students’ achievements. The questionnaire includes the following questions:

- What did you learn about your topic?
- Did you learn anything interesting that you were not able to include in the paper or other work? If so, what is it?
- What did you learn about the process of researching, experimenting, creating a piece of writing?
- What are you especially pleased about in your final product?
- If you could do the project again, what would you do differently and why?
- What will you do next time you have an assignment like this to improve the quality of your work?
- The researcher strongly believes that students’ reflection can be of a great value for helping teachers plan and deal with individual student needs.
2.11.3 The Textbook Used in this Experiment

We believe that textbooks play a major role in the structure and day-to-day teaching activities in the classroom. Textbooks are the tools used by a teacher so that the students would be motivated and would give the maximum understanding about a topic or a problem. A conscious, well-organized practitioner would use textbooks intelligently in different ways so as to suit different levels of students. If he is not aware of it, textbooks can greatly influence and determine the “what” to teach and the “how” to teach.

Textbooks are a key aid in the teaching/learning process. They can help both the busy teacher and the struggling learner. They bring a huge amount of important material. Yet, textbooks are often misused and are inappropriate. The different expectations that the major players have about textbooks can be very useful.

What principals or the administration expect

- up-to-date content;
- material that is easy to be understood;
- relatively cheap to purchase.

What teachers expect

- A core of important learning;
- Some new content or rearranged content;
- New ideas about organizing their teaching;
- Up-dated resource list;
- An up-to-date summary on a particular topic;
- Instruction on basic skills.

What students expect

- Information that is to understand;
- Information that is an up-to-date summary on a particular topic;
- Material that is directly related to the syllabus and the examinations that they are to pass;
- instruction on basic skills.
What authors expect

- That they can present up-to-date information in an interesting way;
- That their textbook is unique and special;
- That teachers and students will recognize its usefulness and use it in class.

It is questionable and rather problematic as to whether a textbook can satisfy all four groups. Beside these groups, researchers also consider the expectations of parents. Because the expectations of the five groups are great, there may occur some conflicts between them.

### 2.11.3.1 The Analysis of the Textbook Features

Researchers like Chambliss, Calfee, and Wong (1990) developed a method for analyzing the design of textbooks. The method considers the instructional load, the mode of presentation; the illustration features, the access features and the display features.

#### The Instructional Load

- This is the subject matter to be communicated to the reader;
- It is usually the stated purpose for which the book was written;
- There is also unintended material included (biases, stereotypes);
- The instructional load represents the knowledge which is considered most worthy to be transmitted.

#### The Mode of Presentation

- This is the mode in which the instructional load is presented. It might be a hard-cover or soft cover book;
- It might be aimed at students or teachers, or both;
- It might include audio-visuals and computer software;
- The mode of presentation apparatus will depend on the subject, level of teaching, financial constraints, space and equipment constraints.

#### Illustration features
This usually consists of photographs, art work (cartoon, drawings) and tables and graphs;

The combination and sequence can vary enormously;

They can have an enormous impact on the use of a textbook.

**Access features**

- These include the table of contents, headings and subheadings, indexes, glossary;
- They are the key to a textbook’s information system.

**Display features**

They include the cover, chapter openings and other devices to enhance the book’s attractiveness, to highlight its organization and to arouse the user’s interest.

Chambliss, Calfee and Wong (1990) suggest that authors of textbook use a number of patterns to present their information which are:

- A linear list of topics;
- A range of topics loosely connected to a small number of central topics;
- A hierarchy whereby major topics are linked to subordinate topics;
- A matrix of topics.
2.11.3.2 The Selected Textbook

Once the goals of the course were established, the next task was to choose a textbook. The first step was to investigate what books the colleagues working at various universities such as the universities of Tlemcen, Mascara, Sidi Bel Abbes, and Mostaganem were using. The aim was to answer a pertinent question which was: which is the most appropriate textbook for the students and the researcher? The book has to be palatable enough to be enjoyed by the researcher and the students alike. The palatability criterion was highlighted by Eble (1988) when he stated that the first consideration in choosing texts is whether students are likely to read them, work with them, and learn from them (p. 126). He strongly insists that the book chosen should support students’ independent learning. This implies that in addition to hold students’ interest, the chosen book should be sufficiently clear, current, and free from major errors so that it would be reliable.
The textbook chosen in this research is entitled: “Process Writing”. It was written by Ron White and Valerie Arndt. It was first published in 1991. The sixth edition was published in 1997 by Longman. The book is divided into six main sections. It actually takes as its organizing principle the various processes involved in the act of writing. In other words the six sections group activities centred on one of these processes: Generating focusing, structuring, drafting, evaluating and re-viewing.

The authors state that because the operations; namely, generating, focusing, structuring, drafting, evaluating and re-viewing apply to the creation of any piece of writing, irrespective of text-type or subject matter, the idea is that the procedure suggested can be used with any text which teachers and/or students decide upon, according to the level, interests and requirements of each teaching context.

Furthermore, the authors did not suggest any text-type or level for any of the units. Nor did they mention any specific indications as to the time allotted for each activity. Thus, the researcher will be utterly free to choose the materials that he believes will suit the context in which he works.

2.11.3.3 The Reason behind Choosing the Book

Before choosing the book for the present research work, we have asked many questions. Among these questions, the most salient were:

- How much time to allocate to each subject and to each language function;
- What topics to cover;
- With which students;
- When and in what order;
- To what standards of achievement.

On these questions, the researcher has pondered deeply before choosing Process Writing by Ron White and Valerie Arndt. The researcher has considered the summary that guided various post-war American writers on the issue of textbook selection, including Spalding (in Gronbach, (1955: 178-9), Buckingham (1960), Nichols and Ochoa (1971), Westbury (1985). The check-list for choice of textbooks include the following criteria:
Quality of content, requiring acquaintance with development at subject frontiers;
Readability;
Cognitive strategies for intellectual development;
Implementation of stated aims in the actual content;
Curriculum fit –including cross-curricular links;
Up-to-dateness of content;
Sensitivity on values issues;
Freedom from bias and stereotyping;
Variety of resources;
Assessment and evaluation activities;
Presentation;
Durability; and
Support for teachers, such as the inclusion of associated manuals.

2.11.3.4 Textbook Evaluation

Developing an effective writing program is a long process for a teacher. Not only must teachers become familiar with the writing process, but they also need to find lessons that are appropriate for their students. When we first started teaching writing, we found many professional books that discussed teaching the teaching process, including suggestions for getting students to conference with other students and revise and edit their own work.

The textbook selected was chosen on the basis of an analysis of teaching objectives and need analysis. The researcher has conducted substantial research to define the content and skills needed for second year students of English to achieve the ability of writing a successful essay. Using a process approach, this textbook was produced with the goal of developing the writing process. It shows students how to turn their ideas into sentences and paragraphs. The book covers the following genres: writing descriptive essays, identifying similarities and differences, describing relationships, summarizing a process, separating opinions from facts, writing about advantages and disadvantages, and drawing conclusions. For each genre, the book offers a series of step-by-step lessons—from selecting topics to publishing pieces—presented in sequential order or divided into daily components. Each lesson—designed to help students meet the language acts standards— is targeted for 45 minutes to one hour. The
adaptation of this book was derived from our experience over the past decade in working with ELT students.

The lessons adapted are designed to help the teacher move students through the writing process. It is important to note, however, that it is not always necessary to take the entire process to completion each time, nor does the process need to end at publishing. The analysis of each writing genre includes essays written by professional writers that illustrate the writing strategies features of the genre, and an analysis of the author’s use of those strategies. For each genre, there is a set of reproducibles that can be used in different ways. The reproducible guides users through the entire writing process—prewriting, writing, and rewriting—developing step-by-step techniques for creating compositions. They are referenced in each lesson, and are appropriate to use as overheads, to put on a classroom chart, or to copy for the students. The model pieces might be shown on an overhead at the beginning of each genre unit, then put up and revised throughout the lessons. Another option is to copy the models for students and have them practise highlighting topic sentences, leads conclusions, and so on.

For each genre, revising and editing checklists are required reproducibles. Students are given a concrete set of tasks to complete when revising and editing their writing. Many students need some direct support as to what to do when revising a writing piece. These checklists can be modified to meet the needs of the diverse learners in the classroom.

At the end, the book offers a reproducible set of writing tools that are appropriate for any genre. Various rubrics help students assess their writing. The self-reflection and partner feedback sheets can be reproduced for students and used at the end of any writing piece. The goal setting sheet is also appropriate with any genre, and the self reflection sheet helps students to monitor their progress when working to achieve their goals. Helpful reproducible, such as a proofreading marks sheet and a vocabulary-building sheet for independent use can be used all year long.

The book combines an up-to-date, balanced, and integrated approach to writing instruction, focusing on strategies that are designed for flexibility of use—and for helping students develop their skills throughout the course. The strategies are expected to explore what they know, think and feel. We have adapted and presented the content of the textbook in
attractive and easily assimilated forms by extensive use of tables, boxes, and illustrations to help students clarify and organize their thoughts before and during the writing process.

### 2.11.4 Data Collection

We have striven to triangulate the data. We have kept field notes to record any researcher biases that might emerge. We have noted any changes or reactions to the implemented approach so as to give a detailed picture of the informants’ behaviour while composing. In examining the impact of the process writing approach on improving students’ written product on the period of the experiment, we have used quantitative data such as standardized and teacher-developed pre-test and posttest, as well as qualitative data consisting of teacher-lesson own plans, students writing portfolios, written reflections by students, individual and focus-group interviews.

Before assigning any written work, the students are provided with a list of task design prompts. This list provides the students with a clear image of what is expected from the situation they are tackling. As the students start composing, they will bear in mind their goal and consider their audience, among other primordial features. It is suggested that when students know what teachers are looking for, they may transfer this knowledge and use it in their writing.

**Task design Prompts**

**Goal**

- Your task is…………………………
- The goal is to………………………..
- The problem or challenge is………………….
- The obstacles to overcome are………………….

**Role**

- You are…….
- You have been asked to………………..
Your job is………………………………

Audience

➢ Your clients are………………
➢ The target audience is…………
➢ You need to convince………..

Situation

➢ The context you find yourself in is ……………
➢ The challenge included dealing with ………………

Product, performance, and purpose

➢ You will create a………
➢ In order to………………
➢ You need to develop………………
➢ So that……………..

Standards and Criteria for Success

➢ You performance needs to………
➢ Your work will be judged by…………………………
➢ Your product must meet the following standards………………

Two types of procedures (Denzin, 1989) were used to verify the data:

➢ Across collection methods (documents analysis, scores on the writing samples, individual interviews, and focus groups).
➢ Across investigators (two researchers, formal member checking in focus group, and informal member checking with individuals).

2.11.4.1 Writing Strategies Questionnaire
The questionnaire, which covers the issue of the writing strategies deployed by Second Year students aims at highlighting the writing behaviour of these students. By behaviour, it is meant:

- How do the students start and finish their writing assignments?
- How and when do they revise if they have to?
- What tools do they use when writing?

It also aims at answering the question:

- How do the students view themselves as far as writing in English is concerned?

This question tackles the affective factors related to self-esteem and self-confidence. Are they self-confident as to take risks in their writings?

The questionnaire that consists of thirty four (34) main questions is oriented towards what is taught during a writing lesson so as to see the approach applied to such lessons.

Another questionnaire was given to the learners so as to see how they prepare themselves to the act of writing and what stages they go through when writing, if at all.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have tried to shed some light on major variables that are crucial and peculiar for the population in this research. Some remain important whereas others are less. But neither should be ignored. Some of the experiences and expectations of the informants scheduled in the syllabus have also been outlined.

The difficulties that the second year students encounter when composing in English are very real. Despite the fact that their motivation which is hampered by many linguistic deficiencies, despite the total non-existence of environmental support, despite the scarcity of libraries, the learners strive to have their voice in this new individual enterprise of acquiring the written form of the target language.
The difficulties teachers face when working with these students in this environment are very real too. They go beyond day-to-day problems which are inherent in trying to teach students who are not proficient in writing in English. In essence, the teacher’s job is made demanding by the above-cited conditions and also by the lack of books (among other tools) that are primordial for the selection of inputs and models, and also for the improvement and actualisation of their texts.

Implementing the process writing approach in this social and cultural space is a too challenging enterprise. Practically, all the variables have to be considered though some of them might appear unrelated to the present issue at stake. Therefore, we believe that variables that have not been mentioned such the environment, the teachers – to name but a few- may have a greater impact on how learners acquire the ability to write in English. Needless to remind that the teacher is more important than any method or material according to Finocchiaro (1974).
Chapter 3

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

In accordance with the type of research undertaken in this project, we have divided the present chapter into three sections. The first section 3.1 offers an analysis of data collected before and after the experiment. A considerable set of data was collected, facilitating a quantitative analysis of the language produced. The approach followed in this chapter is based on the assumption in Corpus Linguistics, that the performance of a language community has to be investigated to capture probable features of language behaviour, whose statistical and pedagogical significance can then be tested and validated.

The chapter then follows up to deal with the procedure of implementing the experiment 3.2. The way the experiment was put in action follows the assumption that teaching and learning are joint enterprise involving both the teacher and students in a partnership where the participants have complementary roles and a similar status.

The chapter then follows up to address the development of writing skills and the major components of writing pedagogy 3.3.

3.1 Data Analysis

Before applying the process writing approach, there was a need to provide a detailed description of the informants’ writing behaviour in English. The aim was to supply the research with insights of how the second year students in general tackle the writing skill.

3.1.1 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to survey the attitudes and activities involving the writing in English by second year students. The questionnaire consists of 18 questions which focus on writing performance, habits, and perceptions (see appendix). The students were
asked to complete by answering the following question anonymously: how often do you do each of the following when you are writing in English?

The following table augurs the different areas the questionnaire covers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>Planning</th>
<th>Generating ideas</th>
<th>Evaluating</th>
<th>Structuring</th>
<th>Re-viewing</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Attitudes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Items</td>
<td>1, 2</td>
<td>3, 4, 5, 6</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
<td>9, 10, 11</td>
<td>12, 14, 15</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16, 17, 18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3.1.2 The Informants

Approximately 20% of the second year students were gathered for the survey, with a total of 120 questionnaires distributed. Of these 120, 80 questionnaires – approximately three-thirds of the number distributed—were returned. The number of questionnaires filled out and returned comprised approximately 40% of the population of the second year students studying at that time in the university. The sample proved to be representative of the different levels of the 2nd year students population.

How often do you do each of the following when you are writing in English?

**Item One:** I make notes on what I want to say before I start writing.

![Percent Frequency Chart]

As can be seen in figure 3.1 the majority of the subjects (66/80)-70% of those surveyed—never or rarely make notes on what they want to say before they start writing.
Item Two: I make an outline before I start writing.

The overwhelming majority of the subjects (72/80) said that they did not make an outline they start writing. This is illustrated in figure 3.2.

Item Three: It takes me a while to come up with what I want to say before I start writing, but I keep those thoughts in my mind instead of writing notes or an outline.

The incubating of the students’ ideas is displayed in this table. Seventy two subjects (72/80) keep their ideas in mind instead of jotting them down on paper.
Item Four: I start writing right away and let the ideas come to me as I write.

76 students out of 80 that is the majority start writing immediately and let their ideas come on their own accord. Only 4 students are rarely accustomed not to do so.

Item Five: I say my ideas out loud to try them out before I write them.

No student ever thinks out his ideas aloud. As will be seen later, the students are not accustomed to the thinking aloud activity
Item Six: I reread what I have just written before I continue writing.

![Percent Frequency Chart]

To a question regarding the students’ reading what they have just written so as to discover new ideas, the subjects responded negatively as only 8 students read what they have just written. The rest of the students either rarely (40%) or occasionally (50%) reread what they have just written.

Item Seven: I reread the entire paper after I have written it.

![Percent Frequency Chart]

It was not surprising to see that no student re-reads his entire paper. Most students were also observed to hand their papers immediately after finishing writing.
**Item Eight:** I cross out or erase words and phrases and substitute other words and phrases as I write.

To the question related to what the informants change, transform, or alter their writing, 72 students that is 90% rarely make changes as they write and 8 students that is 10% never make any change.

**Item Nine:** I add words and phrases to what I have already written.

For the previous question, 64 informants that is 80% rarely add any word or phrase to their composition. 16 students constituting 20% occasionally alter their composition by adding words or even phrases.
**Item Ten:** I change around the order of paragraphs or sentences as I write.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Never | Rarely | Occasionally | Often |

Like all the questions related to the deep transformation of the composition, question nine shows that 72 or 90% hardly ever make any change on the order of sentences or paragraphs as the informants write. 8 students rarely make any deep transformation.

**Item Eleven:** I change around the order of paragraphs or sentences after I have finished the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Never | Rarely | Occasionally | Often |

The question is related to the revising stage where, as seen previously, the students scarcely make any change to their composition. As it can be seen on the table 3.10, 72/80 students that is 90% never alter the order of either the paragraphs or sentences once they have finished writing. The remaining 10% rarely improve their writing by reordering the paragraphs or sentences.
Item Twelve: I combine two or more sentences into one.

![Percent Frequency Chart]

The next item is also related to the revising stage. This question tackles the issue of improving the composition by varying the kind of sentences. The question reveals that while 80% of the informants, that is 64 students, occasionally combine simple sentences into compound ones, 20%, that is 16 students, rarely do so.

Item Thirteen: I write the entire text in Arabic and then translate it into English.

![Percent Frequency Chart]

As can be seen in figure 3.13, the majority of the subjects (80/80) that is 100% of those surveyed never translate from the first language that is Arabic while composing in English. However, the same admitted translating mentally (that is thinking in Arabic) while composing.
Item Fourteen: I check for article/noun/verb/subject agreement as I write.

To a question regarding surface revision as subject verb agreement done while writing, 60/80 students responded that they rarely check for article/noun/verb/subject agreement as they write. Only 8 students, that is, 10%, do this kind of checking, while 4, that is 5%, never check and 5% often check.

Item Fifteen: I check for article/noun/verb/subject agreement after I’ve finished writing.

Then the students were asked whether they do the same checking after they have finished writing. As seen on the table 40% rarely check, 30% never check, 15% occasionally check and 15% often check.
**Item Sixteen:** I’m pleased with my writing strategies.

The writing strategies the students use were also investigated. As shown in figure 3.16, the majority of the subjects, that is 64/80, are never pleased with their writing strategies, 18%, that is 14 students, are rarely satisfied. One student answered that he is occasionally satisfied. Only one student appears to be often satisfied.

**Item Seventeen:** I’m pleased with the compositions I write.

To a question related to self-attitude regarding the composition the students wrote, 32 students or 40% responded that they were rarely pleased, 40 students or 50% said that they were occasionally pleased and only 8 or 10% of the informants were often pleased with their writing.
Item Eighteen: I think I’m a good writer.

In this item, the students were asked whether they think they were good writers or not. 70 students or 87% never think so; while 6 or 8% rarely do, and only 2 students or 3% often think they are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>01</th>
<th>02</th>
<th>03</th>
<th>04</th>
<th>05</th>
<th>06</th>
<th>07</th>
<th>08</th>
<th>09</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>Mean(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never (%)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>39.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely (%)</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>32.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally (%)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>02</td>
<td>14.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often (%)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>00</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>03</td>
<td>13.83%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Writing Practices

Figure 3.1: The Summary of the Different Findings
3.1.3 The Interview

The questions asked in the interview addressed how the students felt about the assignments and the methods they used to produce successful compositions. The choice of the topic was raised in the interview to keep the focus on the students’ work practices and attitudes. The student’s perceptive was paramount for the research.

Survey Responses

**Question 1:** Do you feel you have time to finish the assignment you were given?

The overwhelming majority (87%) of the students responded that they did not have sufficient time to write their compositions. One student reported, ‘I have to write the three drafts to finish the assignment, it really takes time’. Another responded that ‘you have to write, give the text to the teacher or to your friends and then correct your work. After this you have to amend it and give it back to your teacher. I am not accustomed to this’. Other students echoed this sentiment: we are frustrated. We have many things to say but we lack the competence to do so.

**Question 2:** How much do you really care about the skill of writing?

All except three students cared ‘a lot’ about the writing skill. Getting your ideas across in exams, so as to have a good grade was important to them. For some students, writing had always been a problem but with the process writing approach, they were less inhibited. One of the students said that the material presented was interesting but later it became boring.

**Question 3:** How is it going? Are you finding the new approach interesting?

Almost half of the students (47%) found the experiment exciting and worth doing with many novel things to learn. Twenty seven percent found it time consuming with too many things to review before finalizing the text.

**Question 4:** Have ever asked anyone to help you with the different assignments that the process approach requires?

Half of the students had consulted their teacher or other teachers or planned to do so. Several commented that the teacher was the best person to see for help. Some students
expected that their teacher would review their compositions before they turned in the final version. The other half did not ask anyone for help. Two students said that they would just never ask for help unless they were clueless.

Survey Conclusions

The goal of the interview was to learn about the students, so the focus was on their writing habits with this novel approach. The students were met on their turf during their working hours and inquired mainly about their writing habits.

The students report that they are in control of their writing assignments even though they have to do too many checking at the same. They are helped and are helping others by providing constructive feedback though sometimes they are linguistically limited. Their suggestions usually bring new ideas.

The students report that for the first time they understood that to write about something, they have to do researches which will enable them to enrich their writing. Many students are confident that they will learn to write better because they are considering many new items in their writing like purpose and audience, to name but a few.

3.1.4 Assessment of the Skills Acquired after the Experiment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GENERAL SKILLS AND STRATEGIES OF THE WRITING PROCESS</th>
<th>weak</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The ability to use prewriting strategies to plan written work.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The ability to evaluate own and other’s writing.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The ability to use strategies (content, style, and structure) to write for different audiences and purposes (to inform, explain, etc).</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The ability to use writing and other methods to describe familiar persons, places, object, or experiences.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The ability to use strategies to write for a variety of purposes.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The ability to write expository compositions.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The ability to write in a variety of forms or genres</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The ability to write narrative accounts.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The ability to write compositions about autobiography incidents.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The ability to write expressive compositions.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The ability to write in response to literature.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The ability to write compositions that address problems/solutions.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The ability to write personal letters.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The ability to write business letters and letters of request.</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 The Experiment

Researchers Pritchard and Marshall (1994, 2002) have concluded that pupils produce better writing when their teachers have been trained in the writing as a process instructional model. The present experiment was based on the book “Process Writing” written by Ron White and Valerie Arndt, two authors who have a considerable expertise in writing. The experiment that endorses the process approach has a guiding premise that the students will more easily learn to improve their writing if they are provided developmentally appropriate instruction and assignments where they are allowed to experiment with their writing while simultaneously being provided specific supportive feedback. During this experiment, the students received direct small group and even individualized instruction in the writing process, narrative, descriptive, argumentative structure conferencing and seven traits assessment (context: purpose, audience, and form, ideas, voice, and word choice, sentence variety and conventions). Additionally, they were taught to identify and learn to overcome emotional factors that inhibit their writing, and were provided explicit instruction in schema and self-regulation (meta-cognition) strategies related to the production of narrative, descriptive, and argumentative texts. While applying the process approach, lessons were designed to address such narrative features as story structure, character development, and key
concept; such descriptive features as the visual details of what the writer hears, smells, touches, or tastes or senses in some less physical way.

The experiment started by providing the students with ideas of what is involved in the process of writing. It was a kind of sensitising lectures that aimed at increasing students’ awareness of what is involved in writing. For instance, the students were introduced to the importance of considering purpose and audience when writing. They were also advised to recognise the typical features of the different kinds of writing.

These are kinds of sensitive tasks that aim at providing the students with an insight into what they actually do when they write.

The first sensitive activity was composing aloud. It was thought that this peculiar activity might help the students to become aware of what is going on when they write. Composing aloud is an attempt to recreate the thought processes which underlie a piece of written text. It involves verbalizing thought – or thinking aloud- as one writes. It is of great help in reconstructing the thinking that went into the writing, and thus supply important clues for improving the coherence of the text. It can also provide a fascinating insight into what goes on as one struggles to translate meaning into words.

**Activity: composing aloud**

**Aims:**

- To give an insight into what is involved in the writing process.
- To help reconstruct the train of thought which underlies the text they write.

**How to Proceed:**

It was explained to the students that the task is unfamiliar and unnatural. They were encouraged to try to verbalise as much as possible of what might go on in their mind as they write.

Language: to ease the burden of the activity and put less constraint on this task, the students were invited to use any language they wish. Though it is preferable to use English, the students could use classical Arabic, French and even Algerian Arabic. The most important thing is to focus on keeping talking and verbalising the ideas.
To provide further help, the task was first presented by the teacher in front of the two experimental groups. The teacher chose to recreate a story of an accident narrate the story.

Once the students understood what they were expected to do, they were asked to choose a topic on which they would prefer to write on. They were given forty (40) minutes for this activity. For those who were not able to find topic to write on, they were invited to write on a topic they had already dealt with Zahara Begum. This was done so that the students would not come to the task cold and be blocked.

A better way of doing this task would have been to ask the students to do their composing aloud in the language laboratory. Because we encountered various difficulties in using the university language laboratory, we asked the students to transcribe their composing aloud on papers.

**Composing Aloud Done by a Student**

Because I live in Tiaret, no Sougeur far from Sougeur, a place called Rahouia who knows this place, because I live in Rahouiya, the (how do we say responsable de la cité universitaire, (the student used Arabic, gave a room in the campus Hai Badr. The food is not good horrible...etc

As a follow up activity, the learners were asked to read their transcription over, and analyse what they did as they composed

**Findings:**

It was discovered that the majority of the class asked questions when they composed. The most common questions were:

- How will I start?
- Who is Zahara Begum?
- What did she do?
- What was her story?
- How will I finish the story
- How will I conclude my writing?
- How do we say...........etc, in English?
Then, the two experimental groups were introduced to the following questionnaire which was based on work done by Rosemary Dorie, a teacher in Oxford.

Have you ever done this sort of exercise before?
How difficult was it to speak aloud while writing?

A) Difficult  B) Neither difficult nor easy  C) Easy

Have you ever thought about what you do when you are composing a piece of writing?
What did you think about before you started writing this time?
The topic
The length of the text
The organisation
The person who would read it
Something else
If you have transcribed what you said, or if you have simply listened to your composing tape, did you find that:
At the beginning, you:
Spoke a lot
Didn’t speak at all?
During the composing, you:
Talked to yourself about doing the activity
Went back and reread what you’d written
Planned what you were going to do next
Talked about the number of words to write
Corrected spelling and punctuation
Changed words and phrases
Rewrote your work completely
Rewrote part of your work
Didn’t speak from time to time?
What do you think you were doing when not speaking?
Do your tape and/or transcript show that you were doing something you were not aware of doing at the time?
Were you surprised by anything you found in your paper? If so, what?
Do you think it helpful to know what sorts of things you do when you compose a piece of writing?
Have your ideas of writing been changed by this experience? If so, how?

The students are not accustomed to this kind of activity. The findings of this questionnaire sustain the items in the table of the assessment of the students ‘skills before the experiment. The writing behaviour of the two experimental groups can be summarised as follows: the students are used to writing without planning, or outlining, or even jotting down ideas on a rough paper. Once they have completed their composition, they usually don’t even re-read what they have just written. Those who occasionally do not spot their mistakes unless they are underlined with a red pen by the teacher who is taken for granted as the only corrector.

### 3.2.1 Generating Ideas

Generating ideas is a crucial part of the writing process since the task of writing is primarily about organizing information and communicating meaning. What inhibits students in writing is actually getting started. Henceforth, this initiating step of idea generating becomes the cornerstone of the whole process of composing.

At this stage, the writer is attempting to discover a topic and identify a topic. However, even in later stages, the writer is still generating ideas.

Generating ideas is directly connected to the long-term memory which consists of three main kinds of memory store:

- **Episodic Memory**, which is devoted to events, experiences and visual and auditory images.
- **Semantic Memory**, which is devoted to information, ideas, attitudes and values
- **Unconscious Memory**, which includes emotions and feelings

When the writer is generating ideas, he taps in these different types of memory according to his own purpose and the kind of writing involved. Therefore, the kind of writing determines the type of memory that will be tapped. Therefore, the idea-generating process for imaginative writing will be different from that involved in discursive writing.
For instance, imaginative writing will tap episodic and unconscious memories as part of the process of creating an imaginary world. By contrast, discursive writing will call upon semantic memory in which logically interconnected ideas will be important.

To assist the students in generating ideas at the initial stage, there were two main kinds of discovery techniques: guided and unguided. Guided techniques consist of a range of prompts, usually questions that are used to help the writers discover ideas. In other words, the answers that the writers produce are determined by the prompts.

When using unguided techniques, the writers do not rely on external prompts but generate ideas themselves. In this case, the ideas are not predetermined.

3.2.1.1 Brainstorming

When writing, the students are too often confronted to the problem of getting started. Comments like “what can I say about this topic? Or “I have no idea about this subject!” are almost always heard here and there in the classroom.

Indeed, the students find it problematic to generate ideas when describing for instance, and even worse when arguing or expressing opinion. Raimes (1985) states that getting started is one of the most difficult and inhibiting steps in writing.

To overcome the problem of idea-generating, practitioners and researchers alike suggest an effective way which is specially used in creative writing: brainstorming. The strategy of brainstorming is more valuable in bringing to the surface of the mind all information we know about a given topic. This activity can be carried out individually, in pairs, or in groups, and better still with the whole class.

Because the aim of this activity is to get the learner “activate the long-term memory (i.e., Episodic memory, semantic memory, and unconscious memory; Flower and Hayes, 1980) so as to proliferate ideas from various experiences. White and Arndt (1997) state that there should be no censorship from teachers, even less from the learners themselves. Teachers should create such a relaxed situation where the learners feel at ease to propose any idea that comes to their minds: the odd, strange, and unusual ideas as well as conventional and more pedestrian ones. At this pre-writing phase, there should also be no evaluation of the accuracy of the students’ ideas. The first attempt to evaluate will inhibit the novice writers and the
spontaneous and unstructured flow of ideas will be interrupted, or even suspended. Arnold White and Valerie Arndt state:

In essence brainstorming should be free-wheeling, unstructured and non-judgmental. Attempts to structure or evaluate ideas during brainstorming can be inhibiting, and will limit the very creativity and productivity which the technique is designed to promote.

(1997:18)

The assessment of the quality of ideas, their accuracy and relevance will come right after as a follow-up activity. The learners, with the help of the teacher, will select the ideas that are the most practical, relevant and useful to the assigned topic.

To familiarize the students with this technique, the teacher can start with a demonstration session where he does the brainstorming loudly. As pointed out in Valerie Arndt this is an effective way of getting across to the students what is involved.

If used in groups, brainstorming will prove fruitful because the students will benefit from drawing on their classmates ideas as well as their own. This is natural since professional writers do the same when tackling subjects of everyday life for instance.

Brainstorming a topic like life in the cities will generate too many ideas first of all because the students of the university of Oran come from different places namely Oran, Tiaret, Frena, Arzew, to cite but a few, and because everyone has his own vision, his own perception of life in suburb and village. The ideas generated with the class were:

crowds, noise, quiet little places, monumental buildings, promenade de l’Etang, places to visit, restaurants, theatres, museums and galleries, transport: tramway, train, metro and underground, spaces and places variety and excitement, cost, need for a centre, history, convenience: pizza, fastfood, inconvenience: traffic jams, chaos, civilisation began with cities

Brainstorming can be used to:

➢ Choose a topic
➢ Identify a reason or purpose for writing
Find an appropriate form in which to write
Develop a topic
Work out a plot
Develop the organisation of ideas

Because the informants were unfamiliar with this technique, the we made a demonstration to get across to the students what is involved. The demonstration lasted for ten minutes so that the students would not get bored with a lesson dominated by the teacher.

A list of five topics was provided and written on the board. The students were asked to choose one. Then the teacher started brainstorming aloud ideas for the selected topic. We explained to the students what each idea meant to him and therefore it would be considered. The students were invited to suggest ideas too. Their ideas were added on the board.

- **Brainstorming Done By the Teacher**

**Life in the countryside**

Quiet, simple life, difficult life, no commodities, lack transport, no cinemas, hard life, most of the habitants are either peasants etc.

- **Brainstorming by the Students**

Slips of paper: this activity is described as a snow ball activity that proceeds from individual to pairs to group to the whole class.

The teacher started by explaining the activity. The subjects were told that they would spend about a minute or so being silent writing down ideas by themselves. They would write one idea per slip of paper, in legible print. After that, they would work in pairs then in groups.

Having issued slips of papers to the class, the teacher wrote the stimulus topic “women place is at home”. This general topic was written on the board. Such a topic was chosen because the researcher knew in advance that there would be a hot debate over this kind of issue because over 90% of the students are female and therefore would disagree with this kind of question.
Each student started off by writing his ideas on the slips of paper. After five minutes, each student joined with his partner and bounced his ideas off, adding more slips of papers to their collection. After a few more minutes, the pairs joined to make four, and the slips of papers were added to the collection once more. The old ideas were exchanged, and new ones were generated.

At first, the students wanted more time, and that was the reason why five minutes were allotted instead of one minute. Once the class was grouped into two major groups, a leader of each group was asked to write five ideas on the board. The ten ideas were discussed and clarified. To ensure that all the students had a chance to participate in this activity, the first step, that is individual idea-generating, was given a major importance by allotting it more time than the other steps. Here are the ideas produced by the groups:

Every woman should do homework only. Her job is to educate children. The first school for the children is the mother at home. Nowadays the woman’s place is changing little by little. The husband must help his wife because the household is a tedious work. Men think that women have to stay at home but they do not have good reasons. A woman is needed to help the child grow up. The husband should also cook. The percentage of women who work is so small. It should change.

3.2.2 Focusing

In this step, the students were asked to narrow down the scope of their topic. They would focus upon a central idea or upon a view-point if they wanted to communicate their messages effectively. Indeed, focusing upon a major idea will unify and inform the text they produce. The focal idea, that is the thesis, which the students wish to put across, is the answer to the reader’s question:

What are you trying to tell me?

Too often, the writer’s central idea does not start to emerge until the writing is in progress. Elbow (1973) describes the scaffolding image of the central idea and shows at the same time the impossible bind of writing:

It is simply a fact that most of the time you can’t find the right words till you know exactly what you are saying but
that you can’t know exactly what you are saying until you find the right words. The consequence is that you must start by writing the wrong meaning in the wrong words, but keep writing till you get to the right meanings in the right words. Only at the end will you know what you are saying....you should throw lots (of early words and phrases) away, because by the end you’ll have a different focus or angle on what you are writing, if not a whole new subject. It’s like scaffolding. There is no shortcut by which you can avoid building it, even though it can’t be part of your final building...

(1973: 26-30)

Writers have to establish an attitude towards their topic. If they fail to convey their attitude, their reader will be left at a loss as to how to respond to the text. Uncertainty is therefore avoided by the writer’s attitude which can be expressed through the writer’s approval, disapproval, belief, doubt, support, favour, disfavour, or it could be a neutral attitude.

Therefore, the focal idea and view-point are realized by the writer’s engagement with the subject. The expression of the engagement is tightly linked to the writer’s purpose of writing. This, together with other contextual facets of a text like who will be the reader and what form will it take moulds the writing as it progresses and evolves into its final shape.

3.2.2.1 Fastwriting

It is certainly not easy to discover what it is that a writer has to say. Writers usually discover and identify the main point during the drafting process itself. So, while drafting, it may be possible that a writer discloses to himself a focal idea or a view-point. Among the techniques that help to find a thesis and a clear focus for an effective piece of writing are fastwriting and loopwriting.

If the focus is missing in a piece of writing, the writer will encounter a certain difficulty in organizing his ideas coherently because there is no central idea around which to structure them. Furthermore, the audience will find it hard to grasp what the writer is attempting to get
across. The audience’s reaction to the text will consist of a variety of negative responses such as boredom, disdain, rejection, frustration, and most of all anger and hostility.

The technique of fastwriting depends mainly on speed and lack of inhibition. Unlike the technique of brainstorming which produces a great number of individual ideas, fastwriting is mainly concerned with developing and relating those ideas. Fastwriting is an activity that follows brainstorming. Having brainstormed ideas, the students choose one or more ideas and develop them.

**Procedure**

At first, the class was asked to choose a topic. There was a preliminary discussion about identifying a topic. The selected topic was life on campus. There was an overwhelming agreement on that choice though some disagreed because they had never lived on campus before. It was agreed that these students would stand a chance to discover how it was to live on campus. The students were told that fast writing is an individual work and that they had to read the fastwriting instruction sheet handed to them.

**Fastwriting Instruction Sheet**

- Concentrate on ideas, not on language, grammar, or punctuation.
- Write as quickly as you can and don’t stop writing.
- Don’t stop to cross out or correct mistakes.
- If you can’t think of a word or phrase, either write it in your native language when you have finished writing, and then, using a dictionary or thesaurus, add or translate the words or phrases concerned.

Because this technique was new to all the students, the teacher made a demonstration. In the demonstration the teacher made mistakes on purpose so as to exemplify the first recommendation in the instruction sheet. He also wrote words both in French and in Arabic to demonstrate the issue worded in the fourth point of the instruction sheet.

