

Abstract

The present study probes the effect of pre-task planning on EFL learners' accuracy in writing. In other words, this study aims at exploring the relationship between pre-task planning and reaching accuracy in writing. A case of second year LMD students at the department of English at the University of Bejaia is studied. To reach the goal of this research, a pre-experimental study is conducted; it is based on the analysis of data collected through a mixed methodology based on quantitative and qualitative methods. While the former was based on pre-experiment with pre-post test and students' questionnaires, the latter was based on textual analysis and classroom observation. This makes our methodology triangulated. These instruments (questionnaires, textual analysis and classroom observation) serve to answer the following research questions: 1) what kind of difficulties do EFL learners encounter in writing? 2) Do EFL learners plan prior to writing? If yes, what kind of planning strategies they use do develop their writing? 3) What effect does pre-task planning in writing have on students' accuracy? The findings of our study revealed that our participants encounter many difficulties in writing mainly grammar, lack of vocabulary and spelling. In addition, they reported difficulties in making the text accurate to some extent. Finally, the accuracy of our participants in writing was slightly enhanced and improved after the experiment regarding the difference between the pre and post test; however, the difference is not significant. This made us conclude that we can neither confirm nor disconfirm our hypothesis.

Key words: EFL writing, Task Based Language Teaching, accuracy, pre-task planning.

Résumé

La présente étude explore l'effet de la planification pré-tâche sur la précision par écrit des étudiants de deuxième année LMD inscrits à l'université de Bejaia. Pour atteindre l'objectif de cette étude, le modèle pré-expérimental est adopté ; il est basé sur l'analyse des données recueillies dans le cadre d'une méthodologie mixte basée sur des méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives. Tandis que l'ancienne était basée sur les tests de l'écrit (pré et post) et des questionnaires, celle-ci était fondée sur l'analyse de texte et de l'observation en classe. Ce qui rend notre méthodologie triangulée. Ces instruments ont servi à répondre aux questions de recherche suivantes : 1)- quel genre de difficultés nos apprenants rencontrent par écrit ? 2)- Est-ce que nos apprenants planifient avant l'écriture ? Si oui, quel type de stratégies de planification qu'ils utilisent pour développer leurs écrits? 3)- quel effet la planification pré-tâche par écrit a sur la précision de nos apprenants?

Les résultats de cette étude ont révélé que nos participants rencontrent beaucoup de difficultés par écrit principalement la grammaire, le manque de vocabulaire, et l'orthographe. En outre, ils ont rapporté des difficultés pour rendre le texte exact dans une certaine mesure. Enfin, la précision de nos participants par écrit a été légèrement renforcée et améliorée après l'expérience. La différence entre le pré et le poste test n'est pas significative. Cela nous a fait conclure que nous ne pouvons ni confirmer ni infirmer notre hypothèse.

Mots clés: EFL écriture, l'enseignement de langue basée sur la tâche, la précision, la planification pré-tâche.

THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC OF ALGERIA
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH
ABEDERAHMANE MIRA UNIVERSITY OF BEJAIA
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The Effect of Pre-Task Planning on EFL Learners Accuracy in Writing

The case of Second Year LMD Students at the Department of English University of
Bejaia

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of a master degree in
Didactics of English

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family:

To the light of my life my mother, to the best person in my life my father and the flowers of my family my brothers Sofiane, Yanis and Aïmed. To my grandmothers, my cousins and my uncles.

I also dedicate it to my best friends who have always encouraged me. To all my friends who helped me in a way or in another.

I dedicate it to everyone who sets me on my path and who loves me.

“The price of success is hard work, dedication to the job at hand, and the determination that whether we win or lose, we have applied the best of ourselves to the task at hand”.

Vince Lombardi

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Abstract

The present study probes the effect of pre-task planning on EFL learners' accuracy in writing. In other words, this study aims at exploring the relationship between pre-task planning and reaching accuracy in writing. A case of second year LMD students at the department of English at the University of Bejaia is studied. To reach the goal of this research, a pre-experimental study is conducted; it is based on the analysis of data collected through a mixed methodology based on quantitative and qualitative methods. While the former was based on pre-experiment with pre-post test and students' questionnaires, the latter was based on textual analysis and classroom observation. This makes our methodology triangulated. These instruments (questionnaires, textual analysis and classroom observation) serve to answer the following research questions: 1) what kind of difficulties do EFL learners encounter in writing? 2) Do EFL learners plan prior to writing? If yes, what kind of planning strategies they use do develop their writing? 3) What effect does pre-task planning in writing have on students' accuracy? The findings of our study revealed that our participants encounter many difficulties in writing mainly grammar, lack of vocabulary and spelling. In addition, they reported difficulties in making the text accurate to some extent. Finally, the accuracy of our participants in writing was slightly enhanced and improved after the experiment regarding the difference between the pre and post test; however, the difference is not significant. This made us conclude that we can neither confirm nor disconfirm our hypothesis.

Key words: EFL writing, Task Based Language Teaching, accuracy, pre-task planning.

Table of the Content	Pages
Dedication -----	- I
Acknowledgement-----	II
Abstract -----	III
Table of the Content-----	IV
List of Abbreviations-----	VIII
List of Tables-----	IX
List of Figures-----	X
Glossary of Terms -----	XI

General Introduction

Introduction -----	1
I. Source of Inspiration-----	1
II. Statement of the Problem -----	1
III. Research Questions -----	2
VI. Research Hypothesis -----	2
V. Aim of the Study -----	2
VI. Background and Significance of the study -----	3
VII. Methodology-----	3
VII.1. Data Collection Methods-----	3
VII.2. Data Collection Procedures -----	4
VII.3. Data Analysis Tools -----	4
VII.4. Sample and Population -----	4
VIII. Structure of the study-----	5

Chapter one

A Brief Overview about Pre-task Planning and EFL Writing Accuracy

Introduction -----	6
Section one: Introducing EFL writing and accuracy	
I. Definition of Writing -----	6
II. Approaches to Teaching Writing -----	7
II.1. Product Approach -----	7

II.2. Process Approach-----	7
II.3. Genre Approach -----	8
III. The Cognitive Models of EFL Writing -----	9
III.1. Hayes and Flower’s 1980 Model-----	9
III.2. Bereiter and Scardamalia’s 1987 Model -----	11
III.3. Kellogg’s 1996 Model -----	13
IV. The Composing Processes and stages of Writing -----	14
IV.1. Pre-writing-----	14
IV.2. Drafting -----	15
IV.3. Reviewing -----	15
IV.4. Editing -----	15
IV.5. Publishing -----	15
V. Strategies Employed by EFL Learners -----	16
V.1. Direct Strategies -----	16
V.1.1. Memory Strategies-----	16
V.1.2. Cognitive Strategies -----	17
V.1.3. Compensation Strategies -----	17
V2. Indirect Strategies -----	17
V.2.1. Meta-cognitive Strategies -----	17
V.2.2. Affective Strategies -----	17
V.2.3. Social Strategies -----	17
VI. EFL Learners’ Difficulties in Writing -----	18
VI.1. Grammatical Issues -----	18
VI.2. Motivation and Anxiety -----	19
VI.3. Lack of planning-----	19
VII. Dimensions of L2 Performance and Accuracy -----	19
VII.1. The Origins of CAF-----	20
VII.2. Accuracy in the CAF Triad -----	20
VII.2.1. Definition of Accuracy -----	20
VII.2.2. Measures of Accuracy -----	21
VII.2.2.1. Error-free T units-----	22
VII.2.2.2. Error-free Clauses -----	22

Section two: An Overview of Task Planning

Introduction	23
I. An Overview about Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)	23
II. Definition of Task.....	23
III. Definition of Planning.....	24
IV. Types of Planning.....	24
IV.1. Pre-task Planning	25
IV.1.1. Strategic Planning.....	25
IV.1.2. Rehearsal	25
IV.2. Within task/ Online Planning.....	25
IV.2.1. Pressured online Planning	25
IV.2.2. Unpressured Online Planning	25
V. Framework and the Theoretical Basis of Planning.....	26
V.1. Planning and Working Memory.....	26
V.1.1. Baddeley’s Model	26
V.1.2. Kellogg’s Model	27
V.2. Planning and the Cognitive Models of Task Based Performance	27
V.2.1. Skehan’s limited Cognitive Hypothesis.....	27
V.2.2. Robinson’s Cognitive Hypothesis.....	28
VII. Empirical Studies on the Effects of Pre-task Planning on Writing Accuracy.....	29
Conclusion	30

