IMPROVING STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ACADEMIC WRITING THROUGH HOMEWORK

CASE STUDY: FIRST YEAR LMD STUDENTS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT BATNA UNIVERSITY

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirementsfor the degree of Doctorat Es-Sciences in Language Science

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DECLARATION

I, Soraya. ZIDANI, herebycertify that the present thesis titled "Improving students'

achievement in academic writing through homework. Case study: first year LMD studentsof

English Language at Batna University " which I submit for examination in consideration of

the award of a higher degree "Doctorat Sciences" is my own personal effort. wherever

contributions of others in any quotation or paraphrase are involved, they have been duly

acknowledged with due reference to the literature which I present for examination.

Furthermore, I took reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and, to the best of my

knowledge, it has not been taken from other sources except where such work has been cited

and acknowledged within the text. The present work was done under the guidance of

Professor Amel. BAHLOUL, at the Department ofEnglish Language, University of Batna 2.

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DEDICATION

My affectionate thanks go to my precious and beloved parents; for their prayers, their steadfast love, their on-going support, motivation and help in bringing the present thesis to completion.

I would like also to extend warm thanks to all my brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces, and my friends; who have been a source of encouragement and inspiration throughout my life.

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ABSTRACT

Most first year EFL students find difficulties to master most components of academic writing skill and to produce correct papers. Althougha myriad of studies hasaddressed their poor performance in writing skill, teachers are still suffering to develop students' academic writing and to raise their understanding of the importance of processing academic essay writing. To do so, additional practice and time are required to be integrated in foreign language (FL) classes of BatnaUniversity. Instead, homework assignments display its practical application that can develop academic writing in terms of practicing English writing. The present thesis is administered to investigate the effects of integrating this instructional activity into FL classes of writing. It further tries to give a clear picture about its effects on the five components of essay academic writing: content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics. The present thesis presents quantitative and qualitative research conducted through calculating the t-test with the two groups: experimental and control, and analyzing of students' questionnaires and teachers' interviews. First year students (N=60) participate in the present research work: (N=30) students form the experimental group, and (N=30) students form the control group. The findings of the data analyses showed that students who took home assignments along with effective teachers' feedback performed better than those who did not. Recommendations were made to teachers and students on the need to recon with take home assignments to improve students' academic writing performance.

Keywords: academic writing, homework assignments, quantitative research, qualitative research, feedback

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ALM: Academic literacy model

AL: Academic literacy

APA: American Psychological Association

CG: Control Group

E-feedback: Electronic feedback

EFL: English as a foreign language

ENS : école normale supérieure

Etc. : Et Cetera

ESL: English as a Second Language

EXPG: Experimental Group

FL: Foreign Language

I.e: idest**:** that is

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

LMD: License-Master - Doctorate

MLA: Modern Language Association

N: Number

NLS: New Literacy Studies

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TEFL: Teaching English as a foreign language

UK: United Kingdom

WE: Written Expression

%: Percentage

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

Academic writing has been a critical area of research in teaching English as a foreign language. The underlying reason could be the increase of academic writing importance as students move to a higher standard of education. Attempts are made to change teaching and learning of English language in the Algerian context, but these are not always monitored, especially at classroom level where most teachers face many challenges concerning academic writing instruction in classrooms to conduct writing lessonseffectually.

Being perceived as competent in writing is one of the aims for all students at tertiary education. This aim is creeping into teachers' classroom routines, pervading their thinking about how to improve students' academic writing. Based on these challenges, students need more opportunities to practice their writing skill. One of the variables being studied is homework. It is one of many elements thought to improve students' academic writing achievement, given that homework provides a means for students not only to master course content, but also to develop their academic writing through assorted writing assignments being designed.

Homework has been a controversial instructional activity used as an attempt to enhance and improve students' academic writing, and this is what led the researcher to explore the current study on the effects of homework on students' academic writing. When homework assignments are painstakingly given, students will know how to write academically.

Background of the Study

Learning English language is a hard issue among EFL students. It has been found that most students at all levels believe that academic writing is one of the most difficult language skills to master compared with other skills. Algeria is one of the countries which gives a great significance for Foreign Language Learning, thus, it has adopted new educational Reforms to modernize and enhance the educational curriculum. Since the last educational reform of 2003,

English language is deemed as second foreign language and is introduced for the first time in the first year Middle Schools. The Algerian universities endorses the study of the English language. However, they do not embody students to have a certain level of English proficiency to study the languageespecially their ability to write in English.; instead they depend on their marks in the baccalaureate examination.

No one can deny that academic writing is of significance not only to master English language but also to succeed in acquiring other disciplines where it is a medium of written communication. In recent years, the Algerian educational system has accorded greater priority to improving the language with all its skills. The main interest is to further prepare students to write academically different types of texts. Thus, writing becomes a central criterion for academic success at university.

Due to the worth of academic writing, a myriad of studies has indicated different approaches concerning the way of teaching writing. - Brakus (2003), Abdulkareem (2013) - All the argument and the focus were about whether to adopt the product approach, the process approach or genre approach. Infact, teaching writing is more than an approach rather itis a process that needs hard work, enough time, and more practice.

In addition to the way of teaching writing, the challenges of academic writing are another interest that has been remarked by many teachers. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) said that "probably half of the world's population does not know how to write adequately and effectively"(p. 87). Teachers find students' academic writing weak and not acceptable. Myriad of studies conducted by Ghodbane (2010), Hellalet (2014), and Khanchali (2017) who mention that students usually face difficulty in getting use to the requirements of English academic writing. These three studies indicate that there seem to be difficulties and problems regarding the level of academic writing skills in English language department at Batna university. They have found that students' level of English writing skills is not as high as it

needs to be. A notable number of studies have addressed that common problems encountered EFL students and the reasons that could be behind those troubles which means that writing skills considers as highly strung and sensitiveissue that students suffer and remains so as thay still have poor performances in the writing.

Statement of The Problem

Recently, It is observed that much importance is given to English language in Algerian educational system.Regardless of that value, in the course of researcher' career as a teacher of English at the Department of Foreign Languages, she noticed that students are confronted with various problems. The present problem was observed among first year students whose failthe issue especially in writing skill which is perceived as the lowest skilledmatter for students depending on statistics from the administration regarding their scores in written expression course (see appendix 01) and at the same time it usually carries the greatest part of the examinations. They have difficulties in writing paragraphs and essays. When writing a paragraph, students tend to identify their difficulties in terms of the structure of a correct piece of academic writing and hope that if they are taught enough practice, all their problems will be solved.

Writing in English is not that practiced skill outside the class, all the practice occurs inside and has little chance to be improved outside. Practice is almost neglected in the Department of English at Batna University. Furthermore, most of students struggle to write a correct paper in which this concern originates from a researcher' personal interest in the field of teaching writing skill when it is noticed that most students are not yet competent in that issue. These remarks are boosted by other teachers' opinions working in the same Department through teachers' preliminary questionnaire (see appendix 02); they are dismayed by the mediocre writing production of their students in all cases particularly in their examinations where they are not able to write paragraphs and essays in a correct way.

Accordingly, additional work time is now a necessity for students who are processing two languagesand, all too often, they are not given such opportunities. Moreover,they do not posses a sufficient writing practice to construct a well organized piece of writing, and through the researcher' experience in teaching written expression course,and her observation in which she noticed their examination papers (110) (see appendix 03) showing too many errors in terms of grammar, mechanics, content, and organization. They even misuse words to express their ideas. The longer their sentences are, the more errors they include.

So that writng skill of many first year LMD studentsat BatnaUniversitiy needs improvement. Moreover, students are greatly influenced by their mother tongue and translation, which can, sometimes, be a hindrance in writing; they generally think in Arabic and want to write a word- for- word translation. In addition to Arabic, Algerian students can also be influenced by the French language which they master to a certain level. This can noticeablybe an obstacle for the development of their writing and the learning of English. The last problem noticed with these students is that they are able to focus on grammer alone in their writing or to concentrate on content only. This means they are blocked when they attempt to focus on these two concepts at the same time. All of thesefactors contribute to the ongoing problem of writing successfully as an EFL students.

Additionally, in teaching and learning process the teacher rarely uses homework assignments for the purpose of developing students' academic writing and this issue stemed from analysing the nature of homework assignments that teachers give to their students (see appendix 04). Teachers stated that because of the time and the effort that those writing assignments require, the assignments they sometime use only occur inside the classroom. they also tends to depend on different exercises provided in the handouts. Providing too much time for writing rarely implemented. This concern contributes to the students'

development of academic writing. Thus providing effective feedback which is not always adopted by teachers largerly can participate in developing students' academic writing. (teachers' peliminary questionnaire).

It is essential to design language learning activities by adopting and adapting different types of writing assignements and combination of them can help students to achieve a better capacity inwriting ability; However, all of thses challenges can not being achieved unless teachers set a homeworkwriting assignment which is a fundamental part of the curriculum. Not all assignments can be handled in class. This is especially true in learning academic writing. The best way to learn how to write is sit down behind a paper and write; It takes a lot of time, and there are not enough minutes in a class period to do it atUniversity.

Homework is a way that allow teachers to measure the progress of their students' academic writng and to help them learn important concepts. Also it gives students a chance to use extra arenas to practice their academic writing. Students would get a chance to work at their own pace, as opposed to a classroom environment.when there is not enough time in a class for education to be personalized, so homework is the student's effort in improving their education. Consequently, all what is mentioned above increase the researcher' concern to investigate the role of homework assignments in improving students' academic writing production and shed light on the power that homework assignments have related to students' academic writing practice.

Aims of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the present research is aimed to improve the academic writing mastery of EFL first year students through the use of homework writing assignments for their teaching and learning process. The purpose of the present research is to investigate the effect of take-homewriting assignment on student

performance in academic writing. The aim is to scrutinize whether given take home writing assignment to improve students' achievement in academic writing is better than restricting them only to class work. It also aims to revive the direct the derelict role that homework assignments routine has, and to explore the role of teachers' feedback and evaluation in enhancing their practice of academic writing skills.

Research Questions

The aims were achieved based on finding answers to the following research questions:

- Why do EFL students find different difficulties in writing in English language?

- What are the main causes that hamper first year students to produce a correct piece of academic writing?

- What is the effectiveness of homework assignments on developing English academic writing among EFL first year LMD students at Batna University?

- How does teachers' feedback effect the development of the students' academic writing?

Research Hypothesis

The following hypothesis guided the present research.

Homework writing assignments will be more effective as an instructional activity that help foreign language students of Batna University to improve their academic writing if it is compared only to class work activity.

H_0: There is no significant difference betweenstundents with take home writing assignments and students with only class work in improving their academic writing.

H_1: There is significant difference between studentswith take home writing assignments and students with only class work in improving their academic writing.

Research Methodology and Design

To identify and state the existence of the problem, a preliminary questionnaire had been administered to first year teachers of different courses, and to gather the requisite information for the present thesis, the researcher has analyzed different written examination papers (110). Then to achieve the aims of the present research and to test the hypotheses, the researcher needs to select a method that help her collecting data, analyze, interpret it, and make recommendations. The method used in the present thesisis a combination of qualitative and quantitative research; it is a mixed methods research methodology. An experiment in which two intact groups are assigned as experimental group and control group.

The experimental group integrates homework writing assignments in writing sessions while the control group follows the traditional way of teaching written expression subject without the integration of any kind of homework writing assignments.Thus, the experimental method is backed up bytwo other tools as students' questionnaire and teachers' interview in order torummagestudents and teachers attitudes and opinions towards the integration of homework assignments align with teachers' feedback, and to delve deeper into the way written expression is taught to first year LMD students.

Sample

Volunteers (N=60) participate from foreign language classes of Batna University in the present research which took place during the academic year 2016-2017. The participants are divided into two groups for comparison: experimental group (N=30) and control group (N=30). Concerning teachers, a number of eight teachers were interviewed by the researcher.

Instrumentation

The researcher relies on three main research instruments to collect data for the present research: t-test, students' questionnaire, and teachers' interview. For implementing the homework assignments in the written expression classes, the researcher administers certain

instructional and testing procedures with the experiment group. Meanwhile the control group

undertakes the lessons without homework assignments, so the results achieved can be

compared. For supplementary consistency, the students are exposed to the post-experiment

questionnaire. To come out with a deep and comprehensive account on the topic, a students'

questionnaire and teachers' interviews are administered.

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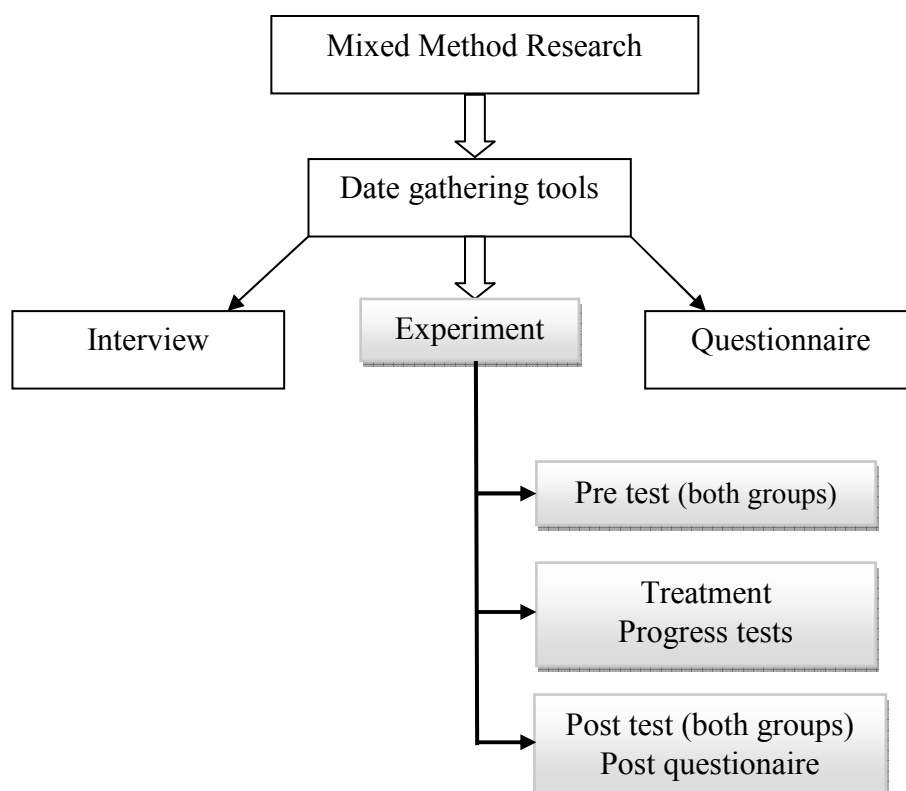
Figure 1 Research methodology and design

Significance of the Study

Academic writing can be considered as an integral part of learning English process. By

emphasizing and reviving the role of homework assignments, there will be a clear picture of

the most effective and functional activity to be adapted by teachersnot only inBatna

University, butalso regionally and nationallybecause it will help students to enhance their

academic writing through practicing more exercises and tasks rather than one long assignment

at the end of the course.

It also makes teachers think about, consider, and change their attitudes towards the effectiveness of homework and feedback on students' academic writing; it pushes them to adopt and rely on this instructional activity so that students enhance their productive written skills. This is because students who were being assignedseveral writing tasks and a variety of types of writing become more written proficient than those who were practicing just one long assignment at the end of the session. Using homework writing assignments along with teachers' feedback is efficient and valuable in improving student's academic writing performances.

It goes without saying that most teachers do their best to improve their students' academic writing. Regrettably, at the end they find their students' compositions are not as good as expected to be. The findings of the present study yield crucial discernments that could contribute to more beneficial direction for the teachers. they can be also significant in terms of suggesting some possible solutions regarding the way of improving students' academic writing. Thus, it can be providing teachers with some insights to prepare their students with the required knowledge and skills**.**

Findings from the present research may offer teachers practical implications for using homework writing assignments in their classrooms. The current research could offer guidelines for teachers to design useful and appropriate homework writing assignments for academic writing teaching. The researcher's hope is to contribute to the improvement of this skill and to develop it in order to give much more chance to our students to have access to the writing of English language in all the fields.

Following are four of the main points concerning the significance of the present thesis:

- It can be significant tostudents: The outcomes to be considered consist of the following: the improvemen of students' abilities in all components of academic writing; development of a positive attitude towards writing and homework assignments; increase in students'

academic competencies to meet academic writing demands; enhancing students'

independence, and the level of interaction that was engendered between students and

teachers.

- It can be significant to curriculum designers to reconsider the position of academic writing

    at first year level syllabus, and providing them with the essay academic writing skills

    needed at that level.

- It can be important to curriculum designers to consider the usefulness of homework

    writing assignments.

- Paving the way for other researchers to conduct further studies on improving students'

    academic writing skills.

Delimitations of the Study

As far as delimitations defined as how the research work will be narrowed in scope by

providingdescriptions of the population to which generalizations accurately may be made

(Creswell,20003). The present research aims at developing academic writing skill for only the

first level English students at Batna University by adopting the implementation of homework

assignments during the academic year (2016-2017). Accordingly, the findingsof the present

research work cannot be generalized to other departments as the results might be unique to the

relatively few students included in the particular research work. Finally, thepresent research

work was further delimited by locative, temporal, human, and topical aspects:

- Locative delimitation: the actual research covered the first-year students in one

    university in Algeria which is Batna University.

- Temporal delimitation: the present research was carried out in the academic year

    2016- 2017

- Human delimitation: the current study investigated a small number of postgraduate

    students of English language – first year, for the results of the present research

may be applicable to students at advanced level, second, third and master students who are working on their dissertations. Therefore, there should be an in-depth investigation to be carried out on the difficulties of academic writing of a larger number of EFL students.

- Topical delimitation: the present research investigates the effects of homeworkwriting assignments on first year students' academic writing development;

Definition of Key Words

Writing skill: writing is "an act that takes place within a context, that accomplishes a particular purpose, and that is appropriately shaped for its intended audience" (Weigle 2002, p. 19).

Homework: Homework, as defined by Cooper (1989), is "any task assigned to students by school/college teachers that is meant to be carried out during nonschool hours" (p. 86).This definition implies that homework is an activity that require from students to do it outside regular school/college classes.

Feedback: "Feedback generally refers to the listener's or Reader's response given to the learner'sspeech or writing". (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982, p. 34). they mean that feedback is any information or idea that is given to the learners regarding their performance.   .

Structure of the Study

The present research includes eight chapters. The first three chapters are allotted to the literature review part. However, the other four chapters are devoted to the empirical part. The structure of the present thesis is outlined to meet the needs of the aims that the researcher set and to pave the way for testing the hypotheses scientifically. Both parts are appended to recommendations as well as further suggestions for the current research.

The three chapters of the literature review are to cover a theoretical consideration for integrating homework assignments to improve students' academic writing. Chapter one is called "teaching/learning academic writing in EFL classroom". It reviews the main concepts concerning academic writing; definition; characteristics and its structure; moreover, different writing approaches in writing are mentioned. The second chapter entitled "Homework assignments and academic achievement". It provides the major conceptions of homework and relate them to academic achievement in students' academic writing. It further explores the characteristics of an effective homework and reviews different factors (time, parent involvement and support resources) that has a strong relation with a homework. The third chapter is named "Responding to students' homework assignments ". It first highlights the different types of writing assignments and the nit shows how to respond to students' paper when different techniques are presented.

The last four chapters are devoted to fieldwork. The fourth chapter is called "Research design" which presents the methods used in the present research, and it starts by selecting the participants and identifying the research methods then moves to presenting the procedures of data collection, which consists of the description of interviews, questionnaires and the experiment. The fifth chapter entitled "an experimental study on the effect of homework writing assignments on students' academic writing achievement"; it presents the results of the t-test procedures. The sixth chapter is devoted to describe and discuss the results of the students' questionnaire and teachers' interviews.

The seventh chapter is called "students' academic writing and homework writing assignments: Empirical results from the qualitative study and integration with the quantitative study" which displays a kind of overlapping between the qualitative and quantitative results. The last chapter is designed for discussing the main recommendations and suggestions for the present research.

Part One

Literature Review

CHAPTER ONE: TEACHING/LEARNING ACADEMIC WRITING IN EFL CLASROOM

"A simplistic view of writing would assume that written language is simply the graphicrepresentation of spoken language…" (Brown, 2001. p. 335).

Introduction

Writing, together with its teaching in both first, secondor foreign language contexts, is currently the subject of a considerable amount of research and other educational endeavor. The ability to write well is a process that learned after a series of practices and experiences.

Then the question of how writing effectively comes to the surface; students need to know exactly what academic writing is, how should they write it? what they should do to master all its components? When students be aware of all those questions, they can get straight into learning and write correctly.

1.1. Defining Academic Writing

Definitions of academic writing have developed over time, according to Taylor (1981, p. 6) writing in product approach is "a creative discovery procedure characterized by the dynamic interplay of content and language: the use of language to explore beyond the known content" In other words, writing is not just a way of telling; it is a way of knowing the rules and patterns as well. While in Current-traditional Rhetoric, writing is "a matter of arrangement, of fitting sentences and paragraphs into prescribed patterns. Learning to write, then, involves becoming skilled in identifying, internalizing, and executing these patterns" (Silva 1990, p. 14). i.e. the use of a prescribed set of rules, conventions, and grammar, was arguably the prevailing view of pedagogy in writing.

Brookes and Grundy (1998, p. 11) considerwriting as "composing (i.e. writing as a skill enabling us to say what we wish to for which some language knowledge is required" and for Weigle (2002, p. 32-33), writing means "not only putting one's thoughts to paper as they occur, but actually using writing to create new knowledge" In clearer words, writing is far from being a simple process including lining up ideas when in fact the process is usually more complicated,

Simply put, writing is a means of communication per se in which writers go through such a complex process to achieve a number of purposes.Here is a list of documents where academic writing is used.

- Books and book reports
- Translations
- Essays
- Research paper or research article
- Conference paper
- Academic journal
- Dissertation and Thesis - These are written to obtaining an advanced degree at a college or university.
- Abstract - This is a short summary of a long document.
- Explication - This is a work, which explains part of a particular work.

Writing is not just a way of telling; it is a way of knowing the rules and patterns as well.

1.2. Defining Academic Literacy (AL) Model

Literacy includes reading and writing. "it is the ability and willingness to use reading and writing to construct meaning from the printed text, in ways which meet the requirements of a particular social context"(Au, 1993, p. 20). This definition implies that literacy is the base of individuals' academic achievementh

Difinitions of the word academic literacy tend to be circular; it is the competency in reading and writing effectively at tertiary education, and the ability of students to analyse and discuss different types of texts (Pugh, Pawan, & Antommarchi, 2000). AL as "proficiency in reading and writing about academic texts with the goal of contributing to the on-going conversation in an academic field" (Neely, 2005, p.7). Acedemic Literacy considers writing as a process which purely related to other aspects asidentities, contexts and cultures. In addition, these definitions take writing as an essential part in the teaching learning process.

Students at university are supposed to go beyond simple reading of piece of writing to use reading to separately make knowledge, to apply what they learned from reading, often in the

form of written work, and to solve novel problems. They are assumed to use their reading and writing skills to produce their own understanding.

Students at university are required to go beyong the idea of writing and reading just for enjoyment, instead they are asked to readand write for analysing and solving problems, In the California State University system, approximately 50% of first year students considered as underprepared for university-level coursework based on their scores from the English Placement Test (California State University [CSU], 2010).

1.3. The Importance of Writing

Most academic intitutions highlight the importance of learning the four (writing, reading, speaking, listening) skills in leaning the foreign language; but there was a fuss about writing in the first place. Writing is a way to foster communication which is a pivotal in all walks of life, Harmer (2007) states that "because writing is used for a wide variety of purposes, it is produced in many different forms. The shopping list and the telephone messages are a type of writing that many people do, as a matter of course" (p.4)

Writing is fundamental in language learning, and it has idiosyncratic place in teaching learning process as it has a direct relation to the other three skills. Those who write well are generally highly skilled students in their language learning; it is essential in developing a good self reader and generate sentences in oral form easily.

Raimes (1994) addressed the importance of writing considering that writing help students to be involved in the process of learning the language as they start order and add prior knowledge with new terms; He also stated that writing is a way to encourage active thinking in which students use their cognitive skills to analyse and synthesize in a well structured piece of writing.

There is a saying"The pen is mightier than the sword." The pen her is related with writing; it implies that writing is extremely stronger than the sword power of fighting. Writing can serve other non-educational porpuses; the issue of writing ideas and thoughts down can change one's perception and even the world as a whole. Most of people go through critical moments when they feel discouraged and depressed losing hope and giving up. In moments like this, writing can be an inspirational gate that can change individual's thinking. Writing is no doubt one way to calm down and relax. The overall aim then will be to help students express their ideas in written form (Kenneth 1976).

Learning how to write is an important part of every teaching and learning the foreing language strategy; it is a long-life processin which the way to convey a given idea to the readers reflects the failure of success of mastering that skill.

1.4. The Most Important Features of Academic Writing

The following are the main components that any piece of academic writing should contain:

1.4.1. Mechanics of writing

The mechanics of writing are those conventions which aid students to develop the quality of their academic writing. They are: punctuation, capitalization, contractions, numerals, technical abbreviations and acronyms. They are as "the sub-skill that includes such things as punctuation, spelling, abbreviations, and acronyms**"** (Norman et al, 2005, p 66)

1.4.2.Organization component

The organization of academic writing is of importance for students to consider. Most of the rating scales for academic writing assessment, organization is one aspect to be considered. It is a component that deals with coherent arrangement of ideas. It includes keeping the reader oriented to the central thoughts. Sentences should be connected to one another and work altogether. Using transition words is considered one of the effective ways in

getting coherence. Thus, while writing an academic paper, it is recommended to use verb tense frequently which helps to reach the aim of coherence.

1.4.3. Content component

The content aspect is about the logical connection between ideas, development and the subject tackled. Effective essays are those in which the content does not reflect and develop the real topic; the content of any piece of writing deals with how much the essay is knowledgeable; substantive; thorough development of topic; relevant to assigned topic which help readers to feel the unity of the topic.

1.4.4. Grammar component

Grammar is defined as an element that represent the way words are set together into sentences. Grammar is the structurte system of language. It is particularly essential in English writing, where a littlemodification in word order can extremelychange the meaning of the sentence. Grammar is absolutely crucial for clarity, accuracy and meaning. Grammar is about word order, verb tense, and subject verb agreement. It seems as an easier component to teach because students enter university with a basic knowledge of how to use language to write. Noguchi's (1991) states that grammar improvesthe quality of academic writing; it helps students to develop fluency and to vary in their own academic writing style.

1.4.5. Vocabulary of writing

Vocabulary is the total number of wordsthat are needed to communicate ideas and express thoughts. It can be defined as "words we must know to communicate effectively; words in speaking (expressive vocabulary) and words in listening (receptivevocabulary)"(Neuman&Dwyer, 2009, p. 385). Students at advanced level of learning the foreign language are supposed to write academically choosing words that concisely convey vital elements of the topic. Choosing active verbs, concretenouns, specific adjectives help the reader conceive the ideas. Effective writing should be concise and precise

in its meaning, choosing the accurate word to convey meaning. Low levels of vocabulary can have an impact on writing; improvement in vocabulary will result in improved writing skills, and the lack of that knowledge is the main and the largest obstacle for FLstudents' poor academic writing production.

1.5. Approaches to Academic Writing

In the term of teaching and learning academic writing, various approaches have been introduced as to help both students and teachers. Writing approach "describethe relationship between the beliefs that writers have about writing and the patterns of writingstrategies that they employ". (Lavelle and Bushrow 2007, p.808) which means that writing approach is ideas and thoughts which related to the wriitng process.

1.5.1. The Product Approach

This approach is "consistent with sentence level structuralist linguistics and bottom-up processing" (Nunan, 1999, p. 272). The role of the teacher is provider of a given example language and guided exercises and corrector of errors when the final paper is produced. According to Richards (1990, p.106). Product approach focus on "the ability to produce correct text or "products" (In these approaches, learning to write mainly involve linguistic knowledge and the vocabulary choices, syntactic patterns". In clearer words, the product approach helps students to write accurate and free from errors.

According to Jackson (2006), students in this approach are asked to just imitate the model that they are given, keeping the same kinds of expressions. The aim is not being creative than producing error-free piece of writing.

As any approach, the product one goes through different steps that outline its structure. In this regard, Badger and White (2000) stated four steps; "familiarization; controlled writing, guided writing, and to free writing". (p.153-154) i.e. In the first step students should be aware of the different characteristics of a given text. Then it is the role of the teacher to limit

students' writing by providing them with linked vocabulary to that text. Thereafter, students are required to write a paper that is comparable to the given one. In tha last step, students are asked to write another identical paper.

1.5.2. The Process Approach

The model set as a replacement to the product approach; students in this approach are given more apportunity and time to write indepently and freely. Writing process is "made up of related stages referred to as "planning", "drafting" and "revising" often named as "prewriting", "writing" and "rewriting"(Clark, 2003, p. 8). According to (Bereiter & Scardamalia,1983 ; Murray, 1982). The approach identifies five stages in writing as it is shown in the figure below:

Pre-writing	Grafting & writing	Sharing & Responding	Revising & Editing	Publishing
-"Getting ready to write" -Decide on a topic -Brainstorm -Organize ideas	-Write and refine paragraphs -Focus on communication of meaning	- Share work to gain feedback -Peer editing -Writing Workshops	-Revise content -Proofread for writing conventions -Text reorganization	-Celebrate and showcase finished products -Build confidence in students as writers

Figure 2 The Writing Process

These steps are not necessarily followed as they are; they can ineract with each other during the process as the writer needs to change or add an idea, so the paper can be exercised more than one time at different steps.

In the process approach, students are encouraged to control their own writing (Brown, 2001); they are not obliged to follow a certain model in a restricted way, rather they develop new ideas and thoughts so that new language forms. According to Nunan (1991), the process approach supports the group work between students that create motivational environment creativity. This is believed to trace positive attitudes towards writing.

1.5.3. The Genre Approach

The genre approach to writing is known as the extension of the product approach (Cope and Kalantzis (1993; it tries to see writing from the linguistic patters of the language rather, it pays more attention to the social context and meaning. In this regard swales (1981) states

> …it is only within genres that viable correlations between cognitive, rhetorical, and linguistic features can be established, for it is only within genres that language is sufficiently conventionalized and the range of communication purpose sufficiently narrow for its to hope to establish pedagogically-employable generalizations that will capture certain relationships between function and form. (p.10)

In the genre approach, students are exposed to many various types of texts which make it different from other approaches of writing. Students are asked to produce a text that is similar to what they have seen before paying attention that the text is socially integrated, so that the composing of the text can be reinforced in terms of linguistics, content and ideas. In line with the purpose behind writing in genre approach, Hyland (2003) considers that students in this model are not writing only for the sake of writing instead they write as an attention seeker trying to follow a given aim as how to apologyze, how to describe, and how to complain ..etc

1.5.4.TheProcess- Genre Approach

Because certain text types lend themselves more favourably to one model than the other, more one approach can be integrated; the three approaches are not necessarily imcompatibe. One example is introduced by Badger and White (2000) as they named it the process-genre approach; it is an approach wich combines principles from both models the process and the genre.

In the present approach, students are taught to relate both the knowledge of language and the context (genrs approach) and the linguistic skills (the process approach) as they adopt

writing processes of prewriting, writing, sharing and resdonding, rewriting and editing, and publishing. Writing in this way allows students to identify the steps they go through to produce a piece of writing that socially addressed.

1.6. Applications of a Given Writing Approach

Writing is seen as a social act; in order to adress which of the approachesis more suitable for student's development of writing skills, teachers have to be aware of the context in which they are writing. Choosing the appropriate wtiting model seems to be pertinent for students with low abilities and low motivation. It really helps students to write easily and promotes their interest in writing.

which model is to be used will actually depend on teachers and students, and teachers here are more likely to determine the model need to be applied in their teaching practices for many reasons: (1) teaching writing skill randomly with no determined approach will actually put the lesson in a disorder, (2) adapting an appropriate model(s) in classroom helps teachers to achieve their goals from teaching writing skill Scott (1996), (3) having decided on the suitable approach(es), students will be more familiar with the different types of approaches so that they will be able to use the approapriate one according to their writing aoms, (4) implying a convenientwriting model provides students with the confidence to handle 'real world' writing as it develops students' attitudes toward language learning (Swami, 2008). In practice, teachers in teaching the writing skill very often use a mixture of the different approaches.

In a nutshell, teachers play a central role in teaching writing skill. Deciding on the appropriate pedagogical approaches in teaching writing is mandatory basedon the needs and levels of their students.

1.7.Academic Writing in the Clasroom

Teaching and learning academic writing at university classes require a consolidation of efforts from all members – teachers and students. This intention is echoed across disrubuting the roles between teachers and students.

1.7.1. Theteacher role

One of the most important roles of teachers is learning how to motivate students; students who are not motivated will not perform well. In this line of thought, Russell (1990) states that teachers should not blame students for their mediocre writing production rather they should motivate and support them in doing better. While motivating students causes a serious disquietude, the recompenses are more than worth it. Simply put, motivation is contagious. A teacher's enthusiasm for the writing teaching can have a very positive effect on students as teachers with low motivation can eventually demotivate their own students.

Teachers should be clear in their teaching writing practices; adopting the appropriate approach can play a critical role in helping students to improve their writing. Linking writing to reading is also needed to do by teachers. There is a dramatic increase in demanding from teachers to set a classroom environment that is supportivefor writing instruction, give students the opportunity to write routinely, and provide them with effective feedback.

Generally; teachers' role is very essential in teaching writing procedures; they are of significance to encourage students' confidence in themselves as writers and to guide their pieces of writing. Indeed, Flower, Aarom, and Okoomain (2007) states that all what students produces in terms of writing is the responsibility of their teachers.

1.7.2. Thestudent role

Students involvement is required; they need to talk about their writing, their strategies, and even exercising their ideas.Harme (2001, p.39) states that "teenagers, if they are engaged, have a great capacity tio learn, a great potential for creativity, and a passionate commitment to

things which interest them", White and Arndt (1991, p. 5) share Harmer's idea state that "students should be involved also in evaluating and revising their writing, taking responsibility for their written products from the early stage" which means that students' engagement in the process of teaching and learnig writing is a must.

When students learn to use writing strategies, they will use themeffectivelly across a range of writing assignments. Understanding the different purposes of writing is also a part of students' role so that they can choose the genre best suited to their writing assignment.

Students need to be confident and successful; an important role is to get a sense of achievement and success. Writing with confidence really matters because lowself confidencehinders students'creativity. When student write Writing, they find trouble to come up with an idea and develop it to produce an essay. If they are perpetually struggling with their ability to write, then it is unlikely that they will be able to write.

1.8. SomeDifficulties First Year Students have with Academic Writing

As writing is one of the English language skills that must be mastered by any foreign language student, many factors that may cause difficulty in writing. And the frequent difficulties from what the researcher noticed during her teaching learnig process took place were (1) The difficulty of the skill, (2) the native language interference, (3) the lack of vocabulary: students often have no ideas about what to write, (4) most students do not write in their L1, so they are uncomfortable and not confident, (5) students are afraid of making errors as they will get low grades and negative feedback by their teachers,(6) students are not used to read since their vocabulary is weak and confined.

These difficulties were propped by different authors; According to (Nunan ,1999) "producing coherent written discourse is an effort for many English mother-tongue speakers" (p.271). He acknowledges, "For foreign language learners the challenges are enormous."(Nunan ,1999, p.271). I.e. writing in itself is a hard task for the native speakers of

English language and the case is more difficult for foreign language students. For White and Arndt (1991) "Proficiency in language does not, in itself, make writing easier" (p. 3). They add that "people writing in their native language, though they may have a more extensive stock of language resources to call upon, frequently confront exactly the same kinds of writing problems as people writing in a foreign or second language" (p. 3).

Reading is a key element in improving students' academic writing. Although plenty of resources students can find on internet, they do not read in English. Reading academic texts is also a challenge for students; they always prefer to read and write texts which are not formal and yet they fail to produce a correct paper. Those students who are not well familiar with good writing skills are likely to find problems in their academic writing

Gomaa- Moutlana (2007) emphasizes that academic writing is the most difficult skill for English students. She also states that the students' first language affects their target language. Although students face difficulties in their speaking English, yet they consider as a minor problem compared to their problems in writing and reading. They prefer to talk and listen than write and read which is not useful for them if they want to write academically. All these aspects affect student motivation, which without a doubt, plays an importantrole in their success◦ in writing.

1.9. Teaching Academic Writing Methodology

Improving students' academic writing skill can be initiated bythe content that the teacher will use in the classrooms.

1.9.1. The foreign language

The idea of teaching and learnig the foreing language imposes challenge; such process should cover all the language skills that students need. Talking about the writing skill, the interest raises in dificulty when teaching non-native students.Accordingly, an effective approach is nedded to increase students' motivation in learning the writing skills.

Generally, when students start writing, they expect to get native speakers' proficiency, and this assumption affect them negatively. Their teachers also can raise this assumption. Therefore, those students should be aware that reaching native speakers' proficiency is not that easy task as Kroll (1990b, p. 141)stated, "there is no 'ideal' written product inEnglish or a 'model' to follow" ,Therefore; students should take into acount that they are only expected to write in a correct way with the requirements of the writing situation.

1.9.2. The writing course / first year written expression syllabus at the Department of English language at Batna University

First year students are exposed to English writing for three hours per week during formal classroom instruction. This instruction focuses on providing students with grammatical rules about how to write rather than writing in itself. First year students practice little written English. This causes difficulties when they need to write in academic way. According to administration (appendix 01), statistics indicate that students perform extremely poorly in writing in English. This therefore affects their performance in other subjects taught in English and the challenge will be greater for those who are studying written expression at the first time.

Writing at first year level should be adressed in different facets, the functions of writing should be related to students' language profeciency, students' awareness of different writing types, and teachers' adoption of a given teaching approach. In line with the writing functions, the alternative that the present study proposes involves a focus on helping students in becoming familiar with the different academic contexts and ensuring that students' writing falls within the standards of acceptable academic writing.

1.9.3. **Writing as a result of reading**

Reading goes hand in hand with writing; improving reading skills will undoubtedly have an immense effect on the ability to write effectively and correctly. Rose (2004, p. 96) argues that "for learners to become better writers, they have to master reading from an early age». Reading can help students in their writing in so many things that can be learned in no other way.

It is mostly improbable to develop in one subject without practicing all other skills needed for learning that subject; writing will greatly improve by reading more. Zamel (1992) states that "writing allows students to write their way into reading, that reading shares much in common with writing, and that reading is also an act of composing" (p. 463). When students are motivated in reading, their writing motivation and involvment increase. They will relate the subject they are writing about by activating their store vocabulary from their reading. The more they read, the better their writing will get.

1.9.4. **Writing styles APA, MLA**

A writing course also need to address different writing styles that students can follow to write various writing genres. Research methodology courses can also be includedto equip students with research skillsthat help them become competent students in both oral and written form using the scientific style and format dictated by each professional discipline (Ball, C.T., Pelco,L.E. 2006). In social sciences, in general, students should beinserted to the stylisticand formatting nuances of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). In humanities, The Modern Language Association's (MLA)Handbook for Writers of Research Papers is used. Many researchers have confirmed that students in social sciences, and health use APA as their primary citation format as it is designed forprofessionals to construct articles. In contrast, students in humanities are asked to useMLA which is designed to help them in constructing papers and creating citations (IvyTech Citation Handbook, 2014).

1.10. The Role of Homework in the Writing Course

Homework is a very important aspect in students' learning developmentparticularly in academic writing skills; many facets to homework design that are essential to deem. Throgh homework students will be able to correct and enhance their academic writing as many time as they would like untill they attain the mastery that they are looking for. The discussion below raises these issues in more details.

Conclusion

In short, academic writing is the most complex and difficult skill to master even for native speakers; it is viewed and defined differently and widely. Academic writing,by its nature, requires students to prepare and practice more one time; itneeds the integration of the other skills and activities.However, students still face problems to write correctly. Thus, thethe integration of homework assignments will be the focal point of the nextchapter.

CHAPTER TWO: HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

"Like mowing the lawn or taking the rubbish out, homework seems to be a fact of life"
(Kravolec and Buell 2000, p. 4)

Introduction

Gaining knowledge in classroom is only half the students' task, the other half gets through practing classroom's knowledge. Most of students find it difficult to achieve that aim as they asked to being good at what they have learned before. Accordingly, homework that refers to practice helps improve skills particularly writing. If students routinlly practice their writing, they will get good at it.

Making a commitment to homework is important to maximize the effect of practice the writing skill. After all, homework considers as the only way for students to be familiar with any skill, so teacher need to embrace the idea of assigning homework in order to develop their students' academic writing.

2.1. Defining Homework

The word "homework" is commonly used to describe the activity which is doing outside regular school classes; it can be defined as learning which takes place outside the context of formal classroom teaching, which is primarily the responsibility of the student; It is defined by Cooper (1989), is "any task assigned to students by school teachers that is meant to be carried out during nonschool hours" (p. 86).

According to Keith (1982), homework is associated with the time spend on it, he defines homework as "the amount of time students spend studying outside of class" (p. 248). However, in dealing with assigning homework, many aspects should be taken into consideration. This multifaceted quality covers a diversity of topics, for example: teachers' attitudes, behaviours and beliefs about the various aspects of homework for example: homework behaviours of when to give it, how much, what kind and what to do with the homework once completed, (collect it, mark it, return it?).

2.2. Positive and Negative Effects of Homework

Homework is defined as the practice to gain familiarity and expertise; however, there has been much debate over the integration of such instructional activity in the classroom. There seems to be a divide in opinion. Students benefit from homework as they are able to use their knowledge through application, being an ongoing formative assessmentused by teachers to evaluatestudentlearning performance, and giving students a chance to review their class materials.Paulu (1998, p, 8) stated a number of benefits whichlisted as:

- To give students a chance to review and practice what they are being taught

- To prepare students for the next lesson

- To encourage and allow students the opportunity to explore and use outside Resources

In line with the homework benefits mentioned by Paulu (1998), Center for Public Education (2007) also listed some of those benefits as:

- To extend what students have learned to new contexts

- To have students work incrementally and in depth on a project

As Homework helps to reinforce learning and improve good study habits, it also has some advantages that have a direct relation with their lives. Time management and responsibility are essential skills that students can get as doing their homework, Bembenutty (2011c, p. 449) stated that "Homework assignments can enhance the development of self-regulation processes and self-efficacy beliefs, as well as goal setting, time management, managing the environment, and maintaining attention"

Providing students with the opportunity to challenge their self-control over their own learning seems to be one of the most benefits of doing homework as they motivating themselves, limiting their time, and using their own strategies to deal with the task given by their teachers. "Evidence from experimental studies shows that students can be trained to

develop self-regulation skills during homework activities" (Ramdass& Zimmerman, 2011, p. 195).