To give a realistic view of fastwriting, the teacher asked the students to choose a topic for him. The idea chosen by the students was “women may be better than men in many fields”.

“Though it is hard difficult to conceive this idea I am obliged to accept it when can a woman be better than in which field in the kitchen maybe, no no no better best cook are man in cinema actor walou neda , in education maybe because women are more patient than men because there are however, women create problems wherever they go.. etc.”

- Fastwriting Done By the Students

The students were asked to select one or more ideas from the brainstorming they did “about woman’s place is at home”. Here is part of what one student produced.

“My mother does not work. She is illiterate but she is happy. My father works for the family. My mother cooks and cares about the family. Outside it my father and inside it is my mother who is responsible”.

- Loopwriting

Looping was the second writing technique we had provided to help the students focus on what they were attempting to communicate.

Loopwriting is a recursive process where the writer produces a stretch of text, summarises it in one sentence, and then uses that sentence to begin a new loop. Each loop will assist the writer in revealing the idea that is the most significant to him. Each successive summary sentence will draw upon ideas developed in the previous loops. This process is carried out many times until the writer is satisfied that the successive summarizing after each loop has brought to the open the central thesis that would be developed in the draft. In its turn, the draft will draw upon the content and ideas produced during the looping.

Since looping was an unfamiliar technique to most students, a demonstration was performed in front of the students.
- Loopwriting by Students

Fifteen minutes were allotted to do this activity. The students were asked to work individually. They were told to consider the ideas that were discovered in the brainstorming phase. Out of those ideas, they would choose one or more and write on them until they discover the central idea or thesis. They were also told that the content they would develop in the loopwriting would subsequently be incorporated into the text in the drafting phase. The following is an example of loopwriting produced by the students.

“Zahara begum is an English girl. She is eighteen years old. She lives in London. he father wanted her to marry off a man of forty who lives in Bangladesh. Zahara Begum is an English girl who faces the problem of arranged marriage. Though she is eighteen, her father wanted to oblige her to marry a distant relative from Bangladesh. Arranged marriage is a problem that most girls from Asian origins born in England are facing these days....”
3.2.2.2 Considering Purpose

Generally speaking, a writer in a more real context than the context of language learning in a classroom, when choosing to commit his ideas to written language he usually has a compelling purpose for doing so. The compelling purpose may be to entertain, to provoke thought and reflection, to provide a record of events or expressions, to inform, to influence opinion or to request information and so forth.

In the classroom context, the purpose of writing is unfortunately very limited and unreal. It is usually limited to exercise or to demonstrate certain language skills or usually to reinforce the learning of the language itself.

The students should be aware of the importance of purpose in writing as it is an essential part of the writing process. Indeed, purpose in writing guides the writers in making choices about the context, about the kind of vocabulary they should include and above all the manner, that is, how they should express it.

Because it is easier to detect the purpose of letters in general, and letters to newspapers in particular, as they are relatively brief and accessible, they were considered as a starting point for considering the importance of purpose in writing.

- Detecting the Writer’s Reasons for Writing

Materials used:

Multiple copies of one sample letter for class discussion (see churning out freaks).

A pool of suitable newspaper letters, on the same topic. These letters were numbered for the purpose of discussion. (See text noisy neighbours p.37).

Tasks sheet (see reasons for writing tasksheet)

First of all, the teacher wrote the following question: why do people write letters to newspapers? It was a kind of brainstorming where nearly almost every student participated. Those who could not find the equivalent word to the ideas they had in mind in their mother tongue were helped by their friends or by the teacher. The reasons suggested by the class were:
To complain, to praise, to thank, to correct to put the record straight, to oppose, to agree, to disagree, to put an alternative point of view, to persuade, to dissuade, to entertain, to get themselves into print, etc.

Then, a sample letter was given to the students.

**Churning Out Freaks**

**Mini-Cows**

What is two feet tall, gives a gallon of milk a day and moos?’ the answer: the Mexican mini-cow, heralded by some as a pioneer ‘in a potential agricultural revolution’.

The tiny animal is the result of more than five generations of selective breeding—which began with the six-foot tall, 2,000 pound Indo-Brazilian zebu. The mini cow produces three to four litres of milk a day—compared with six litres produced but a full-sized zebu—and survives on a tenth the grassland. Some agricultural experts view the cattle primarily as a protein source of rural families who have little grazing land and cannot afford bought milk and meat.

But others are more sceptical. The question just how long a freak cow, which so disproportionately produces huge quantities of milk, can be expected to live and how sickly it will be. The quality of the milk is also questionable. How much more sensible to redistribute the land more fairly so that poor families can keep normal, healthy-size cows. But that, it appears, would be a far more monstrous solution than anything that can be dreamed up in a laboratory. Information from World Development Forum

**Cow Freaks**

I was appalled at the update on ‘mini-cows’ (NI180), have scientists nothing better to do than develop such freaks? Don’t they know that the ideal ‘mini-cow’ already exist? Living on rubbish, producing more nutritious milk than a cow, and less susceptible to disease this ‘mini-cow’ inhabits many third world countries. It’s called the goat.

Jacqueline Nebel

Brussels, Belgium

The students were invited to read the article and then the letter. Together with the teacher, they discussed the writer’s purpose. They had to find out and evaluate the ideas. The next question that was discussed was whether the language the writer had chosen really served the purpose. To help them perform such a task, the students were given the following questions:

- What point is the writer trying to make?
- Is this point clear?
- Is the writer’s attitude clear?
- What is it?
Do we, as readers, need more or less information than the writer has given us to understand the message?

Has the writer used any special language devices to convey the message (e.g. emotive words; emphatic or moderating expressions; modals verbs; juxtaposition of words, concepts or ideas; rhetorical questions; irony)?

The next step was to ask the students to work in small groups so as to work through the pool of letters we had provided (See Appendix A). They would do the same thing done previously in the first step. A task sheet was provided.

The students were then asked to rank the letters according to the degree of success they felt the writer had in achieving his purpose.

Finally, the class compared opinions and discussed why they judged the letters as they did.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Writer’s purpose?</th>
<th>Writer’s attitude?</th>
<th>Special language devices?</th>
<th>How effective is the letter (very/ moderately/ not effective)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Seeking advice</td>
<td>Polite</td>
<td>Direct language</td>
<td>Very effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Giving advice</td>
<td>Totally supporting the complainer</td>
<td>Formal &amp; clear, straightforward language</td>
<td>Very effective with different options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Reasons for Writing’ Tasksheet

3.2.2.3 Considering Audience

An effective writer has to predict how his readers will understand what he has written. To do this, he must be able to see his texts through someone else’s eyes. Armed with this tool, he would anticipate places where the message might not be clear. He knows in advance that his readers’ attitudes and expectations will be different from his own. He also knows that
things he takes for granted will have to be explained to his readers. The next task the researcher had selected aimed at getting students pondering on the various ways in which writers have to tailor what they write so as to suit people who read them.

- **Reconstructing the reader**

The aim of this activity was a sensitising task where the students had to look at texts and try to deduce what sort of audience they were written for. To do this, they had to consider the information the writer has used and the way in which he has manipulated his ideas and language.

However, for this kind of activities, many factors had to be taken into account. The most prominent were:

- Knowledge of the world shared or not shared between the writer and them,
- Their possible educational and socio-economic backgrounds,
- Or their probable attitudes and values acquired in the cultural milieu

Newspapers were the main source of material that could be suitable for this task.

**Procedure**

A copy of a text was provided to the students. We deleted the title so that the context of the text would not be revealed. Then the learners were asked to highlight with a text-liner any information which is not clear to them or any parts of the text they did not understand because of a lack of background knowledge.

Then, the students were asked to work in twos or threes to compare what they had highlighted. The aim was to get down to a core of non-understood information (i.e. if any members of the group did understand something which the others did not, they ought to explain it). The list of non-understood items was written on the board.

The next step was to reveal the context of the text after allowing the students to guess for a considerable time. With the whole class and in the light of this knowledge the items from the list on the board were eliminated.
Suggestions as to how the information reported in the text would have to be written or glossed for a present day audience were invited. To do this, things that had to be considered were:

- What does the writer assume that we (as readers) know which we actually don’t know?
- What extra information is needed?
- Where does it need to be added?

Results:

It was a task. The students had to use a dictionary to understand every word. The students found this task difficult because the text chosen “Greenpeace” is not so familiar to them. However, they understood that the writer wanted a reaction from the reader. The students understand that the writer knows that his readers know the problem.

- Considering form

Learning to write in English or in any other foreign language involves more than acquiring the linguistic forms, structures, and vocabulary. Though these are essential tools with which the learners communicate meaning, they have to be developed with the knowledge about how different kinds of texts are conventionally structured and presented in that language.

Readers expect certain norms of content, structure, and graphic appearance to be respected in the texts they are reading. These expectations which are shared by both the readers and the writers are stored in the long-term memory as abstract mental structures (schemata). They are used by both readers and writers when reading or composing. Therefore, it is paramount that the writer matches the readers’ expectations so that the comprehension would be facilitated.

The aim of the following activity was to increase the students’ awareness of the sense of form which prompts good writers to search for the most appropriate way in which to resent their ideas. The students have already acquired the conventions in which they present their writing in their native language, but these conventions differ from the conventions of the target language.
**Procedure**

The class was set in groups of four because there were not enough copies of English newspapers. Then, a brief brainstorming session was initiated. The purpose of the session was to discover as many types of writing as the students could think of. The lists that the students found was: letters, friendly/personal letters, love letters, business letters, e-mails, a poem, an article in a newspaper, a recipe, a note, a notice, an essay, a telegram, an sms etc. Then the students were geared in their discussion with the help of the following features:

- **Format:** the way the text is set out on the page.
- **Organisation:** the way the text is segmented - sections? Paragraphs? Stanzas? Etc. 
  the way the text is signposted - headings? Salutations? Paragraph Indentations? Etc.
- **Style:** the words and structures chosen - formal / informal/casual?
  direct/ indirect? Personal/ impersonal? Emotive / dispassionate?
  use of notes or abbreviations?

And so on

After this, the students were given the following table. They were asked to look for text types in the newspaper and fill in the table. (See Appendix B)

**3.2.3 Structuring**

In no other language learning skills is structuring so much a crucial issue as in writing. By structuring is meant selecting information - both factual and linguistic - and arranging it. This step is crucial for conveying the message as the reader is distant both in space and time. Structuring information entails various organizational processes of grouping ideas together and deciding upon how to sequence them. However, seldom does a writer know exactly what he is going to write and how he is going to present it until he starts writing. A writer may start off with a general idea and a general organisational processes scheme which is continuously altered as new ideas are constantly generated by the actual process of writing. This means that readjusting the original plans is an important feature of the writing process. Indeed, writing should not be thought of as a process where the organisation of ideas is a preliminary and finite stage but rather as a process where on-going re-organisation is the key feature.
Some people try to impose a rigid plan or plans on themselves before they start writing. Though they usually know that the structure of the final text may turn out to be quite different from how it was first conceived. Others try to impose the usual five-paragraph essay structure on their writing; that is introduction, developing paragraph one, developing paragraph two, developing paragraph three, and the conclusion. What such an approach fails to consider is that each piece of writing is different: it has its own context and its own rationale.

White and Arndt (2001) suggest the following questions to approach the structuring of a text:

- In view of my purpose, is there any particularly important, significant or interesting idea which I need to get across?
- Can I see how all my other ideas relate to this kind key idea?
- How shall I deal with this key idea in my text: start off with this idea? Save it for last? Lead up to it gradually? Re-cycle it in various guises throughout?
- Will the reader expect me to arrange the information in a certain way?
- If so, shall I comply with this expectation, or deviate from it? Which approach will have the greater impact?

### 3.2.3.1 Using Statements Prompts

First, the text was deconstructed by writing each of its statements on separate slips of paper. Each set of statements (the statements of each paragraph) was cut separately and put into an envelope. Then, the whole class was asked to think about the following statement: Compulsory military service should be abolished in all countries. It was a warming session to prompt discussion about the topic. After that, each group was given an envelope, pointing out that the statement they would find were not in a particular order.

First, the text was deconstructed by writing each of its paragraph statement on separate slips of paper. Each set of statements (the statements of each paragraph) were put in an envelope. Then, the whole class was asked to think about the following statement: compulsory military service should be abolished. It was a warming up session to prompt a
discussion about the topic. After that, each group was given an envelope pointing out that the statements they would find were not in any particular order. (See Appendix C)

It was explained to the students that the statements were to be used as the basis for a piece of writing. They were totally free to decide how to order and use them.

The following operations were suggested as a way of guiding the activity:

- Decide which statement are general ones and which are supporting ones.
- Decide which statements can be grouped together.
- Decide what sort of text you could create from ideas.
- Think about logical links between your groups of ideas.
- Decide on an order in which to deal with them.
- Add extra information or examples at appropriate points to clarify and elaborate upon the basic information (use extra slips of paper for this).

The next step was to discuss the sequences and arrangements chosen by each group. Each group presented and explained its own arrangements. It was clear that the students felt free to change the arrangement of ideas and even added new ones as they wrote because they knew only too well that those given statements were only prompts.

Here is an example written by a group of students.

“In old days, large armies were essentials. There was strength in numbers; ordinary soldiers were cannon fodder. There was strength in numbers; ordinary soldiers were cannon fodder. But in these days of inter-continental ballistic missiles, of push button warfare and escalation, unskilled manpower has become redundant. Some countries, like Britain, have already abandoned peace-time conscription. Unfortunately, they haven’t done so for idealistic reasons, but from a simple recognition of the fact that modern warfare is a highly professional business. So why bother leave it for the professional.”

3.2.3.2 Experimenting with Arrangements

The aim of the present activity was to focus the students’ attention on the following:

- That there may not be a single “best” way to organize information
- That the writer always has to be prepared to amend and change arrangements in order to include new ideas which arise in the course of composing
First, handouts of short published texts to illustrate different ways of structuring and presenting the same basic information were provided. Then, the students were asked to analyze how the writer had organized the basic information in groups. To guide their analysis, the students were provided with the following set of questions:

- Which idea is given greatest prominence?
- Do you think this idea provides a good focus for the text?
- Where is the key idea in the text?
- What information has the writer started the text with?
- How has the writer ended the text?

The next step was to compare the outcomes of the students’ analysis so as to see whether the different ways the texts have been structured were related to different audiences, purposes, attitudes and viewpoints.

Here are the students’ answers:

Margaret Thatcher hints that wealthy businessmen and top civil servants may find their applications to settle in Britain favorably. Yes the idea provides a good focus in the text. She dismissed calls for all 3.25 million British nationals in the colony of Hong Kong most important idea. The idea of danger in Hong Kong (massacre). There should be no panic.

Next the students were asked to take the ideas generated from a previous brainstorming activity dealing with olives so that the students ended up with clusters of ideas or information arranged in random order, they were asked to: decide on dominant and supportive ideas as well as to decide on categories/heading for grouping ideas.
4. The next step was to ask the class to work in small groups so as to decide how they were going to arrange the clusters of ideas they produced in step 2. The point of this activity was to focus on different ways of arranging the same information. To do this, they had to imagine a context for their writing, that is, a purpose, an audience and a form. Besides this, they had to ponder on the following:

- The reasons for choosing one order rather than the other.
- The logical connections between the idea–groups. They were also asked to note down what the connections they were and try to think of suitable connective expressions which could eventually function as discourse markers in their texts: in order to see each other’s arrangement; the researcher made copies of each group’s arrangement.

One of the groups made the following arrangement:
As the alternative shows, the students started with explaining the importance of olives in our country and dealt with two possible arrangements of ideas.
The group adopted alternative 2 because they stated that their ideas were made clear for a reader who does not live in the area.

### 3.2.4 Drafting

The activities that have been dealt with are considered as pre-writing activities although all of them are in fact part of the writing process. Drafting includes activities that mark the move from the so called pre-writing stage to actually writing a first draft; even if, as in fastwriting and loopwriting stretches of text have already been produced.

At this stage, there is a transition from the writer-based writing of the earlier idea-generating and theme-identifying to the reader-based writing which will continue to constitute the final product. Therefore, there will be more concerns of the reader. The students will also consider how best to organize information and ideas for their reader. Furthermore, they will look for the best way to attract the attention of the audience, how to continue appealing to them, and how to lead them through the text to a conclusion.

The processes of revision and rewriting are fundamental to the process writing approach. Most advocates of this approach strongly recommend that the students should run through the ‘write-revise-rewrite’ cycle at least once for most writing tasks and when both the teacher and the students desire to have a better product they recommend going through the cycle twice. This implies that the students will have to write three drafts of which the third is the final product, though sometimes writers willing to publish their writing are required to do more than three drafts. The students were advised to make use of the word processor. This will certainly relieve their drudgery of drafting and redrafting.

**Drafting by the teacher**

To help reveal the process to the students, the teacher demonstrated the activity of drafting using the word processor and the data show. First of all, notes from the earlier activities, namely brainstorming and loopwriting activities were displayed. Then, the teacher referred to the central idea which was identified as the thesis of the text. He started trying out several ways of beginning and asked the students to help with their suggestions. Then, the teacher chose the most appealing sentence as the opening sentence and explained why he made that choice. Sometimes, the teacher-researcher halted and asked the students to continue...
the draft. This was done so as to involve the students in the process. The demonstrated purpose was to show the learners that while drafting, the teacher faced decisions about how to organize ideas, how to develop them and how to continue the text. (See Appendix D)

Among the decisions which the writer had to make were:

- How to open the essay in an interesting way which would gain a reader’s attention and interest. (Paragraph 1).
- How to move from narrative opening in Istanbul, which deals with a particular place and event, to the more general idea of cities and their history (Paragraph 2)
- How to show that the works of the powerful have benefits for everybody (Paragraph 3)
- How to develop further the idea of the ordinary person and the way city life affects them (Paragraph 4)
- How to return to the stranded traveler in Istanbul so as not to leave the reader wondering what had happened to him; yet at the same time, clearly establish the main point of the essay (Paragraph 5).

How the students reacted

It is exciting to see the teacher at work. Writing is not easy because even teachers face problems when writing said Sarah. I thought the teacher will never finish writing because he was making too many decisions while writing etc.

3.2.4.1 Beginning, Adding, Ending

Starting a text is often considered a too demanding task because the opening sentence must not only be appropriate for the type of writing concerned, but it must also make the reader want to read on. The purpose of this activity was to make the students look at various ploys to whet the appetite of the audience.

First of all, a discussion was raised over the issue of what attracts the students when scanning a newspaper, a magazine, or even a book in a library or a bookshop. Some said that what grabbed their attention in newspapers were the big titles. Others explained that it was the journalist who wrote big titles in order to attract their curiosity. Some recalled the numbers of
killed and injured people in an accident or in a battle are usually written in such huge red letters that caught their attention.

After this, the informants were given handouts with opening sentences and paragraphs from a variety of published texts. They were asked to state if there were any similarities with what they experienced before. Their responses were all similar when they said it was probably the same as what they usually find in newspaper.

The students were asked to work in pairs so as to do the next step which consisted of:

- Choose an opening that interests you
- Say what it is that caught your attention
- Suggest how the text will probably continue

The following step was to ask the students to consider the previous tasks in idea generating activities (brainstorming) so as to select any piece they wished to write an opening sentence. Here are some opening sentences that the students wrote:

- Every day, tens of young Algerians die in the Mediterranean Sea trying to immigrate illegally.
- Our forests are burnt ever summer.
- Life is getting more and more expensive.
- Young educated people can find jobs.

Then the students were asked to compare each other opening sentence. They were to ask themselves the following pertinent question: do I want to continue reading? If the answer was negative they had to discuss so as to improve their opening sentences.

(a). In a broad Moscow street not two hundred yards from the Leningrad station, on the upper floor of an ornate and hideous hotel built by Stalin in the style known to Muscovites as Empire During the Plague, the British council’s first ever audio fair for the teaching of the English language and the spread of British culture was grinding to its excruciating end. (John le Carré The Russian House Hodder & Soughton 1989)

(b). It takes more than 200 gallons of paint to paint jumbo jet, how many family motor cars would that same paint cover? The answer is -110 (painting the jumbo High life British Airways, April 1989)

(c). Modern times began in 1776 (john le Carré The Russian House Hodder & Soughtgon 1989)
(d). The radio report the evening before had been terse and ominous: gale warnings for the northern Labrador Sea. Our apprehension was over more than heavy seas, however. There were icebergs ahead—and we would be steaming into those waters in darkness, straight into a picket line of ice the size of cathedrals, borne slowly south on the Canadian Current. (Barry Lopez Artic Dreams Macmillan 1986, paperback edition Pan Books 1087)

(e). ‘it is therefore ordered and adjudged by this court, that you be transported upon the seas, beyond the seas, to such a place as His Majesty, by the advice of his privy council, shall think fit to direct and appoint, for the term of your natural life’. Or seven years, or fourteen – in case, the shock of sentencing was dreadful. In law, seven year’s banishment meant what it said; but what a man could be certain of returning to England at the end of it? For many people, the sentence of transportation—whatever its announced length—must have seemed like a one way trip over the edge of the world. (Robert Hughes The Fatal Shore Collins Harvill 1987, Pan Books 1988) c p. 104

- Considering ways of ending

To help the students link the conclusion of their text both with its opening and its thesis in a way that is interesting and decisive, the following activity was provided. The students were given a worksheet containing mismatched examples of openings and endings. Then, they were instructed to match openings and endings. The correction of this activity highlighted the ways in which the endings reflect or relate to the openings.

Example (See Appendix E)

- Adding information

Four examples of the students’ drafts were collected and analyzed in advance so as to identify points at which new or extra information was needed. Worksheets were prepared. On the first worksheet the original text was put. On the second one, the additional information was written but not in the same sequence as it will be included in the text.

The students would work in groups to:

- Consider what the reader already knows about the subject
- Think of what information the reader needs to know to make sense of the text
- Identify missing information
- Suggest where such information could be added,

Then the second worksheet was handed and it was asked to:

- Add the new information at appropriate points in the text
How rice is produced

The rice seeds are sown on the rice bed. The ground is prepared. The seedlings are transplanted into the rice fields. The rice is weeded. After fifty days the rice is harvested, then it is dried. And then it is milled. After that it is cooked and it is served with fish, meats and vegetables.

Here is the additional information, prepared by the teacher.

Rice is used as the basis of many Indonesian dishes.
In some regions, two or three rice crops a year are grown.
The fields must be irrigated.
The growing season lasts from four to six months
In the version below, the information was incorporated……..

In some regions, two or three rice crops a year are grown. The growing season lasts from four to six months. The ground is prepared. The rice seeds are sown on the rice bed. The seedlings are transplanted into the rice fields. The fields must be irrigated. The rice is weeded. After fifty days the rice is harvested, then it is dried. And then it is milled. After that it is cooked and it is served with fish, meats and vegetables. Rice is used as the basis of many Indonesian dishes

The students were also provided with planning cue cards. This technique was developed by Carl Bereiter and Marlene Scardamalia (1987). It was used to encourage the students to improve and elaborate their drafts. The cues given in the second list below were put on cards. They would be used if the writer is stuck. They were used to generate ideas or generate a continuation of the text as if the cue phrase had come to mind spontaneously. The cues were grouped into functional categories. Here are two examples of the set of planning cues, one for opinion essays, the other for factual exposition.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning cues for opinion essay</th>
<th>Planning cues for factual exposition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New idea</strong></td>
<td><strong>Planning cues for factual exposition</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An even better idea is…</td>
<td>An important distinction is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An important point I haven’t considered yet is…</td>
<td>A consequence of (this is)…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A better argument would be…</td>
<td>The history of this is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A different aspect would be…</td>
<td>Something that is similar is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A whole new way to think of this topic is…</td>
<td>Its features remind me of…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one will have thought of…</td>
<td>One thing that makes the difference from other things like it is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A cause of (this is)…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A practical belief is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A way to improve the use of this is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I might explain a method used to…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>elaborate</strong></td>
<td>I’m impressed by…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An example of this…</td>
<td>I sometimes wonder…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is true, but it’s not sufficient so…</td>
<td>An explanation would be…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My own feelings about this are…</td>
<td>My own feelings about this are…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’ll change this a little by…</td>
<td>An example of (this is)…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The reason I think so…</td>
<td>This results in…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another reason that’s good …</td>
<td>My own experience with is…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could develop this idea by adding…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another way to put it would be…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A good point on the other side of the argument is…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>goals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A goal I think I could write to…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My purpose is…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Improve</strong></td>
<td>I could describe this in more details by adding…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not being very clear about what I just said so…</td>
<td>I could add interest by explaining…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I could make my main point clear …</td>
<td>This isn’t exactly how it is because…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A criticism I should deal with in my paper is…</td>
<td>I could give the reader a clear picture by…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really think this is not necessary because…</td>
<td>This isn’t true of all…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m getting off topic so…</td>
<td>To put it more simply…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This isn’t very convincing because…</td>
<td>Readers will find it boring to be told</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But many readers won’t agree that …</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To liven this up I will…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Putting it together</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I want to start off with my strongest idea I’ll</td>
<td>I could describe this in more details by adding…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can tie this together by…</td>
<td>I could add interest by explaining…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My main pint is…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reactions of the students**

They are of great help because they give us new ideas. When I was writing I could not find what to say so I looked at the cue cards and ideas came on their own accord” said one of the students.
3.2.5 Evaluating

A sense of responsibility for being one’s own critic has always been neglected in the teaching of writing. The students’ common belief is that it is their task to write and the teacher evaluates their written production etc.

Because re-writing is a fundamental phase in writing, some even assume that rewriting is what writing is all about. The practitioners’ task therefore, is to endeavour to inoculate in the students the idea that it is ultimately not the teacher but they themselves who must decide whether their text fulfils its intended goal. They must first and foremost be their own evaluators. If they possess a sense of what is wrong with a text, there will be great hope of being able to put the text right.

3.2.5.1 Assessing the draft

The students put a huge effort in producing a text. Yet they often receive a very limited return in that. First, their text is only read and evaluated by the teacher. As far as what happens in the real world, this writing context is not authentic. It is also unproductive because it does not help the students develop a sense of good judgment about their writing. Most advocates of the process writing approach assume that part of the process of becoming critical about one’s own writing is getting used to the idea that what they write will be read by many other people. This, according to Hayes and Flower (1980), gives the writers a psychological spur to greater effort. In the long run, it will also develop their capacity for self-assessment, helping them to become more observant readers of their own work. Reading their friends’ writings and evaluating them will gradually build in the students the capacity for self-assessment which is such a vital element in the process of writing.

- Developing criteria for evaluation

Advocates of the cognitive approach to writing see it as complex a series of problem solving activities. And it is the writers who have to set the right problem to solve. It follows, then, that to be able to become a critical reader of one’s own work, one first must have a sound conception of the sorts of things to be critical about.

The students’ common belief as far as ‘checking one’s work’ is concerned is equivalent to looking for mistakes -mistakes of spelling, punctuation, grammar, structure, word order
and so forth. It is an undeniable fact that an error-free text is very important. But, the most fundamental concern which ought to have the priority at the drafting stage is the underlying coherence of the writing. Therefore, our next concern was to raise the students’ awareness of the sort of questions writers often ask themselves as they assess how coherent they have presented the information and ideas in their texts. It was hoped that later the students would apply these questions and general principles of evaluation as they dealt with specific problems which emerged in their texts.

A suitable sample draft text was given to the students to be collectively evaluated. We made sure we numbered both the questions and lines so as to make it easy to refer to the text in question. (See Appendix F)

The class was set in groups of three. The different groups were asked to mark places where they thought the writing was unclear, incomprehensible, or likely to be improved. They were told not to focus on mistakes of spelling, grammar, or punctuation at this stage. They would focus on these kinds of mistakes only if they interfere with the ideas the writer was trying to convey.

The same draft was displayed on the data show and each group was invited to spot the places where they thought changes were needed. The places were marked as suggested by each group. Next, the students were asked the following question: why is the text unsatisfactory? The aim of this question was to compile collectively a list of points to be considered in evaluating both the content and presentation of information in a piece of writing.

The following checklist was provided to the students so as to guide them in evaluating a draft.

Checklist

(a). Type of writing

- What type of writing is this text intended to be?
- Does it conform to the conventions usually expected of its types?

(b). Purpose and ideas
➢ Is the writer’s purpose clear?
➢ Do we understand the main ideas?

(c). Structure of text

➢ Is it easy to follow the development of ideas/argument?
➢ Would it help to rearrange the sequence of ideas?
➢ Do the relations between ideas need to be changed?
➢ Do the connections between the ideas need to be made more explicit?
➢ Are the ideas grouped together in a suitable way?
➢ Is the text segmented into appropriate paragraphs?
➢ Should any of the paragraphs be joined together?
➢ Should any of the paragraphs be broken down into smaller units?

(d). Response as readers

➢ Does the opening make us want to read on?
➢ Do we feel satisfied with the way the text comes to an end?

After this, the students were asked to redraft the text bearing in mind the points on the checklist. The group that did the most satisfactory work was asked to read its text.

- Becoming your own critic

To help the students develop and apply criteria of evaluation to their own writing as well as to other students’ work, the following activity was implemented.

Copies of the students’ draft were given to the subjects. All the drafts had their paragraphs and lines numbered for case of reference. An evaluation checklist was handed too. The class was divide into groups of threes and was asked to evaluate the draft. The general principle was to get the students read critically their own draft first and then the draft of one or more students. They were asked to use the evaluation checklist to help them note down their observations about each text and highlight places which needed to be amended. At this stage the members of each group would discuss each others’ texts, proving their suggestions for improvements. After the discussion, each student would start writing his second draft.
Table 3.4: Content Evaluation Checklist

In trying to evaluate their friends’ writing, most students tend to disagree with each other. Some did not accept the fact their friends correct them. Some students tend to impose their corrections while they stick to their opinions thinking that their ideas were clearer. The teacher-researcher had to intervene in most of the groups.

3.2.5.2 Responding

One component of the process writing approach is reading students’ reading. This entails responding as a reader, rather than simply as a marker. Needless to say that when reading the students’ work, the linguistic stylistic and formal features are evaluated. However, the main concern of the first reading should be meaning and purpose. A teacher accustomed to react to a text as a piece of language will find it hard to focus on meaning and purpose.
This new relationship requires some tact and sensibility. The teacher-cum-reader has to be supportive and helpful in the kinds of comments he provides, accentuating the positive rather than focusing on the negative aspects of what the students have presented. It is also true that the students must acquire the habit of judging a text in terms of what it means to them. Besides, they should be able to see what the writer needs to do to make his writing as clear and comprehensible as possible for them as readers. Once the tables are turned, the students have to know that the writers actually write for readers and more effective writers are those who take into account this principle.

There are instances when a writer is writing for himself. Even in this peculiar case, he is writing for a reader who is this case is the same person as the writer. Writing which is intended to be published meets more stringent requirements even if the students are writing for each other. Publishing students’ work is highly motivating because it helps find a real audience to their work, and at the same time, the reading and discussion on what each others’ work entailed would help foster a sense of judgment.

- Reading and responding: teacher to students

A group of students’ work was corrected beforehand. The notes by Frank Differy and Ronald Lapp (1988) on written feedback were taken as a useful model guideline for the teachers’ response to students’ work. These are as follows:

- Respond in pencil or black ink red pens can be threatening.
- Write comments and notes in the margins and avoid comments which correct spelling, grammar and mechanics.
- All comments should be specific and content-related. Avoid comments which can apply to any text.
- Reread your responses and ask yourself if they make sense.
- Ask students for feedback on the responses given to them
- Respond as a genuine and interested reader rather than as a judge and evaluator (‘we should respond not so much to student writing but to student writers.’ (Vivian Zamel 1985))
The task was divergent or open-ended as the subjects were encouraged to write about the topic: celebration of a local feast. After reading the student’s draft, the teacher wrote his comments in the following manner.

“Dear Karim,

I really enjoyed reading your draft. You have some good expressions like…..You wrote ….. why don’t begin your sentence with (give suggestion).”

The point here is to write personalized comments which suggest that the teacher made a substantial effort in correcting the student’s draft.

-Reading and responding: teacher to class

A student’s work was selected randomly. It was typed and given to the class. The text was about a topic: cats as domestic animals. The focus in this writing class was on organizing an argument. The following text was chosen.

“Cats are useless as domestic animals. Especially in cities, there is no problem of rats and mice. In all my life I haven’t kept a cat in the house. I think this decision comes from the fact that my life is full of hard work. Perhaps you might say: it is a nice thing to find a plaything for young children, such as a domestic animal. I reply: ok, I like things once a week, but I don’t let my children play with useless playthings. My brother has a son. He had a cat. Later the cat died. The boy was in deep sorrow and remained so for a long time.”

This is a corrected version of a draft. In this version the grammatical and mechanical errors were corrected so that the students’ attention would not be diverted to surface errors at this stage. The students were asked to break up the text into sections according to the way the argument was presented. Then, they had to distinguish between the general statement and examples by underlying them with a text-liners. Then, the different parts were displayed with the data-show

Generalization: cats are useless as domestic animals
In the cities, there is no problem with rats and mice
Examples: I haven’t kept a cat
My brother has a son, and he had a cat
The students were asked to distinguish between points in favour of cats and points against cats as domestic animals.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For</th>
<th>Against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pets for children.</td>
<td>Death can cause unhappiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They catch rats and mice.</td>
<td>Rats and mice aren’t a problem in most towns.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students were asked to suggest what the writer cannot make explicit, for example the relationship between cats as rodent catchers and the claim that rats and mice aren’t a problem in towns and cities.

The students were asked to suggest a reorganisation of ideas that would improve the text. The problem in this text was that it lacked organisation. The writer had to make his points more explicit. Besides, the text lacked both a clear introduction to the argument and a clear conclusion.

The next task the students were asked to do was to rewrite the focus text and then compare their rewritten versions for organisation and clarity.

Finally, when the students completed their work, the reformulation version was displayed.

There were many suggestions provided by the students. Choosing the best one was a frustrating task because many students strongly opted for their personal version.

- **Reading and responding: students to students**

The next stage was to focus on how to respond to each other’s texts as readers. To do so, the class was split up in pairs where each student was invited to read his mate’s draft texts. Each student was asked to make notes of places in his partners’ draft:

- That they particularly liked or enjoyed
- That they particularly disliked or found unnecessary
- That they found unclear
- That they would have liked to know more about.

Lastly they had to summarize their partners’ text: the main idea in this paper is........
Once they finished, they returned each other’s papers and discuss the summary and the points they had noted starting with the positive points and finishing with the points that lacked clarity and improvement. In the process, they were asked to try jointly to improve what they had written.

This activity proved very motivating and many students adhered to the activity by biding their time helping their friends in improving their drafts.

3.2.5.3 Conferencing

By conferencing is meant the procedure in which the teacher researcher or a fellow reader and the writer work together on what the writer has composed. Conferencing is motivated by a concern for clarifying the writer’s intentions, purpose and meaning. Conferencing can take place either after or during the composition. It has the virtue of enabling the teacher to give individual attention to each student so that better advice can be provided than is generally possible written remarks. Furthermore, because conferencing is conducted on a face to face basis, students would respond to the readers’ questions and comments as well as adding their own. Unlike the written comment which is one way, conferencing is a joint discussion and negotiation of meaning.

The process of drafting which is similar to the process of writing itself is characterized by the fact that it is more organic, more recursive than linear. It has to make use of the ideas, comments, notes that have already been discovered. Therefore, the students would need reminders at this stage of drafting to refer back to their previous notes, keeping in mind their thesis and viewpoints and their readers’ interests and attitudes.

To make the conferencing more effective, the researcher has gleaned strategies in Donald Graves (1983) whose work with young children in the native speaking writing class has been very influential both with regard to process approaches to writing in general and to the technique of conferencing in particular.

Graves suggests the following questions as a basis for teacher/ student conferencing:

**Before writing**

- What are you going to be writing about? (topic choice is free.)
How are you going to put that down on paper?
How did you go about choosing your subject?
What problems might you run into?

**While writing**

- How is it going?
- What are you writing about now?
- Where are you now in your draft?
- I noticed that you change your lead. It is much more direct. How did you do that?
- If you are about to put new information in here, how do you go about figuring what to do?
- What strategy do you use for figuring out where one sentence ends and the other begins?
- What will you do with the piece of writing when it is all done?

**After writing**

- How did you go about this?
- Did you make any changes?
- What are you going to do next with this piece of writing?
- What do you think of this piece of writing?

**- Responding to student self-evaluation**

Conferencing can be combined with various forms of self-evaluation. Maggie Charles (1988) suggests one way where students annotated their own texts at points where they needed help. They would put numbers in their draft texts at points where they would like some help, and write the corresponding questions or comments either in a column alongside their text or at the end.

“Is a nice day, the families get together and have coffee with a lot of cakes on 1”th day of Aid El Fitr and go to the cemetery. The families 1) get together about nine or ten o’clock in the morning, have a special breakfast, with cakes of all sorts, drinks and so on. Then we usually visit relatives to wish them happy Aid El Fitr. We met our friends, relatives. The children wear new clothes and buy sweets and toys of all sorts.”
Charles points out that this method needs more time and practice for experience has revealed that what students think is important is not necessarily the same as what the teacher considers important. Time is needed so that students instead of paying attention to surface features of the text they would focus on the more fundamental aspects of organisation and meaning which need improvement.