Chapter two

Design, Methodology and Results

Introduction	32
---------------------------	-----------

Section one: Description of the Study

I. Research Design	32
I. 1. The Quantitative Method: Pre-Post questionnaires and pre-post tests	33
I.1.1. Pre-questionnaire	33
I.1.2. Post-questionnaire	33
I.1.3. Pre-test.....	33
I.1.4. Post-test	33
I.1.5. The Training Program.....	33
I.2. The Qualitative Method	34

II. Sample and Population -----	34
III. Data Collection Procedures-----	35
IV. Data Analysis Procedures-----	35
V. Validity, Reliability and Triangulation -----	36
Section Two: Results and Discussion	
I. Results -----	37
II. Discussion-----	55
Section Three: Limitations, Implications and Suggestions for Further Research	
I. Limitations of the Study-----	57
II. Implications -----	58
III. Suggestions for Future Research-----	59
Conclusion-----	60
General Conclusion-----	61
References -----	62

Appendices:

- Appendix 01: Students’ Pre-Questionnaire.
- Appendix 02: Students’ post-Questionnaire.
- Appendix 03: The First Session of the Pre-Experiment.
- Appendix 04: The Second Session of the Pre-Experiment.
- Appendix 05: The Third Session of the Pre-Experiment.
- Appendix 06: The Fourth Session of the Pre-Experiment.
- Appendix 07: The Fifth Session of the Pre-Experiment.
- Appendix 08: The Observation Grid.
- Appendix 09: The first Sample of Students’ essays.
- Appendix 10: The second Sample of students essays.
- Appendix 11: The Third Sample of Students’ essays.
- Appendix 12: The fourth Sample of Students’ essays.
- Appendix 13: the Fifth Sample of Students’ essays.
- Appendix 14: The first Sample of Students’ planning sheets.
- Appendix 15: The Second Sample of Students’ planning sheets.
- Appendix 16: The Third Sample of Students’ planning sheets.
- Appendix 17: The fourth Sample of Students’ planning sheets.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CAF: Complexity Accuracy Fluency.

EFL: English Foreign Language.

ELT: English Language Teaching.

L1: First Language.

L2: Second Language.

SLA: Second Language Acquisition.

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

TBLT: Task Based Language Teaching.

List of tables

Table 1: Students' age -----	37
Table 2: Students' gender -----	37
Table 3: Years of studying English at the university -----	37
Table 4: Students' decision of studying English -----	38
Table 5: Students' liking of writing -----	38
Table 6: Students' reasons behind liking writing -----	38
Table 7: Students' points of view about writing -----	39
Table 8: Students' difficulties in writing -----	40
Table 9: Students' frequency of error making in their writing -----	41
Table 10: Students' errors in writing -----	41
Table 11: Students' attitudes towards accuracy -----	42
Table 12: Students' reasons behind their answers (yes) -----	42
Table 13: Students' suggestions of how to avoid errors -----	43
Table 14: Students' process of writing -----	43
Table 15: Students' planning of their writing -----	43
Table 16: Students' planning strategies -----	45
Table 17: Students' beliefs about the importance of planning -----	45
Table 18: Students' reasons behind their answers (yes) -----	46
Table 19: Students' guidance on how to plan -----	46
Table 20: Students' awareness of the different planning strategies -----	47
Table 21: Students' thinking about pre-task planning -----	48
Table 22: Students' way of benefiting from pre-task planning -----	48
Table 23: Students' choice of the most helpful planning strategies -----	49
Table 24: Students' thinking about the time devotes for planning -----	49
Table 25: Students' reasons of their answers (yes/no) -----	50
Table 26: Students' focus during the planning phase -----	51
Table 27: Students' thinking about the positive effect of planning on accuracy -----	51
Table 28: Students' thinking about teaching planning thoroughly -----	51
Table 29: Students' reasons why planning should be taught thoroughly -----	52
Table 30: Students' scores in the pre-post tests -----	53

List of Figures and Graphs

Figure 1: Hayes and Flower's 1980 model -----	11
Figure 2: Bereiter and Scardamalia's 1987 model -----	12
Figure 3: Kellog's 1996 model -----	14
Figure 4: Stages of Writing Process -----	14
Figure 5: Diagram of the Strategy System (adapted from, Oxford, 1990: 4) -----	18
Figure 6: Types of Task-Based Planning (adapted from Ellis, 2005, 16) -----	25
Graph 1: Comparison between Students' who planning prior to writing and those who do not -----	44
Graph 2: Comparison between the means scores of the pre and post tests -----	54

Glossary of terms

For better understanding, a list of the most important concepts used in our research is defined below:

Anxiety. It is a negative emotional state characterized by apprehension and worry (Schwarzer, 1986). Moreover, it is defined as “*a negative affect closely related to fear and feeling of uneasy suspense*” (Rachman, 2004).

Cognitive Psychology. It has been defined as the study of how the brain processes information or it is the “*psychology of mental processes or the study of understanding and knowing*” (Groome et al., 2006)

Complexity. According to Ellis (2003) complexity refers to the extent to which the language produced by EFL learners is elaborate, varied and structured.

Information Processing Theories (IPTs). Is a model concerned on describing and explaining the way knowledge is attended to, stored and retrieved from long term memory (Eysenck & Keane, 2005, as cited in Strohm, 2008).

Motivation. Is the why of doing something; it is the desire to do something for a certain reason and is considered to be a very important element of human behaviors (Zwemer, 1960).

Strategies. Are clever plans and methods toward achieving goals. In this sense, O’Malley and Chamot (1990: 1) state that strategies are “*Special thoughts and behaviors that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn and retain new information*”.

Working Memory. Is the capacity to store, hold and maintain information for a short period of time while that information or other is processed (Dehn, 2015). He also adds that working memory equals brief storage and simultaneous processing.

General Introduction

Introduction

The recognition of writing as one of the most important skills in teaching and learning English as foreign language (EFL) is shared by both learners and instructors. And due to the fact that writing abilities lead to learners' progress, both educators and learners are interested in more efficient methods of teaching that can help learners to develop their writing skill.

I. Source of Inspiration

Being a learner of English as a foreign language for five years at the University of Bejaia, gave us the opportunity to notice and observe that students aim at achieving near native proficiency either in spoken or written English; however, this is not an easy task. They encounter many difficulties and barriers especially writing in a foreign language. Westwood (2008) in this sense argues that Writing is maybe the most difficult skill to acquire. This difficulty may be related to various factors such as the teaching method.

To achieve accuracy in writing students may use different techniques such as the different planning strategies. For this, we recognize that students need to plan prior to the task in order to improve their performance and deal effectively with their difficulties. Yet, no research has been done on task planning at the University of Bejaia. In addition, the importance of accuracy and the complexity of pre-task planning motivate us to conduct this study as a contribution to the understanding of how accurate writing is best reached and to bring an adequate change to the Algerian universities mainly university of Bejaia.

II. Statement of the Problem

Writing is a skill which enables language learners to express their feelings and emotions and to organize their ideas. As a matter of fact, writing is non-linear, it is an exploratory and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to express meaning (Zamel, 1982, as cited in Kroll, 1990). However; it is recognized by researchers as the most difficult skill (Westwood, 2008). That is why learners encounter many difficulties and constraints that lead them to write inaccurately and to produce less quality texts. Based on our prior data learners always make errors in writing. And since writing influences learners' progress, they should give more importance to writing and try to deal with their errors and the lack of accuracy. This can be achieved through applying different strategies and by being aware of writing and the different processes it involves.

Among different processes involved in writing, planning is of prime importance (Ellis, 2003, 2005). However, it is not clear enough how planning improves the writing performance. The main body of research on planning has mainly focused on oral performance in different conditions (such as studies of Crooks, 1989; Ortega, 1999; Wiggleworth, 1997). Thus, the central issue of this research is investigating the effect of pre-task planning on students' accuracy in the writing process.

III. Research Questions

To carry out this study, the following research questions are addressed:

- What kind of difficulties do EFL learners encounter in writing?
- Do EFL learners plan prior to writing? If yes, what are the different planning strategies they use to develop their writing?
- What effect does pre-task planning in writing process have on students' accuracy?

VI. Research Hypothesis

Learning to write has for a long period of time been claimed as a very difficult skill to acquire and dreaded by EFL learners (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Westwood, 2008).

Writing becomes a worry to EFL learners who generally fail in acquiring this expertise. We relate students' lack of accuracy in the writing process to the lack of planning and the lack of using effective planning strategies. Thus, we are interested in investigating the effect of pre-task planning on learners' accuracy in writing. Based on this, we are likely to hypothesize that:

"If EFL learners plan prior to composing, they would write more accurately"

V. Aim of the Study

The aim of the present work is first, to explore student's difficulties in writing. Then, we intend to implement different pre-task planning strategies in the writing process to help learners improve their writing and write more accurately. Last and not least, we are interested in investigating the effect that those implemented strategies of planning have on our students' writing accuracy.

