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***Investigating EFL Students' Difficulties
and Common Errors in Writing.***

***Case study: Third year LMD English Students at
university of Khenchela***

**Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture**

Candidate:

- Lahmari Hassna
- Gossa Selma

Board of Examiners:

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Ms: F. Dekhouche | Khenchela University | Supervisor |
| • Mrs: F. Saoudi | Khenchela University | Chairperson |
| • Mrs: I. Belgrone | Khenchela University | Examiner |

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Dedication:

I, Miss Lahmari Hassna, dedicate This work to the pillars of my life, my sympathetic MOTHER and my thoughtful FATHER, whose encouraged me all the time especially in the hardest moments and taught how to be a warrior in the middle of life's challenges and difficulties and how to break all briars to make my dreams and desires come true.

I would like to thank my dear sisters and brother ASSALA, ATIKA, CHAKER who were by my side in every second and helped me get through this by their magnificent, beautiful spirit.

I would like to thank my family, my friends and classmates, for their love and support.

May Allah bless them and protect them all the way.

I, Miss Gossa Selma. I dedicate this work to my beloved family especially to my dear mother who taught me to never give up and push up until my desires and dreams come true. As well as my sister, my brothers and all my friends and colleagues. I would like to thank them for their sincere love and support they gave to me in hard moments.

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List of Abbreviations

L2: Second Language

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

SMS: Short Message Service

SNS: Social Network Sites

LMD: License Master Doctorate

NSW: New South Wales

FL: Foreign Language

Abstract

The rising interest in writing especially at higher levels has developed entirely to become a distinguished discipline on its own. The current study is done to investigate student's common errors and difficulties in writing, it aims at developing student's abilities in writing, and proving that reading plays a major role in teaching writing. The study is directed to third year LMD students at The Department of English at the University of Abbes Laghrour kenchela. The main objective of this study is to investigate the main fundamental hypothesis set by the writers which is; Student's writing errors are derived from two main aspects lack of both reading and practice. In order to prove the validity of the hypothesis, a descriptive method was employed. And the investigation was conducted into a form of student's questionnaire delivered to twenty eight third year students of a total population of approximately 150 students. After collecting data and findings the writers came up with a result that third year student still suffer from lack of practice writing as result of the absence of reading.

Chapter One:

General introduction

Introduction

Writing skill is one of the most important productive skills for students to enhance their English level. In Algerian context English maybe a foreign language more than being a second language because EFL (English Foreign Language) students still not very used for English vocabulary, grammar, spelling and so on .But learning to write is very significant for EFL students regardless of the time, the big attention and the patience but still be very important and have a major impact on student's level in order to achieve a good academic performance.

I.1. Statement of the Problem

Writing was and still an important skill of language, and mastering writing seem to be a challenging task especially for those who write in an L2 (second language) and in an F1 (foreign language). Researchers seem to only present writing as steps that need to be followed such as; planning, reviewing and so on, while mastering writing skill is much bigger than this, when students write they need also to bear in mind who they are writing for (the addressee), and the quality of language they use whether it is formal or informal, as well as word choice and cohesion. Although, writing, listening and speaking were the only focal point of the overall old classical teaching, but students still suffer from committing mistakes in their writing.

The problem here is to spot the light on new techniques and effective processes that students need to follow to achieve a better writing and a better learning outcome.

I.2. Aim of the study

The research aims at investigating 3rd year students' common errors and difficulties in writing and also to make them aware of the importance of learning to write, not only to improve their writing but also to enhance their English communication. Moreover, it attempts to show the great impact of the proficiency of writing on the student's level in English.

I.3. Research questions

- 1- What are the major difficulties do 3rd year students face when they write?
- 2- What are the most common errors do they share in their written assignments?

I.4. Hypothesis

Student's writing errors were derived from two main aspects; lack of reading and lack of practice.

I.5. Data collection and procedures

The main tool used is a questionnaire delivered to 3rd year students .The sample consists of 28 students selected randomly over a general population of 150 third year LMD students. Teachers were not concerned in this research because the writers want to extract information from the students.

I.6. The department investigated

Data was collected from third year English students of Khenchela University because the writers are only interested in this stream.

I.7.Administration and design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire will be administered to third year students of English as a Foreign Language at the department of English “Abbas Laghrour” University of Khenchela.

The questionnaire is composed of nineteen questions to investigate students' difficulties and common errors in writing.

I.8. Methodology

The current study is conducted using descriptive method (cause study) to achieve the main objectives of the research.

I.9. Structure of the study

The research is divided into three chapters.

Chapter one deals with the general introduction of the study, Chapter two deals with an overview on writing, Chapter three deals with the analysis of the questionnaire and findings.

CHAPTER TWO: AN OVERVIEW ON WRITING

Chapter II

Introduction

Writing is regarded as one of the most important skills of a language, and become an exciting challenge and a huge task for students to accomplish, being a distinguished discipline on its own, that needs: attention, language proficiency, making use of wide vocabulary and a lot of practice. For a long time ago, writing was neglected a result of the whole concentration on spoken language rather than the written one, but now writing takes place in language teaching and become an important medium that is used for different purposes. Many scholars and researchers have different views and perspectives on writing; each defines it according to a specific field of study. According to Aduan (2003, p.88) “writing can be defined by a series of contrast: it is both a physical and mental act, its purpose is both to express and impress and it is both a process and a product” that means writing is a mental work in which the reader have to pass through many steps like imagining, drafting, editing, reading and rereading to end up with a very organized, written product. Another definition comes from Harmer (2004,p.79.80) saying that “writing is a basic language skill, as important as speaking, listening and reading. Students needed to know how to write to letters, how to put written reports together, how to reply advertisements and increaseayly how to write using electronic media”. Moreover other definition about a writing include Tarigan (1994,p.3) as a skill of language, he said that writing is one of the language skills which is used to communicate indirectly, without having face to face with other people.

II.1. The importance of improving writing skills

Writing is an important medium and it performs many functions in person's life in different fields and areas. As Bacon (1589) rightly said "reading makes full man, conference a ready man and writing an exact man" which means that reading makes reader able to full the mind with knowledge, pertaining to a variety of topics, Bacon also explained that confearing with others helps eliminate personal narrow mindedness and biases which often accompany a lack of foresight. Moreover, writing mates the students able to satisfy his social and intellectual needs and increases his self confidence and his self extream among others as Harmer rightly said "thus we no longer have to ask ourselves whether writing is a good thing an not, we take it as a fundamental right" (Harmer, 2000, p.3) that means, writing become an essential need that should be taught currently and effectively .Besides, writing is must for converting thoughts, reader, and facts. Moreover, communication is well transmitted through writing than any type of media, simply because it serves as a record for future ; for instance : scientific, logical and technological achievements can not be verbally communicated, they must presented in composed format like scientific journals, logical dairies and so on....

In other words science would not have existed if the researchers had not recorded each experiment in a recorded each experiment in a recorded format. Effective writing increases awareness, memory, knowledge, creativity and imagination and it focus the student's ability to explain and refine their ideas for others. Also it helps raise the student's level of practice. As Green and Oxford (1995) explained that daily and successive use of the target language and the strong focus on practice is a good way for students to higher proficiency.

To sum up, it is crucial for students to learn the good art of good writing in order to accomplish their academic and professional levels, also to be more motivated to set their goals in learning and pertaining to a variety of topics as Reilly (1994) explained that “goals are made clear only if motivation is enhanced”.

II.2.Purpose of writing

The purpose is the goal or the aim of a piece of writing: to express oneself, to provide information, to persuade or create a literary work. These are other some purposes for writing, but these four are emphasized to best prepare students for college and career readers.

- To inform : the purpose of writing is to inform which means to share facts, explain something to the audience emphasizing on truthfull evidence, as well as providing definitions, explaining, concepts or processes and helping readers understand ideas and see relationships.
- To explain: is tell what, how, and why about a specific topic
- To narrate: is to tell a story, the story can be made up or truthful most forms of narrative writing hard a beginning, middle and end for instance : fictional stories and personal narratives.
- To persuade: it means trying to convince your readers to accept your position on a particular topic, by stating an opinion and supporting it with reasons and supporting details in order to get the audience to agree, take action or both.

II.3.Modes and forms of writing

There are many modes of writing each one has its own features and purposes, and in order to achieve a good piece of writing the writer has first to ask himself about three main things like :

-What am of writing about? (Which means what is the main topic of my piece of writing?).

-Who am of writing for? (That means the audience or the readers of this piece of writing).

-Why any writing this? (Which means the writer's purpose).

The following table with explains the main modes and forms of writing as well as the purpose of each:

Modes	Purpose	Forms
Personal	To explore thoughts and feelings.	Journals, blogs.....
Narrative	To tell a story whether true or not and mentioning the settings (place and time).	Short stories, novels, personal narratives biographics.
Expository	Giving information about a topic, explaining how it works.	News reports, enceclopedias entries, research papers.
Persuasive	To convince or express an opinion.	Literary essays, editorials, music, movie reviews.

Table01: Modes and forms of writing.

II.4.Listening as a tool to enhance writing

Listening is regarded as an important medium not only in daily life but also

in education and academic contexts. Vandergift (1999) defines listening as “ a complex active process in which the listener must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intonation, retain what was gathered in all of the above, and interpret it within the immediate as well as the larger sociocultural context of the utterance ” (p.168).

Listening plays a major role in classroom settings due to its huge impact on the students educational performances, in other words it provides the learners with the basic rules to write and to use vocabulary and grammatical patterns in the right way. As Rost (1994) rightly said “listening exercises provides teachers with a means for drawing learners attention to new forms of vocabulary, grammar and inraction patterns in the language” (p.141.142)

As result, listening as a receptive skills and writing as a productive one are interrelated and complementary because without listening the students can not convince the reader and ca not even write a full and a coherent text simply because it establishes the base for students to be more fluent in productive skills later on. As Peterson (2001) states that “through listening learners can build an awareness of interworking of language systems at various levels and thus establish a base for more fluent productive skills” (p.87). Rost (1994) also explained clearly that listening provides impact which important for learners to understand so as to begin on to start with their first step in learning.