Norman Coe (1989) suggests a more focused and effective method which has the additional virtue of freeing the students to tell the teacher what kind of help they need. Coe enables the students to get help thanks to the following code which they put in the margin at appropriate places in their text, rather like a teacher’s margin code. The teacher would use this code as a guide to the areas in which the students want help.

- **R** Please reply to content
- **CM** Please correct mistakes
- **IM** Please indicate (but don’t correct) mistakes.
- **IMAC** Indicate mistakes and add category (e.g. V for verb error, T for tense, etc.).
- **WUO** Comment on words underlined only. (in this case, the student may be trying something out and may be sure whether it is acceptable, appropriate or correct. The underlining of words or sections concerned encourages students to experiment and show that they are doing so.)

**Procedure**

The first step in using this method was a thorough explanation of what the students were asked to do. They annotate their texts using either Charles’ method or Coe’s to tell the teacher what points they wished to have advice on. The previous example about L’Aid El Fitr was used as a model. Then the students were asked to annotate their drafts. They were told that their annotations would be discussed in conferencing.

**3.2.6 Re-viewing**

So far, the students have been shaping their idea through various processes of focusing, structuring, drafting, evaluating, and redrafting. Their texts have already evolved in a form
which was not the final one, however; most of the decisions about which words, or which structures to use have been made.

The final stage, namely reviewing, is such an essential one that it is considered as look at the text with a new pair of eyes. This new look will give rise to the generation of more ideas and thoughts. In fact, the writing task never ends. It is the writer who decides that he has reached the point where he must give up the text to its fate.

Reviewing requires a sense of judgement. The writer is aware that all is not quite right with the text written so far. He needs adequate linguistic tools to amend it. In reviewing, the writer is going to do two tasks. The first is to further develop critical activities. The second is to enrich the repertoire of linguistic resources that are essential tools to writing.

3.2.6.1 Checking the Context

The purpose of the following activity was to check whether the students got the grips with the context of the writing: its purpose, audience, and form. It was an overall assessment of their draft. Furthermore, the purpose was to check how successful the writer had been in taking these three contextual factors into account.

One copy of a final draft of a text from each student was typed and printed. As most students have access to computer facilities, this task proved easy. The students were asked not to write their names so as to keep the text anonymous. This would lessen the risk of subjective judgment. The texts were roughly of the same length but not of the same type. Each text was given a letter for future reference.

A context checklist was given to all the students. It was explained to them that the objective of the reviewing session was to read the texts and assess what the context of each text was supposed to be. Each student takes a text in a file, read it and note his comments on the checklist. He returns the text to the file once he had read it. He takes another and proceeds the same way. The aim was to allow the students to assess at least three texts noting the letters of the texts he had read. The students were told if they happened to pick their own text, they should treat it exactly as the others, i.e., trying to be as objective as possible about it.

Next, someone was asked to start the discussion by reading out the notes he had made on one of the texts. The other students who had read the same text were asked to add their
comments. The aim was to see how closely the notes of the readers tally with the original intentions of the writer of the text in question.

It proved that there were many discrepancies. The students were asked to suggest how the writer might amend the text.

Because it was impossible to proceed the same way for all the texts, the teams were invited to work together and to deal only with the texts of the members of the team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>text</th>
<th>Purpose of text</th>
<th>Possible audience</th>
<th>Type of writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 3.2.6.2 Testing logical links

Translating amorphous idea into well structured language is not an easy task. The writer must ensure that the train of thought which is perfectly clear in his brain should be similarly clear to the reader on the page. Therefore, in the next activities the focus will be on:

- Testing out whether logical links of ideas are clear
- Considering linguistic devices available to writers to make logical connections clear to the reader.

In small groups, the students were asked to brainstorm for a few minutes as many connective expressions as they can think of with the next four logical categories: (addition, or alternative, but contrast, for reason). The class produced the following.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addition</th>
<th>alternation</th>
<th>contrast</th>
<th>reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>And</td>
<td>Or</td>
<td>But</td>
<td>For</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreover</td>
<td>Alternatively</td>
<td>However</td>
<td>Since</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furthermore</td>
<td>On the other hand</td>
<td>Although</td>
<td>As</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First... second</td>
<td></td>
<td>By contrast</td>
<td>Because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equally</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The whole class was asked to write all the connectors they knew on the board. Then, the students were given a copy of a “logical connectors chart” and a sample draft text. (See Appendix G)
The students were asked to regroup into threes to start working on the already given sample. They were asked to disregard the fact that the ideas may be in a good order or that the information needed clarifying and focus on the logical connectors between each idea. They were asked to annotate the text with a suitable expression using chart 3.4 they opt for and which were already provided. They were also invited to make explicit the ideas that were implicit. The aim was to lay bare the train of thought which produced the text and to understand the connections between each item of information as Charles explains (1988).

The draft was displayed and a general discussion was raised on the question of whether there were any places where the connections between ideas that had been explicit could be left implicit and still be understood. Another issue was debated. It dealt with the train of ideas underlying the draft text. The question was whether they should rearrange the ideas or not. If so, which options were suitable and which options were not, and with which connectives they would link the added ideas.

Next, the class was invited to do the same thing but this time with a final version text. They were asked to repeat the same procedure followed when drafting.

The main issues the class was asked to focus on were:

a. How the logical links between the items often remain implicit, and how they often depend on knowledge of the world shared between writer and reader (otherwise the text would become incomprehensibly unwieldy)

b. How writers sometimes use certain punctuation symbols (such as colons or dashes) to indicate logical connections

c. The position of linking expressions in the sentences. Point out that the position of some linking devices can vary (e.g. whereas can be used both at the beginning and in the middle of a sentence), but that others are usually in a fixed position (e.g. too goes at the end of a sentence, clause, or phrase).

The next step was to extend the discussion to the students’ own texts. They were asked to exchange texts with a partner, and mark the places where they considered that the logical links between the ideas to were either wrong, inadequate, missing or superfluous.

The encyclopaedist and historiographer Shihab al-din Abu-l’Abbas Ahmed al Wahhab al Nuwairi, who was born in 1279 AD in Upper Egypt became a favourite secretary of the Mamluk Sultan al Nasir muhammed b. Qalaun.
Al Nawairi spent almost twenty years composing Nihayat al-arab fi funnun al-adab (Aim of the intelligent in the Arts of Letters). This lengthy work is divided into five parts (funun): the first deals with cosmology and geography (heaven and earth), the second with Man (including politics and Ethics) and the third with animals, the fourth with plants and the final part with history.

Al-Nuwairi dealt with animals in the following categories:

I. beast of pray (lions, tigers etc)
II. Other wild animals (elephants, rhinoceros etc)
III. Mounted animals (horses, mules, asses, camels etc)
IV. Venomous animals (divided into lethal and non-lethal)
V. Birds and fishes (in eight sections including different methods of fishing and hunting)

Al-Nawairi explains how the Araba dealt with locusts when they became a serious threat to farming in Bilad-al-Sham by bringing a special bird called al samundle from Khozstan which he gives a detailed description, which eats the locusts two, three or four at a time and digs to find their eggs in order to eat them.

The main duty of the teacher at this stage was to circulate, giving advice and help where needed.

3.2.6.3 Testing Cohesive Links

When writing, writers not only make sure that the logical threads which bind a text together are intact, but they also have to weave various strands of ideas and information into a coherent linguistic fabric of sentences and paragraphs. Both coherence and cohesion encompass vast and complex network of considerations. Tacking the two is a mammoth task would be neither wise nor feasible. It would be wise to address them in different tasks and structures.

3.2.6.4 Analysing cohesive devices in a text

The students were given a text so as to analyse its reference system. The first part of the activity was conducted with the whole class. The teacher drew the students’ attention to the first reference item, underlined it and asked them what it referred to. They had to indicate the
noun or phrase referred to with an arrow. The following text was given as an example.

Then they were asked to do the same with the rest of the text.
The teacher checked the answers.
The task proved to be very stimulating. The students realized what linked the text together.
The students were given the next text to work on. In this activity, various types were blanked out. Their task consisted in filling the blanks.
They compared their suggestions with the words the writer had used in the original text.

The loss of Lardie Moonlight

A few years ago an old Aboriginal woman named Lardie Moonlight died in Boulia, a small (1) ________ in western Queensland. (2)__________ death rated a few lines in the papers, but the full significance of (3)__________ (4)__________ went unreported. Lardie was (5)__________ last fluent speaker of the Kalkadoon language. (6)__________ (7)__________ of such versatility and ingenuity (8)__________ it stands as a monument to human intellectual development.
(9)__________ is a commonly-held belief in Australia that the Aborigines have no (10)__________, just a few words and no grammar. (11)__________ many educated Australians think that the Aboriginal (12)__________ are primitive.
The students were already accustomed to this kind of activity. It was easy therefore to move to deconstruct a whole text. (See Appendix H)

The topic of the text was introduced, and so was its purpose with the whole class, the idea of how the text would be organized was discussed. Because there were two major nationality groups, namely the students from Niger and the local students, two kinds of organisation was proposed. The students found that besides the linguistic system of reference and cohesion, the concept (or scheme) of what weddings usually involve- the elements and sequence of which appeared to be fairly consistent across cultures- helped them to put paragraphs in order.

The scrambled text was given and the students were asked to reconstruct it. The highlighted cohesive linking words and reference items helped them to do this task.

The original text was displayed on the data-show so as to be compared with what the students did.

As a follow up activity, the students were asked to work in pairs. Each pair would work on two different short text following the same procedure. They would write out each sentence of the text on a separate slip of paper, making sure to highlight the words, phrases which they believed bind the text together. They would exchange slips of papers and try to reconstruct the texts. Later, they could check the results with the original text of their partner.
3.2.6.5 Checking Divisions

Communicating a message is the sole purpose of writing. This is usually done by means of certain graphic symbols, such as signposting the text by dividing it into segments either with or without headings. The segmentation of a text into sections or paragraphs helps readers to connect ideas with these sections and to anticipate new ideas or developments between them. Put bluntly, segmenting a text helps to follow the development of the writer’s thought or argument.

- Segmenting materials

The aim of this activity was to check divisions in texts in order to learn and apply paragraph connections in English.

The students were given copies of two texts whose paragraph boundaries were removed. The topic and the purpose of the unsegmented text were introduced. The whole class was asked to ponder on the sort of structure the text might have. (See Appendix I)

The students were asked to read and segment and state why they would segment it so. Again they were accustomed with this activity and it was made clear that usually paragraphs are developed around a major idea and that they often, though not always proceed from the general to the particular. They were also asked to see whether the logical connective expressions give clues to as how the text should be segmented.

Finally, the students’ decisions were compared to the author of the original piece.

Because the informants have already an idea about topic; namely, what problems the first settlers of the new continent encountered, the task was successfully done by most of the students. With texts randomly selected, this task proved to be a difficult one. Our hypothesis is that the reason for this, according to our own experience, is the rhetorical conventions of the students’ school language (classical Arabic) which dictates where paragraph boundaries should be. This sometimes seems to be at odds with or different from those of English.

3.2.6.6 Assessing impact
Professional writers are skilled in manipulating words and structures both to say what they have to say to best effect, and to trigger off the response they want from the reader. They can judge the impact of their chosen language upon hearts and minds. Though to train the learners to be skilled writers is a mammoth task, practitioners can at least start with teaching the novice writers how to choose expressions and structures to create a piece of writing with a certain force and impact. It surely is a lengthy process that requires practice in choosing the expression to make the right impression with written language.

- Conveying mood, attitude and feeling

To influence their readers’ reactions, skilled writers choose suitable words and expressions to signal attitude, mood, and feeling. Accounts of events or experiences that are neutral can express the writers’ attitude towards the subjects. If an account lacks any hint of the writers’ attitude, it can be so bland the reader would lose interest in reading it.

There are three important areas of language upon which writers can draw in order to convey mood and feeling (from approval to disapproval, criticism to tolerance, happiness to sadness, exhilaration to depression, involvement to aloofness, enthusiasm to apathy, and so on. These areas are:

- **Lexical choice** i.e. finding words (especially adjectives and adverbs) which have the requisite associations and implications
- **Use of modal verbs** i.e. indicating a sense of doubt, uncertainty, obligation and so on by using modals such as can, could, may, should, might, must, etc.
- **Use of connective expressions which signal attitude** i.e., indicating a sense of relief, doubt, reservation, conviction and so on with expressions such as fortunately, undoubtedly, clearly, perhaps, at best, etc.

To enrich one’s vocabulary repertoire with an adequate range of vocabulary and knowledge of the association and aura of words is a long and slow process. It is a life-long process for native speakers and non-native speakers alike. The next tasks aim at getting the students to think about ways to expand their basic knowledge of English vocabulary, including tools like the dictionary and thesaurus. Furthermore, these tasks demonstrate, through the use of attitudinal signals, how a writer conveys a feeling or mood to the reader, and how with these mood signals omitted, more than one interpretation is possible. To ensure that their attitude or
feeling is clear, professional writers have to choose their signaling words with meticulous care. (See Appendix J)

Task 1

Handouts of short excerpts from published texts were given to the students. The excerpts were suitable to the students’ level and interests. Words were highlighted in the excerpts. These words could be replaced by other words without change in basic meaning but change in affective meaning.

The students were introduced to the thesaurus as a useful aid for writers when it comes to finding the right word. Writers usually use the thesaurus when they know that there is a word which would be appropriate, but they cannot remember it, or when they feel that the word they have chosen is not quite right, or when a specific word has been used too often in a text and needs to be changed.

Because the students were unfamiliar with how to use the thesaurus, one of the highlighted words in the excerpts from published texts was chosen. The teacher researcher demonstrated how to go about finding alternative expressions for them in the thesaurus.

The various connotations and associations of some alternatives suggested by the thesaurus were discussed. Then, the students were asked to choose one which could be substituted for the word they were considering. They were asked whether the new word had changed the original feeling or impression the writer wanted to convey. For instance, the word forlorn has the following words suggested in the same area of meaning in Roget’s Thesaurus.

Task 2

In pairs, the students were to deal with the rest of the highlighted words. They were encouraged to use the dictionary to help them understand the implications and associations of words they were unfamiliar with.

Task 3

The students’ choices were compared and discussed with the whole class

- Creating mood
Once in the forest we entered a different world: hung with mosses, criss-crossed by fallen, rotted trees and creepers. It was saturated with moisture. Every movement brought down showers of water, and soon we were all soaked.

(1) __________, after only 30 minutes, we made contact with the larger of two groups of habituated gorillas- a (2) __________, almost (3) __________ experience. The old silverback was (4) __________ and we watched (5) __________ as he sat munching leaves and broke off branches in his quest for berries. The whole pack of gorillas moved (6) __________, with the silverback nearly always bringing up the rear. Sometimes he would pause to (7) __________ groom one of the females or a juvenile, and his occasional grunts were answered by females, just out of sight, slapping their chests. Two (8) __________ young gorillas approached us and sucked at our rubber boots. Watching these (9) __________ giants of the forest, we all felt like (10) __________ and we received a (11) __________ reminder that these gorillas were (12) __________ wild animals when the ranger accidentally stepped between the silverback and one of his seven wives. Within seconds the ranger had been pushed over and dragged backwards by the arm, but (13) __________ he was (14) __________ having given the warning, the old silverback relaxed and started eating again, and we moved (15) __________ back to the camp.

From Artist among the gorillas by Timothy J. Greenwood, country life, May 1988

1. The students were set to work in pairs, and each pair was given a copy of the text with blanked-out-attitude-signalling words. The students were asked to read the text and say what was wrong with it as a piece of writing. They should able to recognise that the omission of the blanked out items had left them largely unable to grasp the viewpoint or attitude of the writer

2. Then they were asked to guess what kind of attitude they would consider appropriate given the subject of the text. They were encouraged to suggest a wide range of attitudes

3. A class discussion on the areas of language to convey attitude or feeling (lexical choice, use of modals, use of connecting expressions) commenced. More time was spent revising knowledge of modals as suitable connective expressions.

4. Then, they were asked to fill in the gaps with appropriate items according to the attitude or feeling they wished to develop. The students were encouraged to refer to the thesaurus and dictionary for help.

5. The different versions were compared and attitudes that versions reflected were discussed with the entire class.

6. The original version was displayed to the class. The feelings expressed by the writer were highlighted.

Here are the suggestions proposed by four groups of students to fill the gaps followed by the writer original words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
<th>Group 4</th>
<th>writer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

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Effective writers make a great effort to give their readers something to think about. It is the writing context that determines the strength with which the opinion is signaled and the directness with which it is presented.

The students know from their first language rhetorical knowledge that certain types of writing require a formal, impersonal and direct manner of presentation as a scientific report for instance, whilst others demand informal, direct and personal manner of presentation as a personal letter for example. The following activity focuses on looking at some of the linguistic resources of English for putting across an opinion more or less forcefully and directly.

Handouts of newspaper articles were typed, printed, and distributed to the students. (See Appendix K)

**Tasksheet 1:** (writers’ opinions)
Tasksheet 2: (linguistic features and presentation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation text</th>
<th>Direct</th>
<th>Distant</th>
<th>forceful</th>
<th>Restrained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Line refs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
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<tr>
<td>B Line Refs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
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<td>C Line Refs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of vocabulary</th>
<th>Types of structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forceful</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Restrained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The students were asked, in pairs to read through the texts. They were asked to consider how the writers had conveyed their opinions. To do that, they would highlight places in the texts where they feel the language and representation to be markedly direct or indirect, forceful or restrained. They would also make a note of the line references of these places on Tasksheet 1, and then note specific examples of words and structures from these references which support their decisions.

2. In a whole class discussion, the students were invited to correct the activity. A consensus about the kinds of linguistic features writers use to make their presentation of opinion forceful and direct, or vice versa was sought.

The features that they had suggested included the following:
Use of personal/ impersonal forms, Use of active/passive verb forms, Choice of words (Anglo-Saxon based: often colloquial and emotive; Latin/ Greek based: often academic and distant), Associations of words chosen (emotive/neutral), Associations of references used, Choice of grammatical structure (simple/complex sentences; direct/indirect forms), Use of modal verbs (especially those expressing doubt, uncertainty, possibility, probability), Variations in normal word order types of presentation, Use of understatement, irony, juxtaposition, rhetorical questions, exclamatory statements, Use of qualifying or modifying expressions

Then on Tasksheet 2, they would match these features with different of presentation

Finally, each group would choose five sentences from the text and reformulate them more or less directly or more/less forcefully depending on the original text. The students were then asked to read their reformulation and write them on the board.

-Highlighting the Focal Idea

New angles and slants on writers’ ideas frequently emerge as they write even though, writers might think they know what they are writing about. The purpose following activity is to develop a flexibility of approach to the subject which leads to new angles to be exploited and emphasized as the focus of ideas. At the same time, it takes into account the linguistic changes which might have to be made. (See Appendix L)

1. Copies of the text were handed to the students who were asked to work in pairs so as to read and suggest themes. The suggested themes were written on the board.

2. Each pair was asked to choose one theme among the suggested ones and redraft the text with this particular idea as the focus. The students were encouraged to pay attention to: expanding and elaborating upon the ideas which gave them the clue to their new theme

   How they will have to recognise and perhaps change the wording of the rest of the information to fit the new angle.

3. Copies of each pair were made available to the whole class. Each slant was discussed. The whole class discussed the way the groups had dealt with the themes. The discussion focused mainly on the ways the original ideas had to be changed. The following questions were raised in the discussion:

   - How the information was rearranged
- Adjusting the Style

By adjusting the style is meant “fine-tuning” so to speak. Finalising the draft entails making stylistic changes to suit the contextual constraints of the writing task. Getting a feel for the effects of organisational, grammatical, and lexical choices is therefore an important part of writing. Practice in observing and making stylistic changes has a place in the development of writing skills.

1. The students were first asked how they would address people with whom they have different kinds of relationship, for instance: a close friend, a person senior to themselves, someone they have never met before.

Example 1

Dear David,

You do not know who I am. So let me first introduce myself. I was very keen to get a penfriend in England. So I applied to bureau here which puts people in Iran in touch with penfriends in various countries. They very kindly gave me your address so here I am writing to you.

My name is Amir Daneshzadeh and I am a boy and in class 2 of English course in AZAD University of Boroojerd. I am 172 cm. Tall and weigh 55 kilos I enclose a photograph of myself. I have two brothers and one sister. By the way, I am a writer too, i sometimes write story books and I collect stamps and would be very glad if you would send me some English ones, i shall send you some Iranian ones in exchange, if you are interested. I hope that you will write to me soon and tell me all about yourself.

Yours sincerely

Amir Daneshzadeh

This example was provided so as to notice the inappropriateness because of the mismatch between style and the relationship between the writer and the addressee.
Example 2

Across the open mouth of the tent Nick fixed cheese cloth to keep out mosquitoes. He crawled under the mosquito bar with various things from the pack to put at the head of the bed under the slant of the canvas. Inside the tent the light came through the brown canvas. It smelled pleasantly of canvas. Already there was something mysterious and homelike. Nick was happy as he crawled inside the tent. He had not been happy all day. This was different though. Now things were done. There had been this to do. Now it was done. It had been a hard trip. He was very tired. That was done. He had made his camp. He was settled. Nothing could touch him. It was a good place to camp. He was there, in the good place. He was in his home where he had made it. Now he was hungry.

Example 3

If a writer’s prose were transparently simple and honest, Hemingway felt, he could leave his meaning implicit and the reader would discern it and even help to provide it.... Accordingly, Hemingway’s seemingly matter-of-fact, laconic statements are highly stylised sentences that can incorporate the rhythms and diction of colloquial speech along with archaic inversions of sentence structure and parodies of Gertrude Stein’s or the Bible’s prose. Their simplicity assigns a priority to feeling over thought and to action over comment. The result is that Hemingway can suggest, through oblique implication, compressed irony, or understatement, a sense of moral urgency along with a considerable range and astonishing intensity of feeling, while rendering outward actions and scenes with a vividness seldom matched....

2. The class was asked to contrast the texts given as regards formality of styles and relationship between writer and reader.

3. The students were given the following text:

Small dogs may, at the discretion of the conductor and the owner’s risk, be carried without charge upon the upper deck of double-deck buses or single-deck buses. The decision of the conductor is final.

They were asked to reformulate it in different styles. The students were also asked to make language more direct and less personal.

Other students were asked to address the Dean of the Faculty. They had to use a more formal style. To do this, they were asked to refer to the list of linguistic features.

4. The students were invited to compare their work at the end.

3.2.6.7 Editing, Correcting and Marking

The final step of completing the final draft is editing. This step is carried out by the students themselves before submitting their work to the reader.

Unlike editing, correcting and marking are forms of feedback provided by the teacher. They involve the amendment of specific points in the text among other corrections. Marking consists of the provision of a grade or mark.
The early stages put the emphasis on the fundamental aspects of the text as purpose, thesis, and viewpoint. To this end, priority is given to seeing language as a tool for crafting meaning. At the editing stage, priority is targeted towards surface details of grammatical accuracy and correctness of forms. In other words, at this stage the writer needs to look at how closely the language conforms the conventions of linguistic and formal appropriacy.

Unless it is focused, feedback will not be helpful. A detail marking scheme where writing is evaluated for specific features will show the students where their strengths and weaknesses lie. It will also indicate to the teachers where remedial work is required.

-Correcting the language

During the different stages of the experiment, it has been hinted at the idea of promoting ways of self-correcting. This kind of autonomy and self-sufficiency can be promoted via partnership between teacher and students. The very first step was in responding to self-evaluation where the students themselves put the finger on those features about which they are uncertain or wish to seek advice for. To be salient and relevant, effective feedback has to enhance the correction of self-nominated language problems (White & Arndt, 1997:172) then solving problems nominated by the teacher.

To draw attention to language items when correcting, teachers are strongly advised to:

- Concentrate on language errors which have global rather than local effects. This means attending to formal language errors which interfere with meaning over a broader span than that of the individual clause or sentence.
- Don’t attempt to cover too many repairs. It is quite impossible for the learner to cope with too many problems simultaneously.

The point, here, is to establish certain priorities with regards to language errors. Two criteria may be invoked: communicative effect and frequency.

Both global errors which detract from effective communication and the ones that are recurrent should be dealt with. Some of the most frequent errors are the most fossilized errors. Inflections of verbs or the omission of {s} from the third person singular present simple tense for example are least likely to cause communication difficulties. These errors are treated as a less serious matter and are regarded superficial in effect. Errors that interfere with
understanding such as a misuse of modal verbs (could instead of “be able to”, for example), ambiguity resulting from unclear pronoun reference, or incorrect choice of vocabulary are dealt with more attentively.

The following checklist was given to the students. It covers elements at all levels: ideas, organisation, language and punctuation. It was hoped that this checklist could be a basis for students to check their own writing. It was made clear to the students that all language errors that were noted had to be corrected. This meant that in turn the corrections had to be checked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>Subject missing</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Verb form error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Article error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Tense error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sv</td>
<td>Subject-verb concord error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adv</td>
<td>Adverb order error, misplaced adverb or adverb missing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adj</td>
<td>Adjective order error, misplaced or missing adjective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prep</td>
<td>Preposition error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ss</td>
<td>Sentence structure error</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Proof-Reading and Editing

In the process writing approach, proof-reading and editing are considered as the final tiding up of language and presentation before writing out the final version of the text. This phase includes dealing with spelling capitalisation, punctuation, not to mention the use of written conventions such as the avoidance of abbreviations or numerical forms in certain types of texts.

1. The students were given the unedited draft text. The purpose was to bring home the point that failure to proofread adequately can lead to a mismatch between intention and outcome. (See Appendix M)
2. A list of editing points was handed. The points in focus were:
   - Spelling
   - Grammar
   - Punctuation
   - Capitalisation
   - Words breaks at line ends
Use of contractions

3. The students were asked to apply the same procedure for their draft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Learning Activities</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Instructional Objectives</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Generating idea</td>
<td>composing aloud by the Teacher</td>
<td>45mn</td>
<td>To give an insight into what is involved in the writing process. To help reconstruct the train of thought which underlies the text they write.</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension</td>
<td>Narration of an accident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>composing aloud by the student</td>
<td>2h</td>
<td></td>
<td>Application Analysis</td>
<td>The story of Zahara Begum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brainstorming by the teacher</td>
<td>30mn</td>
<td>To get the learner “activate the long-term memory so as to proliferate ideas from various experiences.</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension</td>
<td>life in the cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brainstorming by the student (snow ball activity)</td>
<td>2.30 mn</td>
<td></td>
<td>Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Woman’s place is at home”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Focusing</td>
<td>Fastwriting done by the teacher *</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discovering main ideas /developing and relating individual ideas</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension</td>
<td>life in the campus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loopwriting by teacher *</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discovering main ideas/ help the students focus on what they were attempting to communicate.</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension</td>
<td>Life in cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loopwriting by the students *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>one or more ideas from the brainstorming they did about woman’s place is at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Detecting writer's reasons for writing *</td>
<td></td>
<td>Considering Purpose</td>
<td>Comprehension Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>newspaper letters, on the same topic (noisy neighbours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reconstructing the reader *</td>
<td></td>
<td>Considering audience</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Greenpeace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Considering form *</td>
<td></td>
<td>to increase the students’ awareness of the sense of form</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>copies of English newspapers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using statements prompts *</td>
<td></td>
<td>grouping ideas together and deciding upon how to sequence them</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Compulsory military service should be abolished in all countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Experimenting with arrangements</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>The organization, amendment, and change of information</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Maggie lets in the rich (article from The Independent),</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Drafting by the teacher</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>To help reveal the process to the students</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension</td>
<td>Life in cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beginning, Adding, Ending</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>to make the students look at various ploys to whet the appetite of the audience.</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>A selection of openings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Considering ways of ending</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>To help the students link the conclusion of their text both with its opening and its thesis in a way that is interesting and decisive,</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>A selection of openings and endings (students match each opening with its corresponding ending)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adding information</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Add the new information at appropriate points in the text</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>How rice is produced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Developing criteria for evaluation</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>Assessing the draft</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Roundhouse Given New Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Becoming your own critic</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>to help the students develop and apply criteria of evaluation to their own writing as well as to other students’ work</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Copies of the students’ draft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading and responding: teacher to students</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>to write personalized comments</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>notes by Frank Differy and Ronald Lapp (1988) on written feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading and responding: teacher to class</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>A more time-efficient procedure to provide personalized comments</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>cats as domestic animals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading and responding: students to students</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>how to respond to each other’s texts as readers</td>
<td>Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Students’ drafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>conferencing</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>clarifying the writer’s intentions, purpose and meaning</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis</td>
<td>strategies in Donald Graves (1983)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewing</td>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responding to student self-evaluation</strong></td>
<td>To help students annotate their own texts at points where they need help</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Checking the context</strong></td>
<td>to check whether the students got the grips with the context of the writing: its purpose, audience, and form</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testing logical links</strong></td>
<td>Testing out whether logical links of ideas are clear</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Testing cohesive links</strong></td>
<td>analysing cohesive devices in a text</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Segmenting materials</strong></td>
<td>checking divisions</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conveying mood, attitude and feeling</strong></td>
<td>Assessing impact, influencing the readers’ reactions</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creating mood</strong></td>
<td>To grasp the viewpoint or attitude of the writer</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signaling an opinion</strong></td>
<td>To look at some of the linguistic resources of English for putting across an opinion more or less forcefully and directly.</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highlighting the focal idea</strong></td>
<td>to develop a flexibility of approach to the subject which leads to new angles to be exploited and emphasized as the focus of ideas.</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusting the style *</td>
<td>making stylistic changes to suit the contextual constraints of the writing task</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Correcting mismatch between style and the relationship between the writer and the addressee</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correcting the language *</td>
<td>Editing, correcting and marking, promoting ways of self-correcting</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>Working with checklist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proof-reading and editing *</td>
<td>dealing with spelling capitalisation, punctuation, the use of written conventions such as the avoidance of abbreviations or numerical forms in certain types of texts.</td>
<td>Knowledge Comprehension Application Analysis Synthesis</td>
<td>unedited draft text: find mismatch between intention and outcome.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3.6 Table of the Different Steps of the Experiment**

The following table shows the students’ performances at each stage of the experiment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>activities</th>
<th>Students’ performances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generating Ideas</td>
<td>Brainstorming</td>
<td>The students were already familiar with this activity. What they learnt is using any other language than English to avoid losing the flow of ideas. At the end of this activity, the students get help either by using dictionaries (Arabic-English), or by asking their peers and also by asking the teacher. The students understood that the aim of such an activity is to gather information by thinking out and talking out ideas and explore possibilities. They can make minds maps, sue diagram of ideas when brainstorming. The majority of the students got rid of the stumbling block of trying to think of things to write about. However, sometimes the students wrote too many ideas that did not fall into the pattern of their topic. This was quite inhibiting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Focusing

Discovering main ideas

The students got easily used to fastwriting or speedwriting. They considered it as brainstorming which was used as a technique to overcome the problem of writer’s ‘block’ and to generate ideas. Looping was rather to demanding because the students generated and summarised their ideas. This activity proved to quite difficult from them therefore.

Considering Purpose

From the activities proposed, the students seemed to acknowledge that texts can be grouped according to whether they are intended to entertain, inform, instruct, persuade, explain argue a case, present arguments. However, to actually create texts accordingly is difficult. Not only the technical know-how, but also the linguistic demands seem out of reach.

Considering audience

The informants were accustomed to address their writing to one person: the teacher who was seen either as an assessor, or examiner. They expect this person to tell them if their writing is good or bad. The activities proposed in the experiment provided them with more flexibility and a great sense of reality for their writing even though the letters they had to address were utterly imaginative.

Considering form

The question of form raised the same problem as the one of purpose. The types of letters the students were asked to write showed how formal, informal, the writer can be, how awkward the writer could be had he not respected the form.

Structuring

Using statements prompts

The students’ scope of ideas was well limited with the statements. It was even tightly limited when they turned the statements prompts into questions. They saw which answers were appropriate and which answers were not.

Experimenting with arrangements

The students managed to sort out the ideas from the most to the least important during the class activities. Yet, little was done in their personal writings.

Beginning, Adding, Ending

It was hard to explain that writing means rewriting. It was even harder for the students to conceive the idea that writing consists of at least three drafts. Those who did well and they were a few were seen to do three drafts; each improving it thanks to the feedback provided by either the teacher or their peers or by both.

Assessing the drafting

A lot of work has to be done here. The students are not only accustomed to write for one audience, the teacher, but also they take for granted that assessing means looking for mistake. It was a hard task to explain that they need to assess their friends’ compositions. Another problem was encountered. The students lack the linguistic competence to do so, not to mention a specific method of assessment. The students need to become a more observant reader of his own work first so to provide constructive criticism to this classmates.

Even though the students lacked the linguistic competence, the feedback they provided proved to be very constructive. It gave rise to a hot debate but it usually ended in the writer amending his own texts.

Evaluating

Responding
Table 3.7: The Students’ Performances at Each Stage of the Experiment

3.3 Activities

As stated previously in the second chapter, the authors of the book "Process Writing", namely Ron White and Valerie Arndt (1997) have organized the book according to the various processes entailed in the act of composing. The process as conceived by the two authors includes: generating, focusing, structuring, drafting, evaluating and reviewing. These operations apply to the creation of any piece of writing, irrespective of text-type or subject matter. Therefore, the procedures which the authors suggest can be used with any text which teachers and/or students decide upon, taking into consideration the level, interests and requirements of each context.

The sequence of activities will look like:

There will be variations depending on the topic that the majority of the students has agreed on. From time to time, there were series of lessons devoted to a particular aspect of the writing process - assessing impact, considering audience, checking connection - or to a particular feature of the essay components as the thesis statement, the developing paragraphs, and the content of the concluding paragraph.

3.3.1 Objectives
The objectives of the writing course include the development of skills in university formal writing assignments with two distinct types identified: in-class expository writer and take-home assignments which were much longer.

Certain specific subskills were identified. Of the various subskills involved in writing the most relevant to the experiment was the set of subskills that includes appreciating, analyzing, and commenting on the other students’ writing in a critical manner. If the students were not given the opportunity to share their scripts, the writing teacher would run the risk of creating a vacuum, instead of creating a forum. The aim behind creating this forum by accommodating peer reviews of scripts in a friendly stress-free atmosphere, the researcher aimed at encouraging the feeling of working in a small community.

In such an easy-going atmosphere, the role and position of the teacher can by no means remain that of the instructor which denotes an Anglo-Saxon academic preference by excellence. This denotation is utterly inappropriate in a situation where learners are helped to write better. Furthermore, learning to write better is an activity that cannot be achieved by instructing. That approach to teaching writing appeared to offer little in the way of negotiating meaning, allowing for personal differences in learning styles and strategy. Besides, it was seen as seriously limited in its potential of establishing a learning environment that would engage sustainable development.

A better, more appropriate denomination was seen in the term ‘tutor’ which denotes that the teacher is an expert in the field. However, his primary concern is motivating the individuals and teams of students in discovering the power of writing for their own benefit.

Now that the denomination of the tutor is established, the next step will be to establish the goals of motivating students to experiment a solid base on which future improvement is possible. This required the students to do both extensive reading and writing. Another new element introduced in the experiment was the concept of group work. This concept is not limited to the usual gathering of students and working together as wished by teachers. It is a kind of sharing ideas, and above all advising each other by reading each other’s compositions.

The tone the students were addressed to in this experiment was the first to break away from the formal tone tradition. The students were addressed to as stakeholders, as participants and the language used during the experiment was simple and clear.
The fact that some students were designated as assistants was an innovation procedure. In fact, fourth year students asked to consider volunteering the team-teach sessions with the researcher. Seven students expressed their willingness to help the informants during and after the composing process. Seven is considered a relatively high number given the fact that even the fourth year students face a huge difficulty when writing in English.

3.3.2 Activities and Techniques

Once the objectives of the experiment were made clear, the researcher pondered on the adjustment of the process writing approach to the present situation taking into consideration the different variables dealt with in the second chapter.

To monitor the progress of the experiment, a colleague from the same department was invited to observe the classes, eliciting, and most of all acting on students’ feedback. It was hoped that the objectives would be reached by classroom and out-of-class activities.

The reason behind dividing the activities into these two categories was mainly the relatively short time available for group work in the classroom. The average span of the courses is approximately twenty three weeks, with two sessions of ninety (90) minutes a week. The average group being forty students or so, it was impossible to deal with each student individually. Therefore, another way of making more time available was to give assignments as homework and inviting the students to ask for help, advice, and feedback from other colleagues. The majority of the students came at least once to ask for advice from both their former teachers of written expression module and the researcher. Another tendency was observed: the overwhelming majority of the students decided to revise their assignments.

- Classroom Techniques

While applying the book, though not slavishly, the tasks that were currently applied were tightly connected to the text types that were developed. Most of the sessions were devoted to workshop tasks intended to promote group learning and sharing. Among these tasks, some were present all the year long, others were present just in some types, others still existed in only one type.