VI. Background and Significance of the Study

Recently, there has been substantial research interest in tasks and their usefulness in EFL classes. And since “*internal dimension of tasks can both shed new light on the relationship between task interpretation, task performance, and learning*” (Byrnes and Manchon, 2014), the use of task in writing is crucial. In addition, as demonstrated by Robinson & Gilabert (2013) “*full complexity of real-world target-task performance*” purported to be covered by *the concepts of task and task learning*’ (cited in Byrnes & Manchon, 2014). That is, the complex tasks such as writing are assumed to be dealt with by the use of tasks in learning.

In Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), tasks are considered as the main unit of analysis. Therefore, there has been an increasing body of research on different aspects of L2 learners' task performance in recent years (Ellis, 2003; Ellis, 2005).

The main focus of research has been on the different procedures of task implementation and their effects on aspects of language performance including accuracy, complexity and fluency. Planning which is considered as a whole process in writing (Byrnes & Manchon, 2014) is one of the implementation variables producing relatively consistent effects on L2 task performance (Ellis, 2003; Ellis, 2005).

In view of that, the objective of our study is to investigate the influence that planning prior to writing has on learners' accuracy. Examining the reality and the kind of relation between these variables, since both of them are related to learners' academic achievement, the present research will contribute to the existing literature by shedding light on learners' difficulties in writing, the extent to which learners are accurate in their writing, and how to reach high levels of accuracy. Finally, the central aim is to probe the effect of pre-task planning on students' writing and accuracy.

VII. Methodology

VII.1. Data Collection Methods

In order to test our hypothesis which is based on causality, our design is a pre-experiment, and our choice of methodology is the use of a mixed methodology consisting of a quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection, Cohen et al., (2000) postulate that collecting data from a wide range of resources through varied methods can make up the richness and the complexity of the study. Our quantitative method consists of a pre-experiment based on a pre

and post tests with an experimental group and pre-post questionnaires, and the qualitative one consists of textual analysis and classroom observation.

VII.2. Data Collection Procedure

As the study is conducted with the use of mixed methodology, the procedures to data collection gather both quantitative and qualitative data.

For quantitative data, the most applicable instrument is a questionnaire as it is the most and widely used and is considered to be a useful instrument in data collection (Cohen et al., 2000) in addition we have used writing tests (pre and post). For the qualitative method, we evaluate students' essays. In addition we use classroom observation.

VII.3. Data Analysis Tools

After collecting data, they are analyzed using Excel 2007 and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 20 which provides us with the descriptive statistics needed for the interpretation of the findings.

VIII.4. Sample and Population

The population of this study is Second year LMD students at the University of Bejaia. The total number of the groups is five with a total number of 106 students, but only one group is chosen randomly, which is a very important method, and random samples are said to be “*unbiased samples because they tend to be representative of the population from which they come*” (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). That is to say, random selection minimizes bias.

Our decision to take Second year students is due to some factors such as the fact that they work on paragraphs and essays. Our focus in this research is to identify the effectiveness of pre-task planning on learners' accuracy in writing and second year students intend to be introduced to essay writing in the second semester of the academic year. Another reason can be summarized in the fact that in our research, we attempt to shed light on learners' difficulties in writing; therefore, second year LMD students are the appropriate choice to take as a sample for this research.

VIII. Structure of the Study

The research at hand is divided into two chapters. The first chapter is theoretical; it deals with the theoretical background and is further divided into two sections. In section one, we introduce accuracy and EFL writing, section two covers the main research findings about task planning.

The second chapter deals with the practical study; it is all about the data collection procedures and analysis as well as the findings and the results. Then, it is concluded with limitations of the study, implications and suggestions for future research.

Chapter one: a Brief Overview about Task Planning and Accuracy in EFL Writing

Introduction

The present research work aims at determining the effect of pre-task planning (or also called strategic planning) on EFL learners' accuracy in the writing process. Thus, in this study we have three main variables: pre-task planning, accuracy and the writing process. Understanding these variables and the factors that have explicit or implicit impact on them is crucial. So, this theoretical chapter aims at exploring the literature and developing a deep understanding of these variables.

Section One: Introducing EFL Writing and Accuracy

Writing is a skill that we use in different domains throughout life; however, acquiring it is not an easy task. Writing is an important language skill for EFL learners to develop their language learning, and understanding the nature of writing and the different cognitive and meta-cognitive processes it involves will help learners to reach higher levels in their writings.

In fact, this section covers the most important literature foundations about EFL writing and accuracy.

I. Definition of Writing

As a sophisticated skill (Hayes & Flower, 1981; Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001), writing has a variety of definitions from different angles and approaches. Three main approaches emerged to account for writing: the product approach, the process approach and the genre approach. In our study, we focus on the process approach since it is one of the approaches that are appropriate to improve the writing competence because it provides the learners with steps to follow in order to produce an elaborate writing.

Writing is not just combining words and sentences, it is rather a thinking process involving different stages that occur repeatedly and that develop learners' creativity since the more writers write the more they discover and create new ideas (Zamel, 1983 as cited in Kroll, 1990).

Brown (2000: 336) states that writing is a thinking process in which the writer produces a final written product by going through thinking, drafting, and revising that require specialized skills on how to generate ideas. Thus, we can add that writing is a mental activity relying on generating and organizing ideas in a specific way to attract the readers' attention.

Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001: 1) define writing as a complex task in which a coordination of different mental processes is involved. Besides, complex cognitive abilities and activities are required because of the fact that writing is a problem-solving activity.

Briefly, writing involves not only one's competence about the language system including grammar, vocabulary and spelling but also involves thinking and different cognitive and meta-cognitive processes and strategies that writers should be aware of.

II. Approaches to Teaching Writing

Writing has been recognized as the most important skill (Wilson & Trainin, 2007, as cited in Westwood, 2008). Thus, the teaching of writing is based on various approaches, each attempts to better explain writing for better teaching and learning it. However, none can be considered ideal regarding the fact that each one has been successful in one period and criticized in another.

II.1. Product approach. It is a traditional approach that continued through the 1950s and the 1960s (Clark, 2003). It is based on imitating models of texts with emphasis on the mechanical aspects of writing including grammar, syntactical structure and vocabulary development (Sheng Hung, 2008). The main focus of this approach is the final product and its correctness by examining the formal surface or the structure of the text. The writing activities are controlled by the teacher whose main role is preventing learners from making errors by focusing more on the correctness of grammar for example.

This approach has been widely criticized since it does neither foster the writers' thoughts nor develop their critical thinking and creativity as it does not adequately describe the different processes involved in writing (Silva, 1990).

II.2. Process approach. According to Silva (1990) the emergence of the process approach came as reaction to the traditional approaches and controlled compositions that showed unsatisfactory results. Process writing shifted the focus from the final product to the various steps learners need to go through as they write, to the behaviors, strategies, and difficulties of the writers (Maybin, 2005). The main principle of this approach is that writing is not a linear

process but rather recursive involving different steps and stages, Sheng Hung (2008) referred to this by arguing that the process approach came with “*its cognitive views of writing as a multi-step process*”.

Moreover, this approach stressed individual writer as the generator of original ideas. The teacher creates a motivating working context in which classroom activities encourage self-discovery and creativity (Sheng Hung, 2008). Also, the teacher helps learners to develop strategies of generating ideas, translating them into words and editing the work (Silva, 1990).

However, this approach has been criticized. Clark (2003) points out that even though the process approach has recognized its pedagogical importance, it has been criticized because of the fact that it does not address issues related to how gender, society, culture and race affect writing and it (process approach) does not provide effective solutions to students’ writing problems.

II.3. Genre approach. It regards writing as a process in which the writer takes into consideration the reader’s background, knowledge, needs and ideologies (Sheng Hung, 2008). It is developed from the work of Halliday and his theory of functional linguistics in which language is related to the way things are accomplished in different cultures. Different contexts and language purposes are associated with different registers and genres (Maybin, 2005). Moreover, this approach concerns mainly how to construct particular kinds of texts (Sommers, 2003). The proponents of this approach believe that writing is basically a social process; it involves mediation between the writer and his/her audience (Sheng Hung, 2008).