To summarize, listening is very important as the other skills because it helps students to gain knowledge and to be introduced to all forms of vocabulary and grammar. As Field (2003) states that “ in the early days of english language teaching (ELT), listening chiefly served as a means of introducing new grammar through model dialogues”(p.13).

II.5.Academic writing

Academic writing is a tool for success at higher educational levels if mastered perfectly by students. It will result in a high sense of research skills, information analysis and other skills such as arguing, organising and expressing personal views (Whitaker, 2009). Irvin (2010) considers academic writing as "...a form of evaluation that asks you to demonstrate knowledge and show proficiency with certain disciplinary skills of thinking, interpreting, and presenting" (p.8). This skill is the base for get good writing Tarnopolsky and Kozhushko (2007) explained academic writing as "the most creative type of writing that can be taught to students of English as a foreign or second language" (para. 4). According to Anne Whitaker (2009) "academic writing assignment is supposed to be your opportunity to explore something that interests you from your course" (p.2). Also Whitaker pointed out students have demonstrated are that academic writing assignments start by asking good question, and examine their answers. Addition to students needed to these show understanding about the topic critical arguments according to Coffin, Curry, Goodman, Hewings, Lillis and Swann (2003) they listed the needs of students to do a good academic writing, the list is as follows:

- Take up a position
- Adopt a particular perspective
- Put forward points for and against a particular position
- Explore possible positions
- Link theory and evidence
- Draw a conclusion

- Analyse
- Be critical
- Develop a central idea
- Use evidence to support an argument
- Express personal opinions
- Use personal interpretations

II.5.1.The impact of Texting (SMS) on Students’ Academic Writing

As the progress of modern life continues to grow, so does the ways of communication in an attempt to link people and narrow distances between them. Text messaging is an act of preparing and sending message electronically between two or more mobile phone, computer users and fixed or portable devices over the network. It uses standardized communication protocols to enable mobile phone devices to exchange short text message.

According to Bond, (09/27/2013) “texting is the event of arrangement and sending electronic messages, typically belong of alphabetic and numeral quality between two or more users of mobile phones, fixed proneness (e.g) desktop computers or portable services (tablets computers, Smartphone’s) ”

John Harmen Valk (2010) said that “University students frequently transmit and take cellular phone text messages throughout their Study time and students frequently use texting in their daily academic work. Students spend their time in no of texting”.

Impact that students faced on their writing due to texting are, now they face problem in writing correct and most of the time students use abbreviations for different words sentences.

II.5.1.1.SMS and its Negative Effects on English Language

Samson(2008) rightly said that “there are great impacts of texting on

students academic writing, spelling, grammar and punctuation because most of the time students use wrong spellings and sentences due to which both the sender and reader pronounce, read and write it in the wrong way and spellings will be used academic writings in projects, papers and email, with the time they get used to it and will be difficult for students to overcome this in the near future or during their Professional life or carrier”.

Also a study was conducted by Danish (2001) where he surveyed a large number of both students and teachers. Results came to show that the majority of the population confirmed that SMS have a negative effect on their writing skills. (Samson, 2008) For example “l8r” use for (later). U for (you), and ‘wanna’ for (want) and ‘guyz’ for (guys) and “sec” for a (second). Acronyms are letter sequences that stand for a longer phrase, such as “IDk” for (I don’t know) “OMG” for oh my (God) ” pictograms are series of characters that speak to an inclination or idea, such as”☺ for a smile and “<3” for “love”. The SMS or text message provides users with a convenient and user friendly service which has taken the Net speak revolution to the next level, with regard to having a unique writing style. SMS has taken type of communication to the next level, making it very casual brief and even potentially less personal.

II.5.1.2. Internet Networking

Social networks are becoming an integral part of people's lives. The internet has changed the style people live in numerous things, but the largest is the impact it is getting on the way they interact ordinary. Most social media are used to transmit one’s emotions and ideas, for instance, ‘Face book’ users may employ the language freely as they want (Brown, , 2017).

SNS (Internet and Social Networking Sites) are used for different reasons.

Ahn (as cited in Mingle & Adams, 2015) indicated that “Social Network Sites (SNS) provide a platform for the youth to participate in communities that help them to learn, and practice skills within a particular knowledge area”. Risto (2014) claimed that “...educators fear that students will draw upon their most frequently utilized form of communication, texting and social media, for their sentence patterns, grammar, punctuation, and word choice”. So, internet can be used in enhancing one’s skills in writing it also inhibit it. A number of studies, Horton, Alloway and Dawson (2012); Wood et al. (2014) (as cited in Mingle & Adams) have been conducted which confirmed that internet, social media and texting have a negative effect on students’ writing especially students’ writing especially in terms of spelling, grammar.

II.6. Professional writers’ vs Academic Writers

Most of EFL students think that academic writing and professional writing are the same. However both of them are extremely different Ivrin (2010) defines academic writing as “a form of evaluation that asks you to demonstrate knowledge and show proficiency with certain disciplinary skills of thinking, interpreting and presenting” (p.8). Whereas professional writing is a style of a communication which is done a in a work place context in order to convey information.

Before starting to write any type of writing whether academic or professional the writers should take into:

1- The audience: academic writers and professional writers must know that their audience is not the same. Academic writer’s work will be devoted to professors, researchers, scientists and historians. Unlike professional writers who target their pieces of writings to colleagues, business people, managers and

sometimes clients. In this case word choice must suit the audience.

2- The tone: in academic writing the writer must write in the 3rd person narrative as assign of formality while professional writers can sometimes write in the 1st person all depends of cause on the context as well as the situation.

3- Active and passive voice: professional writers often go for shorter sentences and active voice; because they know that their audience have other papers reports to read so they go for the main points only. Unlike academic writers who use longer sentences and passive voice because they know that their audiences have more time to read their arguments.

Goals: both of academic and professional writers do not have the same goals. Academic writer usually writers to show case his research while professional writer writes to project an idea to colleagues or propose a project.

II.7.Learning to Write vs Writing to Learn

Learning to write includes learning two sets of skills: composing skills using the writing process (pre-writing, planning, drafting, revising), and transcription one (punctuation, capitalization, spelling, handwriting/keyboarding). A foundational composing skill is the ability to apply knowledge of text structure to write sentences (i.e., knowledge of grammar), paragraphs, and longer passages of text. Knowledge of text structure also includes recognizing the differences among narrative, informational, and argument types of writing.

Composing requires a great deal of thinking at the pre-writing, planning and drafting stages. Transcription skills, on the other hand, should be sufficiently developed for students. That is, they can automatically apply spelling and handwriting/keyboarding skills and use proper punctuation and capitalization. A transcriptions skill enables students to focus their thinking on the composing

aspects of writing. However, there are some students who struggle with these basic skills. When you teach students who struggle with writing, it is important to determine if they are having difficulty with composing skills, transcription skills, and in some cases, both. By providing instruction in both transcriptions skills and composing strategies, writing will improve by a greater degree than a focus only on improving content quality, or only on mechanical aspects of writing. In the other hand writing to learn means using writing as a tool to promote content learning; when students write they think on paper. Content teachers assign writing activities to help students learn subject matter, clarify and organize their thoughts, and improve their retention of content. Writing to learn tasks can be based on reading, classroom discussion, teacher presentation, media such as video, or hands-on activities. Being able to write is as important to learning as being able to read. Subject-area teachers sometimes feel overwhelmed with all of the content they must cover during the session, and it is understandable if at some point you feel there is not enough time to teach writing. Using a plate of food as a metaphor, content teachers may view writing instruction as one more thing to add to an already crowded plate. However, content teachers need to recognize that teaching students how to write about what they are learning gives the students a strong foundation upon which they can access and add more content. When students have strong literacy skills, they have a solid plate to hold all of the content that must be learned. According to Knipper & Duggan “Writing to learn differs from learning to write in that there is no process piece that will be revised until it reaches the finished project stage. Writing to learn, instead, is a way to provide students with opportunities to recall, clarify, and question what they know and would like to know about a subject. It is a way for them to express their thinking in writing”. (Knipper & Duggan, 2006).

II.8.The writing Process

Writing is a complex combination of skills which is the best taught by breaking down the process. The writing process involves a series of steps to follow in producing a finished piece of writing: planning, drafting, editing, publishing. The steps are neither sequential nor orderly. Krashen (1984) suggested “ many good writers employ a recursive non-linear approach writing of a draft may be interrupted by more planning, and revision may lead to reformulation, with a great deal of recycling to earlier stages” (Krashen, 1984, p.17) the various stages of the writing process make an effective performance-oriented teaching programme would mean that we need to systematically teach students problem solving skills connected with the writing process that will enable them to realize specific goals at each stage of the composing process. Thus basic writing stages in the classroom help students understand the nature of writing at every point. The process of writing as of four basic steps that are as follows:

II.8.1. Planning (Pre-writing)

Pre-writing allows writers to discover what they know and how to proceed. During this stage students learn to make decisions and developing a clear understanding of the writing goal through the use of mentor texts, exemplars, or modeled writing. The purpose of the prewriting stage is that students develop a key understanding of the piece of writing they will need to create and allows them think about the form of writing, explore other samples of the writing For they know the “Prewriting” circle proves the most taxing. “Writing is prewriting” Donald Murray claims prewriting “usually take about 85% of the writers’ time. It includes awareness of this world from which the subject is born” (Teach writing

as a process Not product,4). Moreover, Williams (2003) said that “planning is one of the more effective features of the writing process; although it also can be one of the more challenging” (p.114). In short, planning is the step stone for the writing development by which the writers collect all sorts of information about the purpose of writing, the addressed audience, and the information that will be used.

