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University “Des Frères Mentouri”, Constantine
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The Impact of Writing Conferences on Foreign Language Learners' Paragraph Writing

The Case Of First Year EFL Students at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Constantine

**Thesis submitted in candidacy for the degree of “Doctorat ès Sciences” in
Applied Linguistics**

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École Normale Supérieure Assia Djébar of Constantine

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my parents

My husband and daughters: Melissa, Line, Dania, and Melina

My two brothers Ahmed and Mohamed Cherif

My sister in law Leila, my nephew Chahine, and my two nieces Lamis and Yesmine

All my aunts, cousins, and friends

My family in law

The soul of Hassiba, may Allah have mercy on her.

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Finally, I thank all the students of the Department of English of the ENS-C who participated in this study.

Abstract

Adopting writing conferences in order to clarify teachers' written feedback urges researchers and teachers to look for the appropriate feedback procedure that promotes writing improvement. This research seeks to investigate the impact of writing conferences on the content of students' writing performance. A preliminary questionnaire was administered to written expression teachers at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Constantine to investigate how these teachers provide feedback in their writing classes and to assess the potential for incorporating writing conferences as a teaching method for writing. Then, a quasi-experimental study, involving a pre-test and post-test, was conducted on first-year students at the Department of English in the ENS-C. Both the control group and the experimental group received written feedback, but only the experimental group received content conferencing feedback. The study findings highlighted a positive impact of writing conferences on the content of students' paragraph writing. Utilising a Two-Way ANOVA with Repeated Measures statistical analysis via SPSS, the research substantiated the statistical significance of the observed changes in mean scores between pre- and post-tests within both the experimental and control groups. Additionally, a post-training attitude questionnaire was administered which revealed the positive attitudes of learners towards writing conferences. In conclusion, this study underscores the effectiveness of integrating writing conferences as a valuable tool in the realm of written expression feedback.

Key words: *Writing Conferences, Feedback, Paragraph Writing*

List of Abbreviations

CG: Control Group

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ENS-C: École Normale Supérieure de Constantine

EG: Experimental Group

FL: Foreign Language

L1: First Language

L2: Second Language

M: Mean

Max.: Maximum

Min.: Minimum

Q: Question

SD: Standard deviation

TESOL: Test of English for Speakers of Other Languages

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General Introduction

1. Background of the Study

Writing is a skill that has garnered significant attention in recent decades, encompassing various sub-skills such as penmanship, spelling proficiency, and adherence to writing conventions (Schellekens, 2007). English Foreign Language (EFL) students often encounter difficulties when it comes to writing. To address these challenges, feedback has been recognized as an effective means of supporting students in enhancing their writing performance (Sachs et al. 1974).

Feedback serves as a valuable source of input that motivates writers to improve their written work and develop their writing abilities (Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Li Waishing, 2000). Different feedback techniques are commonly employed, including written feedback (end notes, side notes, or correction codes), self-feedback (self-assessment checklists), peer feedback, and face-to-face feedback (writing conferences).

Numerous studies have emphasised the importance of writing conferences in students' writing achievements, learning, autonomy, and confidence. For example, Flynn and King (1993) asserted that writing conferences help students enhance their critical thinking skills and learning by providing a social environment that fosters autonomy in writing. Similarly, Harris (1995) and Martinez (2001) argued that writing conferences contribute to student confidence. Furthermore, these feedback techniques promote independence (Calkins, 1985; Harris, 1995; Martinez, 2001; McIver & Wolf, 1999; Murray, 1979) and empowerment (Young & Miller, 2004). Furthermore, several studies reported that writing conferences assist students in engaging with their own texts (McIver & Wolf, 1999) and foster a sense of authority and ownership (Martinez, 2001; Steward, 1991).

The effectiveness of writing conferences has been a topic of investigation, with various findings. Anderson (2000), Calkins (1986), and Lain (2007) emphasised the importance of balanced interaction between teachers and students during writing conferences, asserting that unequal participation renders the conference ineffective. Similarly, Graves (1983) and Kaufman (1998) proposed the incorporation of humour by teachers to create a friendly and approachable atmosphere. Ineffective writing conferences occur when teachers dominate the conversation without allowing student input (Fletcher, 1993; Walker & Elias, 1987), when teachers solely solve all writing problems (Oye, 1993), or when excessive focus is placed on grammar and mechanics (Oliver, 2001).

Accordingly, future research should delve into the intricacies of teacher-student interactions during writing conferences, exploring the nuances of balanced participation, the impact of the friendly atmosphere, and the potential drawbacks identified in the existing literature. This deeper understanding will contribute to refining the practical application of writing conferences and maximising their effectiveness in improving students' writing skills.

2. Statement of the Problem

The English teaching and learning process at the ENS-C aims to equip students with functional language skills, enabling them to communicate effectively in both spoken and written English. Regarding writing, first-year students are required to comprehend and produce various types of short paragraphs, such as process, descriptive, narrative, comparison, and contrast paragraphs. However, the researcher has observed that many learners struggle to meet the expectations of their teachers in writing proficiency. Despite these intentions, as a teacher of writing to first-year students, a significant number of learners encounter challenges in meeting the proficiency expectations in paragraph writing.

In addition to their future roles as English language teachers, where they are responsible for teaching and evaluating all four language skills, including writing, ENS-C students are also required to submit a dissertation, a training copybook, and a training report in their final year. These assignments serve as opportunities for students to showcase their writing skills. Nevertheless, it has been noticed that many students have not fully achieved this objective, leading to concerns among the teachers at the English Department in ENS-C regarding the writing performance of undergraduate students.

When it comes to improving writing performance, teacher feedback has traditionally been provided through written comments. However, this approach limits opportunities for meaning negotiation, and if the feedback is unclear or misunderstood, the writer may not have the chance to seek clarification. Moreover, written feedback can be time-consuming for teachers. In this context, teacher conferencing is considered an alternative method for providing feedback to writers. Writing conferences involve a conversational dialogue between students and the teacher, allowing for interaction, clarification requests, and meaning negotiation. Students may benefit from writing conferences as they are likely to promote the development of autonomy, independence, and self-correction.

3. Aims of the Study

The present study attempts to investigate the impact of teachers' writing conferences on the content of students' writing paragraphs. It aims to demonstrate that through conferences with students, a deeper understanding of each individual's aptitude for generating meaningful content and innovative ideas can be revealed, surpassing the limitations of conventional mechanical writing exercises.

In this study, we are interested in investigating the use of the proposed technique and its appropriateness, with the ultimate goal to help first-year students at the ENS-C to better

understand and develop the writing process. We are dedicated to exploring alternative ways for correcting students' paragraphs, with the ultimate goal of promoting an enjoyable and effortless writing experience for both students and teachers.

Furthermore, our goal is to develop recommendations that encourage learners' active engagement in refining their writing, fostering collaborative discussions between teachers and learners on paragraph content during the writing process. Moreover, we hope to make a modest contribution to the field of language teaching, specifically in the realm of writing instruction.

4. Research Questions and Hypothesis

Some of the major questions addressed in this review include:

Q1: What is the impact of writing conferences on the content of students' paragraph writing?

Q2: What are the different error feedback techniques teachers most frequently use to identify students' errors?

Q3: How do teachers perceive writing conferences as a tool to improve learners' writing skill?

Q4: How do students perceive writing conferences as a tool to improve learners' writing skill?

In order to address the aforementioned inquiries, it is our belief that first-year students at ENS-C require training to become independent, mindful, and proficient writers. With this in mind, the following hypothesis has been proposed:

- Providing students with writing conferences leads to improvement in their content of paragraph writing.

This hypothesis serves as the foundation for exploring the effectiveness of writing conferences and its impact on students' writing development and engagement.

5. Sampling and Methodology

To meet the research aforementioned aims, answer the research questions, and test the hypothesis, three means of research were used as follows:

- A teachers' questionnaire to examine the existing techniques of feedback, and the possibility to adopt writing conferences, in the context of teaching academic writing.
- A quasi-experimental investigation involving first-year students at the ENS-C, utilising both pre- and post-tests.
- A students' questionnaire to find out whether the population under study accepts the writing conferences as a means to improve their writing ability.

Out of 44 teachers in the Department of English at the ENS-C, a questionnaire was distributed to a subset of 14 teachers. This sample specifically includes teachers of written expression who currently teach or have previously taught first-year students in written expression. The questionnaire served as a preliminary tool to validate the assumption that writing conferences were not commonly utilised by teachers as a method for teaching writing skills. Furthermore, the questionnaire explores the feasibility of incorporating writing conferencing into the teaching of writing.

First-year students are approximately 120 students, organized into four groups by the Department. Each group comprises 30 students, and one of these groups was assigned randomly for the researcher's study. During the research period, the chosen group was further divided into two subgroups: an experimental and a control one. Each subgroup consisted of 15 participants, ensuring a fair representation within the study.

It is worth noting that the training took place over five weeks, a condensed timeframe due to the constraints imposed by the pandemic i.e. during the academic year 2020-2021. The

blended learning system had been in effect from September until March, at which point students expressed a preference for face-to-face sessions. In response to this, a pre-test was administered in early April, marking the commencement of the experiment, which unfolded over the subsequent five weeks.

Preceding the commencement of the training, both groups had already acquired familiarity with narrative and descriptive paragraphs. Following this, they were systematically introduced to the expository type and were assigned the task of composing an expository paragraph as a pre-test measure. This aimed to evaluate their initial writing proficiency by testing their ability to communicate information, organize ideas logically, and present accurate content clearly.

During this instructional phase, in which the students wrote five expository paragraphs, the training specifically honed in on the development of skills related to writing conferences, placing an emphasis on content and the organisation of ideas. Noteworthy is the provision of corrective written feedback, including positive comments and specific remarks about content, to both the experimental and control groups. Furthermore, it is important to highlight that uniquely the experimental group received additional support through writing conferences, concentrating on content and organisational aspects. To ensure the integrity of the experiment and minimise external assistance, online assignments were temporarily avoided during this experimental phase.

Upon concluding the training, participants were tasked with composing a concluding expository paragraph, which served as the post-test. This post-test assessment served as a crucial endpoint, allowing us to gauge the overall effectiveness of the instructional intervention and its influence on the participants' writing competencies. The comparative analysis conducted between the pre-test and post-test results sought to assess the influence of the training on the writing abilities of the participants.

In addition to analysing the quantitative data derived from the pre-test and post-test assessments, we sought to gain deeper insights into students' perspectives by administering a post-training attitude questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed to explore and evaluate the students' beliefs and attitudes concerning the use of writing conferences in the context of their learning experience.

6. Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is composed of two sections. The first one presents an account of the writing skill through defining writing and academic writing, its components, its processes, its types, problems faced by students when writing, and the factors leading to students' problems. The second section is devoted to the paragraph, which is the most concern of first-year students. It includes the definition of the paragraph, its parts, and its different types.

The second chapter also consists of two major parts. The first part reviews feedback in the learning and teaching of EFL writing, problems of feedback, what an effective feedback is, and the different techniques of feedback. The second part deals with writing conferences. It explores the definition of writing conferences, what an effective writing conference is, what an ineffective one is, the role of the teacher in writing conferences, types of conferences, benefits of conferences, and some related studies to writing conferences.

The third chapter deals with the description of the research design and methodology planned for the current study. After explaining the reasons for choosing mixed methods as an approach in the study design, we describe the other research components: the setting, the participants, and the research methods. The latter describes the three methods we adopted for the data collection.

Chapter Four of the study focuses on the analysis and interpretation of data derived from the preliminary teachers' questionnaire. The primary objective is to gain insights into the diverse feedback methods employed by teachers to enhance students' writing skills. Additionally, the chapter explores the potential integration of writing conferences into writing classes. The investigation aims to identify patterns and preferences among teachers regarding feedback practises and assess their willingness to embrace writing conferences as a pedagogical tool.

In the fifth chapter, the focus shifts towards the quasi-experimental study and the examination of data obtained from the post-evaluation students' attitude questionnaire. Within this quasi-experimental framework, the primary aim of the data analysis is to assess the impact of the writing conferences technique on the content of writing paragraphs of first-year students at the ENS-C. The presentation of research findings unfolds in two key stages: firstly, a descriptive analysis of pre-post-test results for both the experimental and control groups. Secondly, a statistical analysis, a Two-Way ANOVA with repeated measures, using SPSS was adopted to compare the pre-post-test findings of groups, thereby testing the hypothesis and addressing the main research question. The subsequent section is dedicated to the post-training students' questionnaire, wherein collected data results are examined to illustrate their attitudes and beliefs regarding writing conferences.

Finally, in the sixth chapter, the reader is provided with some pedagogical implications and recommendations for improving the teaching of the writing skill through providing written feedback followed by the implementation of writing conferences. In addition, this chapter terminates by shedding light on the limitations of the current study and suggestions for future research.

7. Definition of Terms

Certain terms that represent important features in the design of this study are defined below.

Paragraph Writing

Writing paragraphs involves skilful organisation and expression of ideas within a distinct unit of text. Fowler et al. (2007) defined a paragraph as a unique unit of thought dedicated to elaborating a single idea, typically marked by an indented first line and comprising essential elements like a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a concluding sentence. Similarly, Tate et al. (2019) viewed the paragraph as a sequence of sentences unified in content and structure, aiming to convey a singular message. Both perspectives underline the cohesive and structured nature of paragraphs, emphasising their crucial role in conveying unified messages or ideas.

Feedback

Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) described feedback as a two-way conversation between teachers and students, not just a one-sided flow of information. They suggested that both sides actively participate in discussions to improve understanding. Hattie and Timperley (2007) added that good feedback should be given quickly, be specific, and help students know exactly what to do better. In simple terms, feedback is not just about judging; it's a helpful and collaborative process that's essential for learning.

Writing Conferences

Writing conferences are one-on-one interactions between a teacher and a student to discuss and provide feedback on the student's writing, have been recognized as a pivotal element in the writing process. Murray (1979) regarded writing conferences as integral, emphasising their collaborative nature, where teachers assume the role of responsive readers and engage in a dialogue with the writer, providing valuable feedback. Additionally, Schultz (1991)

underscored the interactive and personalised dimensions of writing conferences. She advocated for conferences as a platform for teachers to gain insights into needs of individual writers, allowing for the provision of tailored guidance and feedback.

Chapter One

The Writing Skill and Paragraph Writing

Chapter One: The Writing Skill and Paragraph Writing

Introduction

Cultivating effective written communication is a keystone of academic achievement. This chapter is structured into two sections. The initial part centres on the art of writing, seeking to explore the fundamental nature of writing and its relationship to other language skills. It further delves into the specifics of academic writing, encompassing its defining characteristics, constituent elements, and various approaches, with a specific emphasis on the writing process. The latter section offers a thorough exploration of paragraphs, covering their definition, integral components, diverse typologies, as well as the prevalent challenges faced by students in their writing endeavours, alongside the underlying factors that contribute to these difficulties.

1.1. The Writing Skill

The first part emphasised the development of the writing skill and offers a detailed study of academic writing.

1.1.1. Definition of Writing

Generally speaking, writing is defined as making marks that represent letters or words on a surface (Cambridge Dictionary, 2003). However, writing is much more complicated than being simply a production of symbol graphics. There have been abundant researchers and scholars who provided various definitions of writing.

According to Gie (2002, p. 3) ,“ writing is a whole series of activities done by someone to express his or her thoughts (experiences, opinions, knowledge, desires, feelings, and so on) through written language so as to be read and understood by others”. “It is also an effective way to communicate and express our thoughts, feelings, and opinions to others” (Dj & Sukarnianti, 2015, p. 186). Correspondingly, Richard, (1990, p. 98) stated that “writing is a way

of expressing thought from mind to printing materials”, and Kroma (1988, p 37) argued similarly that “writing is a kind of activity where the writer expresses all the ideas in his mind in the paper (print) from words to sentence, sentence to paragraph and from paragraph to essay”. We can conclude that writing is the expression of writer’s ideas in a written form so that the reader can get the writer’s opinion.

In agreement with Harmer (2006, pp. 79-80), “writing is a basic language skill, as important as speaking, listening and reading”. Similarly, Harris and Graham (2016, p. 78) stated, “writing, like reading, is a foundational skill that can boost comprehension and achievement across all subject areas”. Besides, Yagelski (2016, p. 21) added that “writing is a powerful way not only to describe but also to examine, to reflect on, and to understand our thoughts, feelings, opinions, ideas, action, and experience”. In addition, Subyantoro (2009, p. 223) also believes that “writing is a productive and receptive language skills, and writing requires creativity in the use of graphology, vocabulary, sentence structure, and paragraph development”.

Dorothy (2005) gave a broader definition. In her perspective, writing is an important form of communication in day-to-day life, but it is more important in high school and college where students find difficulty to include ideas in both first and second language, and each culture has its own style of academic writing. Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman (2014) stressed upon the significance of writing, teaching writing and learning to write as it appears in his remarks:

Writing is a powerful means of communication by which students learn better to express themselves. Teaching and learning to write in any language is an essential area that influences student performances and language learning. Moreover, learning to write in English as a foreign language has been an essential professional educational issue that serves various educational purposes and meets certain learning needs upon which the foreign language learners’ progress depends (p. 248).

According to Mohammad & Hazarika (2016), it is evident that writing serves as a tool for generating ideas and reinforcing the linguistic system by utilising it for communicative purposes in an interactive manner. Consequently, this process entails the effective conveyance of ideas from a sender to a receiver through written text, thereby fostering motivation and facilitating the growth of writing skills. However, writing poses a significant challenge for EFL learners, as it is often regarded as the most demanding and arduous language skill.

1.1.2. Writing and Other Skills

The significance of writing is not isolated; it harmoniously interacts with other vital language skills like reading, speaking, and listening. This exploration aims to unravel the collaboration between writing and these interconnected skills, highlighting how they collectively contribute to comprehensive language proficiency.

1.1.2.1. Writing and Reading

An L2 student has to master both reading and writing skills as Hyland (2003, p. 53) said, “writing together with reading, is a central aspect of literacy”. Some studies showed the connection between the two skills. For instance, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) argued that a good writer is the one who can produce texts that could be read successfully. Raimes (1983) suggested that reading could be an effective communicative activity in teaching writing since students can gather ideas and information through reading different types of texts. The relationship between reading and writing garnered significant attention from researchers and writing teachers (Eisterhold, 1991; Heller, 1999) in a way that better writers tend to be better readers and vice versa.

Many are the researchers that distinguished three main theories in the relationship between writing and reading, among them Carson et al. (1990). The first theory is called the directional perspective, in which reading and writing are acquired using the same structure. When this

structure is acquired for one process, it can be transferred to the other process; though, transfer proceeds in only one direction, and mostly the relationship is debated in terms of the influence of reading on the development of writing. The second theory is known as the non-directional. In this theory, transfer between writing and reading occurs at the same time in either direction, so that writing influences reading and reading influences writing (Carson et al. 1990; Grabe, 2003). The last theory, the bi-directional, sees reading and writing as “interactive but also interdependent” (Carson 1990 et al. p. 92), which implies multiple relations whose nature may change depending on language proficiency.

Agustin (2009) advocated that reading contributes to writing in several ways by affording the linguistic content and vocabulary through texts and by providing authentic and real instances of language use. Reading also suggests eloquent models of information and organisation in the target language (Grabe, 2003) in addition to skills and strategies for the acquisition of writing (Weigle, 2002).

Similarly, writing improves reading in many ways. According to Thelen (1982), writing contributes to reading when it helps the students comprehend the concepts of the topic they will learn. By introducing writing activities into reading lessons, students are motivated to study reading in the same way writers do when they have a topic, write the draft and develop the text. Hence, when students perceive the structure of a text, they understand easily what they are reading. In the same vein, Taylor and Bach (1984) found that students improved better the reading of expository texts when they have been first introduced to the writing of such types of paragraphs. In addition, “writing about text should facilitate comprehending it, as it provides students with a tool for visibly and permanently recording, connecting, analysing, personalising and manipulating key ideas in text”(Graham & Hebert, 2011, p. 712).

We conclude that reading and writing are both crucial skills that appear to be individualistic, but they are interdependent. Reading influences positively the writing skill in many domains, and comparably writing contributes much in the development of writing abilities.

1.1.2.2. Writing and Speaking

Writing and speaking are both individual, highly cognitive activity, and social phenomenon (Weissberg, 2006). Writing similar to speaking can be both private and public because it is intended for an audience. Bachman and Palmer (1996) argued that neither skill is different since the writer and the reader make use of prior linguistic knowledge to achieve a particular communicative purpose. Other scholars namely, Cornbleet and Carter (2001), Weigle (2002), hold different standpoints and argued that speaking and writing are not alike.

Brown (2000) provided a list of characteristics that differentiate written language from spoken language. The first feature is permanence: any time. In contrast, speaking requires real situation. The second feature is production time. When writing, there is time for planning, for drafting, and for revision; in contrast, when speaking there isn't. The next feature of difference is distance. The writer has to be clear and explicit in his writing because there is a distance between him and the audience which is not the case for speakers who have the opportunity to speak directly to their audience. Two other features are formality and complexity. Written language has to be more formal and more complex compared to the oral language. In addition to the previous stated features, in the oral language we rely on stress, intonation, pitch, and pause, etc., whereas in written language we focus on the best choice of words and the wide range of vocabulary.

In the same vein, Weigle (2002) argued that in writing, the audience, the content, and the appropriate forms of written texts, purposes and different concerns of readers have to be considered, while in speaking, all this feedback and information could be easily procured from

the listener. At the cognitive level, Grabowski (1996) investigated how writing and speaking require different cognitive abilities because the writer needs planning and producing that are central cognitive processes he undergoes, but the speaker emphasised on preserving the flow of conversation, such as using turn-taking signals or avoiding long pauses (Sacks et al., 1974).

Despite all the differences that could exist between writing and speaking, Biber (1988, p. 24) pointed out that “no absolute spoken/written distinction is identified; rather, the relations among spoken and written texts are complex and associated with a variety of situational, functional, and processing considerations”. Other research results of Akki and Larouz (2021) revealed that there was a strong positive correlation between the two skills, and they showed that when the speaking scores increased, the writing scores also increased.

1.1.2.3. Writing and Listening

Writing and listening are two crucial language skills that play critical roles in communication and comprehension. These skills are influencing and complementing each other in various contexts. Both writing and listening engage complex cognitive mechanisms. According to Flower and Hayes (1981), the mental processes utilised in producing written content closely reflect those employed in understanding spoken language. Another similarity is that writing and listening require individuals to process information efficiently. In writing, this entails organizing thoughts and translating them into coherent text. In listening, individuals must decode auditory input and convert it into meaningful information (Brown & Yule, 1983). This shared emphasis on information processing underscores their complementary nature. Additionally, writing and listening are categorised as receptive and productive language skills, respectively. Receptive skills involve understanding and interpreting language (listening), while productive skills involve generating and expressing language (writing). Writing and

listening bridge this divide, demonstrating how both the ability to understand and to produce language are essential for proficient communication (Ravid & Tolchinsky, 2002).

Despite the similarities that exist between the writing and listening skills, there are also some key differences. Flower and Hayes (1981) maintained that writing necessitates the production of organized text, meticulous attention to grammatical and mechanical details, and the capacity to articulate ideas in a structured format. On the contrary, according to Ravid and Tolchinsky (2002), listening primarily involves the comprehension of spoken language, rapid information processing, and the occasional discernment of nuances such as intonation. These distinctions underscore the diverse cognitive demands of writing and listening.

In a nutshell, writing and listening go hand in hand. They both involve processing information effectively. Writing is about organizing thoughts into clear text, while listening is understanding spoken language. Even though they have similarities, they also have distinct demands. Writing needs attention to detail and structured expression, while listening requires quick comprehension. Both skills are crucial in education and contribute to language proficiency.

1.1.3. Components of Writing

According to Raimes (1983), components of writing can be clustered under six main titles: content or the message to generate, organisation of the ideas, tools used to convey the message, purpose, audience, and style.

1.1.3.1. Content

Content refers to the background information provided about the topic. It has to be relevant, clear and logic. The amount of this background varies with the topic and the type of writing. If

it is a paragraph it is about 120 words, but if it is an essay, it is a combination of more than three paragraphs. This content needs, also, to be organized in such a way as to form a coherent whole.

1.1.3.2. Organisation

According to Swales and Freak (2012, p. 08), “readers have the expectation that information will be presented in a structured format that is appropriate for the particular type of text. Even short pieces of writing have regular, predictable patterns of organisation.” Ideas have to be organized and structured according to a specific order either in essays or paragraphs (Al Mansour, 2014)

1.1.3.3. Tools

Analysing effective writing involves looking at grammar, sentence structure, and how everything fits together. Mechanics encompasses fundamental components including handwriting, spelling, and punctuation. Equally significant is the process of lexical selection, referred to as word choice, which is about carefully choosing the right words that express exactly what you mean.

1.1.3.4. Purpose

According to Whitaker (2009, p. 2), the most common purposes of writing are the following:

- Persuasive purpose to get the reader to adopt the writer’s favoured point of view.
- Analytical purpose: The purpose is to explain and evaluate an issue from multi-perspectives, choosing the best perspective based on certain criteria. Analytical assignments often investigate causes, examine effects, evaluate effectiveness, assess ways to solve problems, find the relationships between various ideas, or analyse other people’s arguments.

- **Informative purpose:** The purpose is to explain possible answers to an issue, giving the readers new information about a topic. This differs from analytical writing in that writers do not force their viewpoints onto the readers, but rather try to enlarge their understanding. Horowitz (1986) identifies several categories of academic writing tasks expected of students to fulfil their course requirements. They include critical reviews; term papers, essays; synthesis of data from multiple sources, and research assignments.

Bailey (2011) stated that the most common reasons of academic writing are to report on a piece of research the writer has conducted, to answer a question the writer has been given or chosen, to discuss a subject of common interest and give the writer's view, or to synthesise research done by others on a topic. Grabe (2003) suggested other reasons such as to control the mechanical production aspect; to list, fill-in, repeat, and paraphrase; to understand, remember, summarise, and extend notes to oneself; to learn, solve problems, summarise, and synthesise; to critique, persuade, and interpret; to create an aesthetic experience or to entertain.

1.1.3.5. Audience

According to Chambers and Northedge (2008), writing can be considered a unique type of conversation. When you write, you engage in a dialogue with an unseen recipient who does not provide immediate responses. It becomes necessary to imagine that this recipient is "listening", and you bear the full responsibility of determining what should be communicated, how it should be conveyed, and how to maintain the reader's engagement.

In agreement with Swales and Freak (2012), as far as the student is concerned, the audience is the teacher who knows what the assignment is about and what the student is supposed to write in his composition. In addition to the instructor, the audience can comprise consultants, thesis committees, and perhaps experts if the paper is a conference, for instance.

1.1.3.6. Style

Style in writing refers to the distinctive manner in which an author conveys ideas and expresses thoughts. It encompasses the writer's choice of words, sentence structure, tone, and overall presentation. Famous writers have used their special ways of writing to make a lasting impact on literature. For instance, Hemingway (1952), in works like "The Old Man and the Sea", represents a clear and direct way of writing, characterised by short sentences. This style of writing fosters a profound emotional impact with readers seeking unembellished narratives.

1.1.4. Academic Writing

Students in high school and college are required to write academically and not creatively; therefore, academic writing has components and characteristics that students should know.

1.1.4.1. Definition of Academic Writing

Academic writing is considered as one of the essential skills that learners at college and undergraduate level need for several educational purposes involving passing the exams (Dar & Khan, 2015). Respectively, Garcia & Isabel (2018) consider academic writing as the most difficult of all the four skills of a language.

According to Oshima and Hogue (2007), academic writing refers to the type of writing typically employed in high school and college courses. It distinguishes itself from creative writing, which encompasses storytelling, and personal writing, involving writing letters or emails to friends and family. Unlike creative and personal writing, academic writing adheres to a formal style, discouraging the use of slang, contractions, or incomplete sentences. Furthermore, it emphasised the importance of constructing complete sentences and organizing them in a specific manner.

As per Hyland's perspective (2002), academic writing encompasses more than simply conveying ideas. It also involves the representation of oneself. Recent studies have indicated that academic prose is not entirely impersonal; instead, writers establish credibility by projecting an identity imbued with personal authority. This is achieved by demonstrating confidence in their evaluations and displaying a strong commitment to their ideas (Hyland, 2002). Irvin (2010) considered academic writing as an argument because an argument is needed to shape readers' point of view to have a belief on the fact we have presented. That is why the writer should have many supporting sources to develop his idea.

1.1.4.2. Characteristics of Academic Writing

Academic writing is considered as distinctively different from other forms of writing (Singh & Lukkarila, 2017). Gillett (n.d.) claimed that "academic writing in English is linear, that is, it is centred on one point with every part contributing to the main line of argument, without digressions or repetitions". He added that academic writing is distinguished by its eight features that are complexity, formality, objectivity, explicitness, precision, accuracy, hedging, responsibility, organisation, and planning.

1.1.4.2.1. Complexity

Written language is relatively more complex than spoken language (Biber, 1988; Biber et al., 1999; Chafe, 1982; Cook, 1997; Halliday, 1989). According to Koutraki (2015), academic writing is lexically dense and crowded compared to spoken language. It uses more complex words and phrases, and it contains more noun-based phrases, more nominalisations, more subordinate clauses, more «that/to» complement clauses, more long sequences of prepositional phrases, more attributive adjectives and more passive voices, more participles, and a sequence of prepositional phrases.

1.1.4.2.2. Formality

Academic writing adheres to a corresponding formality, distinguishing itself from free writing or personal letters commonly crafted for friends or family members. Heylighen and Dewaele (1999, p. 8) characterise formality as the “avoidance of ambiguity”. According to Hacker (1998), formal writing accentuates the importance of its subject matter, maintaining a tone of dignity that deliberately separates the writer from the audience. Additionally, formality is associated with the increased use of nouns, prepositional phrases, adjectives, articles, long sentences, and complex vocabulary (Heylighen & Dewaele, 1999, pp. 13-33). Scholars like Chang and Swales (1999), as well as Hyland and Jiang (2017), have compiled a list of ten features indicative of formality, encompassing first-person pronouns, unattended anaphoric pronouns, split ins, conjunctive adverbs, sentence-final prepositions, listing expressions, second-person pronouns, contractions, direct questions, and exclamations.

1.1.4.2.3. Objectivity

Academic writing is generally objective rather than individual or personal. According to Nunn et al. (2018, p. 74), “objectify refers to attempts to disguise what is actually subjective intervention by making only impersonal language choices”. “It is also an intrinsically flawed concept that does not advance (even scientific) knowledge” (ibid, p 97). It has been intended to mean “disinterestedness; emotional detachment; rule-governed procedures; quantitative methods; openness to criticism; responsiveness to evidence, or accountability to a mind-independent reality, among others.” (Hacking, 2015, p. 25). Eisner (1992) provided us with a straightforward definition of objectivity. For him, when we do something objective, it is not about ourselves, but about the world itself. To be objective, he added, is to be fair, to be open to all sides of the argument, and most importantly is to see things the way they are.

1.1.4.2.4. Evidence

Evidence is another feature which makes the difference between academic writing and other forms of writing. Heady (2007, p. 60) identifies evidence as “the material you use to back up your claims”. The claim is the writer’s point of view or argument. Writers need to consolidate their ideas and arguments by providing convenient evidence which comes in a form of facts, statistics, empirical research findings and expert opinions (Ng, 2003).

1.1.4.2.5. Explicitness

Bennett (2009, p. 45) referred to explicitness as “clarity”. That is to say that academic writing has to be clear and direct; therefore, students should not write implicit ideas, which require intended meaning. In the same vein, Biber and Gray (2010) advocated that it is important for students to learn how to write clearly their prose so that the reader would have no doubts about the intentional meaning. In academic writing, the writer must make clear the connection between the sentences and the paragraphs otherwise the reader will lose attentiveness in reading. However in some languages like Hindi, Chinese, Japanese, and Malay writing does not require explicitness in ideas, for their culture encourages implicitness when presenting ideas (Clyne, 1994).

1.1.4.2.6. Grammar

A student needs to master English grammar in order to express himself correctly and appropriately in academic writing. Grammar includes such rules of verb tenses, the use of modal verbs to express degrees of certainty and commitment, and different ways of grouping and ordering written utterances and words (Lynch and Anderson, 2013). Ferris (1995) asserted that

Though students may be much better at invention, organisation, and revision than they were before, too many written products are still riddled with grammatical and lexical inaccuracies. No matter how interesting or original a student’s ideas are, an excess of

sentence- and discourse-level errors may distract and frustrate instructors and other readers. (p. 18)

Grammar plays an important role in academic writing, and students need to consider rules of grammar when writing their compositions so that they can convey their ideas effectively to the reader.

1.1.4.2.7. Planning and Organising

Another feature of academic writing is planning and organisation. The ideas and information in academic writing have to be organized and outlined before edition in a way that makes the writing coherent, clear and smooth (Al Mansour, 2014). Richards et al. (2002, p. 304) claimed that “writing involves very complex skills. Learners of L2 writing have to attend to higher skills such as planning and organizing and lower skills such as spelling and punctuation.”

1.1.4.2.8. Citing

Postgraduate students need to know how to cite or reproduce other authors’ ideas and statements in order to acknowledge them and avoid plagiarism at the same time. Ng (2003) asserted that citing sources seems to be important because it allows the readers to identify the source material used, and verify the established conclusions of others’ works.

As stated by Borg (2017), students commencing postgraduate studies need to cultivate the ability to conduct independent research. In disciplines like the social sciences and humanities, this entails engaging in extensive background reading within the specific field. Moreover, it involves showcasing the knowledge gained from the literature and incorporating it into a novel intellectual argument. This argument should explicitly acknowledge the contributions of other authors while also positioning them within a fresh framework that highlights areas of agreement and disagreement.

1.1.4.3. Approaches to Teaching Academic Writing

This section focalises on the most popular approaches: the product approach, the process approach, the genre approach and the process genre approach.

1.1.4.3.1. Product Approach

The product approach has emerged since the late 1970s and sees writing as being primarily about linguistic knowledge. The teacher provides the student with a sample piece of writing that the student imitates to produce his own. Richards and Schmidt (2002, p. 422) defined the product approach as “one which focuses on producing different kinds of written products and which emphasised imitation of different kinds of model paragraphs or essays”. The product approach was concerned mostly with the finished written product, and not in the ways it was produced (Neman, 1995). According to Ferris and Hedgcock (2004, p. 3), “this approach considers the students’ written products as static representations of their knowledge and learning”.

The product approach has been displeased by many scholars for many reasons. Yan et al. (2005, p. 19) criticised it because it “requires constant error correction, and that affects students’ motivation and self-esteem”. Besides, the product approach neglected meaning as it is clearly denounced by Raimes (1983). According to him, in such product approach, interest is only adjusted to how well grammar, syntax, and mechanics are put in use, and not in what writing necessitates meaningful expression of messages. Moreover, the amplification on the linguistic forms contributes to students rarely gaining the skills required to shape and create their work (Robertson, 2008).

1.1.4.3.2. Process Approach

This approach has emerged in response to the product approach, which prioritised form over meaning. The process approach places the learner at the heart of the writing process. It is defined as an approach that underscores the composing processes writers employ in writing, such as planning, drafting, and revising, with the aim of enhancing students' writing skills by fostering the use of effective composing processes (Richards and Schmidt, 2002). Kroll (2001) suggested a more elaborate definition of the process approach as follows:

The 'process approach' serves today as an umbrella term for many types of writing courses What the term captures is the fact that student writers engage in their writing tasks through a cyclical approach rather than a single-shot approach. They are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher, followed by revision of their evolving texts (pp. 220-221).

Therefore, good writers go through several steps to produce a piece of writing (Dorothy 2005). These steps of writing are universal at least to some degrees; which means that all writers are passing by the same steps while writing (Ferris and Hedgcock 2004). Accordingly, Brown (2001) states that the writing process can generally be categorised into three stages: pre-writing, drafting, and revising. The pre-writing stage involves generating ideas through various methods, such as reading extensively, skimming or scanning a passage, conducting research, brainstorming, creating lists or clusters, discussing a topic or question, responding to instructor-initiated questions, and engaging in free writing. Following pre-writing, the drafting and revising stages form the central processes of writing in traditional approaches to writing instruction.

1.1.4.3.2.1. Prewriting

Ningrum, et al. (2016, p. 150) stated that “prewriting or planning is the initial and important step in the process of writing. The activities in the prewriting are designed to help students in preparing their writing by assisting them developing their background knowledge, selecting and narrowing appropriate topics, brainstorming ideas, and organizing thoughts”. Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 16) defined prewriting as “a way to get ideas. In this step, the writer chooses a topic and collects ideas to explain the topic.” There are numerous techniques to get ideas in the prewriting stage. The most used techniques are the following:

a) Brainstorming

It is an activity by in which the writer gathers a list of ideas spontaneously. In other words, the writer starts putting down any idea that comes to his mind without thinking of its grammatical exactness or logical significance.

b) Clustering/Mind Mapping

Clustering is also called mind mapping or idea mapping. Rico (1983) defined clustering as a “non-linear brainstorming process akin to free association”. Clustering helps students to inspect the relationship between ideas. According to Rothstein and Santana (2011), when clustering the ideas, the writer will look at them differently which permits him to understand probable directions his paper may take.

c) Journaling/Questioning

This is another technique of prewriting which is mostly adopted from journalists who use questions such as who? what? where? when? why? how? to explore their topic. The teacher here needs to train the students in asking focused questions to get clear and explicit responses

(Dhanya & Alamelu 2019). Similarly, Gorrell (1996) stated that students should use focused questions as the basis for pre-writing.

d) Free Writing

Weinstein (2001) explained that free writing is about to write continuously without stopping. The writer should neither take a break nor stop for revising, but just keeping on writing for ten minutes. According to Saskatchewan Education (1996) this can result in finding new ideas, notions, and perceptions that we were ignoring before.

e) Outlying/Listing

Dhanya and Alamelu (2019, p. 6769) defined outlining as “a pre-writing activity that enables to distinguish and sort the main idea from the supporting ideas (or details). This method is otherwise called listing”. So the writer will have a list that contains, of course, the main topic and the supporting ideas, also called subtopics.

1.1.4.3.2.2. Organizing

In this stage of writing, the writer organizes the ideas into a simple outline. He or she writes a sentence that named the topic and the main idea, and then listed the other words and phrases from the list that supports the topic selected.

1.1.4.3.2.3. Writing

The next step is to write a rough draft, using the outline as a guide. The writer writes a draft as quickly as he can without stopping to think about grammar, spelling, or punctuation. He or she will probably see many errors in the rough draft, but he or she will fix them later.

1.1.4.3.2.4. Polishing: Revising and Editing

Revising should be viewed as a helpful thinking process that enables students to explore their ideas more deeply in order to best communicate their ideas with an audience (Manzo & Manzo 2013). According to Oshima and Hogue (2007), in this step, the writer polishes what he has written. In other words, he revises and writes at the same time, but Oshima and Hogue precised that this process should be done also in two steps: the first one is to attack big issues such as content and organisation, and the second one is to work on smaller aspects such as grammar spelling and punctuation.

1.1.4.3.3. Genre Approach

As a criticism for both the product and the process approaches, the genre-oriented approach emerged in the mid-eighties. Proponents of this approach claim that learners must study a text within a specific genre before beginning writing (Harmer, 2001). Coffin et al. (2005) considered the genre-oriented approach to be a type of an extension to the product- based approach; while, others (Connor and Johns, 1990; Hyland, 2003; Paltridge, 2004; Raimes, 1983) believe it to be a different pattern in teaching writing. Hyland (2003, p. 23) defined genre theory as “a socially informed theory of language offering an authoritative pedagogy grounded in research on texts and contexts, strongly committed to empowering students to participate effectively in target situations”.