As doing homework can help students in a number of unimaginable ways, it also may have negative effects on their learning habits. Too much homework can cause complain for students as homework restricts their freedom to practice their hobbies when ther are outside classrooms, according to Kohn (2006. p, 25); "an hour spent doing homework at home is an hour not spent doing other things"

Homework is also being accused of causing mental and physical health problems; students get stressed all the time doing their homework. They experience depression and anxiety. The pressure to have manycourses and complete the much homework cripples them (Cooper et al, 2006)

2.3. Perspectives Towards Homework

2.3.1. Students' perspectives

Research evidence stated that homework can be viewed as "a cost-effective instructional device, which can be used to diagnose individual learning problems" (Cooper 1989b, p. 91) which means that homework is a tool which can identify the nature of students' learning problems. Homework, therefore, encourages and builds self-discipline in students (Oak, 2009), but most of students stated their dissatisfaction concerning doing homework and this proved by a study conducted by Warrington and Younger (1996) which will be in the next paragraph. There are a number of noted reasons and excuses including the following: (Case, 2008)

- Boring material

- Instructions are unclear.

- Too difficult.

- Too easy.

- Not a priority.

- Forgotten.

- Poor time management, extracurricular activities, and/or after-school employment.

- Non-recognition of the benefit, goal or point of the assignment.

- The student has no place, where it is peaceful and quiet to work or study.

- Lack of access to the equipment and/or technology needed.

- Family obligations.

- Lack of self-study skills and/or habits.

2.3.1. Teachers' perspectives

Although teachers acknowledge the significance of homework, only few studies and researches deal with this concern. Teachers consider homework as a wayto check their students' progress and help students practice what they have learned in classroom. In this context, MacBeath and Turner (1990); Wiesenthal et al (1997); Cooper (2001) stated that homework provides students a great opportunity to review their class lessons to strengthen their knowledge.

Doing homework is also recommended by teachers for many reasons; those reseans are listed by Coutts (2004) as; to help students practice skills, to support students to improve good study habits, to motivate students, and simply to get students prepared forexaminations.

Assigning homework is a ubiquitous activity affecting many areas of students' life, including responsibility, independency, and self-discipline. According to MacBeath and Turner (1996); Warrington and Younger (1996), homework assignments improving promoting independent learning, and develop perseverance and self-discipline.

Although many teachers highlight the academic benefits that come with assigning homework, designing homework is not always easy andeffortless. Teachersdo notspecify time

to grade students' homework properly as they are too busy with designing lesson plans and checking teaching resources in order to prepare lessons.

2.4. Effective Homework Practices

Homework is areally concern for many students and teachers; how students can benefit from homework assignment is teachers' every day concerns during teaching practice. Most teachers integrate homework because they want to help students learn and master the class knowledge. While their primary aim is reinforcing learnig, they often find that they are asked to be aware of what makes homework effective.

Teachers vary in their challenges behind assigning homework; these challenges are not within the question of how much homework rather they are in the way of how designing the right homework assignment.

In the context of designing effective homework, Vatterott (2010) listed five features of good homework: purpose, efficiency, ownership, competence and aesthetic appeal. Purpose means that homework assignmentsshould have the reason for which theyareset, efficiency refers to homeworh' quality, ownership addresses the idea of students' involvement and engagement, competence states the skills and abilities that any homework should address, and aesthetic appeal stands for designing interesting and motivating. The table below shows the link between purpose of homework and homework task.

Table 1

The Relationship between purpose of homework and homework task (Vatterott, 2009)

Purpose of omework	Example of skill or content	Example of homework Task
Pre-learning	Main ideas of chapter	Complete an advance organizer of the chapter
Pre-learning	Vocabulary words and definitions	Draw pictures to illustrate each vocabulary word
Checking for Understanding	Reading comprehension	Create a concept map of the chapter
Checking for Understanding	Division of fractions	Explain the steps, do three problems
Practice of skill	Division of fractions	Do 10 practice problems. Write two word problems for other students to solve.
Practice of rote Memory	Multiplication tables	Write, recite, or create a grid of multiplication tables

According toSallee&Rigler, 2008; Van Voorhis, 2004; Vatterott (2010), for homework to be

effective, a number of features should be taken into account. These features are classified as;

differentiated for Student, student growth, effectivefeedback, homework as independent

practice, and time sensitive.

Differentiation homework assignmentspermits teachers to give students of all abilities the best

chance of learning. Differentiated for Student stands for the efforts of teachers to counter the

distinction among students in doing their homework assignments. Once the teacher varies

his/her teaching style in order to fit all students' level, that teacher is differentiating

instruction. Differentiating instruction for homeworkcan be realized either bydesigning the

same material to all students using a variety of strategiesor giving the taskat different levels of

difficulty found on the ability of each student.

As homework is a practice outside the classroom, it needs to be helpful for students. In order for this to happen, it has to be matched to their capacities. Teachers here are asked to set various tasks for different ability students in order for them to learn effectively. In this vein, Kitsis(2008) highlights the idea of setting clear aims when designing homework as it helps students to be aware of their homework practices.

In the process of assigning and designing homework, teachers are required to fit all students' needs. Creating homework that meets students' level, ability, and background can be an effective way to get students completed it, and labelling homework in conjunction with teachers' aim. Ultimately, the success of homework completion comes down to the content that set by teachers. In order for differentiated homework to provide students with efficient learning, teachers need to vary their exercises to tackle all directions of the lesson learned in wlasroom. Tomlinson (2010) stated that learningshould deal with each student individually instead of setting directions for all students.

Homework also becomes a form of assessment or judging students' grouth; teachers can have a better idea of their students' progress in the lesson through homework. Homework shouldalwaysbedeemed as chance for students to test themselves. Theyshouldstudy for the homework the waytheywouldstudy for an examinations.

Homework isseen as a preciousresource for allowingstudents to practice ; however, giving memorazationhomeworkassignmentscan bedetrimental. Students tend to getunskilled andanyrelationbetweenhomework and students'grouthmaybediminished.

For students to grow in their learning, homework should be assessed. Providing feedback on students' homeworkassignmentshelpsstudents to understandtheirweaknessess and strengthsafterdoing the task. Murphy et al. (1987) statedthat"class discussion on homework, and grading and commenting on homeworkwere the practices mostfrequentlyused by high schoolteachers" (p. 68). Analyzingstudents' homeworkcompletionproveda positive effects

onbothstudentlevel and class level.Teachersacknowledgegradinghomework as an significanttool to motivatetheirstudents ; however, the grade should not bea criterion for students' sucesssothatitwillpreventstudentsfromfocusing ontheirownlearningwhiledoingtheirhomework.

Providing feedback means explaining for students what they are doing correctly and incorrectly. When feedback is provided in a wrong way, it can demotivate and dishearten student production. A feedback that aims to assessing just students' completion of the task will not help students' learning to improve (Sallee&Rigler, 2008). This could result also in students not appreciating the value of homework.

Feedback

Providing feedback is just one of the many ways that teachers do to review the lesson's elements which may not be understood by their students. It is essential as it can give a better explanation so that guide students onto the path of the lesson success. According to Hattie (2012) Sometimesthe idea to reteach the lesson will be an effective way to help students understand the concept.

Teachers should pay attention to provide feedback in a timely manner; When teachers give their comments and remarks immediately, the student responds positively and memorizes those remarks. Otherwise, the feedback that is delivered late permits students not to remember the answers so that not correcting them**.**

Homework as independent practice is the gist of the present research; it can be an extremely powerful strategy in expanding practice and assessing learning. Practice isoneof the most valuable purposes in assessing homework for the purpose of expanding on ideas introduced in class and building proficiency as practice is connected to proficiency. It is evident that when homework is used to practice well the lesson materials, student performance is most positively affected.

Effective homework assignments give students the right challenges to practice skills and develop their learning; Learning in general takes time, especially writing skills in whichit is hard to improve your writing skill without spending a lot of time on drafting.Because classroom time is alwaysrestricted, students only spend three hours per week at written expression course, and most of those hours are pedagogical so thathomework provides a way to expand the time students spend learning writing skill.

The aim behind most homework is to spur students to practice; an emphasis on making this practice meaningful and effective is directly adressed to teachers. Kralovec and Buell (2001, p. 41) quote "Piaget's theory that asking children to perform tasks before they are developmentally ready proves counter productive to development", Teachers should not introduce new ideas and skills in homework; students need to acquire an academic skill before being assigned on it. They have to get accustomed and ready to doing their homework assignments. According to Vatterott (2010), if teachers give homework that students are not familiar with, it can lead to frustration or failure.

The failure to grasp the significance of homework assignmentcomprises also the time specified fot it; homework should be set with the appropriate time for completing it. Most students find it hard to complete their homework assignments respecting the deadline. in a reasonable amount of time.

While homework is a great way to reinforce the learning done in class, it is mandatory to revise the time spend on it. Teachers give homework to help students to practice a given skill, but they also intend to help students improve their responsibility, and time management. (Epstein and Van Voorhis, 2001)

About homework effectiveness, the amount of time students spending on their homework assignments seems to be positively related to academic achievement. The association between time on homework and performance is eventually should be considered;This could result in

permiting students to appropriately practice their extracurricular activities and have their own

life outside the classroom.

2.5. Factors Affecting the Utility of Homework Assignments

There are several factors that influence the utility of homework assignments. They

include the amount of homework, time spent on homework and its possible links to

attainment, homework completion and students' motivation, and support resources.

The amount of homework stands for how much homework is given; more homework

does not necessarily equate to higher performance as it is known -it is the quality of

homework that counts, not the quantity. Homework stops benefiting students when it is

overdone. Teachers should be very carefulabout the homework they give. The key to the

appropriate amount of homework is to ensurethat sufficient quantity will meet theirneeds.

By making homework less overwhelming, teachers can guarantee its effectiveness and

studentswill be morecreative, confident, and motivated when they have limited amount of

homewxork to do.One of the contentious interests in the homework debate is the time spent

on homework and its possible links to attainment. Most students worriedgreatlyabout the

amounts of time they are required to spend on their homework, and levels of time on

homework hasa strong positive correlation with their academic performance. According to

Holmes and Croll (1989), the time students spend doing their homework assignments is "very

flexible depending upon their attitude, motivation, gender, stage of education and/orwhole

school policy requirements" (p. 44).

As the motive behind the exercise of homework is to keep the student motivated with

the doing the task, homework time should come at the first focus. Teachers are asked to be

aware of their time management in assigning hoework; effective time management for

homework can help students to complete assignments on timewithout being stressed and

frustrated.

Students' motivation to do/complete their homework assignmentscan be the reason behind their engagement and involvement in learning. Coutts (2004) stated that students are not motivated to do homework because they consider it as "boring and lacking intrinsic interest" (p. 186). Students need extrinsic motivation, like praise or compliment, to complete assignments and learn.

Homework completion is an essential and valuable aspect regarding students' success. A factor needs more studies and researches. Teachers need to use types of homework that enhance the motivation factor so that homework assignments can become a more successful and beneficial learning tool. Coutts (2004) adds "The challenge for teachers is to assign homework that strengthens the targeted skills and knowledge but ,in away, that is relevant and interesting to students who all too often see homework'scosts" (p. 187).

Support resources can help students' completion of their homeworkassignments. Teachers need to be attentive when assigning homework. If the homework assignment is too difficult, students here are required to use support resources and resist doing it. So, teachers are asked to never givehomework assignment that students cannot do

As students need instructional support in the classroom, they may also need homework support. The lack of reliable and supportive documents will only make students fighting against the gap between what they have learned at class and what they have assigned. According to Kitsantas et al (2011), students who use more support resources in doing their homework assignments have higher academic achievement and performance.

2.6. EvaluatingHomework Assignments

In order to provide students with effective homework assignments, teachers need to assess frequently and routinely their homework practices. Clearly then, the idea of assigning and evaluating homework is more complex than it might first appear. The focus is to find the

effective ways to give and evaluate homework in order to promote student learning in the bestpossible way.

The aim of homework assignments should be clearly addressed and understood by students; students should know the way of assessing their tasks. They should know in advance if a homework assignment will be graded or not. By creating a set of established criteria aligned with targeted objectives, it is possible to fairly assess students' performances so that teachers can accurately evaluate student achievement

Teachers should realize that an assessment is a way of gathering information about their students and that every assessment does not necessarilyto be graded.

> Too many educators consider [marks] and scores as feedback when, infact, they fail the specificity test. Pinning a letter (B-) or a number(%82) on a student's work is no more helpful than such comments as "Nice job" or "You can do better." Although good [marks] and positive remarks may feel good, they do not advance learning (McTighe & O'Connor, 2005, p. 16)

Homework evaluation provides excellent feedback about student achievement and teaching style; however, it does not exactly reflect the details about students' learning.

Conclusion

Talking about teaching and learning process, the word homework is directly associated with what, how, or when the learning is supposed to occur. It is beyond reasonable doubt that homework can play a significant role in improving students' learning. However, there is need for teachers to revise the procedures for carrying out homework assignments in order toenhance thequality of learning.

CHAPTER THREE: RESPONDING TO STUDENTS' HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

”Assessment tends to shape every part of the student learning experience“
(Orsmond, Merry, &Reiling, 2000, p. 24)

Introduction

Responding tostudetns' writing is one of the most challenging part of teachingwriting in

ESL and EFL settings. Most teachers take much time and effortfor examining students' paper

so that providing feedback is deemed as one of EFL writing teachers' paramount task.

Feedback from teachers provides opportunities for students to know how others react to their

writings and also to learn from these reaction and response.

Different essay assignments were designed to improve students' academic writing.

Integrating these writing assignments in students' homework can help them in practicing their

academic writing. It is best to assign several writing assignments and a variety of types of

writing, usually integrated with homework, rather than one long assignment at the end of the

course.

This chapter attempts to discuss the importance of feedback in teaching the writing skill.

It starts with the nature of writing assignments that are included in students' homework,

defining feedback. Then, it discusses the different types and forms of feedback. The purpose

of the present chapter is to highlight some key area including what is correction and feedback,

types of correction, attitudes towards correction and some ideas for correcting errors.

3.1. Integrating Essay Assignments in Students' Homework

Teachers can make writing a valuable part of homework. One reason for the choice of essay

writingand books summary/review for homework was that homework help students to

practice many types of essays writing. Today, teachers can no longer imagine assigning

homework withoutmaking writing an integral part of students' learning.

Writing homework supports learning because it requires students to organize, clarify,

andreflect on their ideas in a time, which is not limited —all useful processes for making

sense of writing. In addition, whenstudents write at home, they have many sources to check in

order to produce a paper that provide a window into their understandings, their misconceptions, and their feelings about the content they are learning.

Of course, the writing that students do in class generally varies from the writing they doat home. Writing in class is not meant toproduce a piece of paper that is suitable for publication, but rather to provide a way for students to reflecton their own learning and to explore, extend, and cement their ideas about a certain topic. Aside from the students themselves, teachers considerthemselves the primary audience fortheir students' writing, and they have taken into consideration what they write, and how they write it.

3.2. Strategies for Incorporating Writing Assignments

Making writing integral to students' homework assignment canencourage students to process course material more deeply, provide an opportunity for them to develop writing and research skills, andgivethem more writing practice. Writing assignments that given as homework can reinforce and extend what is learned in class; the more writing practice and feedback students receive, the more likely they are to develop stronger writing skills.

Teachers should design writing assignments based on the skills students need to learn or acquire (e.g. argumentative essays, proposal, abstract, poster session, book review, report, research paper) in which they can develop their skills doing more practice and exercise. According to Gottschalkand Hjortshoj (2004), teachers should be aware to set each writing assignment that is related to the learning objectives for the course and consider each assignment as a way for students to practice and master writing skills that are central to their academic achievement.For example, if the teachers wantstudents to learn how to summarize a book or a chapter from it or to present and support an argument, plan assignments that explicitly require the skills that are necessary to get these objectives**.**

Gottschalkand Hjortshoj (2004) also stated the importance of being clear in which aspects of the writing you will focus on with each assignmentthat help teachers to make their commenting process more effective and efficient. Furthermore, teachers shouldset clear grading criteria for each writing assignment in order to be fair and systematicwhen evaluating a group of student papers.

Teachers should consider that not all students know how to write the type of writing assignment that they will ask them to write. For example, a student who has learned how to write an excellent analytical paper in a literature course may not know how to write the kind of paper that is typically required for a history course. It is the role of teachers to show them an example of the genre of writing that students are asked to write. They also stated that teachers have todevelop a process for writing comments that will give students a clear idea of whether they have or have not achieved the course's learning objectives and with what degree of successin which students can check their writing development.

3.3. Feedback versus Evaluation

Providing feedback and correcting students' errors in writing is the core of the teaching learning process, particularly teaching academic writing skills. Giving feedback and correctingstudents' errors can be deemed as a way to let students know how well they developed, and it increases students' motivation and build supportive classroom environment.

Error correction is one of the criteriaconcerning teachers' role in the language learning. The aim behind error correction and feedback rely on the teacher and the student as well. While looking at when and how the errors are corrected, it is also essential to look at how students react to the corrections and feedback. It is because students may have negative attitudes towards error correction. Considering teachers and students in the process, Error correction and feedback seems to be the core in the language pedagogy. On the other hand,

evaluating students' piece of writing is very important in order to what a student knows and can do and what a student does not know and cannot do.

Casual observation and analysis of teachers' practices infirst year writing papers indicates (appendix 3) that most teachers' written feedback emphasized the form (i.e. correctness of grammatical structures and mechanics) rather than the content (i.e. ideas, coherence, and organization). As a result, students produce writings that are formally correct with deficientand poor content. Moreover, most teachers' written commentsseen to be not clear in nature, which results in unsuccessful revisions on the part of students.

3.4. Defining Feedback

Feedback generally refers to "the listener's or reader's response given to the learner'sspeech or writing". (Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982, p. 34). Whichmeans that feedback is any information or idea that is given to the students regarding their performance. According to Drown (2009, p. 407), feedback appears when "the output of a system becomes an input to the same system causing the system to respond dynamically to its previous products" i.e. feedback is not that random system rather it is a combination of aspects of a complex system that are related to each other**.**

Drown (2009) sees feedback as a reaction to students' production whether orally or in a written form. Feedback, then, has many advantages as helping students to develop their capability of understanding and to improve their knowledge.

According toHyland, feedback"offers an additional layer of scaffolding to extend writing skills, promote accuracy and clear ideas, and develop an understanding of written genres" (2003, p. 207). It is a way in which teachers can provide students with different revisions (Harmer, 2004). In clearer words, feedback is a mirror for students to see to what extent they produce an effective piece of writing.Both writers consider feedback as an

essential part of learning; it helps students ingiving students an explanation of what they are doing correctly and incorrectly;

3.5. The Importance of Feedback

The advantages of providing feedback are mushrooming as both students and teachersrecommendedit; feedback has become more than just essential. Providing feedback for students' writing has evolved to be extremely beneficial. Whether viewed from teachers or students, being aware of responding on any writing compositions helps to better understanding of the language and make the writing skill improved.

Teaching and learning the writing skill isto a certain extent about providing feedbackwhich is an incredibly important aspect that can only be cultivated by interacting with students' papers. When teachers provide feedback, students can exercise their writing and being able to understand what are their weaknesses and strengths. It clarifies expectations, helps students learn from their errors and builds confidence

Feedback is always an excellent idea. It provides students doubtful benefits that come with the improvements of learning quality; Kwong (2001) stated some of thses advantages as motivating students to learn, and improving students' thinking processes,

Providing feedback to students is very important as they need to know if they are doing progress. However, it requiresparticularly careful handling because teachers should use strong documents to back up their comments.

3.6. Types of Feedback

Feedback is the only way for teachers to appraise whether the lesson materialshave been explained correctly or not. The quality of the feedback given is a key element in any procedure of formativeassessment (Black & William, 1998). Students' growth in learning is greatly depending on the way of responding on their performance; it can take a number of

forms as oral feedback, self feedback, peer feedback, and written feedback. Each has its role in improving students' learning.

3.6.1. Oral feedback

It is a kind of verbal communication between the teacher and student; it takes place during classroom or after grading students on their examinations. Frey and fisher () state that oral feedback "occurs mainly through the spoken form. In order to get positive learners' outcomes, the oral feedback should be characterized by the setting, the structure, and the tone" (p. 77-78) i.e. By choosing the appropriate environment, deciding on the weakness, and using encouraging words, oral feedback can be an important tool in any student's achievement.

Oral feedback is known as informal feedback which can occur at any times as it is something that arises spontaneously at any moment. Most teachers find it time consuming as it does not tale much time to use it; however, Waring and Wong (2009) claim that in order to save time, teachers should not do it every time. Saying phrases as "good job, very good" is not always useful. But by "examining, altering or varying the ways in which teachers provide positive feedback to learners is another dimension in scaffolding instruction and providing guidance or knowledge of results" (p. 202-203)

3.6.2. Self feedback

An achievement evaluation is a significant tool for keeping communication between teachers and studentsAlong with the achievement evaluation often comes the self-feedbackan opportunity for students to self-reflect and realize their strengths and weaknesses. When students criticize their performance, they can gain insight that helps them develop. Wolf and Pistone (1991) state "An episode of assessment should be an occasion when students learn to read and appraise their own work" (p.8)

Self feedback can serve a number of benefits for students; theybecome aware of their own most effective strategies for learning and be able to use them independently. Nicoland Macfarlane-Dick, (2007) say that "in self assessmentstudents can learn to become more self-managing learners" (p. 205). Apraising the self feedback, Gibbsand Simpson (2004) addressed the idea saying that

> Students need to understand why they have got the grade or mark they have and whythey have not got a higher (or lower) grade. Criteria need to be explicit and understood by students, and demonstrably used in forming grades. Often criteria are not accompanied by standards and it is difficult for a student to tell what standardis expected or would be considered inadequate. Much of the literature on the use of self- and peer-assessment is about the reliability of such marking, and assumesthatself- and peer-assessment is primarily a labour-saving device. But the real valuemaylie in students internalising the standards expected so that they can supervise themselves and improve the quality of their own assignments prior to submittingthem (p. 20)

Relating self feedbackwith improving academic writing, Graves (1994) stated that looking deep within is significant to students' understanding of their own writing practices and to the process of writing itself. Students first are asked to be aware of certain features which make their writing correct and effective. In this context, Spandel (2005) states that for students to be competent at assessing their own writing, they need to know first what good writing is. Then being involved in doing their self feedback.

3.6.3. Peerfeedback

Peer feedback as a type of learning avaluation provides for students an opportunity to critique each other on their learning performance; Topping (1998), defines peerfeedback in relation to assessment processesas, "an arrangement in which individuals consider the

amount, level, value, worth, quality, or success of the products or outcomes of learning of peers of similar status." (p. 249)

Peer assessment can be used for motivating learning assessment; teachers can use peer assessment to encourage comparison and discussion. Langham &Wheater (2003) listed a number of benefits of peer assessment as:

- Raises learner autonomy

- Empowers the learner

- Improves learner dependability

- Develops students self- reflect

- Promotes student communication

- Helps dtudents for being familiar with the grading system

- Allow for the comparison and discussion

- Provides a clear justification of what is required by teachers for assessments

With relation to academic writing, teachers in using peer feedback students are more likely to receive more feedback on their writing than is possible from just their teacher. It gives also students the chance to better understand assessment criteria,according to Leki (1992), peer evaluation "provides a means whereby both students' drafts and their awareness of what leads to good writing develop" (p.169), Hedge (2000, p.80) provides teachers and students with a list of questions that may be used in providing peer feedback; they are summarized in the figure below:

- Is the piece well organized?

- Are the ideas well presented and coherent?

- Has the piece achieved the set task?

- Is the audience and purpose of the piece clear?

- Is the overall message clear, coherent, and intelligible?

- Does the work follow the guidelines for the word count?

- Are the style and the register of the language used appropriate?

- Is there a wide enough range of lexis and expression used?

- Is there a wide enough range of syntax used?

Figure 3 Questions Used in Peer Feedback (Hedge, 2000, p.80)

3.7. Teachers'Written Feedback (The Gist of Present Research)

Teacher feedback on student academic writing is recommended to develop their writing competency; it is a unique written relationbetween teachers and students through successive remarks and revisions. Because writing goes through various stages, giving feedback is important in order to check students' drafts so that producing correct piece of writing. Mack (2009) defines teacher written feedback as any remarks, notes or error corrections that are mentioned and written on students' tasks.

When teachers provide feedback to students writing, the purpose is clear as to correct mistakesand errors. Ferris (2003) states,"this type of feedback may represent the single biggest investment of time by instructors, andit is certainly clear that students highly value and appreciate it" (p. 41). In clearer words, teachers' written feedbackis a time consuming.

Because feedbackon students' papers is a requisite aspect of any EFL writing course, providing it by teachers can help in making students not onlyrealize their problems with writing but also improve that skill using the appropriate practices. Teachers here in the

process of giving feedback are invited to be careful and selective in their practices; Sommers (1982) addresses the role of the teacher in that process saying that:

The challenge we face as teachers is to develop comments which will

provide inherent reason for students to revise; it is asense of revision

as discovery, as a process of beginning again, as starting out new, that

our students have not learned. We needto show our students how to

seek, in thepossibility of revision, the dissonances of discovery- to

show them throughourcomments why newchoices would positively

change their texts, and thus,to show them the potential for

development implicit intheir writing (p.156)

In order to get effective written feedback, Hartshorn (2008) lists fourcriteriaas manageability, meaningfulness, timeliness, and constancy. Manageability refers to the time teachers spend on providing feedback, and meaningfulness stands for an understandable feedback that focuses on content rather than form. With ragard totimelinessand constancy, the former means if teachers provide feedback on time, students are more likely to make good use of it while the latter refers to the quality of being dependable and practicable.

In the same respect, Hyland (2003) stated that effective feedback can be attained based on students' desires "Some students want praise, others see it as condescending; some want a response to ideas, others demand to have all their errors marked; some use teacher commentary effectively, others ignore it altogether" (p.180)

3.7.1. Types of teachers' written feedback

There are various types of written feedback, the choice on a specific type depends on teachers, the nature of the assignments, students' level and performance in writing. Fathman and Whalley, (1990) state that "while reading student papers, teachers

often ask themselves, "How can I give the best feedback to help my students improve their compositions?" (p. 178). In which, responding on students' paper using the appropriate way is the main concern of teachers since there is not such a consensus among teachers on the suitable way.

According to Park (2006), there are three types of teacher written feedback: form-focused feedback, content-based feedback, and integrated feedback. As for formfeedback, this is a key point because it defines as commenting on the grammatical errors that are founf in students' compositions; it is a type that students most prefer. Zamel's (1985) studystated that students are more likely to respond on formfeedback than the content one.

In terms of content-based feedback, itfocuses more on meaningquality and organizationalcharacteristics in students' piece of writing. According to McGarrell and Verbeem (2007), feedback on writing should designate content as more important than form in order to have students focus on the communicative purpose of writing. The third type, integrated feedback, refers to the combination of grammar correction with meaning-based feedback.

Other types of feedback are known as direct and indirect feedback. Bitchener (2008) define direct feedback as "the provision of the correct linguisticform or structure by the teacher to the studentabove or near the linguisticerror" (p. 413) and Lee (2004) defines indirect feedback as "to providing feedback on student errors without giving the correct forms or structures" (p. 286). i.e. direct feedback is the placement of the right form by the teacher besides the wrong form while the indirect one is indicating that there is an error but without stating its correct version.

Marginal versus end feedback, negative versus positive feedback, and text-specific feedback versus general feedback are alsoclassified as types of teachers' written

feedback. Marginal feedback is a type offeedback thatisprovided in the marginor between sentence lines of thestudent'spaperwhileend feedbackisprovided at the end of student'spaperas a summary to his/hererrors.

Negative versus positive feedback stands for whether the teacherspraise(the first type) or dimotivate(the secon type) theirstudents ; positive feedback isalways more encouragingthannegative feedback becauseitmotivatestudents to learn. Raimes (2002) states "we are so attuned to errors and so involved in ferreting them out that we attend to neglect to praise our students when they take a risk and try but get it wrong" (p. 283). Text- specific feedback refers to responding on students' paper in a deep, specific and detailedwaywhile in general feedback, teachersgive feedback as generalstatements.

3.7.2. Forms of teachers' written feedback

A deep understanding of the process of giving feedback isessential. It is vital to the success of any students' learning. Having decide on one particular form, teachers find themselves in crucial situation. Hyland (2003) lists five feedback forms; they are as: commentary, cover sheets, minimal marking, taped comments and electronic feedback.

As for commentary feedback, it is the most used among teachers, and it takes the form of hand-written commentary on students' piece of writing. Concerning coversheets, it refers to any formal and standard sheet that students hand in alongside homework assignments. It includes a detailed description on areas for students' development. Russelland Airasian (2007) defines them as "They provide a detailed record of students' performances‹and they should be shown to students to help them see where improvement is needed" (p.218).

As an example of those cover sheets, rating scales, checklist, andrubrics are among them. A rating scale is a written list of performance characteristics. Checklist are known

as formats designed to assess performance, the are systematic as they have a list of requirements to be met. According to Russell and Airasian (2007) "They provide a detailed record of students' performances‹ and they should be shown to students to help them see where improvement is needed" (p.218).

Hyland (2003) defines rubrics as "a variation on commentary‹ and often accompanying it on final drafts, is the use of cover sheets which set out the criteria that have been used to assess the assignment and how the student has performed in relation to these criteria"(p. 181). In clearer words, rubrics are an assessment tool that clearly indicates marking criteria.

Herrera et al. (2007) mention the main steps to follow when relying on rubrics saying that:

> Determine the desired outcome, develop your current classroom practices as task that willcreate opportunities to students to demonstrate the targeted skill, determine what a goodor high-quality performance on this task might look like, and complete the rubric bydescribing the requirements that must be met to attain each quantified level of performance. (p. 43).

Taped comments refer to the use of technology to provide feedback; It is a form of teachers 'feedback in which students can practice their listening skills and see how the others respond to their paper as well. It seems as useful strategy sinch students at this time are more inundated with technology; Sipple (2007) notes that "developmental writers found audio comments, even for problematic papers, made students more confident in their writing because they provided more genuine and frequent praise" (p. 24). In clearer words, audio feedback helps students to achieve their feel self-confidency because of teachers' compliments.

With the development of technology and the use of it in education, teachers now can respond to their students' writing electronically, either through e-mail or text editing programs. E-mailing comments to students is an appropriate way for students as they work at their computers they can incorporate the comments that their teacher is providing or reply questions that are being asked."These new channels of written feedback offer teachers greater flexibility in their responding practices, but ultimately convenience is likely to be the deciding factor in which are used" (Harmer, 2001, p. 183). In a clearer way, it is a usefull way that gives teachers the state of being able to proceed with their feedback practices.

However, according to Yang (2008) forms of teachers' written feedback can classify as praise, question and advice. As for praise, responding by writing compliments can motivate studentsand boostgood writing practices; providing feedback in form of questions can help students to improve their crititcal thinking. Concerning the advice feedback form, it is significant for students to guide their writing and provide them advices for future writings.

3.8. Perspectives Regarding Students' Responding to Teachers' Feedback

While effective feedback considers as a key strategy in learning and teaching, addressing students' perceptions of feedback has also a role to count in mrpviding it., Students may vary in their attitudes towards teachers' feedback; some students accept feedback and carefully apply their teachers' comments, while many others dismiss and refuse them. Ferris (2003, pp. 103-4) states that:

- Students considerteacher feedback in any form (with a minority exception).
- Students are more likely to preferform-based feedback
- In some of the studies, student writers also expressed appreciation for feedback on their ideas and composing strategies.

- Concerning their preferences towards direct or indirect feedback,

     theyprefer indirect correction

It goes without saying that students responded very favorably to the positive

feedback judging it to be effectivestrategy because itmotivates them and makes the feel

self confident. Hyland and Hyland (2001) states that in positive feedback "students as

merely mitigation devices, which serve no function beyond the spoonful of sugar to help

the bitter pill of criticism, go down" (p. 208).

Based on all what mentioned before, teachers have to take into consideration

their students' attitudes and preferences, and adopt a type of feedback accordingly to

guarantee that it is clear, understandable and thus, constructive. So, one can say that, the

concept of student-teacher agreement about the feedback type presented by Cohen and

Cavalcanti (1990) deemed as the best way if teachers want to their comments effect

students positively.

3.9. Methods of Scoring Students' Writing

Teachers' ability to process and grade srudents' writing varies widely; in this context,

many methods and approaches can be explained, among themthe analytic method, the

impression method, and the error-count method.

3.9.1. The Analytic method

It is a way in which teachers can score/grade each writing component separately;

Heaton (1975) defines the analytic method as "a method which depends on a marking scheme

which has been carefully drawn up by the examiner or body of examiners. It consists of an

attempt to separate the various features of a composition for scoring purposes" (p. 136) he

adds that teachers who consider this approach see "writing as a demonstration of many

isolated skills that when scored separately and added together will come up with an

appropriate assessment of the essay"(p.136).

Teachers in this method can get many benefits; it permits them to assess their students'achievements based on different criteria using a single rubric thenwrite an overall production by totaling the criteria. According to Weigle (2002) the Analytic method can give "more detailed information about a test taker's performance indifferent aspect of writing … for this reason preferred over holisticschemes by many specialists" (pp. 114-115).

3.9.2. The Impression method

As its name suggests, it is a kind of writing scoring in which teachers based their grade on their feeling about a certain piece of paper. According to Heaton (1975) in this method "usually three or four markers score each paper because it is possible for a composition to appeal to one reader and does not for another" (p. 135). He adds that "this method is largely a matter of luck whether the teacher or the examiner likes the students' script or not". In other words, scoring students' compositions in this method is totally based on subjective judgment.

3.9.3. The Error-count method

In this method, teachers are invited to count the number oferrors that students did in their writing in order to come with a final grade. According to Heaton (1975),"The procedure consists of counting the errors made by each student and deducing the number from a given total: for example, a student may lose up to 10 marks for grammatical errors, 5 marks for miss-use of words, 5 for misspelling, etc". (p. 137).

The method has been criticizedas it focuses much on the errors than the content of the composition; most students experience considerable amounts of stress, and this stress can take a significant toll on their writing development. Raimes (1983) claims,"they worry about accuracy; they stop after each sentence and go back and check it for inflection, word order, spelling and punctuation, breathe a sigh of relief and goon to attack the looming giant of the next sentence" (p. 83)

Conclusion

It is clear that neither improving nor teaching the writing skill are easy tasks. On the one hand, learning how to write requires the development of many competences. On the other hand, teaching writing skill requires an effective feedback that contributes to students' improving in essays skills. Nevertheless, teachers are not required only to provide students with feedback, but they also need to ensure that the feedback given has been taken into consideration.

Part Two

Empirical Research

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN

"The researcher's overall for answering the research question or testing theresearchhypothesis". Polit et al (2001, p. 167)

Introduction

The present chapter describes the methodology that has been used in answering the following researchquestions and testing the hypothesis.

- Why do EFL students find different difficulties in writing in English language?

- What are the main causes that hamper first year students to produce a correct piece of academic writing?

- What is the effectiveness of homework assignments on developing English academic writing among EFL first year LMD students at BatnaUniversity?

- How does teachers' feedback effect the development of the students' academic writing?

If teachers provide effective homework writing assignments, students will achieve a better-academic written production. i.e. The lack of practice would result in poor achievement in students' academic written production.

To gain a greater insight into the role of homework assignments in improving students' academic writing, the researcher used a mixed-method approach, which consists of three methods to collect data. The quantitative method used an experiment to get an answer if homework assignments have a positive effect on students' academic writing development. The qualitative method involved questionnaire and interview to explore students' perception and teachers' experiences on the same issue.

The combination of the three methods contributed in the triangulation of the methodological triangulation as a resultwas mixed. Firstly, in the present chapter a description of the mixed method researchand qualitative and quantitative approach of research were given. The importance of this approach is clarified and the methods used in the present study are articulated. The present chapter also contained in-depth description of the process of data collection.

4.1. The Physical Setting of the Study

The setting refers to the place where the data are collected. The study took place inBatna University-Algeria-also named HadjLakhdar University

The Department of English Language offers the License Degree in English language. It also offers Master Degree where students may follow tracks in language and culture or language and applied linguistics. Doctoral degree is offered also by the department in a variety of subjects ranging from Applied linguistics to Didactics.

4.2. TheWriting Style Used for the Present Thesis

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most frequently used within the social science and education; dealingwith one particularelement of human behavior, specifically social and cultural relationships (Cuddy,2002). Accordingly, the researcher thought that it is the suitable for the present research work.

In order to provide clarity and give better flow to the research, the present thesis revised according to the 6th edition of the APA manual. It is widely used, either entirely or with modifications. For the presenr study, the researcher used most of the rules as they are recommended by the format itself exept for the references where writing them without following the rule of spacing – double space. Details of the APA style is provided in appendix (20)

4.3. Research Design

According to Kumar (1996), the researchers followed research design "to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately and economically" (p.74). In the same vain, Creswell and Plano Clark (2007, p. 58) 1996), the researchers followed research design "to answer questions validly, objectively, accurately define research design as "procedures for collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies". which means that research design is a way for researchers to find interpretations to their queries. Furthermore, Mouton

(1996, p. 35) defines research methodologyas "the knowledge of howto do things or the total set of meansthat scientists employ in reaching their goal of valid knowledge". As a result, the present thesis adopts a qualitative quantitative research methodology that usesmixed methods research.

4.4. The Qualitative and Quantitative Research

In the present thesis, the researcher opted for a mixed research approach. This approach combinesa qualitative and quantitative approach. The aim is to get the most in-depth understanding of the subject, and to make up for theweaknesses from the advantages of both of them. As Seale (2004) states "employing a range of methodological strategies means that the researcher does not necessarily privilege a particular way of looking at the social world"(p. 22). In the same vein, he (2004) claims that "they each have distinctive characteristics that make the possibility of combining them especially attractive"(p. 262). In clearer words, both qualitative and quantitative approaches have different features that led the researcher to use both of them.

4.4.1. Qualitative research

Qualitative methods involve collecting and analyzing data to recognize behaviors, opinions, or experiences. According to Dörnyei (2007, p.126), "The importance of qualitative approach is not about how representative the study is, but it focuses more on the individuals and the insights they have". In other words, qualitative method researches individuals' views than the study itself. Since sampling is not of importance in qualitative researches, Dörnyei (2007, p. 127) suggests that in an interview study the number of six to ten interviewees would be sufficient". In which "the challenge does not lie in getting enough data, but to obtain purposeful data (Dörnyei 2007, p. 125).

Another definintion presented by Hancock et al. (2007) which implies "qualitative research concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena".It focuses in understanding a research query as a humanistic approach.

Hancock et al. (2007, p.1) stated that "Qualitative research attempts to broaden and/or deepen our understanding of how things came to be the way they are in our social world". In clearer words, qualitative researchaims to get a better comprehension.

Mack et al. (2005, p. 1) listed five characteristics for thequalitative research:

- seeks answers to a question

- systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question

- collects evidence

- produces findings that was not determined in advance

- produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of theStudy

Accordingly, the qualitative research methodology used in the present research is to extend the interpretations and analyses rather than quantifieddata**.**

4.4.2. Quantitative research

Quantitative research, on the other hand, deals in numbers, logic, and an objective stance (Mackay and Gass 2005). It focuses on sampling and population. "An important factor in quantitative research is that the sample resembles and can represent the population" (Dörnyei 2007, p. 96).

As its name suggests, Quantitative research is interested in producing quantities; it based on themeasurement of amount. Data are in the form of numbers and statistics, Therefore, the overarching aim of a quantitative research study is to classify features, and constructstatistical results in an attempt to prioritize the experiment. It isalso known as experimental or positivist. Bowling (2002, p.216) states that:

The experiment is a situation in which the independent variable

(alsoknownas the exposure, the intervention, the experimental orpredictor

variable) is carefully manipulated by the investigator underknown, tightly

defined and controlled conditions, or by naturaloccurrence. At its most

basic, the experiment consists of anexperimental group which is exposed to

the intervention underinvestigation and a control group which is not

exposed. Theexperimental and control groups should be equivalent and

investigated systematically under conditions that are identical (apartfrom the

exposure of the experimental group), in order to minimizevariation between

them.

The present research on homework assignments and students' academic writing

whichadheres to teaching and learning process goes for a quantitative research methodology

because it would be beneficial for the scope of the research to conduct experimentation.

4.5. Mixed Method Research

Mixed method research is a conceptual approach that does not hold rigidly to a single

method or approach, but instead draws upon multiple approaches and methods to gain

complementary insights into a subject; it is a method that combines various approaches and

methodologies within a single study to analyse data depending on the aims of the research and

the nature of the subject. Wisdom et al. (2012), Creswell and Plano Clark, (2011). According

to Glogowska, (2011), Zhang and Creswell, (2013), Theword" Mixing" refers to theprocess in

which both qualitative andquantitative components are conntected for the sake of better

analysing of the research problem. This combination can occur at any stage(s) of the research

process. Glogowska (2011).

The term "Mixed" refers to a method research that is not based on a single method but that draws on several different method principles that are made use of in practice. For example, an experimental design that uses a self-report survey would also be considered a mixed methods study Johnson et al., (2007).

In the present thesis, there are a lot of advantages in using the mixed method research which opens the researcher to a range of alternatives and prevent all the bias. Further, Creswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales (2007) consider it as the most common used approach in social science fields such as sociology and education. Similarly, as Dörnyei (2007) stated Mixed method research can"…open up fruitful new avenues for research in the social sciences"(p. 163).

Dörnyei (2007) defines the approach as, "A mixed method study involves the collection or analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study with some attempts to integrate the twoapproaches at one or more stage of the research process"(p. 163). In clearer words, mixed method research combines both forms of data and presentes them as a sole research design.

Mixed method research for collecting and analyzing data is commendable when circumstances do not allow for the adoption of a single method; The Mixed method provides a third option for researchers because it fuses elements from quantitative and qualitative approach to deliver on the strengths of both. Many researchers attend to use mixed method research because of «theadvantageof employing the strengths from the two research methods, quantitative and qualitative. Creswell (2009, p. 203). In the same vein, Creswell (2009, p. 4) stated that «With this research method, is it important toactually utilize the advantages of the two methods together, and not just have a study with the two methods simultaneously".

Mixed methods research is an approach of choices from the existing methods. A good number of features and advantages are highlighted and recommended to the research; it is very evocative that researcher with no theoretical understanding of the advantages and the drawbacks of each approach cannot use it effectively in the process. Thus, Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) list eight key considerations in dealing withmixed methods research namely; 1) clarify the aim for using mixed methods; 2) explore thephilosophical approach; 3) perceive the different mixed method steps; 4) assessthe skills required; 5) review project management considerations; 6) show the reason behind the combination; 7) ensure that strictness is followed; 8) spreadthe mixed methods research proudly.

For many researchers, it is very important to consider the classification of mixed methods design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). Various typologies of mixed methods designs have been proposed.; Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) state three types of mixed method designs: 1) equivalent status designs (sequential or parallel); 2) dominant/less dominant designs (sequential or parallel); and 3) multilevel use of approaches. While Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) list six major categories:1) Convergent/triangulation parallel design;2) explanatory sequential design; 3) Exploratory sequential design ;4) Embeddeddesign; 5) Transformative design; and 6) Multiphase design. Yet, it is essential to mention that they all share largely the same criterion in which given issues are included in all of the classifications. (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). One of these issues is the priority or weight given to the quantitative and qualitative study which will be addressed later.