Most of the time, the tasks and techniques followed a cycle. This cycle included introductory sessions where students were asked to look into their reading and writing
processes. Pair and group sessions were set so that discussions would be initiated to establish a cooperative network. The aim of the network was to urge the students to share their ideas orally as well as in writing with their classmates. Since the writing pedagogy of the present experiment followed a process approach, by cyclicity is meant that after the introductory sessions, the different levels of text construction were dealt with as discrete elements and holistically.

Our main emphasis was the participation of the students. Our claim is that a sustainable development would be reached by fostering a classroom where the learners are free to raise issues, critique, and to express opinions.

While this element of the classes – the cooperative network - was taking its own course, there were some usual sessions. These usual sessions included lectures about views of writing and supplemented by illustrations from both students' or professional writers scripts. Parts of the lectures aimed at making the students aware of the most important issues of writing: processes in writing, audience, purpose, writer's voice. Those lectures were also meant to establish a link between individual sessions and the overall purpose of the course.

To experiment the application of the process approach, the researcher had to consider and sought to join theory to practice. The first thing was that different learning strategies need motivation from a variety of sources. The high level cognitive load of construing writing quality and processes can be experienced via lower-level stimulus. The practical consideration was that these presentations and the ensuing discussion and application contribute to a lively classroom with enhanced group dynamics. To develop new writing habits and attitudes, and to get rid of the old writing habits and attitudes, fundamental issues were brought closer to real experience. To do this, students' metaphors and images learnt from previous language experiences -mother tongue experience and even the French experience - could be applied as a framework to plug the gap between the familiar and the unfamiliar. These images and metaphors could motivate the students to devise them, share them, and attempt to use them as personally relevant elements of writing strategies.

To exemplify the idea of metaphor approaches, the five T Tips was presented to the students. The Five T Tips would assist the learners recognize paragraph level conventions and notions of signalling a paragraph with indentation. It also helps them recognise what the topic sentence of the paragraph is, in what tense the ideas are presented, how the tone of the writer
exposes the topic, and last but not least, how one paragraph may contribute to the unity of the text.

These bases were incorporated at the beginning of the experiment so as to start on solid grounds. These tips were meant to provide the students with an easy-to-remember technique to be used in the revising stage. These types were in fact a simple check list of five (5) questions the students would have at hand whenever they wanted to develop or to revise a text:

- One tab: have I indented this paragraph;
- One topic: what is the one topic I discuss?
- One tone: does the text speak in one voice?
- One tense: do I use one tense? If not, do I know why I change them?
- One target: where do I go with this text?

Though the first three tips: spotting one tab, identifying one topic, and checking tenses are relatively simple to follow and they do not demand too much effort, they can make a difference in organisation and reader appeal. The other remaining tips, namely the ones on tone and target are more subjective matters. However, they can become part of how students reflect on writing in the long run.

Such processes were common place in both classroom and take-home assignments. Though ninety (90) minutes session format was extremely a too short time for much writing, all the topics had to be discussed either in small groups or by the whole class. A few sessions, however, were devoted to group writing in class. An activity of this type demanded too much effort from sides, the teacher as well as the students. With the collaboration of both the colleagues and the fourth (4\textsuperscript{th}) year students who were invited to provide feedback and help. The aim of the present activity was to provide the students with practice in writing unified coherent paragraphs based on topic sentence prompts that they were asked to discuss. The groups would negotiate content and development. Then, they would produce drafts. The individual paragraphs were collected to be revised in the following class.

Team writing was an option that was used to facilitate negotiation between students. In fact, the groups became teams. A specific group of students would belong to a particular team. Belonging to a team created and fostered a sense of belonging and increased mutual
help between the students. The teams would meet outside (in the library or in a classroom) to complete their assignments or to do some research on a given topic. The idea of team writing facilitated negotiation. The idea of belonging to a team not only facilitated negotiation but it also lowered the usual anxiety the students encountered when writing.

To encourage the teams to work together and to seek and ask for assistance, guidance and pieces of advice from other sources – even from different levels- the researcher provided them with topic sentences and asked the teams to develop them. With five topic sentences given to the teams, they were allowed to choose their own. The teams were advised to divide the tasks between the members of the one team. Once a pair, for instance, began writing a paragraph, the rest of the team worked on other segments of the text. When a draft paragraph was completed, a copy was given to each team. In this way, everyone was able to contribute to the effort. It was an immediate feedback and each team was also able to comment and change the other work of the other teams.

There were other tasks that relied on cooperation. Commenting on students’ writing is a kind of reflection on peers’ text. A student’s portfolio was selected and was assigned as part of the reading set. The students were asked to discuss positive features of the selected portfolio. There were different foci of attention in these reflective scripts. There were students who focused on styles and opinions, others on emotions, still others on facts. Students evaluated these four features, enabling the researcher to assess the students’ coverage of reading and at the same time, enabling him to incorporate insights in modifying reading for future courses. Such tasks represented cooperation on the receptive pane.

One of the features that render writing a too demanding activity is the fact that this skill is a solitary task. Not only does the writer commit to papers thoughts, ideas, and opinions, but he also seeks to express them in a manner that they would be well understood.

However, writing in academic and other fields is often the result of a shared effort of more than one person. Most writing intended for public tends to involve the cooperation of at least two people: the writer and the editor.

When two writers decide to work on a theme by sharing their own experiences, this will result in growing consciousness of reader-based prose. When two writers voluntary decide to co-operate, they will provide insights that the solitary may not have. For this purpose, the
researcher has introduced the task of co-authoring essays. This meant the essay may be written by two students or by a student and one of the fourth (4th) year students.

-Out-Of-Class Activities

Out-of-class activities consisted of a variety of pair, and group tasks; sometimes even individual tasks. To ensure effectiveness, these tasks were complemented with meetings in office. These meetings were meant first and foremost to provide further assistance to the majority of the students. In these sessions, individual students’ needs and problems received dedicated attention. Soon these meetings began to develop into meetings for small groups of students. Participants in those meetings revealed their difficulties in writing in other modules and expressed their desire to overcome those difficulties. Those kinds of meeting were usually held when both parts were free. Other appointments were scheduled with students in difficult slots.

Sometimes, those appointments turned into re-explaining what was taught previously. To put an end to this situation, it was made clear that the aim of the appointments was to deal with students writing so that they would be improved and to find solutions to the problems encountered while composing the assigned tasks.

All in all, the majority of the students seemed to have appreciated the kind of interaction that was taking place in those meetings. It was a stress-free atmosphere where mutual help was provided. More able students were helped too, and in turn, they would help their friends too.

As mentioned previously, the students were asked to consider writing an essay either with their peers or with the collaboration of the fourth (4th) year students. Several students chose to write pieces with their peers, and quite few with the fourth year students. The rationale for the task was to provide an authentic information-gap writing task for both the students and the tutor. Indeed, the cooperation of developing a text that could be initiated by either party would show the strategies that each side develops when writing.

Benkhada and Chenane were two second year students who wanted to participate in this project. They were friends and appreciated working together. When Benkhada and Chenane came to one of the meeting, they expressed the wish to write a true story that happened to one of their friend. They were highly motivated because they felt concerned with the story. The
two students were eager to submit most drafts typed. They had a computer literacy and the function of word processor served a practical purpose. At least the spelling mistakes would be automatically spotted and therefore easy to be corrected.

### 3.3.3 Text-Types

The rationale behind the choice of the previous tasks and the activities described was to raise awareness of the importance of the clarity and correctness both in personal and academic writing. Course theme included a warming up period where students would familiarise with concepts and develop their personal strategies and schedules. The warming up enhanced by class discussions of personal attitudes to reading and writing, workshops, peer reviews and debate as well as by the development of each students’ own journal or portfolio.

#### 3.3.3.1 Personal Writing

It is a fact that the majority of the second year students does not have an extensive experience in writing. The aim of the experiment was, therefore, to provide opportunities for the discovery of tones, contents, approaches and effects, making the process of writing an enjoyable and personally rewarding experience. For this reason, personal writing received the greatest focus. Narratives, descriptive, and arguments were the text organising elements described elements described, discussed, and practised in the sessions. As the section on tasks and techniques showed, the metaphorical applications techniques were used to illustrate and assist in the processes of theme selection, narrowing down and execution. The students were encouraged to submit multiple versions so as to provide extra opportunities not only to the students but to the teacher as well to read and comment texts. The overwhelming majority appeared to be highly motivated to take part in this process. This was implied by several course evaluation questionnaires where students maintained a great interest in continuous writing. They seemed to have understood the fact that the teacher was reading several drafts on end and that motivated them more and more. They saw the teacher’s work a signal of the teacher’s devotion to their writing development. In theory, the warming up with personal writing was viewed as a fundamental phase for later demanding tasks. From the students’ view, this was seen as crucial in:

- Establishing positive attitudes to writing, providing practice in designing,
- Planning and drafting clear and concrete texts,
Helping them develop effective relationships so they had trust and willingness to share their writings,

And motivating students to want to revise so they had practice in text, paragraph, as well as sentence-level revision.

From the teacher’s point of view, the four already mentioned outcomes were equally relevant. They were also complemented by a reader’s curiosity of these students’ ideas.

Various personal text types were designed to achieve those aims. Of these, the ones that proved most effective, explaining the underlying pedagogical and rhetorical considerations will be presented next. Though these text types were presented as option for students’ portfolio, the students were free to choose among them, as well as formulate their own themes and purposes.

**- Reflective Essay Based On Quotes**

A collection of quotes and proverbs selected from different sources served as a source for content and inspiration. The students were asked to select one or two quotes or proverbs they liked or disliked. After introducing the text and its author, they would provide a personal reflection and express their opinions. This kind of writing was selected for two major reasons. The first is that it represented one of the few choices that focused on argumentation. The second one is that it represented the most common type of questions asked in exams. A further advantage of this type can be seen in two skills. Not only would the students who opted for this option experience scanning and skimming providing them with authentic reading goals but they would also focus on their own meaning and opinions.

**- Expository Argumentative and Personal Narrative or Descriptive Essays Based On the Theme Selection Table**

Previous tests were distributed so that students would familiarise themselves with the instrument and the evaluation scheme. From a theme selection table that was provided, students would locate themes they wanted to write about. The theme table incorporated over a hundred themes. The students were also free to write about their own theme. As for reflective essay based on a quote, the aim of this course was to help the students in preparing for high stakes exam.
- An Essay on Any Theme, But With Two Introductions and Two Conclusions

To teach the students how to introduce and how to conclude, a task of writing a text on a topic chosen by the students themselves was introduced. Then, the students were asked to write one more introductory paragraph and one more concluding paragraph. This task was well received by the learners. This task gave them the opportunity to experience introducing and concluding the same text with different approaches.

A follow up activity was to provide the students with the body of an essay. The students were asked to provide the essay with the two missing parts: the introductory and concluding paragraphs. To see how each student had dealt with this task, a debate was usually raised so as to compare the ways the students had used in this task. Some chose the techniques that were used in class; others had used their own.

-The Focused Paragraph

This text type was introduced at the beginning of the year. The main purpose was to help the students focus on economy of expression: the total number of lines set must not exceed six (6) lines. It invited the students to answer an exam question in the module of American Civilisation in clear terms, using specific vocabulary. The students’ responses were not overwhelming. This was mainly due to the fact that most of the second year students use rote learning as a strategy. They found it extremely hard to focus on a particular point of the issue.

-Completion of Task in any writing book

To enrich the courses, the researcher had resorted to use other writing course books which became part of the reading element of the courses. The students were encouraged to consult as many course books as possible. One of the task types was to find the topic sentence of each paragraph. The second was to restore the different paragraph of a given composition.

The advantage of this option was seen in its contribution to the students’ learning strategies. Scanning and skimming played the greatest part in the completion of the task. Besides, familiarity with books chosen by the students themselves can be regarded as a potentially effective mix of free voluntary reading and conscious learning.
-Essay on tape Recording an Essay

The process approach places premium on writing multiple drafts, and on assessing portfolios. Another approach to process approach writing is to continually develop tasks and texts for multiple purposes. The students were encouraged to write about personal learning experiences outside the university. Such an experience may help the students to discover an ability which might prove valuable in other fields. Consequently each student chose to write a personal reflective narrative on such an experience. The students’ writing were not that well-written, but the experiences they revealed were very interesting and rich.

To help the learners revise their own scripts, the researcher had introduced the recording activity. Indeed, recording the scripts on audio-tape helps the novice writers to hear what they had written. The revision consisted mainly on improving the scripts by adding sentences and phrases. It even changed the length of the original version.

The follow-up activity consisted of inviting the informants to choose one of the drafts they had already submitted. They were asked to read both the scripts and the teacher’s commentary. Then, they were asked to make any revisions they deemed necessary. After this, the students would read out the revised text and record it on tape. The rationale was that the aural experience may make the students aware of other potential needs for change. While listening to their own scripts, the students may discover that a phrase, a sentence “does not sound good” and therefore requires some changes. In a word, a thorough revised was required. Because this technique was new for the informants, it received an overwhelming support. This tasks was highly motivating; however, for many recording their scripts posed a real technical problem.

3.3.3.2 Academic Writing

The informants were accustomed to do general essay writing. This proved to be a good experience and an interesting step in acquiring the ability to write in English. They were highly motivated to share their personal experiences and discoveries. They wanted to make their own opinions known, to disagree with the norms, to have a voice in their writing. They appreciated the teacher’s commentary and their peers’ in a lesser degree too. They were used to writing “exposes” in English and in Arabic. Sometimes, they had more exposes than lectures. However, the type of discourse required at the university in general is not personal. Even the “exposes” they usually were made to write lacked method. The method they used
was actually acquired in the secondary school. The final output of the course at the university was based on observation and analysis of an academically relevant subject.

Therefore, the researcher found it necessary to place premium on the requirement of the research paper. This was a leading innovation because usually the fourth year students were flabbergasted and lost when starting doing their dissertation. Henceforth, the supervisor’s duty becomes first teaching how to do a research paper and then do the job of supervision.

The rationale behind conceiving the research paper requirement was to find a transition between personal and academic writing and also to link the course to the rest of the university studies.

Once language, organization, and revision skill practised and improved, the next challenge was to conduct a small-scale authentic research project. In this small-scale of the project the teams were given three weeks to decide on a research question, formulate a plan and produce a first draft. This project was mainly concerned with its coherence with the different modules studies in the second year.

The syllabus of the second year offered a variety of topic options. The options were presented in a table. The table shows (the same as what the students received as one of the handouts in the course) the six specific themes corresponding data and suggested reference material. For the students who wished to investigate other fields and opportunities, an open choice was provided too.

Initially, it was required from the students to write a research paper of 1200 to 2000 words. When they started drafting, the length was reduced to facilitate the first

The students were to follow the standard structure of a research paper: Introduction, Method, Result, and Conclusion (IMRDC). The research paper had to be accompanied with a list of their references in APA or MLA format.

From this brief description of the research paper, the task and the text type aimed the plug the gap between the courses in the Written Expression module and the other modules. The reference conventions the course introduced and explained were extensively practised. Several tasks sheet as how to conduct, prepare and to write a questionnaire were also
provided. Forums were initiated so that students would share their difficulties and their inquiries.

The research paper project was a continuum of the general experiment as it inherited from the earlier phases as continued emphasis on clarity and simplicity of language and ideas, and most of all, the multiple draft process. The project ended when the students submitted their first draft. However, the majority of the experimental group were eager to have the opportunity of revision and kept on submitting second and third versions. Rarely were any instances of four versions. In terms of research design and data, the course aimed to introduce the students to two basic types: presenting quantitative and qualitative results. It also aimed at paving the way to the final most salient dissertation that the fourth ear students have to accomplish.

- Analysis of Peers’ writing

The students were both writers and readers. Reading peers’ writing was a priority of their reading tasks. This enabled them to explore others students’ portfolios once they were finalized. This option widened the students’ horizon in the familiarization with various types of writings. It even enriched their repertoire of approaches and strategies. Some students were even amazed at how their mates conceived and dealt with certain issues. “Ignoring a wife that has deceived a husband is not enough for me. This woman has destroyed the love of a man, has destroyed her husband and has mortgaged the future of her children. Ignoring is that all? She deserves more.....”.

- Surveys among Students and Teachers

Validity and reliability of the research effort were common place issues that were dealt with in these sessions. The aim of these sessions was to provide help to those who chose to conduct questionnaire and interviews surveys among students and teachers. This option was incorporated as an entire part of the research paper task pool. This proved to be a valuable assistance to enable the students to gather information relevant to their studies and to experience the need for searching for and presenting such information based on a reliable study.

3.3.3.3 Readings
As stated in the first chapter (1.1.2.3, p.7), reading has a great impact on writing. Research has demonstrated that the amount of reading successful writers do greatly contributes to proficiency in the skill of writing (Krashen, 1984). The kind of reading these writers usually do, include reading activities. They voluntary do it for pleasure or the reading they do for a specific learning purpose. The complementary processes of reconstructing meaning in reading and constructing meaning in writing was the focus in this experiment.

A total of five stories were employed in this experiment. This selection included:

- Mrs Bixby and the Colonel’s Coat
- A lamb to Slaughter
- The Story of the German Student
- The invention of Solitude
- Man in the Dark

As seen in the second chapter, some of these short stories namely the story of Mrs Bixby and the Colonel’s Coat, became the basis of classroom and group activities. This story also features in the first exam. (See Appendix N)

We have ventured the use of the students’ writing in the experiment. This was but a proof of the increasing emphasis accorded to the students’ writings. Indeed, an essay written by a fourth year student was featured in the experiment. The rationale behind this was to introduce the students the idea of analyzing an essay written by their mate, to see what strategies he had used, and to serve as a model for the students in which the voice of the writer is clear.

Hassan’s essay was the first one the students’ scripts used in this writing course. The researcher has made a collection of the best students’ writings to serve as models. These models would motivate the other students to write and to overcome the idea that writing is reserved only to the professional writers. As the course developed, the students began to share their own essays and to ask for peers’ impression on their writing.

The following table provides an overview of the different types of texts used as reading materials in the course. The table structures the reading according to the three types of reading: course books, publication manuals, authentic essays and studies.
Besides these resources, a variety of other texts were made available for those students who were more interested in further reading. These extra materials included: list of various books and forums, articles and so forth...

### 3.3.3.4 Feedback and Evaluation

As stated in the first chapter (1.5), feedback remains a cornerstone in the writing process. Broadly speaking, the literature is divided on what constitutes the best practice in providing feedback on students writing. However, the trustworthiness and the validity of expert feedback have not been questioned. What follows will explain how providing feedback was provided in this study.

#### 3.3.3.4.1 Feedback Techniques

The continuous assessment the students received on their work in prompt feedback to their writing took the form of dialogue. This dialogue was conducted in each student’s journal. The researcher wrote detailed comments on a portfolio of the scripts that the students were required to submit and on the selection of their drafts. Besides the written feedback, there was usually a discussion where the informants were advised to develop, change, or even omit certain ideas.

Sometimes, the feedback took the form of a whole paragraph where sound and useful comments were worded. The comments were worded in such a simple, clear, specific, and straightforward way that the learners were eager and highly motivated to reflect on the advice. By doing so, the researcher becomes a kind of co-author of the text being written. It was made cocksure that the commentary on the students’ drafts gave an authentic view of the reader’s impression of the content and on the overall quality of the text. Though the errors made by the students may be consubstantial, the feedback on each student’s draft had to be personal. To
achieve these aims, two types of comments were practised: handwritten remarks and notes in the margins focusing on sentence and paragraph-level issues; typed reviews.

When dealing with portfolios, most comments were handwritten on the scripts. Besides this, the original scripts were saved. This technique which was discussed in Grundy and Li (1988) and it helped the researcher see the changes that have been applied to the text being written. The second technique, which is quite traditional, consisted in writing the comments using the pencil. Though traditional, this technique is effective and motivational as it allows the students to erase the comments that are sometimes inappropriate because the teacher might have misunderstood what the students meant to say.

The feedback aimed at focusing on the positive features of the students’ scripts. This was done in the hope that the students would build on them while addressing weaknesses. Focusing on weaknesses will only hinder the learners in their effort to write. Furthermore, by reading the detailed feedback, the learners would do a further reading task.

As far the evaluation of the portfolio is concerned, most of the scripts had been seen at least once in their earlier versions. Therefore, it would be much easier to assess its development. A detailed typed feedback was provided. This, as stated earlier, would serve two things: it would be an aid to improve the writing and at the same time, it would serve as a more reading material that was special in its details.

As for the comments on research papers, the feedback followed the evaluation grids provided to the students. Before starting the experience of the research paper, the novice researchers received a detailed explanation of the evaluation criteria they also received extensive comments when submitting their first draft. (See Appendix O)

The two types of written comments were sustained by a spoken one. This was but a consuming effort activity. However, it seemed that it contributed to boost the students’ willingness to participate in classes and to revise. The fact that the researcher set an example with his own motivation to respond promptly with most written feedback provided within days of receiving a script, showed the students the researcher’s own interest and motivation in students’ work.
3.3.3.4.2 Evaluation

Students’ achievement and progress are assessed by teachers in any course of study. The basis of the assessment is some sample of skills and knowledge covered in the course. The results can serve evaluative and diagnostic purposes. The students were continuously assessed on their participation. It was an informal assessment which was based on their attendance and on holistic assessment of their work in the sessions. However, it was made clear right from the very beginning that participation meant attendance and work done in the sessions (TD mark). In the two formal assessments (first and second exam) the students were given a grade on the basis of the texts they submitted.

To enhance the transparency of the course, the informants knew in advance the constituent categories that were evaluated. Two types of evaluation categories were assessed in the course: the exams and the TD. There are two formal exams a year. The third mark which is informal includes the following components:

- Participation
- Attendance
- Portfolio
- The research paper

The weight of the research paper was made less imposing as it was the first time they experienced it. The following gives a clear image of the weight that the different categories have on the final assessment. Each of the four types of activities assessed provided information on the students’ achievement, and thus were integral elements of the final picture that the students have.

The portfolio received a considerable weight from the TD mark as it was assigned a maximum mark of ten. In assigning this mark to the portfolio, many requirements were considered. The regularity of writing during the course, the number of scripts (a minimum of five), the application of readings and the five T Tips, and evidence of effective revision.

Overall, on the basis of the information collected from the informants, it seemed that the majority of the participating students did well in their portfolio projects. Furthermore, the majority regarded the evaluation as fair. Further studies could compare the levels of
performance and investigate the difficulties unsuccessful writers encountered in their portfolio.

### 3.3.3.5 Students’ Views

To shed light on this kind of informal evaluation, the researcher had turned to the feedback of the students who had experienced this kind of unofficial evaluation. The evaluation project implied two experimental groups that is 80 students. The eighty students (80) students belonged to groups 3 and 4. The groups had a total of forty five registered students each of whom three (3) had already the module of written expression. Out of the forty two (42) students, forty (40) were present. Data was collected when the informants were submitting their end-of-term assignments. The hypothesis was that the forty students would enrich their course by expressing positive as well as negative attitudes to the course. The information would be used in the future to improve the program as well as to correct the mistakes that might be made.

First of all, the students were asked to participate anonymously in the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of four categories that the students would rate numerically. They had the choice of not completing nor submitting the questionnaire.

The task was to rate each of the following four evaluation criteria on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1 represented extremely negative and 7 extremely positive views.

- Fairness of evaluation
- Assistance from students
- Assistance from tutor
- Usefulness of the course

These criteria were regarded as genuine indicators of the students’ satisfaction levels. The thirty (80) questionnaires were collected and the data was analyzed by statistical techniques, calculating means STD figures.

Out of the eighty students (80) who returned the questionnaire, eighty responded to the item on how fair they found the evaluation of their work in the course. The overwhelming majority seemed to consider the evaluation fair enough. Six Five gave the fairness of
evaluation a value of 4; 13 students gave it a value of 5; 16 students gave it the value of 6; and 32 gave it the value of 7; 13 did not answer the question.

![Fairness](image)

**Figure 3.2:** Number of Students Selecting the Values for the Fairness of Evaluation Query

The second item asked the students to rate how much assistance they received from their peers. All the eighty students who took the questionnaire answered the question. With eight students giving this criterion a value of 3, twenty four students a value of 4, twenty seven a value of 5, eight a value of 6, and thirteen a value of 7, the assistance students reported they received from others.

![Students](image)

**Figure 3.3:** Number of Students Selecting Values for the Assistance from Students Query

The third category was assistance from tutor. All the 80 students who returned the questionnaire responded to the query. Three students assesses the tutor’s assistance by giving
it a 3, five by giving it 5, nineteen by giving it 6, and fifty three by giving it the top value of 7. Figure 3.4 demonstrates the distribution of values of the assistance from the tutor criterion.

![Figure 3.4: Number of Students Selecting Values for the Assistance from the Tutor Query](image)

The last course evaluation category in the questionnaire invited the informants to assess the usefulness of the writing course. Again, the 80 students returned their questionnaire by assigning one value of this category. Three students gave it the median value 4, twenty four the value 5, thirty seven the value six, and sixteen the value 7. Figure 3.5 shows the distribution of values for the usefulness criterion.

![Figure 3.5: Number of students selecting values for the usefulness of the course query](image)

The standard deviation figure was calculated so that a sound image of how students’ evaluation differed from each other would be obtained. In this research, the STD would show how the respondents’ opinions in general were similar or different once each respondent
rating was compared with the mean. If the STD is low, the individual responses will be uniform. Conversely, if the value is high, the opinions will be more divergent. It is extremely rare to find the members of one group agreeing on all questions. Therefore, the STD of the four criteria will only be another essential aspect of how students perceive the course.

Figure 3.5 shows that the most divergent opinions were the ones expressed about the fairness of evaluation (1.79). The other remaining STD figures were lower. The lowest STD value was the usefulness category STD value 0.79. It was the evaluation category that elicited the most uniform responses.

![STD Values](image)

**Figure 3.6: STD Values of Participants’ Evaluation of the Four Criteria**

To form an overall image of students’ evaluation of the four criteria, the mean figures were calculated. It was found that the lowest obtained mean was the one of the assistance from the students (4.93). Though assistance from the students was the lowest, it was still in the posture range of the scale.

The mean figure for the usefulness of the course criterion was 5.83 because the students ranked it high. As far as the fairness of evaluation and assistance from tutor categories are concerned, the mean figures were 6.53 and 6.14 respectively. The following figure shows the rating of the four figures.
To assess the reliability of the results, the mean of the values assigned to the fairness of evaluation (f), assistance from students (s), and assistance from tutor (t) were compared and analysed. Then, they were compared with the mean figure for the usefulness of the course category. If there is little or no difference between the two values, then the results are reliable. However, if the comparison results in some differences divergent, different then the results are not reliable. The following figure shows that there is almost no difference between the usefulness of the course and the composite of the other three factorial means.

Figure 3.7: Mean Figures of the Evaluation of the Four Criteria

Figure 3.8: Comparison of the Mean Score for the Usefulness Criterion and the Averages of the Fairness, Assistance from Students and Assistance from the Tutor Criteria
Conclusion

By implementing the experiment, it was sought to engage the eighty informants in the creative process: the process writing approach. Besides teaching them about how their compositions come into being, it was also hoped to give them insights into how to operate as they proceed in the creation of their text. Last but not least, it was anticipated that they would alter their concepts of what writing involves. However, it must be admitted that this task was almost an impossible mission as the saying says: old habits die hard. What the writing itself involves: brainstorming for topics of interest and discussing them with others, gathering information, allowing that information to settle into some sort of overall plan, consulting with others again, and above all revising was quite new for the informants. Furthermore, the interrelated set of recursive stages (generating ideas, focusing, structuring, drafting, evaluating, reviewing), that the process writing includes were totally new too.

It was observed that several students have gone beyond the classroom hours to pursue writing activities for their own pleasure and for various purposes. Yet, others found that the process of writing took time: time to brainstorm ideas or collect them in other way, time to draft a piece of writing and then, with the teacher’s help, review it and edit it in various ways before, perhaps, changing the focus, generating more ideas, redrafting, re-editing and so on.
Chapter 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In the experiment, we focused on student writing groups where response would come from peers rather than from the teacher who was always seen as an evaluator. From the outset, the process writing approach was regarded as a nondirectional model of instruction with very little teacher interaction.

In his review of research on composition from 1963 to 1982, Hillocks (1984) concludes that the teacher in the process model is to facilitate the writing process rather than to provide direct instructions. According to this researcher, teachers in the process model were found:

- not to make specific assignment, not to help the students learn criteria for judging writing,
- not to structure activities based on specific objectives,
- not to provide exercises in manipulating syntax, not to design activities that engage students in identifiable processes of examining ideas (Hillocks, 1984:132).

Accordingly, we provided a situation where students talked to learn, as well as learned to talk; where they wrote to learn as well as they learnt to write, but not with such restrictions on teacher intervention. Our purpose was to give more part in the formation of knowledge (Barnes, 1994). Besides, extensive peer interaction will promote revision, a stepping stone in the process writing approach. Therefore, a considerable part in this following chapter will discuss peer interaction in general and peer interaction within the experimental groups in particular.

The second part of the chapter will be devoted to motivation and its different variables, namely self-regulation, self-efficacy, self-esteem. Within the two experimental groups, there were differences in writing achievements. While some did quite well, that is they went through the different stages of the process writing approach, others kept on their old
behaviour confirming the old saying ‘old habits die hard’. The only explication that might be advanced is that those students were not ‘ready’, they were not motivated. They were seen to focus more on their outcome - the product -, and they neglected the process. They tended to attribute their errors to low ability. They also reported that they were less satisfied with their performance. This negative attitude to writing was reflected in lower self-efficacy, and reduced interest in acquiring the writing skill.

4.1 Principles in Implementing the Process Writing Approach

Throughout the experiment, we have endeavoured to fully implement all the stages that the process writing approach entails so that the subjects would build up a repertoire of writing strategies. Students need structure and sequence and they hardly benefit from a pick and choose approach to teaching writing. Honeycutt (2001) states that in a smorgasbord approach, only some of the instructional components of the process approach are applied such as when the teacher employs grids on grading but does not involve the learners in understanding and /or creating features of the grids. It is the same case of the piecemeal approach, process writing instruction is implemented unevenly across a time lap as when a group of students experiences the entire writing process and the other group only completes skills-and- drills worksheets while the other group never works in peer writing group. These uneven applications confound the methodological issues in studying the process approach. Yet, most of the research underpins the use of the process approach as being more effective than other approaches in terms of providing writing attitudes and products (Pritchard & Honeycutt, 2006).

Pritchard & Honeycutt state that the implementation of best practices in teaching the process approach involves adopting a comprehensive, holistic, instructional model; including understanding the limitations of the approach, its theoretical underpinnings, and the supporting research literature. The first important element to be considered is therefore the teacher. Teachers of this approach do not just have appropriate lessons, one-shot hot topics to attract attention, besides a set of how to’s. They must be aware of the process approach and of what it entails. Some researchers even claim that teachers must have experienced it themselves as writers who share their writing with a specific audience which is the premise of
the development of a sound writing behaviour. Furthermore, the teachers have to involve themselves in writing along with their students.

Though many theories undergird the teaching of writing, two important basic concepts must be considered in developing lessons that are integrated, sequenced, and scaffolded:

- Writing is a cognitive task that is developmental; and
- Writing is a social act and therefore moves from egocentrism to larger audiences (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1980; Hayes & Flower, 1980).

James Moffert believes that there is no language, nor speech without a speaker in some relations to a spoken to or spoken about (1981:142). If a process oriented instructional model is implemented, students will take part in a community of writers intellectually and emotionally. As the course progresses, they will move from an audience of self to teachers, peers, authentic public audience. Moffert adds “This continuum is formed simply by increasing the distance, in all senses between the speaker and audience. The audience is first the speaker himself, then another person standing before him, then someone in another time and place but having some personal relation to the speaker, then lastly, an unknown mass extended over time and space” (1981: 142-143).

The experiment has shown that as the students move along the continuum of audiences, they practice a broad range of strategies, what Goldstein and Carr (1996) refer to as “a process oriented instruction”. This process includes the decisions writers make about audience and topic during pre-writing, composing rough drafts, sharing their writings to gather response, revising and editing.

The main difficulty that the experiment showed is that writing is a literary process that includes a myriad of things. Janet Emig (1971) mentions the hand (tools are used to write) the eye (writing leaves a public artifact), and the brain (prior knowledge is searched, both long and short term memory are used, writing blocks are dealt with, problems are solved) ideas are organized, and so forth. Friete (2000) even adds the heart to the list of items involved in the composing process. He states that all learning is both cognitive and emotional. This means that, during the experiment, we had to deal with all these variables. In other words, we had to address the emotions surrounding writing such as those that accompany the students’ blocks, building confidence, and motivation in the subjects, teaching micro-level (enabling) skills.
such as desktop publishing, spelling and sentence construction. We had also to teach macro-
level skills such as organization, cohesion, audience, and genre. The challenge was to
automatize most of these cognitive and psychological skills so that the subjects do not have to
start from scratch with each and every new writing event.

For one thing, the students understood that the process writing approach is a recursive
rather than a linear process of creating a text that has to be shared with an audience in oral
readings from prewriting to the final draft. It was also noted that not every prewriting activity
would automatically lead to a final draft and that the movement from the first idea to the
finished product was an essential feature.

The experiment focused on changing the students’ writing behaviour. It focused on the
following components:

- Dealing with emotions surrounding writing,
- Developing students’ understanding of the writing process,
- Modeling and teaching self-regulation processes,
- Training and monitoring peer response partners and groups,
- Guiding writing development through targeted strategy,
- Instruction that addresses ideas and content, organization, voice, word choice,
  sentence fluency and convention commonly referred to as the six traits
- Developing a writing vocabulary.

These components were taught and activities were planned so that they would be internalized
by the students. For it tackles all these components, the experiment of implementing the
process writing approach proved to be time consuming. This goes in consistency with
Hammer (2001) when he states,

“One of the disadvantage of getting students to concentrate on the process of writing is that it takes time:
time to brainstorm ideas and collect them in some other way; time to draft a piece of writing and then, with the
teacher’s help perhaps, review it and edit it in various ways before, perhaps, changing the focus, generating more
ideas, redrafting, re-editing and so on. This cannot be done in fifteen minutes”.

(2001:258)

The six components were continuously introduced and reinforced throughout the different stages of the process.

We have first and foremost sought to create a friendly stress-free atmosphere where the students were given time to compose, and most of all they were given freedom to talk about the topics they wanted to talk about. This was but one way of addressing the emotional issues surrounding writing. The impact of emotions on writing has been written about extensively (Boice, 1985; Csikzentmihalyi, 1990; Marcel, 1999; Rose, 1988)

Many researchers believe that skills and emotions are intertwined. They also find out that if teachers provided adequate instructions and time to compose in class, some of the stress that fosters negative attitudes would be reduced.

We had given the students opportunities to compose text in situations where they were members of a positive, nonthreatening social climate in which they wrote frequently. Being part of a writing community- the groups, the writing teams- meant that the students experienced uninterrupted time for individual practice. When writing is given time and presence in the curriculum, students will improve at it (Boice, 1985).

The students were given writing assignments almost every week in various subject areas besides lessons that addressed specific features of writing and the writing process. Instead of merely hearing and reading about the skills and strategies, the subjects were given time to write and practice them.

Right from the very beginning of the experiment, it was observed that many informants hated or avoided writing. Many students did not understand the process for accomplishing a particular task or the end result of a specific endeavour. This explains their repeated frustration. Therefore, to overcome this, specific lessons were designed to address the emotional issues and barriers surrounding writing that would help minimize the students’
confusions. There were four major factors that contributed to the students’ unrealistic expectations and negative perceptions of themselves as writers:

- Failure to understand and apply appropriate strategies when composing a text,
- A flawed understanding of the writing process,
- Confusion about what the assignment is asking them to do (e.g., inability to deconstruct a prompt)
- Unfamiliarity with the features of the assigned genre.

All of these were specifically addressed in the experiment.

When faced with a writing assignment, many students of the two experimental groups face experienced writers’ block. Their stress levels were greatly alleviated when they were provided with guideline for stating and completing the assignment. With writing on-demand, such blocks were partly overcome by activities such as brainstorming, speedwriting and partly by explicit instructions, writing prompts, not to mention strategies for planning. Many students did overcome their fear and their blocks by having the students work in groups and share their drafts as they wrote throughout the process and showcase good images and phases as well as whole pieces of writing. This acted as the models in the product writing approach but in this case the models were attainable because they were written by the students themselves.

This proved very effective. When we had the students share best sentences, they were still drafting and revising. The students who were recognised received an extraordinary boost while the others gained ideas that they adapted to their compositions.

To motivate the subjects, the best compositions were hanged on the hall for a period of a week. This is consistent with the views expressed by Moffett when he says “three things to do with the final versions of writing are post, print and perform (1981:25). This hall publication, or posters that used excerpts from the writing of many students, especially narrative, aimed at giving satisfactory recompense and at the same time at providing further feedback from a larger audience about the effect of what one had written (Moffett, 1981:26).