Swales (1990) provided a comparable explanation of the genre approach, stating that it revolves around communication events and their intended purposes. He defined a genre as a category of communication events wherein the participants share a common set of communicative objectives. These objectives are acknowledged by knowledgeable members of the particular discourse community, thereby establishing the underlying rationale for the genre.

This rationale determines the overall structure of the discourse and influences the selection of content and style.

1.1.4.3.4. A Process Genre Approach

Badger & White (2000) termed the process genre approach as the combination of the process approach with the genre approach in the writing classroom. This approach allows students to study the relationship between purpose and form for a particular genre as they use the writing process of prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. Using these steps develops students' awareness of different text types and of the composing process. According to Frith (2006) and Goa (2007), the process genre approach is a combination of two approaches that can help in developing students' writing skills. "The concept of process genre approach comes from the genre approaches such as knowledge of context, the purpose of writing and certain text features and have the process concepts such as writing skills development and learners' response" (Agesta, 2016, p. 04).

1.2. Paragraph Writing

This section investigates paragraph writing, exploring its fundamental elements, structure, and types for effective academic writing.

1.2.1. Definition of the Paragraph

According to Tucker (2012), a paragraph consists of a collection of sentences focused on a common topic or central concept. The primary goal of every paragraph is to convey this idea to the reader with precision and clarity. The length of a paragraph is not rigidly defined; it varies based on the subject matter and the writer's intended message. Broadman and Fridenberg (2008, p. 15) stated that there are certain numbers of rules which have to be followed while writing a standard paragraph in the term of format.

- ✓ Put your name and date in the upper right-hand corner.
- ✓ Centre the title above your paragraph.
- ✓ Indent the first sentence of your paragraph.
- ✓ Start each sentence with a capital letter.
- ✓ End each sentence with a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark.
- ✓ Begin each sentence where the previous sentence ends.
- ✓ Write on every other line. This is called double spacing.
- ✓ Put margins of about one inch on each side of the paper.

These formatting rules are essential for maintaining readability and consistency in writing.

1.2.2. Parts of the Paragraph

In academic writing, a paragraph is about five to ten sentences depending on the topic, and it has a very specific organisational pattern. When the pattern is followed, the paragraph will be easy for the readers to be understood. This simple pattern is based on topic sentence, supporting sentences and concluding sentence, which represent parts of the paragraph. An academic paragraph has three parts which are the topic sentence, the supporting sentences which are joined together via transition signals and the concluding sentence. All these three parts are preceded by a title.

1.2.2.1. Title

The title tells the reader about the topic of the paragraph. It is usually a word, a phrase, a question, but rarely a declarative whole sentence. According to Nirwanto (2013, p. 01) there are some points to be considered when writing the title of a paragraph which are the following:

- ✓ The first, last and all important words in a title are capitalised, prepositions and articles are not considered important words in a title. Prepositions and articles are not considered

important words in a title. Preposition of more than five letters, however, may be capitalised. Articles that begin that title, of course, are capitalised.

- ✓ The title of paragraph or essay is not understood.
- ✓ The title is not enclosed quotation marks, nor is it ended with a period.
- ✓ A title will attract the reader about up-to-date topics. Often the readers want the latest information.
- ✓ It should be specific and powerful.
- ✓ It should be brief.

1.2.2.2. Topic Sentence

The topic sentence is supposed to be the first sentence of the paragraph; it introduces the paragraph. It can be divided into two parts: the topic and the controlling idea. The topic is a word or a phrase which introduces what the entire paragraph is going to be about and the controlling idea is the writer's opinion about the topic. Controlling idea is further required to limit a topic (Boardman & Frydernberg, 2008, pp. 3-6); For instance, if we take the topic sentence:

The University of Georgia is the first public chartered university in the state of Georgia. The *University of Georgia*.....is the topic.

is the first public chartered university in the state of Georgia..... is the controlling idea.

A good topic sentence should not be too general or too specific. If it is too general, it will be difficult to develop it adequately in a single paragraph. If it is too specific, there will be nothing left to say to develop the idea in the paragraph (Boardman and Frydernberg, 2008, p. 50).

School is terrible..... too general

In my country, children start school in September.....too specific

1.2.2.3. Body: Supporting Sentences

Supporting sentences are sentences that support the topic sentence. They explain the topic by giving examples or evidence. According to O'Donnell and Paiva (1993), there are two types of supporting sentences: major and minor. Major supporting sentences support directly the topic sentence, whereas minor supporting sentences support the major supporting sentences. The information provided in either the major or the minor supporting sentences depends on the type of paragraph to be developed. If the paragraph is expository, it requires illustration and exemplification. If it is narrative, it requires actions and steps organized in a chronological order. If it is descriptive, it appeals to the five senses and involvement of emotions. If it is argumentative, it needs evidence and proof...etc. These supporting sentences have to be linked together by means of transition signals.

1.2.2.4. Transition Signals

Transition signals are those words and phrases used to join sentences to achieve coherence in the paragraph or essay in order to make the reader follow your writing and understand your topic as confirmed by Schorr and Lesh (2003) who stated that without transition signals, the writing will be hard and boring. Transition Signals include words such as first, second, in addition, furthermore, similarly, etc.

1.2.2.5. Concluding Sentence

The concluding sentence is supposed to be the last sentence of the paragraph. Only when the paragraph stands alone, it is required, but if the paragraph is part of a body essay, the concluding sentence becomes arbitrary. There are two ways to write a correct concluding sentence. The first way is to reformulate the topic sentence, which means to rewrite the topic sentence using other words and keeping the same meaning and the same idea. The second way is to summarise the main points of the supporting sentences. A concluding sentence starts with a concluding

transition signal such as in short, all in all, in conclusion, overall, in summary. It is important also that a concluding sentence never introduces a new idea or another topic.

1.2.3. Characteristics of Paragraph Writing

Unity, coherence and development are the most significant characteristics of any academic written text. A paragraph or an essay has to be unified and coherent in order to facilitate for the reader the comprehension of the composition.

1.2.3.1. Unity

A paragraph is unified when all its sentences are relevant to the topic sentence, which means that all the sentences in the paragraph discuss only one idea. As stated by Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 18), “unity means that a paragraph discusses one and only one main idea from beginning to end”. Similarly, Zemach and Rumisek (2005) said that unity is the connection of all ideas to a single topic as unified writing. There are two problems facing unity. The first one is that we may find sentences that are not relevant to the topic, and the second one is that we may find two topics in one paragraph. In both cases we can say that the paragraph lacks unity.

1.2.3.2. Coherence

Zor (2006, p. 9) defined coherence as “the underlying semantic relations that allow a text to be understood”. It is also “an outcome of a dialogue between the text and its listener or reader” (Tanskanen, 2006, p. 192). A paragraph is coherent when the move from one sentence to another is done smoothly, without jump. The sentences are linked together using one of the techniques stated by Oshima and Hogue (2007). The first way to achieve coherence is by the use of key nouns or repetition of key nouns. The second way is the use of consistent pronouns; for example, when we start the first supporting sentence referring to the topic using the pronoun he, then in the next sentence we cannot use the pronoun we or you. The third technique

to achieve coherence is the use of transition signals to link between different supporting sentences such as at the beginning, then, lately, few minutes later, finally...etc. The fourth way is the appropriate use of logical order since sentences have to be organized and outlined before the first draft, and this procedure depends mostly on the type of each paragraph or essay.

1.2.3.3. Development

Developing a paragraph entails supporting the topic with explanations, examples, details, and evidence. This injection of supplementary information strengthens the paragraph and reinforces the main topic. Conversely, a paragraph lacking such enrichment may be considered unfinished. Development may include specific examples, statistics, quotations, or even personal anecdotes depending on the nature and purpose of the writing. According to e Dozier-Brown (2019), effective development is a crucial aspect of proficient writing because supporting material enhances the coherence and persuasiveness of a paragraph.

1.2.4. Types of Paragraphs

When we write, we define, explain, illustrate, narrate, describe, classify, compare or contrast, persuade, argument, or give instructions. For this reason, we have many types of paragraphs each depending on the purpose of writing.

1.2.4.1. Narrative Paragraphs

In the narrative paragraph, we narrate a story, an event, or an experience. We follow a chronological order, and we use list ideas in time order, using such transition signals: first, second, after, at last, next, as soon as, after a while, meanwhile, before, after that, since lesson, finally. Types of narrative include short stories, novels, and new stories, as well as large part of our everyday social interchange in the form of letters and conversation (McDougall, 1999). Broadman and Fridenberg(2008, p. 67) stated that “a narrative paragraph is used when writing

about such things as a vacation trip taken to Africa, your first day in a foreign country, man's journey into space, or the events leading to the end of slavery in America".

1.2.4.2. Descriptive Paragraphs

According to Wishon and Burks (1980), descriptive writing reveals the way things look, sound, smell, taste, feel, or even moods, such as happiness, sadness, satisfaction or fear. It is used to design a visual image of people, places, things, or even units of time. It may tell about a character or a personality. Ameri (2008) advocates that when you write a descriptive paragraph, you are trying to communicate picture or feeling in words because if you say that the new film actress is very beautiful, your audience's next question will almost be what does she look like? Broadman and Fridenberg (2008) declare that a descriptive paragraph would be used for such things as describing the physical appearance of your favourite uncle, the layout of the library at a school, the awesome grandeur of the Pyramids, or the stunning beauty of the Mona Lisa.

1.2.4.3. Process Paragraphs

Also called the How paragraph. A Process paragraph is used when explaining something such as how to do something, how something is done, or how something works. We use the process paragraph to answer questions such as how to decorate an egg? How to make a good pizza? How to prepare a delicious cake? Broadman and Fridenberg (2008) stated that when reading a process paragraph the sequence of steps is easily followed. For this reason, the use of transition words such as first, second, third, after that, then, next, and before is essential for process paragraphs.

1.2.4.4. Expository (Illustrative) Paragraphs

In the expository paragraph (also called illustrative paragraph), we explain the topic by providing examples. We list ideas in a logical order, and we supply each logical order by information and examples, using the appropriate transition signals such as first, second, another example, for instance, finally...etc. Boardman and Frydenberg (2008), advocate that an illustration paragraph is essentially the combination of a description and argumentation paragraph.

1.2.4.5. Classification Paragraphs

Classification is a method of paragraph in which a writer schedules people, things, or ideas with shared characteristics into classes or groups. A classification paragraph often includes examples, illustrations and other supporting details that are organized according to types and categories, or parts of a whole (Nordquist, 2019).

1.2.4.6. Definition Paragraphs

In the definition paragraph, we define usually abstract notions and not concrete ones. The reason behind is that we all agree on the definition of a concrete noun or thing, for example a pen, a table, a face, but we do not have all the same definition about something invisible such as love, happiness, or beauty.

1.2.4.7. Comparison Contrast Paragraphs

This kind of paragraph examines two or more subjects by comparing their similarities and contrasting their differences (Kelly-Riley, 2019). We compare and contrast between two persons, two things, two places, two periods of time, two methods, etc. In academic writing,

there are two basic methods for organizing comparison-contrast paragraphs: the block pattern and the point by point pattern. In the block pattern, we start our supporting sentences stating all features of the element A, and then we state all the features of element B; whereas, in the point by point pattern, in each supporting point, we compare between one feature of A and the same feature of B.

1.2.4.8. Argumentative Paragraphs

In argumentation, the writer tries to prove his opinion and convince the reader that one idea is to be rejected and another one is to be adopted. “The aim is to make a case or to prove or disprove a statement or proposition material” (Wishon & Burks, 1980, p. 382). Similarly to the comparison contrast paragraphs, the argumentative is also organized in two ways: the block pattern and the point by point pattern.

1.2.4.9. Cause and Effect Paragraphs

A paragraph may discuss reasons solely, effects only, or reasons and effects at the same time, especially in the causal chain paragraph, when the effect of a problem becomes a reason of another one. In cause paragraph, the writer delves into the underlying reasons for a statement while, in the effect paragraph, the writer focuses on explaining the consequences that result from a specific cause or set of causes. The goal is to illustrate the impact of the discussed reasons.

1.2.5. Paragraph Writing Problems

Students find the writing skill a very hard task, and people regard writing as something they have to avoid because of its awkwardness (Hilton & Hyder, 1995). Similarly, Byrne (1991, p. 1) affirmed that most writers be they professional or not “would agree that it is usually neither an easy nor a spontaneous activity”. Moreover, writing in a FL or L2 is more demanding than

writing in one's mother tongue on the basis that the former needs some abilities which may be "less well developed than in one's first language"(Schoonen et al. 2003, p. 166).

Shaughnessy (1991, p. 415) stated that "the major difficulties of students' are related to hand-writing and punctuation, syntax, common errors, spelling, vocabulary and beyond the sentence (i.e. problems in presenting and elaborating of a central idea)". Similarly, Hailemariam (2011) found that lack of vocabulary, idea generating and organizing problem, poor grammar, miss use of punctuation, capitalisation and spelling errors are some of the problems students commonly face in developing writing.

From the above statements, it is possible to deduce that L2 students face some difficulties in writing including, grammar errors, planning and organisation, word choice, sentence structure, spelling and punctuation, in addition to insufficient development, wordiness and disunity.

1.2.5.1. Grammar Errors

Hartwell (1985, p. 111) defined grammar as "the internalized system that native speakers of a language share". A more detailed definition was proposed by Harmer (2001, p. 12) as "the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language". These ways are called grammar rules including, tenses, subject verb agreement, the use of articles, word order, etc., which are the basic elements in every language, and the inadequate use of these rules may cause problems in writing. Students when writing should avoid some sentence problems that lead to the misunderstanding of the sentence or simply to the unsophisticated form of the text. Sentence problems include the unparalleled structures, fragments, choppy sentences, comma splice, run-ons, and stringy sentences.

In the production of academic writing, many studies have established strong positive correlations between academic performance and grammar (Byrd, 1998; Zhou, 2009). Celce-Murcia (1991) emphasised that grammar instruction is essential for advanced L2 learners if

they are to achieve their educational and professional goals, and that the importance of a reasonable degree of grammatical accuracy in academic writing cannot be exaggerated. She added that an average of 7.2 grammatical errors per 100 words in L2 academic prose was judged not to be acceptable by professors in mainstream courses.

1.2.5.2. Spelling and Punctuation

The misspelling of words and the wrong use of punctuation are fundamental problems that learners at any level of acquisition are suffering from. Bancha (2013) stated that the misspelling of words are due to the irregularities of the English spelling system, which is related to the similarities of vowels that can be decoded in different spellings. He added that spelling mistakes may occur when students are less concentrated due to tiredness or carelessness about the correctness of words. In the same vein, Harmer (2001, p. 256) stated that “the correspondence between the sound of a word and the way it is spelt is not always obvious”. Additionally, he asserted that the reason spelling is difficult for students is due to the fact that not all varieties of English spell the same words in the same way. For example, the word behaviour in British English is the same as the word behaviour in American English.

Punctuation presents another obstacle in academic writing. Nunberg (1990) argued that punctuation is a systematic module of the grammar of written texts, which is governed by rules and assumptions such as syntax or phonology. Others including, Brisco (1994) and Doran (1998) have investigated ways of including rules and representations for punctuation marks. Punctuation marks include the full stop (.), the question mark (?), the exclamation point (!), the comma (,), the semicolon (;), the colon (:), the dash (—), the hyphen (-), the brackets ([]), the braces ({}), the parenthesis (()), the apostrophe (‘), the quotation marks (“ ”), and the ellipsis (...).

1.2.5.3. Word Choice

Word choice errors in academic writing can have a serious impact on the student's improvement in writing because of the misinterpretation or incomprehensibility these errors could lead to (Leech, 1994). In the same vein, Allen (1983) said that lexical problems frequently interfere with communication; communication breaks down when people do not use the right words. So the selection of the appropriate words has a great impact on students' writing.

1.2.5.4. Insufficient Development

One major problem in paragraph writing relates to insufficient content development. This arises when paragraphs lack specific details, evidence, examples, or explanations to support the main idea. Dozier-Brown (2019) underscored the importance of development. He emphasised that a well-constructed paragraph should be filled with supporting material to fortify the main topic, ensuring depth and persuasiveness. Furthermore, Hacker (1998), known for her extensive writing guides, emphasised the importance of incorporating precise details to enhance the substance of a paragraph. According to her, this practice not only reinforces the central argument of the paragraph but also deepens reader understanding.

1.2.5.5. Redundancy or Repetition

Redundancy or repetition is also considered as a hurdle in content-related problems. This issue arises when writers restate the same ideas or information without leading to wordiness and reader disengagement. Booth (2008) addressed the issue of redundancy, highlighting the necessity for precise and economical language to maintain reader engagement and clarity. In the same vein, Graff et al. (2014) provided practical advice on effective academic writing, including strategies for avoiding redundancy. These scholars, along with Hacker (1998) contributed to the broader discourse on effective writing by addressing the issue of redundancy

and providing practical strategies for writers to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of their paragraphs.

1.2.5.6. Off-Topic or Irrelevant Information

In some instances, paragraphs may suffer from disunity, which is the inclusion of off- topic or irrelevant information. This can lead to confusion and distract the reader from the main point. Dozier-Brown (2019) offered comprehensive guidance on achieving clarity and effectiveness in writing. They highlighted the crucial role of preserving unity within a paragraph, ensuring that the reader can easily comprehend the intended message. In a similar vein, Graff et al. (2014) emphasised the importance of staying centred on the central argument. They warned against including irrelevant details, accentuating the necessity for content to be pertinent and focused.

1.2.6. Factors Leading to Writing Problems

Several significant factors contribute to challenges in the development of writing skills among EFL learners. Each factor outlined here plays a crucial role in influencing the proficiency and performance of students in written expression.

1.2.6.1. Anxiety

Anxiety is a persistent presence in the field of education (Slavin, 2003). According to Woolfolk and Shaughnessy (2004, p. 365), “it is defined as a feeling of self-doubt and tension”. Nunan (1989) further explained that anxiety specifically relates to the process of learning a new language. Li (1991) identified three primary reasons for experiencing anxiety. Firstly, students’ fixation on grammar leads them to pause after each sentence to check for grammatical and mechanical errors, ultimately hindering their writing flow. Secondly, the choice of writing topics can contribute to anxiety if students are assigned subjects that fail to capture their interest, resulting in a lack of ease when writing. Lastly, anxiety arises from the absence of a supportive

writing environment as students fear negative comments from their teachers. As a consequence, Harmer (2006) emphasised the detrimental effects of writing anxieties, as they can foster a negative and pessimistic attitude towards writing.

1.2.6.2. Lack of Motivation

Motivation plays a pivotal role in the development and performance of writing skills, as supported by research conducted by Hayes (1996) and Zimmerman & Risemberg (1997). According to Brown (2000, p. 114), “motivation is characterised as an internal drive, impulse, emotion, or desire that propels individuals towards specific actions”. It encompasses the willingness, effort, and positive attitude towards learning, which motivates learners to pursue their goals (Gardner, 1985). Numerous studies in the field of writing have highlighted the significance of motivation for students in attaining their writing objectives (Hayes & Flower, 1981).

1.2.6.3. Low Proficiency in L2

Low proficient students are also called slow learners or learners with disabilities, and this kind of learners produce short compositions, badly coherent, badly refined, and very badly organized (McAlister et al., 1999). Teaching low proficiency EFL students how to write a paragraph or an essay is often apprehensive (Cumming, 1989). As affirmed by Ghabool et al., (2012) that this obstacle could be the factor of the difficulties students may face in their writing.

1.2.6.4. Inadequate Exposure to the Target Language

Lack of exposure to the English language is also considered one of the factors leading to writing difficulties. Students need to be in contact with the language, so that they can practise speaking or writing easily. In class, students have their teacher who masters the target language; however, outside the classroom, students lack exposure to English. In this vein, Benson (2001)

defined outside-of-class language exposure term as any kind of learning that takes place outside the classroom and involves self-instruction, naturalistic learning or self-directed naturalistic learning. To overcome this challenge, L2 learners could practise reading in the target language as explained by Foster (2015) that exposure to different reading materials can help the students to develop good English. Moreover, students should benefit from TV shows and videos of native speakers to be much more exposed to the foreign language because the lack of exposure to the target language is one of the reasons students lack vocabulary needed to convey meaning.

1.2.6.5. Complexity of the Writing Process

Another reason why students fail in writing correctly is the writing process itself which is difficult to adopt and difficult to follow. Raoofi (2014, p. 39) advocated that “the highly proficient student writers reported using more metacognitive strategies such as organizing ideas and revising content than less skilled ones”. Strategies of the writing process such as brainstorming, listing or mapping require much more cognition and critical thinking than free writing. It has been proven by (Wang, 2008, p. 75) that brainstorming for instance requires “generating more ideas, stimulating new ideas, expanding the vision of thinking, activating previous knowledge, reviewing more words”.

1.2.6.6. Lack of Practice

Dance and sport are activities improved only through practice, and so are writing (Andrews, 1999). Writing is like any other skill, which requires practice to overcome difficulties. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) asserted that writing never comes suddenly, but it needs effort and practice since the writing skill can be acquired through writing.

1.2.6.7. Lack of Appropriate Feedback

Teachers do not always provide students with effective feedback. Teachers focus most of the time on grades and negative feedback and neglect corrective and positive comments. Besides, they write ambiguous comments which students find unclear and misunderstood. Feedback on students' writing should be decisive, with praise, punishment, rewards and corrections (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Teachers should develop a detailed and informative conversation with the students through feedback that would let teachers reach out to the students better. Moreover, teachers should make sure that whatever feedback provided, it has to be useful for the improvement of the students' writing (Wirantaka, 2019). This improvement could be achieved through feedback focused on the specific problems of the students' writing with appropriate corrections (Black & William, 1998). The next chapter is devoted to feedback with full details about its features of effective feedback.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Chapter One explores the world of writing skills and paragraph construction. Writing is more than just putting words on paper—it involves using language well, following grammar rules, and thinking creatively. Recognizing these aspects is essential for both teachers and learners to have a good grasp of writing. The chapter also delves into paragraph writing, breaking down its key parts and addressing common issues on paragraph writing problems. It's crucial to identify and fix problems like grammar errors, spelling mistakes, choosing the right words, making sure ideas are clear, avoiding repetition, and staying on topic. Understanding and addressing these challenges will help both teachers and learners improve their writing skills.

Chapter Two

Feedback in the Foreign Language Class: Writing Conferences

Chapter Two: Feedback in the Foreign Language Class: Writing Conferences

Introduction

Feedback stands as a cornerstone in language learning and teaching, offering guidance for improvement. The chapter emphasises the crucial role of feedback and writing conferences in teaching writing. It is divided into two sections: the first addresses various aspects of feedback, including its definition, importance, and different types. The second section focuses on writing conferences, discussing their definition, the role of teachers in creating supportive environments, components, formats, scheduling, types, and benefits. Together, these elements highlight the profound impact of feedback and writing conferences as powerful tools for language learning and development.

2.1. Understanding Feedback in Language Learning

2.1.1. Definition of Feedback

Despite its acknowledged significance, “feedback lacks a generally agreed upon definition” (Evans, 2013, p. 71). Feedback has been approached from two distinct scopes.

2.1.1.1. Feedback as a Product

In general, feedback is conceptualised as a responsive action, and, more specifically, as “information about how successfully a task has been fulfilled” (Tang & Harrison, 2011, p. 583). Hattie & Timperley (2007, p. 81) defined feedback as “information provided by an agent regarding aspects of one’s performance or understanding”. Similarly, Richards (1992, p. 137) characterised feedback as “information which provides a report on the result of behaviour”, while Ur (1996, p. 242) considered feedback as “information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance”.

According to Basturkmen and Lewis (2002), feedback provided information for teachers about their students' learning progress which is a form of evaluation for their teaching; whereas, for learners, feedback is considered a continuing process, starting their strengths and weaknesses as well as their learning progress. Feedback provides information about the truth or falsehood of human behaviour, as well as providing teachers with a means to improve their own teaching performance and to correct their errors (Paccapaniccia, 2002; Peker, 1992). Therefore feedback refers to the information the learners receive about their writing in the purpose of improving learners performance' and teachers' instruction.

2.1.1.2. Feedback as a Process

Some authors described feedback as a pedagogical process or activity. Among these authors, Hounsell (2003, p. 1) who argued that feedback is “any information, process or activity which ‘affords’ or accelerates learning, whether by enabling students to achieve higher-quality learning outcomes that they might have otherwise attained or by enabling them to attain the outcomes sooner or more rapidly”. Similarly, Gibbs and Simpson (2004) argued that feedback serves multiple purposes. Firstly, it can rectify errors and enhance understanding by providing explanations. Additionally, feedback can stimulate further learning by suggesting specific study tasks for students to pursue. It also contributes to the development of generic skills by emphasising the demonstration of skills rather than solely focusing on content. Furthermore, feedback promotes metacognition by encouraging students to reflect on and become aware of the learning processes involved in their assignments. Ultimately, feedback plays a role in motivating students to continue their studies. Lizzio & Wilson (2008) also offered a definition which considers feedback as a process. For them, feedback provides students with information on their performance, and it facilitates students' development and task improvement.

2.1.2. Problems Encountered with Feedback

Boud and Molloy (2013) suggested different problems of feedback that arise from different directions and different dimensions. These issues need to be addressed and recognized. The problems Boud and Molloy proposed are problems of perception, of shared meaning, of impact on learning, of burdensomeness and being judged.

a) Perception Problems

Students do not appreciate the feedback of their teachers, and they criticise even their institutions for this. Higgins et al. (2002) saw that students are only interested in their grades, expecting good quality feedback. Gibbs (1999) suggested that effective feedback has to be given immediately after the learning activity; but, unfortunately, the rising number of students can present a challenge to students' perspectives.

b) Shared Meaning Problems

Adcroft (2011) suggested that feedback isn't one-size-fits-all. Teachers and students have their own ideas and beliefs about it. These individual viewpoints shape how they respond to feedback. This can lead to two groups, each seeing the same feedback in their own way. This shows that feedback is personal. Recognizing these different perspectives is important. It helps create a more inclusive and effective feedback process, which benefits everyone's learning experience.

c) Impact on Learning Problems

Feedback's influence on learners can be both constructive and detrimental. It proves constructive when teachers' input demonstrably enhances students' output. However, there are instances where the information conveyed by teachers may not be absorbed or even overlooked by students. For example, in cases where students are met with excessively critical evaluations

of their work, it can impede the learning process (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Kluger & DeNisi, 1996). This underscores the significance of delivering feedback judiciously to optimise its educational impact.

d) Burdensomeness Problems

The process of consistently evaluating students' work and offering specific comments throughout the year can be a challenging and time-consuming task. In some cases, teachers may perceive giving feedback as burdensome and may not have high hopes for its impact on improving students' performance. Therefore, for feedback to become more effective, it must be viewed as a positive outcome of teaching rather than a burdensome duty.

e) Being Judged Problems

Students naturally resist what they do not like, and particularly what is seen as disrespectful. This situation leads the teachers to fear of judging students too strongly which push them to create indirect and difficult to interpret comments. It also leads to conventional responses such as a positive comment is followed by a negative one and then another positive. Teachers can even remove the judgmental feedback because learners are open to information they see to be useful for them.

It can be seen from this commencing investigation of the problematic nature of feedback that solutions are needed to look for new and interesting ways of providing clear and well-interpreted feedback to students.

2.1.3. Effective Feedback

Relying on previous actual research and theoretical investigations, we can express with relative certainty the qualities and criteria that effective feedback should meet. Three researchers have listed the characteristics of effective feedback.

2.1.3.1. Howard's Criteria (1987)

According to Howard, effective feedback has the following four important characteristics:

- **Content of Feedback:** feedback must provide precise information on a learner's right and wrong answers and explain why such answers are not correct.
- **Degree to which Feedback Is Individualised:** refers to the extent to which learners' performance must be evaluated individually; for instance, if the assessment tasks are with limited possible answers (e.g. mathematics Assignments), the extent of feedback individualisation is restricted. However when the assessment tasks are with multiple possible answers, it requires more individualised evaluation and feedback.
- **Feedback Immediacy:** Refers to feedback timing. When feedback immediately following a learner's performance is more beneficial than delayed feedback; nevertheless, Howard maintains that the delay in the provision of feedback differs from one task to another. There are tasks requiring procedural knowledge (i.e. what one can do) need immediate feedback; whereas, tasks requiring declarative knowledge (what one knows) need delayed feedback.
- **The Source and Delivery Methods:** For Howard, these two parameters are interrelated and influence mostly the options for all other feedback criteria. So, for instance, pre-programmed computer feedback is highly individualised, immediate and provides limited content options; on the other hand, group conferences and seminars are immediate, more individualised – since each student can ask different questions – and more varied in content.

2.1.3.2. Price et al.'s Criteria (2010)

For price et al., effective feedback should adequately respond to three major questions:

- **What is it for:** Refers to the different purposes of feedback; therefore, feedback should be designed according to purpose in each case. For example, in higher education the purpose of feedback is to feed forward rather than simply to correct.
- **When and How:** Price argued that the content and timing of feedback should conform to its purpose. For instance, if the purpose is just to correct errors, the delivery of detailed corrective feedback would be enough, but if the aim is to bring effects on future learner performance, feedback content should involve more guidance and recommendations for future action.
- **Who and What:** Feedback concerns the teacher and the learner who have different views about what counts as effective feedback. The teacher measures effectiveness according to his intentions and beliefs; whereas, the learner measures effectiveness according to his own expectations and needs. However, considering the complexities involved in providing feedback, Price et al. (2010) stood doubting as to whether the impact is a measurable and accurate indication. As they point out, “input measures such as timing, frequency, quantity [...] can only indicate that some of the conditions for effective feedback are in place. They cannot prove that feedback is effective.”

2.1.3.3. Hatzipanagos & Warburton’s Criteria (2009)

Some authors provided more detailed characteristics of effective feedback. Hatzipanagos & Warburton (2009) presented a model of effective feedback that targets the following dimension:

- **Autonomy and Ownership:** For Hatzipanagos & Warburton, feedback should enhance levels of learners’ confidence and support management of one’s own learning, in order to promote autonomy and ownership.

- **Dialogue:** Feedback should be provided often enough, by supporting peer/tutor conversations and debates, and by allowing learners to question and respond to feedback.
- **Timeliness and Visibility:** Timeliness requires that feedback should be immediate and in adequate quantity; while, visibility requires feedback to anticipate learning needs and unpredicted achieved outcomes.
- **Appropriateness:** Feedback must be comprehensible to students and should be linked to assessment criteria and learning outcomes.
- **Action and Community:** Effective feedback must be Establishing task performance-feedback cycles and helping students set personal goals to foster the dimension of action; while, supporting peer assessment and learning communities enhance the community aspect of Hatzipanagos & Warburton's feedback model.
- **Reflection:** The last dimension is supporting reflection on the work and comparing actual performance to standard one.

2.1.4. The Importance of Feedback

Feedback is a crucial aspect in the writing process, and it plays a central role in learning this skill. Through feedback, learners come to distinguish for themselves whether they are performing well or not (Littleton, 2011), and when they are not performing well, further feedback helps them to take corrective action about their writing in order to improve it and reach a good level of performance (Getchell, 2011). Besides, feedback encourages students to take other views and adjust a message to it (Asiri, 1996). Another valuable feature of feedback is that it serves as a good indication of how EFL students are progressing so that the teachers can diagnose and assess their students' problems in writing (Hino 2006). In addition, feedback is helpful in encouraging students to write multiple drafts and to revise their writing several

times in order to produce a much improved piece of writing (Asiri,1996; Russell & Spada, 2006). Furthermore, most of the time students organize their ideas illogically and use words and tenses inaccurately which lead to the teacher's confusion; the latter can only be clarified by feedback which promotes motivation for learners (Wen, 2013). Drawing on a range of studies, Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) have also shown that effective feedback can lead to substantial gains in learning. They proposed seven aspects as follows:

- ✓ Helps clarify what good performance is (goals, criteria, expected standards)
- ✓ Facilitates the development of self-assessment (reflection) in learning
- ✓ Delivers high-quality information to students about their learning
- ✓ Encourages teacher and peer dialogue around learning
- ✓ Encourages positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem
- ✓ Provides opportunities to close the gap between current and desired performance
- ✓ Provides information to teachers that can be used to help shape teaching. (Ibid, p. 205)

With the absence of feedback, students can become unmotivated (Brookhart, 2017), and their efforts may be misdirected, and they may gain an inaccurate impression of their performance in the writing skill (Lee, 2013). Moreover, an inadequacy of feedback may also lead the students to believe that they have transmitted their meaning and do not need revision for their writing (Saito, 1994).

2.1.5. Types of Feedback

This segment explores the different types of feedback employed in writing instruction namely, written and oral feedback, feedback on form and feedback on content, formative and summative feedback, peer feedback and self-feedback.

2.1.5.1. Written and Oral Feedback

Written and oral feedback are commonly used to provide valuable input and support for improving writing skills.

2.1.5.1.1. Written Feedback

Written feedback concerns feedback given to students' written work. This type of feedback is usually not immediate, so the teacher has time to think about how to provide feedback and on what. The teacher can provide feedback related to the content and the organisation of the writing, in addition to the grammar and vocabulary (Weigle, 2002). Ferris (2003, p. 41) stated that "written feedback may represent the single biggest investment of time by instructors, and it is certainly clear that students highly value and appreciate it". Similarly Wen (2013) advocated that it is the type that L2 learners prefer and expect to receive.

Teacher written feedback in any of its delivery modes, allows students to benefit from working with a more experienced and knowledgeable person (Goldstein, 2004). Han (2000, p. 6) adds that "feedback informs, regulates, strengthens, sustains, and eliminates errors in language learning". Sheen et al. (2009, p. 567) stated that, "corrective feedback may enhance learning by helping learners to (1) notice their errors in their written work, (2) engage in hypotheses testing in a systematic way and (3) monitor the accuracy of their writing by tapping into their existing explicit grammatical knowledge". The comments written by the teacher also give writers ideas for possible ways to mend the mismatch between what they intended to express and what was actually written (Goldstein, 2004). However, there are scholars who disagree; for instance, Hyland and Hyland (2006) referred to Truscott (1998) and concluded that the time spent dealing with errors in class is better spent on additional writing practice.

2.1.5.1.2. Oral Feedback

Oral feedback in the classroom includes any dialogue or conversation between the teacher and the student or between students themselves that can provide information about the performance of the learners in the intention of improving teachers' instruction and learners' performance. Sinclair and Coulthard (1992, p. 03) stated that, "a typical exchange in the classroom consists of an initiation by the teacher, followed by a response from the pupil, followed by feedback, to the pupil's response from the teacher".

Oral feedback is defined as in-class conferences (5-10 minutes) with individual students, while the rest of the class is engaged in other activities; or out-of-class longer (15-30 minutes) conferences with individual students or groups (Brookhart, 2017; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). It is also considered as a conversational dialogue in which meanings are constantly being negotiated while a strong emphasis is made on the two-way communication (Freedman, 1985; Freedman & Sperling, 1985; Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

Oral feedback also includes writing conferences, in which the students and the teacher talk about things that cannot be written in the students' draft (Ferris, 2003). This one-on-one dialogue allows the writer to reflect and change the main idea of the composition. It encourages or discourages changes on drafts, and it helps the writer notice any issues that may arise in the written draft (Freedman & Sperling, 1985). Students benefit from conferencing because it encourages the development of autonomy and it allows them to construct their revision plan independently (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Besides, in this activity, the teacher could talk with the student personally about their problems in writing; therefore, this is beneficial for students who are afraid to talk in front of their classmates (Patthey-Chavez & Ferris, 1997).

2.1.5.2. Direct and Indirect Feedback

Written feedback is divided into direct and indirect feedback. Direct teacher feedback means that the teacher provides the students with the correct form of their errors. He crosses out a word, phrase, or clause and provides the appropriate form; therefore, the students do not have the opportunity to correct their errors by themselves. Contrastingly, “indirect teacher feedback includes pointing out an error by using a code or just underlying it, so this method gives the opportunity to the student to identify and correct the error” (Petchpasert, 2012, p. 1115). When the teacher uses codes or symbols to identify the error, it is called the coded indirect written feedback, but when the teacher underlines or circles the error without identification it is called the uncoded indirect feedback.

Direct written feedback is perceived as simply editing the learner’s production to be a well-corrected version with explicitly mentioning the errors (Hartshorn & Evans, 2015). It stands as “spoon-feeding” when students are trained by their teachers of what must be written (Atmaca, 2016). On the other hand, indirect corrective feedback occurs when the teacher just indicates the errors by underlining, or coding them and then students correct the mistakes by themselves (Guenette, 2007). Tang and Liu (2018) argued that the indirect feedback correction crumples the process over and imposes autonomous learning, in which the EFL instructor provides indicators standing as gaps of convenient textual form of language learners’ performance.

Scholars are divided as to whether the direct or indirect approach is better for written corrective feedback. Supporter of direct feedback such as Chandler (2003) believes that the indirect approach might fail as learners will not have enough information to correct such complicated errors because the direct method allows learners to incorporate the appropriate forms provided by the teacher. It also offers learners straightforward information, letting them test out their hypothesis (Bitchener & Knoch, 2010). In opposition, Clements (2010) suggested

that direct feedback does not tend to have good results because it doesn't give students an opportunity to think or to do anything by oneself. Similarly, Ko and Hirvela (2010) argued that direct teacher feedback is the least successful method of providing feedback on students' errors and mistakes compared to the indirect feedback, in which the learner tries to discover the right form that is instructive to both learner and teacher. This assertion has been promoted by Moser and Jasmine's (2010) study which found that students who used an indirect feedback in revising their essays made considerable gains than those whose essays were directly corrected by the teacher.

Nevertheless, many writing instructors do not have certain conclusions about the best type of feedback to improve their students' grammatical accuracy (Leki, 1990; Susser, 1994). Teachers can use any method of written feedback; though, students' errors should be corrected modestly as recommended by Ko and Hirvela (2010). Teachers should be choosy when correcting the mistakes and should not correct all what is incorrect because when provided with all the mistakes, students will adopt negative attitudes towards writing and negative feelings about themselves as writers as well. Robb et al. (1986) added that teachers need to pay attention when using codes in indirect feedback. They need to be persistent and use symbols that are sustained by systematic grammar instruction to avoid confusion for both teachers and students.

2.1.5.3. Feedback on Form and Feedback on Content

A great number of previous studies approached feedback on writing through a distinction between feedback on form and feedback on content. Feedback on content concerns corrections of mistakes about ideas and their organisation in students' composition. Content level feedback deals with matters like coherence and cohesion, choice of vocabulary, organisation of ideas and other abstract notions of writing (Grami, 2005). On the other hand, feedback on form deals more with errors of grammar, spelling, and punctuation, which is also called the surface level

of feedback. Studies have examined and compared different types and different combinations of form-focused and content-focused feedback (e.g. Ashwell, 2000; Fathman & Whalley, 1990).

Fathman & Whalley (1990) for example, found that all students significantly improved the content of their final drafts disregarding of the kind of feedback provided by the teacher. They conclude that improvements of the students are due to the writing process rather than the feedback of the teacher. They also added that the focus on grammar did not negatively affect the content of the writing; feedback on content is as effective as feedback on form. Ashwell (2000) directed a similar study in the purpose of discovering if content focused feedback followed by form focused feedback was more effective than other types of feedback, but he came to the conclusion that giving form and content feedback simultaneously does not have a harmful effect on student writing.