4.5.1. The Mixed methods purpose and design for the present thesis

Mixed methods research is a kind ofresearch in which both qualitative andquantitative methods are used; it contributes to the development of the research, which increases the understanding of the topic. This understanding is getting by gathering quantitative and qualitative research for the mixed method aims of triangulation,complementarity,

development, initiation, or expansion. Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989)

In the present thesis, complementarity aims seem to best suits the research problem and meets its research questions**,** during which quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis are conducted separately, yet it purposefully aims to create more comprehensive understanding of a complex phenomenon (Greene, 2007). Triangulation also may align with a mixed methods purpose of the present thesis. In which it seeks to find convergenceacross results from differentmethods in order to increase the validityof the research; however, the decision to use these methodswas for the purposes of complementarity. According to (Kopinak, 1999, p. 171), multi-method triangulation as "gathering information pertaining to the same phenomenon through more than one method, primarily in order to determine if there is a convergence and hence, increased validity in research findings" he added "the use of more instruments would provide for more detailed and multi-layered information about the phenomenon under study"

Dörnyei (2007, p. 164), made a comparison between mixed methods research and a jigsaw picture "that has many different pieces that need to be connected in the right way. In the same way these different types of research methods can provide a clearer and bigger picture of theobject of study". This comparison implies that mixed methodsprovides a more complete image than either method would alone.

Mixed methods research also can answerqueries that cannot be answered by relying on only one approach. It depends on the use of many worldviews and paradigms and considered as a practical approach to study. This practicality of mixed methods research represents in the idea that individuals tend to problem solve using both numbers and words (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

As a mixed method design, the researcher opted for convergent/triangulation parallel design

since the researcher gathers both quantitative and qualitative data, analyses both independently, compares the findings from the analysis of both datasets and make an interpretation as to best understand of the research problem by obtaining complementary data and to discover if the results support or contradict each other; as shown in figure below.
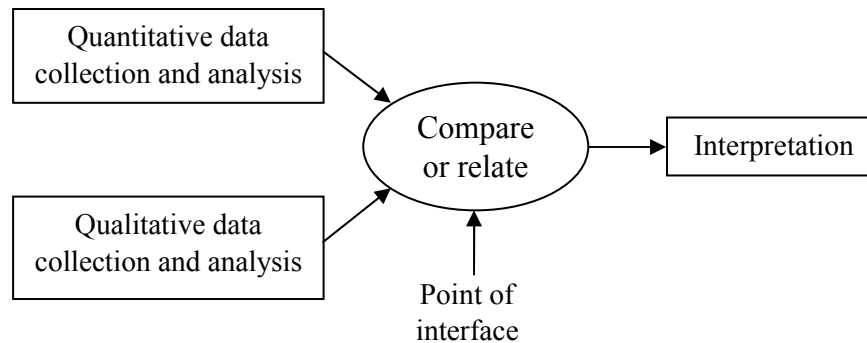
Figure 4 Mixed method research design (Creswell and Plano Clark (2007)

According to Dörnyei (2007, p. 174), "There are relatively few published studies that have used mixed methods, even though it can be considered as a good overall approach"so that the present study is an attempt to add to the research of this type through adopting students' questionnaire, teachers' interview and the experiment.

4.5.2. *Triangulationas a key concept for the present thesis*

It has been discussed above that the tools in question were designed to complete one another. When the tools treated in triangulation design manner,

4.5.2.a. *Type of triangulationused in the present thesis*

The type of triangulation chosen depends on the purpose of a study. Of course, more than one type of triangulation can be used in the same study. Although the idea of triangulation refers to the use of three research methodologies, Wragg (1994, p.113) differentiates four different kinds of triangulation, i.e., data, investigator, theory, and methodological. The four types of triangulation are listed below:

- Data triangulation involving different time, space, or people.

- Investigator triangulation where various observers cross-check each other.

- Theory triangulation which brings different theories to bear on the observations.

- Methodological triangulation whereby more than one methodology of enquiry is employed.

In the present study, the researcher focused on methodological triangulation by developing a strategy for combining the data collected with three different instruments. It is more commonly known as methodologic triangulation, or "multi-method, blended technique (mixed-method), or methods triangulation" (Barbour, 1998; Greene &Caracelli, 1997; Polit and Hungler, 1995). Methodological triangulation is also used to refer to the mixture of qualitative and quantitative data "triangulation by data type" (Erzberger and Prein, 1997),

With the aim of getting ultimately precise outcomes and interpretations and providing accurate and trustworthy results. it is opted for conduct more than one methodology of research, i.e., triangulated methodology. According to Cohen et al. (2000, p. 112) "Triangulation maybe defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of someaspect of human behavior". In clearer words, combining more than one method for a given purpose.

Because the currentresearch is centered on the fourth type namely, methodological triangulation, it has used three different methods of research: experiment, interviews, and questionnaire.

4.5.2.b. *The priority choice of the present study*

It is important for any research that uses a mixed methods approach to ask him/herself the following question: What will the priority of the quantitative and qualitative approaches be? Priority refers to the significance or weighting of the quantitative and qualitative approaches to answering the research queries (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). Talking about the priority, there are twooptions: the first is about providing an equalweight to quantitative and qualitative approaches, and the second choice is one of the methods will be more important

than the other approach (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). Thus, this importance will be given according to the research questions, problem and aims. (Morgan, 1998; Creswell, 2003; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007).

In the present research, priorityis given to the quantitative approach. This choice is affected essentially by the research aim of the current thesis, which is to investigatethe role of homework writing assignments and how they affect students' academic writing achievement. Quantitative approach is claimed to be a powerful one when the aim is to examine the effect of one variable on the other. As has been discussed in the theoretical chapters, there is lack of strong theoretical fundamental in the area of homework writing assignments' affects in Algeria. Thus, studies on the relationship between homework writing assignments and academic writing arelimited. In such case, the quantitative approach is more essential in terms of investigating deeply the phenomenon and adding knowledge to the theoretical foundations.

Additionally, the priority choice is also affected by practical consideration. The significance given to the quantitative study over the qualitative study mirrors the weakness of results that can be done for the present topic. In fact, the research aims to answer two main questions regarding the effect of both homework assignments and teachers' feedback in improving students' academic writing in which qualitative approach' extent is restricted. Alternatively, the researcher decided to conduct mixed methods research, and put more focus on the quantitative approach. Considering the above issues, the researcher conducted a quantitative-dominant mixed methods study.

4.6. The Variables

The main aim of the present thesis is to identify the relationship between two aspects with one supposed to have an effect over the other. Many definitions that variables have, according to Brown (2007) variables are "human characteristics or abilities that differ over time or among individuals" (p.7). Another definition which consider variables as any entity which have various value. "Variables are attributes, qualities and characteristics of persons, groups, settings, or institutions, such as gender, social skills, socioeconomic status, exclusiveness or achievement". (Lodico, Spaulding and Voegtle, 2006, p.7). Accordingly, it is essential to clarify the two variables. The variable being tested and measured in a scientific experiment is called the dependent variable while the one that is changed or controlled in a scientific experiment to test the effects on the dependent variable is called the independent variable.

In the present thesis, the dependent variable is student's academic writing skill whereas the independent variable is hypothesized as the integration homework assignments. In clearer words, the hypothesis is that if teachers provide effective homework assignments, students will achieve a better-academic written production. i.e. The lack of practice would result in poor achievement in students' academic written production.

4.7. Population and Sampling

A population and a sample are basic components for any researcher to tackle his/her research tools. The choice of the population and the sample is an important component of any research because of the significant effect that it can have on the quality of the results. According to Johnson and Christenson (2004), sampling is "the process ofdrawing a sample from the population where the characteristics of a subset are selected from a larger group" (p.197) .In other words, sampling is statistical way in choosing a given number from a group. In this respect, Dörnyei (2007. p.148) stated:

> The small group that is observed is called a *sample*, and the larger group
>
> about which the generalization is made is called a *population*. A population

is defined as all members of any well-defined class of people, events, or

objects. For example, in a study in which students in American high schools

constitute the population of interest, you could define this population as all

boys and girls attending high school in the United States. A sample is a

portion of a population

The research population for the present research work comprised all the first-year students of

English language at Batna University aged 18 or older. Choosing a sample out of a population

can help the researcher to achieve maximum accuracy within a given sample size and to avoid

bias in the selection of sample. In this respect, Sapsford &Jupp (2006, p.1) says:

Sampling in educational research is generally conducted in order topermit

the detailed study of part, rather than the whole, of apopulation. The

information derivedfrom the resulting sample iscustomarily employed to

develop useful generalizationsabout thepopulation.

.

In clearer words, the aim of sampling is to allow generalizations of thefindings obtained

from a given sample. Furthermore, Sapsford &Jupp (2006) emphasize the idea of better

dealing with a sample than a population because the latter is time and effort consuming. They

list theadvantages of sampling as:

- Save time

- Save effort

- Obtain consistent and unbiased estimates of the population status. Sapsford&Jupp

  (2006, p.26)

4.7.1. The choice of sampling strategy

Sampling is a central concept of methodology practice and, due to the variety of

sampling strategies available; choosing a given sampling strategy demandsa focus on the major methodological and/or theoretical components of the research objectives. The choice of sampling strategy selected effects the range and the set of data that is collected, which, in turn, will affect the kinds of queries that can be answered. According to Aldenderfer (1987) and Orton (2000), sampling strategies can be a key in deciding validity and/or statistical confidence in the researcher's interpretations of the data.

The choice of sampling technique can be decided by two criteria. Sapsford &Jupp (2006) stated the probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling. The firstconsists random sampling, stratified sampling, and cluster sampling, whereas the non-probabilistic sampling includes purposive, convenience, and quota sampling. In the present research, the sampling strategy is a mixture of both types, that is, a probability samplingin which each member of population is equally likely to be selected as part of the sample and non-probabilistic in whichin which the researcher selects samples based on the subjective judgment of the researcher rather than random selection. (Sapsford &Jupp 2006)

For students, that isprobabilistic; Itis a simple random sampling to remove bias from the selection procedure and put result in representative samples, (Gravetter, &Forzano, 2011)According to Gravetter, &Forzano, (2011), random sampling is a kind of sampling method that helps produce representative samples by eliminating voluntary response bias and guarding against undercoverage bias while other sampling methods do not do this.

Simple random sampling technique was utilised when selecting the sample for the present research. This is to ensure that every first-year student has an equal chance of being selected for the research work. The researcher believed that the first-year students who are around 18 or 19 years old are matured enough to participate in the actual thesis as they are now at tertiary education. First year students were randomly selected from a list given by the administration to teachers.

For teachers, it is non-probabilistic sampling, that is purposivesamplingtype in which researcher relies on her own judgment when choosing members of population to participate in the present research work based on the idea that it may be the only appropriate method available if there are only limited number of data sources who can contribute to the study.

Accordingly, asthere are a wide range of purposive sampling techniques: Maximumvariation sampling, homogeneous sampling, typical case sampling, extreme (or deviant) case sampling, critical case sampling, total population sampling, and expert sampling. (Gravetter, &Forzano, 2011). Because the population size for teachers is relatively small, the researcher opted for total population sampling which is one of thepoprusive sampling techniques wherewechoose to examine the entire population (i.e., the total population) that have a particular set of features. (Orton,2000),

4.7.2. Student sample

First year LMD students at the department of English at Batna 2 University are Enrolled infifteen groups of about 45-50 students each (about 675). The study population comprised of (118) students who wererandomly chosen to participate in the study. Only 60 of these students were involved in the experiment because they regularly attended their session.

According to Cohen et al., (2007), forexperimental design studies, they recommend "... a sample size of thirty is held by many to bethe minimum number of cases if researchers plan to use some form of statistical analysis ontheir data, though this is a very small numberand we would advise very considerably more". A small sample was considered necessary in order "to make the data more manageable" (Fossey, Harvey, Mc Dermott and Davidson, 2002, p. 726). I.e. it is more practical for the researcher to deal with small sample of participants. These students were those who attended their classes orderly, and they were owing intense and eager approval. to participate after the study was explained to them. One group has been randomly planned to be thecontrol group (CG) and the other group as being

the experimental group (EXP). And from the sample the researcher as dealt with only thirty students from each groupwho were positively interact with her. Age and sex are unwanted variables: they were not taken into consideration.

One of the qualifications needed for the first-year students to be chosen as the participants of the present researchisthat first year level plays a critical role in developing students'writing skills. If students' writing is not addressed adequately at earlier level, the up cominglevels will always be inundated with students who are academically under-prepared. Believing that what students learn at first year level either prepares or under-prepares them for second- and third-year studies. Writing play an essential role in student learning and their acquisition during the first year at university could be seen as a decisive factor in students' success.

4.7.3. Teacher sample

The sample comprised teachers who teach first year written expression subject. A total of eight teachers of English language participated in the present research work. All eight teacherswho teach this course were willing to participate in the actual thesis after an invitation was extended to them. For the present thesis, the aim is to gain knowledge on teachers' perceptions, experiences, knowledge and thought process towards the present topic, only teachers of first year written expression course were selected.

4.8.Methods of Data Collection

The three methods of data collection that were used in the present thesis were interview, questionnaire and anexperiment. An experiment was administered to students and was subsequently followed by a post experimental questionnaire to get information about how EFL students feel themselves as writers. What their thoughts were about their actual writing. Moreover, what they needed help with.

Teachers were also questioned via an interview inquiring about how they felt about

teaching writing, first year written expression syllabus, and assigning homework, what areas of interest they depended for their students and what techniques they have used in order to improve the academic writing of their students,The rationale behind the use of a combination of these data collection methods(triangulation) was "to get rich and in-depth data" (Bell2005, p. .197)regarding the perceptions and experiences of EFL students and teachersof academic writing and homework assignments. Accordingly, the researcher's choices did not fall neatly into the quantitative methodology paradigm, thus they rendered a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses procedures.

All data gathering instruments utilized in the present thesis were piloted to test howlong it would take recipients to complete them, to review that all questions andinstructions were clear and to enable it to remove any question, which did notintroduceusable data.

Many researchers stated that the instrumentsshould ideally be tried out on a group similar to the one that would form thepopulation of the study (Blaxter et al. 2006, p. 137; Bell 2005, p. 147; Leedy and Ormrod2005, p. 110; Glesne 1999, p.38). Accordingly, bothstudents'questionnaires and teachers' interviews were piloted to make sure that thequestions wereclear and understandable.

4.9. The Piloting

Piloting is an indelible step in any research. It helps the researcher to pave the way to further rectification and modifications. Blaxteret al. (2006, p.137) state that "Piloting is the process whereby youtry out the research techniques and methods which you have in mind, see how well they work in practice, and, if necessary, modify your plans accordingly".
The questionnaire was piloted before administering to the main participants of the presentresearch. Questionnairevalidity was attained using face validity and content validity. Content validity refers to how much an instrument fully assesses the subject matter while face

validity is a test of internal validity. As the name implies, it asks a very simple question: "On the face of things, do the investigators reach the correct conclusions?" Blaxteret al. (2006, p.137)

Concerning the face validity, it has been established by administering the questionnaire to three teachers who arespecialized in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). They made some remarks after which they accepted it as a validquestionnaire. And it was also administered to a sample of 30first year students. The questionnaire was distributed in the first semester. It was distributed after having acceptable sessions in written expression course. Three (3) students did not return the questionnaire while one (1) student could not fill in theentire questionnaire. Only twenty-six (26) students filled the pilot questionnaire: Ten (10) students suggested that they should have been given more time with the questionnairewhile four students (04) claimed that the questionnaire had difficult words, which could not be easily understood. However, twelve (12) students completed in the entire questionnaire without objections.

Based on students' remarks and notes from thepilot questionnaire, specific items were treated on the questionnaire. Content validity was achieved by a rational analysis of the questionnaire by teachersfamiliar with the research subject. Accordingly, they reviewed all of the questionnaire items for readability, clarity and comprehensiveness and came to some level of agreement as theappropriateness, meaningfulness, andeffectiveness of each question. Their feedbackwas then analyzed and the questionnaire wasaccordingly adapted.

As for questionnaires'reliability, Cronpach alpha was used using SPSS; it was (0,86) for the questionnaire and this result is acceptable for the study purposes. The interview also was revised asking three English language teachers from three different universities (Larbi Ben M'hidi -Oum El Bouagh-, MohamedSeddik Ben Yahia-Jijel- and M'HamedBougara-Boumerdes). Two teachers suggested some changes concerning the content of the interview.

Accordingly, the researcher took those comments into consideration when the interview'

content was refined. More information will be articulated in a given element entitled

"Evaluation of Mixed Methods Research"

4.10. The Experiment

Since the aim is to show the impact of homework writing assignments ondeveloping

students' academic writing, an experimental study seemed to be the mostsuitable. The focus

was to analyze how students' academicwriting improved through doing their homework tasks

and how students responded to teachers' feedback on their writings and ifthe feedback

resulted in a development in the students' academic writing, namely whether the essays

developed during the process of writing. The present study is in form of experimental

quantitative research.

The aim is to examine the effects ofassigning homework on improving first-year LMD

students' academic writing at BatnaUniversity during the academic year 2016-2017. To

achieve the current goal, and in an attempt to answer the research questionsmentioned above,

an experimental research design that used the pre-test and post-testwas held. Theindependent

variable of the study was providing homework writing assignments versus no homework

writing assignments.

Table 2
Experimental and control groups

EXPG		CG
Experimental Group		**Control Group**
1	Pre test	Pre test
2	Provided homework writing	No homework writing assignments
3	Post test	Post test

The analysis focused on students' academic writing, and teachers' feedback on

students'writing were explored in addition to administering questionnaires and conducting

interviews in order to get rich and broad information. This data collection strategy was also

employed to validate both student and teachers' responses to confirm or corroborate information from other instruments.

"Two issues to think about when initiating quantitative research are how manyparticipants are needed and what kinds of participants are needed" (Dörnyei 2007, p. 96). The sample (60students) in the present research work is derived from a population offirst year LMD students at the department of English language at Batna University. These students are enrolled in fifteen groups of about 45-50 students each.

4.10.1. The population and the sample

Two groups the researcher was teaching during the year (2016-2017) were chosen to participate in the studywith an average of 40-50 students in each group. Because of the problem of repetitive students who are second year, but they attend some first-year courses, the researcher has paid attention to make sure that only first-year students who attend the written expression class during the whole academic year (which is the same period of training) being a part in the study. In other words, the main study of the present work involves the students who took both the pre-test and the post-test.

The number of students in the two groups (60) taking into consideration that repetitive students were not considered. One group has been randomly planned to be the control group CG and the other group considered as the experimental group EXP.

4.10.2. Instructional materials used for practice

As Instructionalmaterials to carry out the present research, different argumentative essays and topics have been used. For the pre-test and post-test, the researcher has opted for the following argumentative essay"Does technology make us alone? (see appendix 05). During the treatment period, since the time allocated to carry out the present research was limited to only one year, many paragraphs and essays writing have been used so that different topics have been discussed and written by students. (Examples of the topics used in treatment

period in appendix 07). A series of lessons devoted for developing academic writing. They revolve around academic grammar use, academic spelling and punctuation use, and writing effective paragraphs.

4.11. Scoring Rubrics

Linn & Miller (2005) defines scoring rubric as a combination of guidelinesthat is being adopted by the teachers assessing their students' performance. According to Linn & Miller, (2005), "Informing students of thescoring criteria that will be used can also improve the validity of the assessment asstudents tend to focus on what the teacher is looking for", (p. 239).In the same vain, Stiggins (1987) adds that "teachers must have a clear idea of what they want students to produce- a notion of poor and extremely good performance- so that teachers can teach students to perform and evaluate their performance" (as cited inLinn& Miller ,2005, p. 261). Which means that rubrics help both students and teachers in terms of improving the quality of learning as they provide students with an idea of what the teacher is expecting from them in their performance. Analytical scoring rubrics seemed to be as one of the tools in assessing students' performance. The rubric of the present research aimed at identifying the essay writing skills necessary foruniversity students.

4.11.1. Analytical scoring rubric

Linn & Miller (2005) stated that each scoring rubric contains a set of levels being used to distinguish students' performance and production. Airisian& Russel (2008) adds that "However, teachers need to consider that attempting to score more than three or four separate categories may make the score confusing and time-consuming"(p.187-188). In which this analytical scoring rubric is best used if teachers aim at assessingmany objectives in a one essay in order to focus on students' strengths and weaknesses. Thus, teachers for instructional aims can use different analytical scales. Wolcott & Legg (1998) stated that "Sometimes a teacher may use four levels, rather than three, and add minor or extensive comments besides the criteria a teacherchooses to evaluate"(p.106). And this can let students aware of the way of

assessing their essays and they may help teachers to add more perspective rather than just giving a single grade.

4.11.2Advantages of using analytical scoring

The analytical scoring is a helpful and valuable tool that teachers can depend on in order to provide students with a detailed feedback regarding their essays by focusing on their strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, Wolcott & Legg (1998) stated that "teachers are able to choose the scales they want to evaluate, taking into consideration the writing assignment and the teacher's goals, with an attempt to distinguish between the elements of form and content" (p. 113). In clearer words, analytical scoring is a way that help teachers to focus on both form and content in their feedback. Analytical scoring was being used as a way to help students understand where the writing needs to be enhanced, and to find out students' strengths and weaknesses.

Wolcott & Legg (1998) point out that "as an assessment measure, analyticalscoring has the advantage of being more comprehensive than primary trait scoring". Additionally, they add, "Primary traits focus on how well writers have fulfilled the specific traits of a particularassignment according to its purpose and audience, whereas analytical scoring goes beyond those specific features to evaluate other dimensions of the task" (p. 116). Which means that in analytical scoring teachers assess clarity and sequence of the students' essays but also the structure and style, which is not provided by the primary traits scoring.

4.11.3. The validity and reliabilityof the assessment rubric

Teachers have to guarantee that the assessment information that they have used is sufficient in order to provide useful feedbackto their students learning development. Validity and reliability are two key aspects that may help teachers to achieve that aim. Hout and O'Neill (2009) stated, "The quality of an assessment achievement depends on its ability to support valid inferences of student's achievement" (p. 82)

Mabry (1999) defined validity as an "integrated evaluative judgment of the degree to which empirical evidence and theoretical rationales support the adequacy and appropriateness of inferences and actions based on test scores or others modes of assessment" (p. 83). In a simpler way, validity is a concept that guarantees if an assessment measures what it was planned to measure. According to Airasian& Russell (2008), reliability refers to the "stability or consistency of assessment information, i.e., whether it is typical of a student's behavior". In other words, it is about producing stable and same results for a repeated assessment.

 According toHuerta-Macias (1995), alternative assessments are in and of themselves valid, because of their direct nature of the assessment. All its kinds are systematic and stable in which teachers conduct different assignments, clear evaluation criteria, and "they can allow teachers to triangulate any decision-making process with different sources as the students, families and teachers" (As cited in Brown and Hudson 1998, p.655).

 However, Brown and Hudson (1998) stated that teachers should be aware when conducting any type of assessment so that the reliability andvalidity of the assessment can be analyzed and improved later on. They added,"The issues of reliability and validitymust be dealt with for alternative assessments just as they are for any other type ofassessment- in an open, honest, clear, demonstrable, and convincing way" (p. 656). Which means that both concepts of validity and reliability should be taken for any type of assessment that intended to improve students' achievement in learning the foreign language?

 A valid and reliable assessment is the one, which consider all students' circumstances from different levels, background knowledge and students' experiencesand needs or even different environments for writing. Accordingly, the rubric that was used was piloted before applying it. Once the rubric was complete, testing was scheduled. This was the first testing of this tool. It was decided that three teachers from two universities – M'HamedBougara and Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahiarespectively would act as reviewers for this initial testing because

they are specialized in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). This would be very effective for determining the degree of importance of each skill on the rubric, and the reliability and validity of the assessment tool. Thus, fifteen (15) students were asked to write an augmentative essay then the researcher who is the teacher herself corrected their writings using the rubric as a reference so that ensure that the rubric fits students' needs and level.

The reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency which measures the attribute; It refers to the stability, consistency, or dependability of a measuring instrument. The test is repeated to the samesample of students on two occasions and then compares the scores gained by calculating a reliability coefficient.

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

The normal range of Cronbach's coefficient alpha value between 0.0 and + 1.0, and the higher values mirrors a higher degree of internal consistency, (George and Mallery, 2003).

Table3
Cronbach's Alpha for Assessment Rubric

	Cronbach's Alpha
All components	0.853

Table 3 shows the values of Cronbach's Alpha equals (0.853). Which considered high value thatmarks a good reliability of the entire scale.
As a result, it can be said that the assessment rubric was valid and reliable

4.11.4. Sample of an analytical scoring rubric used in the present thesis

Taking into consideration the issues discussed earlier, the researcher considered some limitations that EFL students might face. The researcher believes that both teachers and students do not have an attitude about incorporating such tool in their teaching and learning process. Accordingly, a scoring rubric was prepared along with the first-year written expression syllabus to determine students' language skills and levels.

The researcher releases howimportant it would be for teachers to see which aspects most of their students are lacking proficiency so that they can focus more on the mentioned criteria. Using rubrics to assess students' academic writing performance is the core of such kind of assessment tools (see appendix 09),

The different tests were being assessed through a rubric which selected from a number of options available since this scoring technique is the most appropriate one to be used in the present research. It adapted from "Assessing Writing" by Weigle (2002), and contains five aspects of paragraph writing. Each aspect has four levels of performance were described on a four-point rating scale, ordered from 1 to 4, verypoor, fair to poor, good to average, excellent to very goodrespectively so that the total mark of the rubric is 20. The same assessment and scoring rubric were used throughout the whole experiment.

4.12. Pre-test: description

The sixty- (60) participants are pre-tested through an essay writing test. The test was given by the researcher during the written expressionsession. Each student isasked to write an essay about "Does technology make us more alone? The reason for the researcher giving this topic wasthat first-yearEFL students have short experience in essay writing and some of them it was their first time writing an essay. In addition, it is easier for the students to brainstorm ideas and thoughts for this topic, as it is something related to their daily life and thequestion is straightforward. The researcher found it easy to hand out with all steps of the experiment since the researcher was the teacher at the same time.

The objectives of the test were to check the students' ability to carry out the following academic writing skills: content, organization, vocabulary, grammar, and mechanics. To calculate the means of the control group and the experimental groups in thepre-test, the sum of the scores of each group have to be divided on the number of theparticipants.

4.12.1. Validity of the pre/post test

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measuring.

Referee validity

After setting the test in its first version, it was examined by a group of referees whom are teachers of English language for the same level. The number of these teachers was (5), They were asked to comment on:

- The clarity of the test instruction.

- The suitability of the topic to the level of university students

4.12.2. Reliability of the pre/post test

The reliability of an instrument is the degree of consistency which measures the attribute it is supposed to be measuring. It refers to the stability, consistency, or dependability of a measuring instrument. To establish the reliability of the test, it was administeredto a sample of 30 students other than the sample of the research. Then, the same test wasadministered to the same group under nearly similar conditions. The reliability coefficient of the test was estimated using Cronbach Alpha Formula. The normal range of Cronbach's coefficient alpha value between 0.0 and + 1.0, and the higher values mirrors a higher degree of internal consistency, (George and Mallery, 2003). The estimated value was (0.89), which is considered reliable for the purpose of the current research.

As a result, it can be said that the writing essaypre/post test of the present research was valid and reliable.

4.12.3. After the pretest

The researcher read and analyzedstudents' piece of writingfor both groups for three main objectives: First, to find out the main errors and problems that students did, Second, to ensure thatthe aim of the experiment go along with students' needs and level. Third, to examine later on what the benefits that assigning homework can help to motivate students and improve their academic writing. The problem domains were classified in terms of organization, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics and content.

4.13. The TreatmentPeriod: description

The treatment period of the present research lasted forone academic year, and the reason behind this time of the treatment period is that the researcherwas the teacher of the two groups at this academic year. Thetreatment period has started in October 2016 and ended in April 2017. Conditions during thetreatment period were the same for both groups except that the experimental groups have regularpractice with homework writing assignments, whereas the participants of the controlgroup spent the same time practicing writing only in class without extra tasks.

During the treatment period, the researcher used to give the lesson to both groups in the session. Then the researcher provided the experimental group with different homework writing assignments. Each assignment provided drill upon elements already dealt in class. The homework writing assignments were given to the experimental groups each session in which students only meet their teacher once a week and they were instructed to submit the completed assignment before class began. The researcherthen provided feedback andsometimes award a grade. Overall, the researcher has played many roles with the experimental group, whereas with thecontrol group the researcher had too little to contribute; the aimis to give the lesson with little practice.

Since practicing writing needs sufficient time, we used to instruct students to do their exercises at home aftercorrecting students' essays; all the participantstook the corrected form with grades on which there were some notes and remarks. These comments and remarks helped students to be motivated, since they can feel their development day after day. Along with, these notes and remarks on students' academicwritinghelped the researcher to observe and monitor their progress during the time of treatment.

4.13.1. The progress tests

The participantsin the experimental group went through a set of tests (four progress

tests) in order to see students' performance and check their improvementsin terms of academic writing production. As mentioned formerly, the control group was taught in the traditional way. The experimental group, however, benefited from extra homework writing assignments and extra time for teachers' feedback which help students to be more aware of the distinct writing features and to know more about their writing in which they have a chance to correct their errors. The aim here is tofamiliarize students with the different academic writing aspects.

The progress tests are conducted in the course of written expression. Students are given these tests as a classroom activity in which they are required to write essays about different topics and themes. Students are tested in both groups then their scores are compared to assess their range of improvement.

4.14. Post-test Description

To determine the students' benefits in the academic writing skillfrom homework assignments, the students are post tested after the treatment period. The same topic andway of measurement (essay writing) that has been used in the pre-test is also used in the post-test.

The essay of the post-test and pre-test was "Does technology make us more alone? It is a topic that has been developed using strong and effective reasons, in which students explain the effects of technology andtheir opinions regarding its effects on their daily life and learning process as well.

It has been mentioned that the development in students' academic writing involves five elements: organization, content, vocabulary, grammar and mechanics. Thus, the researcher classifies students' development according to their use of different structures, strong and suitable words, the ability to arrange sentences into a logical order, the ability to edit sentences that fit into the context of the given topic and its meaning as well as the ability to maintain cohesion and coherence throughout the whole essay. As essays of the pre-test, essays of the post-test have been analytically scored using four-point scale.

During post-test, the researcher aimsat seeing if there was any improvement in scores or by analyzing data and discussingthe development of the academic writing skill for most of the students and possible reasons for those that did not.

4.14.1. After the posttest

A post experiment questionnaire was designed and prepared in order to find out experimental students' attitudes and perspectives towards academic writing after the treatment (homework writing assignments).

4.14.1.a. *Description of the post-experiment questionnaire*

The post experiment questionnaire was written in English language. The reason for this was that thestudents had an acceptable level of English reading skills, and it was important that all the students understood the statements in the questionnaire. Since English is the students' foreign language, some may have had problems with the questions, and the importance of the accuracy of the questionnaire' statements wasemphasized. Because of this, the post experiment questionnaire was all written in simple English language. In addition, students were also told that their attitudes and perspectives will not have any effects on their marks whatsoever for the course and all responses were for research purposes only and would be treated as confidential.

The post experiment questionnaire consisted of two sections "seeappendix 13"; It was found to be an appropriate, effective technique for measuring attitudes toward academic writing related to homework writing assignments.

The first section was about student's perspective and attitudes towards academic writing in English. The subject for the second section was students' awareness and knowledge of the effect of homework writing assignments and teachers' feedback in improving their academic writing. Here an example of the questions was formulated as "Do you think that those homework assignments prepared you adequately for writing essay examinations in English

language at university? "According to you, how important is teacher' feedback in your academic paper" and "Do you know why do you get good or bad marks for your essay? Clarify

4.14.2.b. *Administration of the post-experiment questionnaire*

The case study consists of experimental group students. The post experiment questionnaire was handed in by the researcher after the experiment under the same conditions and circumstances.

4.14.2.c. *Validity and reliability of the post-experiment questionnaire*

To establish the reliability of the post experiment questionnaire, a set of reliability tests were conducted to determine the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients. The estimated value was (0.8) which is deemed reliable according to the needs of the present thesis.

To ensure that the post experiment questionnaire was valid, the researcher consulted a group of experienced teachers working in the department of English language to comment on the content, the questions, the suitability of the statements to the level of university first year students, and the clarity of the effects of homework writing assignments on students' academic writing. so that the post experiment questionnaire was modified according to the remarks and suggestions that would improve it.

4.15. The Questionnaire

4.15.1. Usefulness of the questionnaire

Questionnaires are a common method in quantitative research (Dörnyei 2007, p. 95). most researches rely on them in their studies. Brown (2001, p. 6), cited in Dörnyei (2007, p. 102), defines questionnaires as:

> …any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions orstatements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers.

According to Dörnyei (2007, p. 101), Questionnaires aim at "describing the characteristics of a population by examining asample of that group". In other words, questionnaires can help researches in analyzing the whole population through a sample of it. Litosseliti (2010, p. 60) remarked that "Questionnaires are frequently used to measure people's attitudes to and perception of languages (or variations of particular languages, such as dialects and accents) or groups of speakers". In other words, questionnaires are used to obtain social and linguistic information from a great number of respondents. "Questionnaires are useful to find patterns of occurrence and to investigate phenomena that are not easy to observe" (MacKey and Gass, 2005).

It is "a questionnaire can measure facts, behaviors and attitudes amongst a population (Dörnyei 2007, p. 102). He means that many aspects that questionnaire can measure as attitudes, behaviors and views. The questionnaire used in the current dissertation aimed to explore all the relation between homework and students' writing development. The questionnaire aimed to elicit how homework assignment can help students in improving their academic writing, and how they experienced the feedback on their written texts. Some of the main interests were what the focus of homework assignment was, how helpful it was, whether homework had any effect on students' writing development and if they had views on how homework practices could be improved to best meet their needs.

In the domain of FL learning/teaching, less attention is given to the development of the writing skill through homework assignments for first-year studying in the university. First-year EFL university students should focus their attention on the academic writing skill or mainly on how to write a correct and academic piece of paper. Since students have learned the FL as one of the subjects in the middle and secondary schools and focus on the rules and structures of that language, they should use what they have learned at that early stage in the advanced stage in appropriate contexts.

At early stages in middle and secondary schools, students learn the FL rules, structures and isolated items. These first stages are called the early stages in learning the FL. According to Rivers (1981)"It is generally admitted that the early stages of foreign language learning must be largely taken up with the thorough drilling of language forms and sequences, so that intraverbal associationsare developed and the student learns to produce correct forms of utterance without concentrating on putting the elements together"(p.195). Which means that students at his stage can focus on rules and forms without paying attention to howthese rules and forms are used in various contexts? thus, students of first year are more familiar with the concept of homework writing assignments since they weretaking the same type of workthat theywere used to in secondary school.

In advanced stages, learners should learn how to write effectively and correctly. Rivers (1981) states that "learners at advanced stage should select the appropriatestructures, forms and items that they have learned at early stages in order to use themappropriately in new contexts for other purposes"(p. 200). In other words, students should start to practice the rules and structures that they have learned to write essays in the FL from the first year at the university.

These are mainly the reasons behind choosing to work with first year students. First-year students should focus on how to write in theFL because theyhave already known the language system (grammar, phonology and vocabulary). Thus, theyneed to know how to relate this acquired knowledge to their needs in subsequent situations.

In conclusion, questionnaires are one of the most common and popular tools in almost all fields, in particular language sciences, researchers can use them to gather data from a large number of people. They can be a powerful tool to inform the researcher' evaluation; however, a poorly designed questionnaire can be difficult for both those that have to complete it, and those who have to analyze the data.

4.15.2. Description of the questionnaire

The questionnaire was written in English. The reason for this was that thestudents had an acceptable level of English reading skills, and it was important that all the students understood the questions in the questionnaire. Since English is the students' foreign language, some may have had problems with an English questionnaire, and the importance of the accuracy of the questionnaire answers wasemphasized. Because of this, the questionnaire was all written in simple English. In addition, students were also told that their response will not have any effectson their marks whatever for the course and all responses were for research purposes only and would be treated as confidential. (see appendix 15)

Students' responses in the questionnaire were cross-referenced with the findings in other research questions to investigate whether teacher homework writing assignments align with student academic writing.

The questionnaire is mostly conceptualized on the ground of the review described in thetheoretical part of the present research. The researcher has mainly used the technique of close- endedquestions because students are generallymotivated to respond to these kinds of questions. In short, thereare three types of questions used in this questionnaire:

- Numeric Questions: these questions are used to get background information of the participants such as the students'preference skill.

- Open -ended Questions: are questions that permitstudents to answer in their ownwords. The aim of using this type of question is to determine the responders' attitudes towards the subject under study.

- Close -ended Questions: which are mostly used in this questionnaire, are questionsthatask students to choose from pre-determined answers. In addition to this type, the researcher hasused follow-up questions in the form of clarification such as "why" or "justify youranswer". This type of questions helps getting obvious and full

responses to open questions so thatthe number of ambiguous responses is minimized.

As shown in appendix (15), students' questionnaire consists of twentyquestions, organized in four sections. Each section in this questionnaire is related directly or indirectly toa specific aspect of the present research. The first section was about students' attitudes towards writing in English. Examples of questions in this part were:
"are you encouraged to write","good writing, in your opinion, is"and "when writing, do you have difficulties in". There weremixture of statements and the students had to tick off one for each statement. This type of closed-ended and short item is called the 'Likert scale' (Dörnyei2007, p. 105). This section provided a general idea of the students' attitudes when it comes to write in English.

The subject for the second section was students' awareness of the effect of homework writing assignments in improving their academic writing. Here thequestions were formulated as frequenciesas 'how often…?', and the students had to tick one of these boxes: 'never', 'once a semester', 'once a month', '2-3 times a month' or 'once a weekor more often'. Examples of questions in this part were: 'How often do you write texts in the English subject?' and 'How often do you write those texts at home?' There were also questions formulated as follows: 'What kind of these homework assignments? The students had to tick one of four different options provided: "Articles", "stories", "summaries of novels and movies", "other genres. "This closed-ended type of item is called 'multiple-choice' (Dörnyei 2007, p. 106).

The third section was about experiences with feedback in writing. There was a mixture of questions between closed-ended and multiple-choice questions. This part provided answers on what practices students had experienced with their teachers' feedback on their writing. Examples ofquestions in this part were: "Do you receive feedback on what you write?" Is it important to receive feedback on your writing?"How does the teacher give feedback on

language? The students had to tick one of four different options provided: "The teacher corrects the errors", the teacher underlines the errors and I have to correct them", the teacher uses a marking code on the errors and I have to correct them", and "the teacher uses other methods". Finally, the fourth section contained a short open answer question: 'What do youthink is the best way of developing academic writing in English language?' this question requires students to give their own opinions on what they want their teachers to do in order to help them to improve their academic writing. In order to make sure that the students understoodeach item and question in the questionnaire, each one was read out and explained by the teacher before the students answered it.

The questionnaire was on five pages and took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Dörnyei (2007, p. 110) believes that "this is an appropriate size for a questionnaire in applied linguistics research." So, this students' questionnaire, allows the researcher to carry on the analysis of the teaching/learning situation and try to discuss the importance of homework writing assignments to develop students' academic writing.

4.15.3. Administration of the questionnaire

In the present thesis, a student questionnaire was distributedface-to-face to the students. In addition, the questionnaire was distributed -after having many written expression sessions (December 2016). All students who participated in this questionnaire (60) study written expression subject for their first year at Batna University in the academic year 2016 / 2017.

4.16. Interview

4.16.1. Usefulness of the Interview

Interviews considered as qualitative methods, and it is"the most oftenused method in qualitative inquiries" (Dörnyei 2007, p. 134). According to Dörnyei (2007, p.134), "The typical length of a qualitative interview is about 30-60 minutes". In some cases, we find

researchers use more than one interview with the same participant. In the present study, there was oneand the same interview for each teacher. Instead, the researcher met other teachers in informal settings where the topic of the thesis was discussed, and it was a chance for the researcher to get a broader knowledge on the topic.

The verbal communication between the interviewer/s and the interviewee/s. is one of the important aspects in interviews. Hitchcock (1989) stresses that "central to the interview is the issue of asking questions and this is often achieved in qualitative research through conversational encounters". (p.79). As a result, it is important for the researchers to familiarize themselves with questioning techniques before conducting interviews.

Researchers may use different questioning techniques that help them to facilitate the topic's accounts and to get quality data from the participants. Current literature suggests some questioning techniques, summarized in the following ten points:

- Ask clear questions: Cicourel (1964) stated that what is clear for someone it may be vague to the otheras a result it is essential to depend clear words that are sensitive to the respondent's context and worldview. "To enhance their comprehensibility to the interviewees, questions should be easy to understand, short, and devoid of jargon" (Kvale 1996, p. 130).

- Ask single questions: Patton (1987) reflects, "Interviewers often put several questions together and ask them all as one"(p. 124). This means that the researcher should ask one question to prevent any burden of interpretation on the interviewees.

- Ask truly open-ended questions (Patton 1987) stated that "Truly open-ended questions do not pre-determine the answers and allow room for the informants to respond in their own terms". (p.122-3). For example, "How do you feel about the method of English teaching in your home country?"

- Ask experience/behavior questions before opinion/feeling questions: Patton (1987) believes that "It is useful to ask questions about experience or behaviorbefore asking

questions about opinions or feelings as this helps establish a context for the informants to express the latter"(p. 115). which means that asking questions about experience can help the researcher to obtain a solid data. For example, asking, "What happened?" before "How do you feel now"?

- Sequence the questions: (Maykut&Morehouse 1994) mentioned the technique of"Funneling', which means asking from general to specific, from broad to narrow". (p. 277). In clearer words, the researcher shoul ask uestions from top to bottom. Cohen& Manion quote an example from the study by Sears, Maccoby and Levin:

  All babies cry, of course. Some mothers feel that if you pick up a baby every time it cries, you will spoil it. Others think you should never let a baby cry for very long. How do you feel about this? What did you do about it? How about the middle of the night?

Sears, Maccoby and Levin, 1957, cited in Maykut&Morehouse (1994, p. 277)

- Probe and follow-up questions: according to Patton (1987), the aim of probing is "to deepen the response to a question, to increase the richness of the data being obtained, and to give cues to the interviewee about the level of response that is desired"(p.125-126). Which means that the researcher can use such technique to get more details on the subject as he/she asks, "Could you say something more about that?", "Do you have further examples of this?"

- Interpret questions: according to Kvale (1996), "the researchers should clarify and extend the meanings of the interviewee's statements to avoid misinterpretations on their part"(p.149). which means that the researcher should pay attention to transmit theinterviewee's statements in a clear way in order not to get confused. Kvale (1996, p. 135) suggests that researchers may use question like 'Is it correct that you feel that……?"; "Does the expression…. cover what you have just expressed?" to allow

the interviewees to confirm or disconfirm what has been interpreted by the researchers.