The experiment proved highly effective in how to get rid of the disruptive emotions the students had when confronted to writing on demands. They had history of fear of the blank page and recollections of how long it takes and how difficult it is to generate texts not to
mention how frustrated it feels to get a failing grade on writing assignment. Many students said that the activities like brainstorming, speedwriting, loopwriting etc. had helped them a lot in dealing with negative emotions. This was spotted by Boice (1985) when he talked about the internal critic (IC). He states that it is possible to instruct them on how to deal with negative emotions, such as to conquer the IC.

Teaching the process writing approach effectively includes assessing and attending to the positive and negative emotions surrounding writing. Instruments like the writer’s self-perception (WSPS) (Bottomley, Henk, & Melrick, 1997/1998) applied to children and the measure of writing apprehension (Daly & Miller, 1975) applied to young adults and adults, can be very helpful. Boice (1985) mentions a more effective self-assessment that addresses blocking in teachers. This self-assessment can be adapted for students. These assessments are used to:

- Identify apprehension,
- Aggregate scores from a class as pre and post list measure to evaluate the impact of teaching
- Give to the students for evaluation so that they can develop their own plans for dealing with procrastination.

Sources: Boice (1985: 123)

### 4.2 Modelling and Teaching Self-Regulation Strategies

All the principles mentioned above must be sustained with the students’ thorough understanding of the writing process. From the very beginning we made a great effort in fostering a climate of conducive to writing and sharing as well as ensuring that all the informants understand the complexity of the writing process. The majority of the students held a naive view that professional writers complete their writing after composing a simple draft and doing some minor revisions. Though they reported that they understood that the writing process involved generating ideas, organizing, drafting, and revising, they persisted in believing that as they refined their drafting they would eventually be able to compose final drafts the first time. Activities like brainstorming by the teacher, speedwriting by the teacher were meant to demystify the writing process for the students by teaching them that regardless of how skilled they become, they will perform just like professionals. They will use a process,
adapted to their needs, to develop their drafts, they will go through several stages of revision, they will seek feedback of their peers, they will edit for errors at the draft level and they will eventually realize that writing is never perfect and is always open to revision.

The difference of achievement among the students can be explained by the fact that some students lacked self-regulation strategies. Active and deliberate self regulation of the writing process is a perquisite for successful writing (Hayes and Flowers, 1996; Langer and Applebee, 1987). Self-regulation in writing involves monitoring one’s comprehension when writing and also applying specific strategies to complete an assignment.

Zimmerman and Risemberg (1997) define self regulation as “self-initiated thoughts, feelings, and actions that writers use to attain various literary goals, including approving their writing skills as well as enhancing the quality of the text they create” (1997:76).

The informants responded to lessons that provided specific strategies for reflection and self-evaluation. Like good readers who understand the importance of activity schemas by skimming the text and thinking about what they know concerning their reading topic, good writers activate schemas by employing some forms of prewriting and reflection. Most of the time, the students were provided with a sequence of step to accomplish demanding assignments. George Hillocks (1998) states that writers require such specific instructions. He calls these “inquiry strategies” for learning “produced knowledge” to develop content and tools for creating different kinds of discourse.

4.3 Training and Monitoring Peer Partners and Peer Response Group

The literature on the process writing approach is totally based on the premise that writing is a social activity and is best learnt in a community. Gere and Abbott (1985) have investigated the connection between the writing process and the social contexts within which writing occurs. The two researchers attribute the effectiveness of the writing process to the interaction of the informants with teachers and peers during conferences and small group work.
A whole stage of the experiment was devoted to evaluating. Evaluating included assessing the draft, responding and conferencing. This stage has demonstrated the importance of the feedback provided by both the teacher, peers, and even by the parents.

Providing feedback is often seen as one of the ESL writing teachers’ most important tasks. However, under the product writing approach, it is almost impossible to provide the kind of individualized attention. Generally, writers expect their texts to be read, and in the classroom feedback from readers, be it the teacher, the peers, or even other teachers, provides opportunities for them to see how others respond to their compositions and to learn from these responses.

This kind of formative feedback encourages the development of the students’ writing and is regarded as critical in improving learning. In his discussion of a stage in the cognitive growth, Vygotsky (1978) names this stage “the zone of proximal development” where skills are extended through the guidance and response of others. Therefore, feedback emphasizes a process of writing and rewriting. It helps the students work out the potential of the text and to comprehend the writing context, by providing a “sense of audience and an understanding of the expectations of the communities they are writing for” (Marcell, 1999).

The nature of the feedback provided in the experiment varied widely according to the teacher’s preferences as well as to the kind of the writing task he had set and the effect he had wished to create. However, while a response to written work is probably essential to the development of the writing skill, it becomes problematic as to who should give this response, the form it should take, and whether it should focus more on ideas or on form.

The students’ expectations from the teacher’s feedback were different. At the very beginning of the experiment, nearly all the students wanted their errors marked and corrected. Then the expectations differed. Some students wanted praise. Others saw the feedback as condescending. Some wanted a response to their ideas, while others used the commentary effectively. Others ignored it altogether. It was really difficult for the researcher to cater all these expectations. A full dialogue with individual students proved to be beneficial, though it consumed time and hard toil. This took the form of “revise and resubmit” (Ferries, 1997) in which the participants detailed the changes they had made in their drafts on the feedback they had received.
The informants were familiar with the kind of feedback provided in commentary and minimal marking. Commentary was the most common type of teacher’s written feedback. It consisted of handwritten commentary on the students’ paper. This kind of feedback was seen as a response to the students’ work rather than an evaluation to what they had written. It stated how the text already written appeared to the teacher as a reader, how successful it had been and above all, how it could be improved. To be effective, this kind of feedback took the form of both marginal and end comments. To summarize and prioritize key points and to make general observations on the students’ work, comprehensive end notes were written. Comments on the margin are primordial because they are immediate and proximate as they appear at the exact point in the composition where the problem occurs.

In the experiment, these proved more effective than end comments because they made sure that the students understood precisely what they referred to. The students had difficulty in grasping the idea of end comments because they saw them as too general.

A variation of commentary often used for final draft was the rubrics. These set out the criteria that had been used to assess the assessment and how the students had performed in relation to these criteria. It goes without saying that different rubrics were used for different genres. This kind of feedback taught the students how to restrict the range of issues that could be addressed for the different genres. They showed them how the teacher had made his grading decisions and what values had been taken into account in a particular piece of writing.

Besides, the researcher had made use of minimal marking feedback. This is a type of in-text form-based feedback. It develops longer term editing and proofreading because attention is primarily given to the features that have just been taught.

Bates et al. (1993), as well as Ferries (1997) state this type of feedback is more effective in stimulating a student’s response because it indicates the location and usually the type of error, rather than show direction. It also develops self-editing strategies. To accomplish this task, a set of simple correction codes such as that suggested in Byrne (1981) was used. It was hoped that this kind of feedback would make the correction neater and less threatening than masses of red ink. It also helped the students to find and identify their mistakes when a problem extended beyond a sentence boundary; it was difficult to categorize that problem. Therefore, the solution was to broaden the categories to focus on a limited number of areas (Hyland, 1990).
Another variation of rubrics was tried. This can be called a true minimal marking method where less information was provided to the informants as nothing was underlined and no symbols were used. A cross in the margin alongside the line indicated surface errors in which they occurred. This encouraged the students to identify the problems and correct them before handing the paper. It was impossible to spot out various rhetorical and communicative inaccuracies with this kind of feedback. It was observed that the students appreciated it because it generated peer discussion and students collaboration in correction.

We are aware that teachers usually respond to form because they know that errors of grammar are an obvious problem for L2 writers. It is a fact that the process approach to writing emphasizes the need for language production uninhibited by language correction. Cumming (1985) finds that teachers try to make comprehension order of the students’ scripts by focusing on surface features. Vivian Zamel (1985) argues that teachers respond as language teachers rather than writing teachers. The effectiveness of such correction has been questioned. Truscott (1996) concludes that error correction is ineffective in improving students' writing. Therefore, researchers encourage teachers to focus on global issues of meaning and organization and on the process of writing.

4.3.1 Responding to Errors

We admit that teacher written feedback should respond to all aspects of students’ texts: structure, organization, style, contents, and presentation. However, during the experiment, not every aspect was covered on every draft at every stage of the writing process. The students were helped to generate, focus and organize their ideas by providing feedback that addresses the development of clear expression of content. Attention to sentence-level errors was generally delayed to the final draft as major parts of the paper were altered and revised. There were cases where the students confused between text stages, used inappropriate text structure, and even made tense and vocabulary that grossly interfered with the right expression of their ideas. It was thought profitable rather than an extemporized response to errors, to reinforce the patterns of each genre so that it would be grasped by the learners.

Another issue that was observed was that despite the teacher’s effort, there were some errors that seemed to be blind spots for some students and that persisted in their work. To
attend to all errors was obviously counterproductive we had to prioritize problems for feedback and review. There are numerous factors that can influence the errors students make and practitioners will need to consider individual differences and students particular preferences for feedback. To target which errors in feedback, Ferris (2002) offers the following criteria:

- Genre-specific errors - those particular to the current target text-type.
- Stigmatizing errors - those that most disturb the particular target community of readers.
- Comprehensibility errors - those that most interfere with the clarity of the writing.
- Frequent errors - those consistently made by the individual student across his writing.
- Student-identified errors - those the student would like the teacher to focus on.

As stated above, the issue is that teachers do not simply respond to grammar and context. They have a number of different purposes. Reid (1993) distinguishes responses that are descriptive (the main idea in the essay is x) personal (the part I like is y), and evaluative (comments that justify a judgment). Ferries et al. (1997), on the other hand identifies eight broad functions to response in over 1500 teacher’s comments, ranging from ‘asking for unknown information’ (what is your focus here?) to ‘giving information on ideas’ (this is a bit off track). In the experiment, the kind of feedback provided was greatly influenced by the kind of purpose that characterized each stage of the writing process. The general aim of the feedback was to influence the writing of the text in progress. Bates et al. (1993) propose the following way to achieve these different purposes:

- Write personal comments –maintaining a dialogue between reader and writer.
- Provide guidance when necessary- avoiding advice that is too directive or prescriptive.
- Make text –specific comments- comments to the text rather than general rules.
- Balance positive and negative comments-avoiding discouraging students with criticism.

To follow these directions too strictly may be unproductive and too difficult as different students as well as different assignments require different types of responses.
Some of the feedback was directed towards the requirements of the genre in practice and therefore, the other issues such as grammar correctness were differed to the final draft.

In the next pages, we shall discuss the following pertinent questions: which of the two can be an effective choice in encouraging revision and proofreading strategies: praise or criticism, and how can criticism be made constructive in facilitating students revision?

Teacher feedback is a two-edge sword. While it is an important pedagogical resource, it also involves delicate social interaction that can affect the relationship between the teacher and the student and influence instruction itself (Anna-Brita Stenstrom, Gisle Anderson, Ingrid Kristine Hasund, 2002). To avoid this, migration strategies are often used.

Brown (1980), Eisenberg and Garvey (1981), Jefferson (1984), and Shieldon (1992) define mitigating strategies as face-saving, other attentive strategies which express the speaker’s sensitively to opponent by being softened and modified so as not to create offence.

Mitigating strategies are also used to help moderate the teacher’s dominant role and tone down what might be seen as over directive intervention in students’ writing. Our main concern during this experiment was to investigate how students respond to comments that were too directive and prescriptive. Knoblauch and Brannon argue that writing can be stolen from a writer by the teacher’s comments and that if the informants follow directive feedback too loosely they may develop neither cognitive skills nor their writing abilities, but merely rewrite texts to reflect their teacher’s concerns (1984:190).

Reid (1994) states that non-conductive approaches violate the cultural expectation of students from backgrounds where explicit advice and correction is expected. Furthermore, they also fail to give L2 students the direct and concrete help they need. In the experiment, therefore, the feedback was carefully studied taking into consideration the level of the students because indirect comments have the real potential to cloud issues and create confusion (Johns, 1977), and mitigation allows teachers to minimize the risk for demotivating students or of taking over their texts. At length, written feedback from teachers and peers can play a significant role in improving L2 students writing, but this role is complex and requires careful reflection to be used effectively.
4.3.2 Teacher-Student Conferencing

The second means to enhance revision during the experiment was the given feedback on student writing through face-to-face conferencing. The one-way written feedback has its own limitations. These limitations can be supplemented by conferencing. Conferencing can provide the written feedback with opportunities for “the teacher and students to negotiate the meaning of a text through dialogue” (McCarthey, 1992:1).

Conferencing is an interactive process that provides teachers with opportunities to respond to the diverse cultural, educational and writing needs of their students. It enables them to clarify meaning and resolve ambiguities. As for the learners, conferencing not only assists learners with auditory learning styles, but gives them a clear idea of their strengths and weaknesses. It develops their autonomy skills, allows them to raise questions on their written feedback and helps them construct a revision plan (F. Hyland, 2000; Riley, 1997).

The experimental groups seemed to appreciate the detailed discussion that conferencing entailed. Zamel (1980) finds that students receive more focused and useable comments than though written feedback. During the experiment, conferences varied considerably to the nature of the texts already written.

There were two kinds of conferencing. Those in which the talking was done only by the teacher and those in which the students were active participants asking questions, clarifying meaning and discussing their papers rather than passively accepting advice. As usual, the poor writers were those who were silent. To ensure their effectiveness, careful planning was always required. Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) acknowledge that when they are done successfully, conferences can lead to revisions in subsequent drafts but have more lasting effects on improving writing in later assignments.

During the conferences, it was observed that some students were not at ease. This situation was due to the fact that they found themselves in a situation that totally differed from the typical classroom situation. Some lacked experience in getting full individual attention and feared discussing the writing face-to-face with their teachers. Some students lacked the experience, interactive abilities, or aural comprehension skills. This explained the reason why they wanted to talk in their mother tongue. Goldstein and Conrad (1990) explain that some learners have cultural inhibitions about engaging informally with authority figures, let alone
questioning them. As a result, the students would passively incorporate the teacher’s suggestions into their work without thought, leading to the kind of “appropriation” of students’ texts discussed earlier.

We observed that conferencing individually with each and every student is time consuming. It also requires good interaction skills.

There were students who did not understand the aim of conferencing. There were different students with different expectations. Some were hoping for proofreading instead of using the opportunity to develop the writing skills and genre awareness. Others hoped for conversation practice. In short, while the use of conferencing is attractive, it may result in both success and failure. Therefore, conferencing requires careful planning and great preparation. Before holding conferences, the following conference planning decisions were considered:

- Whether to hold conferences in class or outside class hours
- Whether to work one-to-one or in small groups
- How frequently to hold conferences
- How much time to allocate to each student
- Which topics to cover
- Whether to ask students to prepare for the conference
- How to manage the conference
- How to follow it up

Sources: Teacher-Student Conference Planning Decisions (Ferris, 1997)

As stated above, conferences require a good action. Time and rooms were scheduled and so were the different points listed above.

The teacher ensured that the students were well-prepared to make the most of the conferences by making sure that the purpose of the activity was clearly understood. This was done by briefing the students about the role of one-to-one feedback during the first steps of the experiment. It was necessary to provide some training where explicit instruction was given. There was also revision of interaction patterns such as requesting and giving information, seeking clarification and so forth… To ensure that the informants take an active role in the conference, they were asked to prepare sessions in advance. This made them read
through and annotate their drafts by putting a number on the margin at points where they needed advice and write out the corresponding question or comment on a separate sheet.

Instead of underlining where they wanted feedback, or correction of possible errors to discuss, the groups were provided with given planning worksheet before conference which addresses the goals of the session. This task required the subjects to think about the meeting and to reflect on their writing. Besides, the teacher also prepared for conferencing by making notes of points to discuss on a draft or listing features of the students’ writing that needed attention. This method proved to be effective and it saved time too.

4.3.3 Peer Feedback

Peer response is said to provide a means of both improving writers’ drafts and developing readers’ understanding of good writing. A result of the experiment, however, was that the students were less positive than teachers because they tended to prefer teacher’s feedback.

The theoretical advantages of peer response are largely based on the fact that writing and learning are social processes. Mittan (1989) states that collaborative peer review helps learners engage a community of equals who respond to each other’s work and together create an authentic social context for interaction and learning.

The students were seen participating actively in learning. They were getting responses not from their teacher but from real readers in a non-threatening stress-free environment. The participants in the experiment benefited a lot from seeing how readers understood their ideas. They, therefore, understood what they needed to improve and also gained skills necessary to “critically analyze and revise their own writing” (Leki, 1990; Zhang, 1995).

Most of the peer review focused essentially on sentence level problems than ideas and organization. This could be explained by the fact that the informants are rhetorically inexperienced. They had the tendency to underline spelling and grammar mistakes. Their comments were unclear, vague, so unhelpful or “even overtly critical and sarcastic (Leki, 1990) rather emphasizing a positive group climate (Carson and Nelson, 1996), the students
participating in some teams in the experiment critically appraised peer’s writing, making feedback beneficial to a certain degree.

Peer response took a number of different forms. It also occurred at various stages in the writing process. Most of the time, it consisted in assigning students to groups of two, three, or four who exchanged completed first draft and gave comments on each others’ work before they revised them. This occurred during class time. It could take up to an hour to complete when readers were asked to produce written comments and writers were required to provide written responses to these. When peer sessions involved free exchange of reactions to a composition, there were sporadic comments that were too general and unfocused. To save time, learners worked with a set of reviewing guidelines that assisted them in focusing on particular aspects of the writing and the conventions of the genre.

Because peer review needs not be confined to first drafts only, students collaborated in pre-writing tasks to generate ideas for the assignments before any draft was made. Furthermore, they even commented on each other’s brainstormings and outlines to raise awareness of the rhetorical issues involved and to develop writing strategies as suggested in Hayes (1994). The purpose was to encourage negotiation of rhetorical planning by involving a reader (the peer). This was drawn on Vygotskyan ideas of activity in the “zone of proximity” development.

As the experiment went on, learners were able to intervene with helpful advice as they had developed their knowledge of relevant features of context, system, content, and genre. In early drafts, their comments were geared towards the clarity and relevance of the ideas and their coherence for readers. At later stages, their comments addressed elements of grammar and expression and how the text was structured rhetorically to effectively present the writers’ message. Students were asked to bring copies for each member of the group to read. This allowed them to have a wide range of responses. Some scholars suggest the discussion of a student’s paper on line as a synchronous chat exercise or synchronously through e-mail. This possibility was not tried for various reasons. The most obvious one was that not all the informants had a computer; let alone access to the internet at home.

It should be noted that because of the lack of time, some peer responses occurred outside the classroom. Many students said that they sought help from classmates, friends, and even parents or members of the family who are at higher levels of proficiency than themselves.
One particular feature of this kind of feedback is that these informants are typically of equal status and in relationship with them that is, socially close and relaxed. This resulted in a constructive criticism which was freely given and correction was supplemented by detailed discussion. Similar results were shown by Hyland (1994) when she mentions a mature Taiwanese student illustrating the value of such feedback. She says:

I got the long essay yesterday. There were some mistakes and some sentences were not clear. I didn’t ask my husband to revise the first draft, so there were lots of grammar mistakes. When I finish an essay, I usually give it to my husband. My husband corrects my mistakes and points out which sentence is not clear. I think it is good for me to learn how to write a correct essay. Sometimes I have good ideas, but I cannot explain very well in English. My husband can give me advice to improve my writing. I always discuss some sentences with my husband and he teaches me grammar. In this way, I think I can improve my English ability. I like this kind of feedback. I can have more ideas about my essay during the discussion.

(1994: 47)

Any feedback is precious no matter what its sources are. However, such kind of informal peer feedback that takes place outside the control of teachers proved to be problematic. Some students were assisted by their parents who happened to be teachers of English; others were helped by persons who have a degree in English. Instead of providing the feedback, these people did the actual writing. Unaware of what the requirements were, they wrote something that did not show the students’ own capabilities. It was explained to these students that the teacher wanted to control the feedback in order to get an idea of the students’ abilities and improvements.
Rather than isolated occurrences, peer review sessions were an integrated part of the experiment. Right from the outset, the subjects were informed that peer response would be frequently required.

What is Peer Editing?

Peer editing means responding with appreciation and positive criticism to your classmates’ writing. It is an important part of this course because it can:

- Help you become more aware of your reader when writing and revising
- Help you become more sensitive to problems in your writing and more confident in correcting them.

Rules for Peer responding:

- Be respectful of your classmate’s work
- Be conscientious-read carefully and think about what the writer is trying to say
- Be tidy and legible in your comments
- Be encouraging and make suggestions
- Be specific with comments

Remember: you do not need to be an expert in grammar. Your best help is as a reader and that you know when you have been interested, entertained, persuaded, or confused.

Sources: A Peer Review Introduction Sheet (Reid, 1993)

There were students who were anxious because they were going to share their writing. To reduce this kind of stress, groups were formed according to students’ wishes. Because some students had certain affinities with others, this- we thought- would reduce stress. In other words, some informants were allowed to self-select their groups. As a first step, this seemed to be a good practice until the anxious students gained a better idea of their writing abilities. In reality, these students were still anxious. This kind of feeling was fossilized and it seemed almost impossible to get rid of it. To tackle this problem, another means was tried. It consisted of pairs that were based on their abilities to offer mutual assistance. These pairs
were formed with one participant of slightly higher proficiency than the other. Working privately -so to speak- enabled the anxious students to easily share their writing.

To enable the subjects to help each other, the purpose of the peer response was clearly stated and rules for responding were suggested. It was difficult to make the students comfortable about their sharing their work and collaborating. Efforts and time were provided to ensure the activity as nonjudgmental and as a means of learning to consider readers’ needs in expressing their purposes. An introductory information sheet was provided to outline the advantages of peer response.

Principle of effective peer response:

- Make peer response an integral part of the course
- Model the process
- Build peer response skills progressively throughout the term.
- Structure the peer response task.
- Vary peer response activities.
- Hold students accountable for giving feedback and for considering the feedback they receive.
- Consider individual student needs
- Consider logistical issues, including
  - The size and composition of the groups
  - The mechanics of exchanging papers

Sources: Ferris and Hedgcock (1998:178)

Because the students were unfamiliar with peer response tasks, we collected and read all the comments that were written to the feedback. Even the writers themselves were asked to write a brief reaction to the comments they received stating whether and how they incorporated them into their subsequent draft.

It was expected that developing peer response skills would take time. It was also expected that the students would not assume full responsibility for feedback immediately, nor could they overcome their doubts about the quality of their peer’s comments.
Research asserts that integrating peer response into a writing course involves patience and supportive environment in which students can take increasing responsibility for their interaction and feedback. Feedback is certainly a major element that enhances revision. The experiment did not take into consideration the teaching of peer response. Because the informants lacked the language competence, they could react intuitively to their classmates’ papers. Indeed, peer response practices cannot be most effective unless they are modelled, taught and controlled.

Beng (1999) finds that peer response training leads to significantly more meaning changes and higher marks on L2 writers’ second draft regardless of proficiency and levels. Furthermore, the peer response literature strongly advocates teacher input prior to the first feedback session (e.g. Carson and Nelson, 1996; Leki, 1990; Lockhart and Ng, 1995). The appropriate schemata for responding come partly from the students’ understanding of appropriate genre, system, and context which can develop in the early stages of a writing cycle. What they needed, then, was strategies for reading and responding, that is, knowing what to look for and how to comment on it.

Reid (1993) assumes that training peer response practice can begin by students working on their own papers with a reflective note to the teacher explaining:

- What he was trying to do in a paper
- What worked
- What did not work
- What was learnt and so on (1993:210)

To assist them in accomplishing their task, students can be given a short list of attributes to look for in their papers. This will involve checking for a particular rhetorical feature that the subject of a task from a stage such as topic sentences, transition paragraphs, problem solution patterns. According to Reid (1993), this will be more effective if the list is submitted with the draft. The students begin to learn to take responsibility for carefully reading his paper. Reid (1993) believes that asking students to write down their reflections can increase their understanding of the genre and the writing process, focusing their attention on texts, encouraging revision and providing them with ways of proofreading and editing text (1993: 212).
Carson and Nelson (1996) suggest that students should build self-awareness by watching videos of peer discussion taken in other classes. White and Ng (1995) propose that students should examine transcripts of peer review sessions. Furthermore, students should be given explicit instruction in the “language of response” and provided with useful expressions to complement, suggest, and mitigate. Most importantly, students need experience in exploring “safe” essays written by students from other classes either in groups or as a whole class, following a list of questions that elicit a general response and some suggestions. This training in response strategies can follow general directives:

What to look for when reading your partner’s draft:

- Clarity- are you given all the information you need in a clear order?
- Interest- does the paper interest you?
- Effectiveness- does the paper make an impact on you?
- Accuracy- are there any errors of spelling, grammar, definitions?
- Try to answer these questions as you read:
  - What is the main idea that the writer is trying to express in this paper?
  - Which part of the paper do you like best?
  - Find two or three places where you like more explanations, examples, or details.
  - Did you lose the flow of writing at any point or find places where the writer jumped suddenly to another idea?
  - Did the beginning capture your attention and make you want to read on? Why or why not?

Sources: Raimes, (1992:64)

Another approach is to give students a number of core response principles which they can build on through the course with increasing detail on what they like and dislike, and greater explanation on how their suggestions will improve the text. Mittan (1989) suggests the following principles:

- Offer a positive response and encouragement to the writer,
- Identify the purpose and main points of the text,
- Direct questions to the writer,
- Offer suggestions.
Still whether these forms of training are likely to overcome the reservations some students have about the quality of feedback they get from their peers remains highly questionable. Some students remain reluctant to engage in collaborative activities of the kind.

It was noticed that peer review during the experiment was unstructured. Sometimes it was too general, too vague, to say the least. Response sheets could help structure it by providing guidance on what participants should look for while reading. The aim is to build students’ responding skills as well as to focus attention on the most relevant issues. Students should have precise instructions and clear directions concerning the different texts they are expected to do. However, the informants’ behavior will mirror their own priorities. And this will result in merely an indirect form of “appropriateness”. Calkins (1982) states that many L2 learners need focus for their interaction especially in the early stages of peer feedback activities although these constraints can be gradually relaxed and the students given greater autonomy as their confidence and metacognitive of writing increases.

Response sheets can be a precious tool to provide valuable form of indirect instruction about good writing practices and genre format. Even the students can be involved in writing response sheets. Response sheets include a space for writers to specify particular areas they would like the reader to comment on. The precise focus of the response sheets will depend on the proficiency of the students, their experience of peer-reviewing, the stage in the writing process, and to a certain extent the particular features that the teacher wishes to express.

Peer Response Sheet: Argument

Author’s name………………………….. Title of Draft………………

Write three questions you would like your responder to answer.

1

2

3
Responder’s name: …………………

Read the questions above. Listen to the author read his/her draft aloud. Read the paper again if you want to. Then write a response for the author.

Author’s Reflection

Read the response you have received carefully. Reflect on it and write what you have learnt and what you intend to do next below. (Mittan, 1982:216-217)

Figure 4.1: A More Interactive Response Sheet for an Argument Paper (Harris, 2000).

In sum, peer feedback was quite effective in improving the informants’ writing. It pushed them to revise and gave them valuable insights of how the reader saw and understood their texts. Still, there remain questions of which forms of feedback could be more effective, and how frequent it should be used, how much training and guidance should be provided, not to mention how best to group the students, and how to encourage participation. Ferris and Hedglock (1998) offer the following guidelines:

- Genre-specific errors-those particular to the current target text-type.
- Stigmatizing errors-those that most disturb the particular target community of readers.
- Comprehensibility errors- those that most interfere with the clarity of the writing.
- Frequent errors-those consistently made by the individual student across his or her writing.
- Student-identified errors- those the student would like the teacher to focus on.

As seen in the experiment, feedback was central to learning to write and sensitize them to the needs of readers. In addition, it offers an additional layer of scaffolding to extend writing skills, promote accuracy and clear ideas, and develop an understanding of written genre.
To make the most of this pedagogical tool, teachers should ask students for their feedback preferences at the beginning of the course and address these in their responses.

- The response practices the teacher intends to use in the course should be explained at the outset. This should include the focus of the feedback that will be given on a particular drafts, the codes that will be used, whether oral or written, or performs will be employed and so on.
- Expectations concerning students’ responses to feedback need to be clearly explained at the beginning so that students understand what is required from them in terms of follow up to feedback.
- Teachers should provide both margin and end comments in their written feedback if time allows, and remembering that students may find comments vague and difficult to act on, seek a balance of praise and doable suggestions for revision.
- Criticism should be mitigated as far as possible while bearing in mind the potential of indirectness for misunderstanding.
- Both teachers and students need to prepare carefully to make the most of face to face conferencing.
- Peer response can be helpful in providing learners with an alternative audience and a different source of commentary but students may need to be trained to respond effectively in these contexts.
- Students ought to be encouraged to reflect on the feedback they receive from any source by keeping journals or writing summaries in which they respond to the comments.

Sources: Silva and Matsuda (2001)

### 4.3.4 Criticism of Peer Response

Research shows that while discussing the topic of peer response in ESL writing classes with other teachers and with conference audiences, many negative comments are heard here and there: “I tried peer feedback in my class, and it did not work. I don’t think it is appropriate for ESL writers”. Peer response is a pedagogical tool that is not without its detractors. Leki (1990), Ferris (2003), Liu and Hansen (2002) note several potential problems with peer
feedback derived both from the comments ESL students and from their own and other teachers’ experiences.

- Students sometimes focus too heavily on surface concerns or editing, neglecting larger revising issues.
- Students can provide vague, unhelpful comments.
- Students may be hostile, sarcastic, overly critical, or unkind in their criticisms of their classmates’ writing.
- Students feel uncertain about the validity of their classmates’ responses.
- In peer group discussions, students may struggle with their own listening comprehension skills or with the peer’s accent.
- Lack of L2 formal (rhetorical) schemata may lead to inappropriate expectations about the content and structure of peers’ texts, which can then result in counterproductive feedback that leads writers further away from U.S. academic expectations.

Sources: Lui and Hansen (2002: 155)

To the practical concerns of Leki (1990), Ferris (2003), Liu and Hansen (2002), Carson and Nelson (1994) raise questions about peer-response and writing groups based on broader cultural issues rather than specific pedagogical problems. The two researchers drew a clear distinction between collectivist cultures (e.g., Chinese and Japanese) and individualist cultures (e.g., United States). Carson and Nelson (1994) point out that both collectivist and individualist cultures use collaborative learning. However, they do so not for the same purpose. In collectivist cultures “a primary goal of the group is to maintain the relationships that constitute the group, to maintain cohesion and group harmony among group members” (Carson & Nelson, 1994: 20). Yet “writing groups as they are frequently implemented in composition classes in the United States function more often for the benefit of the individual writer than for the benefit of the group” (Carson & Nelson, 1994: 22).

As a result of these differing cultures, there will be different expectations for group work. The impetus / motivation behind the response of the students from collectivist cultures “is likely to come from a need for a positive group climate rather than the need to help an individual writer” (1994: 23). While investigating the interactions of several Chinese ESL
students in a writing group, Carson and Nelson (1996) find that the Chinese students were reluctant to initiate comments, and, when they did, they monitored themselves carefully so as not precipitate conflicts within the group” (1996 : 1). Kech (1990) cautions the same difficulty stating that culturally mixed writing groups may experience problems attributable to differing expectations and communication patterns. He adds that Chinese students may say what the writer wants to hear or may not speak at all rather than say what might be helpful to the writer but might hurt the writer’s feelings or damage the cohesiveness of the group (1990: 23).

Zhang (1995) studies the affective advantage of peer feedback for ESL students. In his survey of 81 college and university ESL writers, he found that respondents overwhelmingly preferred teacher feedback over peer or self-feedback. On the basis of these findings, he argues that L2 practioners should be cautious in applying the findings and recommendations of L1 compositions researchers and teachers to the teaching of ESL composition pedagogy. He adds:

The L2 student and the L1 students may never enter the writing process with distinctly different conceptualizations and priorities about input or intervention at the revision stage.

(Zhang, 1995:218)

Jacobs, Curtes, Braine and Hung (1998) find different results. However, all researchers mentioned above agree that: It is not advisable to either use peer feedback exclusively or to abolish it altogether, (Ferris, 2003: 112; Zhang, 1999).

4.3.5 Benefits of Peer Response

Many schools of thought have argued favourably on peer response. To begin with and as peer response activities take place at various stage of the writing process (prewriting/discovery/invention, between draft revision and editing), they fit well with the increased emphasis on cognitive processes and social constructionism in composition teaching (Connor & Asenavage, 1994; Emig, 1971; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Zamel, 1982, 1985, 1987).
Moreover, peer response is based on “the notion of collaborative learning which derives from a socially constructionist view… that knowledge is essentially a socially justified belief” (Carson & Nelson, 1994:17-18). To constructionists like new ideas and paradigms are “constructs generated by communities of like-minded peers” (1986:774). The support of collaborative learning and social constructionism is also derived from the Vygotskyan view that “cognitive development results from social interaction” (Carson & Nelson, 1994; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Vygotsky 1986). Last but not least, in L2 context, group work in general and writing response groups in particular have support from second language acquisition claims about the importance of interaction for L2 development (Duff, 1986; Ellis, 1991; Gass & Selenker, 2001; Long & Porter, 1985; Mangelsdorf, 1989; Mittan, 1989; Pica, Young & Doughty, 1989).

Researchers have claimed that peer feedback activities in the classroom offer various advantages to novice writers both native and non-native speakers. The following benefits have been suggested:

- Students can take active roles in their own learning (Hiverla, 1999; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994).
- Students can “reconceptualize their ideas in light of their peer’s reactions” (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994:746).
- Students can engage in rehearsed, low-risk, exploratory talk that is less feasible in classroom and teacher-student interactions (Mittan, 1989; Moore, 1986).
- Students receive “reactions, questions, and responses from authentic readers” (Mittan, 1989:209).
- Students gain a clear understanding of reader expectations by receiving feedback on what they have done well and on what remains unclear (Mittan, 1989; Moore, 1986; Witbeck, 1976).
- Responding to peer’ writing builds the critical skills needed to analyze and revise one’s own writing (Leki, 1990; Mittan, 1989).
- Students gain confidence and reduce apprehension by seeing peers’ strengths and weaknesses in writing (leki, 1990; Mittan, 1989).
- Peer response activities build classroom community (Ferris, 2003; Hirvela, 1999; Liu & Hansen, 2002; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994).
Mangelsdorf (1989) mentions specific benefits of peer feedback for L2 students’ linguistic development, in addition to the benefits for all student writers. He notes that interactions build communication skills and provide important opportunities for students to test their L2 hypotheses.

At length, some researchers suggest that peer response activities can reduce the writing teacher’s workload and can feed the teacher with important information about understanding more motivated literally skills and their understanding of what constitutes good writing. Mittan calls this last point: the ultimate benefit of peer review process for the teacher.

Regardless of how I judge the quality of (a student’s) finished essays, (the) peer review can show me some of her knowledge about good writing ....indeed, I have found that students whose writing is consistently average or even poor very often write the most thoughtful and helpful peer reviews. This is true empowerment: encouraging students to demonstrate and use their knowledge and expertise rather than punishing them for their as –yet unpolished performance.

(1989:212)

Along with the question of whom to involve in conferences, we have considered the following issues: when, where and how often to hold conferences. Options ranged from holding conferences every week or at every session in which students write during class and come up to the teacher’s desk for a conference whenever they feed the need, to holding them at regular intervals (e.g., seeing each during office works on 3 to 4 week rotation), to requiring students to come at least once during class session for conferences completely optional and holding them only at the student’s request.

Decisions about frequency and time frames depend on the logistical constraints such as scheduling and office space. Because we did not have an office, it was impossible to schedule
office time. Occasionally, classes had to be cancelled to hold conferences with hard-to-schedule students. The best way to hold one-to-one conferences was therefore during class time. Therefore, careful planning was required because the rest of the group had to be productively engaged while individual discussions were held.

When tackling the issue of peer feedback, a wide range of theoretical and practical questions have been examined:

- At what point or points in the writing process should a teacher intervene (if at all)?
- What are the differences between appropriation interventions in responding to student writing?
- Should feedback related to content and organization be given separately from comments and corrections on form (grammar, spelling, punctuation, and so on)?
- To what extent is written or oral feedback more effective in a given context?
- How should teachers identify, select, and prioritize feedback points for their commentary?
- What is the appropriate balance between praise and constructive criticism?
- Are marginal comments more helpful than end comments or are they both necessary?
- How can teachers write clear, helpful comments and conduct effective conferences?
- What problems do ESL students experience in understanding teacher feedback, and how should teachers endeavour to mitigate these problems?

Sources: Ferris, and Hedgcock, (1998)

4.4 Exploring the Students’ Writing Behaviour

During the experiment that was conducted over a period of one year, involving close observation of the subjects, different kinds of assessment were provided. At the very beginning of the experiment, we corrected all mistakes in the composition and then returned them to the students for correction and rewriting. In some occasions, symbolic codes to mark the mistakes in the compositions were used. The compositions were then returned to the students for revision. In other occasions, two compositions on the same topic but with obvious discrepancies in quality were selected and used as samples for discussion. After discussion,
students evaluated their classmates’ compositions according to a checklist and gave feedback to one another. Students then revised their own draft with reference to their fellow students’ feedback but according to their judgments. Another time, the students would self-evaluate their compositions according to a checklist, reflect on their own work and revise it.