Sheng Hung (2008:17) defines genre as “*a term of grouping text together, representing how writers use language to respond to recurring situations*”. That is to say, the way writers use the language in different situations represents different sorts of texts. And the emphasis of this approach is given to rising students’ awareness of text features through using pedagogically useful information for guiding students to take control of the organization and the style of their texts. From the genre perspective, students should be exposed to different text genres by providing them with an understanding of how the context and purpose of these texts are related to their structure and lexico-grammar (Hayland, 2002). In addition, this approach views writing as a textual product putting emphasis on the linguistic or rhetorical sources available for writers to produce a text.

Yet, this approach has been criticized despite the fact that its theories treat writing as a social process constructed out of a particular context. Since “*from the genre perspective learners have simply to learn the rules and apply them uncritically in their own writing*” (Mercer & Swann, 2009). That is to say, these theories encourage students to write through teaching them how to reproduce particular genre of texts that discourages creativity.

To conclude, these approaches are labeled according to their distinct features. As a good teacher of EFL writing, the adoption of an eclectic approach is preferred for better meeting learners’ needs as well as an effective teaching/ learning process.

III. The Cognitive Models of Writing

Writing is a thinking tool and understanding its nature requires the analysis of the different cognitive processes it involves (Hayes and Flower, 1981; Bereiter and scardamalia, 1987; Byrnes and Manchon, 2014). And since writing is essentially a problem-solving activity (Hayland, 2002; Deane, Odendahl et al, 2008), cognitive psychologists have evolved and elaborated different models that explain writing and its nature. According to Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001: 26) “*the notions of memory and limited capacities are always evoked in general writing model*” that is to say, these models discuss the role of working memory and the limitation in the processing capacities of human mind in writing.

III.1. Hayes and Flower’s 1980 model. In 1980, Hayes and Flower created the first model of text writing in which they attempted to classify the different activities and processes that occur during writing and their relationship to the task environment and to the writer (Deane, Odendahl et al., 2008). According to Alamargot and Chamquoy (2001) this model is composed of three main parts: task environment, long term memory and the general writing process.

By **task environment**, Hayes and Flower (1980) refer to the environmental factors and everything outside the writer that contributes to shape the writing process. It encompasses: some writing instructions that determine the general theme of the text (writing assignment), its communicative goals (audience) and some motivational factors (motivational cues) that derive from the writing situation. And the text produced so far or the gradually written text that is used as a reference for the writer to review what he has written and what to write next (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001).

Then, **long term memory** refers to a “storehouse” of the previous knowledge about the topic (linguistic knowledge), the audience (pragmatic knowledge), as well as knowledge of

writing plans and problem representations (schemes). Hayes and Flower (1981: 371) explained this by saying that “*Sometimes a single cue in an assignment, such as ‘write a persuasive...,’ can let a writer tap a stored representation of a problem and bring a whole raft of writing plans into play*”.

Finally, **the writing process** that refers to three important processes writing is composed of and that allow translating the writer’s knowledge into a linguistic product (Deane, Odendahl et al., 2008). These processes are planning, translating and reviewing. First, planning takes the writing assignment and long term memory as an input to produce the output. That is to say, in the planning phase the writer will relate the assignment to his previous knowledge in order to start his writing, moreover, it is the representation of knowledge that will be used in writing. Planning includes three sub-activities: generating, organizing and goal setting (Hayes and Flower, 1981). Second, translating is transforming the content of the planned text into written words as Deane, Odendahl et al., (2008: 4) argue “*translating takes the conceptual plan of the document and produces the text expressing the planned content*”. In other words, translating constitutes of transforming the representation of the ideas into produced and written text. Third, reviewing which involves reading and monitoring. While in the former different modifications for both ideas and words are applied in order to improve it, the latter includes the meta-cognitive processes that allow the writer to move between the needs of the task. In this Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001: 5) say “*monitoring defines the order of activation of the three preceding processes*”. This model is summarized in the figure below:

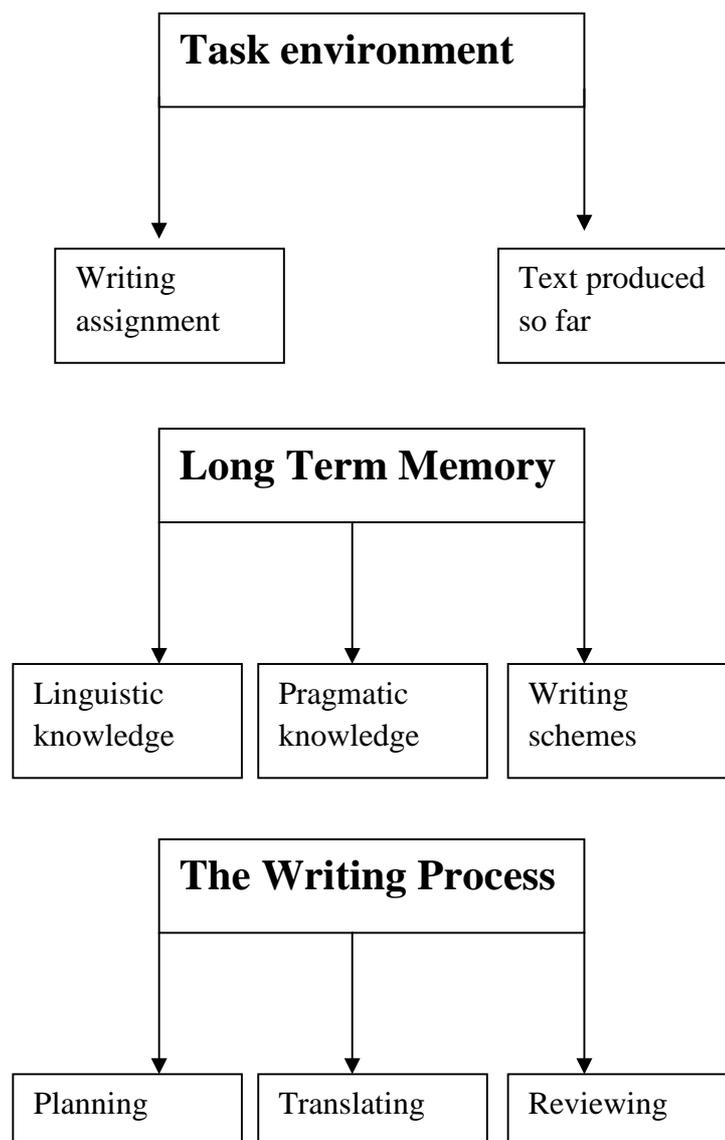


Figure 1. Hayes and Flower's 1980 model.

III.2. Bereiter and Scardamalia's 1987 model. According to Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987 as cited in Deane, Odendhal et al., 2008) there are basically two models of composing that people use: knowledge telling and knowledge transforming strategy. In this model the distinction is made between novice and expert writers.

- **Knowledge telling strategy:** is employed by novice writers. It consists of producing the text by retrieving knowledge from the long term memory without any reformulation or reorganization of the content (Hayland, 2002). This strategy is articulated through three components:

First, the mental representation of the instruction that allows the writer to comprehend and determine the topic and guide the whole writing (Deane, Odendhal, et al., 2008; Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001).

Second, topic and discourse knowledge (stored in the Long Term Memory) necessary for the writing activity (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001). While topic knowledge enables writers to evolve and elaborate the text, discourse knowledge concerns the linguistic knowledge such as grammar, vocabulary and knowledge about the text type such as narration and argumentation (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001).

Third, the writing process named “Knowledge Telling Process” that has close relationship with other two components (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001). In sum, knowledge telling model according to Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) is a model of text composition in which production goes on using only resources of cues for text retrieval including topic, discourse scheming and text already produced.

- **Knowledge transforming strategy.** It is employed by expert writers. It involves the reforming and reworking of knowledge. This shows that writers are more critical thinkers, problem solvers and good planners.