- Avoid sensitive questions: it would be better if the researcher avoids asking questions that may cause annoyancefor the interviewee. Cicourel (1964) agrees that the respondent may well feel uneasy and adopt avoidance tactics if the questioning is too deep.

- Encourage a free rein but maintain control: Palmer (1928) suggests, "proficient interviewers should be always in control of a conversation which they guide and bend to the service of their research interest"(p. 171). In clearer words, the researcher should take control over his/her communication to guarantee that the discussion would serve his/her concern.

- Establish rapport: according to Kvale (1996), "a good contact is established by attentive listening, with the interviewer showing interest, understanding, and respect for what the subjects say"(p. 128). Which means that the researcher should show a kind of respect and support of the interviewee' perspectives and responses. He (1996) continues, "[a good interview] allows subjects to finish what they are saying, lets them proceed at their own rate of thinking and speaking"(p.148)

Interviews proved to be as a powerful tool in extracting data, in particular qualitative in nature. In depending on this research tool, the researcher should be familiar with the techniques that any interview hasand allow flexibility in different interviewing circumstances.

4.16.2.Description of the Interview

The participants in the present study wereeight (08) teachers of English language; the interview was delivered to teachers of first year written expression -teachersthat have direct and clear relation to academic writing. The interview is, mainly, devoted to probe teachers' attitudes and perspectives about the role of homework writing assignments and feedback in

improving students' academic writing, to know the writing skill level of their students, and to find out teachers' practices towards developing students' academic writing skills.

The interviews with the teachers aimed, among other things, to elicit what practices, attitudes and beliefs they had concerning assigning homework for students to improve their academic writing. They aimed to investigate how and why homework tasks are important in practicing students' academic writing skills and their attitudes towards first year written expression syllabus. The interview questions emphasized issues that the researcher found them in relation with the literature. The questions divided into the following concepts:

- **Academic writing skill**: First year written expression syllabus divides into two parts; the first one is only about grammar rulesand structures while the second is about writing paragraphs. Teachers who are teaching written expression subject find themselves in a coincidence with teachers of grammar subject because they nearly teaching the same lessons and they are always complaining that the first part of first year written expression syllabus should be taught in grammar subject. They want session of written expression just for practice writing skill that requires much time. Teachers tend to adopt activities within their classes or at home. Sometimes these activities are not directly addressing to improve students' academic writing. Duringeachinterview, the researcher attempted to explore teachers' attitudes, practices, and perspectives regarding this issue.

- **Homework assignments**: assigning homework tasks was a major component of the present study. Teachers of written expression classes form different activities that require from students to write, but what is important is that student' benefits from these assignments and teachers' awareness of what their students need as assignments to improve their academic writing. Using this concept as a guide, the researcher structured various questions to gather information regarding the role of homework assignments.

Probing questions included, what do you want your students to achieve from this assignment? Do you have a specific objective and intended outcome in mind? How can you monitor whether or not you are overloading your students?

- **Teachers' feedback**: Homework assignments are not enough to develop students' academic writing; most teachers understand that feedback is an important part of improving academic writing skills. However, teachers have different ideas about what is feedback and how it can be integrated. The chief interview question that evolved from this concept was, how does feedback influence the development of the students' academic writing?

The following are examples of six questions that were asked of each interviewee. In addition to these questions, the researcher used follow up questions as the interview progressed to develop a greater understanding of the following issues: (see appendix 17)

- Why do you give feedback?
- How do you give feedback to students' academic writing?
- Why do you do it in that particular way?
- What do you emphasize most when giving feedback?
- How does feedback influence the development of the students' academic writing?

The interviews were semi-structured in order to gather data of a qualitative nature; explanations rather than yes- and noanswers. The reason for choosing the semi-structured interview technique is basically due to the researcher's aim to encourage the interviewees to freely discuss their own standpoints on the depth of the issue. This method with open-ended questions will permit the researcher to adjust the questions depending on the attributes of the interviewees. Through this way of interviewing the researcher hoped to have an affluent collection ofanswers to analyze. This is "the most common interview type in applied

linguistics" (Dörnyei 2007, p. 136).

The interview guide was presented, and the interviewer had the possibility to ask follow-up questions and ask the interviewee to elaborate on some questions (Dörnyei 2007). The researcher was used a pilot study for the interview in order to check if the questions were understood and if there was anything that needed to be modified before the actual interviews. The interview guide is an important tool for the researcher in the interviewprocess, and "it is important that it is planned, worked with and trialed out" (Dörnyei 2007, p. 137).

Interviews were formed in English language, since participants were teachers of English language. They were asked first if they had any problems to conducting the interviews in English language through aninformation letter teacher (appendix16), and they all stated that it was not a problem. They were comfortable with communicating in English.

The interview was piloted with fellow teachersas it is mentioned before. Different aspects were behind conducting interview. One of them is that the interview was audio recorded for getting the most use of the data. Moreover, the researcher has taken notes during the interviews. For the interviews, recording equipment was used, and an extra back-up recorder was used just in case anything went wrong. Interviews were transcribed. Verbatim transcription was made using Microsoft Word (Microsoft, 2010). Although the interview included some non-verbal communication, the researcher paid attention to those non-verbal communications, as the recording was not being able to get this information.

"In studies that rely predominantly on interviewing, the subject is usually a stranger" (Bogdan and Biklen, 2006, p.103) so that the researcher started each interview with small talkto break the ice and create speech- topics that they have in common.
In order to increase the truthfulness and reliability of the teachers' response, the researcher assured them that she has not any power over them. After this, the researcher confirmed them that the information provided would not be sharedor used with anyone and that their identity would be anonymous. The location of the interviews was in their classrooms, teachers' room,

or office in order to make them feel at ease.

4.16.3. Administration of the interview

The interview was delivered toeight (08) teachers, as mentioned before; all the teachers teach written expression subject for first year students at Batna University in the academic year2016/2017.The teachers were very helpful and supportive as they accepted to be interviewed. Their kind acceptance, to help the researcher in the present study, encourages the researcher to get data that are more reliable.

In the present thesis, interviews were held on Novembre2017 after teaching considerable sessions. Although interviews are considered a common datacollection instrument in qualitative research, they were complemented by anopen-ended questionnaire and marked teachers' attitudes that provided rich and reliable data. The study used interviews, which probed teachers' perceptions and experiences about academic writingand homework assignments. The purpose of the interviews in the present research was to gain insight into firstyear students' and teachers' perceptions and experiences concerningthe role of homework writing assignments in improving students' academic writing production.

4.17. Evaluation of Methods and Instruments

Classically evaluating the quality of any research comprise assessing how reliable and valid the research's data collection and analysis are. "All researchers aspire to produce valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner; and both producers and consumers of research want to be assured that the findings of an investigation are to be believed and trusted" (Creswell, 2009, p. 22). Also, most readers prefer to read theses that their findings can be trusted, are creditable, and can be transferred toother education institutions. According to (Kirk and Miller, 1986; Johnson et al., 2006) reliability and validity are appraising criteria that are followed by positivist to guarantee the objectivity of the quantitative research. Concerning the qualitative research, researchers as Johnson et al., 2006

stated that in evaluating the research various criteria should be followed. They listed four types of evaluation standards instead of reliability and validity: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Others, however, said that objectivity is the important basis of all good research (Kirk and Miller, 1986). While (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982; Kirk and Miller, 1986) stated that it is important to keep the same concepts of reliability and validity, but translate and make them connected to qualitative research. In the present research as both quantitative and qualitative approaches are used, the researcher will adopt the concepts reliability and validity for both approaches in order to avoid being inconsistent and unsystematic in the evaluation.

4.17.1. Methods of establishing data reliability

For the results to be as a source of the new knowledge, research reliability has to be established. Reliability defines as the consistency of the results in the same sample in various circumstances. (Johnson et al., 2006).

Reliability differs in both quantitative and qualitative studies; In a quantitative study, the reliability of a measurement can be examined by statistical instruments (Jordan and Hoefer, 2001; Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998) while in qualitative research, human being is a key member in the social world, and human behavior is never stable. Accordingly, researchers are not paying enough attention to reliability (Kirk and Miller, 1986). It is hard to replicate a qualitative study in this sense (Johnson et al., 2006). However, in order to assess the qualitative research in terms of objectivity, different procedures of addressing reliability are recommended by various researchers (e.g., Franklin and Ballan, 2001; Kirk and Miller, 1986; LeCompte and Goetz, 1982; Seale, 1999; Silverman, 2001).

In the present research, asit is discussed before in previous elements, what research methods are used in the present thesis and how the three methods designed in terms of weighting**,** and mixing decisions are reported comprehensibly. Regarding the quantitative

study, detailed description of experimental study procedures is explained explicitly, and the techniques of sample collection and the source of data adopted in the quantitative analysis are reported before.

For the qualitative study, the researcher used what Dörnyei calls "respondent feedback" (Dörnyei 2007, p. 60) to ensure reliability of the findings, the students were asked in the questionnaire before the treatment to comment on some of the main issues concerning their academic writing; the answers of them were found to be largely consistent in their writing practice (the experiment), which stated the honesty of students' attitudes and contributed to the overall reliability of the research. The researcher also used the method of objectivity.

Objectivity is used through the methodology of measurements, data collection, and data analysis through which reliability and validity are established as far as the researcher remained distanced from what she was investigating so findings depend on the nature of what was investigated rather than on the personality, beliefs and values of the researcher.

Also, low-inference descriptors were used in order to establish reliability of the qualitative study (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982; Seale, 1999; Silverman, 2001). Low-inference descriptors meanrecording the research tools as interviewsas concrete as possible (Seale, 1999). In the present thesis, the interviews were audio-recorded with the teachers' permission, and then transcribed in a neat wayto provide a basis for reliable analysis. Thus, the interviews were read again by teachers via sending the notes that the researcher has taken during the interviews in order to get their feedback which a procedure that help to check the accuracy of the data.

Regarding the questionnaire, internal consistency investigates the inter-item correlations within a tool and designates how well the items fit together conceptually (Nunnally & Bernstein 1994; DeVon et al. 2007). Cronbach's alpha is the most habitually

used reliability statistic toget internal consistency reliability (Trochim 2001; DeVon et al. 2007). It was calculated as it is presented before in "the piloting" element to examine the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Trustworthiness in a study is important and can be defined as "the extent to which research findings can be trusted" (Creswell, 2012, p. 27). Trustworthiness can be ensuredby using triangulation, investigator's position, information letter teachers/students (appendix 16 and appendix 14), and the audit trail which is important to provide a basis for checking the researcher's dependability and confirmability. Franklin and Ballan (2001)

4.17.2. Methods of establishing data validity

Validity is another essential criterion of a good research. According to Creswell (2012), validity defines as how close the findings are to reality. Validity refers to the accuracy of the research findings (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). Validity can be seen as "the core of any form of assessmentthat is trustworthy and accurate" (Bond, 2003, p. 179). It is important to mention that there are two kinds of validity. The first is external validity refers to "the generalizability of findings from a study, or the extent to which conclusions can be applied across different populations, settings, treatments and outcomes" (McDermott, 2011; Shadish& Cook, 2002, p. 83). The second kind is internal validity which defined as the determination of whether the relationship within the particular data-set are causal relationships (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998).

The external validity of the present research can be established through the following ways: the researcher followed the "dichotomy" suggested by Campbell and Stanley (1963 cited in Dörnyei 2007, p. 50). In the present thesis, the researcher has ensured that she carefully selected the variables with respect to English language writing syllabus which are used by Algerian EFL teachers at University. the aim was to establish whether the way of teaching writing and providing homework assignments correlate to writing performance of

students. Thus, Parry (1998) stated that gathering diversestandpoints on the same incident can help to decrease the negative effect of single sources on research validity which is helpful to enhance validity.

In the present thesis, the researcher aims to find out the effect of homework writing assignments on students' academic writing achievement from not only the students themselves but also their teachers' perspectives. Another element found to ensure validity and accuracy is member checking.

Creswell (2012) states that member checking is a valid means that can be used to ensure that the themes are reviewed by the participants in the study. The interviewees in the present study were allowed to check the interview transcripts. For the quantitative study, as Jimenez-Buedo&Miller (2010) statethe more the researcher guarantee that the treatment is isolated from potential confounds, the more unlikely it is that the experimental results can be generalized. In dealing with this issue, the researcher tries to increase the sample size as much data as possible and improve data quality.

Additionally, depending on mixed methods research, in which the combination of qualitative and quantitative studies has adopted is one of the important ways to enhance external validity. Bryman (1988, p. 131) argues that "combining quantitative and qualitative approaches can enhance the generalization of the researchers' findings if they can be shown to provide mutual confirmation"

As it is mentioned before, internal validity is related to the causal relationship between variables. A result of a quantitative study has internal validity if the changes in the dependent variable can be imputed to the independent variables rather than to elements (Tashakkori and Teddlie1998) which can be reported in the hypothesis. In the actual research, the supposed relationship between dependent variable and independent variables is based on theoretical

foundation and the results of empirical work. Thus, different statistical instruments are used to test the hypothesis which will be presented further in chapter five.

For the qualitative research, the internal validity refers to the extent to which the toolperforms the social reality (LeCompte and Goetz, 1982). For the interviews, Although the researcher found some unpredictedanswers and some controversial thoughts, she did not reject them, yet she continued recording. With regard to the questionnaire, it is the same for the piloting step, its validity was established by the measurement of face and content validity. Face validity counted the understanding and acceptance of questionnaire items by teachers and students while content validity examined by a group of expert teachers who reflected thelink of each questionnaire item.

In addition, depending on mixed methods research can help to enhance the internal validity by combining quantitative and qualitative data. Many researchers state that the qualitative method can helpin assessing the limited quantitative validity based on in-depth analysis of qualitative evidence (Jick, 1979; Modell, 2005). In the present thesis, unexpected findings that are found in the quantitative study are further investigated in the qualitative study in which there was a kind of overlapping to cross check results and examine thepotential interpretations**.**

4.18. Ethical Issues

Ethical issues are the extremely important standards that direct the research on designing, organizing and to implementing research. In the present study, the researcher followed the ethical principles from beginning to end.

- **Do no harm:** According to (Tolich& Davidson, 1999), do no harm principle isthe most essential standard that purports for not getting participants effected negatively from the research. For the present study, the researcher avoided any physical, psychological and cultural harm on the participants.

- **Informed consent:** Informed consent is "a cornerstone element in codes of ethics for research in the social sciences" (Finch, 2005, p. 61). In the present thesis before starting the questionnaire and interview, the researcher gave information letter to students and teachers; consequently, they could get a clear idea about the research.

- **Voluntary participation:** Participation in any research should be voluntary, and participants should be knowledgeable about that issue. For the present thesis, the researcher talked to them freely that the participation is optional and they can withdraw their approval at any timefor some reason. If they withdraw, all information about them will be anonymized.

- **Confidentiality and anonymity:** "A participantshave reasonable expectations that information provided to the researcher will be treated in a confidential manner" (Litchman, 2010, p. 55). As a result, the researcher used pseudonyms for teachers and students. Accordingly, they will not be identified and confidentiality is confirmed from data collection to any future publication.

- **Avoid deceit:**is the way the researcher treats the data which should be in an honest and truthful way, and the students deals with their homework assignment in which they required not to cheat. The researcher also confirmed that no one would be allowed to access the data except the supervisor.

4.19. Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher is very important in the process of qualitative and quantitatesresearch. Accordingly, the researcher is the central instrument of data collection thusthe features and qualitiesof the researcher is relevant in establishing the trustworthiness of the inquiry (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990).

As a researcher, the role is to set a valid and reliable research by analyzing each item in the data and being flexible during the course of research, and noticing personal biases

(Creswell, 2009). It is essential to be conscious ofresearcher bias since it may affect the process of doing the research. Researchers make interpretations that cannot be isolated from theirexperiences, background, and history (Creswell, 2012). One possible bias for the present researchcame from the researcher own experience with teaching written expression module and her attitude toward the effects of homework writing assignments in improving students' academic writing. Thus, the researcher role was played by situations in order not toinfluence individual participants.

The researcher was cautiousin her role in order to avoid judging or practicing favoritismtoward students' and teachers' attitudes and perspectives. Accordingly, sheneeds to be objective because her personal experiencecould have affected the present thesis.

4.20.Methods of Data Analysis

Data analysis is the action of systematically investigating and arranging the data that is accumulated to enhance the researcher's knowledge and help him/her to give the information to the readers. It includes building and organizing the interviews, transcripts, and other collected data. According to Bogden and Biklen (1998), data analysis is a process that relied on working and arranging the data into manageable units, synthesizing the data, investigating patterns, getting what is essential to tell the readers.

For data analysis, in depth description of all tools – experiment, questionnaire and interview- will be presented in the following chapters five andsix respectively. the audiotapes from the interviewswere transcribed. For the questionnaire, theprocess followed involves the analysis of each question separately with a briefintroduction for each section. In addition, some results have been reported in tabular form sothat results will be clearer. Data received from questionnaires, interviews and the experiment were organized and synthesized by the researcher. All data were synthesizedto find out patterns that may be present in participants' attitudes and answers during interviews, questionnaires and the experiment.

Conclusion

To sum up, the present chapter has addressed the methodology to be followed in the present investigation. To collect the data, the researcher handed a mixed method research which encompasses teachers' interview, students' questionnaire, and the experiment. Thus, what is important is that participation was voluntary and anonymous; no names are mentioned in the presentation of results for the reason that the names are irrelevant. The participants are informed about this issue in order to feel relaxed and not fear of any blame if they told something less pleasant. The sample was chosen and what remains is how to analyze and make sense of this collected data, this will be the objective of the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY ON THE EFFECT OF HOMEWORK WRITING ASSIGNMENTS ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING ACHIEVEMENT

Introduction

Most of the students find dificulties to master all the aspects of writing and to produce effective paragraphs or essays. Thus their essay examination results stated the different shortfalls they face which deter them from a better performance in language skills, particularly writing skills. Accordingly, it was mandatoryto instructionally get involved to elucidate students' disquiet and interest to convey that issue. Therefore, homework writing assignments has been introduced and experimentally held to ascertain its productiveness in improving students' academic writing. So that the present chapter deals with the pretest-posttest experimental study which has been conducted with first year EFL students at batna 2 University as a serious try-out to get the concern under investigation into practice.

5.1. TheExperiment

The experiment based on two groups, an experimental group and a control group.

5.1.1. The Pretest

To establish the achievement level of the students and to compare their achievement,the two groups were pre-tested before the commencement of the treatment during the first week. The pre-test has been evaluated according to the five writing criteria mentioned before. As stated formerly, students in both groups were asked to write a short essay on their opinions and attitudes regarding the topic of "Does technology make us more alone?. All the participants scores were calculated and then divided by the number of participants in both groups. Moreover; the scores of the pre-test were compared in order to find out the academic writing level for students in both groups and also to see if the difference between the means is statistically significant.

The pre-test results

Table 4
the total average of the pretest grades distributed by the control group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				Pretest average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01		2			1					2			1					2			08
02			3		1					2				3			1				09
03	1				1					2						4	1				09
04	1					2			1				1				1				06
05	1				1				1				1				1				05
06			3		1					2			1							4	11
07	1				1				1				1						3		07
08	1				1				1				1				1				05
09			3			2			1				1					2			09
10	1						3		1						3			2			10
11			3			2					3			2			1				10
12	1					2				2			1					2			08
13		2			1						3		1				1				08
14	1				1				1				1				1				05
15			3			2			1				1					2			09
16			3		1				1				1					2			07
17		2				2			1				1				1				07
18			3					4		2				2			1				12
19				4			3		1				1							4	14
20			3		1					2			1					2			09
21	1				1				1				1				1				04
22			3		1				1				1					2			07
23	1				1				1				1				1				05
24			3			2				2					3			2			13
25	1				1					2					3					4	11
26			3		1				1					2					3		11
27		2			1						3		1				1				08
28			3		1				1				1					2			08
29	1				1				1				1						3		07
30			3		1					2			1					2			09
Total	2,1				1,46				1,53				1,43				1,86				8,36

The Rating Scale

➢ 0-1=Very poor

➢ 1,5-2= Fair to poor

➢ 2,25-3= Good to average

➢ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

Table 5
the total average of the pretest grades distributed by the experimental group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				Pretest average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01		2			1					2			1						3		09
02				4	1						3		1				1				10
03			3				3			2					3				3		14
04		2			1					2				2				2			09
05	1				0				1				0				0				02
06		2			1					2			1				1				07
07	1				1				1				1				1				05
08	1				1				1				1				1				05
09			3		1					2			1				1				08
10			3			2				2				2			1				10
11			3				3			2				2				2			12
12			3			2				2					2		1				11
13	1					2			1				1					2			07
14	1				1				1				1				1				05
15		2			1				1				1						3		09
16			3					4		2			1						3		13
17				4			3					3		2					3		15
18		2					3			2				2				2			11
19	1					2			1					2				2			08
20		2			1					2			1				1				07
21	1					2				2			1						3		09
22	1				1				1				1					2			05
23	1				1				1				1					2			06
24			3		1				1					2			1				08
25			3			2				2					3		1				11
26			3			2				2					3		1				11
27		2			1							3	1				1				07
28	1				1				1								1				04
29		2			1				1				1						3		08
30	1					2			1				1					2			07
Total	2,06				1,60				1,66				1,43				1,70				8,43

The Rating Scale

➤ 0-1=Very poor

➤ 1,5-2= Fair to poor

➤ 2,25-3= Good to average

➤ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

Table 6

Summary of pretest scores for both groups

Criteria	Control group		Experimental group	
	score	level	score	level
Content	2,1	= 00	2,06	= 00
Organization	1,46	= 00	1,60	= 00
Vocabulary	1,53	= 00	1,66	= 00
Language use	1,43	= 00	1,43	= 00
Mechanics	1,86	= 00	1,70	= 00
Average	8,38	= 00	8,45	= 00

Analysis of the results

Statistically speaking, it is clear from tables (6) above that the total average of the pre-test is close to the experimental group and the control group with a tiny difference of 0.07. It is preceded by two other tables (23 and 24) which show the overall results for each variable both groups the EG and CG were relatively similar that shows how close are the two groups regarding the average scores and this gives credit to random sampling employed in a pre-test-post-test control group design**.**

As far as the pretest is concerned, all of the participants proved to go through the same thorny path towards the production of their essays. They all had major problems in organization (paragraphing structure is not clear), language use (with subject-verb agreement, verb tense, and article use). mechanics (a lot of mistakes in punctuation and capitalization), vocabulary (especially, word choice and spelling); and Content respectively. This reflects students' answers in item (05) in the questionnaire which deals with the main difficulties they encounter while writing. Hence there is no significant difference between the achievement of the students before treatment was administered. It shows the homogeneity of the groups. Consequently, there is a relative similarity between the two groups.

Even if the two groups have shown an acceptable understanding of different aspects of writing an essay (content, organization, vocabulary, language use, mechanics) and modest

attempt towards the process of writing itself, students do not use this knowledge and understanding if they are not asked to write. This goes together with some students' responses to question (03) in the questionnaire which asks students if they are encouraged to write by their teachers or not. Accordingly, the treatment phase would rely mainly on making students of the experimental group consciously practice the writing skill through writing homework assignments, whereas the control group would only have a traditional treatment. i.e. having the same lessons and classroom activities but not oriented towards the objective of the experimental group (having homework writing assignments).

5.1.2. The treatment phase

Students in the experimental group passed through a series of homework writing assignments and teachers' feedback. As mentioned before, the control group was taught the in the traditional way without any extra writing assignments and constant assessment or feedback. The experimental group, however, benefited from extra time and homework writing assignments with continuous assistance in form of teacher' feedback for each piece of writing as a way to reinforce their practice in writing. This allowed students to get sufficient time because writing is a long and complex process, which is rather requiringmore practice and effort. It is quite logically that practice makes perfection.

The focus in these learning sessions is to make students aware of the main components in paragraph and academic essay writing. Besides this, the researcher aims at teaching writing within each lesson in written expression syllabus which help students to practice each aspect individually and recognize the different language forms, styles and techniques used in context. The intention here is also to provide them with a continuous feedback on their homework writing assignments that help them to know how well they are doing and to reduce errors in writing. Accordingly, good academic writing implies partly an effective teacher' feedback.

The Progress test N1

Students in both groups went through a four-week period of learning, finishing phase

one of the experiment (two lessons) which ends the first unit in the syllabus of written

expression made of two chapters including three units for the first chapter and one unit for the

second chapter.

Course: Written expression	Level: First year	Week: two/three	Duration:360mn
Lesson: Sentence patterns			
Description of the lesson: It is very important for students to be able to demonstrate understanding of sentence parts and elements.Using this skill, they can improve their writing style.			
References • Hauschild, K. (2013). *English sentence patterns*. Florence, KY : Beau Monde Language Services. • Rozakis, L. (2003). *English grammar for the utterly confused*. New York : McGraw-Hill			
Objectives • Explain why correct sentence structure is important • Follow steps to identify sentence structure			
Glossary of terms At the end of this lesson, students should be able to identify and define the following vocabulary terms: • subject, verb, object, subjective complement, objective complement, and adverbial			
Material • Sample sentences and examples • Handouts • worksheet			
Procedure • The teacher presents the examples and rules of basic sentence pattern • The students analyze the sentences to what pattern does it belong. • The students write sentences using the basic sentence pattern. • Their comprehension of sentences' patterns was tested through the following question "identify the basic sentence pattern of the following sentences. Write S-LV-C, S-TV-DO, S-TV-IO-DO, and S-TV-DO-OC. • Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions • Explaining the terms by the teacher through writing different examples • Students were asked to answer different exercises provided in the handout			
Assessment • Display the answers to the worksheet. • Have students correct their worksheets.			

Course: Written expression	**Level:** First year	**Week:** four/five	**Duration:** 360mns
Lesson : Subject-verb agreement			

Description of the lesson: Mastering subject -verb agreement will help students to understand the most common grammar problem**.** Learn how to identify and eliminate these errors in students' academic writing is their first step in writing effectively.

References
- Teaching and Learning Support (TaLS) – Fact Sheets
http://www.une.edu.au/current-students/resources/academic-skills/fact-sheets
- Hacker, D. (2006). The Bedford handbook (7th ed.). Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins**.**

Objectives
- Identify the different subject-verb agreement rules.
- Appreciate the subject verb agreement through applying the rules in sentence construction
- Construct sentences applying or using the different subject-verb agreement rules effectively.

Glossary of terms
At the end of this lesson, students should know that there are two items that work together to form a complete sentence. They are:
- subjects
- verbs

Material
- Sample sentences and examples
- PowerPoint
- Handout of the lesson subject verb agreement: explain the rules for subject-verb agreement-identify and correct errors in subject-verb agreement.
- Rubrics

Procedure
- A short paragraph will be presented and written at the board. The teacher will read first and the students will follow. The students will be given time to examine and study the given paragraph. After which the students are expected to answer the following questions:
  -What did you notice about the paragraph? Main parts of the paragraph?
  -What made most of the sentences incorrect in terms of grammar?
  -What can you do to improve the paragraph?
- Once the students have answered all the questions above, the teacher will introduce the day's lesson which is subject verb agreement.
- A PowerPoint presentation of subject verb agreement will be shown and discussed. Illustrations of how paragraphs structured and subject verb agreement works will also be presented. After discussion, the students are expected to answer the following questions:
  -What are the different rules in subject verb agreement?
  -Give examples of sentences showing these rules.
- Going back to the motivation, the students will improve the paragraph through changing the inappropriate sentences to the correct ones. After that, the students are asked to construct 10 simple sentences using the subject verb agreement rules
- Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions
- Explaining the terms by the teacher through writing different examples
- Distribute handout to the students on subject verb agreement. Give students directions for the handout, which will ask them to answer different exercises.
- Lead the class in a discussion of their answers.
- Students were asked to write in-class paragraph on the following topic "Online education is as good as a standard college education**".**(both groups).
- Students of the experimental group were benefited from extra writing practice and continuous assistance as they have given a short essay writing homework assignment on "Discuss the real

relationship between food, fitness, and weight"
- The experimental students' papers were collected and corrected, out of class using different forms of feedback
- Provide time for experimental group students to read feedback on their papers
- Discuss the papers as a whole group.
- Students are handed in their writings and asked to rewrite their short essay, taking into account the underlined errors and teacher' feedback.
- Students are handed in their writings and asked to rewrite their short essay, taking into account the underlined errors and teacher' feedback.
- Students of experimental group were asked again to write the previous topic "Does technology make us more alone?", after taking their homework assignment with more practice and continuous teacher' feedback.
- The teacher then collected the corrected paragraphs from both groups for the analysis

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The progress testn1 results
Table 7
the total average of the progress test n1 grades distributed by the control group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01		2			1					1,25				1,25				2			07,50
02			2.75		1				1					3,25			1				09,25
03	1				1				1					2			1				06
04	1						2,25			1,25			1						2,75		08,25
05	1				1				1				1					1,25			05,25
06			3		1					2			1							3,75	10,75
07	1				1				1				1						3		07
08	1				1				1				1					1,25			05,25
09	1		3			2					2,75		1				1				09,75
10	1						3		1						3			2			10
11			3			2				2,25				2			1				10,25
12	1					2					3		1					2			08
13		2			1				1		3		1				1				08
14	1				1				1				1				1				05
15			3				2,25		1				1					2			09,25
16			3		1				1				1					2			08
17		2				2			1				1					1			07
18			3					4		2				2				1			12
19				4			3		1					1,75						4	13,75
20			3		1					2			1					2			08
21	1				1				1				1				1				05
22				3,25	1					1,75			1					2			09,25
23	1				1				1				1				1				05
24			3			2				2					3			2			12
25	1				1					2					3					4	11
26			3		1				1					2						3,75	10,75
27		2			1							3,75	1					1,25			08
28			3		1				1				1						2,25		08,25
29	1				1				1				0						3		06
30			2,25		1					2			1					2			08,25
Total	2,04				1,48				1,56				1,40				1,92				8,39

The Rating Scale
➢ 0-1=Very poor
➢ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➢ 2,25-3= Good to average
➢ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

Table 8

the total average of the progress test n1 grades distributed by the experimental group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01			2,25			1,25				2			1						3		0950
02				4	1						3		1					1,25			10,25
03			3				3			2					3					3,75	14,75
04		2			1					2			1					2			08
05	1			3,25		1,25			1				0				0				03,25
06				3,25	1			3,25			2,25		1				1				08,50
07	1				1				1				1				1				05
08	1				1				1				1				1				05
09			3		1						2,25		1					1,25			08,50
10			3			2				2				2			1				12,75
11			3				3				2,25			2				2			12,25
12			3			2				2			1				1				09
13	1					2			1				1					2			07
14	1				1				1				1				1				05
15		2			1				1				1						3		08
16			3				3				2,75			2					3		13,75
17				4				4			3			2					3		15
18		2					3			2				2				2			11
19	1					2			1				1					2			08
20		2			1					2			1				1				07
21	1					2				2			1						3		09
22	1				1				1				1					2			06
23	1				1				1				1					2			06
24			3		1				1					2			1				08
25			3			2				2					2,25			1,25			10,50
26			3			2				2				2			1				10
27			2,75		1						3		1					1,25			09
28	1	1,25			1				1				1				1				06,25
29		2			1				1				1					2			08
30	1					2			1				1						3		07
Total	2,18				1,65				1,71				1,30				1,85				8,70

The Rating Scale
➢ 0-1=Very poor
➢ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➢ 2,25-3= Good to average
➢ 3,25-4=Excellent to very goo

Table 9

summary of progress test n1 scores for both groups

Criteria	Control group		Experimental group	
	Score	Difference	Score	Difference
Content	2,04	- 0,06	2,18	+ 0,12
Organization	1,48	+ 0,02	1,65	+ 0,05
Vocabulary	1,56	+ 0,03	1,71	+ 0,05
Language use	1,40	- 0,03	1,30	- 0,13
Mechanics	1,92	+ 0,06	1,85	+ 0,15
Average	8,40	+ 0,02	8,69	+ 0,24

Analysis of results

What is remarkable is that both participants in the experimental and control group showed a slightly decreased in language use level during their first progress test. This could possibly be interpreted as using the correct form of English grammar is the main problem with students' academic writing: it is on top of students' efficiencies in writing in general.

The experimental group's content however increased. The students have shown a great interest in debating the component of contentand they have been supporting their academic writing with knowledgeable and substantive development of the topic that relate to

and it is because of teacher' guidance, and orientation through extra writing practice in a form of homework assignments and different forms of feedback that teacher provided, something which was not practiced in the control group, that is why it did not show any improvements in terms of using thorough development of topic and relevant to assigned topic. Accordingly, their written performance, did not get any better. Very few were able to understand the topic and develop it.

The general level of the experimental group's organization, vocabulary, and mechanics improved significantly compared to the pre-test results. Same thing for the control group but not with the same copiousness. A slight improvement is to be noticed in their organization, vocabulary, and mechanics writing components.

The progress test n2

Students in both groups went through a four-week period of learning, finishing phase two of the experiment (three lessons) which ends the second unit in the written expression syllabus made of two chapters including three units for the first chapter and one unit for the second chapter.

Course: Written expression	Level: First year	Week:six/seven	Duration:360mn
lesson: understanding independent and dependent clauses			
Description of the lesson: Independent and dependent clauses are the building blocks of sentences. A good way for students to know when they use commas and semicolons in sentences and when they are writing a sentence or fragment, is to be able to recognize dependent and independent clauses.			
References • Biber, D., Johansson, S., Leech, G., Conrad, S., Finegan, E. (1999). Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English, Pearson Education Limited. • Huddleston, R. (1995). English Grammar an outline, Cambridge University Press. • Rozakis, L. (2003). *English grammar for the utterly confused.*New York : McGraw-Hill			
Objectives • Define subordinate clause and independent clause • Identify examples of independent and independent clauses in writing • Explain the role of independent and independent clauses • Use dependent and independent clauses appropriately in writing			
Glossary of terms At the end of this lesson, students should be able to identify and define the following vocabulary terms: • Dependent, independent, main clause, and subordinate clause			
Material • Sample sentences and examples • Strips of paper with independent clauses written on one color and subordinate clauses written on another color, one for each student • Handout and worksheet			

Procedure
• For understanding dependent and independent clauses, the teacher asks student a series of questions:
      -Can you guess the meaning of the sentence and clause?
      -What are the main types of the clause?
      -How do you connect dependent and independent clauses in your paragraph and essay writing?
• Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions
• Explaining the terms by the teacher through writing different examples
• The students are given a mixture of sentences.
• Their comprehension of sentences' nature was tested through the following questions:
      -Circle the dependent clause
      -Underline the independent clause
• Students were asked to answer different exercises provided in the handout			

Assessment • Display the answers to the worksheet. • Have students correct their worksheet			

Course: Written expression	**Level:** First year	**Week:** seven/eight	**Duration:**360mn
Lesson: Conjunctions and types of sentences			

Description of the lesson: The secret to good writing is variation and using a mix types of sentences (simple, compound, complex, and compound complex) within paragraphs and essays

References
- McCaskill, M.K. (1990). GraIllIllar, Punctuation, and Capitalization 'A Handbook for Technical Writers and Editors' . Langley Research Center Hampton, Virginia
- Ng, K. S., Lim, S. K., & Tan, A. L. (2009). *Grammar & writing.* Shah Alam: Marshall Cavendish (Malaysia).
- Teaching and Learning Support (TaLS) – Fact Sheets http://www.une.edu.au/current-students/resources/academic-skills/fact-sheets

Objectives
- Discussing the importance of using conjunctions to join words, phrases and clauses together
- Enabling students to have a basic understanding of the main principles of sentence structure and formation (simple, compound, complex, and compound complex)
- building a sentence in English language that is grammatically correct and makes sense

Glossary of terms
At the end of this lesson, students should be able to identify and define the following vocabulary terms:
- Simple, compound, complex, and compound complex
- conjunction
- coordinating conjunction
- subordinating conjunction
- correlative conjunction

Material
- Sample sentences and examples
- A typed extract of an essay contains conjunctions and different types of sentences
- Rubrics

Procedure
- To get the students ready for the lesson, a series of questions were asked:
  -Can you guess the meaning of the sentence and clause?
  -What are the main types of the sentence according to their structure?
  -How do we connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences.in our paragraph and essay writing?
- Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions
- Explaining the terms by the teacher through writing different examples
- The students are given the essay to read it silently.
- A group of students exchange roles in reading it loudly to their classmates.
- Their comprehension of the main parts of the paragraph and sentences' structure within the essay was tested through the following questions:
  -Circle the conjunction
  -Identify the sentences in the essay and state whether they are simple, complex, compound, or compound complex
- Students were asked to answer different exercises provided in the handout
- Students were asked to write in-class paragraph on the following topic "students learn better using digital textbooks than they can by using books, pens, and paper". Using what they have learned about conjunctions and types of sentences (both groups).
- Students of the experimental group were benefited from extra writing practice and continuous

assistance as they given a short essay writing homework assignment on "Using a computer every day can have more negative than positive effects on children. Do you agree or disagree?

- The experimental students' papers were collected and corrected, out of class using different forms of feedback
- students are handed in their writings and asked to rewrite their short essay, taking into account the underlined errors and teacher' feedback.
- Students of experimental group were asked again to write the previous topic "students learn better using digital textbooks than they can by using books, pens, and paper" after taking their homework assignment with more practice and continuous teacher' feedback.
- The teacher then collected the corrected paragraphs from both groups for the analysis

ACADEMIC WRITING AND HOMEWORK123

The progress test n2 results
Table 10
the total average of the progress test n2 grades distributed by the control group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average/20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01	1					2					3		1					2			09
02		2			1						2,25			2				2			9,25
03	1				1				1					2			1				06
04	1						2,25			1,25				2					2,75		09,25
05	1					2				2			1					2			08
06			3		1						2,25		1				1				08,25
07	1					2			1					2					2,75		08,75
08	1				1						3			2				1,25			08,25
09		2				2					2,75		1				1				08,75
10	1						3		1					2				2			10
11			3				3								3		1				11
12	1					2						3,25	1				1				08,25
13		2			1						3		1				1				07
14	1				1					2			1					2			07
15			2,25				2,25		1				1					2			08,50
16			3		1				1				1					2			08
17		2				2			1				1					2			08
18			2,25					4		2				2			1				11,25
19				3,25			3		1					1,25						3,75	12,25
20			3		1						2,75		1				1				08,75
21				3,25		2			1				1						2,75		07,75
22	1				1					1,75				2			1				09
23	1				1				1				1				1				05
24			2,75			2				2			1					2			09,75
25	1				1					2				2						4	10
26			3		1				1					2						3,75	10,75
27		2					3					3,75	1					1,25			11
28			2,75		1				1				1						2,25		08
29	1						2,25				2,25		1						3		09,50
30			2,25		1					2				1,25					3		09,50
Total	1,90				1,77				1,88				1,38				1,94				08,85

The Rating Scale

➤ 0-1=Very poor
➤ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➤ 2,25-3= Good to average
➤ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good.

ACADEMIC WRITING AND HOMEWORK124

Table 11
The total average of the progress test n2 grades distributed by the experimental group

Serial	Content 1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	Organisation 1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	Vocabulary 1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	Language use 1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	Mechanics 1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	average /20
01			3			1,25				2				2					3		11,25
02				4		2						3,25	1						3		13,25
03				3,25			3			2					3					3,75	15
04		2				1,25				2			1					2			08,25
05		2				1,25			1					1,25				2			07,50
06			3		1					2			1				1				08
07			3			2			1				1					1,25			08,25
08			3		1					2				2			1				09
09			3				2,25				2,25		1					1,25			09,75
10			3				3			2				2					2,75		12,75
11			3				3				2,25			2				2			12,25
12			3			2				2			1					2			10
13		2				2			1				1					2			08
14	1					2				2			1				1				07
15		2			1				1					2					3		09
16			3				3				2,75			2					3		13,75
17				4			3				3			2					3		15
18			2,75				3			2				2			1				10,75
19	1					2					3			2			1				09
20		2					3			2			1				1				09
21	1					2				2			1					2			08
22		2			1				1						2,25			2			08,25
23			2,75		1				1				1					2			07,75
24			3		1					1,25				2			1				08,25
25			3			2				2					2,25			1,25			10,50
26		2				2				2				2			1				09
27			2,75		1						3		1					1,25			09
28	1					2				2				2				2			09
29		2			1					2					2,25			2			09,25
30	1					2			1				1					2			07
Total	2,45				1,9				1,9				1,56				1,95				9,77

The Rating Scale
➤ 0-1= Very poor
➤ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➤ 2,25-3= Good to average
➤ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

Table 12

Summary of progress test n2 scores for both groups

Criteria	Control group		Experimental group	
	Score	**Difference**	**Score**	**Difference**
Content	1,90	- 0,14	2,45	+ 0,27
Organization	1,77	+ 0,29	1,9	+ 0,25
Vocabulary	1,88	+ 0,32	1,9	+ 0,19
Language use	1,38	- 0,02	1,56	+ 0,26
Mechanics	1,94	+ 0,02	1,95	+ 0,1
Average	8,87	+ 0,47	9,76	+ 1,07

Analysis of results

The general level of the experimental group augmented considerably. A constant progress is to be noticed in the students' piece of writing. This is because, as mentioned by students themselves (questions 17 and 18), they become more accustomed to such an activity as they assign more writing practice along with teacher's feedback, so they did not find the same difficulties as their first writing attempt. Students pay more attention to how they write;they have been positively rated at the level of content and language use respectively thus they show a kind of organized and clear piece of writing as a result, their writings were a combination of both, form and content. They started using the teacher's comments learned from the previous writing.

Concerning the control group, unlike the previous session, more students were attentive in their academic writing in terms of organization, vocabulary, and mechanics, and they have used a good vocabulary which help them to say what they mean. Mechanics component seems to have the highest level of advance and this may be interpreted as spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, are easier for students to physically see and correct in their writing. Although most students have shown a better understanding in terms of organization, vocabulary, and mechanics, they still face hindrances in terms of writing clear, direct, relevant, and short sentences. What is remarked is the decline made in writing correct sentences in terms of grammar.

From the analysis of students' academic writing, the researcher finds that the students have made a lot of grammatical errors. Those grammatical errors are classified by the following 7 kinds, namely 1. Errors in verbs; 2. Errors in adjectives; 3. Errors in articles; 4. Errors in prepositions; 5. Sentence fragments; 6. Subject-predicate disagreement; 7. Errors in the part of speech.This is mainly due to the fact thatstudents have an inadequate amount of vocabulary. they should expand their words. At the same time, it is also mandatory to learn how to use these words. And the so-called overgeneralization is to apply the knowledge which they have learned to the situations beyond rules, leading to wrong usage; therefore, a lot of English grammatical errors are interlingual transfer error. Their written performance was better than that of last time, in the sense that they tried to write a well-organized piece of writing but they were still showing a poor grammatical luggage.

The progress test n3

Students in both groups went through a six-week period of learning, finishing phase three of the experiment (three lessons) which ends the third unit in the syllabus of written expression made of two chapters including three units for the first chapter and one unit for the second chapter.