II.8.2. Drafting

After planning out the ideas, the next step is drafting It is producing the first version of the piece of writing that is a subject of amendment. Donohue (2009), refers to drafting as the stage where “the students are able to craft their own writing” (p.12). Therefore, some writers commonly write multiple drafts of a piece before they consider it complete, whereas other plan and outline a piece in their minds, write one finished draft they are composing regardless to spelling mistakes, grammar mistakes and others. Along the writing process there may exist a number of drafts until we reach the final version (Harmer, 2004). The aim of drafting stage is to sketch out ideas, information’s and arguments and start to formally put it together with evidence that will be used later on writing.

II.8.3.Editing

Editing which is the refinement stage of the writing process, is the cleaning up and correcting any errors of a piece of writing this involves reviewing the draft for mechanical aspects of language “focusing on the sentence-level concerns, such as punctuation, sentence length, spelling, agreement of subjects and predicates, and style” (Williams, 2003). Editing is significant phase by which the writers shape their writing and prepare them to be published.

II.8.4. Publishing (the final Version)

The final stage of writing process is publishing the writers in this step are ready to make the final version of their piece of writing to be sent to the intended audience. However, make sure that your written document should be completed to the teacher or any other entity in order to be evanted . Donohue concludes that “The final stage of writing process includes sharing reflection, and assessment of the students’ writing” (p.14).

Flower & Hayes (1980). The process can be diagrammed as follows:

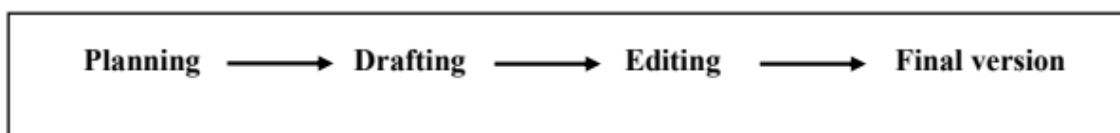


Figure 01: The linear model of writing process, (Harmer, 2004, p. 5)

II.9. Key Principles in Teaching Writing

Hawthorne and Jesson (2010) stated clearly that "we believe that some key principles underpin effective teaching of writing are:

- That writing is an essential skill that students need if they are to participate meaningfully and successfully in the modern world.
- That what teachers do makes a difference to how well students learn to write.
- That all students are able to improve their writing.
- That students learn best in a supportive and nurturing environment.
- That students own interests, backgrounds and goals are important to acknowledge and include in writing programs.
- That effective writing is linked to effective reading.

In other words this means that all students and before starting to write anything, they have give attention to these principles in order to achieve a good and coherent piece of writing.

II.10.Four Types of Knowledge Writers need to Write Well

Howthorne and Jesson (2010) proposed four types of knowledge to any writer who wants to accomplish his piece of writing:

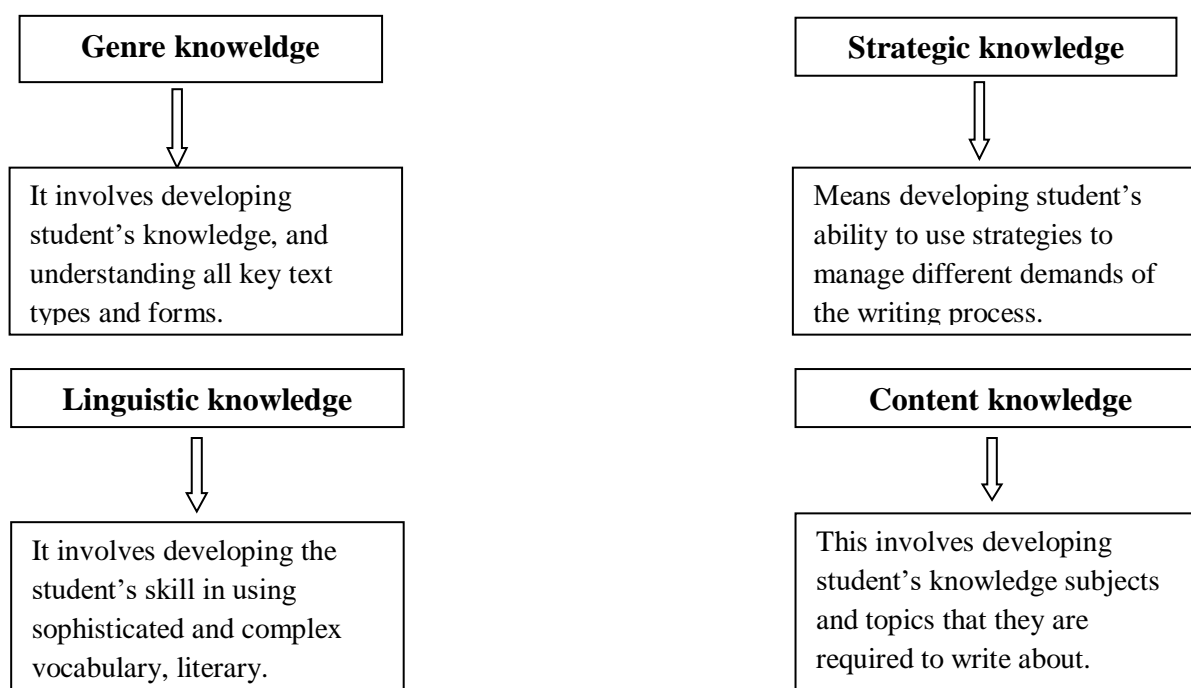


Figure 02: Four types of knowledge, (Howthorne and Jesson, 2010,p.15,16)

II.11.Elements in The teaching of Writing

Elements in the teaching of writing program, it focuses on the compositions of text, the process of writing and the presentation of texts. It also indicates that the aim of teaching writing is for students to learn to write effectively for different purposes NSW Board of studies(2000, p.21) depicts the following elements:

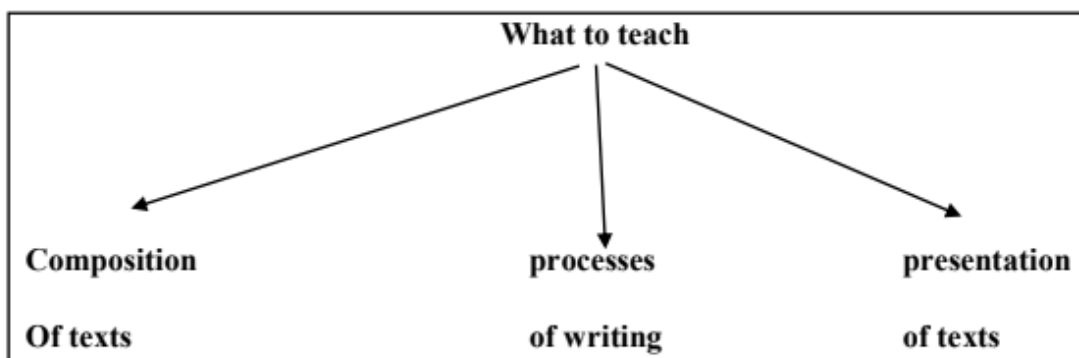


Figure03: Elements in teaching writing (Focus on literacy: writing, 2000, p. 22)

II.11.1.Composition of Texts

The composition of text includes the students developing a sense of the mechanics of writing; how it works and what makes it effective. In doing so, students need to learn how to think about the purpose for their writing according to different writing tasks, and to reflect on the context of their writing. Besides, the teacher evaluates the students' writing at different levels. First, the composition of the whole text (purpose, text structure and cohesion). Second, the teacher evaluates the linguistic features such as grammar, syntax and vocabulary and finally ends with the evaluation of surface features such as punctuation. As a result, in the elements of composition of text, the teacher generally follow a gradual pattern in teaching writing in which he starts with main aspects, followed by a concluding evaluation of students writing.

II.11.2.The process of Writing

In this element, the teacher focuses on the fundamental feature of the writing process. During this phase, the basic process is explicitly illustrated to students, in order to understand how does writing occurs. The process of writing in generally a cognitive one (Flower & Hayes, 1982), that has to do with several mental operations, in spite of the complexity of this process students still need to practice writing following this pattern. Researchers differ in the distributing of

the stages of writing but mainly agree on some of them. For NSW Board of Studies, the process is divided into seven main stages that are drafting, revising, and conferencing along with editing, proofreading and publishing. In short, teaching the writing process to students and the stages of composing enable them to engage in writing more often, and to think critically during writing which will improve it later on.

II.11.3.The presentation of Written Texts

The presentation of written text goes through the explicit teaching of handwriting, spelling, grammar and punctuation. These features need to be present all the time in the student's writing for an effective writing productions. By NSW Board of Studies (2000), and which suggested the three elements. Further description of the elements in teaching writing was illustrated by Hyland (2002).In his description he focuses on three fundamental key elements that are; the writer, the text and the reader which are exhibited in table 2.

<p>The writer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues of proficiency, first language background, and prior experience • Cognitive and motivational factors • Knowledge of the topic • The role of composing processes <p>The text</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authenticity of purposes and writing tasks • Number and variety of writing assignments • Genre modelling and exploration • Rhetorical and lexico-grammatical consciousness raising <p>The reader</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation to specific target discourse communities • Need for real and multiple audiences • Awareness of appropriate levels of involvement and interactional strategies • Importance of feedback and audience response.
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Table 02: Elements of a writing pedagogy (Hyland, 2002, p. 79)

II.12.Key Solutions to Writing Problems

Dissatisfaction has not faded away. It seems certainly that (a) the focus has been laid on training the teachers by adding to their “technology”; (b) by and large, teachers need strategies to raise their awareness of what may cause success or failure in their student’s writing; they need self-esteem and confidence. Nunan (1999) remarked, that “the former does not seem to trust the latter and academics criticize teachers for the superficiality of classroom applications of research findings.” The gap is real. The large number of variables in the teaching-learning process makes it so difficult to replicate that conclusions cannot be easily validated. According to Seliger & Shohamy (1989) “In spite of such infinite diversity [of variables] there exists the universal fact that human beings of all

ages, attitudes, levels of intelligence, socioeconomic background, etc., succeed in acquiring L2s in a wide variety of both naturalistic and formal settings”. Teachers and students face certain problems in teaching and learning writing. As many teachers of English have noted, acquiring the writing skill seems to be more laborious and demanding than acquiring the other three skills (Zheng 1999). In fact, Nunan (1999, 271) considers as an enormous challenge to produce "a coherent, fluent, extended piece of writing" in one's second language. This is magnified by the fact that the rhetorical conventions of English texts—the structure, style, and organization often differ from the conventions in other languages. It requires effort to recognize and manage the differences (Leki, 1991). Even though these problems will persist, there are ways to improve the teaching of this skill to benefit all writing tasks and prepare students for the writing they will have to do after they graduate. Three main approaches to teaching writing have been advocated and used in the past few decades of English language teaching.