While the control group underwent the same procedure for assessment, the experimental groups were assigned different compositions evaluation methods for the period of the study:

- The teacher’s evaluation (detailed).
- The peer evaluation (checklist).
- The teacher’s evaluation (symbolic codes).
- The self-evaluated (checklist).

At the end of the experiment, a follow up questionnaire to explore the students’ views of the various evaluation methods was administered. The questionnaire probing the informants’ attitude to writing was adapted from one that was part of the national assessments of educational progress (NAEP) carried out in the United States. In this questionnaire, a study of the education of compositions was conducted in 1983-1984 on all the students in the United States. The parts that were not relevant to the socio-cultural background of our country were omitted.

The aim of the questionnaire was to explore the students’ attitude to writing but focusing on six different aspects:

- Writing values.
- Enthusiasm in writing.
- Views on feedback.
- Writing strategies.
- Revision strategies.
- Writing habits.

Sources: Adapted from NAEP (1983-1984)

The questionnaire contained twenty-five questions. A likert scale was implemented: each question was given a weighting of one of five marks, with higher marks representing
better attitudes to writing. Two issues were investigated on the basis of the changes made between the first draft and the final version of the composition by the students. The first issue concerned the number of ideas relevant to the topic in the first draft as compared with its final version. The second issue concerned whether there were significant and reasonable stated changes during the process from drafting to revising. One experienced teacher helped in the investigation of these two issues.

4.4.1 Analysis of Composition Pre-and-Post-Test Results

The first analysis concerned the post-test results of the two experimental groups students. The statistical analysis showed that there was a significant difference between the adjusted post-test results.

A second analysis was of the four component parts of the post-test, i.e., ‘context’, ‘wording and sentences structure’ and ‘punctuation marks’. This analysis revealed a significant difference between the performance of the experimental groups and the control group. The development of writing skills requires long-term nurturing, and the experimental period of a year was shortened by the various national and religions holidays. Despite this huge constraint, this experiment gave the students sufficient practice in evaluating and revising to bring about significant differences in the final versions of compositions between the experimental groups and the control group.

A third analysis compared the marks obtained by the students of the experimental groups in the pre and post-test. The analysis showed a significant difference in the pre and post-test results when the groups were shown the teacher evaluation (symbolic codes). A significant difference was also found when using peer evaluation (checklist). The analysis, therefore, showed that these two groups had made significant progress in their compositions. However, no significant difference was found assigned when using the teacher’s evaluation (detailed) and self-evaluation (checklist), implying an absence of measurable improvement in their performance. It must be noted that the teacher’s evaluation (detailed) was also used in the control group and it showed no improvement either.
4.4.2 Analysis of Questionnaire Guarding Pre-and-Post Test

Attitude to Writing

The six aspects of attitude to writing were investigated in the questionnaire starting with
the aspect of “enthusing in writing”. There were significant differences between the students
with different language abilities. The analysis showed that the students with a stronger
language ability- especially introvert learners who are better at writing that extrovert students
who are good at oral expression- had great enthusiasm for writing than less capable ones.
Secondly, analysis of the aspects views on feedback showed significant preferences among
students. The students preferred teacher evaluations (symbolic codes), followed by teacher
evaluation (detailed) followed by using peer evaluation, followed by using self-evaluation.

The general findings reflect the researcher’s belief that the students in general treasure
the teacher’s evaluation of their compositions. They believe that evaluation by the teacher is
more effective method than evaluation by student whether peer or self. It was plain that they
did not wish to study without the authority of their teacher as they would not accept new
evaluation methods. They demonstrated strong reservation about peer evaluation. Another
likely reason for peer evaluation (checklist) being the less preferred was that actual process of
peer evaluation did not convince the students that classmates could provide an evaluation as
good as their teacher’s. In fact, whether students are able to evaluate their classmates’ writing
is a question that has concerned many scholars who strongly advocate peer-evaluation. For
instance, Bruffee (1973) says that the students can act as little teachers only after training
under supervision. As stated previously, more composition evaluation practice a more careful
design of evaluation checklist with more teacher guidance when holding conferences after
peer evaluation may be able to provide a solution to the problem.

The analysis of the aspects of revision strategy showed a significant difference between
the different methods of assessment. A great improvement was observed when using peer
checklist evaluation, followed by the use of teacher evaluation using symbols, followed by the
use of self-checklist evaluation, and the lowest improvement observed where the students
received detailed evaluation by the teachers. These results come in accordance with the views
of scholars that peer evaluation has the potential to encourage students to revise. However, the
possible explanation for the low level of initiative in revising shown by the informants when
they received detailed evaluation by the teacher is that this method gave full discretion to the
teacher with all mistakes having already been corrected by the teacher. As a consequence, initiative in making revisions is really not called for. This result was also observed with the control group where revision not encouraged at all.

4.4.3 Writing Development through Targeted Strategy Instruction

During the experiment and at every stage, strategy instruction was incorporated. Direct instruction was targeted at identified weakness evident in student writing in order to improve writing performance. Hillock (1986) states that research on feedback from peers and teachers shows that it improves overall writing performance.

The rationale behind explicit strategy instruction is to enable the learners to do independently what expert writers do when completing a task. A strategy is made of a series of steps that lead most learners to complete a given task successively. For instance, good writers employ strategies for schemata activation, that is, thinking about personal experiences and knowledge that relate to a prompt, text features, and audience and engaging in prewriting to generate and organize ideas. They also employ strategies for self-regulation which consist of monitoring text production, analyzing, and assessing the quality of the developing text, and modifying and/or changing strategies as needed to complete the writing assignment successfully (Graham and Harris, 2005:112).

Strategy instruction was introduced during the team work and was based on examples from students’ writing. Then, it was reinforced in individual conferences. Those sessions had topics that ranged from local concerns such as word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions to global ones such as ideas, content, organization, and voice.

This instruction proved to be effective as the exposition texts students composed sentences that were grammatically correct as well as unified around the topic. Focus correction areas (FACs) are a sound strategy for incrementally introducing controls and constraints in writing so that novice writers are not overwhelmed during the early stages or in the late stages of revision (Collins, 1997).

Collins who developed this form of feedback describes FCAs as:
Focus correcting is a selective approach to correcting student writing. When teachers focus correct, they select one, two, or three critical problem areas and correct only those areas. Teachers can select any area for focus correction, from capitalization to the use of details. They can select areas for an individual, a group, or the whole class (1997:1)

By limiting the number of FCAS, it was observed that students spent more time during revision improving the content of the paper rather than on the usual concerns such as punctuation, and usage that might be of great use in improving the quality of the text for the time being. An analytic scale was appropriate when the students assessed the strengths and weaknesses of a piece of writing that they had composed. The most common analytic scale is the primary-trait assessment rubric (also referred to as the six traits). This rubric which was developed by Spandel and Stiggin (1997) focuses on the six traits of writing:

- Ideas and content
- Organization
- Voice
- Word choice
- Sentence fluency and
- Conventions

4.4.3.1 Ideas, Content, and Organization

Nothing should be taken for granted; everything had to be taught. The strategy “write first with your heart, then write with the head” means that the students must overcome their emotional blocks and focus first on fluency rather than control so that the students will learn to have and revise from abundance. Therefore, the students should be limited by the amount of words they are assigned to write. Because if they were, they would not find a text to practice the strategy they learn.
Plans that the students are required to make can be inhibiting. Some subjects wrote entire text then they create the required outline. Even when they write an outline, they should be taught how to move from the basic plan and translate ideas to texts. There is a variety of prewriting strategies such as perceptions exercise, heuristics, free writing, brainstorming and graphic organizers that help move a plan to a document. However, such instruction should begin earlier in the middle school where lessons should be inductive as suggested by Hillocks (1986). In inductive lessons, students are given data and are asked to create generalizations from data. On deductive lessons, students are asked to locate example of generalizations that teachers provide.

Instead of assigning topics, the informants were given the freedom to choose their own topics. However, they were led, advised, even geared to tackle up-to-date topics. The purpose of this was to avoid talking about those old fashioned topics that were seen and re-seen hundreds of time: pollution, generation gap, immigration, drug addiction, smoking, delinquency, illiteracy etc.

While choosing their own topics, the informants were observed to be more obsessed by ideas, data rather than by strategies for transforming these data. According to many researchers, to be more effective of six instructional foci for improving writing, students’ attention must be centered on strategies for transforming raw data (Hillocks, 1986). Instead of providing students with ideas, practitioners should provide them with tools that consist of a set of strategies.

A great continuous work must be done before giving students more autonomy. The work should start from middle school where students should be acquainted with the different steps of the process writing approach with the different strategies required at each step. As Moffert (1981) states, most students have not had enough time practice in classifying experiences and creating abstractions because they “are unwittingly encouraged to borrow their generalization from old slogans, wise saws, references books, and teachers’ essay questions, instead of having to forge them from their own experience” (1981:143).

Students tend to respond favourably when they have the choice to learn new modes and genres to expand their repertoire. Romaro (2000) states that middle and high school students especially benefit from multi genre writing assignments that are less restrictive and allow for creativity.
Once they had completed some of the prewriting activities, the students usually had an overall idea of the content they wished to express. These early writings are called zero drafts because they precede a first draft. The zero drafts constitute an early evidence of thinking on paper.

A considerable time was spent here. The reason is that students struggling generated texts that consisted of listing loosely connected ideas or tickertape writing where ideas seemed random. Other students wrote texts whose ideas were unified (all on one topic) but they lacked coherence. This kind of text is called scotch tape approach to organization in which the writer summarizes his ideas by someone else. He never takes the risks to analyze or synthesize the idea and he comes up with a thesis. This was often seen when the subjects were asked in academic format about topics in which they were novice in understanding and where the teacher expected a lot. On writing about books, Moffet points out: it is a narrow notion of exposition, whether it be a book or a teacher’s essay question. It means that certain essential issues of choice about selecting and treating material and creating classes (classification) are never permitted to come up for the student” (1981:141).

In some cases, students resorted to producing writing that Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) call knowledge telling instead of meaning construction. According to Bereiter and Scardamalia knowledge telling is observed when the reader sees that the writer has done little or no planning, when the text seems to have been quickly drafted, and when little or no revision or reflection is evident.

A useful strategy that was proposed by Strong (2006) seemed to be highly effective in helping the informants to plan their writing. This strategy is summarized in the acronym CRAFT.

- C: context for the writer, what knowledge base he will use, from personal experience to formal documents.
- R: role of the writer, the stance the writer will take when composing text (the writer may entertain, be critical, show humour, etc).
- A: the audience for whom one writes (writers must know who their audience is in order to anticipate its needs).
- F: for format.
- T: for topic.
Strong (2006) even suggests that CRAFT is also a useful guide for teachers in designing writing assignments, but he adds it is not a “straitjacket”.

It must be confessed that there is a strong debate over what kind of instruction is regarded as “process writing”. Patthey-Chavez et al. (2001) conclude that “students appear to respond to the type of feedback they receive and when they are asked to standardize their writing rather than to develop it, that is precisely what they do” (2001:469-470). Therefore, the process writing instruction depends directly on who the instructor is. If teachers embrace a standardized linear model of the writing process, or an open-ended recursive model, or a direct instructor model, or an integrated model, or writing as problem solving model, their students will respond accordingly. MacArthur, Schwitz, Graham, Molloy, and Harris (1996) cite a similar comment by Michal Fullan (1986) who says that “teachers may reject innovations not consistent with their current beliefs and practices” (1986: 169). This principle pertains to how teachers and researchers define the writing process and by the same token, interpret the findings.

In the review of the present research, we have found that researchers hold different views of what the process approach entails. Some consider it as a loosely monitored series of step, a ‘natural process’ in the context of authentic tasks without explicit instruction in planning, revising and other strategies (Macarthur et al., 1996). Accordingly, “process writing is primarily based on indirect rather than direct methods of instruction” (Graham and Harris, 1997:252). Others see direct strategy instruction and guided practice integrated into the writing process as crucial to the definition of the process approach (Applebee, 1986; Arwell, 1987; Collins, 1986; Cramer, 2001; Defoe, 2000; Honeycutt and Pritchard, 2005; Poindexter and Oliver, 1998).

According to Cramer (2001), the writing process is “a set of theories, procedures and activities which emphasizes the operations, changes, and procedures by which writing is accomplished’ (2001:53). On the other hand, Applebee (1986) construes the writing process as “strategies that writers employ for particular purposes”. For difficult tasks, writers will use different strategies, and for some tasks these strategies may involve no more than the routine production of first and final drafts (1986:106). Hence, it can be concluded that the writing process that has been studied by many researchers “may be a routine first and final draft devoid of specific strategy instructions or it may be a framework in which strategies and skill development are embedded.
The basic definition of the process model has evolved in the theoretical literature. Now it is regarded quite differently than in its early years when explicit instruction, reflection and guided revision and self-assessment were not associated with the process writing.

4.4.3.2 Voice and Word Choice

The term voice refers to an author’s unique style and personality as reflected in his writing. Voice carries the presence of the writer to the page though choices in tone, vocabulary, syntax and expression (Allwright, 1985). In this experiment, this component was judged as a priority. Voice and style were ranked a later step where students practice and excel in this skill.

Students need to know the words that suit the content and the purposes of their writing. Research has shown that good readers who are poor writers are not able to report information from texts using the original language, suggesting that these students have a problem with vocabulary. Writing samples from both the students of the experimental groups and the control group show that there is a lack of strong nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Extensive reading can often solve this problem. Yet, and because students read less and less, this problem remains.

There were activities that focused on word choice in the experiment. The students were encouraged to use thesauruses. There were also activities that were experienced in whole class lessons with students working with their own writing. For instance, students were asked to list sense words in charts, and then see if they could add one sense to their writing. If they encountered boring words for instance, they were asked to replace generics with specifics. Flowers became dahlias, friends became bonnier; Maggie books became Essay of EB White. Then they were asked to use a dash after a noun group and follow it with a series of specific items in the group. For instance, we enjoyed many fruits at the picnic – apples, oranges, blackberries, and peas or I rode my bike through a maze of streets- belfountaine, Agnes, Bento Boulevard. Such activities motivated the students to search for words. Macrorie (1984) states “that writing comes alive when you put the reader there”.
The students were active during these activities. But, when writing they did not focus on word choice. Some students searched for more appropriate words only after receiving the feedback.

4.4.3.3 Sentence Fluency and Conventions

Sentence fluency refers to the use and variety of different syntax and sentence structure. The students were overwhelmed and side-tracked by their inability to manipulate grammar to create the effects they desired. In using the writing process approach the question was not whether to teach grammar but when to teach grammar. Grammar structures were taught after a drafty was produced as part of revision. Common errors from students’ drafts were pulled out and mini-lessons around them were developed. In other words, grammar was taught when the need for a particular grammatical item had arisen in the students’ writing.

Fundamental research on how students grow syntactically (Hunt, 1977; Loban, 1976, mellow, 1969; O’Hare, 1973) states that the need for understanding grammar and punctuation arises as writers take new syntactic structures. The learners can then experience in their own writing how changing punctuation changes meaning. Kellog Hunt (1977) finds that as learners mature, they consolidate what they once expressed as single simple sentence (a main clause and its attachment) into embedded sentences as in the following examples.

- Aluminum is a metal and it is abundant. It has many uses and it comes from bauxite.

A much more mature student will take the adjective abundant and turns it into a pre-nominative adjective in abundant metal, as well as coordinating three predicates, writing:

- Aluminum is an abundant metal, has many uses and comes from bauxite.

The latter student uses more embedding, putting the main ideas from two sentences into one sentence.

We understood that syntactic development and recognized the evidence of growth. We also knew that as the subjects took on the next structure they would make mistakes.
Therefore, we made sure that every attempt to use a new more sophisticated structure was encouraged and honoured.

In research on the effects of instruction in sentence combining conducted in the middle school children, Frank O’Hare (1973) finds that with systematic instruction based on what is known about how syntax develops students produce one year the structures that are usually expected in four years.

Sentences were selected from students’ writing for sentence combining activities. The students were able to practice creating structures that stretched them but were still within their reach.

Conventions are the mechanical aspects of writing such as spelling, punctuation, usage and paragraph indentation that reveal the semantics of the writing. The students were invited to punctuate the following sentence:

- A woman without her man is nothing.
- A woman, without her man, is nothing.

There was no direct correction. Instead, the informants were asked to read aloud the piece they had composed. The majority commonly corrected their mistakes. To help them stop the inaccuracies, the researcher pointed out at the general location with a check mark in the margin. The students identified and corrected the errors. This method proved to be effective. By explaining and teaching both the error and the correction to another student in the class, learning for the writer who now understands his error is solidified.

Macrorie (1984) finds that it is more helpful for the learners if they personalize the names of the different types of errors they tend to make and use their names as part of the composing vocabulary. For instance, he labels beginning too many mistakes with “there are…” and “it is…” so that the subject slot is reduced to a general pronoun and the verb is a dull state of being verb- with the terms there-ache and it-ache.
Macrorie believes that students’ awareness in detecting mistakes is increased when the learners possess a language that makes sense to describe the errors.

**4.4.4 Developing a Composing Vocabulary**

Throughout the experiment, the learners were introduced to a composing vocabulary. This kind of vocabulary helped them to talk about their writing and also about the writing of their peers. Instead of giving the generalization and then ask the students to find examples (the deductive approach), the researcher started with the parts of speech and the names of the structures that emerged in the students’ writing. The learners were asked to label the words and expressions; that is inductively.

The composing vocabulary included the terms used in the process writing approach. It included emotional issues surrounding writing like getting stuck, the writer’s block, what happens during the process like shaping, brainstorming, looping and the features present in the products that students created like active verbs, sense images, sentence variety, topic sentence, narrative examples etc. As an example, the term “prevision” was used for creating the rough draft. This helped the informants to grasp the term revision as a second look at their writing rather than writing over in ink. The re-prefix meant that the word research is more than one look at data.

The word “own” was taught in the context of writing groups. After sharing his composition with his peers, each student can take the suggestions or not because he “owns” the writing. The word “own” does by no means, mean yielding to every suggestion, even if these suggestions are issued by the authority (the teacher), so to speak.

Macrorie (1984) believes that suggestions help create more options for the writer, but they do not need to dictate his actions. Maisel shares the same principle as he believes that this is a learning moment for the teacher who must realize that it is more important for students to feel like they own their writing than for them to incorporate the changes the teacher wants them to (1999:44).

While participating in their groups, the students expanded their revision repertoire which they could use whenever they felt it necessary. Fear of the blank page; focus correction area
(FCA) (Collins, 1997); gotcha’moment (when the writing captures the writers and they enter a state flow; Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; honouring the process (Maiel, 1999); hook; key concept, sloopy copy; voice; story grammar; hushing the mind (Maisel, 1999); I-It is (using the first person too much); exploding the “wow” moment (in narrative, the climax of the story; Starkweather; Pool, & Horne, 2000); tickertape writing; scotch tape approach; zero draft; knowledge telling (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987); alternative current, kitchen language, and putting the reader there (Macrorie, 1984). All these terms and phrases were taught as appropriate vocabulary for composing.

The subjects were also taught the following: writer-based prose rather than reader-base prose (Elbow, 1981) when they do not consider their audience, the term zoom in the reader needs more details, panoramic view when they need to get “out of the weeds” and make a point, getting off track when a piece lacks unity; the concept show, don’t tell as a way to use elaboration to make a point.

The students can be complimented for taking the opportunity to elaborate when they go beyond listing and naming; they can be praised for providing courtesies for the reader if they demonstrate accurate conventions. Assume your reader has a mind (Macrorie, 1984) is told to the students when they tell their readers so much that the readers get lost or bogged down. If they overcome their internal critic, they have conquered the IC.

To make abstract terms accessible to the informants, the baffling word coherence was replaced by the phrase: words speaking to each other (Macrorie, 1984). Other terms such as tone and voice were introduced because they closely tied to the word coherence. The informants were also taught the following phrases: writer-based prose rather than reader based prose (Elbow, 1988) when they do not consider their audience. The students appreciated using this kind of vocabulary especially when revising and when receiving or providing peer feedback.

Implementing best practices in the process writing approach instruction resulted in improved student writing. However, writing is such a complex task that it cannot be taught once and for all. Every student is an apprentice in learning to write and in writing to learn. No one is consummately a good writer.
4.4.5 Measurement of the Quality of Students’ Written Products

As a result of using the writing process, there has been a great improvement on the quality of the students’ written products. This experimental study with eighty second year students investigated the effects of the process writing instruction on the number and level of revision. The research revealed that students taught how to use the process writing approach scored higher on final drafts. The informants engaged in 3.5 times revision than the students of the control group who were taught a traditional method of composing namely the product writing approach. This revision behaviour has a direct effect as it improved the students’ overall writing performance. These findings go in consistency with the finding by Robinson (1986) and Croes (1990). The former conducted an experimental study with 120 fifth-grade students while the latter conducted a study involving 157 learning disabled students in grade 1-5.

Harris (1992) investigated the relationship between writing quality and attitudes toward writing in a study for 34 third graders randomly assigned to one of four treatment groups. This study indicates some positive effects of the writing process on the variables exemplified.

Similarly, it was observed in our experimental research that the attitude towards writing has totally changed. Raimes (1983) recalls the time when she told her class of advanced students about an article she has been reading ‘Anguish as a second language’ which dealt with the problems of writing in a second language. The students smiled at the ‘pun but agreed with the sentiment’. She discusses the frustrations both the teacher and the students go through. Harold Rosen explains the difficulty of a writing task. He argues,

The writer is a lonely figure cut off from the stimulus and corrective of listeners. He must be a predictor of reactions and act on his predictions. He writes with one hand tied behind his back, being robbed of gesture too of the tone of his voice and the aid of clues the environment provides. He is condemned to monologue; there is no one to help out, to fill the silences, put words in his mouth, or make encouraging noises.

(1981:47)
The overall results of the experiment show to varying degrees positive results on writing products by using the writing process. This is consistent with the findings of the followings studies:

- The use of personal correspondence and the writing process by 236 second-grade children in traditional and process approach classrooms (Hamilton, 1992).
- The writing process as the context for developing 16 “nonnative” students’ writing ability (Chiang, 1992).
- A case study of the development of writing skills over one year for three first graders using a process approach (Eitelgeorge, 1994).
- A comparison between the effects of using traditional retellings of stories (Boydston, 1994).
- A description by gender of writing processes and attitudes about writing of 41 first graders (Billman, 1995).
- The effects of explicitly teaching the writing process to improve the writing skills of 15 seventh-grade Title I students (Dean-Rumsey, 1998).
- The impact of direct teaching of writing strategies and skills to middle school students to facilitate their execution of the writing process (De La Paz & Graham, 2002).

The yearlong experimental study shows measurable effects of writing as a process model on the writing of the 80 students of the second year. The students assigned to the experimental groups received instruction in the process writing approach based on Emig’s research. The control group received the instruction using the product writing approach of teaching composition (textbook title, worksheet, teaching grammar in isolation, providing the topic to students, giving assignments and due dates).

Janet Emig is a well-known researcher. In 1971, she wrote a dissertation on the composing processes of the 12th grade writers. Emig used case study methodology to interview eight students to delineate the processes they went through when completing writing assignments. Furthermore, on three separate occasions, she asked the subjects to complete a writing assignment, composing aloud while she recorded each subject. Emig concluded that writers engage in two distinctive modes of composing:

- Extensive, to convey a message
- Reflective, to explore one’s feeling
We found that overall, the students taught in the process method evidenced greater improvement in their expository writing but not in their creative writing than did the students in the control groups. Furthermore, the experimental groups evidenced a statistically significant increase in positive attitudes towards writing, whereas the control showed a slight decrease in overall positive attitudes towards writing. We believe this is partly due to the different motivating activities that the process writing approach entails, and partly due to the atmosphere the informants work in.

It was also found out that the writing of the students taught using the process approach was rated superior to that using the traditional method especially in terms of the overall organization.

Besides using retrospective analysis of written products and post composing interviews, we used direct observations of the students composing, collections of drafts field notes that included notes from the interaction of teacher-students in class as well as while conferencing. Writing samples were charted for changes in punctuation, spelling, topic, structure, flow, and readability. As the informants internalize a repertoire of process writing strategies (Calkins), especially revising strategies, their writing products steadily improved.

The findings support previous studies which examined the effects of explicit instruction and practice in how to apply writing process strategies and strategies for dealing with negative emotions that arise during various stages of the writing process. In an early study, the pre-and post-test of Honeycutt indicate that the overall quality of the students’ texts improved when students:

- Internalize that the specific strategies for prewriting, writing, and revising,
- Employed self-regulation strategies to monitor the development of a text,
- Activated strategies for dealing with negative emotions that arise during the composing process (2002:281).

It was also found that evaluation methods that strongly involve students were the more likely to encourage students to revise their compositions. Students working in groups and using peer evaluation (checklist) read and commented on one well written and one poorly written composition according to the a checklist. Then, after the discussion-held under the teacher supervision- the students evaluated fellow students’ compositions or even their own
according to the checklist then revise their compositions to produce a final version. Under these conditions, it was noticed that students learnt from the strength of others and offset their own weaknesses.

To the question which of the four kinds of feedback (the evaluation methods) was best, the following conclusions may be drawn from the students’ answers:

- Considering the students as a single body, the method peer checklist evaluation was the most popular, followed by the teacher evaluation (detailed) and teacher evaluation (symbolic codes), while self evaluation (checklist) method was the least popular by a large margin.
- The popularity of the method teacher evaluation (detailed) illustrates that students are still overawed by their teacher’ authority. This led the students to believe that teacher evaluation was the most effective evaluation method.
- The popularity of peer evaluation (checklist) illustrates that students held a positive attitude to this new method, a method which was shown to increase their inclination to revise.

Though the learners edited their essays in subsequent drafts, in some cases their final drafts were basically neater copies of the originals. In our view, the students who were more concerned with the use of language of their writing than the expression of ideas were simply less skilled than those to whom the exploration of meaning was accessible. According to Zamel (1983), such students ‘had no sense of’ possible revision. Zamel emphasized that non native students need to be taught to articulate their ideas, receive ‘truly effects feedback’ from their teachers and ‘teach us what we need to know (1983:183).

Relative to the audience, the experiment showed the positive effects of the addressee feedback on the revision of the text. It also showed that the comments applied to the first draft improved the revision. Another point was that the revisions were more frequent and more errors were detected in others’ texts than in the writers’ own texts. This goes in consistency with the findings of Barlett (1982), Cameron, Edmunds, Wigmore, Hunt and Linton, (1997), and Danimen and Stacton (1993).

The following evaluation checklist was provided to help the students give a straightforward narrowed feedback to each other.
**EVALUATION CHECKLIST**

Reviewer:_____________________________ Date:___________________________

Topic:_______________________________________________________________

Author:_____________________________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The beginning of the article can arouse your reading interest.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A clear standpoint has been established in the introduction.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each paragraph contains topic sentences which support the</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explanatory articles should provide sufficient evidence to</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The evidence stated in the article can convince the readers.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If there is smooth and clear transition, please put an asterisk(*) in between the paragraphs. If not, please put a question mark.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is smooth evidence and clear transition in between</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are many wrong words and wrong spellings in the</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following investigation aims at highlighting various lexical choices the students made in writing. This investigation shows some similarities and mainly differences between the students of the experimental groups and those of the control group.

The general observation is that there is a clear improvement in the quality of the students’ compositions of the experimental groups. For instance, the distribution of the following discourse markers: but however, still, yet, on the other hand, and nevertheless is more frequent. In the control group, the coordinating conjunction and, but are the most frequent. This resulted from the feedback provided in the conferences where the students of experimental groups were encouraged to employ the conjunction but besides opting for what appeared to be more preferred choices in academic writing such as however, on the other hand, for emphatic change of focus or argument. When the control group students were still using such wordy transitions as ‘however, it should be pointed out” or “yet, it is important to note that” in their compositions, the students of the experimental groups used simply but which often resulted in effective sign posting as confirmed by such researchers as Strunk and White (1979), and Zinsser (1998).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article (4 marks for 0-1 error, 3 marks for 2-3 errors; so forth and so on)</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not much incorrect use of wordings and not many sentences of unclear meanings found in the article.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) The article is well-organized regarding the process of providing evidence to support the standpoints.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) The conclusion of the article is definite and reasonable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) Overall speaking, the content of the whole article follows the topic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: Evaluation Checklist (adapted from Risemberg, 1997)
Clarity in written expression appears to be a source of problems for ESL students whose vocabulary may not be rich enough and have not had extensive reading in the target language. In both the experimental groups and the control group, there was a lack of clarity of written expression. For instance, there was a frequent use of the phrase “mentioned above” and its many active and passive variants in the compositions. Research has identified three potential problems with this usage. First of all, the act of mentioning appeared to be a form of hedging that refers to an important point in the argument made by the students earlier. Instead of finding a mention of these points, a discussion, the students used a definition, a discussion even an illustration. Therefore, there is a problem of validity. The second reason of interest in the phrase was related to the adverbial component. Referring to the antecedent as being “above” seemed to characterize most format text types, such as those in the legal profession instruction. Its use in academic writing may contain the intentional or unintentional desire to make the text more formal than one may consider necessary (Van den Berg, 2006).

During the experiment, the writing courses aimed to sensitize the students to the issue referred to so that they could look for alternative expressions. The students tended to translate this expression from their mother tongue. Therefore, what many students referred to this way of reference appeared in the previous sentence. Another frequent use of this phrase appeared to be in concluding sections of the students’ compositions, with the adverb being “all-purpose filler” for …… in this paper. The frequency of the phrase was also high in sentences making an anaphoric reference to a point in the previous sentence. In these contexts, the informants were advised that simple deictic phrase would suffice.

Research confirms emphasizes that clarity in written expression in whatever genre, is enhanced by the use of concrete verbal phrases that accurately identify the reader’s intentions and adequately cross-reference an earlier segment of the text (Strunk and White (1979), and Znisser (1998). This is especially true in writing in general and in academic writing in particular.

There was high frequency of “above” in anaphoric verbal phrases in both experimental and control groups. However, with the experimental groups, these frequencies dropped as a result of the practice students had in the experiment. A number of similar variants were used instead. These included two main types of phrases: past-participle + above and definite article + above + noun phrase (such as listed above) described above, detailed above, and the above facts, the above criteria, the above writers, and ever the above paragraph.
Unlike the students of the control group, the students of the experimental group used the performative collocates of the first person single pronoun “I” to express their aims and methods in their text. The use of “I” in implicit thesis sentences referred to a particular point made in the main body of the text. This information is necessary to form an overall view of the types of aims students identified for their scripts. It can also serve as the basis for evaluating writing strategies in the students’ texts.

There were two types of structures used by the experimental groups. The first one was the “would like + to” infinitive structure and the second one was the “I will” construction which was more frequently used than the first one. Indeed, there were more expressions associated with the model auxiliary will. Table 4.5 shows the thesis statement, topic sentences and statements of method expressed by I would like to structure and I will in the composition of the experimental groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I would like</th>
<th>I will</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyse, Examine, Present, attempt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Show</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine, focus on, point out</td>
<td>Point at / out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse, present</td>
<td>Discuss, focus on, give analysis,/ classification/ tips, Introduce, show, use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize, find out</td>
<td>Check, concentrate on, demonstrate, describe, evaluate, investigate, provide data/ view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer, question, call reader’s attention, clarify, deal with, describe, explore, get to know, give suggestions, highlight, prove, stress, suggest, touch upon, try, write</td>
<td>Address, argue, compare, delineate, devote, space for, emphasize, draw conclusions, have a look, highlight, list, make analysis, make an attempt to find, monitor, report, shed light, study sum up, summarize, survey, take the mean, tell, try, turn to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.2:** Thesis statements, topic sentences and statements of methods expressed by the “I would like to” structure and “I will” in the experimental groups’ compositions (adapted from Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1997).
All the students either from the experimental groups or the control groups were found to overuse the pattern of the epistemic stem “I think [that]” in writing. According to Granger (1993) the overuse of this epistemic stem is laid in the students’ differential concepts of spoken and written registers. However, the reason why one is cautioned not to generalize that L2 learners overuse this pattern is little known about the purpose and audience of the individual scripts. The use of the phrase cannot be regarded as “overuse” unless one feature explores these text organizing principles (Kennedy, 1998)).

During the evaluating stage of the writing process, the students of the experimental groups were advised to be careful when using what Zinsser (1998) calls “little qualifiers” such as “a bit, a little, a sort of, kind of, very, in a sense”. Zinsser states that these qualifiers dilute one’s style.

While explaining his professional writers’ attitude in the context of purpose, he points out that ‘every little qualifier whittles away some fraction of the reader’s trust. Readers want a writer who believes in himself and in what he is saying’ (Zinsser, 1998:71-72).

While there was less and less frequency of the use of “very” in the experimental groups, the students of the control group overused this “little qualifier”. According to Granger (1993) when learners overuse very, they compensate for their under-use of what may appear to be more specific amplifiers.

The informants used less and less little qualifiers because they were taught that when aiming at correctness in academic writing, authors need to review their use of such adverbs so that their intentions may be transparent to readers. Hence, audience considerations played an important role in the development of text by the students of the experimental groups, but they are nonexistent in the writing of the students of the control group. The lack of audience awareness found in the latter group writing may index the slow development of the social-cognitive skills necessary to conceptualize different audiences or it may result from the decontext approach to writing that is prevalent in classrooms (Linda Flower, 1991). However, whether or not the lower frequencies of very or the other adverbs qualified as little qualifiers can be observed in the long run, requires further studies.

All through the experiment the informants were invited to search in dictionaries and in thesaurus for ways to enliven their language by the use of specific expressions that carry their
exact points and attitudes. McMahan and Day (1984), Raimes (1996), and Leki (1989) among others focused on this point. Zinsser (1998) states that for such specificity to occur on the vocabulary and text level, one needs clarity of thought: in personal essays writing and in academic discourse, writers are advised to establish simplicity rather than clutter. This development took place within the experimental groups thanks to critically reading one’s own text, sharing with peers, and monitoring the progress during revision.

One form of clutter of thought and expression in the compositions of the control group was the use of expressive vocabulary that did not readily lend itself to interpretation (Zinsser, 1998). The writing pedagogical experience of the experiment shed light on the issue. By reading and commenting on students’ drafts, we aimed to enable the informants to work on clarity and specificity. It was a long process. Many words were underlined so that they would be avoided. The list of words compromised: case, thing, good, interesting, and etc… Indeed the frequency of these vague words was lower due to the advantage of practicing learning and revising strategies.

Students in both groups used prefabricated patterns (Strunk & White, 1979) like “the fact that” and “in order to”. The latter phrase is regarded by several sources as a redundant prepositional phrase that can often be substituted by the simple to infinitive (Stunk & White, 199; Raimes, 1996; and Zinsser, 1998).

The former phrase, Granger (1996) notes, is excessively overused by L2 student writers. Lindner (1992) who studied a corpus of German EFL texts suggests that the high frequency of the phrase can be attributed to the students’ perception that expository and argumentative writing has to carry high “verbal factualness”. The phrase “the fact that” is significantly more frequently used in the control group than in the experimental groups. However, the distribution of the frequency of the phrase “in order to” was fairly even.

The next point was to see how the informants compose the topic sentences or the thesis statements. The investigation of the types and composition of these first sentences pedagogical concern with the importance of the drafting and revising sentences, we hoped to gather information on students’ choices to attract their audience and to consider their purposes.
The topic sentences and the thesis statements of the compositions of the students of the experimental groups were much more varied than those of the students of the control group. They showed that there was a great effort to search for the appropriate vocabulary that would have the greatest effect on the audience. The informants used the following methods to introduce their topics:

- Opening with a narrative (“the first thing that ordinary people do in the morning is to open one of their favorite daily newspapers and browse the articles”).
- Giving a definition of a field, an issue, or a problem (“student’s opinion about the time-table can have an effect on the final results”).
- Beginning the text with a phrase that expresses astonishment (“believe it or not the Swiss were once a warlike people”).
- Stating a matter clearly obvious for the intended reader, often containing determiners such as every, each, all, or adverbs like always (e.g., “Newspapers are used for informing the population about how the society works and what goes on all over the world”).
- Stating the aim of the composition (“in this paper, my aim it to compare two Algerian daily newspaper issues…”).
- Defining the method of the investigation (“one possibility to gather information about how people feel about the actual life is to implement a questionnaire”).
- Directly addressing the reader (Smoking not only harms your own life, but also the life of your surroundings”).
- Including a direct or indirect citation from a source (“according to Riley, 2001, p.33, a text or discourse is a collection of one or more sentences that display a coherent theme and with the appropriate cohesion…”).
- Asking a question (“What is exactly Globalization?”).
- Beginning with the title of a source (“The Da Vinci Code”).

Sources: Types of Introductory Sentences Adapted from Elbow (1998)

The following table shows the overwhelming preference for four types of introduction: those based on a definition, a personal incident, an obvious issue, and a historical detail.
Similarly to the importance of an essay opens the theme for the reader, in writing the conclusions last sentence the writer has the opportunity to make a last and maybe a lasting impression (Auster, 2001). A sample of students’ compositions from the experimental groups and the control group was analyzed looking for similarities and differences of how the informants concluded their compositions.