Course: Written expression	Level: First year	Week:nine/ten	Duration:360mn
Lesson: Parallelism and wordiness in writing			

Description of the lesson: The overuse of words is a very problematic point in any form of writing. But how do you actually cut down on wordiness? This lesson gives tips on how to identify and reduce wordiness.Parallelism from another side, refers to using elements in sentences that are grammatically similar or identical in structure, sound, meaning, or meter. This technique adds symmetry, effectiveness and balance to the written piece.

References
- Anson, Chris M., and Robert A. Schwegler. (2000). *The Longman Handbook for Writers and Readers*. New York: Longman, 387–398.
- Hacker, D. (2003). *A Writer's Reference*. 5th ed. Boston/New York: Bedford/St. Martin's. 81–84.
- Oppenheimer, D. M. (2006). *Consequences of erudite vernacular utilized irrespective of necessity*: Problems with using long words needlessly. Applied Cognitive Psychology, 20, 139–156. doi: 10.1002/acp.1178

Objectives
- Define parallelism and wordiness
- Spot examples of parallelism and wordiness
- Correct examples of faulty parallelism and wordy sentences

Glossary of terms
At the end of this lesson, students should be able to identify and define the following vocabulary terms:
- concise, precise and redundant sentences
- faulty sentences
- parallel structure
- wordy sentences

Material
- Handouts of the lesson parallelism: how to write and identify parallel sentences and what is parallelism in literature? - definition & examples, one for each student
- Handouts of the lesson wordiness: how to identify & reduce wordiness in writing? - definition & examples, one for each student
- Worksheets

Procedure
- To prepare students for the lesson, a number of questions were asked:
  - -Can you guess the meaning of parallelism?
  - -What are the potential benefits of parallel words in sentences?
-what does wordiness mean?
- Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions
- Explaining the terms by the teacher through writing different examples
- Write an example on the board of a series in which the words have faulty parallelism in their structure, and ask the students how it can be changed to make the sentence smoother
- Call on students, asking for potential benefits of using parallel words when writing sentences. They need to understand that by using parallelism correctly, their writing will be clearer, more concise, easier for others to understand, and more stylish.
- Write four sentences which contain faulty parallelism due to incorrect word structure. Explain that each of the sentences contain mistakes. The class will fix them together
- Introduce concept of wordiness with a sentence on the board, and explain how its correction makes it powerful.
- Write an example on the board of a series in which the sentences are wordy, and ask the students how it can be reduced to use the simplest word possible that conveys the same meaning

- Call on students, asking how do we know we have a wordy sentence when writing sentences. They need to understand that by trying to remove words from each sentence. If you can remove a word while keeping the sentence's meaning, the sentence is wordy,
- Write four sentences which contain wordy sentences due to the use of too many useless words. Explain that each of the sentences contain mistakes. The class will fix them together
- Distribute handout to the students on how to eliminate wordiness. Give students directions for the handout, which will ask them to answer different exercises.
- Lead the class in a discussion of their answers.

Assessment
- Display the answers to the worksheet.
- Have students correct their worksheets.

Course: Written expression	Level: First year	Week:eleven/twelve	Duration:360mn

Lesson : sentence problems (run on sentences, sentence fragment)

Description of the lesson: Sentence fragments, comma splices, and fused sentences are grammatical and stylistic problems that can seriously derail an otherwise polished academic piece of writing. Learn how to identify and eliminate these errors in students' academic writing is their first step in writing effectively.

References
- Teaching and Learning Support (TaLS) – Fact Sheets
http://www.une.edu.au/current-students/resources/academic-skills/fact-sheets
- Hacker, D. (2006). The Bedford handbook (7th ed.). Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins**.**

Objectives
- Learn to identify run-on sentences and fragment sentences
- Learn ways to divide run-on sentences.
- Edit their own writing to correct any run-on and fragment sentences

Glossary of terms
At the end of this lesson, students should know the meaning of the following items:
- Run on, comma splice, and fused sentence
- fragment

Material
- Sample sentences and examples
- PowerPoint and worksheet
- Handout of the lesson run on sentences and sentences fragments: how to identify & correct them? - definition & examples, one for each student

Procedure
- A short paragraph will be presented and written at the board. The teacher will read first and the students will follow. The students will be given time to examine and study the given paragraph and its main parts. After which the students are expected to answer the following questions:
  -Underline the complete sentences and circle the incomplete ones
  -What can you do to improve the paragraph?
- Once the students have answered all the questions above, the teacher will introduce the day's lesson which is run on and fragment sentences.
- A PowerPoint presentation of run on sentences will be shown and discussed. Illustrations of how run on sentences works will also be presented. After discussion, the students are expected to answer the following questions:
  -what is run on sentences?
  -What sentence fragments?

-Is there a difference between complete sentence and run on sentences?
-When do run on and fragment sentence occur?

- Going back to the motivation, the students will improve the paragraph through changing the inappropriate sentences to the correct ones. After that, the students are asked to construct 10 simple sentences using run on sentences.
- Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions
- Explaining the terms by the teacher through writing different examples
- Distribute handout to the students on sentences. Give students directions for the handout, which will ask them to answer different exercises.
- Lead the class in a discussion of their answers.

Assessment
- Display the answers to the worksheet.
- Have students correct their worksheet.

Course: Written expression	**Level:** First year	**Week:** thirteen/fourteen	**Duration:** 360mn

Lesson: Misplaced and dangling modifiers

Description of the lesson: Wrong sentences create confusion, and confusion restrict understanding. The truth is that wrong sentences do not just happen. Writers create them. In this lesson, students will learn how to identify misplaced and dangling modifiers so that they can write clear and effective sentences.

References
- Ng, K. S., Lim, S. K., & Tan, A. L. (2009). *Grammar & writing*. Shah Alam: Marshall Cavendish (Malaysia).
- http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/grammar/modifiers.html Good information for Literacy Education Online regarding what misplaced modifiers are! Read and learn!

Objectives
- Identify a dangling and misplaced modifier
- Explain how dangling and misplaced modifiers create ambiguity.
- Correct a dangling and misplaced modifier to ensure the intended meaning of the sentences.

Glossary of terms
At the end of this lesson, students should be able to identify and define the following vocabulary terms:
- modifier
- dangling modifier
- misplaced modifier

Material
- Sample sentences and examples
- Handout of the lesson misplaced and dangling modifier: explain the rules - identify and correct errors in sentences.
- Rubrics

Procedure
- Discuss the following rules with students:
    a. Misplaced modifiers often modify the wrong word or more than one word. To correct this error, move the modifier as close as possible to the word it modifies. In other cases, the misplaced modifier can be corrected by substituting a dependent clause or adding a main clause.
    b. A dangling modifier seems to modify no word in a sentence; to correct this error, two ways are presented: first, change the main part of the sentence so that it begins with the term actually modified. Second, change the dangling modifier phrase to a subordinate clause, creating a subject and verb.
- Pair students and allow them to work together to correct misplaced and dangling modifiers and identify correctly placed modifiers in exercises on handout.
- Class discussion: Students share and discuss their responses to the practice exercises. Make sure they know correct responses.
- Explaining the terms by the teacher through writing different examples
- Students were asked to write in-class paragraph on the following topic "Pretend you woke up one day and there were no rules. People could suddenly do whatever they wanted! Explain what

the world would be like. Use your imagination!". (both groups).

- Students of the experimental group were benefited from extra writing practice and continuous assistance as they given a short essay writing homework assignment on "Is book learning or experience more significant in a person's life? Why?
- The experimental students' papers were collected and corrected, out of class using different forms of feedback
- Provide time for experimental group students to read feedback on their papers
- Discuss the papers as a whole group.
- Students are handed in their writings and asked to rewrite their short essay, taking into account the underlined errors and teacher' feedback.
- Students of experimental group were asked again to write the previous topic "Pretend you woke up one day and there were no rules. People could suddenly do whatever they wanted! Explain what the world would be like. Use your imagination! after taking their homework assignment with more practice and continuous teacher' feedback.

The teacher then collected the corrected paragraphs from both groups for the analysis

ACADEMIC WRITING AND HOMEWORK131

The progress test n3 results
Table 13
the total average of the progress test n3 grades distributed by the control group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01	1					2	3				3		1				1				08
02		2				2	2,25				2,25			2				2			10,25
03	1				1				1					2			1				06
04	1						2,25			1,25				2					2,75		09,25
05	1					2				2			1					2			08
06			3		1						2,25		1				1				08,25
07	1					2			1					2					2,75		08,75
08		2			1						3			2				1,25			09,25
09		2				2					2,75		1				1				08,75
10	1						3		1					2					2,75		09,75
11			3				3			2				2			1				11
12	1						2,25				3		1						3		10,25
13		2			1							3,25	1				1				08,25
14	1				1					2			1					2			07
15			2,25				2,25		1				1						2,75		09,50
16			3		1				1				1					2			08
17		2				2			1				1				1				07
18			2,25					4		2			1				1				10,25
19				3,25			3				2,75			1,25			1				09,50
20				3,25	1				1				1								10
21	1					2				1,75			1					2			08,50
22				3,25	1				1					2			1				08,25
23	1				1					2			1								07
24			2,75			2				2			1					2			09,75
25	1				1					2				2						4	10
26			3		1				1					2						3,75	10,75
27			3				3					3,75	1					1,25			12
28			2,75		1				1				1						2,25		08
29	1						2,25				2,25		1						3		09,50
30			2,25		1				1					1,25					3		08,50
Total	1,97				1,81				1,88				1,31				1,96				08,97

The Rating Scale
➢ 0-1=Very poor
➢ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➢ 2,25-3= Good to average
➢ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

ACADEMIC WRITING AND HOMEWORK132

Table 14
the total average of the progress test n3 grades distributed by the experimental group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01			3			1,25				2				2					3		11,25
02				4			2,25					3,25	1						3		13,50
03				3,25			3				3			2						3,75	15
04			2,75			1,25					2,25		1					2			09,25
05			2,75			1,25			1					1,25				2			08,25
06				3,25	1						2,25		1				1				08,50
07			3			2			1					2				1,25			09,25
08			3		1					2				2			1				09
09			3				2,25				2,25		1					1,25			09,75
10			3				3			2					3				2,75		13,75
11			3				3				2,25			2				2			12,25
12			3			2				2			1					2			10
13		2				2				2					2,25			2			10,25
14	1					2				2			1				1				07
15		2			1					2			1						3		09
16			3					4			2,75			2				2			13,75
17				4			3				3			2					3		15
18			2,75				3			2				2			1				10,75
19	1					2					3			2				2			10
20		2			1					2			1						3		09
21	1						2,25			2			1					2			08,25
22	1					2					2,25				2,25			2			09,50
23			2,75			1,25			1				1					2			08
24			3		1					1,25				2			1				08,25
25			3		1						2,75				2,25			1,25			11,25
26		2				2				2				2					2,75		10,75
27			2,75		1						3		1					1,25			09
28	1					2				2				2				2			09
29		2			1					2					2,25				2,75		09,50
30	1					2			1					2				2			08
Total	2,54				1,92				1,96				1,70				2,06				9,89

Table 15

Summary of progress test n3 scores for both groups

Criteria	Control group		Experimental group	
	Score	**Difference**	**Score**	**Difference**
Content	1,97	+ 0,07	2,54	+ 0,09
Organization	1,81	+ 0,04	1,92	+ 0,02
Vocabulary	1,88	=00.00	1,96	+ 0,06
Language use	1,31	- 0,07	1,70	+ 0,14
Mechanics	1,96	+ 0,02	2,06	+ 0,11
Average	8,93	+ 0,06	10,18	+ 0,42

Analysis of results

For the control group, students showed more advance nearly in all levels, except their vocabulary which did not display any developments; However, there was a decline concerning their language use which stated that grammar is very basic component in academic writing that students still have problems with it as they have mentioned in the questionnaire (question 5). Students may not have the sufficient amount of practice their academic writing to cope with grammatical troubles. They may have difficulty understanding or correcting their sentences. Therefore, more practice and teacher's feedback and correction will be very helpful during the learning process.

During the present stage, students of the experimental group were very enthusiastic about their academic writing: they have some preferences for writing homework assignments and teacher's feedback. Also, the way of giving them more writing practice and correct their errors helped students use appropriate vocabulary and correct sentences in their writing. Even at the level of content and organization. Their general performance stated clearly that they start showing progress at all levels.

The progress test n4

Students in both groups went through a nine-week period of learning, finishing phase four of

the experiment (three lessons) which ends the fourth unit in the syllabus of written expression made

of two chapters including three units for the first chapter and one unit for the second chapter.

Course: Written expression	**Level:** First year	**Week:**fifteen/sixteen	**Duration:**360mn
Lesson: Capitalization and punctuation rules			

Description of the lesson: it is helpful for students to focus on some of the smaller mechanics of grammatically-correct sentences. This lesson will help them master the use of proper capitalization and punctuation.
References • Kellaher, K. (2001). *Writing Skills Made Fun:* Capitalization, Punctuation & Spelling, Scholastic Inc. Teaching Resources. U.S.A
Objectives • Students will be able to distinguish between the types of punctuation. • Students will be able to use appropriate punctuation in their sentences. • Students will use capital letters where appropriate in their writing.
Glossary of terms At the end of this lesson, students should know that there are two items that work together to form a complete sentence. They are: • punctuate • capitalize
Material • Punctuation worksheet • Capitalization worksheet • PowerPoint.

Procedure
• To get the students ready for the lesson, a series of questions were asked:
    -Can you guess the meaning of the punctuation and capitalization rules?
    -What are the main types of punctuation?
• Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions
• A PowerPoint presentation of punctuation and capitalization rules will be shown and discussed. Illustrations of how punctuation and capitalization rules work will also be presented. After discussion, the students are expected to answer the following questions:
    -What are the different rules in punctuation and capitalization?
    -Give examples of sentences showing these rules.
• Distribute the worksheets to the students on punctuation and capitalization rules. Give students directions for the worksheet, which will ask them to answer different exercises.
• Lead the class in a discussion of their answers.

Assessment Students' success will be measured in a couple different ways. The teacher will measure their success on punctuation and capitalization from the worksheets they did, by discussions they have with the teacher. Also, the teacher will do a progress monitoring test that will allow her to test students' understanding. The progress monitoring test will have the students write four sentences dictated by the teacher. They will be awarded a point for each correct capital letter, correctly spelled words, spaces between words and punctuation.

Course: Written expression	Level: First year	Week: seventeen eighteen/ninteen	Duration: 540mn

Lesson: Paragraph writing

Description of the lesson: in this lesson, students will learn how to form a paragraph using a topic sentence, supporting details, and a closing sentence.

References
- Writing pack for prep classes: Kocaeli University School of Foreign Languages Department of Basic English

Objectives
- write a well-structured paragraph
- identify the different steps and important terms (topic, supporting and concluding sentence) to remember in writing
- organized their collected thoughts or ideas into a well written paragraph
- appreciate the lesson by discovering their hidden skills and talents in writing
- edit, revise, and publish a completed paragraph

Glossary of terms
At the end of this lesson, students should know the following items:
- topic sentence
- supporting details
- concluding sentence
- writing process
- Unity and coherence

Material
- Paragraph puzzle
- Worksheet
- rubric

Procedure
- To get the students ready for the lesson, a series of questions were asked:
  - What is a paragraph?
  - Are paragraphs necessary?
  - Why do writers use paragraphs?
- Teacher- students' discussion of the main concepts and definitions
- Hand out a "paragraph puzzle" envelope to each pair, then instruct students to organize the sentences to restore the paragraph's structure
- Hand out the paragraph puzzle solution, then lead a discussion: How did you know the order in which the sentences should go? Hint for your discussion: Start at the beginning of the paragraph ("How did you know the first sentence was the first sentence? "), then work your way to the end. Discuss alternative orders and why the writer may have chosen to order the sentences as the writer did
- Lead a discussion: What are some of the excellent qualities of the paragraph that they have reconstructed? Hint for your discussion: Use a gimmick to elicit the qualities—Unity, order, coherence, completeness --- ask students to identify the three parts of the paragraph----topic sentence, supporting details, concluding sentence—
- Hand out the sample paragraph, and read it aloud (or ask someone to read it). Lead a discussion: What is your assessment of this paragraph in terms of the 4 F's? Then ask the group to make suggestions for revision.

Assessment
- Ask students to write a paragraph of their own choice
- Ask students, in pairs, to assess one of the paragraphs of their draft
- Use the rubric to assess their writings

Course: Written expression	**Level:** First year	**Week:**twenty/twenty-one/ twenty two/twenty three	**Duration:**720mn
Lesson: Types of paragraph			

Description of the lesson: There are several types of paragraphs. It is important to know how to use each paragraph type for the right purpose.

References
• Gerald, G. (1999), PhD Division of Journalism Florida A&M University © Available at: http://www.longleaf.net/ggrow/modes.html • Seven Types of Paragraph Development http://www.write.armstrong. edu/handouts/Modes.pdf • Indiana University Bloodmington. Paragraphs and Topic Sentences. http://www.indiana.edu/~wt s/pamphlets/paragraphs.sht ml • Petit, A., & Soto, E. (2002). Already experts: *Showing students how much they know about writing and reading arguments*.Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, 45(8), 674–682

Objectives
• differentiate between different types of paragraphs. • Enables students to write a paper with more focus. • Adds variety and structure to students' writing

Glossary of terms
At the end of this lesson, students should know the following items:
   • transitional words
   • describe, narrate, persuade, compare, contrast

Material • Worksheet and PowerPoint • rubric

Procedure

• Divide the students into four groups. Provide each group with a set of sentences. Explain that each group must work together to reconstruct their narrative paragraph in the correct order.
• Once each group has finished, ask one student from each group to read out the reconstructed paragraph to the rest of the class. Ask the students:
    -Does the order of this paragraph sound correct? Why or why not?
    -Which words or phrases gave you clues about the correct order of the text?
    -Why were these words or phrases helpful?
• Discuss the answers of the worksheet as a class.
• Allow the students to correct their sentences order
• Divide the class into pairs.Ask them to write a descriptive paragraph describing one object that they have selected
• Ask the students to read their description for the whole class
• Once the students are done with the paragraph writing, ask the students to check each other's work and give feedback
• Briefly review students on formal writing style and paragraph formats, then discuss other guidelines for persuasive paragraphs.
• Students write a short commercial to advertise a given product. Class votes on most convincing (persuasive) commercial.
• With some guidelines students are instructed to write a paragraph on the topic.
• PowerPoint demonstration of types of expository paragraphs with emphasis on paragraphs that explain how something works. Example: How do you sew a button on a shirt?
• Students were asked to write in-class paragraph on the following topic "All students in high school and college should be required to take at least two years of a foreign language (both groups).
• Students of the experimental group were benefited from extra writing practice and continuous assistance as they given a short essay writing homework on "Any student caught cheating on an

examination should be automatically dismissed from college"
- The experimental students' papers were collected and corrected, out of class using different forms of feedback
- Provide time for experimental group students to read feedback on their papers
- Discuss the papers as a whole group.
- Students are handed in their writings and asked to rewrite their short essay, taking into account the underlined errors and teacher' feedback.
- Students of experimental group were asked again to write the previous topic "All students in high school and college should be required to take at least two years of a foreign language" after taking their homework assignment with more practice and continuous teacher' feedback.
- The teacher then collected the corrected paragraphs from both groups for the analysis

The progress test n4 results
Table 16
the total average of the progress test n4 grades distributed by the control group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				Average/20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01	1					2					3		1				1				08
02	1					2					2,25		1					2			08,25
03	1				1				1					2			1				06
04	1						3			1,25				2					2,75		10
05	1					2					3		1					2			09
06		2			1						2,25		1				1				07,25
07	1					2			1					2					2,75		08,75
08		2			1						3			2				1,25			09,25
09		2				2					2,75		1				1				08,75
10	1						3		1				1						2,75		08,75
11			3				3			2				2			1				11
12	1						2,25				3		1						3		10,25
13		2			1							3,25	1				1				08,25
14	1					2				2			1					2			08
15			2,25				2,25		1				1						2,75		09,25
16			3		1					2			1				1				08
17		2				2			1				1					2			08
18			2,25					4		2			1				1				10,25
19				3,25			3		1					1,25			1				09,50
20				3,25	1						2,75		1					2			10
21	1					2				1,75			1						2,75		08,50
22				3,25	1				1					2			1				08,25
23	1				1					2			1					2			07
24			2,75			2				2			1							4	11,75
25	1					2				2			1					2			08
26			3		1				1				1							3,75	09,75
27		2					3					3,75	1					1,25			11
28			2,75		1					2			1						2,25		09
29	1						2,25				2,25		1						3		09,50
30			2,25		1				1					1,25					3		08,50
Total	1,87				1,90				1,98				1,21				1,96				08,92

The Rating Scale
➤ 0-1=Very poor
➤ 1,5-2=Fair to poor
➤ 2,25-3= Good to average
➤ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

Table 17

the total average of the progress test n4 grades distributed by the experimental group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01			3			1,25				2				2					3		11,25
02				4			2,25					3,25	1					2			12,50
03				3,25			3			2					3					3,75	15,50
04			2,75				2,75				2,25		1						3		10,25
05			2,75				2,75		1					1,25				2			08,25
06				3,25	1						2,25		1				1				08,50
07			3			2			1					2				1,25			09,25
08			3			2				2					3		1				11
09			3				2,25				2,25		1					1,25			09,75
10			3			2				2				2			1				12,75
11			3				3				2,25			2				2			12,25
12			3			2			1				1					2			09
13			3			2				2					2,25				3		12,25
14	1				1					2				2			1				09
15		2			1				1					2					3		09
16			3					4			2,75		1					2			12,75
17				4				4			3			2					3		15
18			2,75				2,75			2				2				2			10,75
19	1				1						3			2			1				09
20		2					3			2			1				1				09
21	1						2,25			2			1					2			08,25
22				3,25			2,75		1						2,25			2			09,50
23			3		1				1				1					2			08
24	1				1					1,25				2			1				08,25
25		2					3				2,75				2,25			1,25			11,25
26			2,75			2				2				2					2,75		10,75
27	1				1				1					2				1,25			08
28	1					2			1					2				2			09
29		2			1					2					2,25				2,75		10
30		2				2			1					2				2			09
Total	2,60				1,95				1,86				1,76				2,06				10,3

The Rating Scale

➢ 0-1=Very poor
➢ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➢ 2,25-3= Good to average
➢ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

Table 18

Summary of progress test n4 scores for both groups

	Control group		Experimental group	
	Score	**Difference**	**Score**	**Difference**
Content	1,87	- 0,1	2,60	+ 0,06
Organization	1,90	+0,09	1,95	+ 0,03
Vocabulary	1,98	+ 0,1	1,86	- 0,1
Language use	1,21	- 0,1	1,76	+ 0,06
Mechanics	1,96	=00.00	2,06	=00.00
Average	8,92	-0,01	10,23	+ 0,05

Analysis of results

Concerning the experimental group, the students showed a good performance. Their language in terms of content, organization, and language use was far better. They did few errors that can be overlooked. In terms of content, they did not keep the last negative remarks. They wrote in a more sympathetic way emphasizing on the central arguments of the topic.The same results were not obtained by the control group because their class exercises were only grammatical exercises.

What could be interesting here to notice is that the experimental students' general level of vocabulary slightly decreased during the period of the fourth progress test while the control group showed more interest and attention. This could possibly be attributed to the choice of words (nature of the topic): the control group did not find any difficulty in writing about the subjectand they showed a rich vocabulary. Whereas the nature of the topic seemed difficult for students of the experimental group to write about, and that is what explains their writing weakness in terms of vocabulary component.Concerning the mechanics aspect, the null change for both groups can be explained by stating that the component is no new to them, and thus it becomes an easy writing aspect to achieve.

The Post test

After ending the progress tests in written expression sessions, the students in both groups are given a final writing assignment (posttest). The researcher kept the same test for the

followingreasons: First, to ensure the objectivity of the results obtained in the two tests. Second, to confirm that the students' results in the posttest would not be affected by external factors related to the test itself like the level of difficulty of the topic, and finally, to see whether the participants were interested enough to check the answers and learn from their errors. The test consisted of the question: "Does technology make us more alone?The students' final scores and their comparison are mentioned in the following tables

The post-test results
Table 19
the total average of the posttestgrades distributed by the control group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01	1					2					3		1					2			10
02	1					2					2,25		1				1				08,25
03		2			1				1					2				2			09
04	1						3			1,25				2					2,75		10
05	1					2					3		1					2			09
06	1				1					2			1						3		08,75
07	1					2			1					2					2,75		08,75
08		2			1						3		1					1,25			08,25
09		2				2					2,75			2			1				09,75
10	1				1				1					2					2,75		08,75
11			3				3				3		1				1				12
12	1						2,25			2			1				1				09,25
13		2			1							3,25	1				1				09,25
14	1					2				2			1					2			08
15			2,25				2,25		1				1					2			09,25
16		2			1					2			1					2			08
17		2				2			1				1					2			08
18			2,25					4		2			1				1				10,25
19				3,25			3				2,75			1,25						3,75	14
20				3,25	1						2,75		1						3		11
21			3		1					1,75			1						2,75		10,25
22				3,25	1				1				1					2			08,25
23	1					1				2			1					2			07
24			2,75			2				2				2				2			10,75
25	1					2				2			1							4	10
26		2			1				1				1							3,75	08,75
27		2					3				3		1					1,25			10,25
28			2,75		1					2			1						2,25		09
29	1						2,25				2,25			1,25				2			08,50
30			2,25		1				1					1,25				2			08,50
Total	1,87				1,90				1,99				1,17				2,1				09,35

The Rating Scale
➤ 0-1=Very poor
➤ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➤ 2,25-3= Good to average
➤ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

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Table 20

the total average of the posttestgrades distributed by the experimental group

Serial	Content				Organisation				Vocabulary				Language use				Mechanics				average /20
	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	1-0	2-1.25	3-2.25	4-3.25	
01			3			1,25				2				2					3		11,25
02				4			2,25			2				2				2			12,50
03				3,25			3			2					3					3,75	15,50
04			2,75			1,25					2,25		1					2		3,75	10,25
05			2,75			1,25			1					1,25							08,25
06				3,25	1						2,25		1				1				08,50
07			3			2			1					2				1,25			09,25
08			3			2				2					3		1				11
09			3				2,25				2,25				3			1,25			09,75
10			3			2				2				2			1				12,75
11			3				3				2,25				2,25			2			12,25
12			3				2,25		1				1						3		09
13			3			2				2					2,25				3		12,25
14	1						3			2				2			1				09
15		2			1				1					2					3		09
16			3				3				2,75		1	2				2			12,75
17				4				4			3								3		15
18			2,75		1					2				2			1				10,75
19		2					3				3		1					2			09
20		2					3				3		1				1				09
21	1				1		2,25			2			1					2			08,25
22				3,25				3,25	1						2,25			2			09,50
23			2,75			1,25			1				1					2			08
24			3		1					1,25				2				2			08,25
25			3			2					2,75				2,25			1,25			11,25
26			2,75				3			2					3				2,75		10,75
27			2,75		1									2			1	1,25			08
28	1					2			1						3			2			09
29		2			1						2,75				2,25				2,75		10
30		2				2			1					2				2			09
Total	2,65				1,99				1,91				1,93				2,15				10,3

The Rating Scale

➢ 0-1=Very poor
➢ 1,5-2= Fair to poor
➢ 2,25-3= Good to average
➢ 3,25-4=Excellent to very good

Table 21

summary of the scores in both tests (pretest and posttest) for both groups

Criteria	Control group		Experimental group	
	Score	Difference	Score	Difference
Content	1,87	- 0,23	2,65	+ 0,59
Organization	1,90	+0,44	1,99	+ 0,39
Vocabulary	1,99	+ 0,46	1,91	+0,25
Language use	1,17	- 0,26	1,93	+ 0,5
Mechanics	2,1	+0,24	2,15	+0,45
Average	9,28	+0,9	10,63	+ 2,18

Analysis of results

It is clear that the experimental group results are higher than those of the control group. This could surely be attributed to the use of homework assignments (as an independent variable).What this means is that the results would confirm significant change in the students' performance.Language use and organization were the major difficulties at the beginning for most of the students, but after four phases of study the case was totally changed. As the results stated, A constant progress is to be noticed in the students' achievements after these four phases of the study.

Experimental group students' general performance stated clearly that they showed a very good improvement at all levels. Unlike those of control group who displayed a slight improvement nearly at all levels, except their content and language use, which did not show any improvements.

5.2. The General Experimental Findings

Students' results showed that the total average of the pre-test is close to the experimental group and the control group with a tiny difference in favor of the experimental group. Then after a period of learning, both groups made a progress, yet the experimental group performance was far better. A detailed description of the results during the experiment can be demonstrated in the following points

- **Content aspect**

Content development and relevance to the topic were better with the EG whose students composed valuable content to be delivered with a specific purpose. The students' views and opinions about the target topic seemed to be shaped by their homework writing assignments and teacher's feedback. The CG, on the other hand, failed on showing how they develop the idea related with the topic. And the students, with few exceptions, did the work of fulfilling special function of transition, restatement, and emphasis rather than conveying ideas. They were simply getting worse from session to another.

- **Organization aspect**

Both groups, EG and CG, were increasingly showed a progress concerning the logical organization of the content (coherence), which demonstrates in each essay writing. yet, the way it achieved and the results it produced were better with the CG. It was apparent that students here are requested to more than writing together all ideas. Even in early drafts it may still be searching for order, trying to make out patterns in line with the purpose of the topic.

- **Vocabulary aspect**

The stage of selection of effective word choice and usage and the word form mastery was better for both groups whose participants, devoted clarity as their prime objective. For the control group, choosing words that express the meaning is precisely rather than skew it or blur it. Also, students of the EGwere selected effective words that are well chosen and used appropriately. It was apparent that students were more familiar with most of the topics.

- **Language use aspect**

Both groups found in the writing activity a good opportunity to develop their language use writing component. There was a kind of successive decreasing in the results achieved by the CG. The students, through their writings, proved their very poor level in language use aspect reflects no mastery of sentence construction, and shows no understanding of most of the grammatical rules (full of errors in pronoun, misplaced modifiers, lack of parallel structure, comma splice,

determiners, verb tense shifts, prepositions, passive voice, articles, and possessive nouns) that influence the meaning to express their different opinions and ideas about the given topic.

The EG; however, performed better results and have done more efforts and serious attempts to better their written production. Most of the students reached the stage of being able to write effective grammatical constructions, fewer errors of pronoun, misplaced modifiers, lack of parallel structure, comma splice, determiners, verb tense shifts, prepositions, passive voice, articles, and possessive nouns with seldom obscured meaning. It was apparent that supporting the writing course with various homework assignments and teacher's feedback provided a rich source and effective stimulus for students to discover, recognize, and correct their grammatical errors.

- **Mechanics aspect**

The stage of using correct punctuation and capitalization in students' academic writing was far better for experimental group whose students have an easy time remembering and using the rules for capitalization and punctuation. They showed fewer errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Concerning punctuation, most of the students were aware towards the use of semicolon, colons, and commas. Capitalization was well controlled by students; Though there are numerous rules associated with capitalization, most of the students remembered and memorized them in their academic writing. One of the problems most of the students face is coping with the differences between British and American spelling; Students are constantly exposed to both British and American English in the classrooms so that they confused both kind of spelling.

Regarding students of the control group, most of them showed no proficiency in academic writing mechanics; they have only partially mastered that component; they demonstrated many errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.When students lack mastery in mechanics aspect, their academic writing may be unsatisfactory in different ways from unclear meaning to weak reasoning and arguments. That was evident that not giving students opportunities to practice and receive feedback was behind such kind of results.

Table 22
Scores matching of the experimental and the control groups

	Content			Organization			Vocabulary			Language use			Mechanics		
	CG	=	EG	CG	=	EG	CG	=	EG	CG	=	EG	CG	=	EG
Pre-test	2,1	>	2,06	1,46	<	1,60	1,53	<	1,66	1,43	=	1,43	1,86	>	1,70
Unit one	2,04	<	2,18	1,48	<	1,65	1,56	<	1,71	1,40	>	1,30	1,92	>	1,80
Unit two	1,90	<	2,45	1,77	<	1,90	1,88	<	1,90	1,38	<	1,56	1,94	<	1,95
Unit three	1,97	<	2,54	1,81	<	1,92	1,88	<	1,96	1,31	<	1,70	1,96	<	2,06
Unit four	1,87	<	2,60	1,90	<	1,95	1,98	>	1,86	1,21	<	1,76	1,96	<	2,06
Post test	1,87	<	2,65	1,90	<	1,99	1,99	>	1,91	1,17	<	1,93	2,1	<	2,15

The above matching table indicated obviously the superiority of the EG over the CG**.**

Table 23
Progress matching of the experimental and the control groups

	CG	=	EG
	8,36	<	8,43
Post test	9,34	<	10,30
Progress	0,98	<	1,87

Both groups achieved a relative progress in their academic writing production, yet the EG showed better results.

5.3. Statistical Analysis of the Experiment Findings

Because the above are observable and may be considered as being subjective, a more and detailed scientific analysis must be needed, which is a statistical analysis of data.

5.3.1. The t- test

The t-test is a way to detect the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable; it is the guarantee of the validity of the experiment.

The observable value of the t-test is called the t-value. A t-value of 0 indicates that the sample results exactly equal the null hypothesis. As the difference between the sample data and the null hypothesis increases, the absolute value of the t-value increases.

To calculate the t-value, the following formula must be needed:

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{(\overline{x_1} - \overline{x_2})\sqrt{(N1 + N2 - 2)N1N2}}{\sqrt{(N1\, S_1^2 + N2\, S_2^2)\,(N1 + N2)}}$$

For:

- G1 is the experimental group and G2 the control group

- X_x = the mean (the sum of cores divided by the number of individuals).

- X_x^2 = squared scores

- N_X = number of subjects.

- S.D = standard deviation.

- (N1-1) + (N1-1) = the degree of freedom. According to Brown (1995, p. 167), "the degree of freedom (df) for the t-test of independent means is the first sample size minus one plus the second sample size minus one". It helps to find the critical value for "t".

for calculating the t-value, the following values must be needed:

- Calculate the mean.

- Calculate the variance of each group.

- Alpha Decision Level

- Following Brown (1995, p. 195), "The language researcher should once again set the alpha decision level in advance. The level may be at $\alpha<05$ or at the more conservative $\alpha<.01$, if the decisions must be surer" (Brown 1995:159).In the present study, the researcher opted for setting alpha at α $\alpha<05$ which means only 05% chance of error can be tolerated. Depending on a one-tailed test means expecting that the group will get grades more highly in the posttest than the pretest. According to Cohen, et al. (2007, p. 504) "one tailed test is stronger than the two-tailed test as it makes assumptions about the population and the direction of the outcome"

The t-test is applied on the scores of the pre-test and the post-test.

Calculating the mean

a. The pre-test scores

N	X_1	X_1^2	X_2	X_2^2
01	09	81	08	64
02	10	100	09	81
03	14	196	09	81
04	09	81	06	36
05	02	04	05	25
06	07	49	11	121
07	05	25	07	49
08	05	25	05	25
09	08	64	09	81
10	10	100	10	100
11	12	144	10	100
12	11	121	08	64
13	07	49	08	64
14	05	25	05	25
15	09	81	09	81
16	13	169	07	49
17	15	225	07	49
18	11	121	12	144
19	08	64	14	196
20	07	49	09	81
21	09	81	04	16
22	05	25	07	49
23	06	36	05	25
24	08	64	13	169
25	11	121	11	121
26	11	121	11	121
27	07	49	08	64
28	04	16	08	64
29	08	64	07	49
30	07	49	09	81
$\sum$	252,9	2399	250,8	2275

✓ Mean of the experimental group's pre-test scores:

$$X_1 = \frac{\sum x_1}{N1} = \frac{252,9}{30} = 8,43$$

✓ Mean of the control group's pre-test scores:

$$X_2 = \frac{\sum x_2}{N2} = \frac{250,8}{30} = 8,36$$

b. The post-test scores

N	X_1	X_1^2	X_2	X_2^2
01	11,25	126,56	10	100
02	12,50	150	08,25	68,06
03	15,50	240,25	09	81
04	10,25	105,06	10	100
05	08,25	68,06	09	81
06	08,50	72,25	08,75	76,56
07	09,25	85,56	08,75	76,56
08	11	121	08,25	68,06
09	09,75	95,06	09,75	95,06
10	12,75	162,56	08,75	76,56
11	12,25	150,06	12	144
12	09	81	09,25	85,56
13	12,25	150,06	09,25	85,56
14	09	81	08	64
15	09	81	09,25	85,56
16	12,75	162,56	08	64
17	15	225	08	64
18	10,75	115,56	10,25	105,06
19	09	81	14	196
20	09	81	11	121
21	08,25	68,06	10,25	105,06
22	09,50	90,25	08,25	68,06
23	08	64	07	49
24	08,25	68,06	10,75	115,56
25	11,25	126,56	10	100
26	10,75	115,56	08,75	76,56
27	08	64	10,25	105,06
28	09	81	09	81
29	10	100	08,50	72,25
30	09	81	08,50	72,25
$\sum$	309	3293,60	280,5	2682,4

✓ Mean of the experimental group's post-test scores:

$$\overline{x_1} = \frac{\sum x_1}{N1} = \frac{309}{30} = 10,3$$

✓ Mean of the control group's post-test scores:

$$\overline{x_2} = \frac{\sum x_2}{N2} = \frac{280,5}{30} = 09,35$$

5.3.2. Calculating The variance

Variance measures how far a data set is spread out.It is the average of the squared differences from the mean.

a. the experimental group variance

$$s_1^2 = \frac{\sum_1 x_1^2}{N1} - \overline{x_1}$$

$$s_1^2 = \frac{3293,59}{30} - (10,3)^2$$

$$s_1^2 = 109,78 - 106,09$$

$$S_1^2 = 3,69$$

b. the control group variance

$$s_2^2 = \frac{\sum_2 x_2^2}{N1} - \overline{x_1}$$

$$s_2^2 = \frac{2682,4}{30} - (09,35)^2$$

$$s_2^2 = 89,41 - 87,42$$

$$S_2^2 = 1,99$$

The t-value

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{(\overline{x_1} - \overline{x_2})\sqrt{(N1+N2-2)N1N2}}{\sqrt{(N1\,S_1^2 + N2\,S_2^2)\,(N1+N2)}}$$

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{(10,3-09,35)\sqrt{(30+30-2)30x30}}{\sqrt{(30x3,69+30x1,99)\,(30+30)}}$$

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{0,95\sqrt{58x900}}{\sqrt{(110,7+59,7)x60}}$$

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{0,95\sqrt{52200}}{\sqrt{(110,7+59,7)x60}}$$

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{0,95\sqrt{52200}}{\sqrt{170,4x60}}$$

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{0,95x228,47}{\sqrt{10224}}$$

$$TN + N2 - 2 = \frac{217,04}{101,11}$$

$$TN + N2 - 2 = 2,14$$

Hypothesis Testing

The following table summarizes the necessary information for testing the hypothesis:

Table 24
t-test summary of post-test scores

Groups	N	mean	Sd	Df	t cal	t critical
Experimental	30	10,3	3,69			
Control	30	09,35	1,99	58	2,14	1.67

Alpha level: $\alpha < 0.05$, one-tailed (directional) decision.

Statistical hypotheses: H_0: X

The null hypothesis H_0 means that there is no statistically significant difference between the means of the group in the pretest and posttest; however, the alternative hypothesis H_1 means that there is statistically significant difference between the means in the pretest and posttest.

5.4. Statistical Significance and the Size Effect of the Tests

The t-value is of 2,14.This value is looked up in the t-distribution table and cross referenced with 58 degrees of freedom and 5% significance. As mentioned on table 24, t calculated equals 2,14 while t critical value equals 1.67. thus, t cal > t critical (2,14 >1.67), therefore the result is significant. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. This means that there is only 05% probability that the observed mean difference (2,14 >1.67) occurred by chance, or a 95% probability that it was because of other factors than chance factors. The null hypothesis is rejected which represents that the researcher is 95% assured that the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable (homework writing assignments treatment) did not occur by chance. There is a significant difference between the achievement in academic writing of students exposed to homework writing assignment and those not exposed to homework writing assignment.This confirms that the treatment given had some effect on students' achievement in academic writing.

Although the statistical significance of the tests stated that only 05% probability of chance, it does not assess the efficiency of the treatment as Cohen(1988, p. 521) indicated "the blunt edge of

the statistical significance is seen as an unacceptable index of effect". As a result, the effect size of the treatment must be checked.It is a simple way of quantifying the difference between two groups that has many advantages over the use of tests of statistical significance alone; it allows researchers to move away from the simple identification of statistical significance and toward a more generally interpretable, quantitative description of the size of an effect.

To show the extent of the activity effect on the experimental groups' achievement in academic writing, the study applied the "effect size" technique. The researcher computed "η²" using the following formula: (Afana, 2000, p. 42) and (Cohen,1969, p. 23)

$$\eta^2 = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + df}$$

For:

- t= t-value

- df= degree of freedom

And "d" value using Cohen (1969, p. 23) formula:

$$d = \frac{2t}{\sqrt{df}}$$

Table 25
the level of size effect (²η) and (d).

Test	Effect volume		
	Small	Medium	Large
η²	0.01	0.06	0.14
d	0.2	0.5	0.8

Calculating the effect size

$$\eta^2 = \frac{t^2}{t^2 + df} \qquad\qquad d = \frac{2t}{\sqrt{df}}$$

$$\eta^2 = \frac{4{,}58}{4{,}58 + 58} \qquad\qquad d = \frac{2 x 2{,}14}{\sqrt{58}}$$

$$\eta^2 = \frac{4{,}58}{62{,}58} \qquad\qquad d = \frac{4{,}28}{7{,}61}$$

$$\eta^2 = 0{,}07 \qquad\qquad d = 0{,}6$$

Table 26
the effect size of homework assignment on students' achievement in academic writing

test	t value	η2	d	Effect volume
value	2,14	0,07	0,6	Medium

Table 26 stated that the medium effect size of homework writing assignments on students' academic writing development and achievement which means that the effect of homework writing assignment is significant. This medium effect may be due to the different writing practice and activities which are used in the homework to improve students' academic writing.

5.5. Interpretation of Data

The results of the present study showed a clear-cut endorsement for the homework assignment group. The findings are in consonance with Sasser (1981) whose stated that there is a slight preponderance of evidence showing that students who get homework writing assignments achieve somewhat better academic results than do those who get no homework writing assignments. However, the results of the present study contradict Friesen (1979) whose findings did not provide a statement that is easy to perceive for either the homework or the non-homework group. In contrast to the finding of Friesen, Kohn (2006) strongly supported the idea that homework will encourage a higher achieving student.

The findings of the present study indicate clearly the efficiency of the experiment and therefore that of the homework writing assignments strategy to academic writing support students to improve their academic writing production. It is homework writing assignments that provide students with different writing assignments that supplied them with more practice, effective teacher's feedback and continuous teacher's assistance, mainly in content, organization, language use, vocabulary, and mechanics components of academic writing in their essays.