II.12.1.The product Approach

The product approach is the oldest and by far one of the most practiced approaches around the world (Palpanadan, Bin Salam & Bte Ismail, 2014) in the teaching of writing. With the product approach, teachers focus on what a final piece of writing will look like and measure it against criteria of “vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanical considerations such as spelling and punctuation, as well as content and organization” (Brown 1989: 320). Students in this approach are encouraged to imitate modeled text provided primarily by the teacher, where the main objective is to acquire linguistic knowledge. Pincas

(1982b) explains learning to write in the product approach as consisting of four stages. It starts with the familiarization stage in which students get acquainted with different features of texts, then they move to the controlled writing stage where they practice skills to be prepared before moving further to the stages of guided writing and the free writing. The normal procedure is to assign a piece of writing, collect it, and then return it for further revision with the errors either corrected or marked for the student to do the corrections (Raimes, 1983).

II.12.2. The process Approach

The process approach to teaching writing is defined as “a cyclical approach. In this approach, students are needed to move back and forth while going from one stage to another stage and taking part in the writing activities” (Palpanadan, Bin Salam & Bte Ismail, 2014, p. 790). In the mid-1970s, the process approach began to replace the product approach which identifies four stages in writing: (1) prewriting, (2) composing/drafting, (3) revising, and (4) editing (Tribble, 1996). These stages are recursive, or nonlinear, and can interact with each other throughout the writing process. For example, many writers return to prewriting activities during the stage of the revision process to develop a new idea or refine a viewpoint. The process approach emphasizes revision, and also feedback from others, so students may produce many drafts with much crossing out of sentences and moving around of paragraphs. The correction of spelling and punctuation is not of central importance at the early stages. Moreover, the stages of writing in the process approach are complemented with various activities that the teacher supply while acting the role of a facilitator and monitor. According to Badge & White (2000), the process approach has been criticized because it views

the process as the same for all writers, regardless of what is being written and who is doing the writing, and also because it gives insufficient importance to the purpose and social context of the piece of writing. However, the process approach is widely accepted and utilized because it allows students to understand the steps involved in writing, and it recognizes that what learners bring to the writing classroom contributes to the development of the writing skill.

II.12.3.The genre Approach

The genre approach is considered as the latest approach in the teaching of writing; however it is thought to be an extension of the previous product approach (Badger & White, 2000). In the 1980s, the genre approach became popular along with the notion that student writers could benefit from studying different types of written texts. As Nunan (1999, 280) explained, different genres of writing "are typified by a particular structure and by grammatical forms that reflect the communicative purpose of the genre." students in the genre approach are exposed with different types of writing, and write for various purposes. Genre in writing, mainly refers to the distinct structure of texts, the different use of language in terms of grammar, vocabulary that writers use to convey their ideas . According to Cope & Kalantzis (2001), the genre approach to writing consists of three phases: (1) the target genre is modeled for the students, (2) a text is jointly constructed by the teacher and students, and (3) a text is independently constructed by each student. According to Badge &White (2000), the approach acknowledges that writing takes place in a social situation, reflects a particular purpose, and that learning can happen consciously through imitation and analysis, which facilitates explicit instruction. The genre approach has been criticized because it undervalues the processes needed to produce a text and sees learners as

largely passive. The genre approach succeeds at showing students how different discourses require different structures. In addition, introducing authentic texts enhances student involvement and brings relevance to the writing process also students in the genre approach are first acquainted with the different features of texts, purposes for writing while considering the context and the needs of the readers before they can engage in writing.

II.13. Reading and Writing

There is a strong relationship between reading and writing. Both reading and writing are functional activities that are used to accomplish a task ,Miller (2012) defines reading as "the ability to decode written texts quickly and accurately and to comprehend what is read. Whereas, writing is the ability to produce connected text (sentences, paragraphs, and Reading brings so much to the reader; he can easily understand and vocabulary, grammatical rules to end up basically with a better understanding of how the language works, because it gives the students the ability to use the right words in the right contexts. Any EFL student should pass through the first step which is picking up something to read ; by doing so he will be more used to other's styles and other's proses. As koons (2008) rightly said that "better readers are generally better writers, and better writers are generally better readers"(p.4). Moreover, students have to receive first to produce later on ,which means they should read books, articles or anything to receive knowledge they needed that will be their main tool to produce good written works later .Mc cardle ,chahabra and kapinus(2008) had clearly explained that "reading is the receptive side of knowledge, while writing is the productive side " Another of thinking about this is that reading and writing drop on the same skills and processes, in terms of being able to read a comprehent text

,and in terms of being able to write a text. So, there is a very close connection between them. To sum up, teaching one helps the other neither by themselves are sufficient just teaching reading does not make for a great writer and just teaching writing does not make for a great reader as well. So students have to take advantage of how they overlap as Mccardle, Chahabra and Kapinus (2008) clearly explained that "students are more likely to derive learning benefits across reading and writing when they understand that connection exists".

II.14.The difference between Errors and Mistakes

Most of EFL students do not actually know how to distinguish between errors and mistakes. In fact, both errors and mistakes are used to describe when a language learner has got something wrong, however some linguistics make a distinction between the two terms. Mistakes are not significant to the process of language learning while errors are significant in three different ways:

1-Teacher must tell the goals they have progressed as a motivation for them to learn more. 2-Errors provide students with evidences, strategies and procedures are employing to discover the language. 3-Errors are indisposable to learners themselves because we can regard the making of errors as a device to learn more. The following explains the main characteristics of each:

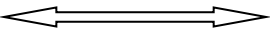
Errors		Mistakes
1-Sysetematic		1-Random
2-Repititive		2-Non-repititive
3-Made by the learners		3-Made by learners and native Speakers
4-Recognized and Corrected by the teacher		4-Recognized and corrected by the teacher

Figure 04: Characteristics of errors and mistakes

II.15. Difficulties Students Face when they Write

1-Reasons behind student's writing errors in writing:

Mastering English writing is a challenging task for EFL students they tend to make errors regardless of a long period of study, these errors are due to many reasons. Firstly, student's lack of reading; for a long time ago students often ignore reading either for educational purposes or for pleasure. As a result of the higher development and social media in which it takes place in their lives ; students became very addicted to social media, instead of using other sources of entertainment like books, magazines, reading newspaper articles they always prefer to use the internet to chat or watch movies . Secondly, lack of practice ; the practice of writing plays a major role in teaching writing ,it enables students to become critical thinkers as well as enhancing their aspects of writing such as; grammar, vocabulary, syntax, cohesion, punctuation and others . Student's these days do not write for entertainments they write just to accomplish their tasks as Adas & Bakır (2013) explained that" students do not write very often and most of what they write is classroom bound "(p.252) .Another factor is that learners do not pay attention to the teacher's instructions inside the classrooms, which leads to the student's deviation from the topic in their written works.

2-Aspects of difficulties:

Problems with grammar: Harmer (2001) has defined as “the description of the ways in which words can change their forms and can be combined into sentences in that language” (p. 12). Grammar is a main component of any language in the world, without grammar students can not understand for example the time of action whether it happened in the past or in the present. One of the problems generally faced by most of students of English is the poor grammar; students are

even ignorant of the basic roles and structural patterns which they are supposed to have learnt as the lower level. The second problem is that students find the grammatical lesson so difficult and boring. In this case, it's better for the teacher to use the communicative way of teaching grammar than the traditional way. Grammar, as they all know should be presented in context. Whatever the technique is used to present grammar, it should be followed by guided practice this can help the learner process language. Moreover, students must work on prepositions, word order because different languages use them differently. Also reading books will help them to enhance their grammar and to form meaningful sentences and putting the prepositions in context.

Problems with vocabulary: vocabulary is defined by Cambridge dictionary as "all the words known and used by a person". Learning vocabulary seems to be one of the easiest things about learning a certain level, most of students face difficulties such as; word choice because there are a lot of words in English compared with many other languages. Besides, most of students learn vocabulary passively which means; that they understand words but they do not use them in their writing or speaking, maybe because they do not take risks in applying what they have learnt, or they forget them easily as

Rahman(2015) clearly explained that "remembering English words as a foreign language is not easy, it depends on the learners "retention".(p.5).

Moreover, most students find the teacher's explanation boring; they do not give their attention when the teacher is explaining the material.

Problems with spelling and punctuation: Punctuation is very important for the structure of the text, it can be defined as a set of symbols and marks which are used to clarify meaning in a text by separating strings of words into clauses, phrases and sentences. Punctuation helps students organize their writing, Although most of EFL

students ignore using punctuation marks .Carroll and Wilson (1993) illustrated some problems linked to punctuation, the first point is that punctuation is not totally exact and very complex because the way they punctuate changes the meaning completely because each punctuation mark has its distinctive way of interpreting the meaning. On the other hand, spelling problems among students is linked to reading problems as Firth (1980) clearly agree with this idea by saying that "Learning to read should imply learning to spell ,and learning to spell should imply on learning to read "(p.496), another point is that students most of time do not check if the words they use are correct or not or maybe they do not pronounce them the same way. Because as we all know that British spelling is totally different from American spelling. Furthermore, students do not concentrate very well when it comes to spelling sessions because the majority do not understand the correct rules of spelling proposed by the teacher ,so Harmer (2001) proposed that if students really start to read extensively, they will overcome spelling difficulties overtime.