Hillocks (1982) and Ziv (1984) claimed that when feedback is provided for the meaning level, it requires more revision in both the L1 and L2 contexts. In addition, when students see the comments of their teachers on their papers, it leads them to revise more which results in the improvement of their writing (Ferris, 1997; Kepner 1991). However, we cannot ignore the fact that providing content-based feedback is not so simple for English teachers to master in a short period since it requires teachers to provide it on the depth or the quality of work either by rubric scoring criteria or through the depth of information (Hattie & Timperley, 2007)

Studies have shown that learners value and anticipate feedback on both the form and the content of their writing, and researchers have pointed out that feedback on both form and content is helpful (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Indeed, feedback should address both issues (Ferris, 2003; Hyland, 2003). However, it is suggested that the dichotomy still forges a

conscious part of the way many L2 writing teachers react to their students' writing (Hyland & Hyland, 2006).

2.1.5.4. Summative and Formative Feedback

Summative assessment is considered as assessment of learning, whereas formative assessment is assessment for learning. Summative assessment entails the evaluation of participants at a specific time within a course or program through feedback and grade (Scriven, 1967; Taras, 2005). It focuses on the outcome of a task, such as an exam or assignment, and asks to keep an eye on educational outcomes (Shepard, 2005). Teachers use different rubrics when marking students' papers depending on the focus of the feedback in order to lead to an objective grade. Summative assessments are given to students at the end of a set time period, generally at the end of the semester, to evaluate what has been learned and how well it was learned.

Formative feedback is a non-evaluative, supportive, timely and specific feedback given to students (Shute, 2008). Non-evaluative feedback means a feedback provided for students but unaccompanied with grades or marks. This idea has been supported by William (2007) who reported that students who were receiving only grades showed no progress in learning, whereas those provided with comments improved better. In addition, formative feedback should be immediate to help fix errors in real time and specific, which means clear and understanding (Shute 2008). In this regard, Ellis (2009) defined specific feedback as a focus feedback which is proven to be more effective than the unfocused one.

2.1.5.5. Peer Feedback and Self-Feedback

Peer feedback and self-feedback are two common types of feedback that allow individuals to receive input and make improvements to their writing through the perspectives of their peers or themselves.

2.1.5.5.1. Peer Feedback

Peer feedback is also referred to as peer editing, peer evaluation, or peer response. According to Stagg et al. (2013), peer feedback generally takes place in classrooms where students are sitting next to each other in arranged chairs and desks, and then the teacher initiates the opportunities for such animation. Liu and Hansen (2002, p. 75) defined it as “the use of learners as sources of information and interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken on by formally trained teacher, tutor, or editor in commenting on and critiquing each other’s drafts in both written and oral formats in the process of writing”. In another definition, Hansen and Liu (2005, p. 01) referred to peer feedback as the “use of sources of information, and interaction between each other”. Therefore, it is a kind of cooperation for reciprocal benefits between students with reading and correcting compositions (Li Waishing, 2000).

Studies carried out by researchers have revealed the importance of peer feedback in improving learners’ productions (Hansen & Liu, 2005). Peer feedback also contributes to the development of the writer students’ awareness of the audience, their recognition of the perspectives, language and many other elements of writing that can provoke their audience as they can entertain them (Tang & Tithecott, 1999). In addition, learners can benefit from the indispensable opportunities that can be presented by offering peer feedback and learning from each other (White & Caminero, 1995)

Regardless of the advantages of feedback, Hyland (2003) believe that teachers welcome peer evaluation more than students who appreciate their teachers’ feedback and comments that give them a sense of security. In the same vein, Urza (1987) claimed that students, while evaluating or editing their peers’ work, they focus on grammar errors and not on content and organisation, for they are not experienced enough to address such level. Leki (1990) added that L2 students

of low proficiency may not accept their peers' evaluation, so there must be training for students to teach them how to accept their peers' criticism, and provide them with a guideline sheet (Yukio, 1998). In such a way, the teacher needs to show students how to provide effective feedback to identify their strengths and weaknesses (Peterson, 2010).

2.1.5.5.2. Self-Feedback: Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is another type of feedback that promotes self-autonomy and self-reflections. If the teacher or the peer feedback cannot be provided in the classroom due to time constraints or any other factor, students can self-correct themselves (Hajimohammadi & Mukundan, 2011). Self-assessment is also called self-revision (Srichanyachon, 2014) or self-feedback (Wakabayashi, 2013).

According to Klenowski (1995, p. 146), "self-assessment is the evaluation or judgement of the worth of one's performance and the identification of one's strengths and weaknesses". Similarly, Orsmond et al. (1996, p. 307) stated that self-assessment "develops ways in which students can become more critical and perceptive about their learning". It is also "a key learning strategy for autonomous language learning enabling students to monitor their progress and relate learning to individual needs" (Graham & Harris, 1997, p. 12).

Brown (2001, p. 146) identified self-assessment in writing as "one's revision of written work on his own". It can occur before, during or after writing. "Students are provided with a rubric, a checklist, or both, so that they will internalise the criteria related to the task. By using the checklist or rubric, students will have an in-depth understanding of the task while the tool assists them in monitoring their work to achieve a desired standard" (Vasu et al., 2022, p. 4).

Self-assessment is primordial for self-regulated and lifelong learning (Panadero et al., 2019; Yan, 2020; Yan et al. 2020). It activates the enslavement of students' intellectual resources through the different meaningful and authentic activities he or she can perform (Kohonen,

2012). Kohonen further added that self-assessment encourages learner-centred instead of teacher-centred which promotes autonomous learning. In the same vein, Boud (1995, p. 19) stated, “in teacher education and nursing education, a central aim of many courses is the development of the reflective practitioner, a person who can think critically about their own practice, plan changes and observe the effectiveness of these modifications.” Therefore self-assessment helps the student to develop reflection and critical thinking. Furthermore, self-assessment enables students to gain control over their learning process as suggested by Weimer (2002, p. xix), “the ability to self-assess accurately and constructively judge the work of peers is an essential learning skill that teachers have the responsibility to develop during their students’ college years.” Moreover, self-assessment aid students in improving their performance. It provides a considerable new proportion to the conclusive of actual performance independent of traditional data sources (Trepagnier, 2004).

2.1.6. Forms of Feedback

The most common techniques in providing feedback are commentary, rubrics, correction symbols, taped commentary, and electronic feedback.

2.1.6.1. Commentary

Comments refer to hand-written commentaries on the learners’ papers, at the end of the composition or in the margins. As (Hyland, 2003, p. 180) argued, “If time allows, responses may take the form of both marginal and end comments. A comprehensive end note allows more space and opportunities for the teacher to summarise and prioritise key points and to make general observations on the paper”. Hendrickson (1980) also approved the need for comments, arguing that all corrections need marginal comments to explain why such a mistake has taken place in that line. These comments should help the learners improve their writing, and they can also be very motivating when they are positive such as” good ideas”, “ well-developed essay”,

“you did very well”, etc. Researchers in writing agreed that positive commentaries or praises raise students’ motivation and improve their writing in the future (Raimes, 1983; Semke, 1984). Similarly, Goldstein (2004) asserted that marginal comments can be used to motivate students, who, through the marginal comments, can see the reader’s interest in the text. Gee (1972) concluded that praise comments made students write more than students who were not praised.

The teacher’s role in writing comments as a tool of providing feedback is very important. The teacher has to consider the background knowledge of the learner so that he or she may understand him. Ferris (2003, p. 124) said that before writing feedback comments, she always asks, “does this student have enough background knowledge to understand my intent in this comment?” In addition, teachers should see their comments as a conversation with the learners, not as an occasion to correct a paper (Straub, 1996).

2.1.6.2. Rubrics

According to Brookhart (2013, p. 04), “A rubric is a coherent set of criteria for students’ work that includes descriptions of levels of performance quality on the criteria”. It is also defined as “a document that articulates the expectation for an assignment by listing the criteria or what counts and describing levels of quality from excellent to poor” (Reddy & Andrade, 2010, p436.). A rubric is a tool that comprises descriptions of levels of performance, to help attributing the grading and/or feedback of students’ work. Wolf and Stevens (2007, pp. 12-13) found five important roles of rubrics which are the following:

- ✓ Rubrics make the learning target clearer.
- ✓ Rubrics guide instructional design and delivery.
- ✓ Rubrics make the assessment process more accurate and fair.
- ✓ Rubrics provide students with a tool for self-assessment and peer feedback.

- ✓ Rubrics have the potential to advance the learning of students of colour, first-generation students, and those from non-traditional settings.

Oshima and Hogue (2007) introduced a scoring rubric designed for the evaluation of paragraphs. This rubric was utilised by participants in both the control and experimental groups to assist them in the writing process (see appendix III).

2.1.6.3. Correction Symbols

Correction symbols are also called minimal marking. They refer to the indication of types and positions of students' errors through the use of correction codes that help them know where they have made wrong. "It is convenient to have a system of signals to the pupil in order to help him to know what he is looking for before he has acquired much proofreading skill" (Bright and McGregor 1970, p. 156). The use of correction codes is done by underlining the mistakes and using a symbol for each error to focus the attention of the learners on the kind of error they have produced (Byrne, 1988).

Correction symbols have many benefits. First, they encourage students to look at writing as a skill that can be improved, and train them in looking for areas of improvement (Hedge, 2000). In addition, "this technique makes correction neater and less threatening than masses of red ink and helps students to find and identify their mistakes" (Hyland, 2003, p. 181) and "makes corrections look less damaging" (Harmer, 2007, p. 121). Oshima and Hogue (2007, p. 111) proposed a model for using correction symbols, exemplified with extracts from students' writing errors. These identical correction symbols were employed by the researcher when offering written feedback to the students (see appendix IX).

Table 2.1.1

Correction Symbols

Symbol	Meaning	Example
S	A spelling error	The answer is <u>obvious</u>
Wo	A mistake in word order	I like <u>very much it</u>
G	A grammar mistake	I am going to buy some <u>furnitures</u>
T	Wrong verb tense	I <u>have seen</u> him yesterday
C	Concord mistake (e.g. subject and verb agreement)	<u>People is</u> angry
A	Something has been left out	He told λ that he was sorry
WW	Wrong word	I am interested <u>on</u> jazz music
{ }	Something is not necessary	He was not { <u>too</u> } strong enough
?M	The meaning is unclear	<u>That is a very excited photograph</u>
P	A punctuation mistake	Do you like London.
F/I	Too formal or informal	<u>Hi Mr Franklin</u> , Thank you for your letter...

2.1.6.4. Taped Commentary

Taped commentary is the use of a tape recorder to record comments about students' writing and to use a mark on their papers to indicate what the comment refers to (Hyland, 2003). The use of audio for feedback delivery has become popular in higher education over the past decade and, in several cases, has been found to be of significant value to students for a range of reasons. Merry and Orsmond (2008) found that students value audio feedback more than written feedback since audio feedback is easier to understand and more personal. Similarly, Ribchester et al. (2007) considered that audio feedback helps to increase discussions between the teacher and the student, for it is more personal. In addition, students felt that feedback was more supportive and caring than written feedback (Ice et al. 2007). Furthermore, Emery and Atkinson

(2009) considered that one minute of audio feedback was equivalent to about 100 words and allowed a more accurate examination of the students' work than written feedback.

2.1.6.5. Electronic Feedback

With the flourishing demand for online course delivery, more teachers are offering electronic feedback, which can be either via e-mail or through text editing programmers. Emailing students is a useful way to respond to students' compositions by providing comments or asking questions electronically.

2.2. Writing Conferences

Some early studies found that students when provided with written feedback have troubles in understanding the written comments, so they need negotiation in face-to-face conversations (Zamel, 1985). Therefore, and for a better revision of writing, written feedback should be followed by oral feedback. In their study, Bitchener et al. (2005) stated that written feedback supported by oral feedback leads remarkably to the improvement of students' writing over time. Oral feedback is defined as in-class conferences (5-10 minutes) with individual students; while, the rest of the class is engaged in other activities; or out-of-class longer (15-30 minutes) conferences with individual students or groups (Grabe & Kaplan, 2014; Broukhart, 2017).

2.2.1. Definition of Writing Conferences

For several decades, writing conferences have been investigated under different names considering their various functions including assisted performance (Vygotsky, 1978); face-to-face interaction (Reigstad, 1984); one-to-one teaching (Calkins, 1986); response sessions (Hansen, 1987); dialectic encounter (Newkirk, 1989); private communication/conversations (Sperling, 1991); one-to-one interaction (Sperling, 1991; North, 1995); interactive dialogues

(Wong et al. 1997); conversation about the student's paper (Anderson, 2000) and meaningful contact (Lerner, 2005).

Teacher-Student Writing Conferences are "private conversations between teacher and student about the student's writing or writing processes" (Sperling, 1991, p. 132). Murray (1985, p. 140) called these conversations "professional discussion between writers" on students' writings. A writing conference is also "a forum in which students receive one-on-one feedback from the teacher concerning their writing" (Nickell, 1983, p. 29). It is managed as one-to-one meeting between the teacher and the students in order to clarify the teacher's written feedback for students (Ferris, 2003).

2.2.2. The Teacher's Role in Writing Conferences

It is always difficult to plan an individual writing conference, and it is not necessary to read and correct all students' writing every week. For this reason teachers should provide each student five to ten minutes writing conference, every two or three weeks depending on students' requirement (Peterson, 2010). During these writing conferences, the teacher plays different roles with students.

Some scholars believe that the role of the writing teacher should not be purely instructional but should also be nurturing (Wilcox, 1997). Calkins (1986, p. 118), for example, said, "our first job in a conference is to be a person, not just a teacher... It is to enjoy, to care, and to respond." Equivalently, Wilcox (1997) contended that in the writing instruction, prioritizing the role of nurturing is most important than instructing. She emphasized that while possessing knowledge and skills in the writing process is important, it is also crucial for the writer to feel a sense of personal growth within the writing project and to have trust in their teacher. According to Wilcox, the emphasis should be on working with individuals rather than solely focusing on the written work itself.

Another role of the teacher during a writing conference is to help the student to think about the problem and to try to find the solution. In this vein, Keeble (1995) stated that the teacher's role is to expand the student's thinking by asking questions, making comments and introducing various ideas that motivate the student to think more and write better. Furthermore, Genesee and Upshur (1996) stressed that during a conference the focus of the teacher should be on the learners' needs; therefore, writing conferences offer teachers inspections and insights about their students' needs (Hyland, 2003).

In addition, the teacher can be regarded an evaluator of students' achievements. In this respect, Graves (1983) reported that conferencing can be viewed as a way of both teaching and evaluating through which the teacher can gather information about his students' ways of reasoning, writings styles, and purposeful meanings.

Furthermore, the teacher's role is to establish a relationship with their students. As Black (1998, p. 123) noted the goal of writing conferences "can be either or both writing/revisiting the paper and establishing relationships with the teacher that is comfortable for the student". Hence, writing conferences therefore can be considered as both an academic and a relational setting, and conference interaction can be defined as "a hybrid kind of conversation that is both curricular and interpersonal" (Consalvo, 2011, p. 28). Consequently, students will feel free to ask questions and clarifications from their teachers.

According to Bell (2002), the most prevalent roles that teachers typically assume are those of managers and editors, highlighting their responsibilities in refining the learning process. Conversely, less common roles, such as being a listener or collaborator, indicate potential areas for expanded teacher-student interaction. This diversity in roles is further nuanced by the varying levels of student proficiency, as highlighted by Mitchell (1990) and Patthey-Chavez & Ferris (1997). Teachers, functioning as facilitators, tend to foster a collaborative environment

with proficient students, aiming to guide and support their learning journeys. In contrast, with less proficient students, Martinez (2001) suggested a more authoritative role, emphasising the need for structured guidance and clear direction in the educational process.

2.2.3. Components of Writing Conferences

Taylor (1985) suggested conditions for helping relationships in conferences, which are the following:

- ✓ The creation of an atmosphere of acceptance and trust: The student should feel free to express feelings and attitudes without threat of condemnation.
- ✓ Openness about goals: It is necessary to state the roles of both the teacher and the student right from the beginning of the conference. The teacher has to focus on one aspect to be negotiated with the student. For example, the teacher says, “today we’ll talk about x and not Y”, so the student will focus on aspect X and not Y.
- ✓ “I” language: When the teacher uses the “I” to talk about his opinion about students’ writing, It reduces the threat to the student. Therefore, the student feel at ease to listen to his teacher’s comments like, “I read this sentence but I don’t feel I understand exactly what it is saying,” or “When the tenses of the verbs in this paragraph change, I get confused”.

Arbur (1977), also offered seven elements of a writing conference as follows:

- ✓ **Engagement:** it is to put the student at ease through welcoming him and identifying the purpose of the conference.
- ✓ **Problem Exploration:** to focus and work on specific problems the student has in writing and not to consider the whole writing as incorrect.

- ✓ **Problem Identification:** the process of isolating as specifically as possible the most serious problem at hand.
- ✓ **Agreement to Work on a Problem Together:** the admission that both the student and the teacher have to work together.
- ✓ **Task Assignment:** the teacher has to tell the student what he is supposed to do satisfy his needs.
- ✓ **Solution:** the stage gained when the problem is solved.
- ✓ **Termination:** the end of the writing conference.

2.2.4. Conference Formats

According to Cooper (1977), Conferences can be included in a conventional classroom; they do not need new equipment, new materials or a new timetable. Students must have their pencils and papers and a place to write; while, teachers must have a place where to meet with the students to talk about their writings. Correspondingly, there have been many suggestions for classroom formats by many scholars. Kirby and Liner (1981) prefer the writing workshop where students are divided into small groups, and the teacher walks around the classroom to confer with each group for a thirty seconds. Garrison (1981) added that he prefers short conferences where the teacher holds them in one corner of the classroom, and at the same time students sit and write. Another format of a conference is described by Turbill (1982). The teacher walks around the room while the students write, conferring shortly here and there. Murray (2014) offers another proposition which favours teaching writing in labs; therefore, students could work individually. For him, every student should have a desk and the teacher an office that is a place where he can work with his student in privacy without being heard by the rest of the class.

Although Murray's format of conferencing seems perfect and ideal, it is difficult to adopt it, for it is too much demanding to provide such a setting for all groups of written expression.

Finally, the most recommended conferencing format is the one suggested by Graves (1982), in which students sit at round tables, and the teacher sits close to the student, not opposite, so that to avoid eye contact and keep the paper in front of both the teacher and the student.

2.2.5. Conference Scheduling

The appropriate time for holding a conference, and the duration of a writing conference has always been controversial. Carnicelli (1980) advocated that a conference approach is most effective when we work with the whole writing process. This means the teacher can have a conference at any stage of writing, like in prewriting for topic selection or during early drafts for suggestions, but not after final drafts when changes are no longer possible. However, post-final draft conferences can still be helpful for future writing. McAllister (1970) proposed a schedule for high school teachers which entail posting a list of the periods available for conferences and having students schedule times. For teachers whose schedules don't include conference periods, he suggested using seven or eight days of class time during every six-week period for individual conferences.

McAllister focused on students whose turns had not been scheduled or who had already presented. What are they supposed to do during their classmate's writing conference? The solution is to hold conferences at the end of a unit so that students can begin working on the next unit with planned materials to start them off.

Concerning the length of the conference, Fisher and Murray (1973) recommend no more than fifteen minutes, at least once a week. They calculated their time, with fifteen-minute conferences spread over a three-day period, and they could handle thirty students in seven and a half hours a week, plus one hour to scan papers in advance. Similarly, Memering (1973) noted that if the teacher meets with a group of six or seven students for half an hour, he or she can see a class of twenty-five in two hours. So it is always possible to plan a writing conference

whenever it requires. It could be at any moment of the writing session, and the length of each depends on each individual needs.

2.2.6. Types of Writing Conferences

There are many types of writing conferences a teacher can hold when teaching writing, as Routman (2005, p. 206) declared, “effective teachers use a variety of conferences to meet students’ needs”. Conferencing during writing sessions appears each time different depending on the aim of the writing conference. A conference can be formal or informal, short or long, public or private, in whole groups, small groups, or even one-on-one.

Calkins (1986) added other types of writing conferences which are content conference that focuses on the topic, the ideas and their organisation in the text as stated by Wilcox (1997, p. 508), “content needs to be more important than mechanics in the minds of teachers of writing”. Other writing conferences include design conference, which focuses on structure, and the process conference, which according to Zemelman et al. (2005) helps the student to learn how to consider their work, how to inspect their development, how to identify their problems and put their goals, and how to design the next step to be taken. Finally, the evaluation conference focuses on teaching students to acknowledge what has been done well and what has not.

Reigstad (1984, p. 30) listed three other kinds of conferences: student centred, teacher centred, and collaborative. In student-centred conferences, “students are treated as conversational equals and fellow writers....as students initiate conversation about various problems with composing, the tutor suggests strategies or alternatives”. In a teacher-centred conference, the teacher asks questions and correct the errors, whereas the student is just submissive as Reigstad (1984, p. 31) said, “the tutor reads through the draft and, pen in hand, corrects mechanical errors or supplies alternative, improved 12 sentences and paragraphs. The tutor asks few questions, and the questions are usually closed or leading”. In contrast in the

collaborative conference, also called balanced conference, both teacher and student had the same possibilities to start, conduct, and conclude the conversation. Bayraktar (2009), suggested a rubric for analysing teacher-student writing conferences and determining which type of conference is held.

Bayraktar (2009) suggested a rubric (see appendix VI) for analysing teacher-student writing conferences, aiming to determine the type of conference conducted. The rubric consists of various categories, including teacher-centred, balanced, and student-centred, each with a nominated point value.

2.2.7. Features of the Writing Conferences

Theorists in the field of writing conferences such as Graves (1982, 1983); Reigstad (1984); Calkins (1986); Harris (1986); Atwell (1987); Anderson (2000); Lerner (2005); Sandman (2006) has enlightened many features of writing conferences which are the following:

- **Being Predictable**

Wong (1999) asserted that the fact that students are knowledgeable about their own topics permits them to have two-way conversations during conferences. When writing conferences are expected from both the student and the teacher, students will be familiar with the procedures and teachers will gain time (Graves, 1982, 1983; Anderson, 2000).

- **Being Focused**

According to Gere and Stevens (1985) teachers and students might have different focuses and concerns in terms of providing comments and asking questions, but Fletcher and Portalupi (2001) suggested that only one topic should be of focus during one writing conference. The questions asked by the teacher should focus on one or two aspects concerning content, but we should not neglect grammatical concepts and writing mechanics.

- **Providing Solutions**

Providing solutions in writing instruction involves more than merely instructing students on what to do or what to write. Instead, it requires teachers to demonstrate and exemplify the desired outcomes. This approach aligns with the perspectives of prominent scholars in the field such as Atwell (1987), Graves (1982, 1983), and Lain (2007).

- **Exchanging Roles between Teachers and Students**

In effective writing instruction, it's important for teachers to encourage students to ask questions and suggest solutions. This approach advocated by scholars like Atwell (1987) and Graves (1982, 1983) and promotes active engagement and critical thinking, moving beyond traditional directive teaching methods.

- **Providing Meaningful Conversation**

Productive writing conferences involve teachers and students engaging in meaningful discussions. This collaborative exchange, supported by researchers such as Calkins (1986) and Graves (1982, 1983) allows for tailored guidance and feedback, enhancing students' writing skills and confidence.

- **Having Humour**

Humour is recognized as a valuable teaching tool, especially in writing conferences. Research by Busler et al. (2017) showed that a lack of humour may be perceived negatively by students. Graves (1982, 1983) also highlighted its importance in building rapport and creating a comfortable learning atmosphere. Infusing humour can reduce anxiety, making the learning experience more enjoyable and productive. This, in turn, can lead to increased engagement and a more positive attitude towards writing instruction.

2.2.8. Characteristics of Effective Writing Conferences

Scholars have addressed various characteristics of writing conferences such as participation, collaboration, and negotiation. Nicole and Macfarlane (2006) advocated that writing conferences are effective when there is a dialogue or interaction between the student and the teacher that leads to satisfaction of each part. Ewert (2009) added that the collaborative attitude that a writing teacher has during a conference increases the affective teacher-student relationship, which results in a student's better revision in subsequent drafts. Similarly, Sperling (1991, p. 70) referred to the collaborative character of writing conferences by defining them as "fine-tuned duets" in which "two participants playing off one another such that the whole that results is something other than whatever the individuals would have produced working solo". Furthermore, negotiation is another characteristic of writing conferences as stressed by Ferris (1997, p. 52) that "teachers and students (re)negotiate a specific 'language' of 'writing'". Goldstein (1990) added that students' active engagement, negotiation, and co-construction of the discourse with the teacher led to better success in successive corrections.

2.2.9. Characteristics of Ineffective Writing Conferences

Just as there are features of effective writing conferences, there are also features of ineffective writing conferences that hinder the desired outcomes and hinder the participants' progress in improving their writing skills.

- **Over Correction of the Teacher**

Ulichny and Watson-Gegeo (1989) observed 20 teacher-student writing conferences in two 6th grade classrooms in which the teachers focused on correction and fixed most of the students' problems encountered in their texts. According to the researchers, the majority of students neglected to review their work for errors, relying instead on the teacher to identify mistakes and provide guidance on how to fix them.

Fisher and Murray (1973, p. 172) supported this view and stated that “the teacher must remember his role and not over-teach. It is not his responsibility to correct a paper line by line, to rewrite it until it is his own writing. It is the student’s responsibility to improve the paper and the teacher’s responsibilities to make a few suggestions which may help the student improve.”

- **Focusing Too Much on Grammar**

Atwell (1987) asserted that emphasising grammar instruction during a writing conference can be problematic. She posited that while there is a role for grammar instruction, it should only come after addressing more substantial and immediate concerns. It is essential for consultants to steer clear of unintentionally shifting towards a rigid, prescriptive style of grammar instruction, as this approach proves not only ineffective but also potentially harmful. Rather, consultants should capitalise on their unique roles as peers, guiding focused grammar discussions towards the end of the session. This approach acts as a complementary element to the writing strategies and techniques already assimilated by the learners.

- **Teacher’s Domination of the Conferences**

In Nickel et al. (2001) investigation into obstacles encountered by students during writing conferences, she observed that while conferring with students, she tended to take a dominant role by either directing them on what to write or at times, even writing on their behalf. This dynamic shifts the teacher’s role from being a collaborator to that of a commander.

2.2.10. Effects of Writing Conferences on Students

Writing conferences prove highly advantageous for students, as they yield three favourable outcomes, as outlined below:

- **Independent Learners**

Numerous studies concluded that writing conferences help students to interconnect with their own texts (McIver, 1999) and experience the feeling of dominance and property (Martinez, 2001; Steward, 1991). According to Bruner (1967):

Instruction is a provisional state that has as its object to make the learner or problem solver self-sufficient. The tutor must correct the learner in a fashion that eventually makes it possible for the learner to take over the corrective function himself. Otherwise, the result of instruction is to create a form of mastery that is contingent upon the perpetual presence of a teacher. (p. 53)

Moreover, writing conferences can improve the students' habits and attitudes towards learning, independence, and authority (Martinez, 2001; McIver, 1999; Young & Miller, 2004). The one-to-one conversation with the teacher helps the student to learn more about writing, so they become able to identify their problems and fix them independently (Calkins, 1985; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1979)

- **Making Students Better at Writing and Revising**

Effects of writing conferences on students' writing and revision skills were the main concern of many studies such as (Bell, 2002; Eickholdt, 2004; Goldstein, 1990; Haneda, 2000; Hewett, 2006; Koshik, 2002; Martone, 1992; Steward, 1991; Wong et al. 1996). MacLeish (1959) wrote about the effect of writing conferences on students' writing and revision of their texts:

The student writes. The teacher reads. And the object of the teacher's reading is to learn if he can how closely the knowing of the words approximates the knowing of their writer. It may be less. It may be far, far more, for such is the nature of the struggle between a writer and the obdurate material of words in which he works. But whether less or more,

the only question the man who undertakes to teach can ask is the question of the adequacy of the writing to its own intent. As a writer himself, he may call it “good” or “bad”. As a man he may have his human opinion of the mind which conceived it. But as a teacher of writing it is not his task to tell his students what they should try to write or to judge their work by the standards he would apply to his own or his betters. (p. 160)

Murray (1979) highlighted his role as a writing teacher by stating that he teaches students to evaluate their own writing, encouraging the production of increasingly proficient drafts. He explained that students engage in the writing process, review their work, discuss their interpretations from reading, and consider how these insights influence their subsequent writing steps

- Helping Students Learn Better and Increase Their Achievement.

According to Heyden (1996), students affirmed that they learned more in writing conferences than through written comments or classroom discussions. It has also been asserted that writing conferences increase students’ higher-order and thinking skills as well as their learning by providing a social context to help the student become an independent writer (Flynn & King, 1993). In addition, writing conferences allow students to have a real audience (his teacher as a listener) who is asking questions and reflecting on writers’ texts (Mabrito, 2006).

2.2.11. Benefits of Writing Conferences

The advantages of writing conferences can be summarised as follows:

- ✓ Writing conferences provide opportunities for students to clarify teachers’ written feedback on their writing and to accomplish better benefits and results (Goldstein, 1990; Wang & Li, 2011; Zamel, 1985).

- ✓ In a writing conference, teachers can drive students to think out loud beyond abstract ideas (Rose, 1982).
- ✓ Students value the feedback provided by their teachers in face-to-face conferencing (McLaughlin, 2012).
- ✓ Writing conferences are the main reason we discuss problems faced by learners to fix them and find solutions (Zemelman et al. 2005).
- ✓ Writing conferences are such kind of tools which help the teacher and the students to talk about things that cannot be written in the students' draft (Ferris, 2003).
- ✓ They are considered as beneficial for shy students who cannot talk in front of their classmates (Williams, 2004)
- ✓ They are beneficial to enhance the quality of students' writing in their revision during the writing process (Ferris, 2003; Hyland & Hyland, 2006).
- ✓ They provide the student with an audience, so it is an opportunity for students to see how their writing is perceived by the reader (Zamel, 1985)
- ✓ A writing conference is seen as a “unique social space” (Consalvo, 2011, p. 3) in which the teacher and the student interact face-to-face.
- ✓ Writing Conferences are as platforms for evolving teacher-student relationships (Black, 1998; Consalvo, 2011; Wilcox, 1997)

In short, writing conferences offer a diverse approach to enhancing student writing, providing opportunities for clarification, feedback, problem-solving, and interpersonal interaction between teachers and students, all contributing to the development of writing skills.

2.2.12. Writing Conferences Related Studies

In contrast to the extensive research on written feedback, there is a relatively limited body of literature focusing on teacher-student writing conferences. Some studies explored the

effectiveness of these conferences, with conflicting findings—while some indicated ineffectiveness, others demonstrated clear benefits. Additionally, several studies investigated students' attitudes towards writing conferences, some delved into the nature of interactions between teachers and students, and a substantial number compared written feedback with writing conferences. Notably, only a handful of studies delved into the impact of writing conferences on students' self-assessment.

2.2.12.1. Ineffectiveness of Writing Conferences Studies

Some researchers explored the ineffectiveness of writing conferences as pointed by Goldstein (1990) who investigated a case study with one teacher and three students and found that conferences cannot guarantee students' encouragement and successful revisions. It is the students' negotiation, which leads to positive revision. Similarly, Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) showed that qualitative and quantitative differences in both conferences and texts were due to the level of proficiency of the student writer and not to the writing conference itself.

2.2.12.2. Effectiveness of Writing Conferences Studies

Other researchers investigated the effectiveness of writing conferences. For instance, Arndt (1993) revealed that the teachers and their students generally consider writing conferences as an effective approach to provide feedback. He also reported that students face some problems when conferencing with their teachers such as the lack of adequate skill when interacting, the stress and anxiety they feel after conferencing, and the obedience to teacher authority. As far as the effectiveness of writing conferences is concerned, it has also been proven that writing conferences increase students' higher-order, critical thinking, and learning by providing a social environment that helps the writer become independent (Flynn & King, 1993). Similarly, Goldstein (1990) and Patthey-Chavez and Ferris (1997) have made a significant contribution to research on the effectiveness of conferences.

A number of qualitative studies concluded that conferences have a lot of benefits. For example, conferences help students to interact with their own writings (McIver & Wolf, 1999), allow students to observe a real listener (Mabrito, 2006), provide an informal and friendly atmosphere and contribute to student confidence (Harris, 1995; Martinez, 2001), promotes independence (Calkins, 1985; Harris, 1995; Martinez, 2001; McIver & Wolf, 1999; Murray, 1979), stimulate empowerment (Young & Miller, 2004). Moreover, Young and Miller (2004) showed that writing conferences can serve as an effective pedagogical activity to improve writing. In the same vein, Flaherty (2019) found that her students increased with 23% in the writing skill between their pre-test and post-test after enforcing writing conferences. In the same year, Healey (2019) conducted a study in which he demonstrated that the discussion collaboration between the teacher and the students helps students to both internalise and verbalise language for their proper thinking processes considering their writing.

2.2.12.3. Students' Attitudes towards Writing Conferences Studies

Most studies detected for this literature review focus on students' attitudes towards writing conferences. For example, Yeh (2016) found that 34 EFL college students in Taiwan held high expectations from their teachers in providing them with directions and detailed explanations, therefore, they were rejecting to setting up the agenda and were not enthusiastic about orienting the conferences. In contrast, Yamalee and Tangkiengsirisin (2019) conducted a study at a private university in Bangkok where 20 English-majored undergraduates' students were provided with teacher writing conferences about paragraph writing. At the end of the training, they found that the students expressed a positive attitude towards writing conferences.

2.2.12.4. Nature of Writing Conferences Interaction Studies

Previous studies have examined the nature of the conference interaction between the student and his or her teacher. For instance, Haneda (2000) found that the teacher varied her interaction

strategies according to students' intentions and pedagogical needs. Similarly, Young and Miller (2004) found that the writing instructor modified her way of talking accordingly to facilitate the student's learning. Correspondingly, Yu (2020) found that the essay problems task seems to recover more direct feedback from the teacher as he asked for more explanations concerning the suggestions of the students.

2.2.12.5. Comparison between Written Feedback and Writing Conferences Studies

Many studies have examined the relationship that exists between written feedback and writing conferences. For example, Tamaulipas (2010) conducted a study in a private school in Mexico where he found that teacher written corrective feedback yielded more revisions than writing conferences did. In contrast, Leung's (2008) study in Hong Kong, where 34 students were randomly divided into experimental and control group, reported that the experimental group who received conferencing feedback revealed significant improvement in the writing skill compared the control group who received written feedback. Recently, a study has been conducted by Afshari et al. (2020) in Iran University. The study aimed at comparing between students 'performance in a group which receives only corrective written feedback , and another one, in which a student wrote his essay on the board and tries to correct it by the help of the teacher. At that time, the other classmates also try to find the errors but silently until the owner of the essay does. If he could not, in this case the teacher asks the others to reply. At the end of the study, it has been shown that the experimental group surpasses the control group who received only written feedback.

Another different comparison study has been done by Baleghizadeh and Gordani (2012), in which they had three groups of students. The first one received direct written corrective feedback on grammatical errors. The second one received both written corrective feedback and teacher-student writing conferences. The third one had been provided with a teacher's

comments on form only. The results found that the student-teacher writing conferences group was significantly better than the other two groups.

2.2.12.6. Relationship between Writing Conferences and Self-Assessment

There are quite few studies that aimed at showing the impact of writing conferences on students' self-correction or self-assessment. Cepni (2016) and Erlam et al. (2013) conducted the same study which is comparing whether formative feedback or explicit feedback aimed at achieving self-correction based on goals set during student teacher writing conferences. They both came at a conclusion that students in the formative feedback group were able to self-correct their errors more than students in the Explicit Feedback Group. Similarly, Graham (2006) asserted that students apply skills discussed in the writing conferences to their own work to ascertain if they have conquered a concept.

Having explored the theoretical aspects related to feedback and writing conferences, we now shift our focus to the practical application in the context of conferencing with first-year students. The significance of both written and oral feedback, along with the crucial role of teachers in conferences, provides a theoretical foundation for our fieldwork. As we delve into the authentic experiences of teachers and novice language learners, our aim is to integrate seamlessly theoretical constructs into the dynamic landscape of learning and teaching in the EFL writing.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter highlighted the importance of feedback and writing conferences in teaching writing, valuing both written and oral feedback. The permanence of written feedback provides learners with a tangible record, fostering reflection and continuity in their linguistic development. Conversely, oral feedback injects immediacy and interpersonal connection, enriching the learning process through dynamic teacher-learner exchanges.

Furthermore, the pivotal role of teachers in writing conferences cannot be overstated. As facilitators, teachers offer constructive critique and personalised guidance. Within this complementary interaction of written and oral feedback and the influential presence of teachers in conferences, a robust foundation is laid for cultivating an enriching language teaching experience.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

Introduction

In order to improve writing ability in 1st year EFL students at the ENS-C, two types of writing feedback approaches were used in the framework of this study: the direct written feedback and the writing conferencing technique to encourage students to benefit from the comments received when writing new paragraphs. Written feedback and writing conferences were investigated to determine the extent of their utility in this EFL setting.

Chapter Three is dedicated to elucidating research design and methodology implemented in this study. This chapter not only provides a detailed rationale for the adoption of the sequential mixed methods approach but also explains various other critical research components, encompassing the study setting, participants, and research methodologies.

3.1. Research Questions and Purpose of the Investigation

In this study, we are interested in investigating the use of the proposed technique (writing conference) and its appropriateness, with the ultimate goal to help first-year students at the ENS-C to better understand and develop the paragraph writing. Thereby to investigate whether the implementation of the writing conference enhances the paragraph writing ability of 1st year EFL students at ENS-C, the following questions are to be answered:

- What is the impact of writing conferences on the content of students' writing paragraphs?
- What are the different error feedback techniques teachers most frequently use to identify students' errors?

- How do teachers perceive writing conferences as a tool to improve learners' writing skill?
- How do students perceive writing conferences as a tool to improve learners' writing paragraphs?

To answer the questions stated above, we believe that first-year students at the ENS-C need to be trained so as to make of them independent, conscious and effective writers. In this sense, it has been hypothesised that providing students with writing conferences would lead to improvement in their writing paragraph.

3.2. Context of the Study

The study took place in the Department of English, at the ENS-C. The ENS-C registers university students who want to become teachers either at the Primary School (BAC+3), the middle school (BAC+4), or at the Secondary School (BAC+5). However, when this study was conducted the English Department provided training only for middle and secondary schools. This implies that the students who took part in the current case study were teacher trainees either at the middle school level (BAC+4), or the secondary school level (BAC+5).

In response to the global COVID-19 pandemic, the ENS-C opted for a blended learning approach throughout the academic year 2020-2021, which led to a reduction in face-to-face sessions. However, with the resumption of classes in April 2021, we found renewed impetus to proceed with our experiment. To facilitate this, we organized supplementary sessions, including one for the pre-test, another for paragraph writing, and a third for the post-test. These sessions were conducted in addition to the regular five weeks of three-hour sessions per week. Despite the availability of online options, we deliberately refrained from assigning tasks online to ensure that students relied solely on their own efforts without external assistance.