A number of students did not include a conclusion to their writing. The first impression was that the concluding sentences tended to be somewhat longer than the introductory ones. Here is how the students of the experimental groups concluded their writing:

➢ Summary of qualitative results (e.g., the more practice the students are allowed, the better their compositions will be”).
➢ Summary of qualitative result (“from the foregoing it obvious that all the analyzed essays are more than average”).
➢ Statement of practical implication (“I also understood that global warming affects the daily life of every one of us”).
➢ Identification of limitation of study (“as the other classes were taught by different teachers of different levels, the research paper and the results of it can be applied only to this particular class”).

**Table 4.3: Students’ Preferences**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>type</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Obvious</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Historical</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Aim</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Method</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Citation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>definition</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Narrative, Question</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A direct or indirect question (“I wonder how peer feedback can of certain value when peers are not taught to provide comments on other writers’ essays”).

Identification of hypothesis or problem for future study (“it could be used for finding why peer-feedback is more effective than the teacher doing all the correction”).

Non-sequitur or irrelevant notion (only the more-able students were existed when the teacher introduced speedwriting”).

Stating the obvious (“other researchers can do as well similar research on the same topic, which would certainly enrich knowledge about the field”).

Citation (e.g., such an essay test might be a torture for those students who dislike essay writing, but it ‘continues to serve as a challenge for a number of students who have shown excellence in writing.’ -reports Raimes...).

Addressing the reader (“thank you for being so kind as to read my present paper”).

Unclear content and ambiguous (“with this paper I got the information, what I wanted to know”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Qualitative</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Practical</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Obvious</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>hypothesis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Citation Reader</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4: The Types of Introductory Sentences

The purpose the second task was to present to students the tasks of reporting the author’s aim in writing. The students were given a set of introductions where the author’s aim is
explicitly stated. Although most of the lexis seemed to be relevant to the main texts they were clipped from, we realized that there was a need to raise students’ awareness of the importance of using more precise and specific verbs in their introductory sentences. The following task was provided.

**Task Sheet on Reporting Verbs**

When you write, you often find that reporting what the writer will do greatly facilitates clarity and relevance. With your classmate, list ten verbs, appearing in the introduction that indicate what the paper intends to do. After that, skim the worksheet and underline those you listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Activity Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 and distribution.</td>
<td>In this paper I will address the latter of the issues,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 links with the rest of the paper.</td>
<td>I will also scan for the thesis sentence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 were written in 1996.</td>
<td>I will analyze my essay’s introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 texts, conclusions, and references.</td>
<td>I will check whether there are</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 and their analyses. In my paper</td>
<td>I will concentrate on semantic relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 are analyzed in a text.</td>
<td>I will concentrate on pronouns in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 a foreign language-writing skills.</td>
<td>I will evaluate my essays in terms of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 that makes a text coherent.</td>
<td>I will examine repetition in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 and Oleanna.-in the chosen essay.</td>
<td>I will examine the text according to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 making the writing more effective.</td>
<td>I will introduce different revision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 many hyponyms and antonyms, but</td>
<td>I will introduce some here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 The hypothesis that</td>
<td>I will present and discuss in some</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 In terms of their structures;</td>
<td>I will survey the introductions, the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two most frequent last statements were represented by the qualitative and the practical outcomes types. Some wrote the type of concluding sentences that were categorized as either unclear or obvious. These students had difficulty ending their writing, thus they opted to write much shorter sentences than others.

To draw attention to the importance of lexical and colloquial choices, students were provided with handouts that features samples of the informants’ writing. This, indeed, facilitated pair and group work. Peers and students alike were able to focus on relevant issues,
arising from either the students’ or peers’ initiative while reading the texts. As authorship was hidden in these examples, the affective filter was lowered, but the studying and discussing of the texts allowed for the effective use of the monitor (Krashen, 1988).

With the peers’ and the teachers’ assessment of the students’ work writing guides were provided to raise the students’ awareness of discrete features of the writing, negative as well as positive qualities that we commented on in the final assessment. These features were regarded as suitable for further study. What the guides added to this process was the opportunity to focus on one factor of their writing. For instance, in the following example, the study guide invited the informants to consider replacing the all-purpose noun “thing” by more specific terms in their writing.

Replacing things

1 or a comic strip. They are usually funny things is some connection
2 to underline, to write in bold and other things. One of the six
3 language in a variety of forms (describing things, people, places…
4 they should be able to inquire about these things. They should be

Like the previous study guide, this one was concerned with concrete vocabulary. It challenged the informants to find more precise terminology instead of “good”.

Example 4 : what makes a good….?

1 revises the essential rules of how to write a good composition, from a good
2 composition, (from a good introduction to a good conclusion. In this exercise
3 From what you are trying to say. It’s a good idea to check
4 Feelings; word order, semantic markers; a good introduction and conclusion
5 Of how to write a good composition, from a good introduction to a good
The most intrinsically motivating of this type of study guides were those that invited the informants to reflect on the use of the first person singular pronoun. The students had to find new contexts for the topic enabling them to verify a focus.

Example 5: what I could and would

1. I could not cope with the problem of expressing my ideas in an exact
2. I could not get rid of my second personal pronouns.
3. I could so as to fulfill the requirements of good essay which is subject
4. I tried to be more careful and accurate as a whole, I managed to eliminate
5. I tried to translate expressions word-by-word in lacking an up-to-date
6. I tried to use the language as creatively as I could so as to fulfill the requirements
7. I used a lot of abbreviations (“can’t” or “isn’t”) and note forms (under
8. I wanted a quick result, therefore the presentation of my work was simple
9. I wanted to be more wise than I really was. It is best presented by the
10. I wanted to have my own special style even if it was ridiculous sometimes
11. I would be still happy but then came learning to write in the writing
12. I would like to develop to be an academic English writer.
13. I would like to give a clear chart about the strong and weak point of my
14. I would like to point out my mistakes and to give suggestions how I can

These writing guides aimed to raise the students’ awareness of their own writing so as to be able to continue to improve editing and revising. In a stress-free atmosphere, a “sheltered” environment (Emig, 1971; Raimes, 1980) the students were able to focus on discrete elements of their writing not to correct their errors, but rather to highlight features that represented writers’ choices made in the process of exploring a topic or a field. Those guides also encouraged exploration of students’ texts outside the classroom. Besides improving the quality of the informants’ texts, they increased the levels of learner autonomy, an essential criterion for development in the long run.

Students tended to use the modal auxiliary will more often in thesis and method statements that the “I would like” construction. To help them employ a wider array of verbs, the following list was provided:
To enable the students to search for information about their topics and to quote authors and researchers, the students were provided with the following list of verbs. The result was a wide variety of vocabulary found in the students’ writing.

Verbs for Integrating Research Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledge</th>
<th>complain</th>
<th>explain</th>
<th>Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add</td>
<td>Concede</td>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Refute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admit</td>
<td>Conclude</td>
<td>Find</td>
<td>Reject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advise</td>
<td>Concur</td>
<td>Grant</td>
<td>Remark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
<td>Illustrate</td>
<td>Replay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow</td>
<td>Consider</td>
<td>Imply</td>
<td>Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>Contend</td>
<td>Insist</td>
<td>Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>criticize</td>
<td>Interpret</td>
<td>reveal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>argue</td>
<td>Declare</td>
<td>List</td>
<td>See</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask</td>
<td>Deny</td>
<td>Maintain</td>
<td>Show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assert</td>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>Note</td>
<td>Speculate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believe</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charge</td>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>Observe</td>
<td>Suggest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claim</td>
<td>Dispute</td>
<td>Offer</td>
<td>Suppose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Emphasize</td>
<td>Oppose</td>
<td>Think</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compare</td>
<td>endorse</td>
<td>Point out</td>
<td>write</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5: List of Verbs for Integrating Research Information
4.5 Interaction among the Experimental Groups

The following describes the interaction processes within groups, the influence on writers’ revision through interaction, and the interaction patterns of a student randomly selected in a group.

Through the result, we observed that one student of a group (student A) acquired knowledge by reading peers’ essays with different topics. He acquired more ideas about the assigned topics, new structures, and new vocabulary. He then reread his own essay and edited it. It was observed that he found errors in the essay while he reread it. He further corrected the errors to improve his text.

In the process of peer-reviewing, peers may edit student A’s essay. The latter, thus, received different comments and suggestions from different peers. Based on these comments and suggestions, he revised his essay.

Apart from receiving comments from peers, student A also contributed knowledge to his peers. He edited peers’ essays and suggested to peers’ essays considerable improvement. He served as a scaffold for peers, as the peers served him as a scaffold for him. Stated in different terms, in this kind of interaction, everyone is someone else’s scaffold. Through observation, it was found that practically every student had active interaction with his peers such as reading peers’ comments, editing peers’ essays, suggesting to peers’ essays. While a student was interacting with peers, reading different comments helped him to revise the text.

4.5.1 The Students’ Interaction Patterns

In this research, interaction pattern (Liu & Tsai, 2008; Reisslein, Seeling & Reisslein, 2005) referred to how students composed new essays, read other essays, edited peers’ essays, and provided suggestions to peers’ essays. On the basis of student A’s actions, his interaction pattern are shown as figure 4.1.
Figure 4.1: Interaction Pattern of Student A (adapted from Reisslein, Seeling & Reisslein, 2005)

In figure 4.8, there were six types of action identified in the interaction process. The different actions represented the ways that student A interacted with peers. In information acquisition, student A acquired information from various ways by reading comments, suggestions and the essays. Examining student A’s information acquisition, we found that student a read the comments provided by peer 1 and 3 (see figure 4.9). He also read the comments that were provided by peer 1 to peer 2. It suggested that student A was not only passively receiving the comments from peers but also even actively reading the peer 1’s comments in peer 2’s essay.
Figure 4.2: Student A’s Information Acquisition (adapted from Reisslein, Seeling & Reisslein, 2005)

For information contribution student A edited the essay of peer 1 and provided reasons for correction (see, figure 4.10). The reasons for correction would help peer 1 have a better understanding of student A’s corrections. Student A also suggested to peer 2’s essay on the basis of the organization and development of the essay. The suggestions to peer 2’s essay would help him to have a clear idea of how to organize or re-arrange the development of the text. In addition, student A could write a new essay for his peers to read. The student A’s new essay might be a scaffold or a reference for peers to write their own essays.
It was found that the interaction patterns in a more motivated group were represented in a reciprocal process rather than a one-way process. That is, participants did not simply acquire information but contribute further knowledge in the process of interaction. While every student interacted with one another, they were in contact with each other and served as a scaffold to one another. This resulted in a student had frequent interaction with others and the interactions with others were reciprocal processes. Members of each group received information from others and contributed the knowledge of peers as well.
4.5.2 Interaction Framework in the Process of Student’s Revision

According to Cotteral and Cohen (2003), Englert, Berry, and Dusmore (2001), Parkinson et al., (2007), Wollman-Bonilla and Werchdlo (1999), many empirical studies suggest that social interaction facilitates learning. However, few studies indicate what types of interaction facilitate learning. In this research, we present the way the informants interacted with others that led to the improvement of their writing.

Based on the interaction patterns, we concluded an interaction framework and attempt to explain how interaction influenced students’ revision (see figure 4.12).
As shown in figure 4.12, the interaction framework presents the influences of interaction on a student’s revision of their text. In text revision, an informant went through different stages by interacting with peers, namely, information acquisition, negotiation of meaning, information contribution. In each stage, the informants might take several actions in order to reach his aim, revising or rewriting the original text. The three stages were not in any given order since the students had different interaction sequences.

After finishing the first draft, the students acquired comments and suggestions from peers in the process of peer reviewing. In addition to the comments and suggestions, a student also observed different peers’ essays of the same topic to imitate peers’ writing, skills and styles. While reading peers’ essays, comments and suggestions, the informants might encounter conflicts between their prior knowledge and peers’ corrections and suggestions.

When encountering divergences, an informant negotiated with his peers through reading and writing. The peers’ contributions represented different perspectives which resulted in the
conflicts between the writer and his peers. The writer then compared his prior knowledge with
the information he received. Negotiation of meaning led to agreement or disagreement which
represented his judgment on peers’ corrections and suggestions. Without negotiating with
meanings, the informants would have been able to identify what was right or wrong.

With the agreement or disagreement with peers’ contributions a student revised his text
based on peers’ contributions, a student revised his text based on peers’ contributions.
Moreover, integrating peers’ contributions helped one to construct new background
knowledge such as publishing a new essay. With the new knowledge, a student plays another
role as an editor a commentator. He helps peers revise their text and provides suggestions to
other essays.

4.5.3 Advantages of the Peers-Interaction

The advantages of peer interaction are based largely on the fact that writing is a social
process where the students respond to each others’ compositions.

- The students considered discussing with their peers very important because it helped
  them identify their errors in the text since they recognized themselves as incapable to
  find errors by themselves.
- They admitted that they were too subjective when writing essays. Peers inspired them
  with a sense of readers’ perceptive by giving them suggestions like “I don’t quite
  understand what you mean here”.
- Because the students also acted as editors in the group, they found that editing peers’
  essays helped them avoid peers’ mistakes as they composed essays.
- All the students agreed that peers’ comments had positive influence on their writing
  because of the concrete comments provided such as the use of conjunctions or
  transitional words.
- Some informants mentioned that reading peers’ essays helped them write better
  because they imitated the writers’ style.
- When erroneous corrections were provided, the students understood better the
  grammatical items better for instance by reconfirming peers’ corrections. In other
  words, the process of reconfirmation strengthened the students’ concepts of grammar.
4.5.4 Problems Occurring In the Interaction with Peers

The informants encountered problems in the process of peer reviewing:

- Some participants stated that most comments from peers focused mainly on grammar such as incorrect verb tenses, sentence fragments, run on sentences, etc... Suggestions regarding global revisions were rare.
- Though global revision is important, some students believe that grammar correction was still important. If grammar in an essay is a mess, the reader is reluctant to finish reading the essay.
- Some participants expressed that corrections from peers were not always right. Some false corrections were peers with low language proficiency. So they turned to the teacher to give them the necessary comments and suggestions. They thought that the teacher was more trustful and that he was able to give them more reliable comments. Though the students believed that the teacher’s comments were valuable, they did not reject the importance of peer-reviewing. Even if the accuracy of peers’ false corrections might be the concern of the experimental groups, they still learnt and gained benefits from the interaction with peers.
- When editing peers’ essays, some students had difficulties in understanding peers’ essays. If they did not understand a sentence they tended to ignore it and underlined the whole sentence which might be frustrating for the writer. However, such writers did learn to consider their audience.

4.6 Motivation and Writing

When describing the importance of motivation to effective writing, Murray (1990) remarks: “yet we also write best-just as we play tennis best- if we feel confident. We have to learn with confidence” (1990: 5). In our research, a salient importance was given to interest in writing. It was hypothesized that the more motivated the informants were, the better they would write.

Early psychological studies on a motivational aspect of writing apprehension (Daly & Miller, 1975) dated right after a few cognitively oriented scholars “discovered” writing as an
ability to be investigated in terms of information- processing and problem-solving strategies. Due to the focus on the cognitive aspects of writing, the motivational and affective dimensions tended to be neglected or even ignored by writing researchers in the 1980s (Boscolo, 1995; Hayes, 1996; Hidi, 1990). Hayes and Flower were the first researchers to include motivation in their early cognitive model in 1980. However, motivation was included only as an element of the writing task environment such as “the motivation cues of the teacher’s stern expression that make students understand that a task is to be taken seriously (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987:12).

It was the social constructivist approach to literacy and literary learning developed under the influence of Vygotsky’s legacy and cultural studies of language and cognition that gave motivation a new dimension in the 1980s. According to this approach, motivation to write is not a simple variable of writing tasks assigned to students. On the contrary, motivation is deeply ‘rooted in the contexts in which writing is a meaningful, authentic activity (Daly & Miller, 1975).

In the experiment, we sought to provide a stress-free atmosphere where the students tackled up-to-date topics and where they received a considerable amount of positive and mitigated feedback. In this specific area of discussion, Burning and Horn (2000) argue that nurturing students’ positive beliefs about writing, fostering authentic writing goals, and contexts providing students with a supportive context for writing, and creating a positive emotional classroom environments are the conditions that determine students’ motivation to write.

4.6.1 Writing as a Motivational Problem

It must be noted that during the implementation of the process writing approach, we kept in mind what has been emphasized by the cognitive approach to writing (e.g., Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Berminger, Fuller, & Whitaker, 1996; Graham & Harris, 2000; Hayes, 1996; Wong & Berninger, 2004). That is, writing is a demanding activity that requires students’ cognitive effort and the use of their self-regulatory skills. A writer as opposed to a reader who simply consumes texts has to produce texts often with minimal environmental input (Noten, 2003). When he is given a topic to write about, he has to generate ideas so as to
generate a text. Such a task requires a knowledge based on which the author can draw his points to be developed in the second stage besides the worries created by the knowledge factors which are perquisites for writing, (Noten, 2003). The complexity of the task, the solitary nature of the activity devoid of any immediate feedback, and the effort required to persist in the task are other aspects of writing that can adversely affect writers’ motivation (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997).

Furthermore, research on motivation and writing has shown that students’ difficulties when facing a writing task may have negative effects on their self-efficacy beliefs and self-perceptions of competence as well as on their attitude to tasks (Bruning & Horn, 2000; Hidi & Boscolo, 2001; Pajares & Johnson, 1996; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1999). Yet, if a student can overcome the task difficulties, and above all, if he knows that his composition will not be evaluated by the teacher, his attitude to the task will not be negatively influenced.

Schwartz Alix (2003) states “professional writers don’t write like that, so why should you?”. Schwartz discusses the benefits of inviting professional writers to the college composition classroom to explain their process of revision. The guest speakers supplement the students’ early –and late- semester analysis of their revisions of their own writing.

Instead of inviting professional writers in our classrooms to provide the informants with insights of how they complete their tasks of writing and their revising processes because we did not have the opportunity, we downloaded shorts films from “YouTube” and “Daily motion’. The short films were about professional authors who explained how they proceed when writing.

4.6.2 Interest and Writing

Interest has been defined as a motivational variable. Interest occurs between the writer and his environment. It is characterized by increased attention, concentration and affect. Alexander and Murphy (1998) explain that the general characteristic of interest is object-specificity. Rather than being generally interested, an individual is interested in some activity, subject, topic, task, or even text segments.
Research has reported that interest is one of the motivational variables that has a powerful positive effect on the learner’s cognitive performance and affective experience (Hidi, Rominger, & Krapp, 2004; Hoffman, Krapp, Rominger, & Baumert, 1998; Schiefele, 1998). In academic writing, the positive affect of interest has been well established. Yet, the question that remains debatable is how interest can be best utilized to improve writing performance.

In the experiment, the way the topics were assigned, or rather suggested was different from those assigned to the control group. The questions in the topics were worded in such a way that the informants felt directly involved. Instead of being impersonal, the questions talked directly to the students. The informants, therefore, felt obliged to talk about a topic where they had to have a voice, a share of responsibility. For instance, to answer the following questions:

- How far do you -as an Algerian living in your own remote town- feel that global warming affect you?
- What will you do to convince your older brother to stop smoking?
- Would you cross the Mediterranean Sea on a small fishing about to immigrate illegally to Europe if after finishing your studies you could not find a job?

The students had to use the personal pronoun I which showed that they were really involved. This also meant that ‘you’ or ‘they’ pronouns were not the norms anymore. It was observed that topics worded that way ignited a hot debate. Every student felt himself involved in one way or another, so he would express his own thoughts, his personal opinion. Indeed those topics did raise the students’ interests. However, whether they affected the students’ writing academic performance is another debatable question.

It was also observed that when dealing with a topic about sport namely football, female students’ production was practically the same as the production of male students. Though the male students were more interested in sport in general, they did not writer better. The only difference between the two groups was that the male students’ compositions were more interesting than the females’ because of the topic knowledge. Indeed the topic knowledge affected positively the planning process where only topic relevant ideas were selected and developed.
There are many reasons for this. In their study, Hidi and McLaren (1991) suggest that the interestingness of topics may increase the students’ motivation but this motivation does not necessarily result in improved writing performance. In this issue, knowledge factors play a major role in the quality of writing that the students produce (Boscolo & Mason, 2000; Tobia, 1994).

Those researchers discover that although their students were fascinated by the topic of travelling, they could not adequately write about it because they lacked sufficient content-knowledge about it. In the case of the students in the experimental groups, male students were highly interested; they possessed a good rich knowledge about football, but they lacked the tools to express their ideas on paper. They were asking, for instance, for particular technical terms of this particular field.

Boscolo and Gisotto (1992) argue that interest in a topic may facilitate and energize writing. Topic interest does not necessarily guarantee interest in writing as an activity. So topic interest is not a sufficient condition for interest in writing albeit a considerable one. Nolen confirms that motivation for writing may rise from an individual’s interest in a particular topic or it may be related to experiences of creative endeavours that are accompanied by positive emotions such as a sense of accomplishment at being able to communicate one’s thoughts and feelings (2003:78).

Hidi and Rominger (2007) find that all the students, regardless of their phase of interest, had developed a sense of what writing involves and recognized the importance of self-expressions. Their findings demonstrated that there are differences between students in various phases of interest development, students goals, perceptions effort required by the task, and circumstances that can make writing a positive experience varied across different phases of interest developments:

- **Students with low levels of interest in writing:** these students aimed at finishing their task as soon as possible. In other words, they aimed at getting the job done. They put lots of effort in their writing task. These students lacked both procedural and discourse knowledge. Their writing lacked ominous procedure. They consider writing boring and painful.
- **Students with individual interest in writing:** these students expressed an interest in doing well as defined by their teachers and getting good grades. As the first type of
students, this type of students make a great effort in writing tasks but because of the lack of both procedural and discourse knowledge, their writing was no satisfactory.

- Students with individual interest in writing: these students wanted to do well but their standards seemed to have been more self-defined such as feeling good about their writing. These students may launch into writing without clear planning. Therefore, they needed more time to structure and organize their abundant ideas. They have an expanded procedural knowledge related to writing. They are willing to invest considerable effort to their texts to others. They talk about how much they like to write and consider it a real fun they want to do.

4.6.3 Self-efficacy and Writing

Researchers (Bandura, 1986; Pajaras, 1996; Schunk & Swartz, 1993; Zimmerman, 1989) define self-efficacy as a cognitive construct which represents individuals’ beliefs and personal judgments about their ability to perform at a certain level and affects choice of activities, effort, and performance. In both the experimental groups and the control group, self-efficacious students were more willing to participate, to work harder, and to persist in longer tasks. They had less negative reactions when experiencing difficulties than those students who doubt their capabilities. Self-efficacy is said to be predictive of the challenge level of academic tasks students choose to perform (Bandura & Schunk, 1981).

Panjaras and Johnson, (1994); Panjaras and Valiante, (1997); Schunk and Swartz, (1993); Zimmerman and Bandura, (1994) state that self-efficacy for writing refers to students’ perceptions of their ability to produce certain types of texts. Schunk and Swartz while investigating the positive associations between self-efficacy for writing and writing outcomes discover that self-efficacy is highly predictive of both writing skills and strategy use. They summarize their findings in:

Learners who feel competent about writing should be more likely to choose to write, expand effort, and persist at writing tasks their students who doubt their capabilities.

(1993:338)
Furthermore, the study showed that a process goal and progress feedback given to students enhanced the transfer of writing strategy use, skill and self-efficacy. Other researchers like Zimmerman and Risemberg demonstrate that writing self-efficacy of older students was productive of their intrinsic motivation to write and of self-regulatory processes involved in high or adequate levels of writing (1997:156). Shell, Murphy and Bruning 1988 state that adults’ self-efficacy for writing predicted their writing performance.

### 4.6.4 Self-Efficacy and Interest

Researchers like Bandura and Schunk (1981), Zimmerman and Kitsantas (1999) argue that increased self-efficacy results in increased interest. Yet, the two variables develop independently. Hidi et al. (2002) argue that interest is not simply an outcome of self-efficacy. They add that the variables are closely associated and may reciprocally influence each other’s development.

Renningter (2002) states that on the theoretical level, both interest and self-efficacy are content domain specific. Therefore, the researcher adds, in any given area, the two variables must be related to the same knowledge base, and their development should be inter-related. Hidi et al. (2002) demonstrate that interest and self-efficacy are closely associated. The informants in the experiment were observed to make great efforts and to do better when they appreciated the topic. In other words, students’ liking and self-efficacy for writing stories were different from those for summarizing for instance. Krapp (1992) adds that there is a positive association between genre-specific liking and self-efficacy and general interest in writing.

Interest and self-efficacy may have a reciprocal relation. For instance, when the learners receive feedback, either from their peers or from their own activities, this information can show them that they are competent. This will result in the learners strengthening their self-efficacy (Pandera 1986). While working with interesting topics, the informants were observed writing more and searching new information, even asking their teacher or their peers for help. Research findings demonstrate that when students are engaging in an activity with interest, they tend to be focused, effortful, persistent and to experience emotions (Ainley et. al.2002; Renninger, 2002). When engaged in an interesting topic, the informants exhibited increased
effort, persistence, and positive emotional reactions because they perceived themselves as being capable of dealing with the given writing task.

4.6.5 Self-Regulation of Writing

Various cognitive and metacognitive as well as linguistic processes have to be coordinated in a writing task. This is what renders writing a too-demanding activity. When assigned a writing task, the novice writer has to make many decisions about:

- What and how to write,
- The use of time,
- The selection of sources to gain information,
- The strategies to be adopted etc.

In sum, writing requires self-regulation. The process writing approach includes metacognitive and executive control components such as the planning phase and the monitor function in Hayes and Flower’s (1980) model, and text interpretation and reflection in Hayes’s (1996) revised model. However, a self-regulated student is something more. Indeed, he is metacognitively and behaviourally active and also motivationally active in attaining his learning goals (Zimmerman, 2000; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2001). As far as writing is concerned, Zimmerman and Riesenbergs state:

Self-regulation refers to self-initiated thoughts, feelings, and actions that writers use to attain various literary goals which include improving their writing skills and enhance the quality of the text they create


Some students showed good skills in managing the complexity of a writing task. They had a high competence in the use of strategies. This resulted in feeling more efficacious. Graham and Harris (2000) state that high self-efficacy activates a writer’s self-satisfaction and may stimulate his interest in the writing task and in writing in general.
Zimmermann and Kitsantas (1997) view self-regulation as involving three elements: the person, the behavior, and the environment.

- Behavioural self-regulation implies a person’s observation of his behavior and its modification to reach a goal or hold an achievement,
- Environmental self-regulation takes into account the feedback coming to the individual from his environment,
- Internal self-regulation regards an individual’s use of his affective state (e.g. anxiety control) and cognitive processes (e.g. the use of memory strategies).

This view allowed Zimmerman and Rosemberg (1997) to identify ten types of writing self-regulating activities on the basis of famous writers’ experiences. Therefore, a writer regulates his environment by:

- Choosing, adapting, or modifying a suitable writing environment (e.g. a quiet and silent place)
- Controlling his behavior (e.g. taking into account how much he has written in a certain time or by using verbalization to facilitate idea generating).
- Practicing an internal control over his activity (e.g. by allotting time to be assigned to writing, or by setting specific objectives for the writing task).

(Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997: 241)

The strategies used by a self-regulated writer emphasize the motivational and affective aspects in the recursive models of writing such as the one proposed by Hayes and Flowers (1980). The researchers distinguish three recursive phases of the writing process: planning, translation and revision. In the planning phase for instance, the self-regulated writer reflects on what and how to write which are related to his motivation and goals. More specifically, in the phase of planning, the writer can deal with:

- His self-efficacy beliefs (“am I able to manage this writing task?”).
- Expectations regarding the outcome (“will I write a good text?”).
- Interest (“do I like carrying out this writing task? Is writing interesting to me?”).
- Mastery goals (“through writing, I elaborate my thoughts about the topic”).
- And performance goals (“I want to write the best essay in my class”).
4.6.6 Writing as a Meaningful Activity

Whether in the experimental groups or in the control group, that is despite the approach to writing, strategic writers remain the ones who can completely manage the difficulties of writing from planning to revision, have more self-efficacy beliefs, are satisfied with their writing performance and are likely to engage more willingly in new tasks (Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997).

Poor writers, on the other hand, are more likely to have low efficacy beliefs and feel anxiety or apprehension relative to writing. Many researchers have opposed the view of writing that focused essentially on solitary cognitive processes and language use. They rather adhere to an approach that emphasizes that people carry out literate practices like reading, writing as well as oral activities focusing at the same time on written language; such as commenting on or discussing. To these researchers, literacy learning is not simply learning to read or to write, but is a pattern of practices through which students construct meanings (Kucer, 2001). Englert, (1992); Englert, Raphael, Fear and Anderson (1998) see the motivation in the process writing approach as artificial on an “externally” stimulated motivation by teachers. These researchers see the classroom discourse motivation in that they are processes of meaning making. They also see reading and writing as closely related practices and view motivational aspects in relation to literacy. They believe that writing is meaningful for students when it is aimed at expressing and communicating thoughts and feelings related to classroom activities and personal experiences. In sum, these different functions of writing are integrated in the view of writing as a social activity, which shows affective and also cognitive advantages associated with collaboration in a community of learners and writers.

4.7 Analysis of the Corpus

The review and discussion summarizes the result of the research question and discusses the hypothesis. This discussion is followed by conclusions on research methodology.
Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis suggested that if the process writing was implemented, the students thinking behaviour and attitude would change, and that would give rise to a more communicatively understandable, and therefore less academically rejected final product.

Our first belief is that with the product writing approach which sees writing as being primarily about linguistic knowledge, stressing the appropriate use of vocabulary, syntax and cohesive devices, the students are ill-prepared to write acceptable academic writing. In the product writing approach, input that provides an important source for imitation becomes the major driving force of language learning. Richards and Rodgers (2001) state that the product approach to writing is in line with the audio-lingual ideology with a structural linguistic view that language is a system of structurally related elements for the encoding of meaning, and a behaviourist view that language learning is 'basically a process of mechanical habit formation' (Richards and Rodgers, 2001:57).

Most of the times, writing tasks encourage students to imitate, copy and transform models provided by teachers and textbooks. Accordingly, the final product which reflects the writer’s language knowledge is highly valued. Zamel (1987) states in this perceptive, that the teacher plays a primary role as an examiner. In this approach, the students have been taught simply to write a text so as to pass an exam. This means that teachers focus on teaching not to write a good solid well-organized essay, but to write a personal narrative for instance without focusing on having them use any type of writing process.

There is good evidence that students’ attitude to writing and their writing behaviour have improved considerably. The students understood more clearly the demands that were placed on beginning writers as they struggle to communicate a message in writing. The more the students wrote and the more detailed and complex their plans would become and the more confident they turned to be. For the experimental groups, writing was a problem solving activity where peer assistance was paramount. The informants had to overcome problems while articulating their thoughts, their message in a written text, trying to find the most appropriate words, and language structures to suit the context, the purpose, and last but not least, the audience of the communication.
Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis claimed that if the students’ writing behaviour were analyzed, a change would take place in the thinking process when writing.

Maxine Hairston (1982) states for the first time in the history of teaching writing, we have specialists who controlled and directed research on writers’ composing processes in order to find out something about how people’s minds work as they write (1982:85). The aim was to help students become aware of the stages and sequences of their thinking and writing. The informants were advised to pay attention to the process and to make sure they went through the prewriting, writing, and revision stages.

This was made possible by the use of the thinking aloud protocol. At first, this activity was unfamiliar and hard to perform. The aim of this activity was to gain more insights into the details of the actual students’ writing process. An example of thinking aloud protocol was downloaded from “YouTube” and showed to the students on the Data show. The recording enabled the informants to reconstruct the writing process accurately, letter by letter and revision by revision.

All the students in the experimental groups acknowledged that they had benefited from participating in the experiment. Specifically, they mentioned that they had learnt prewriting and monitoring/self regulation strategies necessary for composing, and learning how to identify and employ strategies to deal with negative emotions that interfered with composing. Prior to attending the experiment, the students used to have a few ineffective self-regulation strategies to rely on when composing. Besides, they experienced the emergence of negative emotions when faced with writing tasks as indicated by admitting that they were scared about adequately addressing specific topics in their writing.

A review of some of the informants’ portfolio indicated that throughout the experiment the teacher conferenced with them about writing narratives that had a clear beginning, middle, and end. Notes on their portfolio indicated that initially the conferencing focused on going through the different stages of the writing process each time they were assigned a writing task. The overall results of this experiment reveal that there was a change in the writing behaviour of the students. There was evidence of an improvement of the students’ writing behaviour. In story writing, they wrote stories as if they were watching a scene in a movie,
that is, they considered their audience. They described the characters, their movements, facial expressions, and important verbal statements and thoughts. After conferencing, they revised their writing five to eight times before they wrote the final version.

In terms of the impact of specific activities the students experienced during the experiment, most of the informants’ writing indicated that their overall writing improved in several specific ways:

- They increased the quality and quantity of the text they composed.
- They included specific details that made their thoughts, ideas clear to their audience
- They set a clear, well-narrowed purpose
- They engaged in substantial revision after composing an initial draft.
- They reported that they learnt to honour the process by reminding themselves that writing is difficult for many people even for professional writers and therefore trained themselves to persevere in the writing task, even when it was difficult,
- They reported that they frequently entered a state of flow when composing on-demand.

They increased their metacognitive awareness of the processes of writing and the effects of feedback. They illustrated how they employed the self-regulation strategies of, for instance, pausing to reread the text and visualized how their ideas might be understood by their audience. In addition, they made notes on the margins on their draft as they reread them, marking places where they needed elaborate or go back to work on structures and stylistic features and revised and edited using the six traits.

Furthermore, the experienced groups students’ self perception of themselves as writers improved over the period of time when they attended the experiment. They grew more confident about the texts they composed and debated their ideas well when receiving their peers’ feedback. Finally, it was clear that they were applying writing strategies to assignments in content areas.
Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis was that if the students were conscious of what went on in their thinking process when writing, they would build more effective strategies.

A much discussed shift from the product emphasis in writing instruction has been driven to a large extent by the desire to make writing more motivating for students. Classroom setting and classroom practices have been modified by teachers. Students work in group. In this kind of workshops, attention goes to cognitive processes such as prewriting strategies and revising, and to social processes such as peer-responses, teacher-student conferences and publication, often with positive results (Dahl & Farnan, 1998).

In the case of some students, they chose not to write at that time or they could not write at that time. The choice not to write is called “procrastination”, meaning “putting off till tomorrow” from pro (“forward”) and crastinus (“tomorrow”). Procrastination is related to writing apprehension (Dahl & Miller, 1975; Faigley, Daly, & Wiete, 1981). Writing apprehension often leads to task avoidance, particularly when writing is to be evaluated. There seem to be two kinds of apprehension: an enduring kind of apprehension toward writing and an apprehension that is transitory and is affected by the particular writing environment and assignment (Daly & Hailey, 1984).

Apprehensive students avoid writing or are hesitant about writing, but some students suffer from block. They cannot write. Mike Rose (1980) defines writer’s block as a writer’s inability to initiate or continue writing when there are no reasons related to lack of skill or commitment. He explains that:

Blocking is not simply measured by the passage of time
(for writers often spend productive time toying with ideas
without putting pen to paper) but by the passage of time
with limited involvement in the writing task.

(Rose, 1984: 3).

The profile of “blockers” within the experimental groups tended to have to follow mental rules that were absolutist. These rules were often based on inaccurate assumptions about writing. They often believed that a sentence had to be correct the first time. They also lacked
effective strategies for planning. They might write such a complex outline to which they could not adhere.

When conferencing, these students were made aware of their problems. They were reminded that an important aspect of writing is fluency. This term refers to easy movement in writing or the absence of struggle. To overcome such constraints, the students were observed using strategies like free-writing where they wrote without stopping to cross something out, or to wonder how to spell a word, or to wonder what word or thought to use. This was seen effective in overcoming the writer’s block. They also used a strategy labeled satisficing (Newel & Simon, 1972). Satisficing is a strategy where the students decide that what they have written is all right, even though it is not the best. This strategy relieves the students from some constraints like meeting deadline.

4.8 The Pedagogy of Writing Process

The pedagogy of the writing process can be defined in a number of ways, by various theorists. A common set of teaching methods used for college student instruction includes a three-step process of prewriting, drafting, and post-writing. The prewriting phase is used to show students brainstorming techniques, which can assist them in their discovery process when trying to determine topics to write about. Ramage (2006:175) states that students may find “a question or problem may not be well defined, but sense something unknown or disagree with other’s views”. Therefore, they wish to investigate and find the answers.

As instructors, we want to “include activities that motivate students to write, generate ideas for writing, and focus the attention of students or objective of the writing” (Norton, 2004: 315). Techniques such as drawing, listing and categorizing, and semantic mapping can be introduced as methods to stimulate, prompt, and inspire writing. “Where prewriting experiences allow students to explore, imagine, consider initial structure, and think about the details that go into their writing,” moving from the prewriting step to the actual writing process - also known as drafting - will require some additional considerations that, as teachers, we must introduce to our students before the pen touches the paper (Norton, 2004: 318).
The drafting phase of the pedagogy process may include creating outlines, focusing on a specific point to be made, considering the audience who will be reading the final paper, and the linguistic choices to be made. Norton argues that the objective of [the actual drafting] phase is the fairly rapid writing of ideas generated, developed, and redefined during the prewriting phase (2004:301).