5.6. Evaluation of the Post-experiment Questionnaire Results

After the treatment period, the experimental group received the post-experiment questionnaire. post-experiment items were in form of statements. Questionnaire items were analyzed to understand experimental group students' attitudes after homework writing assignments instruction.

Table 27
Experimental students' attitudes towardsthe role ofhomework writing assignments in improving students' academic writing

	Experimental group	
	n	%
1.I like to have homework assignments in written expression class		
Strongly disagree	1	3,33
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	5	16,66
agree	10	33,33
strongly agree	14	46,66
2.I feel confident when practice my writing skill through homework assignments		
Strongly disagree	0	00
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	3	10
agree	17	56,66
strongly agree	10	33,33
3.Homework assgnment makes me more involved in practicing writing skill		
Strongly disagree	0	00
disagree	1	3,33
neutral (no opinion)	1	3,33
agree	13	43,33
strongly agree	15	50
4.Homework assignments provide me with many opportunities to practice different types of academic writing		
Strongly disagree	0	00
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	0	00
agree	9	30
strongly agree	21	70
5.Homework assignments make me want to write English even more		
Strongly disagree	1	3,33
disagree	3	10
neutral (no opinion)	3	10
agree	13	43,33
strongly agree	10	33,33
6.Through homework assignments, I enjoy practicing English language writing		
Strongly disagree	0	00
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	2	6,66
agree	13	43,33

strongly agree	15	50
Experimental group	**n**	**%**
7.Teacher's feedback helps me work well with my teacher		
Strongly disagree	1	33,33
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	5	16,66
agree	14	46.,66
strongly agree	10	33,33
8.teachers' feedback help me improve my English language writing		
Strongly disagree	0	00
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	3	10
agree	12	40
strongly agree	15	50
9.Through teacher's feedback, I learned different writing component faster than before		
Strongly disagree	2	6,66
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	4	13,33
agree	13	43,33
strongly agree	11	36,66
10.After teacher's feedbacvk, I can confidently show my piece of writing to my classùates		
Strongly disagree	0	00
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	0	00
agree	17	56,66
strongly agree	13	43,33
11.Teachers' feedback can reduce my fear of writing English language		
Strongly disagree	0	00
disagree	0	00
neutral (no opinion)	1	3,33
agree	8	26,66
strongly agree	21	70

Items from 1 to 6 were designed to examine students' motivation in doing their homework assignments (Table 27). Most of the students (46,66%) liked to do homework writing assignments. (56,66%) of the students felt confident when practice their writing skill through homework assignments. Fifty percent strongly agreed that homework writing assignments helped them to be more involved in practicing writing skill and focus more in their English class. Seventy percent strongly agreed that having homework writing assignments in written expression class help them to write many types of academic writing, and those students (43,33%) wanted to continue having homework writing assignments in written expression class which made them writing more and

more. Fifty percent of students strongly agreed that homework writing assignments got them enjoyed in writing English.

Items from 7 to 11 were designed to explore students' attitudes toward teacher's feedback on their academic writing (Table 27). (46,66%) of the students felt teacher's feedback helped them work well with their teacher, and 50% felt that teacher's feedback also helped them to improve their writing in English. and 58% stated that they learned vocabulary words faster than before. and 43,33% stated that teacher's feedback helpedlearning different writing component faster than before. 56,66% of the students agreed that after teacher's feedback, they showed their writing with confident, Seventy percent strongly agreed that teacher's feedback reduced their fear of writing in English.

5.7. Summary of the Quantitative Results

To sump up, the null hypothesis predicted in the present study was rejected. First, Students showed a significant increase in all of the writing components in the post-test if compared with the pre-test. The implementation of homework writing assignments and teachers' feedback in teaching academic writing is fuctual. For more precision, the data collected was intended to prove that homework writing assignments succeeded to develop students' academic writing. Regarding the post experimental questionnaire, the aim was to check the real effect of homework writing assignments on students' academic writing because the researcher believes that the more students write, the better their writing will get. Thus most of teachers did not take homework writing essay assignments siriously. That is why, the researcher predicted that assigning homework tasks along with teachers' feedback would bring development.

Second, the t-test findings used to test the hypotheses confirmed the success of the experiment because of the important differences achieved in all the writing components tested if compared with the critical value of fifty eitght degrees of freedom for the t-test.

Conclusion

Throughout the period of the experimental treatment, students received a various homework writing essays assignements along with teachers' feedback in written expression sessions to improve their academic writing. The development of the students after the treatment sessions has confirmed the effectiveness and benefit of homework writing assignments which assure that students' academic writing is always practiced.

All in all, statistic analysis and differences in means of all tests held in the experiments' phases stated that when providing students with a lot of writing practice they get higher scores which reinforces the hypothesis toward the effectiveness of homework writing assignments thus proving that writing skill gets better with constant, and repetitive practice.

CHAPTER SIX: TEACHERS AND STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS, FEEDBACK, AND ACADEMIC WRITING

Introduction

Teachers and students' attitudes and perspectives has become a paramount source of data for the researcher to clarify things and make judgements on given issues related to the main tool. The students' questionnaire and teachers' interview, although they are not the only reference, are seemly instruments among others to determine the effect of homework writing assignments and the role of teachers' feedback in improving students' academic writing. The present chapter deals with the main attitudes and perspectives of both teachers and students concerning homework writing assignments, teachers' feedback, and academic writing. Then it discusses the main results for further recommendations.

6.1. QualitativeResults

According to Taylor & Bogdan (1998), "data analysis in qualitative research is a difficult part as it requires thinking and reasoning, rather than mechanical and technical process. It is an inductive process" (p. 140). Which means that the researcher works with data, organizes them and looking for meanings. Tesch (1990) comments further by stating that "Data analysis is a cyclical process and a reflexive activity; the analytical process should be comprehensive and systematic but not rigid; data are segmented and divided into meaningful units and the data are organized according to a system derived from data themselves" (p. 95). In other words, data analysis is a process that involves a series of steps as classifying and organizing.

After having dealt with different statistics to state the quantitative findings obtained in the present study, the researcher will provide the qualitative findings obtained from the teachers' interview and students' questionnaire.

6.1.1. Students'questionnaire

6.1.1.a. *Analysis of students' questionnaire*

The students' questionnaire aims at finding out students' views about the writing skill, homework assignments, andtheir attitudes toward their teachers' feedback.

Section one: Students' attitudes towards academic writing in Englishlanguage

Question 01

Table 28

Students' favorite skills

Option	N	%
Writing skill	20	33.33
Reading	03	05
Speaking	14	23.33
Listening	23	38.33
Total	60	100

As indicated in the above table, 38, 33% of the respondents prefer listening skill while 33.33% of them like writing English language skill. also with somehow a big rate but not as listening and writing that speaking occupies 23.33%, and then reading took the last rate with 5%

Question 02

Table 29

Students' opinions if reading improves their English academic writing skills

Options	N	%
Yes	45	75
No	15	25
Total	60	100

75% of the students stated that reading is a helpful strategy in improving their writing

If "Yes", please, explain why.

………………………………….

45students explained that reading helps in improving academic writing skills because:

<u>1.It broadens our vocabulary</u>

- Reading improves both vocabulary and spelling (12 students)

- The more things you know the more things you can talk about (01 students)

- It is a way that help us to write constructively (05 students)

- It is a way to pick up the correct grammar and spelling (03 students)

<u>2.It broadens ourknowledge</u>

- We can get more thoughts on various forms of writing (07 students)

- Reading motivate our brain and expand our general knowledge on things (04 students)

<u>3.It helps us for our studies and education </u>(13 students)

Question 03

Table 30

Are students encouraged to write?

Option	N	%
Yes	31	51,67%
No	29	48,33%
Total	60	100%

As Table 30 shows, 51.66% of the total respondents are motivated to write; against48,33%who are not motivated and encouraged.

Question 04

Table 31

Students' definition of good academic writing

Options	N	%
Informative thoughts	12	20%
Correct grammar	17	28 .33%
Effective punctuation	4	6.66%
Precise vocabulary	9	15%
Informative thoughts +correct grammar	3	5%
Correct grammar +precise vocabulary	4	6.67%
Correct grammar + effective punctuation	2	3.33%
Informative thuoghts +correct grammar + precise vocabulary	2	3.33%
Informative thoughts+ precise vocabulary	1	1.67%
Informative thoughts +correct grammar	6	10%
Total	60	100%

Good academic writingaccording to the participants is correct grammar with a rate

of28.33%and informative thoughts with a rate of 20%. Regarding effective punctuation, it took a

rate of 6.66% and precise vocabulary with 15%in addition to other compound choices, students

mentioned, which are correct grammarand precise vocabulary; informativethoughts, correct

grammar and precise vocabularyor all of them.

Question 05

Table 32
The difficulties students encounter while writing

Option	N	%
Choosing vocabulary	07	11,66
Grammar	16	26.67
Ideas organizationand argumentation	18	30
Essay organiationorunfamiliarity with academic writing structure	14	23,33
Conventions of writing (spelling, punctuation, capitalization…etc)	3	05
Grammar+ essay organiation	1	1.67
Ideasorganizationand argumentation+choosing vocabulary	1	1.67
Total	60	100

The most difficult issuestudents face is ideas organizationand argumentation, which takes the great number of students30%followed by the choice of grammar, also with somehow a big rate but not as the one that ideas organization and argumentation take26.66%. Choosing vocabulary occupies20%, essay organization with 15% andconventions of writing (spelling, punctuation, capitalization…etc) that seems to be the easiest one student deal with 5%

Question 06

Table 33
Students' Objectives in Learning Writing

Option	N	%
Write different types of text	18	30
Get a good mark in essay examinations essays	22	36.67
Succeed in writing like native speakers	10	16.67
Others	04	06.67
Write different types of text+succeed in writing like native speakers	02	03.33
Get a good mark in examinations essays+ succeed in writing like native speakers	01	01.67
Write different types of text+ get a good mark in examinations essays	03	05
Total	**60**	**100**

As seen in Table 33, 36.67% of the studentswant to learn writing in order to get good marks in their examinations. 30% of them opted learn different types of text as their choice behind learning how to write while16.67% of the students claimed that their aim behind learning how to write is to succeed in writing like native speakers. Others 10% have combined different options as write different types of text+succeed in writing like native (03.33%), get a good mark in examinations essays+ succeed in writing like native speakers (01.67%), write different types of text +get a good mark in examinations essays (05%)

The 04 students who opted for "Other" specified that their objective inlearning to write is:

- to learn more vocabulary (01 student)

- to improve their language level and write academically (01 student)

- to become skilled writers (01 student)

- to improve their writing skills to be able to express their ideas and to write reports

  (01student)

Question 07

Table 34

Levels of Student Writers

Option	N	%
Very poor	05	08.33
Poor	26	43.33
Fair to average	20	30.33
Good	07	11.67
Excellent	02	03.33
Total	**60**	**100**

Here, 43.33% students consider that their academic writing skills poor, 30.33% of them claimed that their academic writing isfair to average. Only 11.67% and 03.33%considerthemselves as having good and excellent writing skills, respectively

Section Two: Students' awareness of the effect of homework assignments in improving their academic writing

Question 08

Table 35

Frequency of Writing Practicess in General

Option	N	%
Never	0	0%
1--3times asemester	12	20%
once amonth	14	23.33%
2--3times amonth	20	33.33
once a weekor more often	10	16.67
Missing	04	6.67
Total	**60**	**100%**

33.33%of the respondents indicated that they wrote texts 1--3times asemester. 20%of the students answered that they wrote texts in English '1-3 times asemester'. Roughly the same number applied to students answering 'once a month', as well as '2-3 times a month'. Only16.67% of them answered once a week.

Question 09

Table 36

Frequency of Writing Practicess at Class in Other Subjects

Option	N	%
Never	0	0
1--3times asemester	12	20
once amonth	14	23.33
2--3times amonth	20	33.33
Once a week	10	16.67
Missing	04	6.67
Total	**60**	**100%**

Almost 20%of the students answered that they wrote thosetexts at class '1-3 times a semester', roughly the same number of students indicated thatthose texts were written at class 'once a month' and33.33%of students answered '2-3times a monthwhile 16.67% answered "Once a week"

Question 10

Table 37

Frequency of Writing Practicess at Home in other Subjects

Option	N	%
Yes	14	25
No	45	75
Missing	01	1.67
Total	**60**	**100**

Nearly 36.67% of students said they never wrote the texts at home, whilealmost20%of the students claimed they wrote texts at home '1-3 times a semester.' Almost16.67%of the students crossed off that they wrote texts at home either 'once amonth' or '2-3 times a month' (13.33%). Only 08.33% of the students answered "once a week"

Question 11

Table 38

Students' Opinions if Homework Assignments is Waste of Time or Not

Option	N	%
Never	22	36.67%
1--3times asemester	12	20%
once amonth	10	16.67%
2--3times amonth	08	13.33
once a week	05	08.33
Missing	03	05
Total	**60**	**100**

76.67%of the students, as shown by Table 38, think that teachers' homework assignments will not waste valuable time, whereas 23.33% believe that homework assignments will negatively affect the time devoted to the course

Please, explain why………………………..

Out of 60 students, 46 would like to get homework assignments for thefollowing reasons:

2. There is an obvious relationship between academic writing skills and homework assignments

- Students learn rules at class and go home to apply them in writing to express clearly their ideas(07students)

- They complete each other (09 students).

- Homework and WEcourse have the same goal: helping the students become good writers (01student).

3. Practicing writing skills at home has several advantages. It will aid students:

- To remember the rules (07 students).

- To acquire grammatical knowledge through the practice of writing (05 students).

- To practice grammar and writing at the same time (05 students).

4. <u>Homework assignments are the only context:</u>

- To apply what they study at class (01 student).

- To improve the grammatical knowledgethat has been learned at WE course (02 student).

- To evaluate our writing production development (02 students).

4. <u>It will be challenging because:</u>

- It is more difficult to practice writing at class (04 student).

- It will oblige students to keep in touch with what they have taken at class and get prepared for the next course (03 students).

14students explained that they are against having homework assignments:

1. <u>There is no need to link them; students learn at class, that is enough </u>(05students)

2. <u>They want to keep them separated:</u>

- They want to have enough time tohave fun and play"we have lives outside of university and need time to relax! (02 students).

- It causes dangerous stress situations (03 students).

- They are not able to do so because they expect it will be too demanding (02 students)

- They preferlearning writing at class with the presence of the teacher (01 student).

- Students do not learn anything they said that homework assignments allow teachers to easily grade us (01 student)

Question 12
Table 39

Students' Opinions if Their Teachers Give Them Homework or Not

Option	N	%
Yes	40	66.67
No	12	20
Missing	08	13.33
Total	**60**	**100**

For this question, 66.67**%**of the students that their teachers assign them different homework assignments while20**%**answered that question by saying "no"

If yes, what kind of homework assignments?

Out of 40 students, 32 of them stated that most of written expression homework assignments were in a form of exercises.

<u>They related homework assignments in written expression course with grammar that, in doing those assignments, it is not about practicing writing than in learning grammatical rules.</u>

- Filling the gap (08 students)

- Rewrite the following sentences using the appropriate punctuations (15 students)

- Learning about sentence construction

- Identify the simple, compound and the complex sentences (01 student)

- Learning about different kinds of words and when using them in sentences (08 students)

- Multiple choices exercices

The remaining respondents (08 students) claimed that they are actively involved in writing.

For example:

- Essay writing and comprehension tests (05 students)

- Writing stories and letters (03 students)

Question 13
Table 40

Students' Attitudes if They Do Their Homework Assignments

Option	N	%
Yes	43	71.67
No	13	21.67
Missing	04	06.67
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 40. shows that 71.67% of the surveyed studentsclaimed that they did their homework assignments.

Question 14

Table 41

Doing Homework Improves Writing Essay Assignments in English Language At University

Option	N	%
Yes	57	95
No	02	03.33
Missing	01	01.67
Total	**60**	**100**

95%of the students believe that doing those homeworktasks in written expression course

will contribute to improve their writing (as provided in Table 41).

Question 15

Table42

Attending Written Expressioncourse Improves Writing in Other Subjects

Option	N	%
Yes	57	95
No	03	05
Total	**60**	**100**

Almost all the respondents9**5**% indicated that WE course helps them to write well in other

modules

Please, explain why**.**

57 students, who answered "Yes" to Q.16, justified theirviews according to the following

considerations:

1. It is normally a way when students are able to write in discipline-specific modules due to the

   contribution made by the WE course

   - Written expression course aids us in writing especially in other subjects as literature

     and civilization where we write essays (10 students)

   - It helps on the way we read and understand words (05 students)

   - It gives us the basics for writing in other modules (07 students)

   - It teaches us the academic writing as well as the ability to cite sources (19 students).

2. <u>Writing in other modules needs only practice in WE module</u>

- practice makes it easier**)** 05 students)

- the more they practice it, the more they develop the quality of writing (04 students)

- the practice of writing paragraphs or essays allows them to know better the rules (03 students)

- Knowing the rules in written expression course makes it easy (04students)

Two (02) students provided that they consider written expression course as a separated module in which they learn different issues from what they take in other subjects.

Section Three: Experiences with feedback on academic writing

Question 16
Table 43

Frequency of Teacher's Feedback

Option	N	%
Always	12	20
Sometimes	37	61.67
Never	09	15
Missing	02	3.33
Total	**60**	**100**

From the results, it is clear that 61.67% of the students said that their teacher sometimes give feedback, and 20% answered that "Always**"** , only 15% claim that he never gives feedback.

Question 17
Table 44
Importance of Teacher's Feedback

Option	N	%
Yes	46	76.67
No	12	20
Missing	02	3.33
Total	**60**	**100**

As table 44 shows, 76.67% of the respondents consider teachers' feedback importantwhile20**%** of them are against the idea.

If yes, please justify

46 students explained that teachers' feedback is important because:

- It helps us avoid repeating the same mistakes in our future writing assignments (12 students)

- It improves our errors (03 students)

- We like knowing what our teacher thought about our writing (07 students)

- We learn a lot from the feedback (02 student)

- It is a way of interaction between students and their teachers (03 students)

- It helps us to know how well we are doing (04 students)

- Feedback consider as a tool to know our level of performance (03 students)

- Feedback is a tool for continued learning) 04 students)

- It helps us to keep motivated (01 student)

- It enriches our self-knowledge and awarenessconcerning our writing (02 students)

- It gives as a sense of direction and guidance in our homework assignments (03 students)

Question 18
Table 45
Techniques Used by Teachers to Correct Students' Essays and Paragraphs

Option	N	%
The teacher corrects the errors	43	71.67
The teacher underlines the errors and I have to correct them	09	15
The teacher uses amarking code on the errors and I have to correct them	08	13.33
The teacher uses other methods	/	/
Total	**60**	**100**

71.67%of the students said their teacher corrects the errors, 15% claim he/sheunderlines the errors and I have to correct them .13.33% of the students said he/sheusesamarking code on the errors and I have to correct them.

Question 19
Table 46
Priority in providing feedback

Option	N	%
Spelling errors	12	20
Grammatical errors	18	30
Preciseformulations and vocabulary	10	16.67
Content	08	13.33
Grammatical errors+content	05	08.33
Spelling errors+grammatical errors	07	11.67
Total	**60**	**100**

30% of the students said that the grammaticalerrors is given more importance bytheirteachers while 20% said spelling errors.Few students said Precise formulations and vocabulary while very few saidContent.

Section four: Further suggestions

Among the respondents, 41 students provided the following suggestions assummarised below:

1. <u>The place of homework assignments in learning writing:</u>

    - The have a central role (08 students).

    - They help us in developing our writing (01 student).

    - They arean essential part in writing (03 students).

    - They contribute to improve our level in learning English (01 students).

    - Homework assignments must be given at in any modulethat requires writing (01 student).

    - Good writing is partly due to a good practice (01 student).

2. <u>Homework assignments and the teacher of writing:</u>

- A good teacher must assign homework tasksbecause they help the students (04 student).

- They would like their teacher of writing to adopt more homework assignments in his/her classroom (03 student).

3. <u>writing and time allocation:</u>

- Writing is important in language learning, and therefore, it should be given moreconsideration by giving more hours to practicing it (10 student).

4. <u>Feedback and writing:</u>

- Feedback must be linked to the teaching of WE to improve ourlevel in writing (06 student).

- It must be given the principal place in writing (01 student).

- Feedback is part of writing and each one completes the other (01 student).

- Through receiving feedback, we can see our errors so that avoiding them (01student).

6.1.1.b. *Interpretation of the results*

The results generated via this thorough analysis of the questionnaire demonstrate thata considerable number of the students like writing because they are aware of thenecessity of developing this skill**.** Concerning the relation between reading and writing most of them claimed that reading improves writing and this indicated that most of the students perceived reading to have positive influence on their writing. However, the others are just escaping the "yes" alternative that requires an explanation that theycannot provide since there is no relation between the two skills. Regarding the objectives of the students in learning writing, most of studentswant to learn writing in order to get good marks in their examinations.

Thesestudents do not recognize and realize the real aim behind writing when different standards should be considered. Appropriately, students should be knowledgeable by their teachers

concerning the objectives about what is expected from them in the WE course. In writing, the most difficult issuestudents face is ideas organizationand argumentation, which takes the great number of students30%and this justify why most students fail during their examinations where argumentative essays are mostly required. For students writing abilities, most of them claimed that they have poor writing. Indeed, their writing on the questionnaire showed a number of errors.

As to students' awareness of the effect of homework writing assignments in improving their academic writing, they claimed that writing is a long and complex process, which is rather requiringmore practice and effort thus they complaining for not having essays writing assignments at home. Accordingly, most of them like to get homework assignments as a way to reinforce their practice in writing. It is quite logically that practice makes perfection. Concerning the kind of activities teachers assign, most students claimed that these tasks are in form of exercises that serve much more grammar than writing skill itself. Thus, it seems that they spend a nearly one semester in learning just grammatical lessonsas the written expression syllabusentitled. And this may explain their failure to be actively involved in the process of writing. The majority of the students, indicated that WE course normally will help them to write well in other corses.

Regarding feedback, nearly all the students stated that their teachers sometimes gives feedback and they answered positively to the idea of the importance of teachers' feedback. Students consider linking writing to feedback will help them to improve their academic writing. It is a kind of consciousness-raising activity. This means that students are conscious of the importance of feedback, and this attitude is based on the fact that feedback is an important aspect in writing because it is a necessary component of learning to write, and it is positively or negatively affecting the quality of students' writing. By providing feedback, they will certainly reduce errors in writing. From a general perspective, most students agree that good academic writing implies partly an effective teachers' feedback.

Concerning the aspect which the teacher gives the more importance in feedback, 30% of students said the grammatical errors as they stated that their teachers provide directly the correct

form in their feedback Yet, although there was a firm accord amongstudents with regard to feedback significance, they seemed not to be that much satisfied. with the type of feedback. This demonstrate that the teachersattach great importance to form-based feedback. Accordingly, they are urgently should be aware ofthe potential of both kinds of feedback (content and form) for excelling the composition skills of students. They all have to adopt itregularly to evaluate students' writing in more or less the same fashion.

Overall, the students showed that they feel interested by what is takingplace in the writing classroom and by language teaching. The students' suggestionsrevealed that homework assignments have a significant place in developing their writing and intervenes in all the processof writing, and that it should be devoted sufficient time. In addition, the studentssuggested that good teachers are the ones who assign effective homework assignments and provide a functional feedback. S/he shouldhave a solid belief in the potential of practice to ensure an effective teaching of writing and toprovide his/her students with as much selective essay assignments as possible. Therefore, it becomes a need to investigate the role of homework assignmentsalong with feedback, which occurs before the final piece of writing, and whether students incorporate them or not.

6.1.2. Teachers'interview

6.1.2.a*Analysis of teachers' interview*

The teachers' interview is intended to get information from teachers about teaching writing, homework assignments and the importance of their feedback in improving students' academic writing. The interview allows for in-depth probing and extended responses. It aims mainly at knowing the place teachers give to homework assignments and feedback in the writing classroom, the first-year written expression syllabus and if the time appointed to teachingwritten expression is sufficient.

The researcher started by transcribing the interviews so that she could read and reread the transcript several times. Interpretations are taken back to the participants in order to confirm the content of what they have stated during the interview. Thematic analysis is a method for

identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes)within data. It is considered as an independent

qualitative descriptive approach is mainly described as "a method for identifying, analysing and

reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). It is the most common

method used in qualitative research. It aims to find common patterns across a data set. It usually

follows given steps to link between themes and the aims of the study in order to guide

thedevelopment of analytical claims. The main steps are listed as: (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

- Reading and re-reading the data.

- Coding the whole text.

- Finding themes.

- Reviewing themes to confirm that they fit the data.

- Defining and naming themes.

- The write-up (creating a coherent narrative that includes quotes from the interviewees).

In presenting the findings, codes (I1 − I8) are used to distinguish the eight teachers

(interviewees).and the table below shows overall time of interviewing.

Table 47
Overall time of interviewing

Data	Time spent
Interviewee -1- (I1)	1 h.45 ms
Interviewee -2- (I2)	2 hrs.12 ms
Interviewee -3-(I3)	2 hrs. 05 ms
Interviewee -4-(I4)	1 h. 42 ms
Interviewee -5-(I5)	2 hrs.10 ms
Interviewee -6-(I6)	1 h. 40 ms
Interviewee -7-(I7)	2 hrs. 05 ms
Interviewee -8-(I8)	2 hrs.10 ms
Overall amount of interviewing	**15 hours &09 minutes.**

- **Interview with teacher 1**

The interviewee 1 (I1) 1had been teaching English for 12 years. She had Magisterdegree (MA) and

had taught written expression for 8 years. At the time of the interview, she was teaching first year

students in written expression, in addition to other subjects.

The interview began by talking about writing in general and the I1 was asked how important academic writing is in her written expression course. Her reply was that "I would say it is a pretty crucial skill to acquire". She mentioned that "academic writing forces students to look at ideas and research from a different perspective". the interviewee 1 felt that academic writing should have a larger place in her lessons, but that there is a problem in the curriculum. There are many other things to focus on.

Concerning the way, she is teaching the academic writing, she stated that "variation is important" she integrates the two aspects of language as writing, reading. Accordingly, writing is always connected to both reading and understanding the varioustopics. She illustrated that by saying "I teach grammar and other aspects of the language in connection with the paragraphs and essays the students wrote" then she asks them to write at class sometimes. Then she provides them with feedback immediately after they had written the paragraphs and essays and could put the remarks into a context straight away. Knowing that she raised the idea that students like to write but only what they want to write. Which is a good way according to her.

Regarding written expression syllabus, she stated that "I think it would work better if we reorder its parts and lessons" Commenting the problems students face in their writing, she said that "students suffered with the same problems, especially grammar, such as subject verb agreement, prepositions, sentence structure, and parts of speech". The interviewee 1 bases the grade on both content and form, consequently, the two counted the same amount towards the grade.

When asked if she assigns homework in her written expression course, the I1 answered that "sometimes not every session by providing them with different exercises". She was asked if the students are prepared to do the homework, shesaid that "most of the students considered the homework as a compulsory taskgiven by the teachers, they neither see the homework as a process of complete learning nor ignore it".

Ideally, she thought that through homework assignments teachers can see how well students understand lessons. The interviewee 1 considers that homework affected learning when the students took it seriously and were attentive in it.

Regarding the feedback teacher gives, (I1 answered that she commentsby giving the correct answer Yet, the comments were more specialized in the beginning of the year than in the end of the year. She gives the comments and the grade digitally so that the students could save them and compare the comments for improve themselves.

the interviewee 1 was asked what she emphasizes most when giving feedback, her reply was form feedback explaining that most of the errors were in form of verb conjugation, articles, and prepositions. by preference, she thought that feedback is the appropriate way which help students to enhance their learning particularly their academic writing. The comments could be saved and they stayed there so that the students could go back and see what the comments were at any time.

In her final comments, she said that "The best way to improve students' academic writing is specify much time for practice and reading which leads to good level in writing"

- **Interview with teacher 2**

The second interviewee (I2) was a teacher who had been teaching English for ten years at university. She had a Magister degree in Applied linguistics and TEFL. And she is teaching first year written expression for eight years. She is currently finishing her doctoral thesis to be defended soon.

When asked about how important writing is in her courses, she answered: "I tend to focus more on writing because students' written proficiency is not as good" and concerning the way of teaching academic writing, she said that "sometimes I ask them to do their exercises that were related to the lesson they had been learning.

With regard to the first-year written expression syllabus, the second interviewee commented by saying that "I do not find many lessons where the students are requested to write full texts. Sometimes I assignthem to write shorter texts. The longer texts were in connection with their

examinations". Usually she is teaching those writing aspects as a last part of the written expression syllabus so that students do not get chance to practice all the elements of writing before they might be going for the different exams that they have. she thought it was better for the students to have more chances to practice writing from the beginning of the year.

The second interviewee said that the obstacles for the students when writing English varied. The basic problems connected to the writing process, (spelling, grammar, punctuation). And those which related to the essay's structure (how to write a thesis statement, an introduction body, and conclusion). Thus, she said that "her assessment was based particularly on their grammatical errors".

When asked if she gives homework, she explained: "I do not give homework"; The reason was that if she did that, she thought that she needs to read and reread the texts and comment on them, and it was hard to find the time and effort to do that often. She rather questions them to do their exercises in class, so that she could go around, read, and make sure they understood the lesson. Relatedly, she felt that most of the students had unfavorable attitude towards homework. Accordingly, she does not give that much value to the homework assignments in order to improve students' academic writing. Believing that homework can affectboth students' physical and mental health. She proved that by saying: "According to a study by Stanford University, 56 per cent of students considered homework a primary source of stress".

When we discussed the concept of feedback, the second interviewee stated that "I gave feedback to show students how they can improve and how they can do better". She added that:

> I gave feedback orally on the most prominent errors after the tasks were finished explaining
>
> that it is a time consuming, and I did not see any improvements from a student; they were
>
> not interested in improving. Not all of the students wanted to rewrite and work with the tasks
>
> again

The second interviewee stated that she finds difficulties to distinguish between giving feedback, helping the students and letting them be writers of that task. She said that feedback could affect academic writing in a positive way only if students were interested and motivated in the process.

- **Interview with teacher 3**

The third teacher had been teaching English for about eleven years at the time of the interview. Sheis teaching the first year for four years. She teaches oral expression, grammar and writing. She holds a Magister degree and is currently finishing her doctoral thesis to be defended.

Writing was really important for her. The students spent about three hours per week on writing in general. She was asked to describe how she taught academic writing, and she explained:

> it depends, it is so difficult and you have to vary it. Sometimes I just write the lesson on board and explain it. Or sometimes I have to make them prepare it by themselves. I cannot say why I teach academic writing this particular way, because in one class I teach academic writing in different ways

She explained that teaching academic writing is based normally on topics and the students asked to write about those. Also including answering questions to check students' understanding the topic that had been focused on. But unfortunately, first year written expression syllabus did not fit that purpose; the students wrote a kind of complete texts at the end of the year. they could not do that in the beginning which should be developed through reading she added "students deemed their written performance as not important and for them writing was not priority over other language skills as speaking". as far as the question of grading students' academic writing, she replied as "I do not have a given model to do so"

As for Homework, the third interviewee gives homework mostly through the exercises. She corrects them with students at class. Adding that students had neutral attitude towards homework; doing only those that find them easy and taking less time to accomplish.

For her, homework assignments should be assigned with a reasonable length and given goal in order to keep students interested and motivated.

The third interviewee does not give feedback explaining that "giving feedback to a work took much time. I need to explain it for student individually which is hard task with large class that we deal with". The reason why she had not done it, is time constraints and sheexperienced that it was very difficult to accomplish. Accordingly, for her a grade on students' academic writing should suffice.

In her final comments, she said that "one could have many ideas on how to do things, but in the busy time schedule and not satisfied syllabus, it was not easy to try many new things".

- **Interview with teacher 4**

The interviewee 4 had been teaching English for 2 years. She had Master degree and she is first year doctoral student. She had taught written expression for 2 years. At the time of the interview, she was teaching first year students in written expression, in addition to other subjects.

The interviewee 4 was asked how important academic writing was in her written expression course. Her reply was that The American writer Mark Twain said: "Writing is easy. All you have to do is cross out the wrong words.". She mentioned that writing provides a vehicle for expression and communication.

The interviewee 4 went on to talk about the difficulty in teaching academic writing; it was hard for her to specify in detail how she is teaching academic writing. She explained: "Writing is part of the plan and is often linked to other tasks" She asks students to prepare the lesson then they present it with her directionthen she gives them activities and when she hands the activities back, she gives them her feedback.

The reason why the interviewee 4 teaches in the way she did was that she believes in getting students involved in teaching learning process. Another essential factor of teaching writing was individual responsibility. It was important that the students depended on their own individual challenges.

Concerning the frequency of students' writing paragraphs and essays, she commented saying that "not much, most of my assignments were in form of exercises and short paragraphs". Explaining that most students consider writing as a heavy burden. When asked about the first-year

written expression syllabus, the interviewee 4 answered that "it is appropriate, but it needs much time to work on".

Commenting the problems students face in their writing, she mentioned the most of them as: good thesis statement, grammar, and transitions. When she graded writing, the interviewee 4 based the grade on how many errors students did.

Regarding homework, (I4 said that "during my lessons there were always written tasks and assignments, but students are not motivated enough to write". Complaining of that because according to her homework gives students another opportunity and chance to practice writing skill.

The interviewee 4 gives feedback mostly through the quizzes and examinations. She corrects them and summers everything up at the end. She tries to give direct feedback to what the students had produced so that they could see their errors and weak points, based her feedback on writing good thesis statement, body and conclusion. She occasionally tries out feedback on homework; sheis not comfortable with the method and did not find it very efficient. She explained: "Feedback is very essential. If we had the time, I think it would work better". As a conclusion to her interview, (I4) wished a good luck to the researcher.

- **Interview with teacher 5**

The fifth teacher (I5) had been teaching English for about seven years at the time of the interview. She had a Magister degree in English language. She was teaching the first year for six years. She also visited some European countries which helped her in consolidating her knowledge regarding teaching English as a foreign language.

The interview began by talking about the importance of academic writing in interviewee' classroom when the (I5) replied as:

> Writing is an essential aspect of expression; the ability to articulate oneself via the written word provides students with the chance to share their knowledge in a meaningful and effective way.

The (I5) mentioned her way of teaching academic writing. That was done in a context; the students wrote about a topic and presented that topic in front of their classmates. she believed in putting elements in context, so academic writing was always linked to many components.

the (I5) stated two factors when she was asked about why students do not write much. One factor was that the syllabus does not help them to do so. The students only discover the way of writing at the end of the syllabus. A second factor was that there was a small percentage of students who positively want to write.

Concerning the difficulties that students encounter when writing, she commented as saying; "Most of them in terms of generating ideas, ordering time and outlining". When she grades their students' academic writing, she basesthe grade on providing her with correct piece of writing.

When asked if she gives homework, she explained "yes when I see they need it" whether writing paragraphs and essays or doing different exercises. She added that students thought that doing homework was not valuable and did not contribute to learning. Then she hoped that the student's personal motivation from the classroom would also a play a role in homework completion.

Talking about her objective behind assigning homework, her reply was "improved development of their personal skills". The (I5) believes that when homework proceeds smoothly it can become a positive aspect in developing students' academic writing"

When asked why she gives feedback, the (I5) answered that it was difficult to decide how much the teacher should correct or comment on. She herself evaluated both language and contents in a written form. Because she believes that when students saw that the teachers hadspent time and energy to provide good feedback, they could feel that the teachercared about their development.

According to her, giving feedback to a work took much time, yet it deemed as the effective way to improve students' academic writing. In her final comments, she hoped for more and more studies that conducted that issue.

- **Interview with teacher 6**

The sixth teacher had been teaching English for about ten years at the time of the interview. She had a Magister degree in English language. She was teaching the first year for six years.

"Writing should play a more prominent role in classroom" she said. When she was asked to describe how she taught academic writing, she stated "in a normal way, providing the handout for students, read and explain it then I ask them for questions". The reason why the (I6) is teaching in the way she did was that "after many years of teaching I have been convinced that is approximately the correct way"

When it comes to times of writing, "there is no definitive practice to follow when asking students to write. Sometimes every week while others were just exercising. Either way, it is important that the writing practice" she commented. "students view a writing task as a chore and a dull duty writing just what they like to write" she added. When asked about the first-year written expression syllabus, the I6 answered without details that "I hope to see more improvements"

According to her, spelling errors were among the most frequent errors committed by students. Thus, generating ideas, and grammar misuse were also perpetrated. Concerning the grade for students' academic writing, she bases on a formal writing rubric that made up of five components.

When asked if she gives homework, she said "sometimes, through a mixture of exercises and writing paragraphs and essays ". Commenting on students' attitudes towards doing their homework assignments, she said that "there was variability in theirperceived of homework and its completion. Only few students completed all their assigned homework"

Her objective behind assigning homework was to extend student exploration of lessons more fully than class time permit. Thus, she mentioned that "studentswho are regularly involved in homework and tend to increase their efforts for doing their academic task accomplishment at home, are more likely to develop their academic writing and achieve positive results"

As for feedback, the sixth interviewee stated, "I gave feedback orally and in a written form to show studentstheir errors". She added that:

> The high-performing students looked at the feedback, but the low-performing students did not. However, usually the low-performing students needed the feedback most.

About what she emphasizes most when giving feedback, she utilizes codes to indicate errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics. She explained, "Responding to students' writing is thought of as an essential part of learning how to write successfully in the FL context"

- **Interview with teacher 7**

The interviewee 7 had been teaching English for 2 years. She had Master degree and she is first year doctoral student. She had taught written expression for 2 years

The interview began by talking about the importance of academic writing in interviewee' classroom when the (I7) replied as: "Academic writing fosters the students' ability to express themselves by understanding of the language used and the ability to communicate" she added "Academic writing remains a major role player in higher education"

When she was asked to describe how she taught academic writing, she said that the appropriate method for me is the following "write the lesson on the board, explain it, and provide students with handout for more information". About the times, students write she commented, as "they like to write" shesaid "some students write by themselves and ask me for feedback commenting on first year written expression syllabus, she stated that it is somehow appropriate to students at that level.

Dealing with first-year syllabus, she commented as saying "If we want teaching writing to improve, more emphasis must be placed on curriculum delivery". Concerning the difficulties that students encounter when writing, she commented as saying; "Most of them in terms of vocabulary and grammar misuse". When she graded their students' academic writing, she based her grade on the errors students did in their piece of writing.

Talking about homework, she explained "I gave them different exercise and activities in order to master their lessons and fit the syllabus requirements". She added, "Students' attitudes to homework vary according to many criteria". She considers homework assignments an important extension of classroom learning.

The interviewee 7 gave feedback mostly through the quizzes and examinations. She focused on language structure problems. She gives feedback in a form of questions as what, how and why? In order to enhance students' ability to defend themselves. When she asked about the role that feedback play in students' academic writing she said, "Feedback helps students to rewrite and that is what is most importance, however I find the type of feedback, timing of its use, and way it is used can have positive effects on students' academic writing".

In her final comments, (I7) hoped for more and more focus on how to improve students' academic writing.

- **Interview with teacher 8**

The teacher 8 had been teaching English for about seven years at the time of the interview. She had a Magister degree in English language. She was teaching the first year for six years.

"Writing is the primary basis upon which communication is begun," she said. Students nowadays are required to write with clarity and ease because they already have the will to write. She was asked to describe how she taught academic writing, and she explained: "I have to make them prepare the lesson by themselves in order to be independent learners"

The (I8) stated many factors when she was asked about the frequency of students writing paragraphs and essays, she said that teachers struggle with planning and designing academic writing assignments thus, they are also supposed to devote a significant amount of time to feedback and assessment. Accordingly, with the requirements of the syllabus "I often ask them to write" adding that "students are really want to write, yet they need encouragement" then "Teachers do not work together to plan syllabus matters, because they are not properly trained or workshopped"

With regard to the difficulties students find when writing in English, (I8) claimed that "their students' lexical repertoire is poor and limited". Adding "I grade their papers according to their grammatical errors in addition to transition, punctuation and spelling mistakes"

As for Homework, the (I8) gives homework mostly through the exercises. Adding that students do not value much homework assignments; doing only those, which find them easy and with less effort. For her, homework assignments should be assigned with a specific objective in order to make them effective. "The more specific the goal, the more effective is at the disposal of students, thus much improvement is attained".

The (I8) do not give feedback anymore explaining that "Because most of the time students look at the grade and close the paper, so we do a lot of work that the students do not even look at the feedback we provide". Accordingly, for her a grade which based on both content and language form should suffice.

She concluded the interview saying, "Teaching academic writing is not an easy task as it is expected, and teachers do work hard in order to find some effective ways in doing so.

6.1.2.b. *Findings and discussions*

Findings are presented on five themes, whichwere identified in the data of the study and recognized as significant challenges and problems hampering teachers and students in improving academic writing. The themes are presented as:
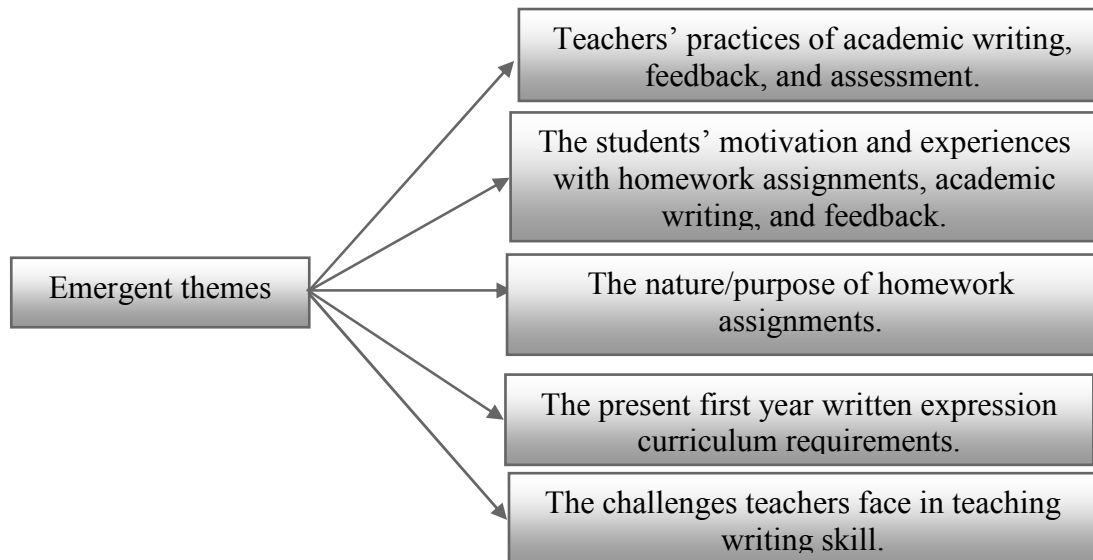
Figure 5. Emergent themes according to interview' analysis

Teachers' practices of academic writing, feedback, and assessment

Obviously, 62,5% ofteachers find it difficult to respond on students' academic writing, because there is less time available and more students at one classroom. They believe that large classes do not allow the teacher to evaluatehis/her students' papers, as it does not offer opportunities for discussions for that not all of them provide it; "giving feedback to a work took much time. I need to explain it for student individually which is hard task with large class that we deal with". According to I3. It must be said that feedback is seen not only as a means to check students 'errors but has also been seen as "a means of channeling reactions and advice to facilitate improvements" (Hyland & Hyland, 2001, p. 186).