3.3. The Participants

The participants in this research were teachers who answered the questionnaire and students who participated in the Quasi-experiment and also answered the post evaluation questionnaire.

3.3.1. Teachers

Teachers who participated in the study are full-time teachers in the Department of English. The questionnaire was administered to 14 teachers out of 44 teachers at this department. These teachers who had been administered the questionnaire teach or have been teaching writing to first-year students in the Department of English at the ENS-C.

3.3.2. Students

This study focuses on first-year students enrolled in the Department of English at the ENSC during the academic year 2020-2021. The total population comprises approximately 120 students, who were divided into four groups by the Department. From the total population, a sample consisting of one of the groups had been assigned to the teacher. Although there were 30 participants in total, only 26 students were actively present and participated in all the written expression workshops during the implementation period. Some students were occasionally absent or did not consistently submit their assignments, leading to their exclusion from the research. As a result, the number of participants in each group (experimental and control) consists of 13 students. This procedure ensures an equal number of participants in both groups for accurate analysis of the pre-and post-tests.

The selection of first-year English students as a case to study was driven by the fact that they begin writing academic paragraphs in the second semester, which forms the foundation for essays required in the second and third years across modules such as written expression, civilisation, literature, and linguistics. As a writing teacher in this department, it became evident

that students encounter significant challenges in writing, and relying solely on written feedback as a means of improvement is insufficient. Therefore, further research is necessary to explore alternative methods of delivering feedback that can enhance the situation.

3.4. Research Methodology

According to Creswell (2009), there are three main research approaches, the quantitative (structured) approach, the qualitative (unstructured) approach, and the mixed methods research. Our research falls in the third category. Researchers typically select the quantitative approach to respond to research questions requiring numerical data, the qualitative approach for research questions necessitating textual data, and the mixed methods approach for research questions requiring both numerical and textual data (Williams, 2007). This mixed method is called triangulation. It is defined by Neuman (2006, p .150) as follows, “mixing the styles can occur in several ways. One way is to use the methods (quantitative and qualitative) sequentially: first one and then the other. Another is to use the two methods in parallel or both simultaneously”.

The present study utilised a sequential mixed research design. The initial phase involved administering a preliminary questionnaire to written expression teachers. The primary aim of this questionnaire is to scrutinise the strategies employed by teachers when providing feedback in writing classes. Furthermore, it serves the purpose of introducing the concept of writing conferences to instructors of written expression, while also investigating their viewpoints on the practicality of incorporating this approach into their feedback process. Through this questionnaire, valuable perspectives and opinions from teachers are sought, shedding light on their willingness and potential readiness to embrace writing conferences as an effective method for delivering feedback to students. Subsequently, a quasi-experimental study was conducted to test the hypothesis that providing students with writing conferences would lead to improvement in their writing paragraph. To complement the experimental findings, a post-

evaluation questionnaire was administered to an experimental group, providing additional insights into the independent variable. This sequential approach facilitated a thorough exploration of the research goals and contributed to a deeper comprehension of writing conferences.

3.4.1. Teachers' Questionnaire

Questionnaires are any written devices that present respondents with a set of questions or statements to which they are to reply, either by writing out their answers or selecting from the existing answers (Brown, 2001). They generally consist of both closed ended questions and open ones. In closed-ended questions, the respondent is asked to select one answer or more from the provided options, whereas in the open questions, the respondent is asked to write about the subject.

The teachers' questionnaire (see appendix I) comprises thirty questions, and it was administered to 14 teachers of written expression who teach or have been teaching first-year students in the Department of English at ENS-C. Few days later, the fourteen copies of the questionnaire were collected back. This questionnaire consists of four sections.

➤ Section One: General Questions

The first section includes four questions (from **Q1** to **Q4**). The initial question (**Q1**) aims to establish the professional context of the participating teachers. The second one (**Q2**) seeks to understand the range of experience and expertise among the teachers. It focuses on gauging the level of experience each educator brings to their English teaching. (**Q3**) hones in on the specific experience each educator possesses in teaching written expression. It underscores their expertise in the area of interest. The fourth question (**Q4**) is tailored to capture the teachers' familiarity with teaching written expression to first-year students. It helps to differentiate the responses based on their experience with this specific population.

➤ **Section Two: Teaching Written Expression**

This part is composed of six questions (from **Q5** to **Q10**). **Q5** aims to categorise students based on their writing proficiency, offering insights into the diversity of skills among the students' writing. **Q6** is a set of questions that delves into the frequency of errors in crucial areas of language. It provides a foundational understanding of the challenges students face in writing. **Q7** addresses a fundamental aspect of effective writing instruction: student motivation. It sets the stage for exploring potential strategies to enhance motivation. For teachers who respond negatively to the previous question, this query invites them to articulate potential factors contributing to the observed lack of motivation (**Q8**). **Q9** prompts teachers to reflect on their role in motivating students. It highlights the varying perspectives on the teacher's responsibility in fostering motivation. For teachers who affirm the role of teachers in motivation, this question invites them to share specific strategies or approaches they employ. This offers a glimpse into the diverse range of methods used to inspire students (**Q10**).

➤ **Section Three: Teacher's Feedback**

This section embraces eight questions (from **Q11** to **Q18**) that are related to the teacher's attitudes, beliefs, and ways of providing feedback to first-year students. **Q11** probes the teachers' perception of the significance of feedback in the writing instruction process. It sheds light on their awareness of the pivotal role feedback plays in student learning. **Q12** encourages teachers to articulate their understanding of the primary objectives behind offering feedback. Their responses offer valuable insights into their instructional methodology in teaching. **Q13** establishes whether or not teachers engage in the practice of providing feedback to students. For teachers who do not provide feedback, this question prompts them to elucidate the underlying reasons. Their responses may range from logistical challenges to pedagogical preferences (**Q14**). **Q15** addresses the frequency of feedback provision, shedding light on the

regularity with which teachers engage in this instructional practice. **Q16** aims to discern the preferred modes of feedback utilised by teachers. It provides insight into the diverse range of strategies employed in feedback provision. **Q17** invites teachers to reflect on the effectiveness of different feedback approaches, emphasising their perceived impact on student learning outcomes. For teachers who identify specific types of feedback as more beneficial, this question offers an opportunity to elaborate on the underlying rationales. Their responses elucidate the pedagogical reasoning behind their preferences (**Q18**).

➤ **Section Four: Writing Conferences**

The fourth section of the questionnaire delves specifically into the conferencing technique, seeking to understand teachers' attitudes and beliefs regarding its efficacy in teaching writing. This part involves twelve questions (from **Q19** to **Q30**). The first one (**Q19**) is a statement that addresses a common concern among teachers, acknowledging the potential time investment required for providing comprehensive feedback on student writing. It prompts teachers to reflect on the practicality of this approach. The second question (**Q20**) is a statement that acknowledges the possibility of students struggling to fully grasp the feedback provided. It highlights a potential challenge in the feedback process, emphasising the importance of clarity and comprehensibility. **Q21** is a statement that touches on the persistence of recurring errors in student writing, despite feedback. It draws attention to the potential need for focused intervention and suggests that certain issues may require additional attention. **Q22** points to a potential barrier in effective feedback provision – the clarity and precision of the feedback itself. It encourages teachers to consider the comprehensibility of their comments. **Q23** is a statement which suggests conferencing as a potential remedy for instances where written feedback may not have been fully considered by students. It underscores the interactive nature of conferencing. **Q24** addresses the specific content and focus of written feedback, emphasising the importance of targeting grammatical and mechanical aspects. It prompts teachers to

consider the scope and objectives of their written comments. **Q25** directs attention to the intended emphasis of conferencing sessions, highlighting the importance of discussing higher-level elements of writing, such as content and organisation. **Q26** underscores one of the unique benefits of conferencing – providing students with a direct audience for their work. It highlights the potential impact on student motivation and engagement. **Q27** emphasised the interpersonal aspect of conferencing, suggesting that individualised attention and dialogue can have positive effects on both writing development and the student-teacher relationships. **Q28** addresses the potential efficacy of conferencing as a mode of communication, specifically in terms of feedback provision. It prompts teachers to consider the clarity and effectiveness of writing conferences. **Q29** highlights the reciprocal nature of conferencing, suggesting that it can provide valuable insights for teachers as well. It underscores the potential for two-way learning in conferencing sessions. **Q30** is an open-ended question that invites teachers to offer their own reflections, insights, and recommendations regarding the implementation of conferencing in the specific context of teaching writing to first-year students at the ENS-C.

The teachers' questionnaire is a vital tool comprising thirty questions divided into four sections. It navigates through various facets of teaching written expression to first-year students, from understanding teachers' backgrounds and experiences to probing into their beliefs and practices regarding feedback provision and the conferencing technique. This questionnaire is instrumental in refining pedagogical approaches at the ENS-C.

3.4.2. The Quasi Experiment

During the first semester, first-year students were exposed to sentence writing (see appendix IX). They were taught all what concerns the sentence: types of sentences, types of clauses, types of phrases, sentence problems (fragment, comma splice, run-on, stringy, unparallelled structures, and wordiness), capitalisation and punctuation. At the end of the first semester,

students were required to start writing paragraphs. Initially, students were introduced to the comprehensive writing process, encompassing all its requisite steps. Subsequently, their focus shifted towards understanding the fundamental components, starting with the topic sentence, followed by the supporting sentences, and ending with the concluding sentence.

When the second semester began, first-year students had been taught audience, purpose, unity, and coherence: crucial elements of academic writing. After instructing students in the fundamentals of paragraph writing, they embarked on crafting narrative paragraphs, followed by exploring descriptive paragraphs. In April, as students returned to school for in-person sessions upon their request, we coincided this return with a pivotal juncture in our curriculum—the exploration of the theoretical elements of the expository paragraph. To facilitate a deeper understanding, we introduced a model expository paragraph before embarking on our quasi-experiment.

To ensure a rigorous assessment, we commenced the quasi-experimentation process with the administration of a pre-test, serving as a foundational measure for the students' initial writing proficiency. Subsequently, the quasi-experiment was systematically executed to implement and scrutinise the efficacy of writing conferences. Finally, a post-test was administered to quantitatively appraise the progress and effectiveness of the implemented intervention.

3.4.2.1. Pre-test

The pre-test was administered as an essential component of this research, aiming to examine the influence of writing conferences on the content of students' paragraph-writing scores both before and after the intervention. Regarding the pre-test, the students were assigned to write a paragraph discussing the advantages of private schools. Students were asked to allocate a designated 60-minute period for completing the pre-test. Their task was to construct a paragraph

elucidating the advantages of private schools, substantiated by specific examples. Clarity and conciseness were emphasised within the stipulated time frame.

The pre-test was conducted during face-to-face sessions in April 2021, when classes were resumed after the COVID19 pandemic. By that time, the students had already begun writing paragraphs on various topics. However, for the pre-test, they were given one hour to write an expository paragraph specifically. The test took place on April 4, 2021, starting at 11:00 AM and ending at 12:00 PM on the same day. After the allotted time, the students were instructed to stop writing, and the teacher collected a total of 30 writing paragraphs.

3.4.2.2. The Quasi Experiment

The introduction of writing conferences as a feedback tool in the research project was met with enthusiasm by the participants. The teacher expressed gratitude and appreciation to the students for their willingness to take part, assuring them that this training would be highly beneficial for their writing skills. The students eagerly anticipated the opportunity to engage in these writing conferences with their teacher.

To establish a comparison, we divided the group into two subgroups: the control group and the experimental group. The control group received only written feedback on their writing paragraphs, while the experimental group received both written feedback and writing conferences from the teacher.

We instructed the students to write an expository paragraph during each session they met, following the writing process of prewriting, outlining, drafting, revising, and editing. It was assumed that all the students had been taught the writing process in the first semester and were expected to apply it before submitting their final drafts.

Additionally, students of both groups were provided with a self-editing checklist (see appendix III) to facilitate their own revisions. We aimed to foster independent learning among the students, drawing upon the findings of Wakabayashi's (2013) study that highlighted the positive impact of self-feedback on advanced EFL learners. The study demonstrated that students who reviewed their own drafts experienced significant improvements in their final writing products. Similarly, Hajimohammadi and Mukundan (2011) reported that students who engaged in self-correction also enhanced their final writing outputs.

After the students completed their revisions, they submitted their drafts to the teacher for further evaluation. The papers of both the control and experimental groups were corrected using direct written feedback. This method involved using symbols to underline errors and indicate the type of each error. In addition to the error symbols, the teacher also provided positive comments as suggested by Krashen's Filter Hypothesis (1982). The purpose of these positive comments was to motivate the students and create a positive learning environment.

During the training process, formative assessment was implemented, and written feedback was provided to the students without assigning any marks or grades. This approach aligns with the findings of William (2007), who observed that students who solely received grades without feedback showed no improvement in their learning. In contrast, students who received comments and feedback demonstrated better progress in their learning outcomes. Furthermore, Black et al. (2004) supported the notion that students tend to overlook feedback when it is accompanied by grades. The presence of grades can overshadow the feedback itself, leading students to focus solely on the numerical or letter evaluation rather than engaging with the comments provided. Willingham et al. (2002) added another perspective by highlighting that learners may attempt to persuade their teachers to change their grades in order to achieve higher marks, shifting their focus away from the actual learning process. By neglecting grades, the

intention was to encourage students to pay closer attention to the feedback and utilise it for their learning and improvement.

In the subsequent session, the teacher returned the students' papers with written feedback and initiated one-on-one conferences with each individual from the experimental group. These writing conferences took place at the teacher's desk, ensuring privacy and allowing the students to feel comfortable to ask any questions they had. During this stage of the writing conferences, the teacher and the student engaged in a collaborative process. They read through the draft together, pausing at each underlined word or comment. The teacher actively listened to the student, allowing them to self-correct their errors. This approach promoted a student-centred environment, empowering students to take ownership of their writing and learning.

During the writing conferences, the teacher carefully tailored the duration to the unique characteristics of each learner, with sessions typically spanning from 3 to 7 minutes. This flexibility in time allocation allowed for personalised attention, ensuring that individual needs and requirements were met. Moreover, the teacher maintained a priority on promoting a positive atmosphere during these interactions. To achieve this, the teacher infused humour and occasionally incorporated words from the students' mother tongue. These intentional strategies were designed to establish a relaxed environment, fostering open communication and a conducive space for learning. Notably, the teacher acknowledged the significance of considering the specific needs and moods of each student, especially those who tended to be reserved or less responsive.

Before concluding the writing conference session, the students were reminded not to discard their drafts. They were encouraged to carefully consider all the comments and suggestions provided by the teacher. The purpose was to prevent them from repeating the same errors in

future writing assignments and to encourage autonomy and self-correction in their writing skills.

Due to the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the academic year 2020- 2021 necessitated a reorganisation of educational practices. Particularly, first-year students, who were accustomed to dedicating four and a half hours per week to studying written expression, experienced a reduction in their instructional time to three hours weekly. Recognizing the potential consequences of this adjustment, the teacher arranged supplementary sessions during face-to-face weeks. These additional sessions were designed to enhance learning outcomes and help students achieve better results despite the challenges posed by the pandemic.

3.4.2.2.1. The Writing Process (60 minutes)

The structure of each one-hour writing assignment adhered to the following sequence of the writing process:

- **Topic Selection (05 minutes)**

The session had been initiated by proposing a topic to the students and asking for their consensus on writing about it. Fortunately, the students consistently agreed on the suggested topics as we carefully selected the ones that were both interesting and accessible, taking into account the students' backgrounds and proficiency levels.

- **Prewriting (15 minutes)**

During this stage, the students were encouraged to utilise any prewriting technique of their preference, such as listing, free writing, or drawing, as discussed in Chapter One, p. 28. The primary objective of this step was to generate ideas and gather relevant information about the chosen topic.

- **Planning (05 minutes)**

During this phase, the students created an outline that served as a roadmap for organizing their ideas in the subsequent draft.

- **Drafting (15 minutes)**

In this stage, the students wrote the paragraph using the previously prepared outline. The student selectively included necessary ideas and eliminated unnecessary ones. Grammar and mechanical errors were not the primary focus during this stage.

- **Revision (10 minutes)**

Revision was a crucial step where the students were provided with a self-assessment checklist (see appendix III). This checklist aids in reviewing and revising the paragraph. The teacher distributed copies of the assessment sheet to the students, encouraging them to utilise it each time they were asked to write a paragraph.

- **Polishing and Editing (10 minutes)**

During this stage, the student rewrote the final draft after carefully reviewing the paragraph using the self-editing sheet. The aim was to refine the writing by correcting any errors or improving the clarity of the content. Once the polishing and editing process was complete, the papers were ready for submission to the teacher.

3.4.2.2.2. Written Feedback

Upon collecting the paragraphs, the teacher took them home to provide detailed written feedback to both the control and experimental groups. The feedback was given using indirect methods, employing appropriate symbols (see appendix IV) adopted from Oshima and Hogue

(2006, pp. 302-303). The teacher incorporated both positive and negative feedback to boost students' confidence and promote their awareness of areas for improvement.

3.4.2.2.3. Writing Conferences (120mn)

In the following session of the same week, the teacher distributed the paragraphs back to the students, along with written feedback. The students were given a period of five to ten minutes to carefully review the feedback provided by the teacher. However, it is important to note that only the experimental group had the opportunity for a private writing conference with the teacher.

During the private writing conferences, the teacher invited each participant from the experimental group individually to the teacher's desk. This allowed for one-on-one discussions regarding the received written feedback. A chance was offered for students to seek clarification or ask questions. Each conference lasted approximately five to seven minutes, ensuring adequate time for meaningful interaction. Meanwhile, the entire group, including both the control and experimental groups, were given the opportunity to revise their paragraphs based on the corrections and suggestions provided by the teacher. This revision process aimed to encourage students to improve their writing by incorporating the feedback received.

Following the conferencing sessions, which spanned approximately two hours, the students were instructed to write another expository paragraph. They were required to follow the same writing process and utilise the self-assessment checklist as before. The allotted time for writing each paragraph remained consistent at 60 minutes. The teacher collected the students' assignments to provide detailed feedback at home, ensuring thorough evaluation and guidance for further improvement. The third, fourth, and fifth sessions followed a predictable pattern, similar to the first and second sessions. However, the last session differed as students had a

dedicated three-hour timeframe for conferencing. The sessions are summarised in the following table.

Table 3.1

Writing Conferences Sessions

Sessions	Time	Activities
Session One	60 minutes	Production: If you could meet anyone from the past who could it be ? Write a paragraph about that person
	120 minutes	Writing conferences about the previous topic
	60 minutes	Production: Write about qualities of a good friend.
	120 minutes	Writing conferences about the previous topic
	60 minutes	Production: Write about qualities of a good teacher.
	120 minutes	Writing conferences about the previous topic
	60 minutes	Production: Write about benefits of knowing a foreign language
	120 minutes	Writing conferences about the previous topic

During the writing conferences with each student, the teacher utilised her cellular phone as a recording device. She captured all the conversations and later transcribed them into written texts.

3.4.2.3. Post-test

The post-test was administered to the same class after a treatment period of five weeks, on May 7, 2021. The test followed the same procedures, rules, environment, and time duration as the pre-test. To ensure the validity of the samples and minimise the influence of topic familiarity, the teacher deliberately selected different topics that shared similar rhetorical characteristics. This decision was based on the belief that using the same tests could compromise the reliability of the results (Tran & Can, 2020). Students were instructed to write about the advantages of public schools. This contrast in topics allowed for a comparison of their writing skills before and after the intervention. In this case, 28 writing paragraphs were received.

3.4.2.4. Method of Marking

The teacher employed summative assessment to evaluate both the pre-test and post-test in order to obtain the quantitative data required for the research. Summative assessment, as described by Shepard (2005), focuses on the overall outcomes and results of an assignment or test. In this case, the teacher utilised a marking scheme, adapted from the Florida rubric (see appendix V), to measure the students' writing skills. The marking scheme consisted of two main elements: content and format.

To prioritise content feedback during the writing conferences, it had been assigned 15 points to the content and organisation aspect of the marking scheme. Accordingly, 5 points were allocated to the format of the paragraph. This approach allowed for a systematic evaluation of the students' writing based on the specific criteria outlined in the marking scheme.

3.4.2.5. Description of the Scoring Rubric

The provided scoring rubric sets out to assess paragraphs based on two fundamental aspects: Content/Organisation and Form. Within these categories, various criteria are outlined to gauge the proficiency of the writer. A detailed exploration of each criterion is provided here, beginning with Content/Organisation, and then ending with form.

- **Content/Organisation**

- **15-12 points (Excellent)**

In the 15-12 point range (Excellent), the paragraph demonstrates precise adherence to the task, engages readers with captivating content, and exhibit a high level of craftsmanship. They begin with a clear topic sentence, incorporate specific supporting details, and conclude effectively. This range signifies exceptional proficiency in paragraph writing.

- **12-10 points (Proficient)**

In this scope, the paragraph generally meets requirements with minor room for improvement. It maintains interest, despite occasional errors. The writer shows care, with slight room for improvement. The introductory sentence is expected to cover both topic and controlling idea, with occasional exceptions. Additionally, one or two supporting sentences may lack precision or relevance, leading to a slightly less focused discussion.

- **10-05 points (Adequate)**

In this area, the paragraph partly shows fulfilment of the task. The reader engagement varies, with moments of clarity and interest, but also instances of unclear addressing of the topic. Supporting sentences may have mixed purposes or include irrelevant content, resulting in a less

cohesive discussion. Additionally, transition signals for guiding the reader may not be used optimally.

- **5-01 points (Limited)**

In this lower range, the paragraph may significantly fall short of meeting assignment expectations. The topic sentence might not effectively orient the reader, causing potential confusion. Supporting sentences are expected to offer clear, pertinent information. However, ideas may not consistently flow logically, resulting in a disjointed argument.

- **01-00 point (Inadequate)**

In this case, the paragraph fails to meet task expectations. The topic sentence may not efficiently orient the reader, leading to a lack of clarity. Ideas may not progress logically. Additionally, supporting sentences may be insufficient or irrelevant, leaving the paragraph lacking substance. The concluding sentence may not effectively tie back to the topic, further undermining coherence.

• **Form Criteria**

- **05-04 points (Excellent)**

In the highest range, writing excels technically. It's nearly error-free, ensuring clarity and easy comprehension. Verbs are consistently accurate, reflecting strong language command. Various sentence structures convey ideas precisely. Punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling are perfect, revealing a keen eye for detail. Pronoun usage enhances overall clarity. These strengths result in accurate and masterfully crafted writing.

- **04-03 points (Proficient)**

In this scope, writing demonstrates a strong grasp with occasional minor errors. The writer handles words and verbs, with precise subject-verb agreement. Various sentence structures are employed effectively. Punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling are mostly correct. Pronoun reference is generally clear. Overall, the writing is proficient, with slight room for enhancement.

- **03-02 points (Satisfactory)**

In this space, writing shows satisfaction with some room for improvement. It is generally clear, and errors may slightly hinder understanding. Verb forms and tenses may have inconsistencies. Subject-verb agreement can be an issue, impacting clarity. Sentence construction is generally proficient, though few issues may arise. Addressing errors in punctuation, capitalisation, and spelling is crucial for accuracy. The clarity of pronoun reference is generally good, although some instances could be clearer with improvements.

- **01-00 points (Needs Improvement)**

In this case, writing displays significant room for enhancement. Inaccuracies in word forms and verb tenses consistently affect clarity. Subject-verb agreement remains a persistent issue. Poorly structured sentences limit effective communication. Significant issues with sentence construction create confusion. Prevalent errors in punctuation and capitalisation substantially impact clarity. Unclear pronoun reference leads to confusion. Addressing these areas will notably elevate writing quality and effectiveness.

3.2.2.6. Statistical Analysis

A Two-Way ANOVA with repeated measures was adopted using SPSS to check the hypothesis. Schober and Vetter (2018) identified it as a statistical analysis used to examine the influence of two independent variables (factors) on a continuous dependent variable, with the

added feature of repeated measurements on the same subjects or entities. This design is particularly useful for studying changes over time or under different conditions.

Here is a breakdown of the components of two-way ANOVA with repeated measures in the context of our research on the impact of writing conferences on content paragraph writing.

➤ **Two-Way ANOVA**

- **Factors:** The writing conferences (with and without means experimental and control) and the time of assessment (pre-and post conferences) act as the two independent factors.
- **Main Effects:** we assess the impact of writing conferences and the time of assessment on the quality of content paragraph writing.
- **Interaction Effect:** The interaction effect reveals whether the influence of writing conferences differs depending on when the assessments are conducted— providing **insights into the combined impact of both factors.**

➤ **Repeated Measures**

- **Repeated Assessments:** Since we measure content paragraph writing quality before and after writing conferences, we are incorporating repeated measures on the same participants.
- **Within-Participant Variability:** The repeated measures design helps account for individual differences among participants and increases the sensitivity to detect changes in writing quality over time.

➤ **The Hypotheses**

- **Null Hypothesis:** There are no main effects of writing conferences or time of assessment, and there is no interaction between writing conferences and time on content paragraph writing quality.

- **Alternative Hypothesis:** There are significant main effects of writing conferences and time, and there is a significant interaction effect, indicating that the impact of writing conferences differs based on when assessments are conducted.

This design helps to investigate not only the main effects of writing conferences and the timing of assessments but also the interaction effect, which examines whether the impact of writing conferences differs depending on when the assessments are conducted (pre-or post tests). It's a powerful way to capture changes over time within the same participants.

3.4.2.7. Analysis of Teacher-Student Writing Conference Interaction

In this survey, we used Bayraktar's rubric (2009) to analyse each teacher-student writing conference interaction (see appendix VI) that is organized into eight categories: focus, conference agenda, ownership/building on students' strengths, reflected questions, encouraged turn taking, frequency of talk, amount of praise statements, and number of interruptions. Rubric categories were further divided into three sections; teacher-centred, balanced, and student-centred.

- **Focused (F)**

The first category is Focused (F), which evaluates the teacher's ability to address appropriate content and surface-related issues based on the draft stage. In the teacher-centred writing conference, the teacher focuses on more than three relevant issues, while in the balanced writing conference; the focus is on three issues. In the student-centred writing conference, the teacher narrows the focus to one or two issues.

- **Conference Agenda (CA)**

The second category, Conference Agenda (CA), assesses the leadership and involvement of both the teacher and the student in guiding the discussion and answering inquiries. In the

teacher-centred writing conference, the teacher takes the lead, while in the balanced writing conference; both the teacher and student contribute. The student-centred writing conference allows the student to determine and lead the conference discussion.

- **Ownership/Building on Student's Strengths (OS)**

The third category, Ownership/Building on Student's Strengths (OS), examines the teacher's role in providing suggestions for improvements in text. In the teacher-centred writing conference, the teacher provides suggestions, whereas in the balanced writing conference, both the teacher and student collaborate on suggestions. The student-centred writing conference empowers the student to provide suggestions for improvement.

- **Reflected Questions (RQ)**

The fourth category, Reflected Questions (RQ), focuses on the balance of questions asked by the teacher and the student. In the teacher-centred approach, the teacher asks more than 50% of the questions, while the balanced writing conference involves an equal number of questions from both teacher and student. The student-centred writing conference allows the student to ask more than 50% of the questions.

- **Encouraged Turn Taking (TT)**

The fifth category, Encouraged Turn Taking (TT), assesses the distribution of turns between the teacher and the student during the conference. In the teacher-centred approach, the teacher dominates the conversation, providing directions and suggestions without allowing the student to respond. In the balanced writing conference, both teacher and student take almost equal turns, fostering involvement. The student-centred writing conference gives the student the majority of turns, putting them in charge of improving their own text.

- **Frequency of Talk (FT)**

The sixth category, Frequency of Talk (FT), evaluates the distribution of talk between the teacher and the student. In the teacher-centred writing conference, the teacher does more than 50% of the talking, acting as the primary source of information. In the balanced writing conference, teacher and student talk almost equally, exchanging roles as the sender and receiver. The student-centred writing conference gives the student the opportunity to produce more than 50% of the talk, with the teacher acting as the sender of messages.

- **Number of Praise Comments Received (P)**

The seventh category, Number of Praise Comments Received (P), examines the explicit or implicit praise provided by the teacher regarding the quality of the writing features. In the teacher-centred writing conference, no explicit statements are made, although general praise statements may be used to show active listening or maintain the conversation. In the balanced writing conference, general praise statements are provided. In the student-centred writing conference, text-specific praise statements are given, focusing on the quality of the writing features.

- **Amount of Interruption Occurred (I)**

The final category, Amount of Interruption Occurred (I), assesses the level of interruption during the conference. In the teacher-centred approach, the teacher is open to interruptions, allowing them to take up to 15% of the total conference time. In the balanced approach, interruptions occur but are limited to less than 15% of the total conference time. In the student-centred writing conference, interruptions are discouraged, signifying the seriousness of the conferencing process.

The rubric introduced by Bayraktar (2009) proves invaluable for researchers and teachers assessing teacher-student writing conferences. It aids in discerning the conference's orientation, be it teacher-centred, balanced, or student-centred. However, we didn't delve further to scrutinise the specific nature of all writing conferences.

3.4.3. Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire (see appendix II) serves as a crucial tool for eliciting feedback on students' perceptions and attitudes regarding the effectiveness of writing conferences. Its primary objective is to address the fourth research question, specifically focusing on how students view writing conferences as a means to enhance their writing skill.

This questionnaire begins with an introductory explanation about the purpose of the study, and a part to thank the participants for their contribution to the study. For all parts, students seemed to have no trouble understanding and responding to the sections of the questionnaire. It was also given to an English teacher to elicit her views as to the correctness, clarity, and appropriateness of the instrument. Thus, it was reviewed and corrected according to her recommendations. It consists of 24 questions. Respondents were requested to circle a number, from 1 to 5 to express their degree of agreement or disagreement. In addition, they were provided with a space to add more information or to answer open questions.

Initially, **Q1** inspects the clarity of conferencing objectives. This pivotal inquiry serves as the cornerstone, aiming to gauge if students comprehend the primary goals of the conferencing sessions. The second question (**Q2**) probes into the dynamics of seeking clarification from the teacher. It implicitly suggests that written feedback may not be entirely perspicuous. Building upon this foundation, **Q3** embarks on a more profound exploration of the conferencing process. This question aims to understand how conferencing contributes to overall writing improvement,

including content, organisation, and sentence structure. It suggests that the conferencing process plays a vital role in enhancing various aspects of writing.

As we move forward, the questionnaire carefully explores the details of the conferencing process. **Q4** investigates the meticulous handling of mechanical errors, including spelling, punctuation, and capitalisation, in the written feedback provided before writing conferences. It underscores the importance of attention to detail in feedback provision. **Q5** suggests that face-to-face feedback should serve as a motivational factor, stimulating students to write more extensively. **Q6** Then, it asked if students thought that learning to write in English was best done through conferences with the teacher after finishing a writing task ventures into the realm of perception and belief.

The questionnaire went on to ask if students felt they were getting better at writing with fewer errors (**Q7**). It also checked if students could put their ideas together well in a paragraph (**Q8**). It asked if students could write paragraphs with clear and organized sentences (**Q9**). It even asked if students could pick the right words for their writing (**Q10**) and if they followed the right format when writing a paragraph (**Q11**).

Moving forward, the questionnaire transitioned to gather feedback on the duration of conferences and the overall training program (from **Q12** and **Q13**). These questions provided a platform for students to offer their insights on the temporal aspects of the conferencing approach, offering valuable feedback on the optimal duration of both individual conferences and the comprehensive training program.

The questionnaire proceeded to explore students' engagement with the training topics (**Q14**), seeking to measure their level of interest and enthusiasm in the chosen subjects. It then moved on to examine the quality of interaction with the teacher (**Q15**), aiming to understand the effectiveness of communication and engagement during the conferences. Additionally, the

questionnaire delved into the atmosphere during conferences (**Q16**), inquiring whether students found it conducive to open discussion and learning.

Additionally, we delved into the nuances of feedback integration and its timing. (**Q17**) probed whether students diligently took into account all of the teacher's comments when revising their writing. In a similar vein, (**Q18**) scrutinised if the teacher provided written feedback prior to face-to-face conferences with the student, shedding light on the strategic aspect of feedback delivery. (**Q19**) explored whether the teacher's written comments effectively steered the course of the conference, underscoring the influential role of pre- conference feedback in shaping the discourse.

Moving on to **Q20** through **24**, the questionnaire invites students to share their thoughts on key aspects of teacher-student conferencing. **Q20** asks if students see value in this training for their future roles as teachers. **Q21** focuses on whether this approach is suitable, especially for first-year students. This acknowledges the importance of tailoring teaching methods to specific student needs. **Q22** seeks to identify the most beneficial part of the conferencing experience from the student's perspective. **Q23** encourages students to think about areas where the conferencing process could be improved. Lastly, **Q24** allows students to freely express any additional thoughts or insights about the conferencing experience. This open-ended question gives students the chance to share unique perspectives that structured questions may not cover, offering a final opportunity for valuable input on the conferencing approach.

The questionnaire is a specialised tool designed to gather insights from students about their experiences with conferencing. It consists of **24** questions covering various aspects of conferencing. These questions delve into factors like motivation and beliefs about learning. The questionnaire also assesses the time allocated for conferencing and the level of student engagement. It investigates if students carefully consider feedback and if it is provided in a timely manner. Additionally, it provides an avenue for students to share their personal

perspectives on conferencing. In essence, this questionnaire transcends its role as a mere set of questions; it serves as a valuable instrument for refining our teaching methods.

Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with the explanation of the adopted methodology in this research, which is triangulation, for the study is both quantitative and qualitative. It described the pre- and post-tests as well as the training procedure. In addition to the description of the teachers' and students' questionnaires, this chapter provided details about the context of the study, the participants, the method of marking in a full description and justification. The following chapters discuss and interpret the results obtained from this study and answer the research questions we asked and confirm or not the formulated hypothesis.

Chapter Four

Teachers Questionnaire Data Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter Four: Teachers Questionnaire Data Analysis and Interpretation

Introduction

In conducting this study, a questionnaire comprising thirty questions was employed. The targeted participants were 14 experienced teachers of written expression, all of whom are currently engaged in teaching or have previously taught first-year students within the English Department at the ENS-C. The primary objective of the questionnaire was two-fold: firstly, to delve into the diverse methodologies employed by teachers in offering feedback within writing classes; and secondly, to evaluate the potential effectiveness of integrating writing conferences as a distinct teaching method. This approach aimed to capture a nuanced understanding of current feedback practises while exploring the readiness and acceptance among teachers for the implementation of writing conferences in their instructional approaches.

4.1. Section One: General Information

Q1. Status

A- Part-time/Assistant Lecturer

B- Magistère Degree Holder (Maître-Assistant)

C- Ph. D Holder (Maître de Conférences)

D- Professor

Table 4.1.*Teachers' Level of Formal Education*

Options	N	%
A	0	00%
B	9	64.28%
C	5	35.71%
D	0	00%
Total	14	100%

The breakdown of the teachers' formal level of education is presented in Table 4.1. According to the data, 64.28% of the respondents are Magistère degree holders, while 35.71% of them are Ph. D ones. This may suggest that the ENS-C has early-career teachers.

Q2. Years of Experience in English Teaching at University Level

- a) From 8 to 10 years
- b) From 11 to 19 years

Table 4.2.*Teachers' Experience at University*

Options	N	%
A	04	28.57%
B	10	71.42%
Total	14	100%

According to the data presented in Table 4.2, it is evident that all of the respondents (100%) have been teaching at the university level for more than 8 years. Among the participants,

28.57% have a teaching experience of less than 10 years, while the majority, comprising 71.42%, has been teaching for over 10 years. These statistics highlight the extensive experience and expertise of the respondents in teaching at university.

Q3. Years of Experience in Teaching Written Expression

- a) Less than 5 years
- b) 5 to 10 years
- c) More than 10 years

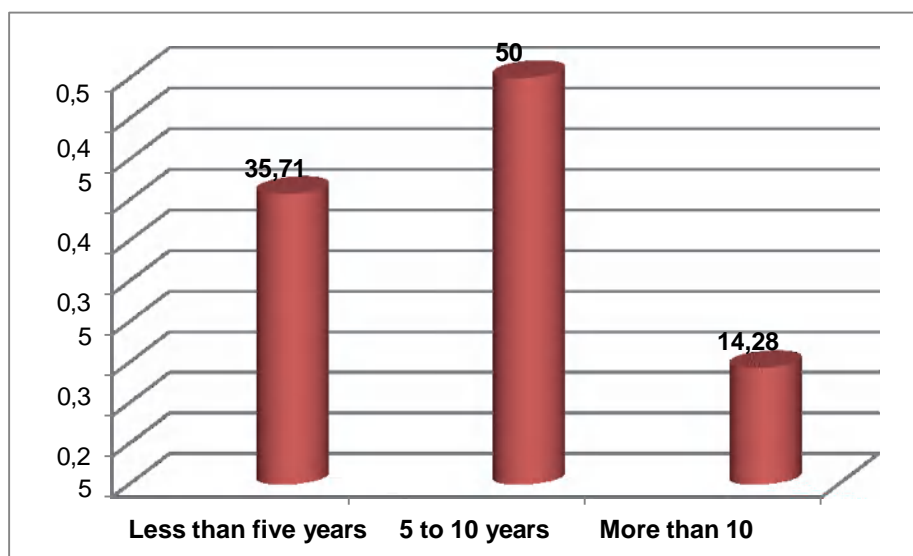
Table 4.3.

Experience in Teaching Written Expression

Options	N	%
A	05	35.71%
B	07	50%
C	02	14.28%
Total	14	100%

Figure 4.1.

Experience in Teaching Written Expression



The data illustrates the distribution of teachers' experience levels in teaching written expression. The majority of teachers fall within the category of having 5 to 10 years of experience, comprising half of the total sample. This indicates a notable presence of mid-career instructors who bring a substantial level of expertise to their teaching roles. Meanwhile, a significant portion of teachers (35.71%) possesses less than 5 years of experience, and teachers with more than 10 years of experience constitute a relatively smaller proportion (14.28%) of the sample. This suggests that the ENSC may not have a large number of highly experienced teachers specifically focused on teaching written expression.

Q4. Years of Experience in Teaching First Year Written Expression

- a) Less than Five Years
- b) More Than Five Years

Table 4.4*Experience in Teaching First Year Written Expression*

Options	N	%
A	07	50%
B	07	50%
Total	14	100%

The data in table 4.4 presents a balanced distribution of teachers' experience levels in teaching first-year written expression. Exactly half of the teachers (50%) have less than five years of experience in this domain. This group brings fresh perspectives and may benefit from ongoing professional development to enhance their teaching skills. On the other hand, an equally significant proportion of teachers (50%) possess more than five years of experience, which suggests that they may have a wealth of accumulated strategies and insights to contribute to the effectiveness of their teaching methods.