According to Bereiter, Burtis and Scardamalia (1988, as cited in Alamargot and Chanquoy, 2001: 6) “*the development of the writing expertise needs to be considered as a progressive change from knowledge telling to knowledge transforming via intermediate strategies*”. This shows that the writing development requires both strategies to be complementary to each other. This model is summarized in the figure below:

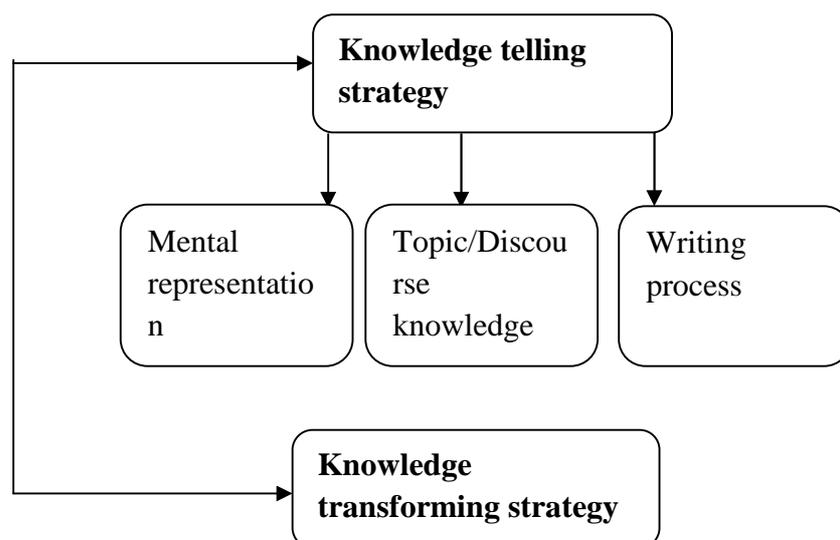


Figure 2. Bereiter and Scardamalia’s 1987 Model.

III.3. Kellogg's 1996 model. In 1996, Kellogg has elaborated another model in which his objective was to incorporate the writing processes and a system of information processing (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001). He further explained that there is interference between writing and thinking, that is to say writing is a process in which different cognitive processes and abilities are in contact. More precisely, this is a model of working memory in which Kellogg distinguished between three main components of the writing process: formulation, execution and monitoring (Ellis, 2005). Kellogg in his model adds also that particular writing processes make use of some components of working memory and not others. For example translating and reading draw on verbal working memory and not spatial, editing and planning draw on spatial working memory (MacArthur, Graham & Fitzgerald, 2006).

First, **formulation** is made up of two main processes: planning and translating. Planning allows writers to fix goals and generate ideas related to these goals while translating allows writers to transform the generated ideas into linguistic structure (Alamargot and Chanquoy, 2001).

Second, **execution** is made up of programming and executing. Ellis (2005: 13) considers programming as “*where the output from translation of ideas into written words is converted into production schema for the appropriate motor system involved (e.g. handwriting or typing)*” Briefly, programming is transforming the ideas into written structure, and executing is considered as the actual production of sentences.

Third, **monitoring** consists of reading and editing. While in reading the writer reads and verifies his own text during and after its elaboration, editing is the process by which the writer checks the correctness and the relevance of his ideas and text. Ellis (2005: 14) adds “*the extent to which a writer is able to engage in monitoring will depend in part whether the writer has the time to adopt a ‘polished draft strategy’ or is engaged in pressured text production*”. In other words, the extent to which the writer monitors his text depends on how much time he has.

According to Ellis (2005) Kellogg in his model stressed that the writer activates the three processes simultaneously, yet the extent to which this is achievable depends on the working memory. Moreover Alamargot and Chanquoy (2011) argue that Kellogg's model is interesting due to the fact that it locates each different writing process in its Working Memory registers.

We are likely to conclude that there is no single model trying to explain the exact nature of writing and which processes it involves. So, understanding the nature of writing and how it should be taught represents a big challenge for researches in the field of Second/ Foreign Language Acquisition. The figure below summarizes Kellogg's model:

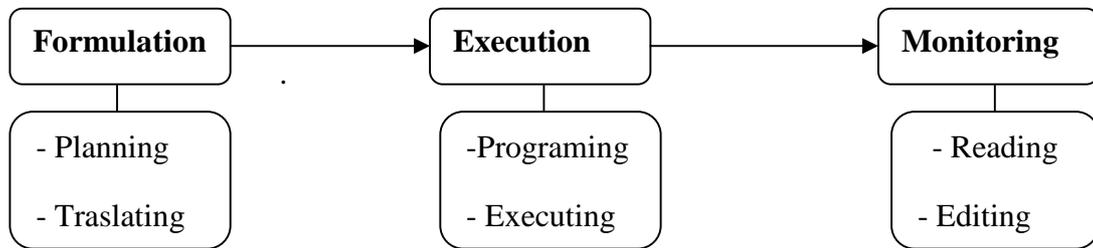


Figure 3. Kellogg's 1996 Model.

IV. The Composing Processes and Stages of Writing

Writing is a non-linear process, it is however recursive, writers do not go through the stages step by step in logical manner but they can move forward and backward. In agreement, Manchon (2009) states that “writing is a distinctly recursive process in which writers go back to what they have written so as to construct new ideas”. We have summarized these steps in figure 4 below:

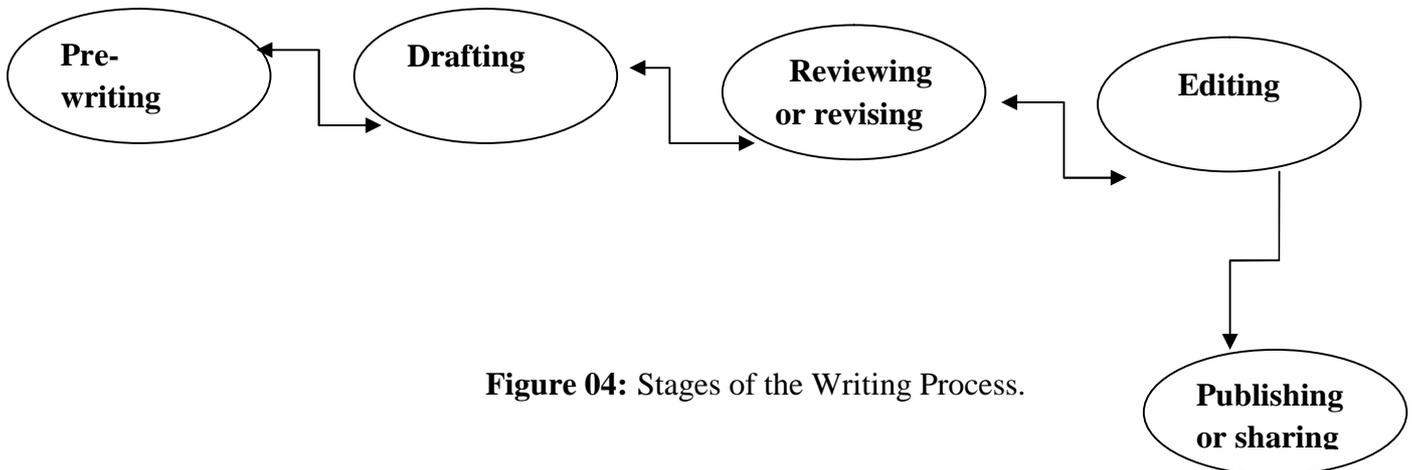


Figure 04: Stages of the Writing Process.

IV.1. Pre-writing. -Also called planning- is considered as an essential step in the writing process where the writer plans what is going to be written, brainstorms, gathers information and elaborates outline. Besides, Flower and Hayes (1981) point out that planning is the process by which “writers form an internal representation of the knowledge that will be used

in writing". This shows that good planning leads to good writing. In addition Clark (2003: 8) refers to pre-writing as "*the stage of discovery in the writing process*". That is, at this stage writers discover what and how to express their ideas.

IV.2. Drafting. In this stage writers transform their ideas into words on paper in the form of organized paragraphs. Tompkins (2004) refers to drafting by arguing that it is in this stage that writers translate their ideas into written words. Moreover he adds that drafting is the time when students pour out ideas generated in the pre-writing stage (as cited in MacConnell, 2006). Moreover, according to Richards and Renandya (2002) drafting is the first attempt in writing where writers focus on the fluency of their writing, and generating as much ideas as possible. In addition, they add that at this stage writers are not distracted by grammatical accuracy.

IV.3. Reviewing. -Also called revising- In this stage, writers check their texts carefully, eliminate errors, modify and reformulate sentences (Horvath, 2001). Moreover, Sommers (2003:133) adds that reviewing means "*I go over and change words around*". That is to say, reviewing is verifying and modifying. Deane, Odendahl et al. (2008) add "*reviewing evaluates the appropriateness between the written text and the linguistic, semantic and pragmatic particularities of the writing goal*". To make it clear, reviewing is checking whether the ideas are well expressed and whether they fit the goals. Flower and Hayes (1981) support the idea that reviewing is a process in which writers read what they have written either for evaluating it or for translating new ideas.

In short, reviewing is re-reading and reconsidering what has been written at the level of ideas and structure (form and meaning).

IV.4. Editing. In this stage of the writing process, writers proofread and correct their errors through sharing the work with their classmates and teacher and receiving feedback. Studies claimed that more skilled writers are continuously engaged in more editing processes than less skilled writers (Raimes, 1987 as cited in Leki et al., 2008). In addition, Leki et al. (2008: 131) add that "*...Editing became recursive, occurring throughout the writing process*". That is, mostly, writers edit as they write and do not wait until finishing writing.