Conclusion

As a productive skill, writing is significant for students in the learning of the target language. In the context of study, writing is one of the basic elements in the curriculum of foreign language teaching. This chapter shed light on the theoretical framework surrounding the skill of writing, and the main microskills and processes in writing composition. It also deals with the teaching of writing in different approaches, and it ends with the main difficulties encountered in writing.

Chapter Three: Data Analysis and Findings

Chapter III

Data analysis and findings of the students' questionnaire

Introduction

The method that will be used in this research is the descriptive method since, it helps us determine investigating students' writing difficulties, and common errors and they share in writing. In doing so, a students' questionnaire was administered with the aim of identifying learners' views of writing. Depending on the questionnaire as a data gathering tool.

The students' questionnaire is administered to third year LMD of English at Khenchela University. This chapter includes a description of the population from which the sample was selected. In addition, it covers a description of the questionnaire, an analysis of the questionnaire Moreover, this chapter deals with a discussion of the findings and ends with suggestions and recommendation for further research.

III.1.Population

Third year LMD students of English at university of Khenchela are the whole population. It consists over an approximate number of 150students. For the lack of time, the writers chose a sample of 28 students randomly.

III.2.Design and Description of the students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire is designed to third year LMD students'of the department of English at Khenchela University.

The questionnaire is composed of nineteen (19) questions mixed between closed question, which contains yes or no questions, multiple choices and opened question where students are able to give their opinions on effective writing.

Questions where they are asked to pick their own answers providing a justification for the selection. In addition, there exist other questions with a 'yes' and 'no' answers with a justification space if the answer matched to the option 'no'.

Moreover, the questionnaire is categorized into five main types. Questions (1) and (2) are under background information of the students. The second type, question (3) to (5), entitled: Students writing proficiency deals with aspects related to students' perception of their level and motivation in writing, and their opinions on effective writing. The third part of the questionnaire, question (6) to (10), entitled student's difficulties in writing deals with difficulties in writing and the given time is it enough to writing. It also tackles features such as the writing process they should take it in consideration in writing, the use of dictionaries, respecting teacher's instruction during writing in other modules and how often students write outside classroom .

Furthermore, other question in this type deals with writing modes students use. The fourth type, question (11) to (15), entitled academic writing are mainly related to students' use of SMS texting, internet and social networking sites, the type of language they use in these services and their impact on their English writing. The fifth type of the questionnaire, question (16) to (19) entitled the role of reading in enhancing student's writing skills deals with the connection between reading and writing and its importance in improving writing skill.

III .3. Analysis of the students' questionnaire

Part one: Background information

Question 01: 1-How many years you have been studying english at university?

This question aimed to determine the number of years students have been studying at university to see whether it is sufficient to accomplish writing proficiency.

Frequency	Years of studying English	Percentage
28	3 years	100%

Table03: Students study English years

Question 02: How do you assess your English level?

a- Excellent b- Good c- Average

d-Low

This question aimed to determine how students evaluate their English level.

Option	percentage
Excellent	10,7%
Good	75%
Average	10,7%
Low	3,6%
Total	100%

Table 04: Students' English level

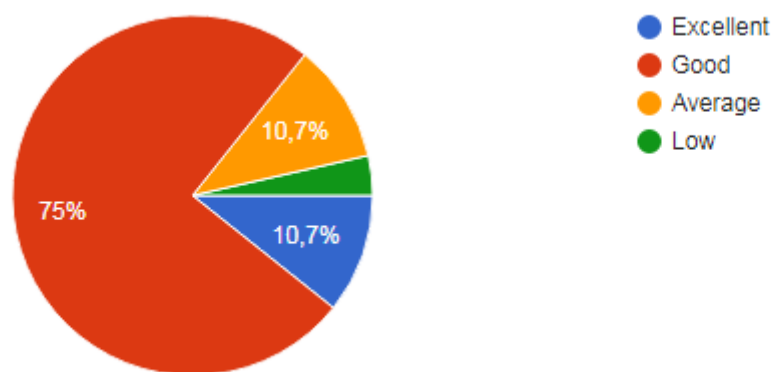


Figure 05: Students' English level

We can deduce from Figure 05 that the highest rate of respondents (75%) claim to have an average level, others (10,7%) of them claim to have an average level. (10,7%) have declared to have a good level, while the remaining respondents (3.6%) appeared to have a low level in English.

Part two: Students writing proficiency

Question 03: Do you like writing?

a-Yes b-No

This question aimed to determine how for students like writing

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	21	75%
No	7	25%
Total	28	100%

Table 05: Students' like writing

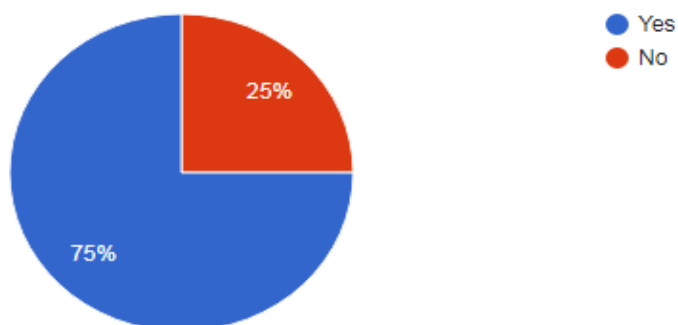


Figure 06: Students' like writing

As noticed in the figure 06, the majority of respondents (75%) of students assume that they like writing, as the rest (25%) has stated that unfortunately do not like writing

Question 04: What is an effective writing to you?

This question aimed to determine students' opinions about effective writing.

Opinions	Frequency	Percentage
writing that respect the standards of formal version and make your ideas organized with a process and understandable	15	53,57%
To develop communication skills	5	17,85%
Missing answer	8	28,57%
Total	28	100%

Table 06: Students' opinions about effective writing

Question 05: Is your writing proficiency?

a- Excellent b- Good c- Average d- Low

This question aimed to determine how students actually assess their writing proficiency.

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	0	0%
Good	21	74,1%
Average	6	22,2%
Low	1	3,6%
Total	28	100%

Table 07: The level of writing proficiency

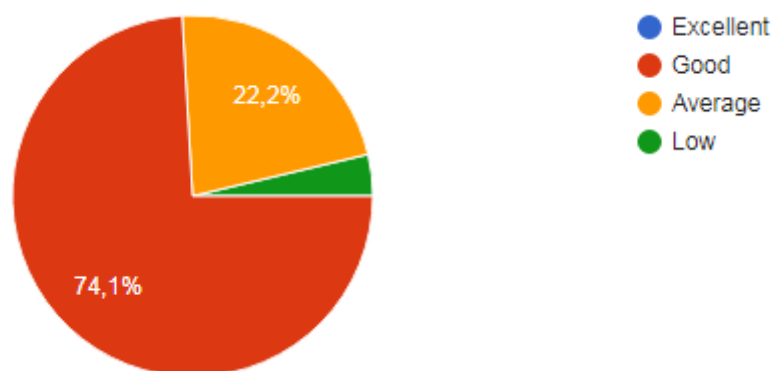


Figure 07: The level of writing proficiency

Figure 07 demonstrated that the majority of students 74,1% consider that the level of their writing proficiency is good while 22,2% claimed to have an average level.

Part three: student's difficulties in writing

Question06: Which problems do you face while writing? (You can choose more than one answer)

- a- Grammar b-Vocabulary c-punctuation d-Punctuation
 e-Formal style

This question aimed to determine the difficulties that students face when they are writing

Aspects of difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Grammar	9	22%
Vocabulary	7	18%
Punctuation	7	15%
Spelling	7	16%
Formal style	12	29%
Total	42	100%

Table 08: Aspects of difficulties in writing

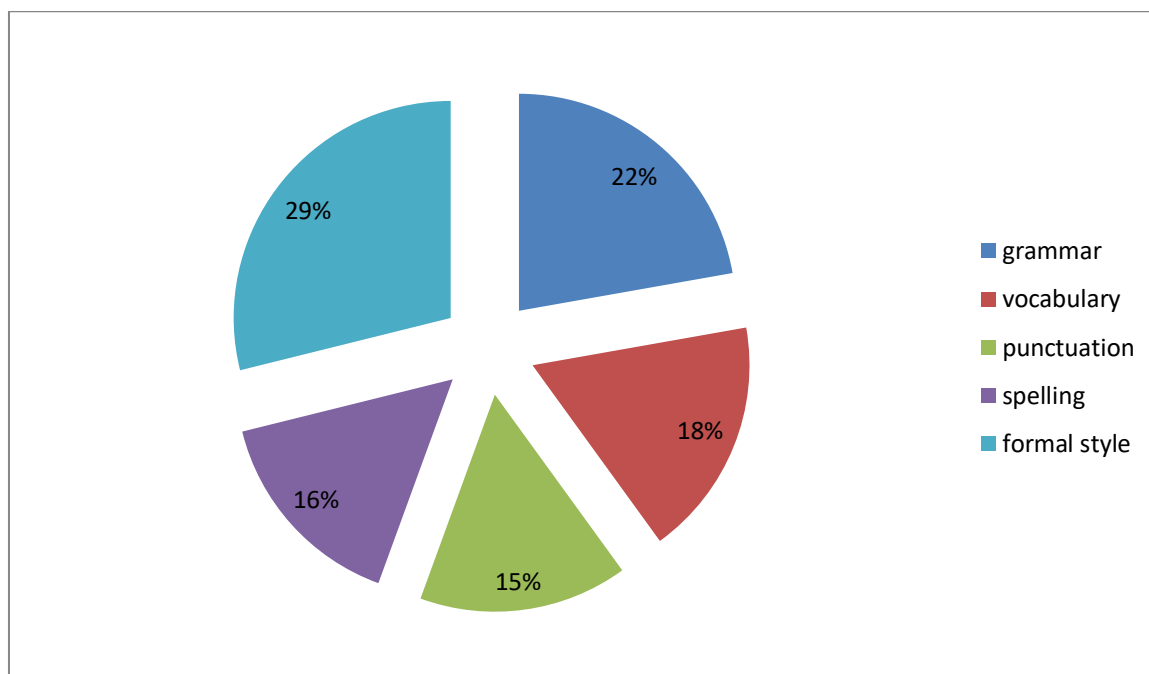


Figure 08: Aspects of difficulties in writing

Figure 08 showed that the majority of students 29% claimed to have difficulties

in formal face style, while 22% of them claim to have problems with grammar, then (18% declared to have problems with vocabulary and the minority 16% have problems with spelling and 15% have problems with punctuation.