4.2. Section Two: Teachers' Experience**Q5. How would you Rate Your First-Year Students?**

- a) Non-Writers
- b) Poor Writers
- c) Good Writers
- d) Very Good Writers

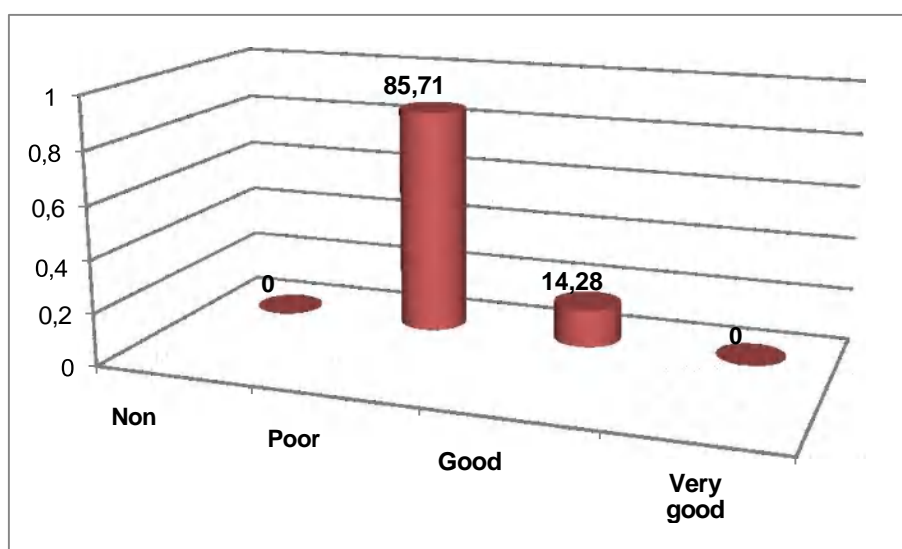
Table 4.5.

Evaluation of Students' Writing

Options	N	%
A	00	00%
B	12	85.71%
C	02	14.28%
D	00	00%
Total	14	100%

Figure 4.2

Evaluation of Students' Writing



According to the findings, the majority of teachers (85.71%) perceive their students' level of writing to be in the poor category. However, there is a small minority of teachers who perceive their students' writing skill to be good. It is worth noting that none of the teachers in the sample classified their students' writing skill as very good or considered them non-writers. These

results indicate that the majority of teachers have concerns about the writing abilities of their students, suggesting a need for improvement in this area.

Q6. How Often Do Your First-Year Students Commit Errors in the Following aspects of Language?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Always

a) Content and Organisation of Ideas

Table 4.6.

Frequency of Committing Content and Organisation of Ideas Errors

Options	N	%
A	00	00%
B	02	14.28%
C	04	28.75%
D	05	35.71%
E	03	21.42%
Total	14	100%

The data reveals the frequency of errors committed by first-year students in terms of content and organisation of ideas in their writing. The majority of teachers noted that errors occur either

often (35.71%) or sometimes (28.75%), suggesting that a significant portion of the students face issues related to content and organisation of ideas in their writing. A smaller proportion of teachers indicated that errors in this aspect occur either rarely (14.28%) or always (21.42%). These findings underscore the need for targeted support and interventions to help students enhance their skills in content development and organize their ideas effectively. This data provides valuable insights for adjusting teaching strategies and providing specific feedback to address these areas of concern.

b) Mechanics (spelling and punctuation) and Grammar

Table 4.7.

Frequency of Committing Mechanics and Grammar Errors

Options	N	%
A	00	00%
B	00	00%
C	02	14.75%
D	05	35.71%
E	07	50%
Total	14	100%

Based on the data presented in Table 4.7, it is evident that the majority of teachers, accounting for 83.71%, believe that students frequently or always commit grammar and mechanics errors in their writing. Additionally, 14.75% of teachers stated that these errors occur sometimes. These findings align with the perception that first-year students are generally considered poor writers, as indicated in the fifth question. The responses suggest there is a clear need for improvement in their writing skills.

Q7. Can You Say That Your First-Year Students Are Motivated to Write?

Table 4.8

Students' Motivation to Write

Options	N	%
Yes	06	42.85%
No	08	57.14%
Total	14	100%

It can be inferred that there is a split opinion regarding the motivation of first-year students to write. According to the teachers, 42.85% believe that their first-year students are motivated to write, while 57.14% believe that their students are not motivated to write. This denotes a divergence in perception among the teachers, highlighting the need for further exploration and potential strategies to boost writing motivation among first-year students.

Q8. If No, Why?

Based on the positive responses from 57.14% of the teachers in **Q07**, it appears that there are multiple underlying factors contributing to students' lack of motivation to write. These include a limited vocabulary, misconceptions about the writing process, unfamiliarity with regular writing practices, viewing writing as a challenging and intricate skill, struggles with self-expression, and occasional student apathy. Recognizing and addressing these factors is crucial for teachers to assist students in overcoming these obstacles and fostering the development of their writing proficiency.

Q9. Do You Think It Is the Teacher's Job to Motivate Students?

Table 4.9.

Attitudes towards the Teacher's Job to Motivate Learners

Options	N	%
Yes	11	78.57%
No	03	21.42%
Total	14	100%

According to the obtained results, 78.57% of the teachers believe that it is the teacher's responsibility to motivate learners. This suggests a high level of awareness among these teachers about their role in fostering student motivation. However, it is worth noting that 21.42% of the teachers do not share the same opinion, demonstrating a difference in perspectives regarding the role of the teacher in student motivation.

Q10. How?

Among the 11 teachers who affirmed it is part of their role to support learners, there were diverse explanations provided. Three teachers didn't offer specific details. Two mentioned that they engage students with interesting writing topics, aiding in idea generation and vocabulary development. Five highlighted the importance of consistent feedback and encouragement. One teacher mentioned assigning tasks to enhance writing skills regularly, particularly those focused on personal expression, which garnered significant student interest.

In contrast, the three teachers who disagreed believed that university-level students should self-motivate. They emphasised the independence and awareness of university students compared to younger learners, suggesting they are more capable of driving their own learning. These responses showcase varying opinions on the teacher's involvement in student

development. While some teachers employ strategies to engage students, others feel students should take charge of their own learning. Recognizing and respecting these perspectives contribute to a well-rounded approach in supporting students.

4.3. Section Three: Teachers' Feedback

Q11. How is Feedback Provision Important in Teaching Writing?

- a) Very Important
- b) Important
- c) Moderately important
- d) Of little importance
- e) Not Important

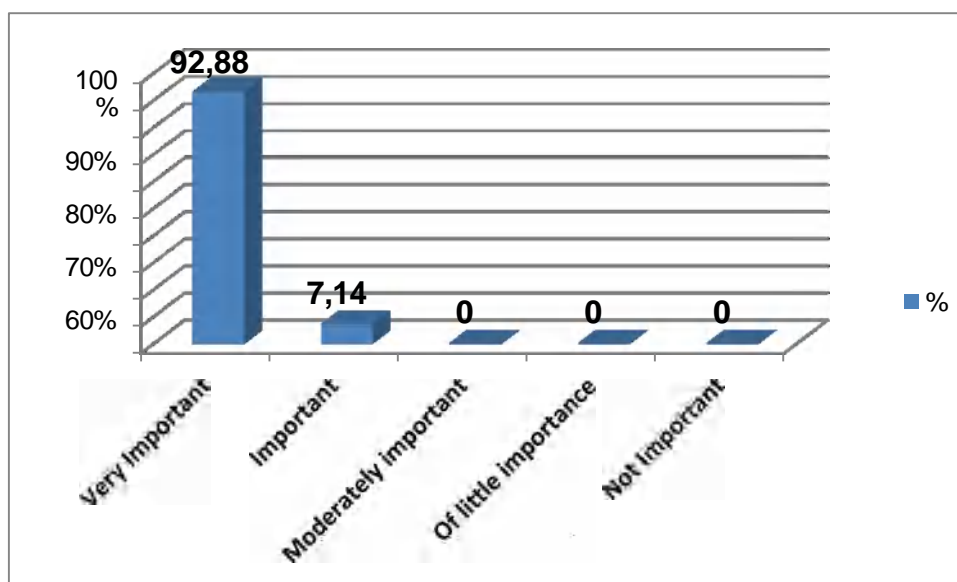
Table 4.10

Awareness of the Importance of Feedback

Options	N	%
A	13	92.88%
B	01	07.14%
C	00	00
D	00	00
E	00	00
Total	14	100%

Figure 4.3

Awareness of the Importance of Feedback



The findings reveal a strong consensus among teachers (92.85%) regarding the crucial role of feedback in teaching writing. Only one teacher described it as ‘important’, showing a unanimous positive sentiment towards feedback provision. This constructive attitude among teachers is promising and holds the potential to significantly enhance students’ learning outcomes.

Q12. In Your Opinion, What is the Main Purpose of Providing Feedback?

The consensus among teachers regarding the main purpose of feedback is that it serves to help learners identify their strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to avoid repeating mistakes and improve their writing skills. Additionally, one teacher emphasised that the primary purpose of providing feedback is to motivate students to put in efforts to enhance their writing. This viewpoint highlights the motivational aspect of feedback, as it can inspire students to strive for improvement and take an active role in their writing development.

Q13. Do You Provide Your Students with Feedback?

Table 4.11

Provision of Feedback

Options	N	%
Yes	14	100%
No	00	00%
Total	14	100%

The common agreement among the teachers (100%) regarding their provision of feedback when teaching writing indicates a strong agreement on the importance and purpose of feedback. This alignment further reinforces the findings from questions **Q11** and **Q12**, which explored the significance and objectives of feedback. The fact that all teachers expressed their commitment to providing feedback indicates a collective understanding of its value in helping students improve their writing skills.

Q14. If No, Why?

None of the fourteen teachers, when asked if they provide feedback to their students, answered 'no'.

Q15. If Yes, How Often Do You Give Feedback on Students' Writing?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Always

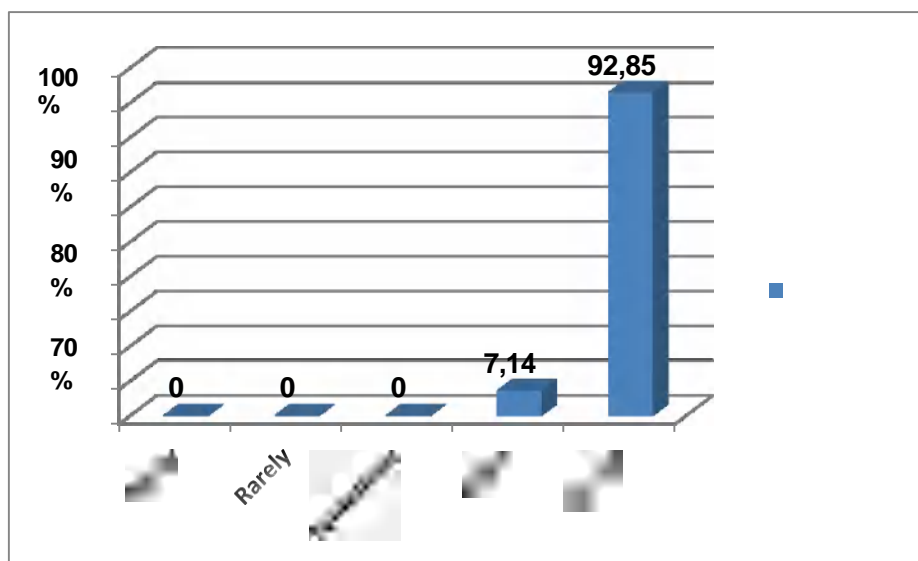
Table 4.12.

Frequency of Providing Feedback on Students' Writing

Options	N	%
Never	00	00%
Rarely	00	00%
Sometimes	00	00%
Often	01	07.14%
Always	13	92.85%
Total	14	100%

Figure 4.4

Frequency of Providing Feedback on Students' Writing



According to Table 4.12 and figure 4.4, it is evident that the majority of teachers (92.85%) provide feedback very frequently, indicating that they consistently engage in offering feedback on students' writing. This high percentage underscores the teachers' commitment to providing

ongoing support and guidance to their students. By providing feedback regularly, teachers can address students' strengths and weaknesses and offer specific guidance for improvement.

Q16. Which Type of Feedback Do You Use When Teaching Writing?

- a) Conferencing (face-to-face feedback)
- b) Peer feedback (classmates' feedback)
- c) Teacher's written feedback
- d) All of them
- e) Others

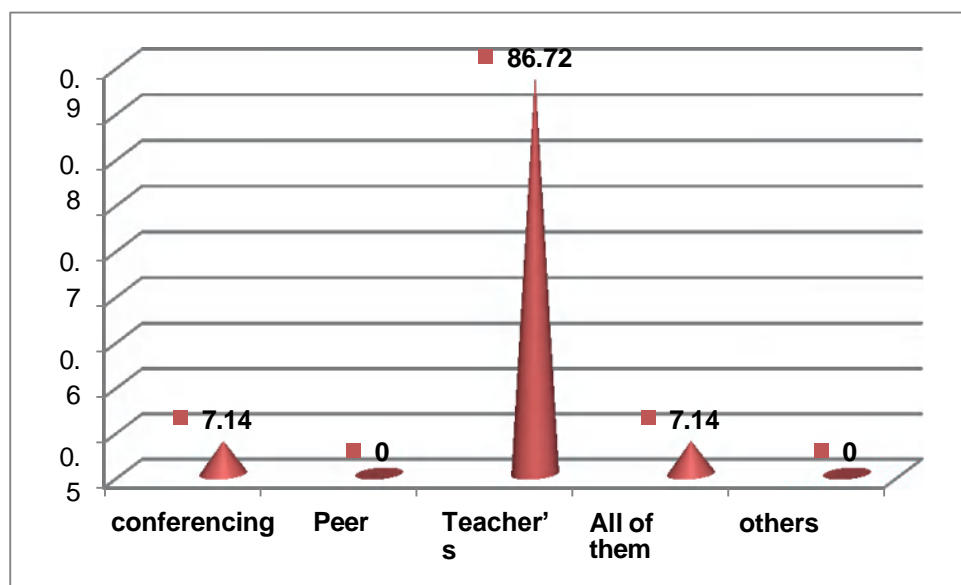
Table 4.13.

Types of Feedback Used by Teachers

Options	N	%
A	1	07.14%
B	00	00%
C	12	86.72%
D	01	07.14%
E	00	00%
Total	14	100%

Figure 4.5

Types of Feedback Used by Teachers



The majority of respondents, 86.72%, indicated a reliance on teachers' written feedback. This suggests that written feedback constitute the primary mode of feedback in this teaching context. In addition, a smaller percentage of teachers, 7.14%, utilise conferencing (face-to-face feedback) or utilise a combination of all options, accounting for another 7.14%. Notably, no respondent reported using peer feedback (classmates' feedback) or other methods. These results underscore that teachers predominantly lean towards utilising written feedback as the primary assessment method in writing instruction. This inclination could suggest a preference for written feedback or potentially indicate that teachers may not have received sufficient training in conducting effective conferencing sessions.

Q17. Which of the Previously Mentioned Types of Feedback Is More Beneficial for Your Students?

- a) Conferencing (face-to-face feedback)
- b) Peer feedback (classmates' feedback)
- c) Teacher's written feedback
- d) All of them
- e) Other

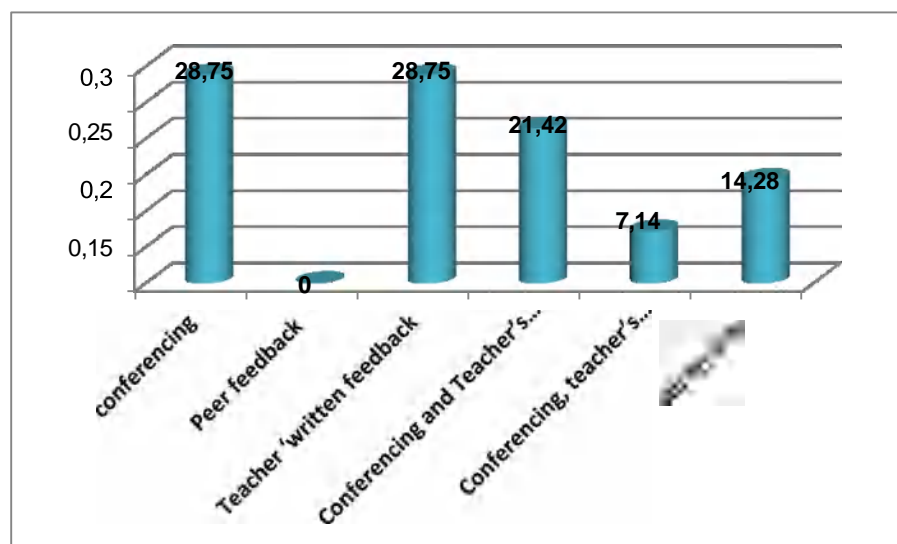
Table 4.14

Teachers' Feedback Preferences

Options	N	%
A	04	28.75%
B	00	00.00%
C	04	28.75%
A+C	03	21.42%
A+B+C	01	07.14%
No answer	02	14.28%
Total	14	100%

Figure 4.6

Teachers' Feedback Preferences



Among the respondents, a notable 28.75% find writing conferences to be beneficial, indicating the value of direct, personalised interactions in the feedback process. Similarly, an equal percentage of teachers (28.75%) consider teacher's written feedback to be highly beneficial, underlining the importance of detailed written feedback. Furthermore, 21.42% of respondents believe that a combination of writing conferences and written feedback is the most effective approach. Additionally, 7.14% of teachers find that all types of feedback are equally beneficial. It's worth noting that a portion of respondents (14.28%) did not provide an answer to this question. This may indicate a range of opinions or an uncertainty regarding the most effective feedback method for their students. Notably, none of the teachers in the sample identified peer feedback as the most beneficial type for teaching writing.

Q18. Why?

When asked to justify their preference for specific types of feedback, teachers provided various reasons for each type selected:

❖ Writing Conferences

Teachers who preferred writing conferences suggested the following reasons:

- Writing conferences help the learner remember feedback moments easily.
- Face-to-face comments allow for easier understanding and the opportunity to seek clarification if needed.
- It has been proven beneficial for learners with significant writing challenges.
- It ensures positive reception of feedback.
- It enables students to promptly address misconceptions and identify weaknesses.
- It addresses concerns about potential disregard for written feedback and potential inaccuracies in peer feedback.

❖ Written Feedback

Teachers who preferred written feedback suggested the following reasons:

- Written feedback is practical in classes with a large number of students.
- It allows students to review feedback at their own pace and as many times as needed.
- Students have greater trust in their teacher's feedback compared to that of their peers.
- More detailed and memorable feedback.

❖ Conferencing and Written Feedback

Teachers who opted for writing conferences and written feedback gave the following reasons:

- They highlighted points for students to recognize writing problems and suggest corrections.
- Students consistently value their teachers' comments, which contribute to performance improvement.
- Organized conferencing after written comments proves beneficial for in-depth problem discussion.

❖ All Types of Feedback

Teachers prefer to use all types of feedback because of the following reasons:

- Match different learning styles students may exhibit.
- When combined, they offer comprehensive benefits.
- Effective if students attentively consider and apply them.

The justifications provided by the teachers demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the benefits of both written and writing conferences in teaching writing. Teachers acknowledged that written feedback is vital for rectifying students' writing issues, offering a detailed examination and specific suggestions for improvement. Writing Conferences are esteemed for their ability to elucidate and expand upon written feedback, providing face-to-face interactions that facilitate comprehension of the written feedback. By integrating these approaches, teachers can offer comprehensive support to students, enhancing the overall effectiveness of the feedback process and contributing to students' improvement in writing skills.

4.4. Section Four: Writing Conferences

Do You Agree or Disagree with the Following Statement:

- a) Strongly disagree
- b) Disagree
- c) Neutral
- d) Agree
- e) Strongly agree

Q19. Written Comments are Time Consuming.

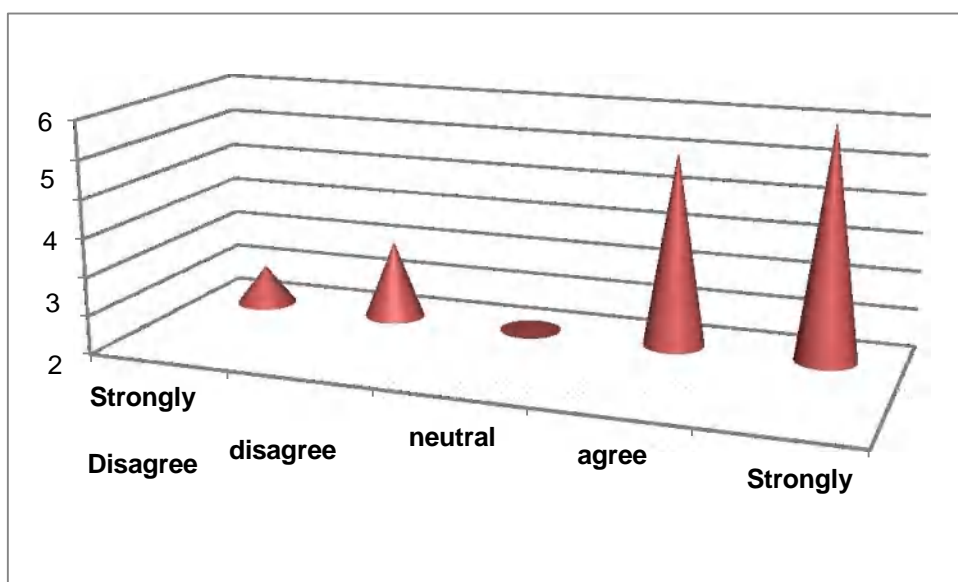
Table 4.15

Time-Consuming Written Comments

Options	N
A	01
B	02
C	00
D	05
E	06
M	2.8
SD	2.31

Figure 4.7

Time-Consuming Written Comments



As stated by Hillocks (1982), most teachers of writing will agree that making comments on students' writings causes annoyance and usually takes up the most time. Teachers agonise over whether the comments will be understood, produce the desired results, or even be read. The mean response to the statement «Written comments are time-consuming» is approximately 2.8. This indicates that, on average, the teachers' opinions tend to lean towards agreement with the statement. The SD of approximately 2.31 suggests that there is a noticeable amount of variability in the responses among teachers. This feedback was also advocated by Fisher and Frey (2012), who stated that one of the problems faced in giving written feedback, is that teachers take time to look for errors made by students and make efforts to fix them.

Q20. Students do not Understand all the Comments.

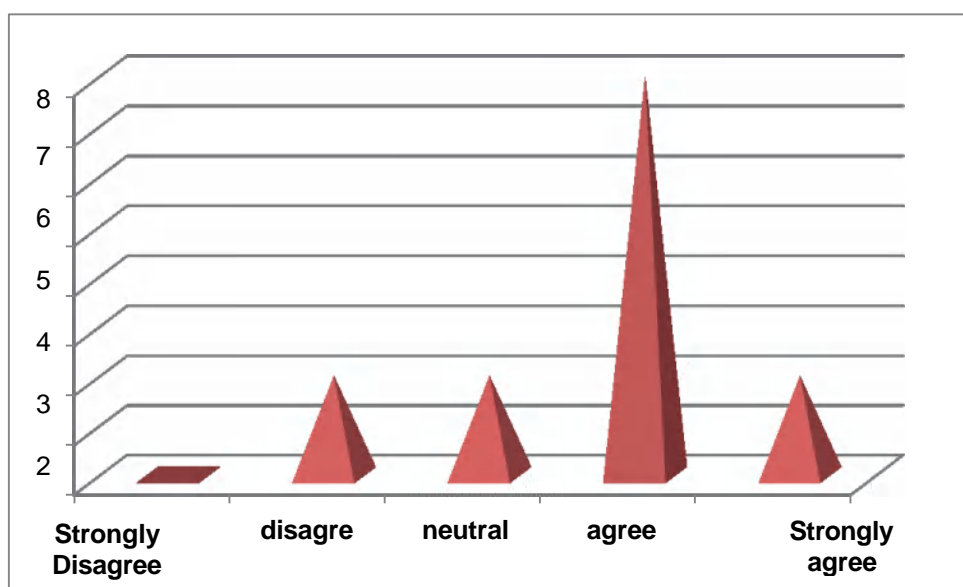
Table 4.16

Comment Comprehensions by Students

Options	N
A	00
B	02
C	02
D	08
E	02
M	2.8
SD	2.71

Figure 4.8

Comment Comprehensions by Students



The mean is approximately 2.8, and the SD is approximately 2.71. This indicates that, on average, teachers' opinions tend towards agreement that students do not understand all the

comments. The SD suggests a moderate amount of variability in the responses, which indicates that teachers have different levels of agreement. Mostly, this confirms Hyland's (2003) concern about whether students understand the corrections made by their teachers.

Q21. Students Keep Committing the Same Errors

Table 4.17

Persistent Student Errors

Options	N
A	00
B	02
C	02
D	09
E	01
M	2.8
SD	3.19

The mean is 2.8. This means that teachers' opinions tend towards agreement that students tend to repeat the same errors. The SD (3.19) indicates a moderate degree of variability in the responses, underscoring again varying levels of agreement among the teachers.

Q22. The Ambiguity of the Feedback is the Reason Why Students Disregard Feedback

Table 4.18

The Feedback's Ambiguity as a Cause for Students' Feedback Neglect

Options	N
A	0 0
B	04
C	01
D	06
E	03
M	2.8
SD	2.14

The mean is approximately 2.8. This indicates that, on average, teachers' opinions tend towards agreement that written feedback can be ambiguous. The SD (2.14) points to a moderate level of variability in the responses, signalling varying degrees of agreement among the teachers.

In conclusion, the mean scores for the statements addressing the limitations of written feedback averaged around 2.8, indicating a general acceptance among teachers regarding the challenges associated with this form of feedback, including time constraints, potential ambiguity, and students' difficulties in comprehension. However, the standard deviations, ranging from 2.14 to 3.19, indicate a considerable diversity in teachers' levels of agreement. In short, although there exist some challenges, their influence on individual teachers differs. This underscores the need to explore alternative strategies in order to effectively tackle these acknowledged limitations.

Q23. Conferencing with Students is the Solution When Students overlooked Your Feedback.

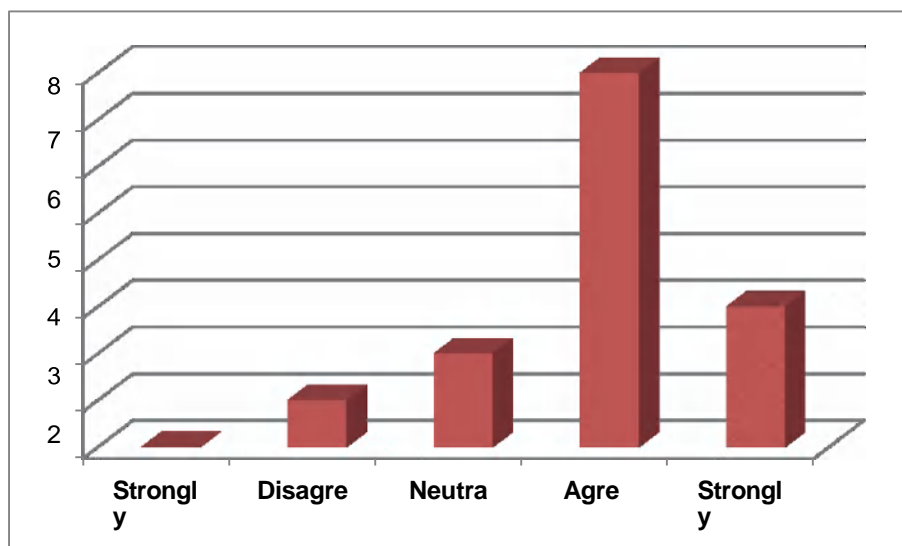
Table 4.19

Student Conferencing as a Remedy for Overlooked Feedback

Options	N
A	00
B	01
C	02
D	08
E	03
M	2.8
SD	2.82

Figure 4.9

Student Conferencing as a Remedy for Overlooked Feedback



The mean is approximately 2.8, which indicates that, on average, teachers'

opinions tend towards agreement that conferencing with students is a viable solution when students overlook their feedback. The SD (2.82) hints at a moderate range of variability in the responses, suggesting differences in the levels of agreement among the teachers.

Q24. Teachers' Written Feedback Should Focus on Grammar and Mechanics.

Table 4.20

Emphasis on Grammar and Mechanics in Teachers' Written Feedback

Options	N
A	00
B	04
C	03
D	05
E	02
M	2.8
SD	1.72

The mean is approximately 2.8. This indicates that, on average, teachers' opinions tend towards agreement that written feedback should focus on grammar and mechanics. The responses exhibit a moderate amount of variability, as indicated by the SD (1.72).

Q25. Writing Conferences Should Focus on Content and Organisation of Ideas.

Table 4.21

Emphasis on Content and Idea Organisation in Writing Conferences

Options	N
A	00
B	00
C	05
D	07
E	02
M	2.8
SD	2.79

Table 4.21 shows an average response of about 2.8, with an SD of roughly 2.79. This suggests a general inclination among teachers towards agreeing that writing conferences should prioritise content and organisational aspects. However, the SD indicates some diversity in opinions within teachers.

In general, teachers lean towards agreement that both written feedback and writing conferences should prioritise different aspects. They tend to believe that written feedback should emphasise grammar and mechanics, while writing conferences should focus on content and organisation of ideas. These findings align with Ashwell's (2000) assertion that the feedback pattern recommended by the process approach was not superior and found that providing form-focused feedback followed by content-focused feedback was equally effective. She also supported Fathman and Whalley's (1990) conclusion that giving form and content feedback simultaneously does not have a detrimental effect on student writing.

Q26. When Conferencing, Students Have the Opportunity to Witness How an Audience Takes up and understand their Writing.

Table 4.22

Student Conferencing: Observing Audience Engagement with Their writing

Options	N
A	00
B	00
C	04
D	07
E	03
M	02.8
SD	02.64

The average response centres around 2.8, reflecting a broad agreement among teachers on the advantages of conferencing in enabling students to observe audience engagement with their writing. The SD, approximately 2.64, indicates variability in opinions among teachers. This suggests a variety of perspectives on the effectiveness of conferencing for this purpose.

Q27. Talking to Each of the Students and Listening Individually to their Needs Would Improve their Writing and Ameliorate Student-Teacher Relationship.

Table 4.23

Individual Student Discussions: Enhancing Writing and Strengthening Student-Teacher Bonds

Options	N
A	00
B	02
C	03
D	06
E	03
M	2.8
SD	1.94

The average response hangs around 2.8. This implies that teachers, overall, are inclined to believe that engaging in individual conversations with students to understand their needs can significantly improve their writing skills and strengthen the student-teacher rapport. The SD (1.94) also indicates a moderate level of diversity of agreement among the teachers.

Q28. Conferencing is Communicating My Feedback to Students Much More Clearly than I Had through Comments on Their Papers.

Table 4.24

Conferencing: Clearer Communication of Feedback to Students than Written Comments

Options	N
A	00
B	03
C	01
D	09
E	01
M	2.8
SD	3.25

The average response falls around 2.8, with an associated SD of roughly 3.25. This indicates a general inclination among teachers to consider conferencing as a more effective method for giving feedback to students, surpassing the impact of written comments on their papers. This observation is consistent with Leung's discovery (2008) that writing conferences result in substantial improvement compared to written feedback. However, the noteworthy SD highlights a considerable diversity in responses among teachers.

Q29. When Listening to My Students' Questions about Writing that They Were Unable to Ask in front of the Class Makes me Understand Better How to Improve my Writing Instruction.

Table 4.25

Conferencing: Enhancing Writing Instruction Insights

Options	N
A	00
B	00
C	05
D	05
E	04
M	2.8
SD	2.32

The mean is approximately 2.8. This indicates that, on average, teachers agree that listening to their students' questions about writing, particularly those they may be hesitant to ask in front of the class, helps them better understand how to enhance their writing instruction. The SD (2.32) recommends different levels of agreement among the teachers.

Analysing the responses and means from **Q26** to **Q29** reveals the various advantages of using conferencing for feedback in writing instruction. The agreement, with an average of 2.8 in each question, demonstrates that conferencing excels in clarity, audience understanding, and addressing individual needs. This method proves superior to written comments, making it a commanding tool for effective teaching of writing.

As far as the advantages of writing conferences are concerned, these findings support Harris' assertion (1986) that writing conferences offers several advantages. One of these advantages is the interaction between the teacher and student. During conferences, the teacher serves as a live audience, allowing for immediate clarification, comprehension checks, problem-solving, and decision-making assistance. Additionally, conferences enable a higher quantity and more accurate feedback to be provided per minute compared to written comments.

Q30. Do you have Any Comments and/or Suggestion Related to Writing Conferences When Teaching Writing for First Year at the ENS-C?

Here are some comments and suggestions provided by the teachers:

- ✓ The importance lies not only in the type of feedback given but also in its usefulness. Teachers should focus on creating a learning atmosphere that boosts students' confidence.
- ✓ It is essential for teachers to ensure that students understand their feedback to eliminate any ambiguity.
- ✓ Writing conferences can be beneficial not only for first-year students but also for second-year students who will be writing different types of essays.
- ✓ Providing oral feedback through conferencing is an effective way to clarify and enhance students' understanding of the teacher's feedback.
- ✓ First-year students may struggle to comprehend written comments on their papers due to their limited familiarity with the subject matter. Receiving feedback orally and directly can be highly beneficial in such cases.
- ✓ Reminding each student about their mistakes and the progress they have made can be motivating and helpful in improving their writing skills.
- ✓ Eight teachers had no additional comments to provide.

These comments and suggestions reflect the value of writing conferences in teaching writing to first-year students. They highlight the importance of clear communication, understanding, and motivation in the feedback process. Implementing writing conferences can contribute to creating a supportive learning environment and enhancing students' writing skills at the ENS-C.

4.5. Summary of the Findings of Teachers' Questionnaire Results

In this investigation, we delved into the empirical data obtained from 14 teachers specialising in written expression, shedding light on the nuanced aspects that shape the educational domain of writing instruction at the ENS-C. From teachers' profiles to feedback practises, our investigation aimed to address the second and third questions, focusing on how teachers provide feedback in writing classes and evaluating the potential integration of writing conferences as a teaching method.

Results from the findings revealed that the teachers of written expression at the ENS-C comprise both Magistère and PhD. holders with over five years of experience teaching English at the university. In terms of teaching writing, the participating teachers acknowledged that the majority of first-year students (85.71%) are considered poor writers due to difficulties in generating and organizing ideas, as well as making grammar and mechanics errors (**Q5**). This collective apprehension signals an exigency for targeted pedagogical interventions and raises pertinent questions regarding the efficacy of current instructional methodologies.

Additionally, the teachers emphasised that first-year students lack motivation to write, which can be attributed to various factors such as limited vocabulary, a misunderstanding of the writing process, an inability to express one-self effectively, and even student apathy (**Q7** and **Q8**). To address these issues, the majority of teachers (78.57%) affirmed their role in motivating

learners through various strategies, including suggesting interesting topics for writing paragraphs, providing adequate feedback, and assigning frequent writing tasks. However, some teachers (21.42%) believe that motivation should be the students' responsibility, as they are expected to build their own interest and self-motivation at this level.

Divergent views emerge on the motivation of first-year students to write, with 42.85% expressing confidence and 57.14% demonstrating reservation. This prompts a nuanced exploration of motivational factors, drawing insights from Ryan's and Deci (2000) extensive work in educational motivation. Examining teachers' roles in motivating learners reveals a consensus (78.57%) on the pivotal role of teachers, yet 21.42% introduce a subtle divergence, reflecting varied perceptions of teachers' roles in student motivation (**Q9** and **Q10**). Ushioda's (2013) investigation into the complex dynamics of teacher roles in motivating language learners provides a theoretical backdrop for interpreting these nuanced findings.

Regarding feedback, all the participants expressed a positive attitude towards its provision, recognizing its importance in improving students' writing ability (**Q11** and **Q12**). Although the teachers provided feedback frequently, they differed in the methods they employed. The majority relied on peer feedback and written feedback from the teacher, while writing conferences were neglected at the ENS-C (**Q16**).

This finding answers the second research question that first-year written expression teachers do not utilise writing conferences as a means to enhance students' writing skills; they rather rely in their teaching of the writing skill on written and peer feedback. When given the opportunity to choose among different types of feedback, each teacher had their preferences, with some favouring one or two types or even a combination of all types. These preferences were justified by highlighting the benefits of each feedback type, with written feedback being valued for its ability to highlight and address students' writing problems and errors, while

writing conferences were seen as valuable in clarifying written feedback and being easily understandable and memorable (**Q17** and **Q18**).

The nuances of feedback become evident when we examine the reasons behind teachers providing it and the challenges associated with it (**Q19, Q20, Q21, and Q22**). All teachers agree that the main goal is to help students find their strengths and weaknesses. However, there are worries about time, possible confusion, and students struggling to understand. This delicate balance aligns seamlessly with the broader literature on feedback in education, with scholars such as Hattie and Timperley (2007) accentuating the paramount importance of clear, timely, and actionable feedback for effective learning. Similarly, Hillocks (1982) have engaged with the intricate challenges teachers encounter in the process of providing written feedback, acknowledging the temporally intensive nature of this process. Fisher and Frey (2012) further accentuated the laboriousness of providing written comments, echoing the sentiments voiced by the participating teachers in our study.

The perceived advantages of writing conferences, as elucidated by teachers, further enrich our understanding. A consensus (average response of 2.8) underscores its efficacy in clarity, addressing individual needs, and understanding audience engagement (from **Q23** to **Q29**). Harris's (1986) scholarly insights into writing conferences align with our findings, emphasising its advantages in live interaction, immediate clarification, comprehension checks, problem-solving, and decision-making assistance. Crucially, these results directly speak to our third research question, confirming that teachers are open to integrating writing conferences into their written expression classes. This implies that teachers might not have merely undergone sufficient training on conducting impactful writing conferences sessions.

In summary, the data obtained empirically in this study provides profound insights into the complex dynamics of teaching writing at the ENS-C. The varied experiences and perspectives

of teachers lay the groundwork for refining pedagogical approaches in the field of written expression. Consequently, these insights have the potential to improve the writing proficiency of students at the ENS-C. The detailed exploration of feedback practises and the potential incorporation of writing conferences stand out as crucial considerations in the continuous pursuit of more effective writing instruction in this academic setting.

Conclusion

In this chapter, the analysis and interpretation of the teachers' questionnaire data were presented. The questionnaire focused on gathering information from written expression teachers. The results revealed that first-year teachers of written expression primarily rely on written feedback and tend to neglect writing conferences. However, despite this preference, the teachers expressed a positive attitude towards the implementation of writing conferences in the teaching of writing.

Chapter Five

The Impact of Writing Conferences on Students Writing Paragraphs

Chapter Five: The Impact of Writing Conferences on Students Writing Paragraphs

Introduction

In the pursuit of the understanding of the impact of writing conferences on students' paragraph writing, this chapter is about the core of our study. It employs a two-fold methodology. Section one employs a quantitative methodology to delve into the potential causal relationship between writing conferences and the enhancement of content in paragraph writing for first-year students. Through meticulous examination of pre- and post-test scores, this section aims to discern the tangible effects of writing conferences on participants' writing improvement. Complementing this, Section Two delves into the invaluable insights derived from the students' questionnaire. This exploration offers insights into how students perceive the influence of writing conferences on their paragraph writing abilities. By examining their responses, this section offers a nuanced understanding of their attitudes towards the effectiveness of writing conferences in augmenting their writing proficiency.

5.1. Quasi-Experimental Study

This section examines the quantitative analysis conducted to determine the causal relationship between writing conferences and the improvement of the content of first-year students' paragraph writing. Through meticulous evaluation of pre-and post-test scores, this analysis aims to elucidate whether writing conferences significantly influenced participants' content of writing improvement.

5.1.1. Data Analysis Procedure

Initially, the collected data, including pre-test and post-test scores, were organized and entered into statistical software (SPSS) for analysis. Descriptive statistics, such as means,

standard deviations, mode, median, range, were computed to provide a summary of the data and gain insights into the participants' performance.