IV.5. Publishing. Is the process by which the final product is delivered to the audience. In this sense, Elbow (1981) states that "*the essential human act at the heart of writing is the act of giving*". Learners share their writing by giving it to another person to read either for pleasure or to receive feedback and advice. Elbow (1981:20) argues "*sharing is that I'm*

beginning to be a writer” and it is “*a perfect way to publish and getting feedback*”. Specifically, sharing recognizes writers as writers.

V. Strategies Employed by EFL Learners

Writing is viewed as a goal-oriented, cognitively demanding and problem solving task (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1997; Flower and Hayes, 1981). This ensures that writing is a complex skill. And students need to use different strategies that enable them to take control of their writing process. O'Malley and Chamot (1990) quote Mayer (1986) by arguing that the role of strategy is to help learners regulate their state and acquire new knowledge.

Basically, learning strategies serve as a tool of motivation and of regulating the learners' emotional state and the way they learn. In our study we adopt Oxford's (1990) taxonomy since it is the most detailed classification taking into consideration all the learners sides (cognitive, psychological, social...) that have direct or indirect influence on their learning.

Oxford (1990) defines strategy as “*a plan, step or conscious action toward achievement of an objective*”. In other words, strategies help learners achieve their goals and aims. In our study these strategies help to write accurately through implementing various planning strategies mainly prior to the task. Brown (2000) points out that, strategies are specific techniques used to attack a given issue. In sum, strategies are the different behavioral, cognitive, meta-cognitive, psychological, and social actions to approach a given constraint.

In Oxford's taxonomy, language learning strategies are divided into two big categories: direct and indirect strategies that are further divided into sub-categories each containing four sets of strategies that can be applied to the four language skills encompassing reading, writing, speaking and listening (Oxford, 1990).

V.1. Direct strategies. According to Oxford (1990) direct strategies process the language directly by using different mental activities such as reasoning and thinking and this kind of strategies enable learners to immediately respond to the language task. They include three sub categories that are: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies.

V.1.1. Memory strategies. According to Oxford (1990) learners use memory strategies in order to store information and organize them in the mind to be ready for retrieval whenever needed. This category falls into four sets: creating mental linkage (grouping and associating),

applying images and sounds (semantic mapping, using key words) reviewing well and employing action.

V.1.2. Cognitive strategies. Enable learners to process and transform information as Oxford (1990) explains “*cognitive strategies are the manipulation and transformation of the target language by the learners*”. They include in writing: organizing information, reading out loud, analyzing and summarizing. This category involves direct management of the subject matter to be learned (Brown, 2000).

V.1.3. Compensation strategies. Are additional techniques that learners use to deal with the limitation of knowledge and lack of appropriate vocabulary either in speaking or writing as the use of dictionaries, and switching to the mother tongue. In this sense Oxford (1990) argues that compensation strategies “*enable learners to use new language for either comprehension or production despite limitation in knowledge*”.

V.2. Indirect strategies. Are used for the general organization of learning; they help learners to prepare for the task and take control of their learning. According to Oxford (1990) “*indirect strategies support and manage language learning without in many instances directly involving the target language*”. They are divided into:

V.2.1. Meta-cognitive strategies. Are the global skills of students that reflect their self-awareness; they enable learners to control their own cognition and their learning. They include: planning and setting goals, monitoring comprehension or production and then evaluation (O’Malley and Chamot, 1990)

V.2.2. Affective strategies. Are strategies for regulating learners’ emotions, attitudes and motivations (e.g. self-talk). Oxford (1990) argues that learners’ emotional side has a big influence in the learners’ performance. Thus, regulating their emotions, lowering their anxiety and promoting their self-esteem will positively affect their achievement.

V.2.3. Social Strategies. Are techniques that facilitate learning through interaction with others and since language is used as a means of communication, applying appropriate social strategies is important. In this sense Oxford (1990) advocates: “*learning a language involves other people and appropriate social strategies are important*”. Brown (2000) confirms that social strategies are also considered as communication strategies. Examples of social strategies are: asking questions and collaborative writing.

In short, the use of strategies in language learning is important since they help learners to overlap their difficulties especially in writing since it is a complex process that requires attention, creativity, reflective thinking and self-regulation in addition to the mastery of the language system (vocabulary, grammar, morphology and syntax).

The figure bellow represents and summarizes the oxford’s classification of language learning strategies:

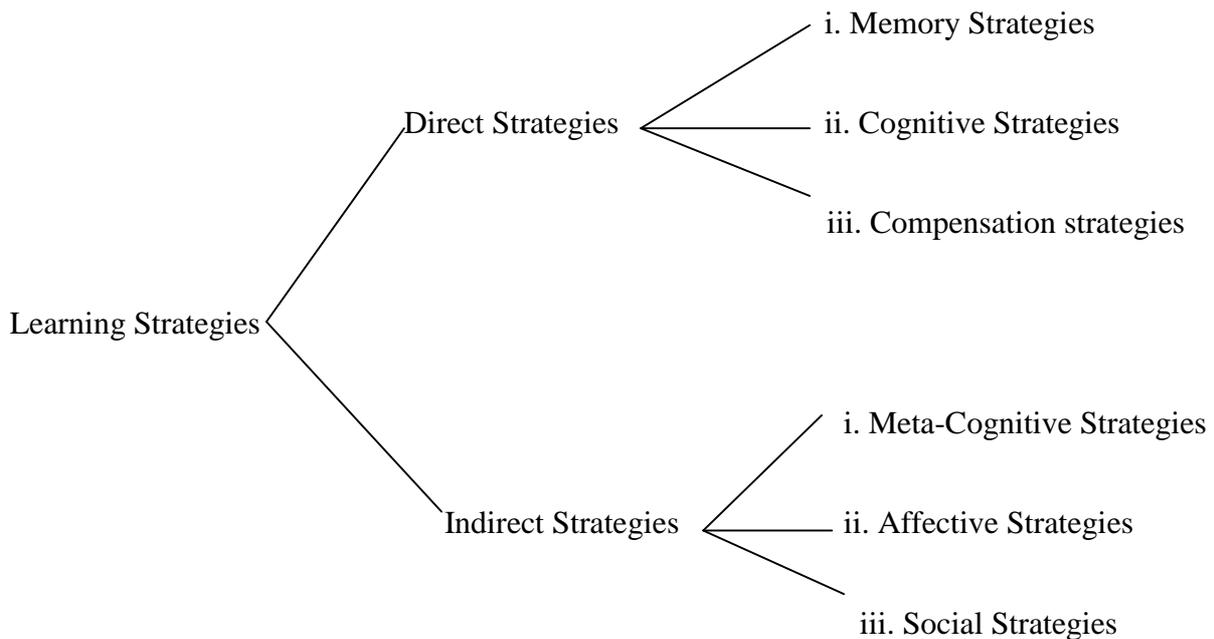


Figure 5. Diagram of the Strategy System (adapted from Oxford, 1990: 16)

VI. EFL Learners Difficulties in Writing

As we have discussed in section one, writing is a complex activity that EFL learners do not acquire easily. Westwood (2008) mentions that writing can be extremely challenging for the learners since it is based on various cognitive and linguistic abilities. Thus, many difficulties and issues can occur while studying writing. AL Seyabi and Tzulukava (2014) add: “*most empirical studies indicate that writing continues to pose challenge for EFL learners*”. So, let us discuss some of learners’ difficulties in writing.

VI.1. Grammatical issues. One of the most common issues encountered by EFL learners is grammatical errors. According to Leki et al. (2008) many researchers (such as Ghrib-Maamouari, 2001; Leung, 1984) found that for L2 writers grammatical errors are the most common problems in L2 writing, these errors include inappropriate verb forms, articles, noun

forms and overgeneralization of the grammatical rules because of learners' interference between their L1 and L2. Moreover, Ferris and Hedgcock (2005; 265) state that "*writers frequently struggle with a range of issues related to verbs (e.g. errors in verb tense, and errors in subject-verb agreement)*".

Spelling also represents one of the areas that writers struggle with. "*Learning to spell in a language like English is not an easy task, and many students have difficulties in generating the correct spelling of the words they want to use in their writing*" (Saddler, 2006; Thomson & Snow, 2002, as cited in Westwood, 2008). Concerning spelling difficulties Westwood (2008: 63) argues that even students who are good readers and writers encounter these difficulties especially because "*learning to spell, like reading, is not a natural language process so students need instruction that equips them with effective strategies of analyzing and encoding words*". That is, learners need instructions on how to generate the correct spelling of words.