Question07: Do you think that the given time is enough for you to answer writing activities?

A-Yes b- No

This question aimed to determine the sufficiency of time for students to answer the writing activities.

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	18	64,3%
No	10	35,7%
Total	28	100%

Table 09: The sufficiency of writing time

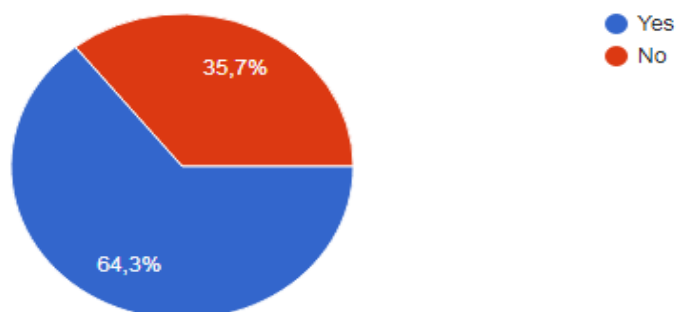


Figure 09: The sufficiency of writing time

As it is showed in the figure 09 the majority of students 64,3% seen to be totally satisfied with the given time to answer writing activities, unlike the rest of them 35,7% claim that the time is not enough to answer the writing activities.

Question08: Do you take in consideration the writing process in your written assignments?

a-Yes b-No

The aim behind this question aimed to determine if the students give respect to the writing process in their assignments.

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	96,4%
No	1	3,5%
Total	28	100%

Table 10: Respect to the writing process

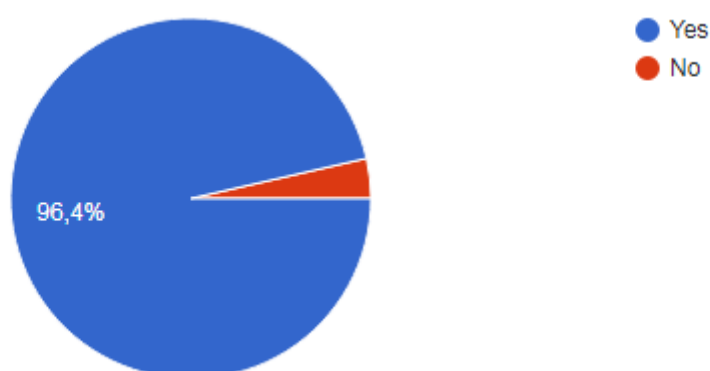


Figure 10: Respect to the writing process

As it the figure 10 showed that 96,4% of students confirm that they do respect the writing process in their written assignments.

Question09: Which tool that you use help you the most to write during the session?

a- Dictionary b-Internet c-Books

The aim behind this question is to determine which tool that help students in the session.

Tool	Frequency	Percentage
Dictionary	9	28,6%

Internet	15	57,1%
Books	4	14,3%
Total	28	100%

Table 11: Tool help students in the session

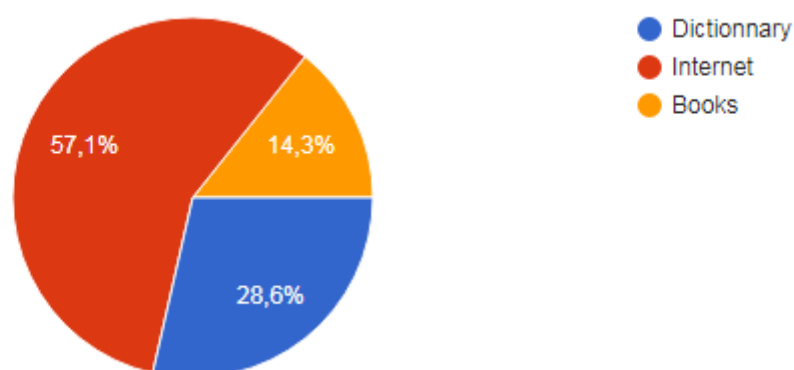


Figure 11: Tool help students in the session

As it is noticed in the Figure11, the highest rate of respondents 57,1% claim to use internet while 14,3% of them do use books.

Question10: Do you think that the teachers rules are helpful for you in other modules?

This question aimed to determine the helpfulness of the teachers' rules for students in other modules.

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	100%
No	0	0 %
Total	28	100%

Table 12: The helpfulness of the teachers rules for students in other modules

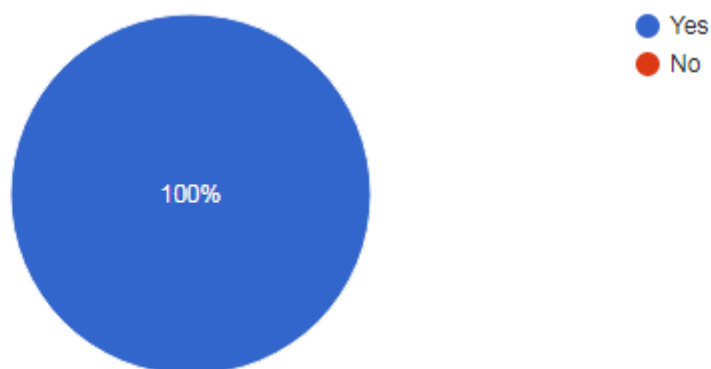


Figure 12: The helpfulness of the teachers rules for students in other modules

As the Figure12 showed that 100% of students are totally agree that the teacher's rules are very helpful for them in other modules.

Part four: Academic writing

Question11: How often do you write outside the classroom?

a-Always b-Often c-Rarely d-Never

This question aimed to determine if students write outside classrooms.

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Always	5	14,8%
Often	12	44,4%
Rarely	8	29,6%
Never	3	11,1%
Total	28	100%

Table 13: Students write outside classrooms

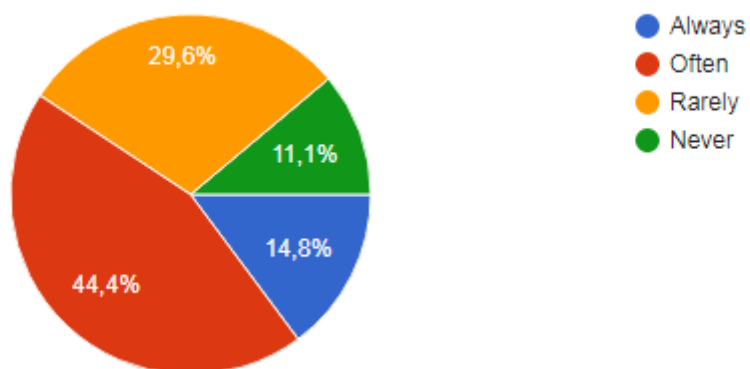


Figure 13: Students write outside classrooms

As it is shown in Figure13, the majority of students 44,4% declared that they write outside classroom very often while 29,6% claim that they practice writing rarely.

Question12: Which of the following modes you use more often in your writing outside the classroom?

a-Personal b-Narrative c-Expository d-Persuasive

This question aimed to determine which mode students use the most when they write outside the classroom.

Modes used	Frequency	Percentage
Personal	13	48,1%
Narrative	8	25,9%
Expository	2	7,5%
Persuasive	5	18,5%
Total	28	100%

Table 14: Modes students use when write outside the classroom

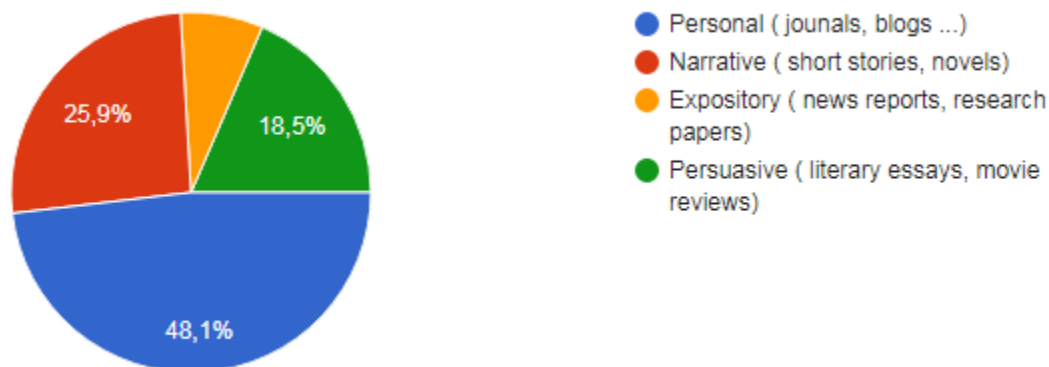


Figure 14: Modes students use when write outside the classroom

Figure14 showed that a total of 48,1% of students claim to use the personal mode while 25,9% claim to use the narrative mode.

Question13: How often do you practice English writing via/through Internet, social media or SMS?

a-Always b-Often c-Rarely d-Never

This question aimed to determine how often do students practice writing is it through SMS/Internet, social media.