To address the main research question and check the hypothesis that writing conferences will lead students to improve the content of students' paragraph writing, a Two-Way ANOVA with Repeated Measures statistical analysis was employed to compare the pre-tests and post-test scores, along with both EG and CG, allowing for an assessment of the potential changes in participants' written paragraphs.

5.1.2. Pre-test Results for both Groups: EG and CG

In this section, the pre-test results for both the EG and the CG are examined. The pre-test is utilised as a baseline assessment to measure the initial writing abilities of the participants before the implementation of writing conferences. Valuable insights can be gained by analysing the pre-test results, allowing for an understanding of the starting point of the participants in terms of their writing proficiency. The pre-test results serve as a foundation for understanding any existing differences or similarities in the writing abilities of the two groups prior to the implementation of the intervention.

A scoring rubric (see appendix V) is used to assess paragraphs based on two fundamental aspects: Content/Organisation and Form. Content refers to the information conveyed in the text. It encompasses the ideas, arguments, details, and overall message that the student is trying to communicate. On the other hand, form involves considerations such as paragraph structure, grammar, punctuation, spelling and overall presentation.

Table 5.1.1*Pre-test Results for both Groups: EG and CG*

EG				CG			
<i>Part.</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Part.</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3.5	12.5	16	1	0.5	9.5	10
2	1.5	9.5	11	2	1.5	10.5	12
3	0	10	10	3	1	11	12
4	2	9	11	4	1	8.5	9.5
5	1	11	12	5	2.5	6.5	9
6	2.5	10.5	13	6	2	7	11
7	1.5	9.5	11	7	1.5	9	10.5
8	4	11	14	8	2	11	13
9	3	11	14	9	1.5	8	9.5
10	1.5	8.5	10	10	2.5	8	10.5
11	1	9.5	10.5	11	2.5	10	12.5
12	4	10.5	14.5	12	1	8	9
13	1	10.5	11.5	13	2	6	8
M	02.03	10.23	12.19	M	1.65	08.69	10.49

Part. (participant)

In this comparative analysis, the objective is to discern any disparities in the proficiency levels of both the CG and the EG in the areas of Form and Content in writing. Table 5.1.1 indicates that the EG exhibited a higher mean score of 2.03, compared to the CG's mean score of 1.65 as far as form is concerned. This difference suggests a notable inequality in the groups' performance, with the EG showcasing a stronger grasp of formal aspects in writing. Regarding content, similarly, the EG surpassed the CG, boasting a mean score of 10.23, while the CG gained a mean score of 8.69. This signifies a substantial difference in content-related proficiency.

When synthesising both ‘Form’ and ‘Content’ scores to derive the ‘Total Scores’, the EG maintained a higher mean score of 12.19, in contrast to the CG’s mean score of 10.49. This comprehensive assessment reinforces the trends observed in the individual categories, indicating an overall proficiency in the EG. These findings suggest that the EG exhibited a notably superior performance in both formal and content-related dimensions of writing.

5.1.2.1. Descriptive Statistics of the Pre-test Total Scores Results

The descriptive statistics of the pre-test total scores results are presented, offering a comprehensive overview of the initial writing abilities of the participants before writing conferences were implemented.

Table 5.1.2

Pre-test Descriptive Statistics Total Scores Results

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
EG	13	12.19	1.92	11	11.50	06	10	16
CG	13	10.49	01.52	10.5	10.5	05	08	13

Table 5.1.2 offers valuable insights into the initial proficiency levels of both the EG and CG. Initially, it’s notable that the EG began with a slightly higher average score of 12.19, in contrast to the CG’s mean of 10.49, which suggests a baseline disparity in writing proficiency. Moving further, the SD values shed light on the spread of scores around the mean. The EG exhibited a slightly higher SD of 1.92, indicating a moderate degree of variability within their scores. Conversely, the CG had a lower SD of 1.52, implying a relatively narrower range of scores. The mode of both groups demonstrated a similar central tendency (11), signifying a common attainment level among participants. Unlikely, the EG’s median (11.50) slightly surpassed that of the CG (10.50), which suggests that the EG tended to exhibit higher scores.

Analysing the range, the Min and the Max, suggests that the EG exhibited a range of 6, slightly wider than the CG's range of 5. This means that the scores in the EG varied a bit more. The EG started at a Min of 10, while the CG's lowest score was 8, which signifies that even the lowest-performing students in the EG began with a relatively higher score compared to their counterparts in the CG. Conversely, both groups demonstrated their highest scores, with the EG reaching a Max of 16, while the CG achieved a peak score of 13. This implies that the highest achievers in the EG initiated with notably high scores. In short, the EG commenced with a slightly higher average score, moderate variability, and a broader range of scores in comparison to the CG. It's worth noting that the groups, as indicated by these pre-test results, show some heterogeneity in their initial proficiency levels.

Moving forward, we provide a description of the content scores and form scores, further examining the specific aspects and characteristics of each group's performance in these areas.

5.1.2.2. Pre-test Content Results

The pre-test content results will be examined, shedding light on the participants' initial proficiency in terms of the content of their writing paragraphs.

Table 5.1.3

Pre-test Descriptive Statistics Content Results

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
EG	13	10.23	1.05	10.33	10.5	04	08.50	12.50
CG	13	08.69	1.65	08	09	05	06	11

The pre-test results for content indicate notable differences between the EG and CG. The EG demonstrated a higher mean score of 10.23, compared to the CG's mean score of 8.69, signifying a substantial gap in content-related skills. The SD for the EG was 1.05, indicating a

relatively narrow dispersion of scores around the mean. On the contrary, the CG displayed a slightly higher SD of 1.65, suggesting a slightly wider range of scores. Furthermore, the mode and median scores for both groups further support this trend. The mode for the EG was 10.33, and the median was 10.50, indicating a relatively concentrated distribution around the mode. In contrast, the CG had a mode of 8 and a median of 9, revealing a broader distribution of scores.

Examining the range, the Min and Max scores further illuminates the disparities in content-related proficiency between the EG and CG. The range was 4 for the EG and 5 for the CG, indicating that the range of scores within the EG was slightly narrower. In the EG, the lowest score observed was 8.50, while the highest was 12.50. Oppositly, in the CG, the lowest score was 6, and the highest was 11. This wider range of scores suggests a greater variation in content-related skills among participants. The Max score in the CG was lower than that of the EG, reinforcing the initial observation of higher proficiency in content- related writing within the EG.

Overall, these pre-test results underscore the initial disparities in the content of students' writing skills between the EG and CGs.

5.1.2.3. Pre-test Form Results

The pre-test form results are examined, shedding light on the participants' initial proficiency in terms of the form of their writing paragraphs.

Table 5.1.4*Pre-test Descriptive Statistics Form Results*

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
EG	13	02.03	1.26	1.25	1.50	04	00	02.50
CG	13	1.65	0.65	1.66	1.50	02	02	04

The pre-test descriptive statistics for form-related writing skills highlight significant differences between the EG and CG. The EG exhibited a higher average score of 2.03, compared to the CG's mean score of 1.65, indicating that participants in the EG generally demonstrated a greater proficiency in formal aspects of writing. Similarly, the EG displayed a slightly higher SD (1.26) compared to the CG (0.65), suggesting a slightly wider spread of scores in the EG. This indicates a greater diversity in form-related proficiency.

Examining the mode, median, and range provides further insight. In the EG, the mode was 1.25, while in the CG, it was 1.66. Both groups had similar modes. The median was 1.50 for both groups, also. However, the EG exhibited a wider range of scores (4), indicating a broader spectrum of proficiency levels, while the CG had a narrower range (2), suggesting a more consistent level of proficiency.

Moving further to the Min and Max scores provides additional insights into the proficiency levels of both groups. In the EG, the lowest form-related score was 0, indicating that at least one participant exhibited a minimal level of proficiency in this aspect. Inversely, the highest score in the EG was 4, signifying that at least one participant demonstrated a relatively high level of proficiency in form-related writing skills. In the CG, the lowest score was 0.50, suggesting that even the lowest-performing participant in this group had a slightly higher level of proficiency compared to the EG's lowest score. The highest score in the CG was 2.50, indicating a notable proficiency level in form-related writing skills by at least one participant.

Overall, the pre-test results highlight the initial disparities in form-related writing proficiency between the two groups, setting the foundation for further analysis and intervention.

The descriptive analyses of total scores, content, and form related writing proficiency indeed indicate disparities in writing proficiency between the two groups. This preliminary assessment sets the stage for a more rigorous statistical examination. An independent t-test would provide a quantitative measure of the significance of these observed differences.

5.1.2.4. The Independent-Samples T-Test

The t-test compares the means of the scores in the EG and the CG to determine if there is a statistically significant difference in the pre-test.

Table 5.1.5

Independent-Samples t-test Results for the Pre-test

	<i>M</i>		<i>SD</i>		<i>T</i>	<i>Sig (2-tailed)</i>
	<i>EC</i>	<i>CG</i>	<i>EC</i>	<i>CG</i>		
Content	10.23	8.69	1.05	1.65	2.83	.009
Form	2.03	1.65	1.26	0.65	0.97	.340
Total scores	12.19	10.49	1.92	1.53	2.486	.020

Table 5.1.5 reveals that the EG had a mean score of 10.23, while the CG had a mean score of 8.69, indicating a disparity in the initial content proficiency between the two groups. The t-value of 2.83 suggests that this difference is statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.009, which is lower than the conventional significance level of 0.05.

Similarly, for pre-test form scores, the EG's mean score of 2.03 surpasses the CG's mean of 1.65, indicating a stronger grasp of formal aspects in writing. The t-value of 0.97, however,

suggests that this difference is not statistically significant, as the p-value is 0.34, which is higher than the significance level.

Finally, for pre-total scores, the EG again outperforms the CG with a mean score of 12.19 compared to 10.49. The t-value of 2.486 indicates that this difference is statistically significant, with a p-value of 0.020. These results collectively suggest that there are significant differences in the pre-test scores between the two groups, particularly in terms of content proficiency and overall writing proficiency. Consequently, we infer that the two groups were not initially homogeneous.

The observed dissimilarity in pre-test scores between the EG and CG suggests an initial lack of homogeneity. As a result, a Two-way ANOVA with repeated measures statistical analysis is used to compare the post-test results for both EG and CGs, along with pre-and post-tests.

5.1.3. Post-test Results for both Groups: EG and CG

This section delves into the post-test results, offering valuable insights into the effects of the treatment. While both the EG and the CG received written feedback, the EG additionally benefited from writing conferences specifically tailored to their content of paragraph writing. This distinction sets the stage for a comparative analysis, shedding light on the potential differential impact of the writing conference method.

Table 5.1.6*Post-test Results of both Groups: EG and CG*

EG				CG			
<i>Part.</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Part.</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	4	12	16	1	5	9	14
2	2.5	12	14.5	2	3.5	6	9.5
3	0	13	13	3	1	12	13
4	3.5	11	14.5	4	3	10	13
5	2	13	15	5	3	7	10
6	4	13	17	6	4	10	14
7	2.5	11	13.5	7	2.5	10.5	13
8	4	14	18	8	2	11	13
9	5	12.5	17.5	9	5	9	14
10	2	10.5	12.5	10	3	10	13
11	2	12	14	11	3	11	14
12	4	13.5	17.5	12	3	8	11
13	1	12	13	13	2.5	12	14.5
M	2.80	12.19	15.07	M	03.11	9.65	12.76
<i>Part. (participant)</i>							

The post-test results indicate notable differences between the experimental and CGs in both ‘Form’ and ‘Content’ aspects of writing. In terms of form, the EG exhibited a higher mean score of 2.80, compared to the CG’s mean score of 3.11. This suggests that the EG showed a slightly lower proficiency in formal elements of writing. However, in terms of content, the EG displayed a higher mean score of 12.19, while the CG had a mean score of 9.65. This implies a substantial difference in content-related proficiency, with the EG outperforming the CG. When considering the total scores, which combine both ‘Form’ and ‘Content’, the EG maintained a higher mean

score of 15.07, compared to the CG's mean score of 12.76. The thorough evaluation confirms the patterns seen in specific areas, highlighting an overall enhanced proficiency in the EG.

5.1.3.1. Descriptive Statistics of Post-test Total Score Results

The descriptive statistics of the post-test results are presented, offering an overview of the gained writing abilities of the participants after writing conferences were implemented.

Table 5.1.7

Post-test total Scores Results of both Groups: EG and CG

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
EG	13	15.07	1.92	14	14.50	05.5	12.5	18
CG	13	12.76	01.60	13	13	05	9.5	14.50

The post-test results provide a comprehensive view of the impact of writing conferences on both the EG and CG. The mean scores for the EG in total scores is 15.07; in comparison, the CG had a mean score of 12.76. This indicates that the EG exhibited a higher mean score. However, it is essential to note that the differences in means may not necessarily imply a statistically significant distinction between the two groups. When looking at the SD, they were 1.92 for the EG and 1.60 for the CG in total scores, indicating a relatively higher variability in scores within the EG.

Regarding the mode, the median, and the range scores, they were also higher in the EG for total scores, further indicating a broader spectrum of performance levels within the EG. In terms of Min and Max scores, the EG had the lowest score of 12.5 and a highest score of 18, while the CG ranged from 9.5 to 14.5. These findings illustrate that the writing conferences had

a discernible impact on the writing proficiency of the EG, resulting in higher scores compared to the CG.

Overall, the post-test results suggest that writing conferences had a positive impact on the EG's writing proficiency.

5.1.3.2. Post-test Content Results

The post-test content results are examined, shedding light on the participants gained proficiency in terms of the content of their writing paragraphs.

Table 5.1.8

Post-test Content Results

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
EG	13	12.26	1.03	11	12	04.50	10.50	14
CG	13	09.65	01.81	10	11	06	06	12

The post-test results in the content domain reveal significant insights into the proficiency levels of both the EG and CG. In the EG, the mean content score is 12.26, whereas the CG exhibits a lower mean score of 9.65. This highlights a significant contrast in content-related proficiency, as the EG exhibits a stronger understanding of considerable elements in writing. The SD of the EG had a lower variability in content scores ($SD = 1.03$) compared to the CG ($SD = 1.81$). This suggests a more consistent level of content proficiency within the EG.

As far as the mode, the median, the range, the Min, and the Max are concerned, the mode is 11 for the EG and 10 for the CG. The median is 12 for the EG and 11 for the CG, which confirms the EG's higher proficiency in content-related writing. Considering the range, we observe that the EG had a wide ranging of content scores (4.50) compared to the CG (6). This

suggests a wider range of proficiency levels within the EG. Examining the Min and Max scores, we find that the EG had a Min content score of 10.50 and a Max of 14. In contrast, the CG ranged from a Min of 6 to a Max of 12.

We conclude that the post-test results for content proficiency clearly demonstrate the positive impact of the writing conferences on the EG. They exhibit higher mean, mode, median, and Max scores compared to the CG, indicating a considerable improvement in meaningful elements of writing. Overall, these findings underscore the effectiveness of the writing conferences in enhancing students' content-related writing skills.

5.1.3.3. Post-test Form Results

The post-test form results will be examined, shedding light on the participants gained proficiency in terms of the form of their writing paragraphs.

Table 5.1.9

Post-test form results

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mode</i>	<i>Median</i>	<i>Range</i>	<i>Min.</i>	<i>Max.</i>
EG	13	2.80	1.42	04	02.50	04	01	05
CG	13	03.11	01.10	03	03	04	01	05

The post-test results in form provide valuable insights into the writing proficiency of both the EG and CGs. In the EG, the mean form score was 2.80, while the CG exhibited a slightly higher mean score of 3.11, indicating a marginal difference in the formal aspects of writing between the two groups. The SD of the EG had a slightly higher variability in form scores (SD = 1.42) compared to the CG (SD = 1.10), suggesting a slightly wider range of form-related proficiency levels within the EG.

The mode is 4 for the EG and 3 for the CG. The median is 2.5 for the EG and 3 for the CG, indicating a slight advantage in form-related writing proficiency for the EG. Considering the range, both groups had a range of 4, suggesting a similar spread of proficiency levels in form-related writing. Examining the Min and Max scores, we find that both groups had a Min form score of 1 and a Max of 4.

In summary, the post-test results for form-related writing proficiency indicate a slightly distinction between the EG and CG. While the CG exhibited a slightly higher mean score, the EG displayed a marginally broader range of scores in form-related writing. Both groups demonstrated similar mode, median, and range values, suggesting comparable performance in formal aspects of writing. Generally, these findings suggest that the writing conferences had a modest impact on the formal elements of writing, with both groups demonstrating similar levels of proficiency in this domain. Consequently, it is imperative to conduct a comprehensive analysis of each group's progress in terms of content, form, and global scores for a more precise understanding of their advancements.

5.1.4. Pre-and Post-tests Analysis

The means of the EG (15.07) and the CG (12.76) in the post-test indicate a difference in their paragraphs writing performance. However, it is important to note that these differences may have existed even in the pre-test, as the groups were already found to be non-homogeneous based on the initial independent t-test.

Table 5.1.10*Improvement in Content, Form and Total Scores of Participants*

	EG (N = 13)			CG(N = 13)		
	<i>Mean</i>			<i>Mean</i>		
	<i>Content</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Total Scores</i>	<i>Content</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Total Scores</i>
Pre-test	10.23	02.03	12.19	08.69	01.65	10.49
Post-test	12.19	02.80	15.07	09.65	03.11	12.76
Improvement	01.96	0.77	2.88	0.96	01.46	02.27

From table 5.1.10, we can observe that the mean difference of the EG (2.88) and the CG (2.27) is nearly the same with a slight difference. This similarity in mean difference can be attributed to the fact that both groups received written feedback. However, there is a slight variation between the groups due to the inclusion of writing conferences on content, which was provided only to the EG.

Furthermore, when comparing the content scores, it is evident that the EG has a higher mean score (1.96) compared to the CG (0.96). This indicates that the writing conferences had a positive impact on the content of the writing. However, when analysing the mean difference of both groups in the form post-test, we observe that the mean score of the CG (1.46) is moderately higher than that of the EG (0.77). This discrepancy might be attributed to the emphasis on form in the written feedback provided. The CG may have paid more specific attention to form-related aspects, leading to a relatively higher mean score in this area.

These findings highlight the importance of considering both content and form aspects when providing feedback in writing instruction.

5.1.5. Two-Way ANOVA with Repeated Measures

To check the hypothesis that states that providing students with writing conferences will lead to improvement of the content of students' paragraph writing, a two- Way ANOVA with Repeated Measures statistical analysis was conducted as far as content paragraph results are concerned.

5.1.5.1. Study of Differences between the CG and EG

Table 5.1.5.1.1

The Impact of Writing Conferences: Tests of between-subjects Effects

<i>Source</i>	<i>Type III Sum of Squares</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Mean Square</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>	<i>Partial Eta Squared</i>
Intercept	5422.327	1	5422.327	2147.593	.000	.989
Group	56.077	1	56.077	22.210	.000	.481
Error	60.596	24	2.525			

The analysis explored the impact of writing conferences on content paragraph writing, specifically examining the EG. The F-test shows a significant result ($F = 22.210$, $p < 0.05$), confirming the hypothesis that writing conferences have a noticeable impact on content paragraph writing. This can be elucidated through the following table.

Table 5.1.5.1.2

Impact of writing conferences: Group-wise estimates for mean differences, standard errors, and confidence intervals

		95% Confidence Interval			
		<i>Mean</i>	<i>SE</i>	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
<i>EC</i>	Pre-test	10.231	.384	9.438	11.024
	Post-test	12.269	.410	11.423	13.116
<i>CG</i>	Pre-test	8.692	.384	7.899	9.485
	Post-test	9.654	.410	8.807	10.500

Table 5.1.5.1.2 shows that the EG scored higher in the post-test (12.269) compared to the pre-test (10.231). This suggests an improvement in content performance after the intervention, indicating a positive impact of the writing conferences on the content of paragraph writing for the EG. In contrast, the CG also showed an increase in mean scores from the pre-test (8.692) to the post-test (9.654), but the improvement is not as noticeable as in the EG. The confidence intervals give us a range in which we make sure the scores are more consistent compared to the CG. In short, these findings suggest that the writing conferences may have contributed to enhanced content paragraph writing skills, as reflected in the higher average scores in the EG.

5.1.5.2. Study of Differences between the CG and EG in Pre-test and Post-test Measurements

5.1.5.2.1. Pairwise Comparisons of Mean Differences

Table 5.1.5.2.1

Pairwise Comparisons of mean differences in Pre-test and Post-test for CG and EG

	Pre-test	Post-test	Mean difference	Sig.	
EG	10.231	12.269	2.038	.000	N = 13
CG	8.692	9.654	0.962	.063	N = 13

The results of the pairwise comparisons of mean differences in pre-test and post-test scores for the EG and CG reveal compelling insights into the efficacy of writing conferences. The EG demonstrated a substantial improvement in performance, as evidenced by a significant increase in mean scores from the pre-test ($M = 10.231$) to the post-test ($M = 12.269$), yielding a mean difference of 2.038 ($p < .001$). In contrast, the control CG exhibited a more modest improvement, with a smaller mean difference between pre-test ($M = 8.692$) and post-test ($M = 9.654$) scores, amounting to 0.962, although this difference was not statistically significant ($p = .063$). These outcomes strongly suggest that the implementation of writing conferences had a positive and statistically significant impact on the content of students' paragraph writing skills of the EG, supporting the study's hypothesis.

5.1.5.2.2. Comparison of Mean Differences between Groups

Table 5.1.5.2.2

Comparison of mean differences in Pre-test and Post-test between CG and EG

	CG	EG	Mean difference	Sig.	
Pre-test	8.692	10.231	1.538	.000	N = 26
Post-test	9.654	12.269	2.615	.009	N = 26

Table 5.1.5.2.2 presents a comparative analysis of the mean differences in pre-test and post-test scores between CG and EG. The pre-test scores indicate a notable disparity between the two groups, with the CG starting at a mean score of 8.692 compared to the EG's mean score of 10.231, resulting in a mean difference of 1.538 ($p = .000$, $N = 26$). Similarly, in the post-test phase, the EG outperformed the CG, with a mean score of 12.269 compared to the CG's mean score of 9.654, resulting in a larger mean difference of 2.615 ($p = .009$, $N = 26$).

These findings suggest again that writing conferences had a significant positive impact, leading to an improvement in scores compared to the CG. The statistically significant differences in mean scores underscore the effectiveness of writing conferences on the content of students' paragraph writings.

In conclusion, the statistical analyses conducted on the EG and the CG provided evidence to support our research hypothesis. We reject the null hypothesis, as evidenced by the statistically significant improvement in the content of students' paragraph writing (Mean Difference = 2.038*, $p < 0.001$) and the pronounced superiority over the CG in this regard (Mean Difference = 2.615*, $p < 0.001$). This affirms that the implementation of writing conferences had a positive impact on the EG's performance. On the other hand, for the CG, the null hypothesis is accepted, as there was no statistically significant difference in post-test scores compared to its own pre-

test scores (Mean Difference = 0.962, $p = 0.063$). This implies that the conventional teaching methods employed with the CG did not yield a detectable improvement in the content of students' paragraph writing. Overall, these findings provide a powerful support for the effectiveness of writing conferences in enhancing students' writing proficiency.

5.1.6. Qualitative Analysis of Teacher-Student Writing Conference Interaction

While the primary focus of our study was not to analyse the nature of teacher-student interactions, we aimed to provide a brief overview of how writing conferences were approached. According to Bayraktar (2009), we can analyse each teacher-student writing conference interaction by using a rubric (see appendix VI) that is organized into eight categories: focus, conference agenda, ownership/building on students' strengths, reflected questions, encouraged turn taking, frequency of talk, amount of praise statements, and number of interruptions. Rubric categories were further divided into three sections; teacher-centred, balanced, and student-centred. In this section, two samples are to be analysed according to the same rubric.

Table 5.1.6.1

Malek's Paragraph: Qualities of a Good Friend (see appendix vii)

T: Hi Malek....you are the first one I confer with...!

S: Hi Madam!

T: Have you seen my comments?

S: yes madam.

T: Let's talk about some of them.....he should be truthful. Having a good friend means having someone with whom you can talk freely, without the fear of being misunderstood...

Do you think this is a definition of being truthful?

S: I mean someone you trust.

T: but not being understood ?....being understood has nothing to do with trust.....

S: I'm sorry madam. It isn't.

T: This is all what you wrote concerning the first quality. Read the third quality.

Malek reads loudly

Third, a good friend should be a comprehensive one. Choose a person who understands your moods and accepts them as well. A good friend is always ready to be by your side, in your thick before your thin. The right friend doesn't blame you when you are absent once, but

T: I like this part. It is well illustrated, a well-explained quality. Thank you Malek.

S: Thank you madam

- **Focus:** The Teacher focused on one appropriate content-related issue which is one supporting point in the paragraph dealing with qualities of a good friend. (student-centred)

- **Conference Agenda:** The teacher read and asked questions, and she required answers from the student, so she gave the student the opportunity to determine and lead the conference discussion. (Student centred)
- **Ownership/Building on Student's Strengths:** at this level the student was given the opportunity to provide suggestions for improvements in the text. When the teacher read the definition of being truthful, she asked Malek whether she thought it was a correct definition, and Malek recognised by herself that this was trust and not truthfulness. (student-centred)
- **Encouraged Turn Taking:** Both the teacher and Malek took almost equal numbers of turns which allowed the student to be involved in the conversation about her paragraph. They both had six turns taking. (Balanced)
- **Frequency of Talk:** In terms of the number of words, the teacher dominated the discussions as she served as the primary source of information. Consequently, she acted as the main sender of the messages during the conversations, outnumbering the students in terms of their contributions. (Teacher-centred)
- **Number of Praise Comments Received:** The teacher expressed appreciation and provided specific praise about the quality of the writing features; for example, she said at the end, "I like this part. It is well illustrated, a well-explained quality" (Student-centred)
- **Amount of Interruption Occurred:** No interruption occurred during the conversation.

Overall, the interpretation suggests a mixed approach of both student-centred and teacher-centred writing conferences. The conference discussion primarily focused on the student's work, allowing for student input. However, the teacher's contributions outweighed the student's.

Table 5.1.62

Nesrine's Paragraph: Changing the World (see appendix vii)

T: Hi Nesrine, how are you?

S: I'm fine madam

T: Today we'll discuss another paragraph.....let's see....everyone has a dream or may be a wish to change something in the world for specific reasons either because he hate the fact that it exists or he has a better version of it in his mind. To start with..... where is your topic sentence Nesrine?

S: This one madame.... Everyone has a dream or may be a wish to change something in the world for specific reasons either because he hate the fact that it exists or he has a better version of it in his mind. To start with...

T: don't you think it is too long and too general...a topic sentence is S:
Neither too general nor too specific.

T: Thank you Nesrine. I'm happy....you did not forget my words. Can you reformulate it? S:
Yes....Everyone has a dream or may be a wish to change something in the world?

T: why not you?... I asked you to describe three things you would like to change about the world.

S: I would like to change many things in the world, but the most important are three.

T: That is better Nesrine, thank you. We start our paragraph directly with the topic sentence.

The teacher reads.....because people are annoying, selfish and they criticise each other daily and for no reason....

This sentence has a structure problem Nesrinedon't you think so?

S: because people are annoying selfish and they aaaah, they are not the same....yes madam...parallelism.

T: Yes. You can also explain better and give examples.

The teacher reads...I want the way animals are treated to be changed.... I put revise the structure

S: how madam?

T: For example, I want to change the way animals are treated. Then you said people need to give each other the knowledge to make better decisions when it comes to pet ownership.....until.....that end up suffering. Don't' you think that it is the same idea....you should revise this part.

S: yes madam I will do. Thank you.

- **Focus:** The Teacher focused on three appropriate content-related issues which are the topic sentence, sentence structure, and development of the first quality in the paragraph dealing with things you want to change in the world. (Teacher Centred)
- **Conference Agenda:** both the teacher and the student led the discussion and answered the inquires (balanced)
- **Ownership/Building on Student's Strengths:** at this level the student was given the opportunity to provide suggestions for improvements in the text. For example, when the teacher shows disagreement with the topic sentence, Nesrine made improvements. (Balanced)

- **Encouraged Turn Taking:** Both the teacher and Nesrine took almost equal numbers of turns which allowed Nesrine to be involved in the conversation concerning her paragraph. They both had eight turn takings. (Balanced)
- **Reflected Questions:** All the questions were solved by Nesrine. (Student Centred)
- **Frequency of Talk:** both teacher and Nesrine talk almost equally during the discussion. (Balanced)
- **Number of Praise Comments Received:** The teacher provided specific praise about negotiating the topic sentence. The teacher said, “this one is better. Thank you Nesrine. You did not forget my words”.(Student centred)
- **Amount of Interruption Occurred:** two interruptions occurred during the conversation when Nesrine was reading her paragraph. (Balanced)

Altogether, the interpretation suggests a balanced writing conference between the teacher and the student, with recognition of the student’s strengths and efforts. Both parties had relatively equal opportunities to contribute, resulting in an interactive and engaged discussion.

5.2. Students’ Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to the EG immediately after they submitted their final drafts. This questionnaire serves as a crucial tool in addressing the final research question of our study, which aims to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of students towards writing conferences.

5.2.1. Analysis of Students’ Responses

In our subsequent analysis, we will assess the participants’ level of satisfaction using a numerical scale ranging from 1 to 5. Each number corresponds to a specific attitude: **a** signifies Strongly Disagree, **b** indicates Disagree, **c** denotes Neither Agree nor Disagree, **d** reflects Agree, and **e** represents Strongly Agree.

Q1. The Objectives of the writing conferences Were Clearly Defined. a, b, c, d, e If you have scored c, b or a, please comment why you have given this rating.

Table 5.2.1

The Clear Definition of the Objectives of the Writing Conferences

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	08
E	07
M	4.47
SD	0.17

Given that all responses are in the Agree (d) or Strongly Agree (e) categories, the high mean score of approximately 4.47 indicates a strong consensus among students that the objectives of the writing conferences were clearly defined. The low SD of about 0.17 further supports this, suggesting that the responses are tightly clustered around the mean. This indicates a high level of agreement among students on this aspect, which implies that the teacher effectively communicated and articulated the training objectives right from the beginning.

Q.2- Conferencing with My Teacher Gave Me the Opportunity to Ask for Clarification If the Written Feedback Is Not Clear.

Table 5.2.2

Students' Opportunity to Ask for Clarification

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	06
E	09
M	4.6
SD	1.3

The mean score of approximately 4.6 indicates a strong agreement among students that conferencing with their teacher provides them with the opportunity to seek clarification if the written feedback is not clear. The relatively low SD of around 1.3 suggests that the responses are clustered around the mean, indicating a high level of consensus among students on the effectiveness of conferencing for addressing any uncertainties arising from written feedback. This positive feedback reflects the perceived benefits of conferencing as a means of improving understanding and communication between students and teachers regarding feedback (Q.29 in Teachers' Questionnaire).

Q.3- Conferencing with the Teacher Helped to Improve Content, Organisation of Ideas and Sentence Structure.

Table 5.2.3

Areas of Focus in Writing Conferences

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	03
E	12
M	4.53
SD	1.18

The mean score of 4.53 shows a strong agreement among students that conferencing with their teacher has significantly contributed to improving content, organisation of ideas, and sentence structure in their writing. The relatively low SD of around 1.18 suggests that the responses are closely clustered around the mean, also indicating a high level of consensus among students regarding the positive impact of conferencing on these aspects of writing. A similar attitude was echoed by teachers (Q25 in Teachers' Questionnaire) regarding the effectiveness of conferencing in enhancing content and organisation of ideas.

Q.4- Errors of Mechanics and Grammar Were Treated in the Written Feedback.

Table 5.2.4

Areas of Focus in Written Feedback

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	01
D	05
E	09
M	4.33
SD	1.04

The mean score of 4.33 indicates a strong agreement among teachers that errors of mechanics and grammar were effectively addressed in the written feedback they provided. The SD of around 1.04 means that while there is agreement, there is also some variability in responses among students. The neutral response may give the impression that there is some uncertainty in the perspective of one student.

Both students and teachers generally agree that the written feedback, whether received or provided, effectively addresses errors related to mechanics and grammar. However, teachers express a stronger agreement on this issue (Q.25 in Teachers' Questionnaire). On the other hand, while most students agree, a small percentage is neutral, indicating some variability in their perception of the effectiveness of the feedback in this regard.

Q.5- My Teachers' Face-to-Face Feedback Motivated Me to Read More and More.

Table 5.2.5

Motivation of Face-to-Face Feedback

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	01
E	14
M	4.93
SD	1.25

Table 5.2.5 shows that the mean score is 4.93. This indicates that the vast majority of students strongly agree that face-to-face feedback from their teacher significantly motivated them to write more. The SD of around 1.25 suggests that while there is a strong agreement, there is still a small amount of variability in responses among students. Overall, this feedback strongly supports the effectiveness of writing conferences in fostering a motivation to write among these students.

Q.6- I Think the Best Way to Learn to write in English Is that Your Teacher Confers with You Once Your Writing Is Finished.

Table 5.2.6

Conferencing is the Best Way to Know to Write

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	07
E	08
M	4.47
SD	1.12

The mean score of 4.47 suggests that the majority of students either agree or strongly agree that conferring with their teacher after completing a writing piece is the best way to learn to write in English. The SD of around 1.12 indicates that there is some variability in responses among students. Consequently, we deduce that learners highly valued the writing conferences provided by their teacher once they finished writing. They appreciated having their paragraphs corrected and readily accepted the teacher's comments.

Q.7- I Now Can Write a Paragraph Correctly with

Fewer Errors Table 5.2.7

Ability to write with fewer errors

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	02
D	08
E	05
M	4.07
SD	0.98

Table 5.2.7 shows that the mean score of 4.07 indicates that the majority of students either agree or strongly agree that they have improved in writing paragraphs with fewer errors. The SD of around 0.98 suggests that while there is a consensus, there is still some variability in responses among students. Generally, this report strongly supports the notion that students believe they have made progress in writing proficiency, particularly in reducing mistakes when writing paragraphs.

Q.8- I Now Can Well Organize My Ideas in a Paragraph.

Table 5.2.8

Ability to Organize Ideas in a Paragraph

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	01
D	10
E	04
M	4.27
SD	1.05

With a mean score of 4.27, it is evident that a significant proportion of students either agree or strongly agrees that they can proficiently organize their ideas in a paragraph. The SD of 1.05 indicates that, while there is a consensus, there is still some variability in responses among students. In summary, this response robustly affirms the idea that students perceive improvement in their ability to organize ideas within a paragraph. As stated by Parks (1996), a well-organized paragraph includes a clear topic sentence, the elimination of irrelevant ideas, the use of an outline, and the incorporation of relevant ideas.

Q.9- I Now Can Write a Paragraph Formed of Well-Structured Sentences.

Table 5.2.9

Ability to Write a Paragraph with Well-Structured Sentences

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	02
D	10
E	03
M	4.07
SD	0.98

The average score of about 4.07 shows that most students either agree or strongly agree that they are now proficient in composing paragraphs with well-structured sentences. An SD of 0.98 implies that while there is a consensus, there are varying levels of agreement or emphasis among students. Collectively, this input strongly affirms the notion that students perceive an enhancement in their ability to craft paragraphs with well-structured sentences.

Q.10- I Now Can Write a Paragraph Caring about Word Choice.

Table 5.2.10

Ability to Write a Paragraph Caring about Word Choice

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	07
E	08
M	4.47
SD	0.99

The mean score of 4.47 reveals that a significant majority of students either agree or strongly agree that they pay close attention to word choice when composing a paragraph. Despite a prevailing consensus, the SD of approximately 0.99 suggests there is still some variation in responses among students. This response strongly supports the belief that students perceive an enhancement in their ability to consider word choice when writing paragraphs because in English, using the wrong words can hinder the delivery of the intended message, as words often have multiple meanings depending on the context (Bram, 1995).

Q.11- I Now Can Write a Correctly Formatted Paragraph.

Table 5.2.11

Ability to Write a Correctly Formatted Paragraph

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	11
E	04
M	04.47
SD	0.99

With an average score of approximately 4.47, it is evident that the majority of students either agree or strongly agree on their ability to write a correctly formatted paragraph. The SD of around 0.99 suggests that, while there is a general agreement, there remains some variability in responses among students. In essence, this reaction robustly supports the idea that students perceive a heightened proficiency in formatting paragraphs correctly, recognizing the significance of well-structured paragraphs as a key aspect of writing professionalism (Boardman et al. 2008).

Q.12- How Was the Length of Each Writing Conference (from 5 to 10 minutes)

- a. Needs to be longer**
- b. Needs to be shorter**
- c. Was a good length**

Figure 5.2.1

Length of Writing Conferences

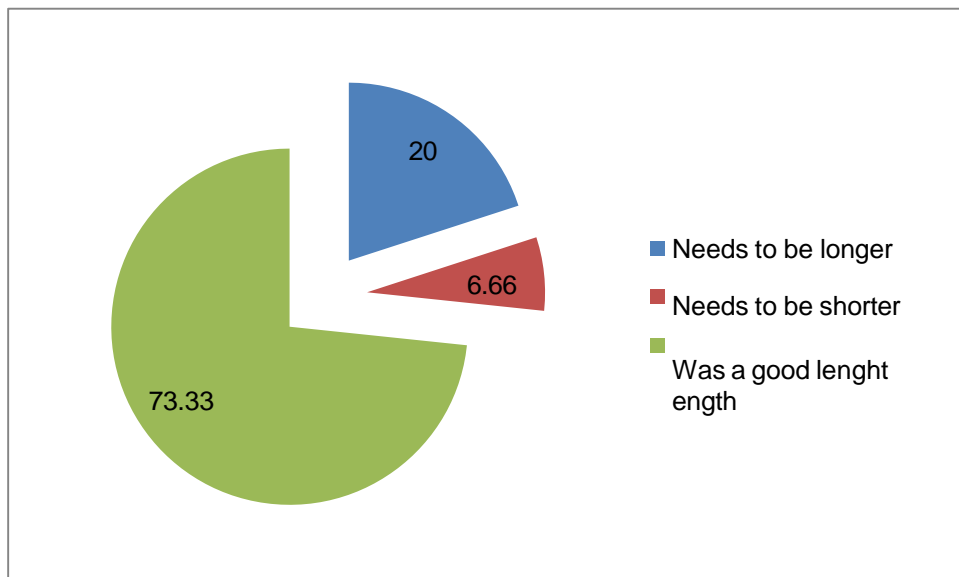


Figure 5.2.1 indicates that a majority of students (73.33%) find the length of each conference to be appropriate. However, a small portion of students (20%) feel that the conferences could be longer, while an even smaller portion (6.66%) believes they should be shorter. This suggests that the majority of students are generally satisfied with the duration of the conferences.