This phase “often leads writers to discover new ideas, to complicate or refocus the problem, sometimes change directions” (Ramage, 2006:412). While all of these changes may occur during the drafting phase, students may have the tendency to become unorganized in their writing, and many experts believe an outline will keep writers on task. Author Ayn Rand believes that “most writing problems – the psychological barriers, setbacks, discouragements – come from the absence of a proper outline . . . thus [the writing] falls apart structurally” (1991: 152).

Encouraging students to write with some type of organization is beneficial and will be seen in the finished product. The final stage in the pedagogy process over the years, revision, “has been a neglected part of the writing process” (Bereiter and Scardamalia, :). Experts believe the reason for the neglect might be that revision is hard to teach. “Revision isn’t easily reduced to a model as with prewriting clusters, Venn diagrams, or freewriting” (Campo, 2002: 257).

Revision tends to happen after the first drafting process. Furthermore it is also where major portions of writing are still completed, and most certainly is a recursive step, for drafting and revision tend to go hand in hand. Most experienced writers will write, revise, write, and revise slowly “going through the first draft, adding, deleting, reordering, or completely rewriting passages” (Ramage, 2004: 498).

Each student should be taught proper revision processes, such as, peer review and editing workshops. Students must be shown how to revise properly, with instructors informing the students what, when, and how they should be searching for possible mistakes and probable places for revision.
4.9 Recommendations for Future Research

On the basis of this experiment, we would recommend what appear to be the most needed and relevant. These recommendations are primarily concerned with writing pedagogy, writing strategies, teachers’ formation in the process writing approach, and students’ autonomy in learning how to collaborate in writing.

- This experiment could be replicated with secondary schools to discover the root causes of the ineffectiveness of our learners’ writing. If the process writing approach is implemented in the secondary school the will-be students of English will be accustomed to the different stages, to the different writing activities, and to the different writing strategies required at each stage. The achievement will certainly be greater.

- However, the process writing approach will be effective only if the teacher fully adhere to the approach. Tim Caudrey (2001) conducted a research where he tried to find out what people understood by the concept of a “process approach” to teaching L2 writing. He discovered that it had come to mean rather different things to different people. The findings of the research showed that teachers had diverse definitions with often elements in common. There were also strong differences in emphasis and even some completely contradictory ideas. Therefore, writing teachers should fully understand what the process writing approach really means, what it really implies, and what it really requires. The process writing approach should be wholly used though it consumes time and hard toil. This will lead us to question whether the teachers at the University of Oran know what process writing is and how it works. To this question, Bouhadiba (2010) states: I doubt it. And all the issue of what Written Expression at the university at University is and what interaction and transaction strategies in writing are at university level is thus raised (mainly in the spirit of the LMD).

- The strategies that the learners use when writing a composition in English should be uncovered so that all poor writers would benefit from the successful writers.

- It is important that we include instruction and practice on writing strategies while applying the process writing approach. We can begin by creating an awareness of the process writing. Teachers can share the sub-processes they use when they write, as well
as ask students to describe their own strategies. This can be followed up with a discussion on the distinction between writing as a means for practicing grammar or any other formal aspects of the language and writing as an end or composing. Lastly, there should be a discussion of what difficulties the students encounter when writing in English, what strategies they use to get around their problems, and which strategies don’t seem to work for them. It is important that students understand that not all strategies are productive and that they need to match strategies to task. This can be worked out with the class as a whole or in small groups or pairs. In all cases, it remains necessary to share the results with the whole class. It is also necessary to keep a written record of the strategies mentioned.

➢ Awareness activities should be followed by an examination of the writing process from the standpoint of three major categories of strategies. Although it consumes time, think-aloud protocol may be used to illustrate the composing and revision processes. A more realistic way of including think-alouds in the classroom is to have the teacher or a student pre-record a think aloud of a short writing task and use it later for discussion. Individual think alouds can serve for diagnosis of writing difficulties or to monitor the use of strategies. There are also think alouds done by professional writers and by students in the net. They can be used as well.

➢ The planning- composing- revising process should be presented as a recursive process of constructing meaning and working ideas rather than an opportunity for spelling practice. The strategies that are generated by the students during the awareness-raising discussions can be fit into the planning-composing-revising process model. Furthermore, the activities should be devised that model and practice strategies individually (e.g., brainstorming activities for prewriting or word/phrase substitution exercises for deep level strategies) and in combination (e.g., revising a paragraph using several surface strategies), teaching students to evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies and to use them flexibly, depending on factors such as task, audience, and purpose.

➢ The students tended to concentrate on surface editing and to give less importance or ignore meaning revisions. It is paramount to discuss the need for both types of editing and to practice both surface and deep editing strategies separately and in combination.
For instance, first uncorrected drafts from previous classes of different groups can be saved to be used to practice revision strategies. Strategies that help students compensate for spelling or vocabulary problems so that the informants can keep the flow of ideas and the writing going. The students can be advised to underline a word to check later for spelling or to insert a word in parentheses to look up in dictionary once they have finished the draft.

Because a direct relationship exists between planning and writing well (Flower & Hayes, “cognitive process theory”) writing instructors should foster prewriting in their students’ writing. Prewriting has to do with whatever writers do to collect and focus their thoughts before they write. Examples of this include brainstorming, trying out ideas by talking about them, and such forms as making notes.

Lack of vocabulary was seen to be a major stumbling block for the majority of the students. Keiko Koda indicates that there is a strong relationship between vocabulary and quality ratings (1993:343). Koda suggests that vocabulary knowledge provides linguistic scaffolding for the task and allows the writer to manipulate and express concepts. Vocabulary development should be one of the cornerstones of the process writing approach. It should be integrated with rating instruction, especially as part of the prewriting activities. The students should be advised to do a research, to read on the topic of the composition so as to develop a list of key vocabulary and to organize the structure of the essay.

As suggested in 3.2.7.6.1 conveying mood, attitude and feeling, extensive practice should be provided on how to use both a dictionary and a thesaurus effectively, including recognizing parts of speech and making decisions on which meaning best fits the intent of the students. An effective activity is to provide the students with an excerpt from an article with certain words underlined. The informants will have to find appropriate synonym to substitute for the underlined word and write the sentence making necessary changes in the word so that it fits the context.

Writing teachers should encourage students to engage in interaction for encouraging interaction among students would facilitate their learning. To motivate the students to interact with peers, writing instructors can provide extra grades if students edit more
peers’ essays than assigned ones. Add to this, explaining the benefits of peer reviewing would help them to be aware of the importance of peer reviewing. Providing the students with the process of a draft composition with its different drafts, the peers’ comments, the different revisions and the final draft, highlighting the changes and improvements. A special attention should be given to those passive students who sometimes ignore peers’ contributions. Because they may have trouble in editing peers’ essays, these students should be provided with special assistance.

- To reduce students’ doubts about accurate corrections and misunderstanding of peers’ essays, the writing instructor should provide the students with remedial instructions on weaknesses in grammar and techniques on providing suggestions and comments. Although the informants have different prior knowledge, some common errors may still be found. Through remedial instructions for common errors, students can either reinforce their prior knowledge or construct new knowledge.

- Students must be taught techniques on providing suggestions and comments. According to Mini (2006), trained peer review feedback can positively impact EFL students’ revision quality of text. Through training students techniques of giving suggestions, they will provide better quality of suggestions so students’ doubts will be reduced considerably.

- To promote prewriting and rewriting effectively, teachers should establish a multiple-draft policy (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). At the very start of the writing the course. When a student has struggled with a topic with poor results, it is useful to return the pieces to the student with notes explaining the problems and asking him to revise what he has written. The benefit of this method is rather than penalizing him for his poor work; it teaches him to recognize key obstructions between drafts and final versions.

- Students must be helped to be aware of their writing processes. In conferences, they can be asked how they write a particular problem paper and also how they generally write their papers. As a result, they can shed light on problems they encounter when composing. Some researchers state that the problem is not awkward syntax or misspelled words or missing, sagging skills but rather a student’s failure to manage his composing processes wisely. When students have problems writing, the causes are
frequently in the process of writing, not the text. But discussing these, teachers can help students learn to manage the problem itself, not just the symptom, and consequently help students gaining sight into their composing and avoid such problems in the future.

- If the students were initiated to word-processor-some are already using it- when submitting their work to be corrected, they would be more self-confident as spelling mistakes for instance are corrected automatically. The students usually fear and don’t feel at ease when submitting their composition to be corrected by their teachers. This fear is explained by the students’ spelling mistakes or by the miss-translation of their ideas. Once these minor mistakes are corrected, the students will endeavour to correct meaning mistakes.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have summarized the main results of the experiment and discussed these results in relation to the relevant literature reviewed in Chapter One. Two issues that have direct impact on the final writing product of the process writing approach were debated. Namely, peer interaction and motivation. We have dealt with the advantages and disadvantages of working in groups where the students shared each others’ comments above all each others’ writing strategies. The effects of peer evaluation which is sometimes perceived as tolerable at best and as extremely unpleasant at worst had a considerable share in this discussion. In the final section of this chapter, we have provided suggestions of how best the process writing approach could be implemented.
GENERAL CONCLUSION

This research has undertaken to probe into EFL writing pedagogy on the basis of second year students’ written production at the University of Oran. After reviewing the relevant theory and empirical research in the related fields of writing pedagogy, it has presented the implementation of the process writing approach. The aim was to synthesize pedagogy by investigating the gap that exists between the process and product approaches. The course of investigation has been framed by current understanding of writing processes undertaken by researchers like Zamel (1992), Zinsser (1998), Raimes (1990), Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) to name but a few.

Before implementing the process writing approach, we knew the central tenets of the writing approach movement as well as we know the letters of the English alphabets. As teachers of writing, we cut our teeth on the claims that writing constitutes a process of some sort and that this process can be generalized. It is generalizable to the extent that we know when someone is recursive or to the extent that we know when to intervene in someone’s writing process or to the extent that we know the process that experienced or expert writers call upon when they write (Emig, 1980:70).

Rather than adhering to a more careful and controlled stance where we refrain from championing any single approach in order to avoid “false trails” (Raimes, 1992), we chose to implement the process writing approach. Rather than indicating any alternatives or corrections for the future, we weigh the common belief that the plurality of approaches, designs, and procedures characterizing contemporary composition classrooms and outlines shared negotiations on the diversity and complexity of teaching and learning writing. However, adhering to the same stance would have denoted a lack of confidence in the approach we advocate. Research has shown that this pluralism in approaches sound too easily achieved but not based on sound principle.

From the outset of this experiment, the process writing approach was envisaged as a help menu based on the six recursive stages of composing. The most important insight that recent research into writing has provided the writing pedagogy is that good writers, professional writers appear to go through certain processes that lead to successful pieces of writing work.
Good writers start off with an overall plan in their heads. They think about what they want to say and who they are writing for. They then draft out sections of the writing. As they work on these sections, they are constantly reviewing, revising, and editing their work. Stated in other terms, good writers are characterized by having a sense of purpose, a sense of audience, and a sense of directions in their writing. Unskilled writers as our 80 informants of the two experimental groups tended to be much more haphazard and much less confident in their approach. The challenge, therefore, was to alter the writing behaviour of our informants.

The invigorating effect of reading a first draft, of discussing its weak as well as its strong points, of reading the revised, improved versions of the first draft enhanced the informants’ will to improve their writing. They were willing to share their ideas with their peers. Needless to say that in this process of sharing ideas, there were conflicts. Many students acted negatively and defensively to critical comments from their peers. There were cases where some students had difficulties identifying problems areas in other students’ writing. Therefore, they offered them inaccurate correction. While most of the students addressed more surface errors than problems of meaning, generally speaking, peer interactions in the experiment were a complex and productive scaffold peer help process. Discussions and hot debates took place in a stress free atmosphere which included camaraderie, empathy and concern for not hurting each others’ feelings. It was rather an informal setting where every student, rather on focusing on the final product, did his best to provide each other with the necessary support and advice during the writing process.

Revising with peer feedback was an effective means of improving writing and revision strategies. It was also an enjoyable technique that provided an audience for writers and seemed to develop students’ evaluative skills. The informants have understood that revising relies on critical consciousness where dispassionate pragmatic eyes are used to make quick harsh decisions because they have not got time to vacillate. Revising with peer feedback is a powerful tool as the learners revise with eyes of others.

There are limitations in this research. Because of the considerable amount of activities required to implement the process writing approach, it was impossible to see if the writing behaviour learnt during the experiment was put into practice in the other subjects or in writing exam papers. The sole aim of the experiment was to see whether the process writing approach could improve the students’ written production of English. Will the informants go through the same process, go through the different stages and sub-stages, will they use the same writing
strategies when confronted with a writing task in other subject or when confronted with a topic in literature exam for instance? This will be an interesting vista for future work.

We believe that the sample size of eighty students was not enough to generalize the findings of the experiment. At the same time, supervising eighty students, conferencing with every one, providing each student with personalized comments and strategies was not an easy task to say the least. Furthermore, the writing hours for the approach to be implemented were very limited. The results could have been different had the experiment been allotted more time.

Also, at this conclusion, it seems appropriate to stress once again the need to use the process writing approach at school. Unless it is implemented at this level, it will not have any tangible effect as the learners will compose the way they have always been composing. It is like fossilized mistakes, if the aforementioned approach is implemented from scratch at university level, in the long run, the students will switch back to their old favourite way of composing.

A number of factors have remained beyond the scope of the present research. There was space to position the theory and practice of the assessment and evaluation of writing skills which represent one of the outcomes of the writing process (Emig, 1991). This field is well worth further investigation.

Writing within a group may have positive as well as negative effects. This area may be well worth investigation in future action research. Another type of follow up study could investigate how what was acquired and learnt in this experiment is applied in students’ theses in other subjects.

Another vista of future work may be the correlation between performance in oral and written tasks. Would the students with high proficiency in oral skills affect their skills in writing?

It remains to be seen how many of these suggestions for further inquiries into the different variables linked to writing will meet with support. Clearly, awareness of, and interest in the need investigate the writing pedagogy in our university and the potential outcome of improved levels of student performance are among the motives of any educational proposal.
In submitting the present research on the processes and the products of the students of the second year, we hope that we have shown some directions for achieving those ultimate goals.
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Appendix A: Pool of Letters (p.192)

A
Noisy neighbours
Dear Sir,

The new occupants of the adjoining house frequently play loud thudding music until late at night. Polite request to them to reduce the volume have been met with hostility and rudeness. How does one handle a situation like this? Do your readers have any suggestions?
Yours faithfully
Carole Mannstone
London, N3

B
How to cope with noisy neighbours
Dear sir,

Your correspondent (letter 8 March) has two options for action over noisy neighbours once friendly persuasion has failed. First, contact the local environmental health department. If they agree that the noise constitutes a nuisance, they should take action, at first informally and ultimately under section 58 of the control of pollution Act. If this is ineffective, the second option is to take private legal action; this could be expensive, and advice should be sought.

Noise is one of the most all pervasive environmental problems in the UK, and neighbour noise tops the list of complaints. Research shows amplified music, barking dogs, domestic sounds and DTV activities to be the worst complaints from householders varies widely. Some have a clear policy on neighbour noise and provide helpful advice; others appear to be failing in their legal obligation to investigate and act on noise complaints. This society has a neighbour-noise working group which this month is undertaking a survey of environmental health departments. We hope to establish the minimum response to noise complaints, and to recommend methods of dealing with particular problems.
Yours faithfully,

C
Dear Sir,

We once lived in a flat beneath the Bee Gees pop group. The only solution to noisy neighbours (8 March) is to move and quickly.
Yours faithfully,
Anne Anderson
London, N1

D
Pete hate
Dear sir,

At least those with noisy neighbours (8 and 10 March) have a legal remedy. What do we do about a neighbour’s cats which foul over our garden, particularly the lawn, on a daily basis? Owners are not legally responsible for their cats’ actions and complaints have proved fruitless.
Repellants are mostly too dangerous to use with young children about. We might as well be living in a high-rise flat for all the pleasure we can have from our own garden.
Yours faithfully,
Julia Plumptre
Faversham, Kent
10 March

E
Dogged defence
Dear sir,

Julia Plumptre’s problems with her neighbour’s cats are not insoluble (letter, 13 March). May I suggest that she gets a dog?
Yours faithfully
Annabelle Elleson
Abergavenny, Gwent
13 March

F
Catty tactics
Dear Sir,

To help Julia Plumptre and her cat problem (letter, 13 March), may we suggest that she acquires a cat of her own who will drive other people’s cats from her garden and will attend to its own affairs in their garden.
Yours sincerely
Lewis Jukes
GRACE JUKES
Bromley, Kent
13 March

G
Dear Sir,

Neighbours ‘cats’? A water pistol

H
Cat calls
Dear Sir,

Perhaps one method to prevent invasion of our gardens by neighbour’s cats (letter, 13 March) would be to create a lot of noise.
Yours faithfully,
ANDREW HISCOX
Lancaster
Lancashire
13 March
**Appendix B: Text-Types Analysis Chart (p.195)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Type of writing</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>postcard</td>
<td>Address on right Message on left</td>
<td>Personal, informal Abbreviation used Ideas often in note form</td>
<td>Date and place as heading No indication of addressee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Formal business Letter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Page from academic article</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Editorial from newspaper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>recipe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Telephone message</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Page from a novel</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>poem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix C: Statement Prompts (P.198)**

**Compulsory Military Service Should Be Abolished in all Countries.**

Believe it or not, the Swiss were once a warlike people. There is still evidence of this. To this day, the guards at the Vatican are Swiss. But the Swiss discovered long time ago that constant warfare brought them nothing but suffering and poverty. They adopted a policy of neutrality, and while the rest of the world soothed in turmoil, Switzerland, a country with hardly any natural resources, enjoyed peace and prosperity. The rest of the world is still not ready to accept this simple and obvious solution. Most countries not only maintain permanent armies but require all their young men to do a period of compulsory military service. Everybody has a lot to say about the desirability of peace, but no one does anything about it. An obvious thing to do would be to abolish conscription everywhere. This would be the first step towards universal peace.

Some countries, like Britain, have already abandoned peace-time conscription. Unfortunately, they haven’t done so for idealistic reasons, but from a simple recognition of the fact that modern warfare is a highly professional business. In the old days, large armies were essentials. There was strength in numbers; ordinary soldiers were cannon fodder. But in these days of inter-continental ballistic missiles, of push button warfare and escalation, unskilled manpower has become redundant. In a mere two years or so, you can’t hope to train conscript in the requirement and conditions of modern warfare. So why bother leave it for the professional.

There are also pressing personal reasons to abolish conscription. It is most unpleasant in times of peace for young men to grow with the threat of military service looming over their heads. They are deprived of two of the best and most formative years of their lives. Their careers and studies are disrupted and sometimes the whole course of their lives is altered. They spent at least two years in the armed forces engaged in activities which do not provide them with any useful experience with regard to their future work. It can’t even be argued that what they learn might prove valuable in a national emergency. When they leave the services, young men quickly forget all the unnecessary information about warfare which they were made to acquire. It is shocking to think that skilled and unskilled men are often nothing more than a source of cheap labour for the military.

Some people argue that military service “does you good”. “Two years in the army you hear people say, “will knock some sense into him”. The opposite is usually the case. Anyone would resent being pushed about and bullied for two years, all in the name of “discipline”. The military mind requires uniformity and conformity. People who do not fit into this brutal pattern suffer terribly and may emerge with serious personality disorders. There are many wonderful ways of spending two years. Serving in the armed forces is not one of them!
Appendix D: Drafting by the Teacher (P.22)

Life in Cities

The train halted. Anxiously, I peered out the door. Lots of people, but no sign of anyone who might be looking for me. So I climbed down and, with my suitcase, walked towards the exit. Stepping out under the porch, I caught my breath. In front of me was a busy, sparkling stretch of water, lapping a coastline dominated by half-familiar buildings of architectural eminence. I had arrived at Istanbul, the sometime capital of Byzantium and now, in this one stunning moment which I could never repeat, there it was, spread out before me under a clear blue sky.

The drama of the skyline in Istanbul, the very tangible sense of layer upon layer of history, stretching from classical to modern times, summarizes the key feature of the city and city life. Cities have always been the seat of power and influence from the time when mankind first established urban civilization. Rulers, whether priests of kings, were the focus around which a court assembled, and patronage of the arts ensured that the city became the artistic expression of that civilization.

Whatever criticisms can be leveled at such concentrations of power, the architectural legacy of eclecticism is the very thing that makes cities such interesting and exciting places to live in. Who could deny the splendor and elegance of Paris? And who could have produced such elegance but an essentially autocratic monarchy and the ruling class assembled around it?

In our more egalitarian times, the cities fathers have to attend to the daily needs of the masses, and running a modern city is a demanding operation of enormous complexity which most of us take for granted—until something goes wrong. We assume that the garbage will be collected and pavements swept, that the buses and the metro will run on schedule, that phones will ring, water will flow, traffic will circulate, that shops will be stocked and that our urban routines will continue on their accustomed course. For these are all of the amenities which city life should offer, and it is only when the garbage collectors go on strike or the transport system falters that we recognize the intricacy of the urban civilization in which we live.

Meanwhile, at the station in Istanbul, my friends arrived, and later dropped me off at the Galata Bridge, where, as I crossed, I felt a slight thrill at being in the centre of such a significant city poised at the meeting point of Asia and Europe. Maybe some of the city’s former glory, on closer acquaintance, proved to be a little tarnished. And perhaps one might have wished for less noise and pollution. But here was represented the variety, spectacle, noise, bustle, danger and excitement epitomizing life in cities—that most significant expression of human civilization.
### Appendix E: Considering Ways of Ending (p.204)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Beginnings</strong></th>
<th><strong>Endings</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(a)</strong> Edinburg is a city unlike any other. It has been called ‘The Athens of the North’ and has its site compared with seven hills on which Rome was built. But Athens (‘the Edinburg of the South’) is in truth not more dramatic to look at and if you search diligently you can find at least a dozen hills within the Edinburg boundaries and a hundred or so within an hour’s drive. (Edinburgh, Official Guide City of Edinburgh District Council)</td>
<td><strong>i.</strong> The train had cast the station like a skin. It called out to the sky, I’m coming. I’m coming; and again, there was no answer.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(b)</strong> Have you ever stood at the supermarket checkout and inwardly tut-tutted at the white sliced bread, sausages, sugar jam and tinned spaghetti filling up the basket next to yours? If so, the likelihood is that you have never had to feel a family on income support (Kate de Selincourt, Supermarket shelves that are out of reach, The Independent 24 October 1989)</td>
<td><strong>ii.</strong> The authority is now developing ideas for an information pack on health eating on a low budget. But authority workers may be facing the task with heavy hearts, knowing that for people such as the four million British adults and children who depend on income support, and others in low incomes, a healthy diet will be priced beyond their reach.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(c)</strong> The train came out of the red horizon and bore down towards hem over the single straight track (Nadine Cordimer No Place Like: selected short stories Penguin 1978, the Train from Rgodesia)</td>
<td><strong>iii.</strong> You pays your money and your takes innovatory choice. If we go on taking stills at the rate of 40 billion a year and making enough videotape to pool from here to Mars, there ought to be room for everyone.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(d)</strong> Most journeys begin less abruptly than they end, and to fix the true beginning of this one in either time or space is a task which I do not care to undertake. I find it easier to open my account of it at the moment when I first realized, with a small shock of pleasure and surprise, that it had actually begun. (Peter Fleming News from Tartary Jonathan Cape and Futura 1980)</td>
<td><strong>iv.</strong> The star of all events, however, is undoubtedly the city itself. A magnificent setting, fine buildings, a wealth of green space, with ever-changing views to the hills, the river and the sea make it a town of constant discovery and delight, historically and contemporaneously fascinating. Edinburgh is, in the truest sense of the word, unique.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(e)</strong> Getting on for 40 billion colour photographs are printed every year, a third of them in America, and most of them show happy families and smiling faces on holiday. (David Taylor, Have you got a film in? High Life, British airways 1989).</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix F: Evaluating a Draft (p.209)
### Appendix G: ‘Connectives’ Chart Prototype (p.219)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>And</th>
<th>Listing</th>
<th>Cataloguing</th>
<th>e.g. first</th>
<th>Another</th>
<th>Finally</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition, leading to a new stage in sequence, or digression</td>
<td>e.g. as for</td>
<td>with reference to</td>
<td>incidentally</td>
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<td>Summing up what has gone before</td>
<td>e.g. in short.....</td>
<td>Briefly...</td>
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<td>Referring backwards or forwards to similar ideas/ references</td>
<td>e.g. that is to say...</td>
<td>for example</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expressing results or consequences</td>
<td>e.g. therefore</td>
<td>accordingly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Inferring from a previous statement</td>
<td>e.g. in other words...</td>
<td>otherwise....</td>
<td>if..... then</td>
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| Or | Expressing in a different, but similar way | e.g. rather.... | or.... |
| Expressing an alternative | e.g. alternatively... | on the other hand...... |

| But | Contrasting | e.g. by contrast.... on the other hand..... | whereas... |
| Conceding | e.g. however... | although.... | nevertheless.... |

| For | Expressing reason | e.g. since | because .... |
|contradicting | on the contrary | in fact, though.... |
Appendix H: Scrambled Text (p.223)

Once negotiations have been finalized and an agreement reached, everyone shakes hands on it, and the following evening all relatives on both sides are invited to feast and celebrate at the future bride’s family home, and the engagement date is decided.

This wedding-day party is but the first in a three-day celebration of feasting, singing and dancing. The couple then have a few days to recover before the bridegroom’s village stages its own party in honour of the newlyweds—a day merrymaking that traditionally takes place on the Sunday following the wedding.

At Cypriot weddings the bride and groom enter the church together. When the service is ended the priest takes the couple by hand and walks them around a table with nearby guests throw rice, to wish them a “white” (easy) life together, and corn for happiness.

The boy it is reasoned will provide for his wife thereafter, so the girl’s family is expected to set the couple up or marriage. Expecting those cases where families have a much all lined up, the marriage procedure begins something like this: boy chooses girl and discusses the matter with his family, who take the matter from there. A relative of his—usually the godfather—approaches the girl’s family with the proposition, and asks what they will offer in return for the boy’s hand.

There is no honeymoon. The couple settle down to married life straightaway and plan a down to married life straightaway and plan a down to married life straightaway and plan a family as soon as possible—naturally hoping for sons.

On the big day women friends gather at the bride’s house to start the cooking—which is no mean task when the custom is to invite the whole village! In the meantime the bride is attended by some of her single friends. Accompanied by music from outside the door they wash her hair, make her face and help her into her wedding dress. The groom, assisted by bachelor friends, is shaved and his hair cut in readiness for the service. Church bells beckon the couple, and after them a procession follows from the village.

Meanwhile her father has been saving as much as he can, because dowries usually include the marital home too, and most families buy land and build a house as the girl is growing up. Cattle, cash, a car, certainly a television and nowadays a washing machine too—some, or perhaps all of these can be included in the dowry, depending on the girl’s family finances. No wonder boy babies are so popular.

Outside the church the bride and groom are congratulated before one and all proceed to the newly-weds’ house to start celebrating.

From this stage of official engagement it is not unusual for the couple to live together, and, on a type to all intents marriage, if the engagement is to be of trial marriage. If the engagement is to be broken, therefore, the union can only be undone in an ecclesiastical court. Normally it is only in an ecclesiastical court. Normally undone in an ecclesiastical court. Normally undone in an ecclesiastical court. Normally undone in an ecclesiastical court. Normally undone in an ecclesiastical court.

As far as the bride is concerned, her family have been preparing for her wedding ever since she was born, and a traditional pattern followed since that time. As she grew up, she herself has quite possibly helped her mother and her grandmother in the painstaking task of building up an entire dowry, for she is expected to provide as many as 100 sheets and pillow cases, 100 towels, bedspreads, table linen, runners, cushions... the list is endless....

One of the most attractive, colourful, and certainly the happiest of occasions is the traditional village wedding. Everyone in the village is invited and excitement builds up during the preceding days. But preparations for this day can literally be said to have started 18 to 20 years earlier....
Appendix I: Segmenting Materials (p.224)

Read the passage below and decide where new paragraphs are needed. Highlight the opening sentences.

Qualities and courage of a different sort were necessary to create large and orderly societies in a wilderness. This business demanded huge capital. It was more than men’s work: women in great numbers had to be associated with it. All the ideals, arts, and sciences of civilization were involved in it. Not fully aware of all that colonization implied but eager to exploit the real estate in America, English merchant capitalists sought that privilege from the Crown at the beginning of the seventeenth century. They had already formed trading companies to engage in commerce with Russia, the Levant, and the East Indies. In corporate enterprises of that type they had demonstrated their ingenuity. Besides they had accumulated much capital for investment. This capital they now proposed to use in colonial enterprise, about which they knew so little. Only one aspect of it was clear of them: individual farmers, merchants, artisans, and their families, with small savings or none at all, could not embark unaided on any such undertaking as large-scale colonization. Under English law all the territory claimed in America belonged to the Crown. The monarch could withhold it from use, keep any part of it as a royal domain, or grant it, by charter or patent, in large or small blocks, to privileged companies or private persons. It was the Crown, therefore, that English enterprisers bent on colonizing America turned for grants of land and powers of government. And in making such grants by charter or patent, the Crown created two types of legal agencies for colonization: the corporation and the proprietary. The corporate type of colonizing agency was the company, or group of individuals merged into a single ‘person’ at law by a royal charter. The charter named the original members of the company and gave them the right to elect officers, frame bylaws, raise money, and act as a body. It granted to the company an area of territory and conferred upon it certain powers: to transport emigrants, govern its settlements, dispose of its land and other resources, and to carry on commerce, subject to the laws of England. Such a corporation was akin to the modern joint-stock company organized for profit-making purposes. The proprietary agency for colonizing consisted of one or more persons to whom were given a grant of territory and various powers of government by the Crown. The proprietor thus endowed with special privileges had authority to found a colony and enjoy property, commercial, governing, and other rights similar in character to those vested in a company by royal charter. Companies and proprietors did not, however, have completely free hand in managing their colonial affairs. They were limited by the terms of their charters or patents and were compelled to confer upon free settlers certain liberties and immunities enjoyed by English people at home, including a share in the making of local laws. Various motives inspired English leaders to form companies or embark on careers as proprietors in America. Among the motives were the desire to extend English power, to make money out of trading privileges and land sales, and to convert the Indians to Christianity. For some companies and proprietors the idea of establishing religious liberty in America for members of persecuted sects was also among the primary considerations in their colonizing activities. Still another purpose entering into the plans of companies or proprietors was that of giving poor and otherwise unfortunate persons in England a chance to work and live better in a new country so open to opportunity. In other words, political, economical, religious, and charitable motives induced English leaders to devote their energies to the business of colonization.

(The Beards’ New Basic History of the United States PP22-23)
Appendix J: Conveying Mood and Attitude (p.226)

Mrs Philips didn’t really know what was happening in the grounds around her. She had no means of judging men, judging faces. Depending on herself now, she was continually surprised by people…

It was part of her incompetence, her new unhappiness. And it came out again when she tried to get help, when she advertised for women to help in the manor and was surprised again and again to get people like herself, women adrift, incompetent, themselves without the ability to judge people, looking as much for emotional refuge as for a position, solitary women with their precious things (full of associations for them alone) but without men or familiehe as women who for various reasons had been squeezed out of a communal or shared life.

The first of these ladies came upon me like a vision one lunch time when I was going out to the bus stop. She was below the yews and she was in brilliant green; and the face she turned to me was touched with green and blue and red, green on her eyelids. The colours of the paint on the lady’s face were like the colours of a Toulouse-Lautrec drawing; made her appear to belong to another age. Green was the absinthe colour; it brought to mind pictures by other artists of forlorn absinthe drinkers, it made me think of bars. And probably a bar or hotel somewhere on the south coast was the lady’s background, her last refuge, her previous life.

How long must she have spent arranging that violently-coloured face, dusted with glitter even for lunchtime on this summer’s day! Where-and to whom-was going now on her day off? So dreadfully coquettish, so anxious to please, so instinctively obsequious in the presence of a man-everything about her caricatured by age, and the caricature set off by the rural setting, the yews, the beeches, the country road.
Appendix K: Signalling Opinion (p.228)

Tasksheet 1: (writers’ opinions)
Appendix L: Highlighting the Focal idea (p.230)

Nowadays, there is nothing that we cannot get the food which you want any time in Japan, if you have money. I have really realised that how luxuriant food life we have. In fact, there are quite many shops where you can buy the food from many parts of the world and almost all vegetables or fruit all the year round. However, this is deplored by a part of the Japanese people, because, in the past, the food was very concerned with a season. But it has been disappearing.

Since old times, the significance of the four seasons has been very important for the Japanese. We have spring, summer, autumn and winter which are more definite than English one, therefore we have adapted our lives to each season. Also we had the vegetables, fruit and seafood which we could eat only while a certain term. We enjoy these foods each season and could feel the change of the four seasons throughout the food.

There is a good example which you can know how important for us a season is. This is 'haiku' is to use the words or phrases which express the season. This is called 'the seasonal words', which includes many food. Each season has the seasonal words, for example, spring: strawberry, summer: watermelon, winter: pumpkin and so on. We have associated the food with four seasons.

However, I doubt at the moment whether the Japanese children can make 'haiku' or not. As a result of a high technology, we can make crops thrive at all seasons, for example by a green house. Also fish or meat are frozen. Therefore the children do not know how vegetables and fruit thrive or when crop is harvested in the natural way. I think we should consider that this a serious problem for us.

In conclusion, our lives have been becoming extremely wealthy and luxurious for a short time, but also we have been losing something very important while the same time. In the future, i would teach my children the correlation between the food and season and hope they will be able to make 'haiku'.

Appendix M: Proof-Reading and Editing (p.234)
Appendix N: Mrs. Bixby and the Colonel’s Coat (p. 253)

**Question 1:** Read the passage below and decide where new paragraphs are needed. Highlight or underline the opening sentences on your answer sheet.

As soon as she was in the train, Mrs. Bixby carried the box into the privacy of the ladies’ room and locked the door. How exciting this was! A Christmas present from the colonel. She started to undo the string. ‘I’ll bet it is a dress’ she said aloud. ‘It might even be two dresses. Or it might be whole lot of beautiful underclothes. I won’t look. I’ll just feel around and try to guess what it is. I’ll try to guess the colour as well, and exactly what it looks like. ‘Also how much it cost’. She shut her eyes tight and slowly lifted off the lid. Then she put one hand down into the box. There was some tissue paper on top; she could feel it and hear it rustling. There was also an envelope or a card of some sort. She ignored this and began burrowing underneath this tissue paper, the fingers reaching out delicately, like tendrils. She opened her eyes wide and stared at the coat. Then she pounced on it and lifted it out of the box. Thick layers of fur made a lovely noise against the tissue paper as they unfolded, and when she held it up and saw it hanging to its full length, it was so beautiful it took her breath away. Never had she seen a mink like this before. It was mink, wasn’t it? Yes of course it was. But what a glorious colour! The fur was almost pure black. At first she thought it was black; but when she held it closer to the window she saw that there was a touch of blue in it as well, a deep rich blue, like cobalt. Quickly she looked at the label. It said simply wild Labrador mink. There was nothing else, no sign of where it had been bought or anything. But that, she told herself, was probably the colonel’s doing. The wild old fox was making darn sure he didn’t leave any track. Good for him. But what in the world could it have cost? She hardly dared to think. Four, five, six thousand dollars? Possibly more. She just couldn’t take her eyes off it. Nor, for that matter, could she wait to try it on. Quickly she slipped off her own plain red coat. She was panting a little now, she couldn’t help it, and her eyes were stretched very wide. But oh God, the feel of that fur! And those huge wide sleeves with their thick turned-up cuffs! Who was it that had said that the arms are made skins for the rest of the coat? Someone had told her that. Joan Rutfield, probably, though how Joan would know anything about mink she couldn’t imagine. The great black coat seemed to slide down almost of its own accord, like a second skin. Oh boy! It was the queerest feeling! She glanced into the mirror. It was fantastic. Her whole personality had suddenly changed completely. She looked dazzling, radiant rich, brilliant, voluptuous, all at the same time. And the sense of power that it gave her! In this coat she could walk into any place she wanted and people would scurrying around her like rabbits. The whole thing was just wonderful for words! Mrs. Bixby picked up the envelope that was still lying in the box. She opened it and pulled out the colonel’s letter.

Appendix O: Feedback Techniques (p. 255)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity of research in Method section</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity and appropriateness of reporting findings in result and Discussion section, including appropriateness of citations</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance of implications in Conclusion</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriateness of form of References</td>
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<tr>
<td>Syntax, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citations and works cited</td>
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The Evaluation of Categories of the Research Paper at the Beginning of the Experiment

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The Evaluation of Categories of the Research Paper Given by the End of the Experiment