Regarding the way of providing feedback, 75 %of teachersare commenting on the form – surface structure- than the content or providing students just with a grade. "I utilize codes to indicate errors in grammar, spelling, and mechanics" according to I6 and I7. When myriad studies including the present one, investigatingteachers' feedback on students' papers find that teachers provide feedback mostly on grammar. The early study of Zamel (1985) finds that most of the teachers' remarksemphasize on language errors ignoring content. However, feedback is very essential for students' improvement. Hyland (2003) stated that "teachers' feedback provide on their students' writing should be "more than marks on a page" (p. 184). Therefore, he mentioned that

when teachers provide feedback, they should consider all aspects in students' writing such as the structure, organization, style, content, and presentation.

Though there is a need to address issues related to types of feedback on writing, 75 %of teachers adopted oral, and direct feedback, however, it would be better if teachers mix their feedback to give students the chance to self-correct before offering their papers and to ensure its a long-term effect.

Only 37,5% of teachers were talked about praise in providing feedback, knowing that the researcher did not mention it before in the interview on purpose and let teachers by themselves addressed it. Encouraging students through praise is also a kind of feedback that is highly recommended as Cardelle and Corno (1981) state, "students receive feedback only on errors and there is no consideration of possible motivational effects" (p. 253). Moreover, to avoid negative consequences, Cardelle and Cornopropose that "a combination of criticism and praise can make students errors salient in a motivationally favorable way" (p. 260).

Selectivity or the "focused approach" as it is known by many authors (Sheen, Wright, &Moldawa, 2009, p.567), implies that "teachers select specific grammatical problems that they have observed and make these problems the focus of their feedback for a limited period". In other words, Selectivity is an appropriate way that help teachers to identify at what level they need to emphasize while providing feedback.

There have been strategies of scale in teaching methods but not in assessment (Gibbs & Simpson, 2003). This may reflect teachers' attitudes when they asked about assessment and grading their students' papers. There was not a formal rubric they relied on in their assessment even not all teachers used a rubric to grade students' papers. Because of the absence of assessment consensus among teachers, assessment is often being provided randomly, and lacking in the necessary quality, to be effectual. Yet, it is essential for students to have theopportunity to work with a standard scoring rubric, so that "Itgives them the chance to see the importance of writing criteria and to gain

some practicein assessing their own or their colleagues' piece of writing" (Wolcott & Legg, 1998, p.121).

Students' motivation and experiencewith homework assignments, academic writing, and feedback

Motivation in learning is a very powerful and effective tool in predicting a students' success in acquiring the language. This statement can be seen from the transcription of interviews. Through the interview with teachers, the researcher concluded that students' attitudes towards writing vary as they have positively influenced their desire to write and/or they have negatively deemed it as a chore. From the teachers' perspective (87,5%), most of the students did not get a sense of responsibility and accomplishment when homework is provided "students had unfavorable attitude towards homework" according to I2. "Students are not motivated enough to write" according to I4. This sense of disregard is further encouraged by some teachers in a way.

Students were not motivated in doing their homework assignments. However, it is the job of teachers to reduce that issue. How can students be motivated and encouraged to do and complete homework assignments if their teachers did not try hard to do so, teachers support in helping with doing homework assignments will lay a ground that will evolve into good study habits and the practice of writing that will scaffold into many improvements in their academic wiring. It is expected from students not to do their homework tasks as they do not like to have assignments outside the classroom, yet teachers should be aware how to cope with that and value the role that homework assignments play in improving students' academic writing.

Teachers' attitudes on students' perspectives towards feedback asserts that there is a contradiction among students: while some of them evaluate and respond to it, others overlook it and do not make any changes in their writings. This contradictory suggest that teachers should be knowledgeable about the reason and choosing the suitable feedback that increases students' motivation and serves their level of proficiency,

The present first year written expression syllabus requirements

Minority writing production, disorder and thenature of the lessons are shown to be closely associated with certain priorities inthe syllabus. While the way of designing the syllabus plays an important role when teaching academic writing skill, this course requires a significant amount of written production. 87,5% of teachers highlighted the isuue that students are offered fewer writingopportunities than what they are required to do at that level. "If we want teaching writing skill to improve, more emphasis must be placed on curriculum delivery", according to I7. "I hope to see more improvements" according to I6. Thus, according to I2 "I do not find many lessons where the students are requested to write full texts. Sometimes I assign them to write shorter texts. The longer texts were in connection with their examinations"

With the present curriculum being deficient on every indicator of writing production– e.g. full of grammatical lessons such as sentence structure and types of sentence, lack of space for teaching the writing skill– till the end of the curriculum. It appears as if curriculum issues are almost completely overshadowed by the more lessons that are found in grammar module or grammatical lessons or taught in an isolate way without any link with writing itself.

In order for curriculum planning to be effective, the curriculum must address more students' writing production. A review of arrangements for curriculum planning and coordinationmay enable teachers to identify creative approaches within that could fruitfully be applied in that area of writing.

"Teachers do not work together to plan curriculum matters, because they are not properly trained or workshopped" (I8)

The nature/ purpose of homework assignments

Homework assignments' purpose influences students' achievement through their own beliefs. As it has been extracted from teachers' interview, an issue as debatable as homework cannot only be solved from a students' standpoint in terms of practices, yet, it should be addressed

in light of teacher beliefs, attitudes and the role that they play in assisting students' homework tasks. Teachers should be attentive to the quality of homework assignments, which is worth considering. Teachers' assignments have a strong influence on improving students' academic writing (100% of teachers). 75% of teachers are assigning homework in form of exercises that addressed most language structure does not serve too much students' academic writing skill. "I gave homework mostly through the exercises" according to I4. "Writing homework assignments gives the students practice of whatever they learn in class and practice makes them perfect". Nelson (2005, p.3)

Create assignments that havespecific knowledge and skills and challenge students to think and to integrate is very essential to the writing skill, as it has mentioned by (I7) when it emphasized the idea that "students' attitudes to homework vary according to many criteria". Attitude affects motivation to learn and influences how students approach an academic writing task. Homework in written expression course can give students an opportunity to apply a concept beyond the controlled conditions of the classroom and provide them with extra time practicing. Homework assignments in written expression should be given to acquire knowledge by practicing the skills necessary for writing so that it will not be a burden for the student.

The challenges teachers face in teaching writing skill

The discussion above raises many issues around the nature of homework assignments, the way of teaching writing skill, and feedback that teachers provide especially whenboth the teachers and the students have different attitudes towards the topic. Large classeswere also a challenge as theyare overloaded with work: there was not enough time to workin an effective way.

Both teachers and students in the present research highlighted the inconsistency between the curriculum guidelines and the actual writing practice in the classrooms. Though effective feedback and useful homework assignments are the recommended strategies for teaching academic writing, teachers find it difficult to respond on students' papers and engage them in the required homework assignments because most students usually have a negative attitude towards homework assignments and a limited response to teachers' feedback and lack of proficiency in English writing.

Consequently, the teachers found it difficult to cope with such circumstances. Gradually students lose interest in writing and become too discouraged to it. Accordingly, there are tensions between the curriculum guidelines, the role of homework assignments, students' motivation, teachers' feedback, and currentacademic writing teaching in the University.

Teachers should emphasize students' level and focus on how to improve the abilities that students will be able to do when they write. However, every year, first year written expression results (see appendix 01) indicated that students perform worse, written expression subject has struggled to get its students to achieve the average. Students have roughly a good grade in that course. Accordingly, another limiting factor has been that in most cases teachers should be more interested and attentive in the writing teaching to help their students score high marks in the examinations.

6.2. Summaryof the QualitativeResults

Qualitative research is useful for obtaining insights into problematic experiences. Qualitative data consists questionnaire and interviews, which aimed to shed light to uncover the emerging, themes, patterns, concepts and knowledge.

Through the analysis of teachers' interview and students' questionnaire, it is easily remarked that various problems are largely responsible for students' low achievement in academic writing therefore; the achieved findings seem, to confirm some answers to the research questions. Details findings will be addressed in the following chapter.

Conclusion

In the present chapter, both the questionnaire and the interview have been to a great extentinformative in that they reported the attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and perspectivesthat teachers and students have. Teaching academic writing is not that easy task, yet it is not seriously taken into consideration which may in the long run the effectiveness of learning English at university level. It is concluded that teachers are meaningfully engaged in the teaching writing skills in spiteof a plethora of grievances and challenges.

CHAPTER SEVEN: STUDENTS' ACADEMIC WRITING AND HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS: EMPIRICAL RESULTS FROM THE QUALITATIVE STUDY AND INTEGRATION WITH THE QUANTITATIVE STUDY

"EDUCATION = school learning + home learning + community learning"
(MacBeath& Turner,1990, p. 3)

Introduction

The researcher visualized triangulation in the present research as a process of combining and synthesizing data and findings that are gathered using various instruments (interview, questionnaire, and experiment). Each instrument has its own focus and shed light upon different elements of what makes up students' academic writing development. Triangulation in the present research was not a question of establishing whether analysis of the data from each of the three instruments would lead to the same findings yet, instead, the data from the instruments were combined to develop a comprehensive.

The presentbrief chapter attempts to integrateand triangulatefindings from the three different tools of the present research. The underlying conceptual relationship between the data collected with the various instruments is aimed to achieve a kind of overlapping between the three instruments.by combining results from the quantitative and qualitative approaches.

The discussion of the results in the present thesis is divided into two sections: a) students'experiences and attitudes and b) teachers' perspectives and understandings.

The discussion in each section includes and integrates the findings from the questionnaires, experiment and teachers' interview. Moreover, the discussion and analysis in each section is investigated in relation to the themes that emerged from the findings of teachers' interview which outlined in chapter six.

The following concepts are of importance in the present research because they confirm that academic writing stillcause obstacles and challenges to first year EFL students and that students/teachers do not adequately address and overcome these obstacles and challenges.

7.1. AcademicWriting and Homework Assignments: students' experiences and attitudes

Students' experiences and attitudes of academic writing and homework assignments are of significance in the present research because they can providean accurate and deep intuitive understanding into the problems they face when approaching writing tasks at first year level. Moreover, students'experiences of their academic writing can highlight those factors that will need to be addressed so that writing can be taught effectively.

The results on students' experiences and attitudes of academic writing and homework writing assignments are discussed in three areas: a) academic writing at first year level, b) homework writing assignments at first year level c) academic writing and feedback.

7.1.1. Academic writing at first year level

From the questionnaire, the results revealed that students claimed to have poor level in writing. Indeed, an analysis and correction of their papers through an experimental study indicated that students were really struggling and had problems in structuring their writing. This results support assertiveness that academic writing is one of EFL students' main debilitation (Hellalet, 2014) As a result, most students fail dismally in producing a correct piece of writing. They should be given more writing practice and more writing exercises and clarity on assignmentsin order to harness their writing skills; students are likely to experience writing difficulties. May be this reflects that most writing activities in educational circumstances is directed to the teacher for evaluation purposes.

Students' answers ofthe questionnaire revealed that they require assistance in their writing. a serious disquietude that students acknowledged regarding their weaknesses in academic writing. The question of grammar is a majorcomponent that featured from the data whether the questionnaire or the experiment and that could be clearly seen on their filled questionnaires and during the correction of their papers. Students consider good writing equals to the mastery of grammar features. Although grammar is essential, students need to be equipped with other academic writing components in order to produce a correct paper. In this context, Teachers' focus

too much on grammar. Similarly, students are obsessed with their grammar errorswhich become like grammar is an unachievable skill for them.

With regard to students' definition of good academic writing, the results from the questionnaire indicated their understanding of good writing included few or no grammar errors and ideas organizationand argumentation. These answers resonate with their writing experiences in the experiment. Accordingly, students are to a certain extent aware of what is good academic writing, but they are not able to do that during their writing practice. This may interpret what have been addressed before concerning the idea that writing was introduced late in their written expression syllabus or that students should get more involved in the writing process.

Students generally value the role of written expression session in improving their academic writing for all the different courses they have in their academic year. This finding resonates with the idea that students need to be given more writing tasks for them to become better writers. During the experiment students were keen to have more writing activities. In the written expression course, students are required to havemany essay assignments.

The idea of struggling with academic writing revealed that students are still in need for support and help in order to improve their academic writing. This is because academic writing is a key skill that is required for university level and students need to be familiar to it. It is clear from the data (questionnaire and experiment) that students are suffering to writewhich an issue should be addressed and discussed.

7.1.2. Homeworkwriting assignments at first year level

Homework writing assignments play a noteworthy role in the teaching of writing in EFL contexts and should provide a solid base for students to practice their writing skillswhich will help them to write correctly and effectively in future. Accordingly, homework assignments should be given properly and adequately from the onset. And this is what the experiment proved in terms of the effectiveness of the homework assignments in improving students' academic writing.

The good quality of writing that students produced at the end of the experiment after having a number of homework assignments constitutesthat students have limited opportunities to practice writing skills. The findings are presented in accordance with the questions asked to them in the questionnaire. From their responses, it is noticeable that students are actively excited in doing their homework assignments. However, the extent of homework assignments done is not clear. In addition, teachers' interviews revealed that students were not motivated in completing/doing their assignments, thus contrasts the findings from the questionnaires.

In some instances, though at surface level it seemed that these EFL students were actively excited to do their homework assignments (responses from the questionnaire.), the reality which raised by their teachers via the interview showed that they still faced challenges in this area. Because only practice can make improvements, their writing had not improved. It can be suggested that they simply need more time to write in English in connection with classroom work before they are comfortable writing by themselves. The exposure to homework assignments seemed to be of adequate benefit to the students in the present research because they performedacceptable writing skills in their essays. Perhaps if the students had gone through this strategy of working over a long period of time, their habits on writing in English language would develop as well.

As indicated earlier, homework assignments need more emphasize whether from teachers or students, one cannot be oblivious of the fact that they are first year students and this perhaps indicates the need for more homework assignments to do. The earlier they start getting homework assignment the better. However, for this to be achieved, it would take a tremendous effort to change negative attitudes about homework assignments in education which still prevail in university today. Trying to get students to do their homework assignments is one of the most frequent and frustrating challengefor teachers.

As mentioned before, attitude plays a key role in promoting doing homework assignments motivation and achievement, thus developing positive attitudes toward homework assignments may help students become more motivated. In general, the results indicate that despite some students claiming that they were adequately involved for doing their homework assignments at university, the samples of student writing and teachers' responses gave a different picture. The

implications are that more effort needs to be done in preparing students and teachers to cope with homework assignments at university level.

7.1.3. Academic writing and feedback

Students' answers of the questionnaire revealed that they require assistance in their writing. a serious disquietude that students acknowledged regarding the feedback on their writing. Most students value feedback because it helps them avoid repeating the same errors in future writing tasks. Indeed, this concern supports the experiment' results that feedback should also be considered in improving students' academic writing as it is a way of achieving writing progress.

Through the responses from the questionnaires, students found that feedback was useful impugns assertions that students do not value feedback which a fact raised by their teachers via the interview. Seemingly the experiment gave a clear picture that students were keen to receive feedback and respond on it. Regrettably teachers through the interview found that students did not respond on feedback regarding their writing rather they were interested only in the grade. These responses designate poor reception of feedback and that students did not benefit at all from the remarks. Accordingly, teachers missed a chance to help them in improving their writings and thisindifference in receiving feedback should be discouraged at all times.

Feedback on students' writing is of paramount importance as it is the only way to pursuit students' progress in writing. Thus, the quality of feedback that students receive from their teachers cannot be underestimated. An analysis of students' questionnaire revealed that students received feedback only on the form level. In fact, this goes in line with teachers' responses regarding the same issue. Both teachers and students clearly indicate that grammaris a great challenge. And that is what the experiment revealed. singularly, this shows that studentsshould be giveninclusive feedback that covers all their weaknesses and strengths. Because if teachersdid not do that, they are going to cheat and fail their students.

The results from the experiment proved the effectiveness of feedback with all its kindsin improving students' academic writing. This implies that teachers need to teach through giving

feedback. This is decisive in teaching and learning writing where students can know what is right and wrong with their writings.

7.2. AcademicWriting and Homework Assignments: teachers' perspectives and understandings

Teachers' perspectives and understandingsplay a key role in the process of teaching and learning writing as they contribute to the way EFL students are taught academic writing. Furthermore, teachers' experiences can underline many issues of interestthatwill give a further boost to the process.

The discussionwith teachers regarding academic writing and homework writing assignments are addressed in three areas: a) academic writing at first year level, b) homework writing assignments at first year level c) academic writing and feedback.

7.2.1. Academic writing at first year level

As already revealed in the results from students in the present research, teachers also confirmed that students cannot express themselves well in English language, which was accrued for different problems they have in their writings. These responses state that English proficiency is a serious problem for most of students. Academic writing is a very essential communication skill desired at tertiary education (Brandt 2009; Lillis 2003). Thus, it is arduous for students to succeed at university without the needful language skills. As already discussed in analysis of the results from each tool, the actual result confirms other researches which reported that students are still struggling with such skill (Ghodbane, 2010, Hellalet, 2014 and khanchali2017)

The way of teaching writing and presenting the syllabusis pivotal element of writing and teachers should care aboutthat issue accurately if they want to develop their students' academic writing. Teachers should remember that writing is a process which needs time and practice to be done well. Teachers stated that students struggle to approach basics: sentence construction, ideas organization and unfamiliarity with academic writing. This finding resonates with their answers in

the questionnaire and their experience in the experiment which revealed that sentences and paragraphs are some of the language aspectsthat found in students'strife.

The content of first year written expression syllabusand the placement of writing skill involved play a key role in teaching academic writing. Even though there were hardly an adequate space for writing which an issue raised by most of teachers via the interview where the chapter of writing has introduced at the end of the year. it also has been stated by some teachers that teaching academic writing at first year level is not desired yet. Perhaps by starting by writing first, taking into consideration that students' writing was mostly informal, changes in the purposes for such writing. academic writing in English language then has become more natural to students. More writing activities need to be embedded into the syllabus.

Students' academic writing is at the heart of teaching and learning process in higher education. Students are assessed largely by what they write, and need to learn such kind of skill earlier in order to besuccessful in higher education. the foundations of language learning should start in early ages development and that it will be hard to acquire language essentials later. As it has addressed before acquiring writing skillsis of paramount importance skills students should acquire so that they can produce a correct paper.

Overall, the results clearly mirror the truth that students really need some serious interventions for them to become competent writers. They still need to learn the basic components of language before they can further learn academic writing. However, as concluded from their teachers' interview, not all the teachers showa kind of appropriate commitment and aid for the teaching of academic writing as they have to do.

7.2.2. Homeworkwriting assignments at first year level

Due to students' poor level in academic writing assignments at university, it is unavoidable that students will need further remedial assistance. Thus, effective practice is needed and includes many teacher decisions about how it should be undertaken. However, the results from teachers' interview about giving the effective practice is largely contradicted. Not all the teachers consider

homework writing assignments in improving their students' academic writing. This is the common critique of the role of homework assignments at University; homework is mainly for scrutiny. It is routinely provided to satisfy universitydemands or meet the syllabus needs. It is high time that heedful consideration to its aims and the need to align assignments withrelation to development of students' academic writing**.**

The issue of homework writing assignments completion comes to the surface in a number of questions asked to teachers; the role of teachers to the students' completion of English homework cannot be underestimated. Teachers' attitudes towards homework writing assignments have an impact on the motivation of the students to complete them. As it is understood from the interview, it is rare that teachers will praise students for completing/doing homework. They always assume that students should take up their own responsibility to finish/do the homework as they are at such level of education. In contrast, teachers have the responsibility to discuss the students' attitude towards homework tasks and design appropriate homework that improve their academic writing.

Corroborated with findings from the students' data. Teachers also noticed that there isnot a consensus of opinion among them on homework writing assignments at first year level and its effectiveness in enhancing students' academic writing where there is no proper foundation in the course of written expression practices which builds up to further courses. This finding is also confirmed by students where they claimed that they need to be given more writing assignments to enhance their academic writing skills. It is further suggesting that students should be exposed to more reading and writing homework assignments as they seem to have less exposure to these tasks. A great number of homework assignments is needed. Much writing practice gives high quality.

In a nutshell, these responses show that there will never be good writing without practice.They also comprehensiblystate that homework assignments routine is the foundation towards better academic writing skills and that this should begin earlier, Furthermore, the discussion with teachersrevealed a lack of giving homework assignments at University particularly first level which implies that when students are at further levels, teachers will still be suffering with

the familiarity of students with homework assignments. Accordingly, students should have given them at earlier levels.

7.2.3. Academic writing and feedback

The results from all the tools used in the present research state that teachers agreed that good academic writing includes providing effective feedback. The results show that teachers acknowledge that in giving feedback, they tend to comment on grammar. Similarly, students from the questionnaire indicated that teachers provide them feedback for their writing first on their grammatical errors. Although some teachers depend on effective strategies in providing feedback, but they still value feedback on form. These types of comments are not comprehensive and students do not benefit from it in improving their academic writing as it is experienced in the experiment. The issue of feedback on content versus form comes to the surface in the present research: the content should weigh as much as language because this is academic writing. Accordingly, these should not be separated but rather combined.

Although it is contrary to the results from the present research, it is important to say that more attention should no longer be on surface grammar aspects but on content. Thus, the present researchemphasizes the importance of approaching both content and grammatical features.

The discussion with teachers states the negative attitudes that studentshave with feedback which refuted students' answers of the questionnaire; However, students' positive attitude does not mean that understanding teachers' feedback or acting on it. It is very important to highlight the motivational role which teachers have to adopt when responding to students' papers. Furthermore, teachers are invited to be mindful of theiruse while giving students with feedback because sometimes students' attitudes towards feedback are based on their teachers' strategies in providing feedback. Positive comments instead of being negative all the time can largely motivate students to respond positively to their teachers' feedback.

To conclude, all teachers emphasize the importance of feedback on teaching and developing writing skills in FL contexts. Therefore, teachers need to approach all aspects of academic writing when responding on students' papers. It is true that grammar is an essentialaspect of writing,

teachershave to adopt the academic literacies approach where all the aspects of writing are considered than the study skills approach.

7.3. Students'Experiences and Teachers' Visualization: Similarities and differences

The findings divulged a number of similarities and differences between teachers' and students'standpoints of student academic writing, homework assignments and feedback.

The results state that there are similarities between students' and teachers'perspectives of the role of homework writing assignments in improving their academic writing. Both teachers and students concurthat students are not well equipped with academic writing skillsand they still need further support by their teachers. In addition, both students and teachers indicated difficulties that they encounter in their academic writing Furthermore, they reach to a consensus that grammatical errors were given much focus than other components of academic writing whether in students' writing or teachers' feedback.

Both members agreed that good quality academic writing production requires extra practice in which homework writing assignments can fit that purpose. The need for more writing activities and intensive language support. Thus, the findings of the present research show that both students and teachers have similar ideas regarding teachers' feedback; they harmonizethat feedback is an important part of teaching academic writing in EFL contexts, and providing effective feedback is essential for students to be informed aboutthe areas they did well and those they need to improve on.

The findings also revealed some differences between students' and teachers' conceptions ofhomework assignments' effectassignments on students' academic writing.for example, teachers seemed to discernall students as having low and poor academic writing skills and they were not ready to deal with the academic writing requestsasked for higher education while some students discern themselves as having average academic writing skills. There were some conflicting responses where not all the teachersstated that they give writing assignments whereassome students indicated that they did different writing assignments at home.

While teachersstated that they do not give homework assignments regularly, students in a hyperbolic way were incompatible with their teachers' responses. In contrast, though students indicated that they do/complete their homework writing assignments, teachers complained saying that students may do the homework writing assignments because of the fear from their teachers or in order to get extra marks to do so, rather than they honestlyintend to do the homework assignments by themselves. Although students valued feedback, teachers complained of no responding to their comments; most students did not apply what they alleged in their answers to the questionnaire.

Both teachers and students are aware of what should happen on the conceptual level but fail to involve at the implementation level. In depth analysis of the work, the researcher found that many challenges should be addressed when approaching academic writing and homework writing assignments in real practice.

7.4. Summary of the Quantitative and Quantitative Results

The main research question of the present thesis is "What is the effect of homework writing assignments on English academic writing among EFL first year LMD students at BatnaUniversity? Interesting results were achieved concerning the role of homework writing assignments in improving students' academic writing. The data obtained revealed that students struggle with various aspects of academic writing which include language use, structure (introduction, body and conclusion), organization of ideas (from the experiment).

On the other hand, the present research also showed that students perceive low feedback response, lack of motivation, lack of students' completion/doing of homework (from the interview) as factors contributing to student academic writing difficulties. The findings show that teachers clearly think that students still need to develop their writing to the standard required at university. The reality is that academic writing takes time to develop and it cannot be acquired in a limited time, and that students need to master the basics of writing before they can fully acquire academic writing. Therefore, the results seem to answer the first research question.

With regard to the causes that hamper students to write a correct paper, the results obtained proved that students' poor achievement in academic writing was influenced by different causes, including lack of effective writing strategies, lack of beneficial writing homework assignments, negative attitudes towards homework writing assignments and teachers' feedback, and lack of effective detailed feedback. According to the findings gained, the causes were rudimentary due to the less writing practice which are usually developed from extensive reading, extra practice time and sufficient opportunities to do so. Therefore, results seem to confirm the second research question

As far as the third and fourth research questions are concerned, the quantitative analysis realized through the experimental study showed the effective role that homework writing assignments and teacher's feedback play in improving students' achievement in academic writing.

The writing process is not necessarily easy: it takes time and effort. Better writing takes practice; it is a skill that is learned by the students themselves on the bases of a certain rules, under a certain setting, with the help of teachers. utilizing certain study strategies. So, students should be given a time to practice their writing and homework writing assignments should be used. That is to say, students are the core of the process and the teacher works as organizer, facilitator and motivator, assigning activities and providing feedback to motivate students for writing. Teachers should meet the needs of students. From this point of view, homework writing assignments can help students to improve their academic writing.

It cannot be denied that homework assignments were an effective tool in improving students' academic writing which can be concluded from the experiment, and to some extent, changed the situation of having to write into willing to write. Homework writing assignments along with teacher' feedback offered an opportunity for students to practice their writing skill. They can arouse students' interest and facilitate It can facilitate English writing teaching and learning and make it more efficient.

Well-designed homework writing assignments and effective teachers' feedback proved to be as a source for students to get useful instructions concerning writing, such aswriting well can only

come from practice, language use which proved to be at the top of students' difficulties in writing (it is already mentioned in their answers of the questionnaire and it subsequently proved by the experiment), organization of the text, and getting more chance to practice and communicate their writing skill. Teachers can do more important things concerning homework writing assignments and feedback: to design some writing tasks to practice written English by giving students some topics to write about, provide them with effective feedback – content and form- to give them clear guidance on how to improve their writing., to explain the difficult parts of academic writing structure. In this way, students can really grasp and use the language, because the ultimate aim of teaching writing skill is to produce correct papers.

But the discussion with teachers (interview) prompted the researcher to reflect the drawbacks of homework writing assignments in English teaching. Long hours of writing in class and outside of it, and it is easy for students to become tired after long periods of writing and doing exercises. Some students will feel careless and not motivated to even complete the assignments or taking the teachers' comments on their writings into consideration.

Meanwhile, homework assignments cannot meet all the expectations. With the help of various strategies, teachers find effective tools for improving students' academic writing and in turn unavoidably organize writing teaching materials according to their own goals, while think a little less of making writing an evolutionary and systematic process for students. Students are still relatively passive seemingly towards doing their homework assignments and responding to their teachers' feedback. Teachers are the responsible of the process. Students do what they are told to.

The alleged four elements of teaching writing skill are teachers, students, teaching materials and homework writing assignments. Learning to write well takes time and practice. They are interconnected and interacted efficiently and effectively during the course of teaching the writing skill. Teachers provide students with the lesson adopting different teaching strategies, assign various homework assignments, students do their tasks, teachers provide effective feedback on their

students' writings. And while perfection is, as always, an impossible dream, students can certainly do their best to make their writing as close to perfect as they can.

All the participants agreed on the importance of the homework writing assignments along with teachers' feedback in teaching and learning academic writing skill. They expressed their satisfaction (the post experimental questionnaire) with the use of these kind of strategies that help them to produce a well-organized, correct, and comprehensive piece of writing. Detailed discussion will be presented in the following elements.

Conclusion

From the analysis above, it can be concluded that homework writing assignments can indeed affect students' perspectives and academic writing skills in English language. Such results reflect how much students need for time and practice to improve their academic writing, and how good homework assignments are. Furthermore, it can be argued that teachers' feedback is largely important to academic writing skills. The results from the present thesis can insinuate that what happens in teaching and learning the foreign language, when it comes to academic writing practice and homework assignments, might affect the students just as much.

CHAPTER EIGHT: PEDAGOGICAL RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Introduction

As far as the problem of academic writing English is concerned, the researcher recognizes that acquiring writing skill is not that easy task for students rather it is a process that need much time and practice, yetneedless to say that there are no solutions since the researcher attempted to diagnose the illness.

The present chapter tries to provide directions for teachers to find ways to teach academic writing efficiently to overcome students' weaknesses. It also attempts to guide students to improve their academic writing. Differentrecommendations will suggest to both teachers and students to alleviate students' difficulties when writing. Thus, multiple suggestions that are derived from the analysis of the present research's tools are presentedfor developing EFL students'academic writing proficiency level.

8.1. Pedagogical Recommendations

8.1.1. Motivating students to read/write across the curriculum

Students lack motivation and teachers do little to address this issue. The teachers' role during academic writing teaching is absolutely essential. The teacher should be able to find out ways to enhance not only students' achievement but also students' motivation and interest. The idea behind it all is to encourage students to read and write without worrying about their errors.

One of the criteria of a good teacher is to provide motivation whenever the student needs. A teacher can have different roles during the process of teaching and learning academic writing: a leader, counselor, facilitator, motivator, and creator. He/she should consider writing as aroutine that students will acquire through practicing it all the year. Students in turn have to be responsible and independent toward the process of learning because as it has been said by Robert Schuller "You cannot push anyone up the ladder unless he is willing to climb himself." The teacher should be hand in hand with the student to achieve the aims of teaching and learning academic writing in order to attainimprovement in students' academic writing papers all over the year. if the teacher is

more creative and innovative to carry out the teaching learning academic writing so the student will be more concernedin writing different genres**.**

Because students display more motivational benefits from teachers, they like over teachers they dislike. Bruning& Horn (2000) stated that "Four clusters of conditions must be used as keys to developing motivation: Nurturing functional beliefs about writing, fostering engagement using authentic writing tasks, providing supportive context for writing, and creating a positive emotional environment" (p. 25).

With regard to environment, it is one of the most essential ingredient of student motivation. environment should be of a quality or caliber that contributes to the motivation of the students. Accordingly, they would feel secured and pleasant when learning and be encouraged to write even if their English language is not that good. An environment of openness and freedom to learn from errors can foster students' motivation to write. Generally speaking, teachers should do unto the students as they would want done unto themselves. Furthermore, attitude plays a crucial role in promoting academic writing motivation and achievement, thus developing positive attitudes toward academic writing will help students become more motivated to lead to an academic success.

When students are motivated in reading, their writing motivation and engagement increases. They are able to relate the topic they are writing about by activating background knowledge from their reading. As their reading motivation increases so does their academic writing skills. Accordingly, teachers could even supply students with supplemental texts or short stories that align written expression curriculum as long as some level of choice is suggested. This way will increase their reading motivation and ultimately increase their writing skills as well. Teachers should also start including short storiesdiscussion into their lesson plans. This can be usefull to the students because it gives them the opportunity to enrich their vocabulary background. Thus, the researchersuggests a close collaboration between teachers, syllabus designers, andadministrators in order to introduce reading techniques as a subject for first year curriculumas other universities (ENS Constantine).

8.1.2. The necessity to change attitudes towards the homework's influence on students to write

Through the analysis of the tools of the present research, findings state that there are differences inthe perception of homework effectiveness and purpose among teachers and students; homework is mainly for scrutiny. It is routinely provided to satisfy the curriculum needs. Students consider homework as an encroachment on their free time. Accordingly, homework as a whole should start to receive more attention as a topic to be researched and reconsidered. It is high time that careful consideration to its purpose and the need to align tasks with aims.

Homework writing assignment is essential activity for every academic student because it helps students to implement their theoretical knowledge into practical world. Because writing is a continuous process and teacherscannotapply every learned theoretical aspect without practicing, so students need to practice their writing and this can only be done by doing more academic writing assignments through homework. In other words, homework writing assignments provide students with enough opportunities to express their unique ideas, opinions, and reactions freely. Written expression sessions, combined with homework writing assignments and examinations (most of which will require essay writing skills), will guarantee that students' academic writing is always practiced. In this way, they will find it much easier to pull off better words, ideas, and content.

The presentthesis provides a new lens into the topic of homework and the effect that teachers may have on their students' motivation and attitudes toward homework. Teachers should be aware that their attitudes toward homework can have an effect on their decisions when it comes to improving students' academic writing. This may bring forth more continuity in regards to scoring and planning homework writing assignments. Thus, it will raise the issue of whether the homework tasks that teachers assign are useful and meaningful to their students. Accordingly, their attitudesneed to be focused and addressed in order to fully understand their homework practices. The highly significant difference that was found between both groups in terms of writing development means that homework writing assignmentswere beneficial in giving the students the opportunity to practise writing skills outside the classroom.

The role of teachers to the students' doing and completion homework assignments cannot be underestimated. The data from the study suggests that most of teachers do not focus too much on assigning homework activities or they do not haveany training related to designing homework, those teachers may assign homework for reasons that may not benefit their students. More particularly, some teachers may actually assign homework, regardless of its effectiveness, to meet district homework policies or as punishment. Teachers should put more time to design high quality homework that help students to develop their academic writing. It is proposed that homework should be tailored to be aligned to the academic writing skills aims. Ideally, homework can even have a bigger function for students' academic writing if teachers can skillfully set it. For example, limiting homework to rote writing practice would be good way to develop writing skills that need reinforcement**.**

The type of homework that teachers assigned should be considered carefully; teachers' homework practices should be expanded from purely grammatical exercises in written expression course intoappropriate reading material that could play an essential role in improving students' academic writing. Undoubtedly, reading aids students acquire language skills unconsciously. It helps them to acquire a large vocabulary, improve the ability to understand and use complex grammatical constructions, develop a sense of critical thinking, and develop a good writing style. Accordingly, students should be given the choice to read what is appropriate to their language proficiency.

8.1.3. The need to reconsider the status of academic writing skill at the first-year written expression syllabus (Writing across the curriculum)

Different basic points should be taken into consideration when dealing with academic writing especially in written expression context. Sufficient exposure to academic writing at the beginning of the syllabus can play an important role in producing a correct piece of academic writing. Moreover, academic writing should be taken as an integral part of first year written expression curriculum as students at this level need to be familiar with the main features of

academic writing componentsto get effective writing skills. That are students should be equipped with these necessary skills at earlier levels to accomplish their academic writing tasks in future.

There should be collaboration between teachers of written espression and their colleages of grammar. Because, in fact, there is a kind of repetition in terms of the nature of lessons in both curriculums, thus what is supposed to teach in grammar subject, it is also included in written expression syllabus; lessons that are more appropriate to be in grammar course than wriiten expression one. Accordingly, there must be a consensus on the content of both courses so that students will learn the rules in grammar course and practice writing in written expression course. This collaboration is unavoidable as students will benefit more from written expression course to practice their writing skills.

Written expression teachers and syllabus designers should consider the needs and the requirements of students to prepare them with prerequisite skills and academic writing conventions. It is essential to integrate academic writing conventions, phrases and words at the beginning of the syllabus for identifying students' problems and needs according to which the content of the lessons will be tailored. Making essay writing purposeful and give it thehighest priority among written expressionfirst year curriculum. The aim is to train students how to write not merely what to write. It is essential to integrate the requirements of academic writing throughout the writing process all over the first-year level written expression syllabus. There are fewer writing activities done in first year level written expression curriculum and student writing is underestimated; students are no longer required to write paragraphs or essays at that level and that could be why students have problems with academic writing. The matter of the number of the lessons required in each unit in the syllabus should be included a part of practicing writing skills rather than teaching each lesson from the syllabus in isolated way.

Accordingly, as mentioned earlier, syllabus plays a huge role in students' education and in skills development process. the researcher proposed a new first year written expression syllabus that based on the old one, yet she considered all what have been said by teachers, students and the

researcher's experience as a teacher of written expression for eight years; Even though one cannot developstudents' skills without working hard and having a desire to make progress, a syllabus can definitely help and make huge differences concerning this matter. A syllabus that support reading sills and ensure alot of practice which meansbetter performance. (see appendix19)

When teachers of written expression course implement academic writing strategies into all of their content instruction lessons, students are writing across the curriculum. In other words, helping students to be familiar with the different writing styles, the structure, and other elements of various genres in each lesson should be considered as of paramount importance to teachers. It should be one of their priorities from the beginning of the year in which students will be able to effectively express their views and ideas in their own voice.

8.1.4. Effective use of feedback

Needless to highlight the importance of feedback on learning and developing academic writing skills in FL contexts, Thus, teachersare invited to be acquainted with their practices during the process of providing students with written feedback because generally the ways that teachers depend conceptualize students' understanding of feedback. Accordingly, if teachers really want their feedback to be useful, they should try to reduce their heavy emphasis onediting skills and providedifferent types of feedback to help students to be creative writers. Furthermore, the need for teacher feedback arises from the students' responses. As shown in the questionnaire results; most of the students wanted to receive feedbackon their writing from teachers.

According to the current research, teachers should reconsider their perceptions of feedback. They should place more emphasis on content and not put form as the main aim and ignore meaning. Because form-based feedback proved to be useless and unproductive then teachers should give it less importance and since it has no effect in improving students' writing form so why teachers still keep practicing it? Thus, the way of grading students' papers should be reviewed and reconsider; there should be consensus among teachers on the suitable way that allows both teachers and students to understand their grades. Accordingly, a well-designed rubrics or checklists should be followed from all teachers in terms of grading students' academic writingas it is done by the researcher herself in the present research work (see appendix09).

The results of the present thesis summon teachers tocontemplate academic writing as a process that needs continuous assistance, within this request, the type of feedback that teachers provide should not only be informative, but it should also considerstudents' level of learning, and preferences. Self-correction provides students with an opportunity to correct their own errors; it has a positive long-term impact on students' academic writing development. Teachers can provide a self-correction chance for their students by giving indirect feedback on students' errors. Moreover, feedback should be a dialogical and ongoing communication process in which both teachers and students are actively involved, in other words, teachers should discuss their own feedback practices with students to make them aware about it.

Class size represents a crucial issue for EFL teachers; teaching large classes is a challenging assignment for teachers. Large classes do not permit them to evaluate their students' progress as it does not offer chances for discussion. Teachers need more time and small classes to practice giving feedback the way they ideally would want to do and in ways that would benefit students' writing. As a result, a prompt need forthe administration to reviewing the number of students in each class.

Based on the empirical results from the actual thesis, teachers are invited to distinguish between serious and minor errors. A serious call for teachers' training may be a good guide for helping novice teachers in choosing what to correct. Furthermore, it seems that students only consider their grade, not teacher feedback when seeing their papers. Thus, it is essential for teachers to have their students revise their errors with the help of teacher feedback on multi-drafts before the final paper is graded.

8.2. Limitationsand Suggestions for Further Research

Regarding limitations of the present study, they defined as feebleness of the research work although we can consider these limitations as opportunities for further research (Creswell, 2003). One suggestion for myself as a researcher would be to continue investigating students' poor achievement in writing in general for various levels. This would allow me to better document the issue.

The findings of current research do not indicate long-term effects of homework assignments on students' motivation in academic writing practices. To solve this concern, a longitudinal research needs to be designed including different homework activities as data over a longer period of time. In this way, the effects of homework writing assignments on students' long-term academic writing development can be examined.

Alsoexploring the relationship between homework and learning achievement of the EFL students of Batna 2 University is invited to be investigated in future researches. To conclude, the present research is fruitful not only for teachers and students participating in the present research, allowing students to improve their academic writing, but also for researcher herself because it allows to think deeply in the teaching and leaning process as well.

Conclusion

The present research work provided a luminous result of how homework writing assignments hasaffected students' achievement in academic writing; the present chapter presented the main conclusions which stemmed from the results, and provided some recommendations for all learning teaching process members. All in all, the findings have demonstrated the need to embed homework writing assignments within the teaching of written expression courses so that first year EFL students could improve their academic writing ability.

General Conclusion

The present researchendeavors to diagnose the role of homework writing assignments in the academic writing process and to investigate the first year EFL students' academic writing problems, the thesis tries to help teachers to find solutions to students' poor academic writing performance and aid students control their writing weaknesses and propose an effective instructional activity which improve their academic writing proficiency, it buoyantlyaims to make academic writing pleasant practice for EFL students.

The actual thesis is about the effect of homework writing assignments on students' academic writing**.** The three chapters of the literature review are to cover a theoretical consideration for integrating homework assignments to improve students' academic writing. Chapter one is called "teaching/learning academic writing in EFL clasroom". It reviews the main concepts concerning academic writing; definition; characteristics and its structure; moreover, different writing approaches in writing are mentioned. The second chapter entitled "Homework assignments and academic achievement". It provides the major conceptions of homework and relate them to academic achievement in students' academic writing. The third chapter is named "Responding to students' homework assignments ". It first highlights the different types of writing assignments and the nit shows how to respond to students' paper when different techniques are presented.

The four last chapters are devoted to fieldwork. The fourth chapter is called "research design" which presents the methods used in the present research, the fifth chapter entitled "an experimental study on the effect of homework assignments on students' academic writing achievement"; it presents the results of the t-test procedures. The sixth chapter is devoted to describe and discuss the results of the students' questionnaire and teachers' interviews.

The seventh chapter is called "students' academic writing and homework assignments: Empirical results from the qualitative study and integration with the quantitative study" which displays a kind of overlapping between the qualitative and quantitative results. Based on the results achieved, the last chapter is designed for discussing the main recommendations and suggestions for the present research.

The method used for the actual thesis was a combination of qualitative and quantitative research, thusmaking the study a mixed methods study, and thereby increasing its validity. The results emerging from the current research offers interesting insights into the relationship between students' academic writing and homework assignments, it helps the researcher to draw the following conclusion regarding the main research questions of the present thesis.