Q13. How Was the Length of the Entire Training (5 weeks)

- a. Needs to be longer
- b. Needs to be shorter
- c. Was a good length

Figure 5.2.2

Length of Entire Training

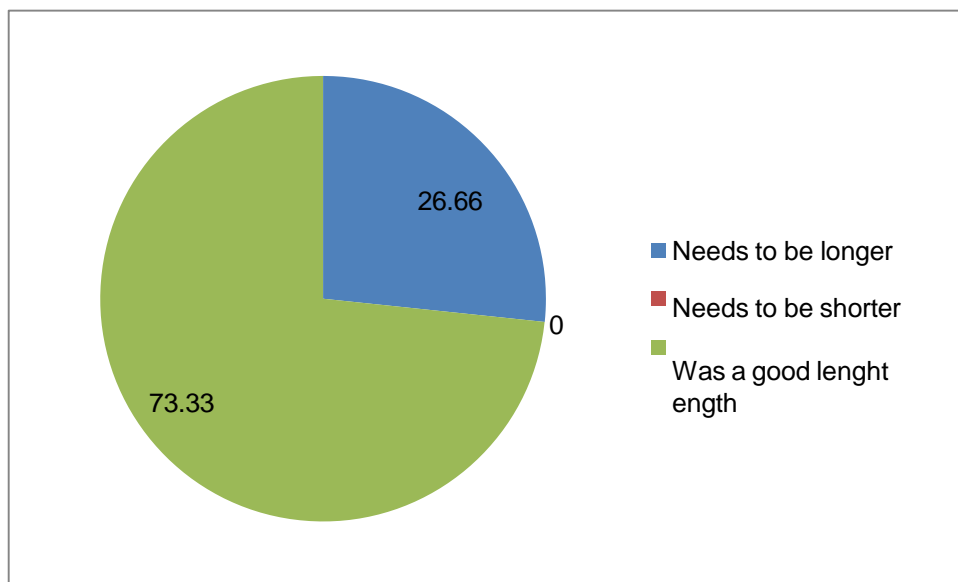


Figure 5.2.2 data indicates that the majority of students (73.33%) find the length of the entire training (5 weeks) to be appropriate. None of the students feel that the training needs to be shorter, while a significant portion (26.66%) believes it could be longer. This attitude suggests that the majority of students are generally satisfied with the duration of the training programme.

Q.14- The Topics Covered During the Five Weeks Were Motivating and Interesting.

Please Make Any Comments by Stating Clearly Why You Give the above Rating

Table 5.2.12

Attitudes towards the Topics Covered

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	01
D	04
E	10
M	04.67
SD	01.22

The mean score of approximately 4.67 indicates that the majority of students find the topics covered during the five weeks to be highly motivating and interesting. The SD, about 1.22, shows that although many students agree, there is still some variation in responses, suggesting different levels of enthusiasm or emphasis. Overall, this response strongly affirms the notion that students perceive the topics as engaging and stimulating.

This finding aligns with the recommendation put forth by Latif (2009), who emphasised the importance of selecting topics that are not overly challenging. When topics are too difficult, students may become preoccupied with grappling with the question itself rather than being able to express effectively their opinions and thoughts. By incorporating topics that were relatable and accessible to the participants, the training created an environment conducive to meaningful and authentic engagement.

Q.15 I Had Good Interaction with the Teacher.

Please Make Any Comments by Stating Clearly Why You Gave the above Rating

Table 5.2.13

Attitudes towards Good Interactions with the Teacher

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	08
E	07
M	4.73
SD	1.17

The average score, about 4.73, hints that most students had a notably positive interaction with the teacher. An SD of approximately 1.17 shows a general agreement, but there's still some diversity in responses, pointing to varying views on the quality of interaction. In essence, this feedback strongly backs the idea that students generally had a favourable experience interacting with the teacher during the training.

When asked to provide further justification for their ratings, the majority expressed satisfaction and pleasure with the conferences. Students shared various reasons for their positive experience during the conferences:

- They felt comfortable expressing themselves, as their teachers were attentive listeners.
- Teachers provided feedback in a kind and acceptable manner, creating a supportive environment.

- Students felt confident discussing their mistakes with their teachers, who motivated them to improve.
- Engaging in conversations about their errors helped teachers better understand the students, while also assisting students in overcoming their mistakes.
- Students viewed the conferences as valuable advice rather than mere feedback.
- Teachers' guidance and direction were appreciated, as they helped students avoid making mistakes.
- Students praised their teachers for being understanding and caring, emphasising how this positively affected their learning.
- Teachers' corrections were seen as clear and objective, enabling students to understand and rectify their mistakes effectively.
- Teachers actively involved students in the process of identifying and correcting their errors, fostering self-correction skills.

To conclude, the feedback highlighted the significance of dialogue and interaction between teachers and students during writing conferences. The positive experiences reported by the students aligned with the notion that both parties learn and benefit from these interactions. The findings resonate with the research done by Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006), which emphasised the importance of dialogue in fruitful teacher-student conferences.

Q.16- I Think the Atmosphere Was Relaxing.

Please Make Any Comments by Stating Clearly Why You Give the above Rating

Table 5.2.14

The Relaxing Atmosphere

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	01
D	08
E	06
M	4.67
SD	1.22

The mean score of 4.67 indicates that the majority of students found the atmosphere during the training to be relaxing. The SD of around 1.22 suggests that while there is a strong agreement, there is still some variability in responses, indicating differing perceptions of the atmosphere's relaxing nature. In short, this opinion strongly supports the notion that students perceived the atmosphere as calm and conducive to learning.

When asked about why conferencing provides an informal and friendly atmosphere, with the exception of two participants who did not provide any answer, the others answered as follows:

- They mentioned that the teacher was kind and focused on correcting their mistakes while helping them improve their writing.
- Students expressed their comfort in asking the teacher to correct their mistakes and enhance their paragraphs.

- They appreciated the fact that during conferencing, their classmates did not disturb them.
- Students highlighted the benefit of having the teacher present in front of them, providing instructions and guidance.
- They described the conferencing experience as relaxing and comfortable.
- Sharing their paragraphs with the teacher was mentioned as a positive aspect of conferencing.
- Students praised their teacher for being understanding and allowing them to discuss the challenges they faced in writing. They acknowledged the teacher's continuous support.
- The ease of asking questions and receiving advice from the teacher was appreciated.
- The teacher's ability to create a relaxed atmosphere was attributed to her experience in the field, making it easier for students to ask writing-related questions.
- The comfort of correcting mistakes in class was mentioned as a contributing factor to the positive atmosphere during conferencing.
- Students felt comfortable conversing with their teacher and paid close attention to the feedback and guidance provided.

Briefly, the students' responses highlight the positive impact of conferencing on creating an informal and friendly environment, characterised by supportive interactions between the students and their teacher.

Q.17- When My Teacher Gave Me His Opinion in Writing, I Take into Account All his Comments.

If You Have Scored a, b or c , Please Comment Why You Have Given This Rating

Table 5.2.15

Incorporation of Teacher's Written Opinion and Comments into Consideration

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	05
E	10
M	4.67
SD	1.22

Table 5.2.1.5 shows that the mean score is 4.67, indicating that the majority of students highly value and take into account all their teacher's comments when provided in writing. The SD of 1.22 suggests that while there is a strong consensus, there is still some variability in responses among students. This strongly supports the notion that students find their teachers' written comments to be valuable and impactful.

Q.18- The Teacher Had Put Comments on Our Paragraphs before Holding Conferences with Us.

Table 5.2.16

The Teacher's Comments on Paragraphs before Conferences

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	09
E	06
M	4.33
SD	1.01

With an average score of about 4.33, it appears that a majority of students agree that their teacher had given feedback on their paragraphs before hosting conferences. The SD, approximately 1.01, indicates a general agreement, yet some variability in responses suggests differing opinions among students. In essence, this response strongly endorses the practice of providing written comments before conferences, highlighting its perceived value by students.

Q19. The Teacher's Written Comments Had in Effect Set the Agenda of the Conference.

Table 5.2.17

The Effect of the Teacher's Written Comments on the Conference Agenda

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	08
E	07
M	4.73
SD	1.17

Table 5.2.1.7 indicates that the mean score is of approximately 4.73. It suggests that the majority of students strongly agree that the teacher's written comments effectively set the agenda of the conference. The SD of around 1.17 indicates that while there is a strong consensus, there is still some variability in responses. In fact, this feedback strongly supports the perception that written comments play a significant role in shaping the discussions during conference.

Q20. This Conferencing Training Will Be of a Value to Me as a Future Teacher. Please Make Any Comments by Stating Clearly Why You Give the above Rating

Table 5.2.18

The Value of this Conferencing Training for the Student as a Future Teacher

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	04
E	11
M	4.87
SD	1.26

The mean score of approximately 4.87 indicates that the majority of students strongly agree that the conferencing training will be valuable to them as future teachers. The SD of around 1.26 suggests that while there is a strong agreement, there is still some variability in responses. In general, this response strongly supports the perception that the conferencing training is highly beneficial for students in their prospective teaching career.

When asked about why conferencing training will be of a value to them as a future teacher, they emphasised that first-year students, being beginners, need to grasp the basics of good writing and learn from their mistakes to improve their writing skills.

Q21. I Fully Recommend the Teacher Student Conferencing for First-Year Students.

Table 5.2.19

Recommendation of Teacher-Student Conferencing for first-Year Students

<i>Options</i>	<i>N</i>
A	00
B	00
C	00
D	04
E	11
M	4.87
SD	1.26

With an average score of about 4.87, signifying strong agreement, the majority of students expressed a robust endorsement for teacher-student conferencing for first-year students. The SD, approximately 1.26, reveals some variability in responses. In essence, this input strongly reinforces the notion that teacher-student conferencing is highly recommended for first-year students, reflecting the perspectives of the student participants.

Students recognized that by using conferencing techniques in their own teaching, they would be able to guide their pupils towards improving their writing abilities. The informants firmly believed that conferencing is highly beneficial and useful in the teaching of writing. They expressed their intention to incorporate writing conferences when instructing writing to their future students, aiming to facilitate their students' progress and development in writing.

Q22. What Did You Like Most about Writing Conferences?

The participants of the writing conferences expressed various aspects they liked most about conferencing. These included:

- **Motivation:** The participants appreciated the motivational aspect of conferencing that encouraged them to write more and improve their writing skills.
- **Knowing more about their mistakes:** Participants found it valuable to receive feedback and insights into their mistakes. Conferencing provided an opportunity for them to gain a deeper understanding of their errors and learn how to fix them.
- **Interaction with the teacher:** The interactive nature of conferencing was highly appreciated by the participants. They enjoyed the opportunity to engage in discussions with their teacher, ask questions, and seek clarification on their writing.
- **Objectives and results:** Participants acknowledged the clear objectives and positive outcomes. They found it satisfying to see the progress they made in their writing as a result of the feedback and guidance received during the conferences.
- **Comfortable discussions about mistakes:** Participants felt comfortable discussing their mistakes during conferencing. The supportive atmosphere created by their teacher allowed them work towards improvement without feeling afraid.
- **Clarification of errors:** Conferencing provided the participants with a better understanding of where they went wrong and how to correct those mistakes in their writing.
- **Novelty:** Participants appreciated the novelty of conferencing. As a new method of writing feedback, it offered an alternative to traditional methods.

- **Praise and comments from the teacher:** The participants valued the praise and comments received from their teacher during conferencing. Positive feedback and recognition of their efforts served as a source of motivation to continue working on their writing skills.

Q23. What Did You Dislike Most about Writing Conferences?

Most participants expressed that they had no specific dislikes or negative aspects about conferencing. However, a few participants mentioned certain concerns:

- Two participants mentioned that they disliked finding the same mistakes and receiving the same remarks repeatedly. This suggests a desire for more variety or targeted feedback to address different aspects of their writing.
- One participant expressed dissatisfaction with waiting for their turn during conferencing. This may indicate a preference for a more efficient or structured conferencing process to minimise waiting time.
- Three participants expressed a need for more time to discuss and discover additional mistakes. This suggests a desire for extended conferencing sessions or more opportunities to explore and address a wider range of writing errors.

Q24. Please Provide Any Additional Feedback about Writing Conferences?

Participants provided additional feedback about their experience with writing conferences. Here is a summary of their feedback:

- Two participants expressed the importance of including all group members in conferencing sessions to motivate and engage everyone in the process.

- One participant initially had doubts about the effectiveness of conferencing but found it to be beneficial and confidence-boosting in improving their writing skills. They expressed a desire for more teachers to incorporate conferencing as a regular part of their teaching methods.
- One participant stated that they found conferencing to be perfect and did not have any additional feedback to provide.
- One participant appreciated how conferencing helped them overcome writing difficulties and emphasised the importance of being able to contact the teacher and seek clarification when confused.
- One participant considered the conferencing experience to be valuable and expressed a desire to use it as a future teacher to create a friendly and effective atmosphere with their own students.
- One participant suggested that conferencing sessions should be more frequent and that more time should be allocated to each conference, indicating a desire for more extensive and regular interaction.
- One participant expressed gratitude towards their teacher and expressed a desire to continue working with them in the future.
- One participant highlighted that conferencing helped them identify their weaknesses, emphasising its value in self-improvement.
- One participant strongly believed that conferencing is vital and should be implemented for all students throughout their four to five years of education.

These additional responses reflect the positive impact of conferencing on participants' motivation, confidence, writing improvement, and the importance of incorporating

conferencing in education. Participants expressed a desire for inclusivity, continued use, and optimisation of the conferencing process to enhance their learning experiences.

5.2. 2. Summary of Students' Questionnaire Results

The implementation of writing conferences in the context of writing instruction has yielded significant insights into its effectiveness, revealing high satisfaction among students regarding the writing conferences. This study sought to understand the impact of writing conferences on students' writing abilities, focusing on various aspects such as clarity of objectives, improvement in writing skills, and overall student satisfaction. The following are the key findings derived from the participants' responses and feedback.

One of the most striking findings was the strong consensus among students regarding the clarity of writing conferences' objectives, with an overwhelming majority expressing agreement (mean score of 4.47). This indicates effective communication and articulation of training goals by the teacher. Additionally, participants highly valued writing conferences as an avenue for seeking clarification on unclear written feedback, as indicated by the high mean score of 4.6. This underscores the perceived benefits of conferencing in improving understanding and communication between students and teachers (Q1 and Q2).

Another important finding in this research is that writing conferences significantly contributed to the improvement of various elements in writing, such as content, organisation, and sentence structure, as reflected by the high mean score of 4.53. On the other hand, the assessment of errors related to mechanics and grammar is through written feedback, which showed a similarly high level of agreement, and both students and teachers acknowledged the effectiveness in addressing these areas.

These findings also highlighted the substantial positive effects of face-to-face feedback on student motivation, with an impressive mean score of 4.93 (Q5). Moreover, participants

reported significant enhancements in their writing skills across various dimensions. They showed improved proficiency in organizing ideas within paragraphs (mean score of 4.27) and constructing well-structured sentences (mean score of 4.07), signifying a strong consensus among students. Additionally, participants displayed a heightened awareness of word choice and paragraph formatting, with both aspects receiving mean scores of 4.47, underscoring their recognition of these critical components (Q10 and Q11).

Furthermore, the majority of students were content with both the length of individual conferences and the overall duration of the training program (Q12 and Q13). This feedback indicates that the current structure meets the students' needs and expectations. While a small percentage expressed a desire for longer conferences, the overwhelming consensus suggests a high level of satisfaction with the existing framework.

The students highly valued the conferencing training, giving it a remarkable mean score of 4.87. They firmly believe that the skills acquired through writing conferences will be invaluable in guiding their future students towards improved writing abilities (Q20). Additionally, the students overwhelmingly recommended writing conferences for first-year students, indicating a high degree of confidence in its effectiveness as a teaching approach (Q21). This strong support emphasises the students' belief in the positive influence that teacher-student conferencing can have on the learning experience of new students.

Finally, participants gave helpful suggestions to make conferencing better (Q24). They said it's important to include different perspectives and voices. They also mentioned that keeping conferencing going regularly is crucial for helping students improve their writing. Additionally, they had ideas to improve the process even more for a better learning experience. These suggestions will be really useful in making writing instruction even better.

We conclude that the student questionnaire results indicate high satisfaction with the writing conferences, answering our last research question, which aims to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of students towards writing conferences. Participants reported significant improvements in paragraph content, organisation, and sentence structure due to writing conferences. They found the face-to-face feedback motivating and believed it to be the best approach for learning English writing. The writing conferences also enhanced their ability to use appropriate words, create well-organized paragraphs, and construct coherent sentences. Participants recommended the implementation of writing conferences for all first-year students and expressed their intention to utilise this technique as future teachers. They emphasised the importance of a friendly atmosphere and suggested expanding the writing conferences across different modules.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the quasi-experimental design employed in this study, along with the statistical analyses, strongly supports the positive impact of writing conferences on students' content paragraph writing. The significant improvements observed in the EG post-test scores, coupled with their notable superiority over the CG, underscore the effectiveness of incorporating writing conferences into the instructional approach. Furthermore, the post-training questionnaire results provide valuable insights into the attitudes and perceptions of students towards writing conferences. Students expressed satisfaction, not only with the improvements in their writing skills but also with the motivational and engaging aspects of face-to-face feedback. Their enthusiastic recommendations for broader implementation and future utilisation as teachers highlight the potential of writing conferences as a valuable tool in fostering language proficiency.

Chapter Six

Recommendations and Pedagogical Implications

Chapter Six: Recommendations and Pedagogical Implications.

Introduction

The present chapter delves into the pedagogical implications derived from our research study on writing conferences. Employing a quasi-experimental design and analysing questionnaires, our study aimed to offer valuable guidance for teachers, students, and syllabus designers, with the inclusive goal of enriching the teaching and learning of writing. The results underscore the importance of employing effective instructional feedback techniques and integrating writing conferences into writing pedagogy. Teachers, armed with the ability to provide timely and meaningful feedback, can play a pivotal role in guiding students towards enhancing their writing proficiency. This is achieved through active participation in writing conferences sessions, where students refine their skills in content development, organisation of ideas, and sentence structure. Administrators are encouraged to use this information to establish supportive structures and allocate resources strategically. However, it is imperative to acknowledge the study's limitations and advocate for further research to explore the effectiveness of writing conferences in diverse educational settings, as well as to investigate long-term impacts. By embracing and implementing the suggested guidelines, educational participants can collaboratively cultivate an environment conducive to effective writing instruction, fostering student growth, and thereby advancing writing pedagogy while enhancing students' writing abilities.

6-1. Teaching Writing

Within the domain of effective writing instruction, teachers emerge as crucial designers in shaping students' writing proficiency and sustaining their engagement. This section explores fundamental facets of teaching writing, directing attention towards the careful selection of

compelling topics, the adept execution of the writing process, and the nurturing of a culture of self-assessment.

6.1.1. Selecting Interesting Topics

To enhance students' engagement and writing proficiency, it is important for teachers to carefully select interesting topics. A good topic should be current, engaging, and relatable to students' lives. When providing samples for students to read before writing their own texts or assigning them to write paragraphs on specific topics, teachers should ensure that the chosen topics align with students' interests and involve real-life subjects. This approach allows students to have a wealth of background information and ample ideas to draw from when completing their writing tasks. Examples of such interesting topics include friendship, school and university, social media, parents, pollution, home, experience, and family. The choice of topic significantly impacts students' ability to write compelling and engaging paragraphs, as noted by Keech (1984), who found that certain topics elicit better writing outcomes than others.

Many scholars agreed on the importance of choosing interesting topics in writing. Flower and Hayes (1981) underscored the pivotal role of topics in cultivating idea generation during the writing process, asserting that a well-chosen subject stimulates cognitive processes and creativity. Building on this, Graves (1983) emphasised the crucial link between topic choice and motivation, advocating that students' autonomy in selecting engaging subjects increases intrinsic motivation, therefore fostering enthusiastic and dedicated engagement with writing tasks. Similarly, Elbow (1998) advocated that emotionally resonant topics capture interest and foster a deeper personal investment, resulting in more authentic and compelling writing.

6-1-2. Implementing the Writing Process

In this approach, the role of the teacher shifts from simply assigning topics and correcting final products to actively intervening throughout the writing process. Students should be guided to follow the writing process when composing any paper. They begin with pre-writing activities, such as brainstorming, listing, drawing, free-writing, and questioning, to generate ideas related to the topic. During this stage, whole-class participation, facilitated by the teacher, can help generate a wide range of ideas. The next step involves outlining, where students organize the selected ideas, ensuring they align with the topic sentence and discarding irrelevant information. Following the outline, students start drafting their paragraphs without focusing on grammar rules or sentence structure. After completing the draft, they revise their work using a self-assessment checklist that addresses both the organisation of ideas and mechanics. Students then rewrite their paragraphs, incorporating the revisions, and submit their papers to the teacher for further corrections.

Regarding the necessity of implementing a writing process, Graham (2018), in advocating for a process-oriented approach to writing, aligned with contemporary researchers in the field. Applebee (2012) underscored the importance of nurturing a writing process that not only augments textual results but also fosters the development of students' critical thinking skills. Furthermore, research conducted by Van den Bergh et al. (2016) illuminated the pivotal role of collaborative writing processes, indicating that peer interaction during the drafting and revision stages exerts a positive influence on enhanced writing outcomes. Further supporting this perspective, Flower's et al. recent work (2019) emphasised the constant nature of writing, underlining the importance of constant refinement. In harmony, these scholars validate Graham's viewpoint and underscore our ongoing study, shedding light on the significance of a dynamic, process-oriented methodology in the realm of writing instruction.

6-1-3. Encouraging Self-Assessment

Teachers should foster a culture of self-assessment in the writing process. Before submitting their papers to the teacher, students should revise their work using a checklist provided by the teacher. Self-assessment holds more significant learning potential than peer assessment, as it allows students to critically examine and evaluate their own writing. Unlike peer assessment, where feedback is provided by classmates with similar cognitive skill development, self-assessment gives students the opportunity to take ownership of their writing.

Encouraging students to engage in self-evaluation before submitting their papers is underscored by the insights of various scholars. Sadler & Good (2006) suggested that self-assessment fosters student engagement and promotes learning. Additionally, Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) asserted that framing self-assessment as a dialogic process enhances understanding and fosters a collaborative environment for improvement. In the same vein, Topping (2009) highlighted the intrinsic motivational aspects of self-assessment, predicting that when students take an active role in evaluating their writing, it contributes to increased engagement and a sense of ownership over their learning. In short, it has been affirmed by many scholars that self-assessment plays a crucial role in promoting student engagement, fostering learning, and nurturing a sense of autonomy in the writing process.

6-2. Providing Adequate Feedback

Effective feedback serves as a cornerstone in the instructional process of writing, assuming a pivotal role in directing students towards writing proficiency. The provision of constructive feedback involves a refined exploration of various facets, including the temporal allocation for feedback, the strategic approach to corrective written feedback, the delicate equilibrium between negative and positive feedback, and the seamless integration of writing conferences into the broader feedback mechanism. Each of these dimensions contributes to a comprehensive

understanding of the feedback process, encouraging an environment where students can refine and enhance their writing skills.

6-2-1. Time for Feedback

After students submit their papers, the teacher assumes a crucial role in conscientiously correcting their drafts. This undertaking is a time-consuming process that involves a careful examination of each paper, with the aim of providing precise and constructive feedback to every student. The evaluation of the drafts addresses form nuances and offers insights into content demand, which is an investment of significant time and attention.

Moreover, a strategic approach is employed by preferring to set aside the corrected drafts for a designated period before returning them to the students. This intentional delay, as recommended by Williams (2004), serves a twofold purpose. Firstly, it allows the teacher to approach the corrected drafts with a fresh perspective, ensuring a comprehensive and insightful review. Secondly, this delay in returning the corrected drafts benefits the students, which enables students to engage with their work as if encountering it for the first time. This prospect empowers students to identify areas for improvement more effectively and encourages towards refining their skills.

6-2-2. Providing Corrective Written Feedback

Written feedback is most impactful when it adheres to the principles of conciseness, standardisation, and a focused emphasis on grammar and mechanics. The concise nature of feedback ensures clarity and avoids overwhelming students with an excessive amount of information. By refining feedback to its essential points, teachers provide students with clear and precise insights that can be readily understood and applied. Standardisation in written feedback entails adopting a consistent and uniform approach across students' work, enabling students to comprehend and internalise correction patterns. A standardised format contributes

to the creation of a structured learning environment, enhancing the students' ability to recognize and address recurring errors systematically. Teachers play a key role in utilising symbols to indicate the type and location of errors, facilitating a more efficient feedback delivery system. Providing students with a comprehensive list of correction symbols, as referenced in Chapter Two (p. 68), which serves as a valuable tool for students to interpret and act upon the feedback provided. Beyond promoting conciseness and maintaining standardised formats in written feedback, emphasising grammar and mechanics serves to prioritise fundamental aspects of writing. It is essential to recognize the significance of offering comprehensive written feedback that addresses content, organisation of ideas, sentence structure, and word choice in the evaluation process. By following the principles of clarity, standardisation, and inclusiveness, teachers contribute considerably to the refinement of students' writing capabilities.

6-2-3. Negative and Positive Feedback

When providing both Negative and Positive Feedback, maintaining a balanced approach is crucial for nurturing students' growth in writing proficiency. Tailoring feedback to individual student needs involves understanding that different students respond differently to feedback styles. Gee's (1972) research highlighted that some students thrive on positive reinforcement, finding motivation and increased output in their writing when provided with praise. Recognizing and acknowledging well-executed elements, such as a "good paragraph," "good organisation," "well-developed," "well-illustrated," or simply encouraging students to "carry on," contributes to a positive and supportive learning environment.

However, it is essential to strike a delicate balance. An excessive focus on positive comments, while uplifting, may inadvertently lead to less attentiveness to the intricacies of the writing process. If students receive only affirmations without constructive criticism, they might miss opportunities for growth and refinement in their writing skills. Conversely, an

overemphasis on negative criticism can have discouraging effects on students. Excessive negativity may consume students' confidence and enthusiasm for the writing process. Hence, it is essential to provide constructive criticism that guides students towards improvement without demotivating them.

The importance of offering both praise and constructive criticism is underscored by Wen's (2013) findings, which emphasise that a combination of negative and positive feedback accelerates progress in writing skills. This balanced approach not only promotes self-confidence but also encourages a continuous learning process. In essence, the concept of negative and positive feedback underscores the importance of achieving a careful balance in the way feedback is delivered, suggesting that feedback should not be overly critical or overwhelmingly positive but should instead strike a nuanced and well-considered middle ground.

6-2-4. Writing Conferences

Relying solely on written feedback is not sufficient to effectively improve the teaching and learning of writing. Students often struggle to fully understand or interpret written feedback, which can be ambiguous. To enhance the feedback process, teachers should supplement written feedback with writing conferences, where they engage in private conversations with students to discuss the errors they made in their compositions. When conducting writing conferences, the following aspects should be considered:

- **Initiating the Conference:** Following Murray's approach (1979), teachers should begin writing conferences by asking questions such as: What did you learn from this piece of writing? What do you intend to do in the next draft? What surprised you in the draft? Where is the piece of writing taking you? What do you like best in the piece of writing? What questions do you have for me?

- **Student-Centred Conferences:** Writing conferences should revolve around the student's needs. Teachers should empower students by allowing them to set the agenda and decide what they want to discuss during the conference. This approach provides students with opportunities, support, and encouragement to practise writing, even if they have not yet mastered all the necessary skills (Barkaoui, 2007).
- **Role exchange between teachers and students:** During conferences, both teachers and students should have equal opportunities to talk, ask questions, describe, clarify, and summarise. This reciprocal interaction promotes effective communication and active engagement (Anderson, 2000; Calkins, 1986; Lain, 2007).
- **Complementing written feedback:** Writing conferences should complement written feedback. They should be purposeful, well-structured, and organized, lasting between five to ten minutes, depending on the learner's proficiency level and the types of errors discussed in the conference.
- **Focusing on content and organisation:** In writing conferences, teachers should prioritise discussions on content, organisation of ideas, sentence structure, and word choice. Since grammar errors have already been addressed in the written feedback, more emphasis should be placed on the overall meaning rather than purely mechanical aspects. This aligns with Kaufman's research (1998), which showed that students benefited more from conferences that focused primarily on content. Conversely, conferences that excessively focused on mechanics and grammatical concerns were less effective (Oliver, 2001).
- **Differentiated approach for students of varying skill levels:** Teachers should adapt their approach based on the skill level of the students. With less skilled students, teachers may rely more on teaching the rules of writing, particularly sentence structure

and grammar. Consequently, the length of the writing conference maybe longer. For skilled students, the focus should shift towards content and word choice, resulting in shorter conferences that emphasise higher-level writing skills.

By implementing these guidelines, teachers can create meaningful and productive writing conferences that facilitate student growth and improvement in writing.

6.2.5. Providing a Satisfactory Atmosphere

Creating a friendly and relaxed atmosphere is crucial for fostering an environment where meaningful dialogue and constructive interactions can take place. In this context, several key considerations contribute to cultivating a positive and conducive atmosphere.

First, the teacher plays an important role in initiating a positive interaction with the student. This involves encouraging communication about the student's writing in a supportive manner. The teacher should create an environment where learners feel at ease to freely express their thoughts, ask questions, seek clarifications, and articulate their agreement or disagreement with the teacher's perspectives. Supporting this notion, Stenfors et al. (2019) found that classrooms where teachers actively initiated positive interactions with students saw an increase in student engagement and willingness to communicate about their writing.

Second, learners should perceive the writing conference as a safe space for open communication where they feel comfortable sharing their ideas, opinions, and concerns related to their writing. The teacher should listen, acknowledge student input, and create a non-judgemental space that promotes discussions about the writing process. Substantiating this idea, Waltz et al. (2020) demonstrated that students are more likely to share their ideas and concerns in writing conferences when they perceive the learning environment as a safe space.

Third, the teacher should convey that student involvement and motivation during the conference are highly valued. This acknowledgment does not imply an obligation on the teacher's part to accept every suggestion from the learners. Instead, it signifies recognition of the importance of students' perspectives, by respecting and valuing their input. Myhill et al. (2018) highlighted that valuing student involvement during conferences can impact their overall engagement in the writing process.

Finally, the writing conference should be framed as a collaborative learning experience where both the teacher and the student actively contribute to the improvement of the writing. Ismail and Maasum (2009) revealed that framing writing conferences as collaborative learning experience leads to improved writing outcomes. They asserted that when both teachers and students actively contribute to the discussion, there is a more significant impact on writing improvement compared to a more directive approach.

In summary, the creation of a satisfactory atmosphere in writing conferences is promoted by the principles of positive interaction, open communication, valuing student perspectives, and fostering collaborative learning. By adhering to these considerations, teachers can establish supportive writing conferences, enhancing the effectiveness of the learning experience for both the teacher and the student.

6.2.6. Writing Conferences and Student Self-Correction

During conferences with students, teachers can utilise various techniques to provide constructive feedback and encourage students to correct their own work. It is important to emphasise that the teacher's role is not to meticulously correct every word and rewrite the paper until it becomes their own, but rather to guide and support the student in improving their writing (Murray, 1979). The following are the techniques which can effectively guide students to self-correct their writing:

- **Metalinguistic feedback**

Metalinguistic feedback involves providing comments and asking questions related to the students' writing. The teacher reminds the student of the rule or concept, allowing the student to correct themselves. For example,

Teacher: "Remember to use the third person singular-s."

Student: "She speaks two languages."

- **Elicitation**

Elicitation refers to the technique where the teacher prompts the student to provide the correct form. The teacher begins a sentence and pauses, allowing the student to continue with the correct utterance. Elicitation helps create a learner-centred classroom and promotes more effective learning (Darn, 2008). Here's an example from a student-teacher conference:

Student: "When I went to Australia, I met a girl who name is Amy."

Teacher: "I met a girl..."

Student: "...whose name is Amy."

- **Repetition**

Repetition involves the teacher reading the student's text aloud, pausing at the error and repeating it. This signals to the student that revision is needed. For instance,

Student: "I wake up early this morning." Teacher: "You WAKE up early this morning?"

Student: "I woke up early this morning."

- **Paralinguistic Signals**

During conferences, the teacher may ask the student to read their text, and when an error is identified, the teacher can use facial expressions or gestures to indicate that it is incorrect. For example,

Student: “Yesterday, I go to the library.” Teacher: Uses gestures to indicate past tense.

- **Clarification Requests**

Another technique used in the interaction is when the teacher directly asks for clarification. If a sentence or comment is unclear, the teacher may ask the student to explain. Likewise, if the student does not understand the written feedback provided by the teacher, they can request clarification. This fosters a dialogue between the teacher and student, which is the primary purpose of writing conferences.

By employing these techniques, teachers can effectively guide students to self-correct their writing, encouraging active engagement and empowering them to take responsibility for their own improvement.

6.3. Formative Assessment

Emphasising formative feedback is a key aspect of successful teaching methods, requiring teachers to give careful consideration. This involves consistently providing feedback on students' written work, separate from grades. The importance of this approach becomes evident when acknowledging students' tendency to neglect written feedback when overshadowed by numerical grades. Therefore, highlighting the importance of formative feedback is crucial to overcome the discouraging effects of solely focusing on grades throughout the learning process.

While grades are useful for evaluating performance against set standards in final assessments, they fall short in encouraging continuous improvement. In contrast, formative feedback is an ongoing process integrated into the entire learning experience. This key difference, highlighted by Lee (2013), underscores that formative feedback is about ongoing growth, whereas grades represent a final judgement in summative assessments..

Expanding on this groundwork, William (2007) emphasised the crucial role of formative assessment in enhancing student learning outcomes. He delved into several strategies for implementing effective formative assessment practises in the classroom, recognizing its power in shaping the educational experience. Likewise, Brookhart (2017) conducted impactful research, examining different aspects of formative assessment, including the design of effective feedback and techniques for engaging students in the assessment process. Brookhart advocated for the seamless integration of formative assessment into everyday teaching methods, acknowledging the lasting importance of formative feedback in creating a dynamic and effective learning environment.

6.4. Suggestions for Decision Makers

Decision makers should implement necessary measures to enhance the teaching of writing at training schools. One crucial aspect to address is the allocation of sufficient time for the writing module, as the current four and a half hours per week are inadequate for first-year students to fully grasp the intricacies of academic writing and achieve optimal results, particularly for EFL students. Increasing the weekly writing study hours to at least six would afford students more opportunities to practise and improve their writing skills. Furthermore, teachers should be granted additional time to provide comprehensive written feedback, allowing students to engage in extensive reading and analysis of their own writing. Additionally, it is recommended that the administration assign teachers specialised in the written expression

module to exclusively handle writing classes for one group, while assigning other modules to different teachers. This would enable teachers to effectively employ various feedback methods, such as written feedback and writing conferences, and facilitate workshops with students after each composition assignment. Lastly, it is essential to provide continuous professional development opportunities for teachers of written expression through organizing conferences, workshops, study days, seminars, and webinars. Such training initiatives would contribute to the improvement of teaching standards and enhance the overall writing instruction provided to students.

6.5. Limitations of the Research on Writing Conferences in EFL Contexts

This study on the impact of writing conferences on students' improvement in paragraph writing within EFL contexts encountered several limitations that should be acknowledged. These limitations include the restricted research duration (five weeks), the small sample size (15 participants), the lack of focus on conference discourse, the short-term interactions with students, and the homogeneity of paragraph topics.

To begin with, this research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic i.e. during the academic year 2020-2021, which resulted in shortened research duration of only five weeks due to the adoption of blended learning through a wave system. The wave system involves the phased scheduling of classes to reduce the number of people present at any given time and facilitate social distancing, aiming to minimise the risk of spreading the COVID-19. This limited timeframe may not have been sufficient to capture the long-term effects of writing conferences on students' writing skills. Additionally, institutional policies prevented students from attending school outside the allowed time, further restricting the research timeline and access to participants.

The sample size of the study was small, consisting of only 15 participants. This limited sample size raises concerns about the generalisability of the research findings to all EFL contexts. A larger sample would have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of writing conferences on students' improvement in paragraph writing.

The research did not adequately focus on analysing the nature of the conference discourse and its effects on students' perceived self-efficacy towards writing. It is important to check each type of words, and analyse all the dynamics of the writing conferences because a writing conference has proved effective if it is student centred. This limitation prevents a comprehensive understanding of how conference discourse influences students' attitudes and beliefs about their writing abilities.

The short-term interactions (five weeks) between the researcher and students may have limited the ability to observe different interaction patterns over an extended period. A more prolonged engagement with students could have provided deeper insights into their progress and individual needs.

Furthermore, the participants wrote seven paragraphs, including a pre-test and post-test, focused solely on the expository paragraph type. The homogeneity of the topics covered in the paragraphs may have influenced the improvement observed in both the experimental and control groups. This similarity in topics potentially masked the true impact of writing conferences on enhancing writing skills across different paragraph types.

Acknowledging these limitations is crucial to understanding the scope of the research findings. Future studies should consider addressing these limitations by extending the research duration, expanding the sample size, promoting student agency in conference interactions, analysing conference discourse patterns, allowing for long-term observations, encouraging an open environment for student-teacher discussions, and diversifying the topics under

investigation. By addressing these limitations, future research can provide more vigorous insights into the impact of writing conferences in EFL contexts.

6.6. Recommendation for Further Research

Due to the mentioned research limitations, it is important to interpret the results of the study cautiously, as there are several unresolved issues that need to be addressed in future research.

- While writing conferences have proven to be effective for first-year students at the ENS-C, it is necessary to explore the potential benefits of this technique in other educational levels and institutions.
- Future studies should investigate the nature of student-teacher interactions during writing conferences. Factors such as the length and content of each conference should be analysed to determine their impact, as student-centred conferences have been found to be more effective.
- Participants in the current study expressed that a five-week period of writing conferences training was insufficient and suggested a longer duration. Future studies should consider extending the investigation period to allow for further improvement in students' writing skills.
- Conducting comparative studies with a larger number of participants, including writing teachers from different levels, who incorporate writing conferences in their classrooms, would provide valuable insights into the variations in writing conferences practices.
- Exploring writing conferences at different stages of the writing process, such as pre-writing or drafting, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the observed phenomena.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study highlights the importance of writing conferences for students' writing improvement. However, it is crucial that writing conferences are preceded by effective written feedback, including both positive and constructive comments. Furthermore, teachers should motivate their students by selecting engaging topics, guiding the writing process effectively, promoting self-assessment during revision stages to enhance self-esteem, and creating a supportive atmosphere during conferences. Additionally, valuing formative assessment and providing ongoing feedback are essential for enhancing the teaching and learning of writing.

General Conclusion

This research aimed to explore the integration of writing conferences in the teaching of writing and its impact on the content of first-year students' writing paragraphs. It also investigated students' attitudes and beliefs regarding the usefulness of this technique, as well as the opinions of written expression teachers on incorporating writing conferences alongside written feedback.

In the theoretical section, we thoroughly explored the intricacies of writing and feedback, with a particular emphasis on paragraph writing and the pedagogical tool of writing conferences. Writing conferences, characterised by one-on-one interactions between teachers and students, emerged as a targeted approach to address challenges in writing. The literature review substantiated the efficacy of writing conferences, showcasing their role in fostering students' autonomy, and self-assessment in the writing process. This theoretical foundation laid the groundwork for our investigation into the practical application and impact of writing conferences on students' content paragraph writing.

The fieldwork conducted in this study examined the effects of writing conferences on the content of students' paragraph writing. Four research questions were formulated and addressed. The main question examined the impact of writing conferences on students' content writing, which was addressed using a quasi-experimental design involving pre-and post-tests. The second and third questions explored the error feedback techniques most commonly used by teachers to identify students' errors and their perception of writing conferences as a tool for improving learners' writing skills. These questions were answered through a teachers' questionnaire. The final question sought students' reactions to writing conferences, and it was answered through a post-training evaluation questionnaire.