VI.2. Motivation and anxiety. One of the biggest difficulties that learners encounter when learning a foreign or a second language is lack of motivation and augmented anxiety. According to Lindstorn (2007) anxiety and motivation often accompany the writing process mainly for less proficient writers. It often represents a serious problem that affects the quality and the quantity of their writings (as cited in Westwood, 2008: 59). Thus, lack of motivation negatively influences the text writers produce and so does anxiety. Moreover, Wilson and Trainin (2007) add that the learners' negative perception of their competence and their negative attitudes towards writing adversely affect their willingness to engage in writing tasks (as cited in Westwood, 2008).

VI.3. Lack of planning. Lack of planning and lack of effective planning strategies is recognized by researchers as one of the reasons why writers fail to write a good quality writing (Westwood, 2008: 61). He also points out that lack of planning is the reason behind learners' less coherent writing and less detailed texts. Hence he mentions that "*effective writers require to spend adequate time in generating ideas*". Westwood (2008) stresses an important remark that planning does not come naturally mainly to less proficient writers. Hence, teachers should explain this process in a more detailed and structured manner.

VII. Dimensions of L2 Performance and Accuracy

L2 researchers and educators argue that L2 performance and proficiency are multidimensional in nature (Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012). Their constituent parts are

complexity, accuracy and fluency. Hence, learners' language performance can be measured on the basis of these three main aspects of production always referred as CAF. There has been great deal of research on the development of writing over the last decades (such as Skehan studies in 1996).

VII.1. the origins of CAF. Skehan (1996, 1998) evolved a model of L2 proficiency measurement that brought for the first time the three dimensions: complexity, accuracy and fluency, and thus the three dimensions were given their definitions (Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012). And since the 1970s, research on CAF traces its origins. L2 researchers used the measures of grammatical complexity and accuracy developed in L1 research for an L2 development index with which L2 proficiency could be reliably, objectively and quantitatively measured (Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012: 1). They also point out that since the 1990s, the three concepts appeared to be characteristics of L2 learners' performance that will be evaluated to investigate the effect of other variables (such as: planning, age, aptitude...). In addition, the recognition of CAF as L2 properties has been confirmed by SLA researchers who state that whenever any claims about L2 learners' production, the three dimensions must be considered (Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012).

In sum, CAF emerged as important properties of L2 production and proficiency that may appear under various conditions of L2 use, and different learning conditions (Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012).

VII.2. accuracy in the CAF triad. Accuracy is argued to be the simplest and the easiest construct of the CAF triad, however, instead the simplicity of the concept, its interpretation and its application for L2 data remain problematic. These problems include the nature of the errors and the criteria of evaluating the accuracy (Housen, kuiken & Vedder, 2012). Thus, 'A' in CAF is to be interpreted not only as accuracy but also as "appropriateness" and "acceptability" (Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012).

VII.2.1. Definition of accuracy. According to Ellis (2003: 339), accuracy refers to the degree to which the target language produced during the performance of tasks applies the rules of this target language. In addition, Skehan and Foster (1999) state that accuracy is concerned with the ability to perform the language in high levels of control and avoidance of errors (As cited in, Alavari& Asharitabar, 2012: 40). Moreover, Hammerly (1991: 12) adds that accuracy is "*performative knowledge of the language or linguistic 'know-how', i.e. the ability to use the language according to its systematic characteristics*". Besides, In another

definition “*Accuracy (or correctness) in essence refers to the extent to which an L2 learner’s performance (and the L2 system that underlies this performance) deviates from a norm (i.e. usually the native speaker)*” (Hammerly 1991; Pallotti 2009; Wolfe-Quintero et al. 1998, as cited in Housen, Kuiken & Vedder, 2012). And by the word deviation they refer to errors. Hence, accuracy is the extent to which L2 learners’ performance is erroneous or correct in comparison to native speakers.

In short, accuracy is the mastery of using the linguistic knowledge, and the production of correct structures in the target language with respect of its rules and norms.

VII.2.2. Measures of accuracy. Housen, Kuiken and Vedder (2012) point out that the CAF dimensions appear to be valid measures of language development (spoken or written). Thus an objective measure of accuracy is required. However, many measures are suggested and each one is said to be more objective.

According to Ellis (2005) there is a wide range of CAF measures; yet, because of the diversity of those measures and the different choices among researches, it becomes difficult to compare results across studies. That is why more work is needed in order to evolve measures that provide more valid assessments (Ellis, 2005).

Accuracy can be measured in several ways (Polio, 1997) (Wolf-Quintero, Inagaki & Kim, 1998, as cited in, Mackey & Gass, 2012). According to Housen, Kuiken and Vedder (2012) language accuracy indices can be both general and specific. The general measures constitute of counting errors. In this sense, Knoch (2009) adds that the accuracy of written texts has been analyzed by using a wide range of discourse analytic errors, usually errors have been counted. Examples of such measures include: the number of words per errors, the proportion of errors free units (error-free t-units and error free clauses), and the average length of error free units. However, regarding the percentage of error free clauses Foster and Skehan claim that such a “*generalized measure of accuracy is more sensitive to detecting significance differences between the experimental conditions*” (1999, as cited in Byrnes and Manchon, 2014). The specific measures include for example Error analysis, frequency analysis and for-function analysis (Ellis, 2005).

Another idea of the measures of accuracy came into the scene, consisting of linking between the type of the errors and its seriousness and gravity in order to distinguish accuracy from comprehensibility as Byrnes and Manchon (2014) reported from Pallotti (2009). Yet, attempting to make a standard error gravity hierarchy has produced conflicting results (Byrnes

& Manchon, 2014). In a nutshell, typical measures of accuracy found in the literature mainly in relation to planning include:

VII.2.2.1. Error-free T-units. According to Lee Mackay (2006) one of the early index used to evaluate the syntactic features of L1 students' essays was what Hunt (1965) labeled T-unit. This latter is defined by Hunt (1965) as "*one main clause with all subordinate clauses attached to it*" (cited in Byrnes & Manchon, 2014). To code using T-units the ratter goes through the text or the essay and count the total number of t-units and then count the number of T-units that are free from errors and finally presents the ratio (Mackey & Gass, 2016).

VII.2.2.2. Error-free clauses. A clause is defined by Fisher (1984) as "*a syntactic unit which contains a finite verb*" (as cited in Polio, 1997: 115). Wolfe-Quintero et al. (1989) state that among accuracy measures, the number of error-free clauses divided by the total number of clauses (as cited in Knoch, 2009). They add that Error-free clauses refer to those clauses containing no error of syntax, morphology or lexical choice (as cited in Shehadeh & Coombe, 2012). To use this measure data are to be divided into clauses, and errors of any kind including lexis, morphology and syntax will be marked. Thus, any clause without an error is considered as error-free clause. The percentage of error-free clauses is to be used as score for analysis.

Section two: an Overview of Task Planning

Introduction

I. An Overview about Task Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

In English language teaching (ELT) different methods and approaches are evolved to teach the different aspects of language in a best way, and making learners able to communicate their ideas in writing effectively depends mostly on the approach that has been adopted.

Task-Based Language Teaching has emerged as a reaction to the empirical approaches of teacher-dominated and form-oriented second language teaching (Van den Branden, 2006). It is one of the approaches that are adopted in teaching and learning the four language skills including writing. It is characterized by the fact that students are given functional tasks in which they focus on communicating a given message and meaning. In other words, this approach is based on doing communicative tasks that permit to use and learn the language in context, as Richards and Rodgers (2001: 223) state “*Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) refers to an approach based on the use of tasks as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching*”. Also, Van Den Branden, (2006) adds that tasks have been used as the main unit of interaction, output production and meaning negotiation. To make it clear, tasks are used as tools to make learners practice the input, produce the output and communicate.

II. Definition of ‘Task’

Historically speaking, an interest in tasks as an important tool in second language acquisition emerged in the mid 1980s (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Task has been defined in different ways. The available definitions arise from the fact that as a concept the word task can be used for different purposes as Van Den Branden (2006) reported from Bygate et al (2001).

Richards and Rodgers (2001) argue that even though task has a variety of definitions, they draw on the same idea that task is an activity in which language is used as a means to attain an objective. In addition, Van Den Branden (2006) argues that task is an activity that involves using the language to achieve a goal and Bygate et al (2001: 11) add that a task means using the language appropriately to attain an objective through stressing meaning.