The qualitative and quantitative analysis of the experiment, students'questionnaires, and teachers' interviews proves that most of first year EFL students' academic writing performance ranged between average and weak, students encounter serious problems in their writing, and those difficulties are in the terms of:

- Misuse and lack of effective and expressive vocabulary background: students do not have qualities in choosing the appropriate words that express their ideas so that the essay content seems not

- Writing mechanics (spelling, punctuation and capitalization)

- Essay organization: they have problems in following a certain essay order

- Incorrect grammar (misuse of pronouns, sentences structure subject verb agreement….)

The findings achieved showed that among the main reasons that causing students' poor academic writing performanceare:

- Lack of practice

- Lack of effective teachers' feedback.

- Negative attitudes towards homework assignments and teachers' feedback

Accordingly, the results obtained from the research tools seem to answer the first and second research questions

The results from the experiment proved that homework assignments along with teachers' feedback can remedy or at least reduce the main difficulties and errors in students' academic writing.the focus is needed at the level of providing students with more activities outside of classrooms to practice their writing skill. Practice makes perfect.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 01: Sample of first year students' grades in written expression course

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Appendix 01

Sample of first year students' grades in written expression course

Assiduité (0-5/5)	Quiz (0-15/15)	CC (0-20/20)	EF (0-20/20)	Rat (0-20/20)
04.5	07	11.5	11	
04.5	03.5	08	04	
00				
00				
04.5	07	11.5	11	
04.5	12.5	17	13	
01.5	07.5	09	04.5	03.5
04.5	08	12.5	09.5	
00				
04.1	10	14.5	17	
04.5	08	12.5	05	09
01	04.5	05.5	04.5	06
03	08	11	05	06
04.5	12	16.5	15.5	
04.5	04.5	09	08.5	
04.5	11.5	16	14.5	
03.5	06.5	10	07	10
00				
04.5	06.5	11	12	
00				
00				
00				
00				
04.5	05.5	10	03.5	11
02.5	05.5	08	Abs	
00				
00				
01.5	03	04.5	08.5	08.5
00				
04	07.5	11.5	09	
01.5	Abs	01.5	06	
04	08.5	12.5	13	
00				
03	07	10	06.5	

Assiduité (0-5/5)	Quiz (0-15/15)	CC (0-20/20)	EF (0-20/20)	Rat (0-20/20)
04.5	08.5	13	13.5	
00				
04	04	08	10	
00				
00			06.5	07.5
00				
04	06.5	10.5	09	
00				
04	05	09	07.5	11
00				
04.5	06	10.5	10	
00				
00				
00				
00				
04.5	09	13.5	13.5	
04.5	10	14.5	15	
00				
00				
04.5	04	08.5	05.5	05
00.50	06.5	07	06	
00				
01.5	Abs	01.5		
00.50	Abs	00.50		
00				
04.5	11.5	16	16	

Assiduité (0-5/5)	Quiz (0-15/15)	CC (0-20/20)	EF (0-20/20)	Rat (0-20/20)
02.00	06.5	08.5	07.5	
03.00	08.5	11.5	09.5	
03.00	07.0	10.0	08.0	
02.00	11.5	13.5	08.0	
01.0	04.5	05.5	05.0	03.5
02.0	05.0	07.0	05.0	04.0
00.5			04.5	04.0
04.5	06.5	11.0	07.0	
04.0	10.5	14.5	13.5	
04.5	10.0	14.5		
04.5	05.5	10.0	03.0	
04.5	04.5	09.0	04.0	06.0
02.0	07.5	09.5	08.0	
03.0	04.5	07.5	05.0	04.0
04.0	05.0	09.0	06.0	05.5
04.5	07.0	11.5	07.0	
02.0	06.0	08.0	06.5	14.0
04.0	07.0	11.0	07.0	
04.0	07.0	11.0	10.5	
03.0				

Assiduité (0-5/5)	Quiz (0-15/15)	CC (0-20/20)	EF (0-20/20)	Rat (0-20/20)
04.0	03.5	07.5	06.5	
00.5	09.0	09.5	11.0	
03.0	08.5	11.5	11.5	
03.0			08.5	07.0
04.0	05.0	09.0	08.0	
04.0	06.0	10.0	09.5	
00.5				
04.5	11.5	16.00	16.00	
03.0	06.5	09.5	07.5	
04.5	05.75	10.25	06.5	
00.5				
04.0	08.0	12.0	07.5	
03.0	06.5	09.5	04.0	08.5
04.0	06.5	10.5	12.5	
04.5	07.5	12.0	06.5	
01.0				
04.0	06.0	10.0	10.5	
04.5	08.5	13.0	11.0	
04.0	09.0	13.0	06.5	
04.5	06.5	11.0	07.5	

Appendix 02

Teachers' Preliminary Questionnaire

Dear colleague

The present thesis deals improving students' achievement in academic writing through homework assignments Hence, the aim is to suggest ways that may help teachers and students solve students' poor academic writing performance. The current preliminary questionnaire is a part of a research work designed for getting a deep understanding of the existence of the problem. Answering the present preliminary questionnaire would be of great help.

Please tick (⊿) the right box or give a complete answer when needed.

Thank you for cooperation

ZIDANI Soraya
Department of English Language
Faculty of Letters and Social Sciences
University of Batna

1. Which of the following skills your students prefer?

    a. Speaking☐

    b. Writing☐

2. What is the level of your students in writing:

    a. Very good ☐   b.   Good ☐ c. Average ☐   d. Bad   ☐

3. Do your students find difficulties when writing?

    a. Yes☐

    b. No☐

If "Yes", are these difficulties because of:

    a. Lack of effective teachers' feedback☐

    b. Students' unwillingness☐

    c. First year written expression syllabus☐

    d. Lack of practice/time☐

    c. Lack of reading☐

    e. Teachers' way of teaching the skill☐

f. Others, ……………………………………………………………………….

4. Do you encourage your students to write at home?

    a. Yes☐

    b. No☐

5. Do writing and homework assignments converge?

    a. Yes☐

    b. No☐

    If yes, how?

……

6. Do you provide written feedback on your students' papers?

    a. Yes☐

    b. No☐

Thank you for cooperation

Sample of Students' Examinations Papers

Exercise Five: Choose one of the following topics: (5 pts)

   a. Write a process-analysis paragraph on how to fail an exam.

   (b). Write a cause paragraph on the reasons for a particular artist's/ singer's/ player's success.

The pop artist Ariana Grande has come a long way before she got to her success. It started from the musical "13". Ariana was also featured in so many other musical works such as Victourious and Sam and Cat. The singer's first hit was in 2013 on the title "Put your hearts up". She also won many grammys and VMA awards. But it wasn't always good times for that artist. She has faced so many difficulties too. It was such an intresting divelopment for Ariana's success.

What are the reasons of her success?

0.25 + 0.25 + 0.25 + 1 + 0.5 = 2

Exercise Five: Choose one of the following topics: (5 pts)

   a. Write a process-analysis paragraph on how to fail an exam.

   b. Write a cause paragraph on the reasons for a particular artist's/ singer's/ player's success. ✓

Each one of us wants to succeed and achieve his dreams in the life, in order to that we try to follow the steps of successful persons such as the famous player "Christiano Ronaldo". He was born in poor place with bad fathers and grand brothers. They drank and smoke. They did the worst things ever. However, he try to survive with this hell he follows some rules which are:

The first, he studied hard to succeed.

The second, he never forget to practice his favourt sport fatball, and try to be creative.

The third, he is facition person and he never forget his basics in the life he wants always to help people and he changed his brother to good person a like and as a conclusion, we should learn many things from this person.

2

0 + 0.25 + 0.25 + 1 + 0.5 = 2

Exercise Five: Choose one of the following topics: (5 pts)

   a. Write a process-analysis paragraph on how to fail an exam.

   b. Write a cause paragraph on the reasons for a particular artist's/ singer's/ player's success.

How to fail an exam analysis:

I'm going to show and speak about how to fail an exam. it is very simple with very easy steps, do exactly what i'm going to tell you.

First of all, forget that you are going to have a exam. forget it like it's nothing. Secondly if you have video games, pc, phone use it continuesly. Third if your parents told you to go and study ignore them and final step is when you go to exam you won't even look at the paper.

I hope my ideas good and it will help you in the future.

0 + 0.25 + 0.25 + 1 + 0.5 = 2

Exercise Five: Choose one of the following topics: (5 pts)

a. Write a process-analysis paragraph on how to fail an exam.
b. Write a cause paragraph on the reasons for a particular artist's/ singer's/ player's success.

Success is the 1st goal of any football player. playing in a great club is the biggest success. to realize that, a player work hard and always motivates himself by following the history of the football stars. Being oh in on example of an algerian football player who succeed to be the be the best goal scorer in Qatar.

$$Q\mathcal{K} + 8\mathcal{r} + 8\mathcal{2r} + Q_48\mathcal{r} = {}^2\mathcal{2}$$

Exercise Five: Choose one of the following topics: (5 pts)

a. Write a process-analysis paragraph on how to fail an exam.
b. Write a cause paragraph on the reasons for a particular artist's/ singer's/ player's success.

b).
in those day the is so many reasons for a particular sing's success in there job, one of those reasons is working hard there is who try there own Best to sucess But they fail and there is who can succeed is the job and Be so papa just like ariana grande she is now one of the Best singers in the world and that Because she has great voice and vocals And they also so needs time and not to give up on the gols Because sotime the song can Be succeed and some time not

$$8\mathcal{K} + 8\mathcal{K} + 8\mathcal{K} + 8\mathcal{r} + 8\mathcal{2r} = 1.\mathcal{r}$$

Appendix 04

The nature of homework assignments given by teachers

Exercises related to dependent and independent clauses

Identify each of the clauses as independent or dependent.

1. *when Mr. Jones yelled*
2. *I enjoy the opera*
3. *unless it comes today*
4. *although I lost the library book*
5. *they're going on a picnic*
6. *mom found it in the drawer*
7. *the fifth graders sang*
8. *when the movie is over*
9. *I decided to go along*
10. *the strength of the man might*
11. *we're planning to have a party*
12. *when I'm finished reading*

Complete the following sentences using appropriate subordinating conjunctions.

1. *I make it a point to visit the Taj Mahal ... ... I go to Agra.*
2. *This is the place ... ... I used to stay when I was studying at college.*
3. *... ... ... you get the first rank, I will buy you a car.*
4. *... ... ... you work hard, you can't pass the entrance test.*
5. *I am leaving tomorrow ... ... or not you give me the permission.*
6. *He could not get a seat, ...he came early.*
7. *The players delivered a splendid performance ... ... they had rehearsed well.*
8. *Parents should give enough attention to children ... ... they will not feel neglected*

Exercises related to run on sentences

1.) My academic advisor told me not to take 18 credit hours for the fall semester I'm regretting not having listened to her.

a.) Run-on

b.) Complete sentence

2.) My cat was upset all day he didn't get canned food for breakfast.

a.) Run-on

b.) Complete sentence

3.) Organizations that promise students a scholarship if they pay an extraordinarily high application fee are most likely scams.

a.) Run-on

b.) Complete sentence

4.) Because Rose was late for the all-you-can-eat buffet, she had to order from the main menu.

a.) Run-on

b.) Complete sentence

Exercises related to Parallelism

Directions: Read the following sentences. If the sentence is correct, don't change anything. If the sentence is incorrect, find the parallel structure problem and fix it.

1. The factory workers were ready, able, and were quite determined to do a great job.
…………………………………………………………………………………………..
2. The computer network is safer, stronger, and more secure.
…………………………………………………………………………………………
3. We cannot be worried or terrified of difficulties in life.
…………………………………………………………………………………………
4. The actor taught his student how to read, how to stand, how to cry, and to talk with fans…………………………………………………………………………………………..
5. The requirements for a chemistry degree are not as strict as a medical degree.
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

<center>**Appendix 05**</center>

<center>**Students' pre-test and post-test**</center>

Essay Writing Test

Batna University

Department of English language

First year level

Name…………………………

Time:90 minutes

Mark: 20

Write a well-organized essay discussing the following topic: "Does technology make us more alone?

………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………
………

Appendix 06

Samples of pre-test for the control group

Student 01

Student 02

Appendix 07

Samples of pre-test for the experimental group

Student 03

technology as a process
it was made technolog
technically to make our life
easy and productive, but
people point views are different
from one side? see that technology
it allows us to produce
more? the other side have
a negative point view
about this tool, but I
believe that technology
has a positive reflection to
our life
in order to convince
the reader about the
importance of this process
we have to set argument

first of all, life has
changed a lot and became
much easier since the industry
revolution which it had
affected positivly and
it made the world a secondly
small town for example
we contact a friend
in the other side of the
world, seco secondly
finally, really good
affection in the economy
in other words? it
help it the process of
progressing any country
which

Content 2/04   - not well Arrange!!
Organization 1/04   - no punctuation
Vocabulary 1/04   marks?
Language use 01/04   - Confusia ideas
Mechanics 02/04

Student 04

write pargraph:
- Technologie make as more alone.

13,5 / 20

In this days, every a tm. thing is changed because of the devlopement in science and human mind like the devlopement in technologie. every thing is going faster and changed all th and all the things changed.

First, technologie has made many differences in our live life. but it make us to care and alone from our families and friends because we are alway with phones and web site. and social media face book... etc but this belong to us how we use second, it in good way.

Second, Technologie make our life so com confortebul and easy but

always there is a camid of problem weich is we forget our selves and with this teon technology. and never take care about our life.

In the end, the problem is not on the technologie it in our selves and to how we use it in positive ways.

Contnt 3,5/4   - misus f preposition
Organization 3,5/4 - punctuation ?
Vocabulary 3,5/4   good & effectiv
Langage us 2/4   ideas.
Mechanics 2/4

Appendix 08

Topics used in treatment period

- Discuss the real relationship between food, fitness, and weight
- Online education is as good as a standard college education.
- Students learn better using digital textbooks than they can by using books, pens, and paper"
- Using a computer every day can have more negative than positive effects on children. Do you agree or disagree?
- Pretend you woke up one day and there were no rules. People could suddenly do whatever they wanted! Explain what the world would be like. Use your imagination!
- Is book learning or experience more significant in a person's life? Why?
- All students in high school and college should be required to take at least two years of a foreign language
- Any student caught cheating on an examination should be automatically dismissed from college

Appendix 09

Academic writing assessment and scoring rubric

aspects	level	Criteria
Content	4/3,25	EXECELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Knowledgeable; substantive; thorough development of topic; relevant to assigned topic
	3/2,25	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Some knowledge of subject; adequate range; limited development of topic; mostly relevant to the topic, but lacks detail
	2/1,25	FAIR TO POOR: Limited knowledge of subject; little substance; inadequate development of topic
	1-0	VERY POOR: Does not show knowledge of subject; non-substantive; not pertinent; or not enough to eval uate
Organization	4/3,25	EXECELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Fluent expression; well-organized; ideas clearly stated/supported; logical sequencing; cohesive
	3/2,25	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Somewhat choppy; loosely organized but main ideas stand out; limited support; logical but incompletesŒuencing
	2/1,25	FAIR TO POOR: Non-fluent; ideas confused or disconnected; lacks logical sequencing and development
	1-0	VERY POOR: Does not communicate; no organization; or not enough to eval uate.
Vocabulary	4/3,25	EXECELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Sophisticated range; effective word/ idiom choice and usage; word form mastŒy; appropriate mastery
	3/2,25	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Adequate range; occasional errors of word/ idiom form, choice, usage *but meaning not obscured*
	2/1,25	FAIR TO POOR: Limited range; frequent errors of word/ idiom form, choice, usage; *meaning con fused or obscured*
	1-0	VERY POOR: Essential translation; little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form; or not enough to eval uate
Language use	4/3,25	EXECELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Effective complex constructions; fewŒ errors of agreement, tense, number, word ordŒ/ functi on, articles, pronouns, prepositi ons
	3/2,25	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Effective but simple constructions; minor problems in compl ex constructions; sevŒal errors of agreement, tense, number, word ordŒ/ function, articles, pronouns, prepositions *but meaning seldom obscured*
	2/1,25	FAIR TO POOR: Major problems in simple/ complex constructions; frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word ordŒ/ function, articles, pronouns, prepositions and/ or fragments, run-ons, deletions; *meaning con fused or obscured*
	1-0	VERY POOR: Virtually no mastŒy of sentence construction rules; dominated by errors, does not communicate; or not enough to eval uate
Mœhanics	4/3,25	EXECELLENT TO VERY GOOD: Demonstrates mastery of conventions; few errors of spel li ng, punctuation, capital ization, paragraphing
	3/2,25	GOOD TO AVERAGE: Occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing *but meaning not obscured*
	2/1,25	FAIR TO POOR: Frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing; poor handwriting; *meaning con fused or obscured*
	1-0	VERY POOR: No mastŒy of conventions; dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capital ization, paragraphing; handwriting illegible, or not enough to evaluate

Adapted from Weigle (2002). *Assessing Writing*

Appendix 10

T-distribution table

t Table

cum. prob	t.50	t.75	t.80	t.85	t.90	t.95	t.975	t.99	t.995	t.999	t.9995
one-tail	0.50	0.25	0.20	0.15	0.10	0.05	0.025	0.01	0.005	0.001	0.0005
two-tails	1.00	0.50	0.40	0.30	0.20	0.10	0.05	0.02	0.01	0.002	0.001
df											
1	0.000	1.000	1.376	1.963	3.078	6.314	12.71	31.82	63.66	318.31	636.62
2	0.000	0.816	1.061	1.386	1.886	2.920	4.303	6.965	9.925	22.327	31.599
3	0.000	0.765	0.978	1.250	1.638	2.353	3.182	4.541	5.841	10.215	12.924
4	0.000	0.741	0.941	1.190	1.533	2.132	2.776	3.747	4.604	7.173	8.610
5	0.000	0.727	0.920	1.156	1.476	2.015	2.571	3.365	4.032	5.893	6.869
6	0.000	0.718	0.906	1.134	1.440	1.943	2.447	3.143	3.707	5.208	5.959
7	0.000	0.711	0.896	1.119	1.415	1.895	2.365	2.998	3.499	4.785	5.408
8	0.000	0.706	0.889	1.108	1.397	1.860	2.306	2.896	3.355	4.501	5.041
9	0.000	0.703	0.883	1.100	1.383	1.833	2.262	2.821	3.250	4.297	4.781
10	0.000	0.700	0.879	1.093	1.372	1.812	2.228	2.764	3.169	4.144	4.587
11	0.000	0.697	0.876	1.088	1.363	1.796	2.201	2.718	3.106	4.025	4.437
12	0.000	0.695	0.873	1.083	1.356	1.782	2.179	2.681	3.055	3.930	4.318
13	0.000	0.694	0.870	1.079	1.350	1.771	2.160	2.650	3.012	3.852	4.221
14	0.000	0.692	0.868	1.076	1.345	1.761	2.145	2.624	2.977	3.787	4.140
15	0.000	0.691	0.866	1.074	1.341	1.753	2.131	2.602	2.947	3.733	4.073
16	0.000	0.690	0.865	1.071	1.337	1.746	2.120	2.583	2.921	3.686	4.015
17	0.000	0.689	0.863	1.069	1.333	1.740	2.110	2.567	2.898	3.646	3.965
18	0.000	0.688	0.862	1.067	1.330	1.734	2.101	2.552	2.878	3.610	3.922
19	0.000	0.688	0.861	1.066	1.328	1.729	2.093	2.539	2.861	3.579	3.883
20	0.000	0.687	0.860	1.064	1.325	1.725	2.086	2.528	2.845	3.552	3.850
21	0.000	0.686	0.859	1.063	1.323	1.721	2.080	2.518	2.831	3.527	3.819
22	0.000	0.686	0.858	1.061	1.321	1.717	2.074	2.508	2.819	3.505	3.792
23	0.000	0.685	0.858	1.060	1.319	1.714	2.069	2.500	2.807	3.485	3.768
24	0.000	0.685	0.857	1.059	1.318	1.711	2.064	2.492	2.797	3.467	3.745
25	0.000	0.684	0.856	1.058	1.316	1.708	2.060	2.485	2.787	3.450	3.725
26	0.000	0.684	0.856	1.058	1.315	1.706	2.056	2.479	2.779	3.435	3.707
27	0.000	0.684	0.855	1.057	1.314	1.703	2.052	2.473	2.771	3.421	3.690
28	0.000	0.683	0.855	1.056	1.313	1.701	2.048	2.467	2.763	3.408	3.674
29	0.000	0.683	0.854	1.055	1.311	1.699	2.045	2.462	2.756	3.396	3.659
30	0.000	0.683	0.854	1.055	1.310	1.697	2.042	2.457	2.750	3.385	3.646
40	0.000	0.681	0.851	1.050	1.303	1.684	2.021	2.423	2.704	3.307	3.551
60	0.000	0.679	0.848	1.045	1.296	1.671	2.000	2.390	2.660	3.232	3.460
80	0.000	0.678	0.846	1.043	1.292	1.664	1.990	2.374	2.639	3.195	3.416
100	0.000	0.677	0.845	1.042	1.290	1.660	1.984	2.364	2.626	3.174	3.390
1000	0.000	0.675	0.842	1.037	1.282	1.646	1.962	2.330	2.581	3.098	3.300
z	0.000	0.674	0.842	1.036	1.282	1.645	1.960	2.326	2.576	3.090	3.291
	0%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	95%	98%	99%	99.8%	99.9%
						Confidence Level					

Source: Wikipedia Encyclopedia

Appendix 11

Samples of post-test for the control group

Student 01

« technology makes us more alone ».

Day after day, life is changes from the so well to the best and this is because of technology and the developpement that we live it every day, some people argue that technology makes human beings more alone but for I think that pretending is totaly wrong.

First of all, technology made our life more easy than before, for example let's take the sector of communication and Transport it becomes devellopped so we can communicate with each others simply and this further to Internet and mobiles...

In addition, with technology human could make a lot of achievements like arriving to space and simplifying the dairy activities of people...etc

As a conclusion, I want to say that

and bad

is a good thing that we have at the same time, so we must to know how to use it because it's an arm which has tow branches and it's use depends on us.

Content
Organisation
Vocabulary
Language use
Mechanics

Student 02

Write Two or three paragraphs, discussing the idea of: Technologie make us alone.

All of us are agre that since the Techonolgie has be created, our life became earier. but there is some peoplewho says the Technologie make us alone.

If you asked me about my point of view on this Subjet. I would say that the Technologie makes the person sociable in the face world and lonely in the real one. that means that any one can make new relationships on net, but not in real one. Because for some people it's easy To Talk To people on Net than face To face because for them he is hided behind the screen and it won't be ewkwerd if he is rejected by somone.

Also some people who suffers from bollyings prefers To stay in there rooms away from real world. becaus it makes them Suffr.

The ideas need to be impved

Contet 2/04
Organisation 2/04
Vocabulary 1/04
Langage us 2/04
Mechanics 1/04

Appendix 12

Samples of post-test for the experimental group

Student 03

Student 04

Appendix 13

Post-Experiment Questionnaire towards the Role ofhomework assignments in improving students' academic writing

Dear student

     I would like you to comment the following statements; I want to get some fairly detailed feedback from you on the role of homework assignments in helping you to practice and improve your wrting skill and the essay tests taken during the period of treatment to help me realize what is working, what is not. Please Make a (x) inside the best choice

    1 Strongly disagree
    2 disagree
    3 neutral (no opinion)
    4 agree
    5 Strongly agree

1. I like to have homework assignments in written expression class.

1 □   2 □   3 □   4 □   5 □

2. I feel confident when practice my writing skill through homework assignments

    1 □   2 □   3 □   4 □   5 □

3. Homework assgnment makes me more involved in practicing writing skill.

    1 □   2 □   3 □   4 □   5 □

4. Homework assignments provide me with many opportunities to practice different types of academic writing

    1 □   2 □   3 □   4 □   5 □

5. Homework assignments make me want to write English even more

    1 □   2 □   3 □   4 □   5 □

6. Through homework assignments, I enjoy practicing English language writing

       1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

7. Teacher's feedback helps me work well with my teacher.

       1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

8. teachers' feedback help me improve my English language writing

1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

9. Through teacher's feedback, I learned different writing component faster than before

       1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

10. After teacher's feedbacvk, I can confidently show my piece of writing to my classùates

       1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

11. Teachers' feedback can reduce my fear of writing English language

       1 ☐   2 ☐   3 ☐   4 ☐   5 ☐

Information letter students

Request for participation in the Ph.D. thesis entitled

"Improving Students' Achievement in Academic Writing Through Homework"
Background and Purpose

My name is ZIDANI Soraya, and I am an assistant lecturer "A" at the Department of English Language- University of Batna. I would like toinvite you to a research work that deals with the subject of academic writingand homework assignments. The purpose of the present study is to explain how homework assignments can help students in improve their academic writing. The study is anonymous, that is, information about you and thatyou contribute will be completely anonymous.

What does participation in the study involve?

Participation mainly involves in questionnaire and experiment. The questions in English language which will deal with the wayyou relate homework assignments, teachers' feedback and students' academic writing skills, so what thoughts, attitudes and experiences you have concerning that issue.You are also asked not to cheat as cheating is one of the ethical considerations that we should avoid.

What are the benefits of your information?

All personal information will be treated confidentially. It is justthe researcher and her supervisor who will access the information about you and your contribution. The study is anonymously as mentioned above and no individuals can be recognized in publications. The research is going according to endby June 2017, and all data will be deleted.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

With best regards,

ZIDANI Soraya, Lecturer assistant "A" at Batna University

Approval for participation in the study

I have received information about the study and:

☐ I agree to participate in the research

☐ I agree that some of my texts may be included in the research

Students' Questionnaire

The present questionnaire serves as a data collection tool for a piece of research to obtain aPhD degree in English language. You are kindly asked to fill in this questionnaire, which is designed to assess your knowledge about the role of homework in improving your academic writing.

I greatly thank you in advance for your contribution that is appreciated.

Thank you for cooperation

ZIDANI Soraya

Department of English Language

Faculty of Foreign Languages

University of Batna

Section one: Students' attitudes towards academic writing in English

1.Which skill do you prefer?

    a. Writing skill.☐

    b. Reading.   ☐

    c. Speaking.   ☐

    d. Listening.   ☐

2. Do you think reading improves your English writing skills?

    a. Yes☐

    b. No ☐

      If yes, please why.

....

3. Are you encouraged to write?

    a. Yes☐

    b. No☐

4. Good academic writing, in your opinion, is**:**

    a. Informative thoughts. ☐

    b. Correct gramma.   ☐

    c. Effective punctuation. ☐

    d. Precise vocabulary.   ☐

5. When writing, do you have difficulties in:

    a. Choosing vocabulary.   ☐

    b. Grammar.   ☐

    c. Ideas organization and argumentation. ☐

    d. Essay organizationor unfamiliarity with academic writing structure.☐

 e. Conventions of writing (spelling, punctuation, capitalization).   ☐

6. Learning to writeenables you to:

    a. Write different types of text. ☐

    b. Get a good mark in examinations essays. ☐

c.Succeed in writing like native speakers.☐

    d. Others… …………………………………………………………………….;

7. How good are you at writing essay assignments?

    a. Poor   ☐ b. very poor   ☐ c. fair to average☐d. good☐ e. excellent ☐

Section Two: Students' awareness of the effect of homework assignments in improving their academic writing

8. How often do you writetexts in the English subject?

    a. Never☐

    b.1-3times a semester☐

    c. once amonth☐

    d. 2-3 times amonth☐

e. once a week or more often   ☐

9. How often do you write those texts at class in other modules?

    a. Never ☐

    b.1-3times a semester ☐

    c. once amonth☐

    d. 2-3 times amonth☐

e. once a week or more often ☐

10. How often do you write those texts at home in other modules?

    a. Never ☐

    b.1-3times a semester☐

    c. once amonth☐

    d. 2-3 times amonth☐

e. once a week or more often ☐

11. Homework assignments is a waste of time.

  a. Yes ☐

    b. No☐

  justify why …………………………………………………………………………………

12. Does your teacher give homework assignments for you?

    a. Yes ☐

    b. No ☐

If   yes,   what   kind   of   these   homework   assignments? …………………………………………………………………………………………….;

13. Do you do your homework assignments?

    a. Yes   ☐

    b. No   ☐

14. Do you think that those homework assignmentspreparedyou adequately for writing essay assignments in English language at university?

    a. Yes   ☐

b. No ☐

15. In general, do you think written expression course can helpyou write well in other courses? Justify

    a. Yes   ☐

    b. No   ☐

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Section Three: Experiences with feedback on academic writing

16. When your teacher corrects your paragraph and essays homework assignments does he/she givefeedback

    a. Always☐

    b. Sometimes☐

  c. Never☐

17. Is it important to receive feedback on your writing?

    a. Yes☐

    b. No☐

     If yes, please justify

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

18. How does your teacher give feedback on your writing?

     a. The teacher corrects the errorscorrect them.☐

     b. The teacher underlines the errors and I have toerrors and I have to correct them.☐

     c. The teacher uses a marking code on the. ☐

    d. The teacher uses other methods. ☐

            19. When your teacher provides you with feedback, he/she focuses on:

a. Spelling errors in your writing.☐

b. Grammatical errors. ☐

c. Precise formulations and vocabulary. ☐

d. Content.☐

Section four: Further suggestions

20. According to you, what is the best way of developing your academic writing in English language?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

Information letter teachers

Request for participation in the Ph.D. dissertation entitled

"Improving Students' Achievement in Academic Writing Through Homework"
Background and Purpose

My name is ZIDANI Soraya, and I am an assistant lecturer "A" at the Department of English Language- University of Batna. I would like to invite you to a research project that deals with the subject of English-language writing and homework assignments. The purpose of the study is to explain how homework writing assignments can help students in improve their academic writing. The study is anonymous, that is, information about you and that you contribute will be completely anonymous.

What does participation in the study involve?

Participation mainly includes an interview. The questions in English language which will deal with the way you relate homework assignments, feedback and students' academic writing skills, so what thoughts, attitudes and experiences you have concerning that issue. It will be taken notes and recordings of the interviews, the reason for it is to ensure accuracy.

What are the benefits of your information?

All personal information will be treated confidentially. It is just the researcher and her supervisor who will access the information about you and your contribution. The study is anonymously as mentioned above and no individuals can be recognized in publications. The study is going to end by June 2017, and audio recordings and other data will be deleted.

Voluntary participation

It is optional to participate in the study and you can withdraw your approval at any time for some reasons. If you withdraw, all information about you will be anonymized. I hope nevertheless to participate in the present study.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

With best regards,

ZIDANI Soraya, Lecturer assistant "A" at Batna University

Approval for participation in the study

I have received information about the study and:

☐   I agree to participate in the interview

☐ I agree that some of my texts may be included in the work.

Teacher Interview Guide

Opening notes

The aim of the present interview is to help me get information for my topic. I will be taking notes and recording the interviews to keep track of theinformation and to make it easier for me to continue with the writing afterwards.

Your names will be kept anonymous. I am only interested in finding out how things really are and listening to your thoughts and experiences. Your input is very important and greatly appreciated.

Background

- What qualifications do you have in teaching English?

- How long have you been teaching English?

- How long have you been teaching first year written expression course?

Academic Writing skill

- How important is academic writing in your courses?

- How do you teach academic writing?

- Why do you it that particular way?

- How often do the students write paragraphs and essays? what about their attitudes?

- What do you think of first year written expression syllabus?

- What are the most common writing problems you noticed in your students' academic writings?

- What do you emphasize when grading/ assessing their academic writing?

Homework assignments

- Do you assign homework in your written expression course? What kind of assignments?

- Do students have all of the information they need to do this assignment? In others words, are they prepared to do the homework?

- What do you want your students to achieve from this assignment? Do you have a specific objective and intended outcome in mind?

- In what ways homework assignment can help students in improving their academic writings.

Teachers' Feedback

- Why do you give feedback on your students' academic writing?

- How do you give feedback on students' academic writing?

- Why do you do it in that particular way?

- What do you emphasize most when giving feedback?

- How does feedback influence the development of the students' academic writing?

Final Comments

- Would you like to add any final comments about the topic?

Appendix 18

First year written expression syllabus

Semester one

Chapter one: the sentence structure

    a. The sentence

    b. The clause

    c. Sentence elements

    d. Subject verb agreement

Chapter two: types of sentences

Chpter three: combination of sentences

Chapter four: sentence problems

Semester two

Chapter five: the writing process for the paragraph

Chapter six: different types of paragraph

Proposed first year written expressionoutline

COURSE SYLLABUS

September, 2018

INSTRUCTOR: ZIDANI Soraya

Office: Floor 2, Room 32
Office hours: 11:30-14:30 TUE
Office phone: 0659070505
Email address: soraya.zidani@yahoo.fr
Class hours: 8:30-14:30 WED

> "Writing is thinking on paper. Anyone
> who thinks clearly should be able to
> write clearly—about any subject at all."
> —William Zinsser

A. Course description

This course is designed to prepare students for writing clearly and concisely some of the forms they will need to write in their future career. Through regular writing practice in and outside of class, students will learn to express themselves clearly. Thus, students will learn to revise their own work through incorporating corrections and suggestions from peers and the teacher.

During this course, the students will develop the ability to write a variety of texts. They will be able of writing formal and informal texts applying the requisite steps of the writing process.

B. Course objectives

The main aim of the present course is that students become autonomous writers and that they will be capable to apply writing knowledge not only in written expression course but in other courses as well. Therefore, they must achieve the following specific objectives:

- To improve a high level of independence in the writing of various texts types.

- To employ academic writing components in the composition of any text.

- To simultaneously strengthen the other linguistic skill: reading comprehension which will give students more knowledge about a topic and will help them to convey their thoughts in a written manner in the best possible way.

C. Attendance, preparation, and participation

- Plan to attend every class. Missing classes will affect students' grade

- Come to class prepared, having done the homework. Lack of preparation will affect

    students' grade.

- Plan to participate actively. Lack of cooperation will affect students' grade.

D. Types of Assignments

The present course will include:

- Homework assignments, including writing assignmentspractice
- Grammar, mechanics, and vocabulary exercises

E. Evaluation Criteria and requirements

The course grade consists of:

	Coefficient
Class participation;	15%
Homeworkwriting assignments	15%
Quizzes	30%
Exam	40%

F. Course outline

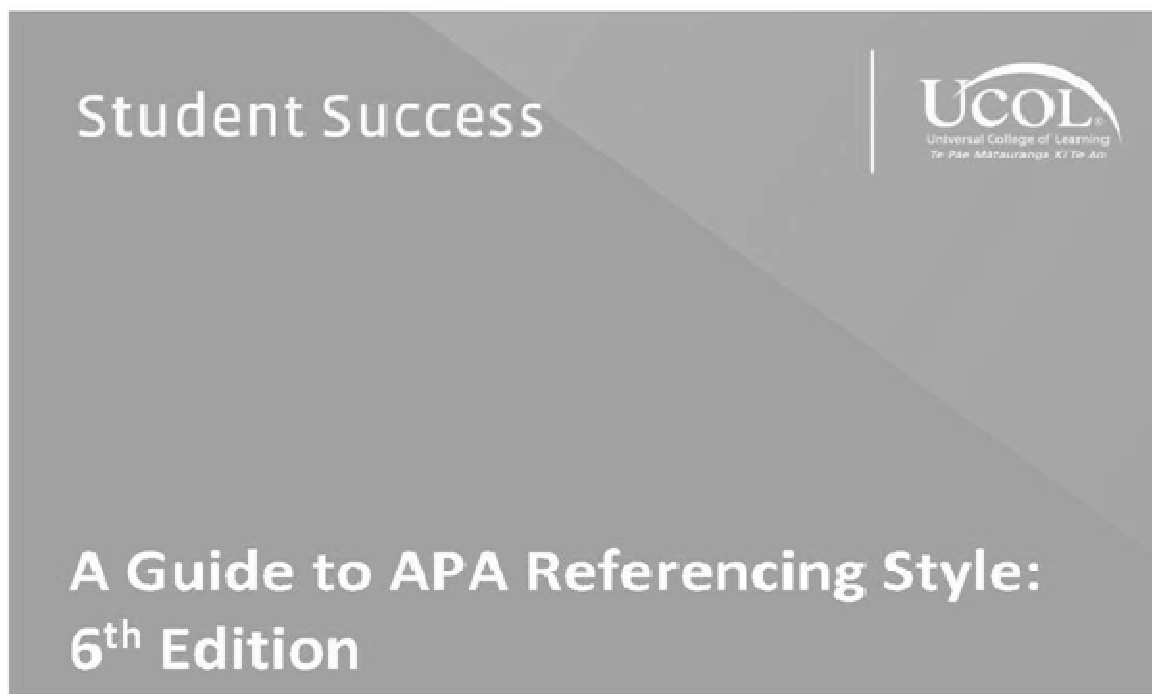| Lesson number	weeks	Reading	Writing Session focus/Activity
1	2	Independent reader, reading strategies	Introduction to the course/the paragraph defined/Theprocess of writing/Identifying language functions in academic text – academic writing and plagiarism
2	1	A text-centred approach	The writing process: pre-writing, writing, post-writing Pre-writing process (brainstorming, freewriting, clustering)
3	3	Identifying the main idea • Finding the central idea • General and specific sentences • Irrelevent sentences	Basic paragraph structure • Topic sentence • Supporting sentences • Concluding sentence
4	2	Build vocabulary, activate ideas	Ordering details and identifying sentence problems • Parallelism • Wordiness • Comma splices or run-on sentences • Misplaced and dangling modifiers
5	2	Samples of written sets of passages/exercises	Outlining a paragraph • Simple outline • Detailed outline
6	2	Modeling and the sharing of quality literature full of descriptive writing.	Writing descriptive paragraph
7	2	Modeling and the sharing of quality literature full of narrative writing/identify the key events or actions in the story	Writing narrative paragraph
8	2	Differentiating between facts and opinion	Writing argumentative paragraph
9	2	Modeling and the sharing of quality literature full of cause and effect writing	Writing cause and effect paragraph
10	2	Similiraties and differences	Writing comparison and contrast paragraph
11	2	Modeling to show students how problem-solving essays work	Writing problem-solving paragraph
12	2	Paragraph shrinking	Writing process paragraph

RemmendedBooks for Reading

- Lamott, A. (1997). *Bird by Bird.* New York: Anchor Books.
- Robinson, K. and Aronica, L.(2010). *The element: how finding your passion changes everything. London*: Penguin Books
- King, S. (2012). *On writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. New York, NY: Scribne

RemmendedReferences

- Anson, M., andSchwegle, A.(2000). *The Longman Handbook for Writers and Readers*. New York: Longman, 387–398.
- Hacker, D. (2003). *A Writer's Reference*. (5th ed). Boston/New York: Bedford/St. Martin's. 81–84.
- Hacker, D. (2006). *The Bedford handbook*(7th ed.). Boston: Bedford/ St. Martins**.**
- Weigle, S.C. (2002). *Assessing Writing*. Cambridge: CUP
- Winkler, C and McCuen-Matherall, R. (2008). *Writing Talk* (3rd ed.). Longman

Appendix 20

Sample of APA Format Used for the Present Thesis

Student Success | UCOL
Universal College of Learning
Te Pae Mātauranga Ki Te Ao

A Guide to APA Referencing Style:
6th Edition

This guide has been prepared by staff from the UCOL Student Success Team.

January 2015

Updated March 2017

Résumé

La plupart des étudiants d'anglais de première année éprouvent des difficultés à maîtriser toutes les composantes de l'écriture académique et à rédiger des textes corrects. Par conséquent, une myriade d'études aborde les faibles performances des étudiants en écriture, mais les enseignants ont encore du mal à développer l'écriture académique dès leur compréhension de l'importance du traitement de la rédaction d'un essai. Pour améliorer la rédaction académique des étudiants, il est nécessaire d'intégrer davantage de pratique et de temps dans les cours d'anglais langue étrangère de Batna Université. Au lieu de cela, les devoirs montrent son application pratique qui peut développer l'écriture académique en termes de pratique de l'écriture anglaise. La présente thèse a pour but d'examiner les effets de l'adoption de cette activité d'enseignement dans les classes d'écriture EFL de l'Université Batna. Il tente en outre de donner une image claire de ses effets sur les cinq composantes de la rédaction académique d'un essai : contenu, organisation, vocabulaire, usage de la langue et mécanique. La thèse présente des recherches quantitatives et qualitatives menées en calculant le test T avec les deux groupes : expérimental et de contrôle, et en analysant les questionnaires des étudiants et les entretiens avec les enseignants. Les étudiants de première année (N = 60) participent aux travaux de recherche actuels : (N = 30) étudiants du groupe expérimental et (N = 30) étudiants du groupe contrôle .Les résultats des analyses de données ont montré que les étudiants qui effectuaient des devoirs à la maison avec une rétroaction efficace des enseignants obtenaient de meilleurs résultats que ceux qui ne le faisaient pas. Des recommandations ont été formulées à l'intention des enseignants et des étudiants sur la nécessité de reprendre leurs devoirs à la maison afin d'améliorer les résultats de leurs écrits.

Mots-clés : rédaction académique, devoirs, recherche quantitative, recherche qualitative, feedback

ملخص

يجد معظم طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة باتنة صعوبات في إتقان جميع عناصر الكتابةالأكاديميةوكتابةمقال أكاديمي صحيح، علاوةعلىذلك، الكثير من الدراسات تناولت الأداء الضعيف للطلاب في مهارة الكتابة، ومع ذلك لا يزال الأساتذة يعانون من كيفية تطوير الكتابة الأكاديمية للطلاب وتوعيتهم لأهمية هذه الكتابة، بناء على ذلك، يجب أن يتم منح المزيد من التدريب والوقت للطلاب. وبالتالي، تعتبر الواجبات المنزلية التطبيق العملي الذي يمكنه تطوير الكتابة الأكاديمية فيما يتعلق بالممارسة. تهدف هذه الأطروحة الى معرفة آثر هذا النشاط التعليمي في تطوير مهاراتالطلاب في كتابة اللغة الإنجليزية. كما تحاول الدراسة الحالية لإعطاء صورة واضحة حول تأثيراته على العناصر الخمسة للكتابة الأكاديمية: المحتوى، والتنظيم، والمفردات، واستخدام اللغة، علامات الترقيم والكتابة بحرف كبير. تقدم الدراسة الحالية البحث الكمي والنوعي من خلال اجراء التجربة مع المجموعتين: التجريبية والضابطة، تحليل استبيانات الطلاب واجراء مقابلات مع الأساتذة. يشارك طلاب السنة الأولى (60) في العمل البحثي الحالي: 30طالب يشكلون المجموعة التجريبية، وثلاثون اخرون يشكلون المجموعة الضابطة. وأظهرت النتائج أن الطلاب الذين منحوا واجبات منزلية إلى جانب التصحيح الفعالمن طرف الأساتذة كان أداؤهم أفضل من أولئك الذين لم يفعلوا ذلك. وفي الأخير تم تقديم توصيات للأساتذة والطلاب بشأن الحاجة إلى إعادة النظر في دورالواجبات الدراسية المنزلية لتحسين أداء الطلاب في كتابة اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات الرئيسية : الكتابة الأكاديمية، الواجبات المنزلية، البحث الكمي، البحث النوعي، التصحيح