The results of the teachers' questionnaire revealed that first-year students at the ENS-C face writing difficulties and require motivation to improve their writing skills. Written expression teachers advocated for the teacher's role in motivating students and using appropriate feedback techniques to address writing issues. It is confirmed that first-year students receive written feedback and occasionally classmates' feedback, but writing conferences are rarely utilised. However, teachers expressed a positive attitude towards implementing writing conferences in teaching writing. Additionally, the majority of participants agreed that both written feedback and writing conferences are necessary, as written feedback addresses grammar and mechanics, while writing conferences focus on content and organisation of ideas.

The results of the quasi-experiment demonstrated that writing conferences have an impact on students' improvement in content, while written feedback contributes to improvement in form. Both the experimental and control groups showed improvement in writing in the post-test results. A Two-Way ANOVA with Repeated Measures statistical analysis confirmed our hypothesis and answered our main question that is writing conferences have a positive impact on students' content paragraph writing.

The findings from students' post-training questionnaires indicated their satisfaction with writing conferences. They report that the training helped them improve the content, organisation of ideas, and sentence structure in their writing. They acknowledge the motivating nature of this feedback technique. The interesting topics and the supportive atmosphere provided by the teacher encourage students to seek clarification and negotiate the meaning of the written feedback. Considering the numerous benefits of writing conferences, students recommend implementing this technique for all first-year students and across all subjects.

In conclusion, teachers are advised to incorporate writing conferences in teaching writing, particularly in providing feedback, as students express satisfaction with its implementation.

However, writing conferences should be preceded by effective written feedback that includes detailed comments, both positive and negative.

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Résumé

Adopter des conférences de rédaction afin de clarifier que la rétroaction écrite des enseignants incite les chercheurs et les enseignants à rechercher la procédure de rétroaction appropriée qui favorise l'amélioration de la rédaction. Cette recherche vise à étudier l'impact des conférences d'écriture sur le contenu de la performance d'écriture des étudiants. Un questionnaire préliminaire a été adressé aux enseignants d'expression écrite à l'École Normale Supérieure de Constantine afin d'étudier comment ces enseignants apportent leur rétroaction dans leurs cours d'écriture et d'évaluer la possibilité d'intégrer les conférences d'écriture comme méthode d'enseignement. Ensuite, une étude quasi expérimentale, comprenant un prétest et un posttest, a été menée sur des étudiants de première année au Département d'anglais de l'ENS-C. Tant le groupe témoin que le groupe expérimental ont reçu une rétroaction écrite, mais seul le groupe expérimental a reçu une rétroaction de conférence de contenu. Les résultats de l'étude ont mis en évidence un impact positif des conférences d'écriture sur le contenu des paragraphes écrits par les étudiants. En utilisant une ANOVA bidirectionnelle avec analyse statistique des mesures répétées via SPSS, la recherche a confirmé la signification statistique des changements observés dans les scores moyens entre pré et post-tests au sein des groupes expérimental et témoin. De plus, un questionnaire sur l'attitude vis-à-vis de l'usage de cette technique a révélé les attitudes positives des apprenants à l'égard des conférences d'écriture. En conclusion, cette étude souligne l'efficacité de l'intégration des conférences d'écriture comme outil précieux dans le domaine de la rétroaction d'expression écrite.

Mots clés : conférences de rédaction, commentaires, rédaction de paragraphes

ملخص

اعتماد مؤتمرات الكتابة لتوضيح تغذية المعلمين المكتوبة يحفز الباحثين والمعلمين على البحث عن الإجراء المناسب الذي يعزز تحسين مهارات الكتابة. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص تأثير مؤتمرات الكتابة على محتوى أداء الطلاب في الكتابة. تم إجراء استبيان أولي لمعلمي التعبير الكتابي في المدرسة العليا للأساتذة اسيا جبار قسنطينة لفهم كيفية تقديم هؤلاء المعلمين للتغذية الرجعية في دروس الكتابة وتقييم إمكانية دمج مؤتمرات الكتابة كطريقة تدريس. ثم تم إجراء دراسة شبه تجريبية، تشمل اختبارًا قبليًا واختبارًا بعديًا، على طلاب السنة الأولى في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية حيث تلقى كل من المجموعة الضابطة والمجموعة التجريبية تغذية رجعية مكتوبة، ولكن فقط المجموعة التجريبية تلقت تغذية مؤتمرات الكتابة. كشفت نتائج الدراسة عن تأثير إيجابي لمؤتمرات الكتابة على محتوى الكتابة للطلاب. باستخدام تحليل الانحدار ثنائي الاتجاه بال تكرار من خلال برنامج SPSS ، أكدت الدراسة على الأهمية الإحصائية للتغيرات الملحوظة في الدرجات الوسطية بين الاختبار القبلي والاختبار البعدي داخل كل من المجموعة التجريبية والضابطة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم إجراء استبيان للمواقف بعد التدريب كشف عن المواقف الإيجابية للمتعلمين تجاه مؤتمرات الكتابة. في الختام، تسلط هذه الدراسة الضوء على فعالية دمج مؤتمرات الكتابة كأداة قيمة في ميدان تقديم تغذية لمهارات التعبير الكتابي.

كلمات رئيسية: مؤتمرات الكتابة، تغذية راجعة، كتابة الفقرة

Appendix I Teachers' Questionnaire

Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear teacher, this present questionnaire attempts to gather information about different error feedback techniques teachers use to identify students' errors, and the possibility to implement writing conferences when teaching writing. You are kindly invited to answer the following questions.

Your contribution is kept anonymous and used only for research purpose. Thank you very much for taking the time to share your ideas and experiences. Your input is very important and greatly appreciated.

Section one: General

information 1-Status

-Part-time / assistant lecturer-

-Magistere Holder (Maitre Assistant)

-PhD. Holder (Maitre de Conference)

- Professor

2- Years of experience in English teaching at university level

.....
.....

3- Years of experience in teaching written expression.

.....

4- Years of experience in teaching first year written expression

.....

Section two: Teaching written expression

5- How would you rate your students?

Non writers poor writers good writers very good writers

6- How often do your students commit mistakes in the following aspects of language?

Content and organisation of ideas

Never rarely sometimes often always

Mechanics (spelling and punctuation) and grammar

Never rarely sometimes often always

7- Can you say that your students are

motivated to write? Yes No

8- If no, why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

9- Do you think it is the teacher's job to

motivate students? Yes No

10- How?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Section three: Teacher's Feedback

11- How is feedback provision important in teaching writing?

Very important important moderately important of little importance not important

12- In your opinion, what is the main purpose of providing feedback?

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.....

13- do you provide your students with feedback?

Yes

no

14- if no, why?

.....
.....
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.....
.....
.....

15- if yes, how often do you give feedback on

students' writing? **Never rarely sometimes often always** 16-Which type of

feedback you use when teaching writing?

a/ Conferencing (oral feedback/face

to face) **b/**Peer feedback

(classmate's feedback) **c/**Teacher's

written feedback

d/all of them

e/ others

17- Which of the previously mentioned types of feedback is more beneficial for your students ?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

18- why?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Section four: writing Conferences

-Do you agree or disagree with the following statements

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
19- All the comments on students' writings is time consuming					
20- Students do not understand all the comments.					
21- Students keep committing the same mistakes.					
22- The ambiguity of the feedback is the reason why students disregard feedback.					
23- Conferencing (oral feedback) with students is the solution when students over looked your feedback.					
24- Teacher's written feedback should focus on grammar and mechanics.					
25- Teacher's conferencing should focus on content and organisation of ideas.					
26- When conferencing, students have the opportunity to witness how an audience takes up and understands their writing.					
27- Talking with each of the students and listening individually to their needs would improve their writing and ameliorate student-teacher relationships.					
28- Conferencing is communicating my feedback to students much more clearly than I had through comments on their papers.					
29- When listening to my students' questions about writing that they were unable to ask in front of the class makes me understand better how to improve my writing instruction.					

30- Do you have any comments and/or suggestion related to writing conferences when teaching writing for first year at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Constantine?

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Appendix II Students' Questionnaire

Post Training Evaluation Questionnaire

This questionnaire has the purpose of assessing the effectiveness of the conferencing technique in writing you have been experienced during your face-to-face sessions. As well as having knowledge of the preferences of the students. Read the questions carefully and answer the most sincerely possible. You do not need to write your name.

For each of the bellow listed statements circle the number which best reflects your views on a scale of 1 to 5.

1= strongly disagree,or the lowest, most negative impression.

2= Disagree, negative impression.

3= Neither agree nor disagree, or an adequate impression.

4= Agree,positive impression

5= Strongly agree, or the highest, most positive impression

1 . The objectives of the writing conferences were clearly defined.1 2 3 4 5

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating

.....
.....

2 . Conferring with my teacher gave me the opportunity to ask for clarification if the written feedback is not clear. 1 2 3 4 5

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating

.....
.....

3. Conferring with my teacher helped me to improve content, organisation of ideas and

sentence structure. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Errors of mechanics (spelling, punctuation and capitalisation) are corrected in written feedback. 1 2 3 4 5

5. My teacher's face-to-face feedback motivates me to write more and more 1 2 3 4 5

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating

.....
....

.....
....

6. I think the best way to learn to write in English is that your teacher confers with you once your writing is finished 1 2 3 4 5

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating

.....
....

.....
....

7. I now can write a paragraph correctly with fewer mistakes.1 2 3 4 5

8. I now can well organize my ideas in a paragraph 1 2 3 4 5

9. I now can write a paragraph formed of well structured sentences.1 2 3 4 5

10. I now can write a paragraph caring about word choice 1 2 3 4 5

11. I now can write a correctly formatted paragraph 1 2 3 4 5

12. How was the length of each conference (from 5 to 10 minutes)

a. Needs to be longer

b. Needs to be shorter

c. Was a good length

13. How was the length of the entire training (5 weeks)

a. Needs to be longer

b. Needs to be shorter

c. Was a good length

14. The topics covered during the five weeks were motivating and interesting 1 2 3
4 5

Please make any comments by stating clearly why you give the above
rating

.....
....
.....
....

15 . I had good interaction with the teacher. 1 2 3 4 5

Please make any comments by stating clearly why you give the above rating

.....
....
.....
...

16 . I think the atmosphere was relaxing. 1 2 3 4 5

Please make any comments by stating clearly why you give the above rating

.....
....
.....
....

17 . When my teacher gave me his opinion in writing, I take into account all his
comments. 1 2 3 4 5

If you have scored 3, 2 or 1, please comment why you have given this rating

.....
....
.....
...

18 . The teacher had put comments on our paragraphs before holding conferences
with

us. 1 2 3 4 5

19 . The teacher's written comments had in effect set the agenda of the conference.
1 2 3

4 5

20 . This conferencing training will be of a value to me as a future teacher 1 2 3 4
5

Please make any comments by stating clearly why you give the above rating

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

21 . I fully recommend the teacher-student conferencing for first-year students.1 2
3 4 5

22 . What did you like most about writing conferences?

.....

.....

23 . What did you dislike most about writing conferences?

.....

.....
.....

24 . Please provide any additional feedback about writing conferences?

.....
.....

Appendix III Self- Assessment Check List

Self-Editing Worksheet I

Chapter I: Paragraph Structure

U

Writer: _____ Date: _____

Format

My paragraph has a title.	yes	no
The title is centered.	yes	no
The first line is indented.	yes	no
There are margins on both sides of the page.	yes	no
The paragraph is double-spaced.	yes	no

Mechanics

I put a period, a question mark, or an exclamation mark after every sentence.	yes	no
I used capital letters correctly.	yes	no
I checked my spelling.	yes	no

Content and Organization

My paragraph fits the assignment.	yes	no
My paragraph has a topic sentence.	yes	no
The topic sentence has both a topic and a controlling idea.	yes	no
My paragraph contains several specific and factual supporting sentences, including at least one example.	yes	no
How many supporting sentences did I write?	number	_____
My paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence.	yes	no
All of my sentences are directly related to the topic.	yes	no

Grammar and Sentence Structure

Every student has his or her own personal grammar trouble spots. Some students battle with verb tenses. For others, articles are the main enemy. Some find it hard to know where to put periods.

In the space, create your own personal checklist for items that you know are problems for you. Then, throughout the term, work on eliminating these errors. Delete items you have mastered and add new ones that you become aware of.

Errors to check for include verb tenses, subject-verb agreement, articles, pronoun agreement, sentence fragments, and run-on sentences/comma splices.

	Number found and corrected
I checked my paragraph for _____ errors.	_____
I checked my paragraph for _____ errors.	_____
I checked my paragraph for _____ errors.	_____

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Appendix IV : Correction Symbols

D

Editing Symbols

Symbol	Meaning	Example of Error	Corrected Sentence
p	punctuation	I live ^p and go to school here ^p . Where do you work ^p ?	I live and go to school here. Where do you work?
am	missing word	I ^{am} working in a restaurant.	I am working in a restaurant.
cap	capitalization	It is located at <u>m</u> ain and <u>b</u> aker <u>s</u> treets in the <u>C</u> ity.	It is located at Main and Baker Streets in the city.
vt	verb tense	I never <u>w</u> ork as a cashier until I <u>g</u> et a job there.	I had never worked as a cashier until I got a job there.
s/v agr	subject-verb agreement	The manager <u>w</u> ork hard. There <u>i</u> s five employees.	The manager works hard. There are five employees.
pron agr	pronoun agreement	Everyone works hard at <u>t</u> heir jobs.	All the employees work hard at their jobs.
()	connect to make one sentence	We work together. So we have become friends.	We work together, so we have become friends.
sp	spelling	The <u>man</u> eger is a woman.	The manager is a woman.
sing/pl	singular or plural	She treats her employees like <u>s</u> lave.	She treats her employees like slaves.
X	unnecessary word	My boss s he watches everyone all the time.	My boss watches everyone all the time.
wf	wrong word form	Her voice is <u>ir</u> ritated.	Her voice is irritating.

WW	wrong word	The food is delicious. The ^{WW} restaurant is always crowded.	The *ood is delicious. Therefore, the restaurant is always crowded
PR	pronoun reference error	The restaurant's specialty is fish. Th__ye are always fresh.	The restaurant's specialty is fish. It is always fresh.
		The food is delicious. Therefore, ^{PR} is always crowded.	The food is delicious. Therefore, the restaurani is always crowded.
WO OR	wrong word order	Fridayawas/our busiest night	Friday is always our busiest night.
PO	run-on sentence	[Lily was fired she is upsei]	Lily was fired, so she isupset
CE	comma splice	[Lily was fired, she is upset.]	Lily was fired: therefore, ste is upset. Because Lily was fired, she is upset. Lily ›s upset because she was fired
Prog	fragment	She was fired. [Because she was always late,]	She was fired because she was always late.
		[Is open from 6:00 p.m. until the last customer teaves.]	The restaurant is open from 6:00 p.m. until the last customer leaves.
		the ennployees on time and worf hard.]	The employees are on time and work hard.
choppy	choppy writing	[I like the work. I do not like my óoss. I want to quit.]	Even though I like the worf, I do not like my boss, so I want to quit.

not //	not parallel	Most of our regular ^{not //} customers are <u>friendly</u> and aenerous tiDoers.	Most of our regular customers are friendly and tip generously.
sub	subordinate	The tips are good, ^{Sub} [and all the employees share them 1	The tips, which all of the employees share, are good.
prPp	preposition	We start serving ^{prep} dinner 6'00 p.m.	We start serving dinner at 6'.00 p.m.
conj	conjunction	Garlic sh,rimp, fried ^{COUP} cams, broiled lobster are the most popular dishes.	Garlic shrimp, fried clams, and broiled lobster are the most popular dishes.
art	article	Diners in the United States expect glass of wat'r when they first sit down.	Diners in the United States expect a glass of water when they first sit down.
	add a transition	The new em loyee was careless. She frequently spilled coffee on the table.	The new employee was careless. For example, she frequently spilled coffee on the table.
¶	staha new paragraph		
n{z/nmp	needs further support/needs more proof. Add some specific details (example, facts. quotations) to support your point.		

Appendix V: Scoring Rubric

Content/organisation	form
15-12	05-04
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- The paragraph fits the assignment . b- The paragraph is interesting to read. c- The paragraph shows that the writer used care and thought. d- The paragraph begins with a topic sentence that has both a topic and a controlling idea e- The paragraph contains several specific and factual supporting sentences that explain or prove the topic sentence, including at least one example. f- The paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- It is written with few errors that do not interfere with comprehension. b- It includes accurate word forms and verb tenses. c- No subject/verb agreement mistakes. d- Diverse academic vocabulary. e- A variety of sentence types f- No sentence problems g- No punctuation, capitalisation and spelling mistakes h- Logical word pronoun reference.
12-10	04-03
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- The paragraph fits the assignment . b- The paragraph is interesting to read. c- The paragraph shows that the writer used care and thought g- The paragraph begins with a topic sentence that has both a topic and a controlling idea d- One or two supporting sentences may have mixed purposes or is irrelevant to the subtopic e- The transition signals are not used appropriately f- The paragraph ends with an appropriate concluding sentence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- It is written with few errors that do not interfere with comprehension. b- It includes accurate word forms and verb tenses. c- few subject/verb agreement mistakes. d- Rarely diverse academic vocabulary. e- A variety of sentence types f- Only a few sentence problems g- Only a few punctuation, capitalisation and spelling mistakes h- Some unclear reference
10-05	03-02
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- The paragraph partly fulfils the task expectations b- The topic is not addressed clearly c- Supporting sentences have mixed purposes and contain irrelevant sentences d- Ideas are lacking e- Supporting ideas are insufficient f- Very few transition signals g- The concluding sentence is neither a summary of the supporting points nor a reformulation of the topic sentence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- Generally clearly written with few errors of interference b- Inaccurate verb forms and verb tenses c- Plenty of subject/verb agreement mistakes d- Limited vocabulary e- Few sentence problems f- A lot of punctuation, capitalisation and spelling mistakes g- Few right pronouns word reference

05-01	01-00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- The treatment of the paragraph fails to fulfill the task expectations b- The topic sentence does not orient the reader efficiently to the topic c- Ideas never build one another and appropriate markers are not used. d- Supporting sentences re not enough or irrelevant e- The concluding sentence is not relevant to the topic sentence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a- Numerous errors that interfere with comprehension b- Inaccurate word forms and verb tenses c- Contains plenty of subject-verb agreement mistakes d- Uses simple and repetitive vocabulary e- Only simple sentences hardly structured f- Sentence problems g- Lack of punctuation and wrong use of capitalisation h- No clear reference

Appendix VI. RUBRIC FOR ANALYSING TEACHER-STUDENT WRITING CONFERENCES

Categories	Teacher-centred <i>Total of 1 point</i>	Balanced <i>Total of 2 points</i>	Student-centred <i>Total of 3 points</i>
Focused (F)	The teacher focuses on more than three appropriate content/surface related issues depending on draft stage	The teacher focuses on three appropriate content/surface related issues depending on draft stage	Teacher focuses on one or two appropriate content/surface related issues depending on draft stage
Conference Agenda (CA)	The teacher leads the discussion and/or answers her own inquiry	Both teacher and student lead the discussion and answer the inquiries	The teacher gives student the opportunities to determine and lead the conference discussion
Ownership/Building on Student's Strengths (OS)	The teacher provides suggestions for improvements in or beyond the text	Both teacher and student jointly determine suggestions for improvements in or beyond the text	The teacher gives opportunities to the student to provide suggestions for improvements in or beyond the text

Reflected Questions (RQ)	The teacher asks more than 50% of the questions for her own problem solving	Both teacher and student ask equal number of questions	The teacher gives the student silent time to ask more than 50% of the questions
Encouraged Turn Taking (TT)	The teacher takes more than 2/3 of the turns that lead her to keep the control and give all the directions and suggestions without giving the student a chance to respond	Both teacher and student take almost equal number of turns which allow the student to be involved in the conversation about his/her text	The teacher allows the student to have more than 2/3 of the turns to make him/her mostly in charge of improving the student's text

Frequency of Talk (FT)	The teacher does more than 50% of the talk (in words) during the discussion as s/he is the source of information and because of that functions	Both teacher and student talk almost equally during the discussion; they exchange roles as sender and receiver	The teacher gives opportunities to the student to produce more than 50% of the talk and acts as a sender of
-------------------------------	--	--	---

	as a sender of the message		messages during the conference
Number of Praise Comments Received (P)	The teacher does not provide any explicit or implicit statement about the quality of the writing features but may use general praise statements (e.g. Okay) to show active listening and/or keep the conversatio n going	The teacher provides general praise statements about the quality of the writing features (e.g. good, fine, oh, well)	The teacher provides text specific praise statements about the quality of the writing features (e.g. That's a good metaphor)

Amount of Interruption Occurred (I)	The teacher is open and flexible toward interruptions by others that can take more than 15% of the total conference time	The teacher has interruptions but returns to the discussion as soon as s/he can limit the length of the interruptions to be less than 15% of the total conference time	The teacher gives the message that conferring is a serious act and has no interruptions during the conference
--	--	--	---

Appendix VII: Paragraphs' Samples of Students

Student one: Malek's paragraph

Bonifissane

Malak.

meaning

well
illustrated

point

A good friend has many qualities. First, he should be a truthful one. Having a good friend means having someone with whom you can talk freely, without the fear of being misunderstood. Second, a good friend is a supportive person. You ought to surround yourself with someone who supports you and encourages you to be the best version of your own. However, someone who underestimates your abilities and belittles you is not even a friend. Third, a good friend should be a comprehensive one. Choose a person who understands your moods and accepts them, as well. A good friend is always ready to be by your side, in your kick before your thin. The right friend doesn't blame you when you are absent once, but he appreciates you when you were there many times before. Having a good friend is having a sonmate with all these qualities.

Student two: Nesrine's paragraph

There are many characteristics of a good friend, but for me the most important is to be ^{honest} trustworthy and a supporter. First, a good friend needs to be a good listener because without the ability to listen, your s/p friendship will be shallow. Second, good friends should be trustworthy; one should have friends to whom you can be able to tell all your secrets without any fear of them ^{wordiness} telling other people about them later. Third, a good friend should always be available for support, you should have friends with whom you can ^{be} ^{sure} for any help and support. To sum up, in each stage of life, everyone needs someone who can support and trust them.

Benyahia Nesrine
2nd year group 04.

examples?

Your supporting points needs examples.

Appendix VIII Samples of Students' Pre, Treatment, and Post-tests

Student one: Amira

Bechar Amira
G04

The advantages of private schools.

Private schools have many advantages which distinct ~~t~~ from the public schools. First, private schools have improved academic opportunities. For instance, different educational courses and programs are being offered to students there, which help them grow and learn in nice way. Furthermore, students of private school are good at general knowledge and lead a memorable student life. Second, The student of private school are confident, because everyone gets equal representation which booser their confidence and self-esteem. Students take and active part in debate competitions and other activities, this activities improve their communication skills. Finally, smaller classes of private school are easy to handle, that's why teachers can easily handle their students. They can also make small competitions between them in positive manner without noise. This are some examples of the positives of private school

Qualities of a good friend

Having a good friend is the best gift ever. First, a good friend you can share with him your secrets without fear, you can trust him/her on your secrets and he/she doesn't tell it to anyone.

Second, a good friend advises you and corrects your mistakes even if you don't like that. For instance, you do a bad behavior with someone then he/she tells you that it is wrong. Third, to say I have a good friend you have to say my friend cares about me, because friends care about each other. They care about your feelings and don't like others to hurt you. For example, when someone said bad things about you they defends ~~for~~ you. In addition, a good friend helps you and pushes you to be better and wants you to be a successful person. That's how a good friend must be.

some qualities are well developed; other are not

give this
a name

punc

punc

S Vaguer

Amira

Qualities of a Good Friend

T: Hi Amira.....we'll talk a little about your paragraph: qualities of a good friend. The teacher reads *a good friend is the best gift ever. You can share with him your secrets without fear . you can share with him your secrets without fear. You can trust him or her on your secrets and he or she doesn't tell it to anyone.* You can name this. It is a quality.....isn't it?

S: A secret keeper?

T: No, other.

S: Trust...?

T: yes. The first quality is trust, so we say....

S: a good friend is the one you can trust.

T: in this part, *for instance, you do a bad behavior with someone then he /she tells you that it is wrong*, we have two independent clauses, but they are joined together directly without.....? The teacher shows astonishing

S: ahIt is a run-on sentence.

T: Also here Amira.....in" third, to say I have a good friend you have to say my friend cares about me....you can also name this quality .

You have also punctuation problems...., because...no coma when we start with the independent clause.

S: Yes madam

T: Amira I have other remarks.....*they defends on you....* s/v agreement....i put it

S: ah yes they defend on you.

T: they defend you.

Pay attention to punctuation and grammar errors Amira. Concerning ideas and organisation, you gave examples to some qualities and neglected others....an example of the last quality
?

S: Ah yes madam. I notice.

T : Are my comments clear Amira?

S: yes madam. Thank you.

Bechar Amira G04

Three things that I would ~~to~~ change about the world.

If I have the capacity to change the world, I would like to change just three things. The first thing is racism system. The world becomes stratified and ^{in order} make differences between people especially those ^{STV} ~~are~~ black. I would change this bad thing ~~in order to~~ make our world equal and all people live peacefully. The second thing is ~~this~~ wars. Some Arab countries suffer from wars because of the western countries. The greatest example of that is Palestine and what its citizens ^{are} living till now because of the Israel occupation. It's ^{an} nice feelings to see all countries free, ~~not only of that~~ but I hope that the Arab countries will return to what they were in the past, so stopping wars is the solution. The third thing and the last is making my mother younger. It is my desire because I don't like to see her facial wrinkles getting worse day by day. These are my main changes that I would change about the world.

Strong
positive

all more

well organized paragraph
sentence structure

Amira

Things You Would Change about

the World T: Hi Amira.

Amira

smiled.....

T : Amira read

please

S: *I would like to change three things. The first thing is racism system...Racism...*

T: yes

S: and make differences between people.....it's nice feelings

T: yes?

S: it's a nice

feelings **T:** it

is a nice

feelings? **S:**

It is a nice

feeling.

Amira continued reading....*not only of that but I hope that the Arab countries will return to what they were in the past, so stopping wars is the solution.*

T: what about this sentence Amira?

S: it is stringy

T: it is too long...how can you fix it?

S: *not only that, but.....*

T: what about the rest?

S: we put a full stop and start a new sentence?

T: where you want to put the full stop?

S: I prefer to delete it Madame....I omit *so stopping wars is the solution*

Amira continued reading till the end

T: you devoted a vey small space to talk about your mother?

S: three lines

T: she deserves more than three lines. Do you agree with me?

S: yes Madame...but you asked us to write a paragraph...I thought it was enough.

T: no problem....despite some writing problems, your paragraph is well organized...than you.

Bechar Amira
Gr. 11.

Benefits of knowing a foreign language.

Knowing a new language is necessary in new day. First, it's one of the ways to ~~develop~~^{we choose} the culture about the other foreign countries. For example, if you want to learn or search more about foreign countries, you learn first their language. ~~then~~^{then} you can recognize their cultures. Second, It ~~helps~~^{helps} you to connect with ~~strangers~~^{strangers}. The first way ~~to~~^{is} of connection is the language; therefore, knowing foreign languages is helpful. For instance, when you go abroad and you need to get help because you ~~are~~^{are} lost, you must talk ~~to~~^{to} people with their language. Finally, learning a new language makes you confident. When you learn a foreign language beside to your native language, you will be confident and don't worry to do meetings or go abroad. To sum up, knowing a new language is an important thing in a person's life.

possible

well organized paragraph

Amira

Benefits of knowing a Foreign

Language T: Hi Amira, how are you?

S: Fine Madame

T: let's talk about your paragraph Amira....your paragraph is well organized.....I like also your ideas Amira would you please read it for us.

S: Yes madame.....*knowing a new language is necessary in nowday. First.....To develop the culture..*

The teacher intervenes....

T: to develop the culture?

S: yes, about the other foreign languages

T: you do not mean to develop.....i put w. c....word choice. It means...it is not the appropriate word

S: but, I mean...to develop knowledge of the language.

T: what if you say To discover or to learn other languages?

S: I guess madam....this is what I wanted to say. The student continued reading the paragraph

S: *you learn first their language then you can recognize their cultures.*

T: *then*....is not a subordinator....you cannot use it to link clauses....you have to put a full stop before *then*

T: *because you lost*....where is the verb?

S: you are lost.

T: pay attention to subject verb agreement Amira and also to punctuation....thank you. I repeat I like the organisation of your ideas in this paragraph.

S: Thank you madam

Advantages of online learning.

In our time, online learning became an importance because it has many advantages. First, flexibility. You can study wherever you are, and you haven't to go school for attending your classes.

For instance, you stay home and you can get your lessons or even you are outside home, just check your phone and look at them.

Second, control your time by yourself. Online studying gives you the opportunity to manage your time. For example, you are not limited by a regular time like school. You can study whenever you want. This one helps students because each one of them has special time and way of study. Third, providing money, most of the time we spend our money to take bus or taxi to go to school, but online learning makes it easy for us and we don't need to spend money. The last advantage is that there are no obstacles to interrupt your study. Most of us can't attend their classes because of the weather. For instance, those who live far from school suffer from that problem, but learning online makes it easier. To sum up, online study is helpful for all of students.

Bechar Amira

G04.

Student one: Douaa

Expository Paragraph About The Advantages of Private Schools.

Private Schools have many advantages. ^{pr}It provides a special care for its students a ~~special care for its students~~ and special services for the benefit of them. In addition to that, it takes on account the ^{sp}parent's opinion and then notes about their children abilities and the kind of education they receive. As an important point, teachers in Private Schools are experienced and competent; in other word, Private Schools insure a high education for ^{pr}its students that insure to them a good job; in other word, it ^{sp}helps them to graduate with excellent average that qualified them to study the ^{sp}major they aspire to. Private Schools teach additional subjects related to foreign languages, as an important ones in all the world. Private Schools always their best to teach in an advanced way, by inventing new, advanced and calculated programs for the students to benefit and understand well. It is clear that Private Schools are for the benefit of children.

Douaa Boumahra C-4

you mean a girl

S/V agreement

Don't

Bowman

Vol.

A good friend h

e of qualities.

First of all, she should be a

person who gives

her hand to you at any time

when you are in;

word, a good friend t

he should be part of

what you feel, as he feels the same too.

pure

in

that a good friend should be honest

its without

word

g

Third, a good friend should be

a kind person who has a sweet heart and never

needs more

examples

→ makes you hearted sorry. For, a good friend

to you what she loves to herself; in other

no

correlation

, a good friend is the person who sees

only your positive aspects and forget about the

negative ones. Finally, a best friend is the person

who try to help

vate you and encourage

S/V agreement

you to be a better person

of successful too.

examples

→ In brief, having a good friend means having

a person with the quality

you can do better



Doua

Qualities of a

Good Friend T: yes doua. How are you.

S: fine madame.

The teacher starts reading the paragraph.....

T:who gives **her**so for you a friend must be a female and not a male; isn't it?

S: so, I can say he, or she?

T: you put *whatever you feel between two commas*. why?

S: I mean it is an explanation of a good friend is part of your life.

T: an explanation!!!!no! part of your life does not mean whatever you feel.

S: I mean when I am happy she is happy. When I am sad she is sad.

T: aaaa so you say it in another way, or I think you should omit this part because it is irrelevant. It has nothing to do with "helpful". With another quality you may add this idea, but not here.

S: I want to say she feels as I feel.

T: yes, I do understand what you mean, but it has nothing to do with helpful; feelings are something else.....then what we have? *in addition to that...* ah it is your second

quality.....a good friend should be an honest person. Say just honest because when you add person it is....

S: wordiness.

T: *whom you can tell your secrets without feeling fear*. You have only one sentence for this quality. It is not enough.

S: Yes madam

T: We should have the name of the quality, the explanation of the quality, and examples of course....you know this? The third quality is also not well illustrated .

S: I notice

T: Doua, I prefer to have three qualities well illustrated and well developed better than having five or six just named and listed.... in the fourth quality....*a good friend loves to you what she loves to herself*.....who **see** ?

S: sees

T: *Sees only your positive aspects*....is this sentence related to this quality.

S: yes madame, if the person loves to you as she loves to herself she sees only your positive aspects.

T: no it is not true; and I think you mean something else. You mean she hopes for you only positive things. This is what you mean.

S: yes madame exactly.

T: and again subject verb

agreement...*who try*... **S:** who tries.

T: Encourages....not encourage.....*this person encourages you to be creative*....how?...you should give examples or explain....I say it again, I prefer you to write about three qualities , but well illustrated better than five or six that need other support like this. Is my feedback clear Doua?

S: yes madame

T: thank you miss.

S: thank you very much.

Doua

A Good Teacher

T: Doua, I want to tell you something first. Your paragraph is very long. We can divide it into short paragraphs and form an essay with. Now, start reading

S:*as he cares about his children or any member of his family...*

T: *any member of his family*who could it be?

S: for example, he ask...he asks....

T: he asks them if they have problems? Do you think that if I ask you such a question you are going to answer?

S: of course no.

T: so a good teacher tries to look for students problems may be. Doua reads.....

S: ...*he should make extra efforts...*

T: why extra efforts?

S: efforts?

T: yes, it is enough.

S:.....*a good teacher means creativity..*

T: creativity is a noun.

S: creative.

T: what are the examples you provided for creativity? Doua reads.....

S:.....*by controlling classroom...*

T: creativity is something and controlling the classroom is something else.

S:*he should have the ability to make his students love his subject*

T: what is this ability?It is through all these qualities stated above that will aid the learners to love the subject.

S: *To summer* ,....

T: No Doua. To spring,....

S: hhhhhh, I'm sorry madame

T: thank you doua. Did you get the points?

S: it's ok

X %\,hsnoi\ lobout The odvamb d d n s Peanminy
 Oine Peaining haa momy cdvowdefes -Finak, Liskomee Boming 1o ke
 hawing clus? ot ho,me shidedeom Sticly Jom homeb thes Swi
 of "J'kac_"mcwm, jye Wiewn tome the wm\;g) ke ownd nauine dhein Dersonm cibo
 hone they wowk diwsing +he day] fLeg—me—medfals and mam ey with e
 by technology -Secomd, dsbome e decuuning Sl o iwker exbing methoelod
 DPmmw _J/,psm_mebs cown Uhe %GU—TM B..J \N'\'C\'L'DL\PFJ r%""jj13 W&L) » L00)
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 they have questions about the persons - In addition to that, chance P(o-u;t
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Douâ Boumahra G_u

Appendix IX: Samples of Students' Pre, treatment, and Post-tests(

CG) Student: Nassia Berrou

Berrou
Nassia

Being a teacher has always been one of the most respectful and valuable jobs for everyone. In fact, this job became a serious (with) mission and challenge, since it's very hard to be professional teacher who should characterize with specific qualities. First, the good teacher must be kind in his treatment with his students, that he could build a strong and unique relationship based on respect and appreciation with his students. Second, he or she must be qualified for this job, that they must work hard and be able to teach their students perfectly and enrich them with the knowledge that they need. Next, a good teacher should be somehow strict in (the way of) his way of teaching, in fact, (some) teachers are supposed to adopt a serious and severe method to create the discipline in the classroom, and that also would lead students to focus in their studies and pay attention.

kind and serious
severe
approach

so they can perform well and achieve
the success that they are working for.
To conclude, a good teacher should be
characterized with the specific
qualities because which make him
authoritative and perfect enough to lead
their students to perfection and
success.

Good thing

Bernau Nabbia

Learning foreign languages ^{S/V} have a great importance, and it has several benefits. First, foreign languages enable us to communicate with others and gives us the opportunities to meet new people from different parts of the world, so we can feel comfortable when we interact with them using our mother tongue. Second, as we learn a foreign language, we will be able to travel ~~there~~ ^{let} and visit various ~~other~~ countries, and explore places and ~~to~~ different locals, and it will become easy when you communicate by their language. In addition to that, foreign languages improve the brain skills and help to ~~us~~ ^{us} acquire a new vocabulary and other grammar rules. Chapman and exercise ~~you~~ ^{your} our memory abilities. Also, foreign languages ~~always~~ enable you to advance and develop your career and open for you a great chances and opportunities for ~~us~~ ^{us} the domain ~~workless~~ ^{workless}.

of employment. To conclude ~

To conclude, learning a foreign language is very beneficial and advantageous in our life.

a paragraph is one block.

good paragraph

good thing

There are some specific qualities that should be existed in a good friend. ^{cap} First, the perfect friend must be polite, modest and kind in his treatment with the others; respectful and well-behaved. ^{purge} Second, he or she must support and help you on the hard and tough times and stands by your side whenever you need and never let you down. ^{purge} Third, a good friend has to be the one who deserves your confidence because confidence is the most valuable and precious thing in any relationship. So, your best friend should be whom you trust and believe in the most. Next, the best friend is the one whom you share your life details with, understands more than anybody else and knows your likes, dislikes and even your secrets. In addition to that, the good friend should help and support you to solve all your problems and overcome ^{the} the obstacles.

Examples?

you can rule it

goes with support

and to be the light that shines your life.
to Conclude, these qualities should be
ordinance { are the characteristics that should exist
on the personality of a good and ideal
friend.

Berran
Nafsa.

- There ~~(are many)~~ ^{are} 3 things that should be changed in the world - first, racism and discrimination, which ^{are} still a worldwide phenomenon that ^{has} become a serious international issues as it explains the oppression and the vicious racist against the negroes, who suffer from the ~~unjust~~ ^{unjust}, mistreatment and the discrimination ^{according to their skin, religion and race}. ~~They~~ ^{They} ~~are~~ ^{are} still unblessed with their civil rights, ^{which} ~~so~~ ^{that's why} this ~~issue~~ ^{issue} should be eradicated ~~so~~ ^{so} the negroes can regain their freedom and live in a peaceful world without any forms of oppression and segregation. Second, The exploitation of the Third world by the developed countries, since it has become a terrible international ^{an} phenomenon that shows how the progressed countries keep profiting the third world to achieve their goals especially in the economical ~~domains~~ ^{domains}.

through controlling their trade and
 commerce, beside abusing their various
 products and natural resources. Next
 third, Violence is one of the worst
 (vicious and) common misbehaviour
 that occurs throughout the whole
 world, that (threats) can be categorized
 in a number of ways as crimes
 that still effect and Threat many
 lives and harms a numerous ~~been~~
 innocent ~~from~~ (innocent) spirits, so we should
 of (main) things that ~~that~~ will be changed.
 You outdoal yourself today

Appendix X: the Writing Course Syllabus

First-Year Writing Course Syllabus

- Process of Writing
 - Brief Introduction to the Paragraph
 - Planning
 - Drafting
 - Revising
- Types of Constructions
 - Phrase
 - Clause
 - Sentence
- Subordination Coordination Capitalization
- Outlining
 - Vertical List
 - Tree Diagram
- The English Paragraph
 - Indentation and Topic Sentence
- The Narrative Paragraph
 - (Process_Chronology) the semicolon
- Guide Writing
 - (the narrative Paragraph) the colon
- The Descriptive Paragraph
 - Spatial Development
- Free Writing
 - Punctuation Review
- Expository Paragraph by Examples
- Parallelism
 - Vocabulary Growth
- Summarizing and Paraphrasing
- Free Writing Activities
- Wordiness
 - The Apostrophe
- Note Taking
- Sentence Openings
- Spelling
- Parentheses_Dash_End Marks
- Connectives
- Punctuation Review
 - Comma Splice; Run-on Sentences
- Vocabulary Growth
 - Using Idioms
- Force in Writing
 - General Review