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Always	11	40,7%
Often	12	44,4%
Rarely	3	11,1%
Never	2	3,7%

Total	28	100%
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Table 15: Students practice writing is it through SMS/Internet, social media

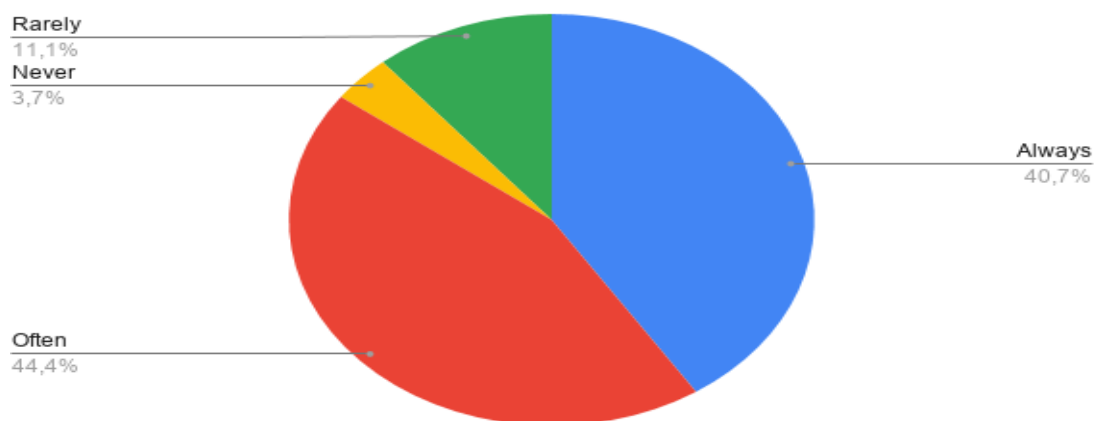


Figure 15: Students practice writing is it through SMS/Internet, social media

Figure 15 demonstrated clearly that 44,4% of students practice English writing very often while 40,7% of them practice writing always through both SMS /Internet and social media, while 11,1% of them practice writing rarely.

Question 14: What kind of language do you use when using Internet or SMS?

a- Formal English (Academic English) b- Colloquial English (Informal, casual English) c- Both

The aim behind this question is aimed to figure out which kind of language do students use when they use SMS or Internet.

kind	Frequency	Percentage
Formal English	3	11,1%
Colloquial English (informal)	13	48,1%
Both	12	40,7%
Total	28	100%

Table 16: The kind of English students use when using internet or SMS

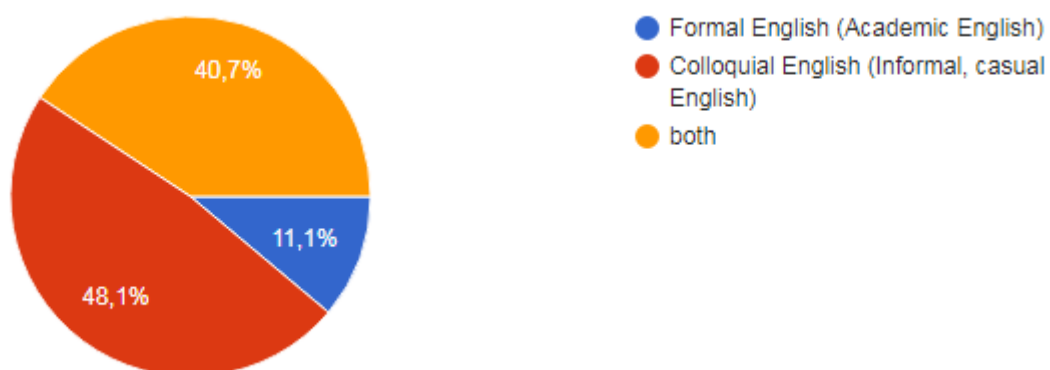


Figure 16: The kind of English students use when using internet or SMS

Figure16 showed that48,1% of students declared that they use colloquial English(informal English) when they use SMS or internet while 11,1% of students respondent that they use formal English.

14.1. Justify your answer:

Answer	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage

<p>formal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I use the formal English when texting my teachers, whereas I use the colloquial English when chatting with friends. - A breath taking essays are those written with academic English - Because it's more academic 	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">11,1%</p>
<p>Informal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - because I communicate just with friends there is no need to use the formal one - Because it's easier - I use informal Language because I text only my friends - To gain time and feel more comfortable when i did mistakes - Because the words delivered are for friends - I usually use the internet to communicate with friends or 	<p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">48,1%</p>

	<p>something else so i use the informal English</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because i talk with my friends - Because i watch English (American) movies so often that's why I tend to use casual English and because it is easier - It's the easiest kind of language 	<p>1</p> <p>1</p> <p>5</p>	
Both	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sometimes i don't know the correct word if it is formal or informal - I use the formal English when texting my teachers, whereas I use the colloquial English when chatting with friends. - I have to put into consideration the person I talk to sometimes I have to use formal English and sometimes It has to be practical (short and direct) - both because sometimes you need to practice on your writing and in other times when you are in another mood you just write because you 	<p>3</p> <p>5</p> <p>2</p> <p>2</p>	40,7%

	want to write as if just for entertainment		
Total		28	100%

Table 17: Students' justifications to the kind of English they use

Question 15: Do you think that Internet and SMS chatting effects negatively your academic writing?

a-Yes b-No

This question aimed to figure out how much internet/SMS chatting affect students' academic writing.

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	35,7%
No	18	64,3%
Total	28	100%

Table 18: Internet/SMS chatting affect students' academic writing

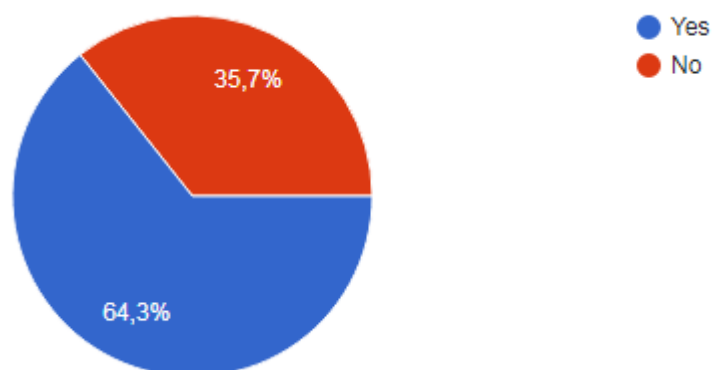


Figure 17: Internet/SMS chatting affect students' academic writing

Figure17 showed clearly that the majority of students 64,3% declared that SMS chatting and internet really affects negatively their academic writing while 35,7% of them declared that it does not affect their writing.

Part five: The role of reading in enhancing student's writing skills

Question 16: Do you prefer to have a module for reading comprehension in your future program?

a-Agree b-Disagree c-Strongly agree d-Strongly disagree

This question aimed to determine of students prefer to have a reading module in their future program.

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	19	67,9%
Disagree	4	14,3%
Strongly agree	5	17,9%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	28	100%

Table 19: Students prefer to have a reading module in their future program.

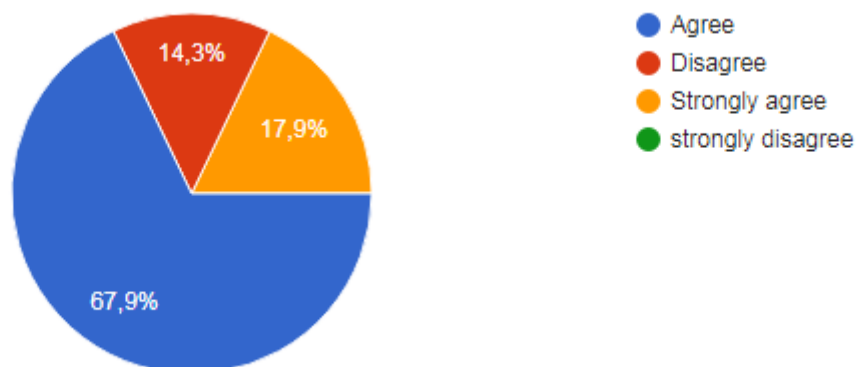


Figure 18: Students prefer to have a reading module in their future program.

Figure18 showed clearly that 67,9% of students agree to have a module of reading comprehension while 14,3% disagree to have it.

16.1. Why

Answer	Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	- because reading can develop both speaking & writing skills.	1	17,9%
	- It will help us a lot specially in khenchela we got nothing already	1	
	- To take my writing level to high level	3	
Agree	- Reading isn't just about making sounds out loud it abt understanding the material you read	1	67,9%
	- It will help me to develop my writing skills	1	
	- Reading would enhance our writing proficiency	1	

	- Its mold the writing skills	1	
	- To learn new vocabularies and get ideas	1	
	- It helps concentrate more while reading a text and have a better understanding	1	
	- To enhance our knowledge and skills in reading and writing the foreign languages	1	
	- It help us to progress pour skills un writing	1	
	- To improve my writing skills and my level if English language	4	
	-To improve my academic English	5	
Disagree	-no need for me	4	14,3%
Strongly disagree		0	0%
Total		28	100%

Table 20: Students justifications to internet/SMS chatting affect students' academic writing

Question 17: Is reading outside and inside classroom important in enhancing your writing?

This question aimed to figure out if reading outside and inside classroom is important in enhancing their writing .

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	100%
No	0	0%
Total	28	100%

Table 21: The importance of reading in enhancing writing

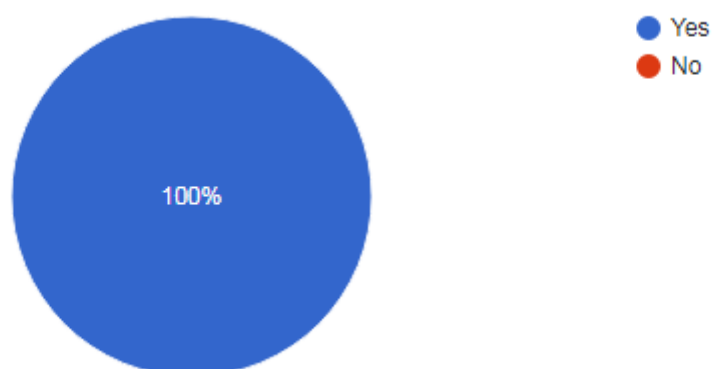


Figure 19: The importance of reading in enhancing writing

Figure 19 showed clearly that the total number of students 100% believe that reading is important in enhancing their writing.

Question 18: How often do you practice reading?

a-Always b-Often c-Rarely d-Never

This question aimed at determining the degree of practicing reading.

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Always	7	25%
Often	15	53,6 %
Rarely	6	21,4%
Never	0	0%
Total	28	100%

Table 22: The degree of practicing reading

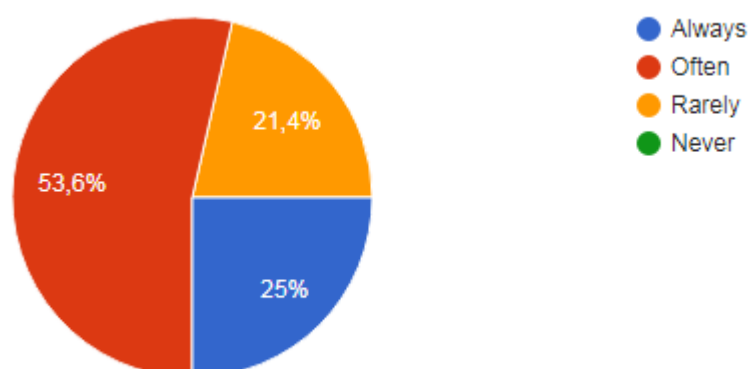


Figure 20: The degree of practicing reading

As it is noticed in Figure20 showed that 53,6% of students which is the highest rate of respondents practice reading very often while 21,4% of them declared that they practice reading rarely.

Question 19: What forms of written works do you read?

a-Books b-Magazines c-Online articles d-Newspaper

The aim behind this question is to know forms of written works do they

read.

Forms	Frequency	Percentage
Books	14	50%
Magazines	1	3,6%
Online articles	11	39,3%
Newspaper	2	7,1%
Total	28	100%

Table 23: Forms of written works students read

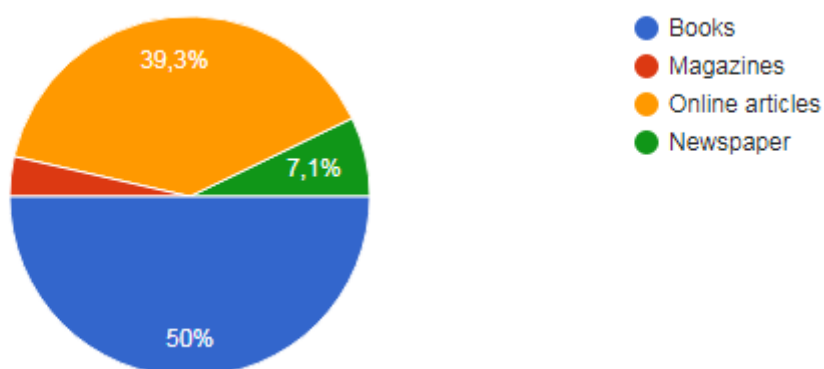


Figure 21: Forms of written works students read

Figure 21 showed clearly that the half number of respondents 50% prefer to read books while 39,3% of them read online article and 7,1% of students read newspapers.

III.4. Interpretation of the findings

The analysis of the questionnaire has revealed that most of students do like writing, and they found that writing is interesting. The questionnaire shows that the majority of students have a good English level and a good writing proficiency as well. Yet, most of students agreed that effective writing is the one which provides certain conditions like; formal style writing process and so on. When it comes to the difficulties students face when they write, the questionnaire revealed most of students confirmed to have problems with three main aspects; grammar as the highest rate 35,7% then formal style with 46,4% and vocabulary with 28,6%.

During the writing session, students declared that the given time to answer writing activities is largely sufficient, and they do respect the writing process in their written assignments, while the minority does not because they forget it. Besides, 57,1% of students considered Internet as a helpful tool in which they depend on in the writing session, despite the fact that they agreed in the same time that it affects negatively their academic writing.

On the other hand, the majority of students confirmed that they often practice writing via Internet, using informal style because they feel more comfortable while using it, and think that formal style is difficult and boring. Furthermore, 35% of respondents declared that they often practice reading while they all agreed that reading enhances their writing skills, in addition they agreed also to have a reading session in their future program.

III.5. Limitation of the study

Conducting this study there exist several limitations which made the results to be less accurate:

- Time was not sufficient to investigate student's difficulties in writing in a more detailed way.
- Student's willingness to give honest answers for the questionnaire

III.6. Significance of the study

Writing proficiency is demanded largely from students to do various tasks, homework's to end up with dissertations. Teachers of writing at the department of English in the University of Khenchela will find this study useful in exploring students major difficulties in writing it will be clearly useful not only for teacher but also for students; they will benefit from the research findings to organize their writing plan for better understanding. Also this study will provide the teachers with perceptions about the writing skill as well as for the coming research who want to carry their studies on the same subject.

III.7. Recommendations and suggestions

After conducting the present research and collecting findings, these are some proposed suggestions and recommendations directed to the teaching staff in order to reach systematic teaching and learning writing for the sake of third year students at University of Abbes Laghrour Khenchela:

- 1- To generalize the results of this study on a larger population in the department of English at the University of Khenchela.

- 2- To provide more sessions for reading practice to refresh the student's minds to produce more written works.
- 3- To focus more on detailed writing aspects and examining them in association with; the amount of reading they practice, the type of activities they exercise and the use of technologies to develop student's writing skills.

General Conclusion

Writing is certainly a valuable and an essential component in EFL. This case study aims at spotting the light on investigating EFL Students' writing difficulties and common errors in writing. During writing composition, students generally hesitate to write, for they strive to find the proper words, struggle with the grammar of the language, or they may find punctuation difficult.

English learners especially third year students should be aware to avoid of writing difficulties and make errors in writing and enhance their level in written English language. Thus foreign English teachers should guide their students to raise their writing skill.

The findings of this research reveal that third year English students at the University of Khenchela have different writing difficulties. According to the results obtained from the questionnaire, students seem to have main difficulties concerning vocabulary, grammar and academic style. Therefore teachers are advised to use these findings for an effective teaching of writing in the future, whereas students are encouraged to use the findings in developing their writing proficiency. Therefore teachers are advised to use these findings for an effective teaching of writing in the future, whereas students are encouraged to use the findings in developing their writing proficiency.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Surdents' questionnaire.

Dear student, this questionnaire was to develop for a purpose of investigating the students writing difficulties, and the presence of colloquial writing in their writings. We would be grateful if you could fill this questionnaire. And we inform you your response will be completely anonymous and only used for survey purposes.

Thank you

Questions:

1-How many years you have been studying english at university?

.....

2-How do you assess your English level?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Low

3-Do you like writing?

- Yes
- No

4-What is an effective writing to you?

.....

5-Is your writing proficiency?

- Excellent
- Good
- Average
- Low

6-Which problems do you face while writing ? (you can choose more than one answer)

- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Punctuation
- Spelling
- Formal style

7-Do you think that the given time is enough for you to answer the writing activities?

- Yes
- No

8-Do you take in consideration the writing process in your written assignments?

- Yes
- No

If no justify:

.....

9-Which tool that you use help you the most to write during the session?

- Dictionary
- Internet
- Books

10-Do you think that the teacher's writing rules are helpful for you in other modules?

- Yes
- No

If no why?

.....

11-How often do you write outside the classroom?

- Always
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

12-Which of the following modes you use more often in your writing outside the classroom?

- Personal (journals, blogs ...)
- Narrative (short stories, novels)
- Expository (news reports, research papers)
- Persuasive (literary essays, movie reviews)

13-How often do you practice English writing via/through Internet, social media or SMS?

- Always
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

14-What kind of language do you use when using Internet or SMS?

- Formal English (Academic English)
- Colloquial English (Informal, casual English)
- Both

Please justify your answer:

.....

15-Do you think that Internet and SMS chatting effects negatively your academic writing?

- Yes`
- No

16-Do you prefer to have a module for reading comprehension in your future program?

- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly agree
- Strongly disagree

Why?

.....

17-Is reading outside and inside classroom important in enhancing your writing?

- Yes
- No

If no justify:

.....

18-How often do you practice reading?

- Always
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

19-What forms of written works do you read?

- Books
- Magazines
- Online articles
- Newspaper

Summary of the research

This study is about investigating student's common errors and difficulties in writing, it is clearly divided into two main chapters one is theoretical and the other one is practical.

The first part deals with a general overview on writing, as well as approaches and the main steps to achieve good writing. While the second part deals with a general interpretation of results, the writers came up with these results through a questionnaire delivered to twenty eight of 3rd year LMD students at the department of English at the University of Abbes Laghrour khenchela.

The research end up with a general conclusion which involves that ; reading has a great role in enhancing student's writing skills and learning to write is not simple as it seems, it takes time and a lot of conditions to reach the required academic writing

ملخص البحث

تناول هذه الدراسة موضوع الأخطاء الشائعة و الصعوبات التي يواجهها الطلبة أثناء الكتابة. حيث ينقسم البحث إلى فصلين أساسيين، حيث كان الفصل الأول نظريا من خلال الحديث عن مقدمة عامة عن الكتابة، بالإضافة إلى بعض المقاربات و أهم الخطوات التي يجب مراعاتها عند الكتابة للوصول إلى المستوى الجيد للكتابة، أما الفصل الثاني فهو تطبيقي حيث يتناول تفسير عام للنتائج.

لنصل في الأخير إلى خاتمة مفادها أن القراءة تلعب دورا هاما في تحسين مهارات الكتابة للطلاب، و أيضا إن تعلم الكتابة ليس بالأمر السهل كما يبدو، بل يتطلب الوقت والجهد و الكثير من الشروط للوصول إلى الكتابة الأكاديمية المطلوبة.