According to Byrnes and Manchon (2014) “*internal dimension of task, can both shed new light on the relationship between task interpretation, task performance, and learning*

outcome". In this sense, through tasks learners' performance can be measured as well as how well they have learned.

All in all, the above definitions draw on the same idea that task is an activity to reach a goal.

III. Definition of Planning

Planning is a task implementation variable that has received greater attention from researchers and a large number of studies has been conducted to investigate it (e.g. Ellis, 2005; Ellis, 2003).

Ellis (2005) defines planning as an activity that involves decision making about the linguistic items to be used in order to communicate effectively. And he adds that it is a problem-solving activity. To add, planning is an essential activity that helps writers and speakers to communicate effectively. Besides, task planning is a meta-cognitive process and an inseparable part of writing and speaking that influences the kind of language produced (Ellis, 2005).

Newel & Simon (1972, as cited in Hosseini, Alavinia and Salimi, 2012) add: "*planning is a goal-oriented mental activity that people are engaged in to achieve a particular objective*". Based on this, planning is an abstract mental activity used by people in order to achieve a given aim.

In another definition, planning refers to "*the schematization of a complex situation that has to be solved*" (Hoc, 1987, as cited in Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001: 33). It means that planning is a visual representation and simplification of a complex task.

In writing, planning takes a very important place, Byrnes and Manchon (2014) refer to this by arguing that planning is "*a uniquely distinctive phenomenon in writing*". In addition, Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001: 33) state that every writer needs to anticipate, reflect and consider what is to be written. Moreover, the longer and intensive this reflection activity is, the better writing will be. Thus, planning in writing is a very complex notion and relies on different mental processes (Alamargot & Chanquoy, 2001).

IV. Types of Planning

Ellis (2005) distinguishes between two main categories of planning in terms of when they take place either before or during task performance. And each category is in its turn divided into sub-categories. Ellis (2003) argues that this distinction is important since it plays a role in

understanding how planning variables impact the three aspects of performance (fluency, accuracy and complexity).

IV.1. Pre-task planning. Is giving for the learners time to prepare for the task performance prior to or before the actual performance and production, also learners have access to the task materials (Ellis, 2005, Byrnes & Manchon, 2014). It is further divided into:

IV.1.2. Strategic planning. It involves learners preparing to perform the task by focusing on the content to be conveyed and how to express it (Ellis, 2005). It is also used as synonymous to pre-task planning.

IV.1.3. Rehearsal. It includes providing learners with an opportunity and time to perform the task before the main and actual performance through repetition as a kind of preparation for a subsequent performance (Ellis, 2005).

IV.2. Within-task/online planning. This kind of planning takes place during the task performance; it is achieved through manipulating the time that made it available for online planning (Ellis, 2005, Byrnes & Manchon, 2014). It is divided into:

IV.2.1. Pressured online planning. Is when learners engage in a rapid planning resulting in what Ochs (1979, as cited in Ellis, 2005) calls “*unplanned language use*”.

IV.2.2. Unpressured online planning. Is when learners are given time to engage in a careful planning during task performance resulting in what Ochs (1979, as cited in Ellis, 2005) calls “*planned language use*”. The summary of this division is presented in the figure.6 below:

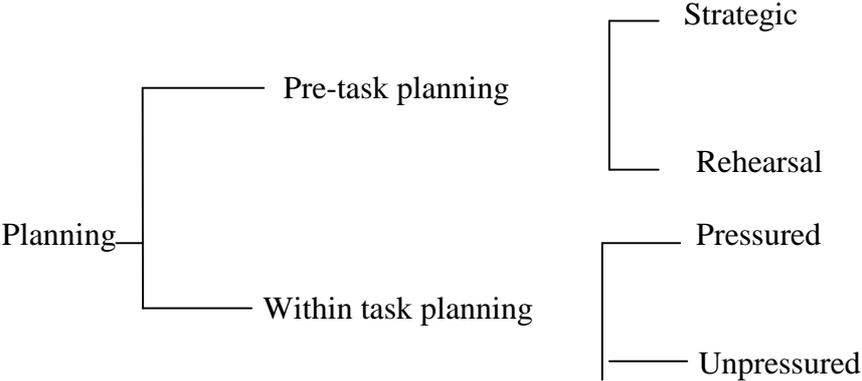


Figure 6. Types of Task-Based Panning (adapted from Ellis, 2005: 4).

V. Framework and Theoretical Basis of Planning

The theoretical perspective and the study of planning were mainly instructed by information processing theories - the dominant approach in cognitive psychology- concerned with explaining how human beings comprehend and produce the language. These theories are based on the assumption that human beings have a limited capacity to process information. This explains the difficulty encountered by EFL learners to focus simultaneously on meaning and form .Yet, based on the previous research of planning, when learners are given the opportunity to plan for a task, these limitations will be overcome and the performance will be enhanced (Ellis, 2005).

V.1. Planning and Working Memory

V.1.1. Baddely's model. Ellis (2005) argues that different models emerged to explain how working memory is related to language learning; however the most cited model in the literature of planning is Baddely's model.

Working memory is a term used to describe the short term memory system, in which information is stored for a short period of time enough to execute cognitive and complex tasks such as learning and thinking (Baddely, 1992; Gathercole & Baddely ,1993). In this model, three components of working memory are identified: the central executive, the phonological loop and the visual spatial sketchpad. However, Ellis (2005) argues that only the central executive and the phonological loop are related to the role of task planning.

- **The central executive system** is an “attention-controlling system” (Baddely, 1992) and the most important component that covers the relationship between working and long term memory and it regulates the flow of information within working memory (Gathercole and Baddely, 1993). Yet, this system is limited in capacity. Ellis (2005) refers to this by an example: when learners pay attention to lexical searches, the attention they give to grammar will be minimized. Thus, planning will facilitate the working memory load. This system is supplemented by two slave systems each specialized for the processing of materials within particular domain (Gathercole & Baddely, 1993).

- **The phonological/articulatory loop.** It is assumed by Baddely (1992) to be responsible for maintaining speech based information. Gathercole and Baddely (1993) state that this process allows articulatory rehearsal that serves to refresh the decaying information and maintain memory. In this case, planning provides learners with the opportunity to access and maintain one of the language materials (e.g. linguistic) in the phonological loop, while they draw on another set of material to modify and refine it (Ellis, 2005).

▪ **The visuo-spatial sketchpad.** It is a slave system used for the processing and the storage of visual and spatial information that is coded in the form of images (Gathercole & Baddely, 1993).

V.1.2. Kellogg's model. The other model which is also widely cited in the literature of planning is Kellogg's model (mentioned in section one). Kellogg related this model with its three components (formulation, execution and monitoring) to Baddely's model (central executive, phonological loop and visual spatial sketch pad).

According to Ellis (2005), Kellogg argues that the central executive system is involved in all the sub-processes (planning, translation, programming, reading and editing) except executing since this later does not need controlled processing. Ellis (2005), however, states that this may be true in the case of adult native-like writer who does not require central executive during handwriting or typing. Yet, L2 learners may call for the controlled processing (central executive) during execution especially those whose mother tongue shows different script from L2 (Ellis, 2005).

Kellogg in his model confirms that the visual spatial sketchpad is only involved in planning and the phonological loop is required for both translating and reading (Ellis, 2005). But, this contradicts with Ellis (2005) who argued that the visual spatial sketchpad does not seem to be relevant for the role of planning.

In a nutshell, Kellogg in his model referred to the limited capacity of the central executive that makes writers prioritize one writing process over another to produce a text. Planning in this case enables learners to make balance between the writing processes (Ellis, 2005).

V.2. Planning and the Cognitive Models of Task-Based Performance

V.2.1 Skehan's 1998 limited capacity hypothesis. According to Ellis (2005) Skehan (1998) in his cognitive model, also called "dual-mode system", distinguished between two main systems: exemplar-based and rule-based. The former is lexical in nature: it includes the different linguistic and lexical knowledge. In addition, it is easily accessed to perform in a fluent manner. The latter involves the abstract representation of the language patterns. This system requires more processing for a less fluent but more controlled performance. Skehan in his model explained that "*learners possess a limited processing capacity such that trade-offs between fluency, accuracy and complexity (especially these last two) are likely to occur*" (Ellis, 2005: 16). That is to say, learners will emphasize fluency, accuracy or complexity but not all the three simultaneously. Skehan's 1998 Limited Capacity Hypothesis' claims that more cognitively demanding tasks "*consume more attentional resources...with the result that*

less attention is available for focus on form” (Robinson, 2011: 19). In other words, complex tasks lead learners to focus on one language aspect with less attention given to other aspects because of the scarcity of attentional resources.

Moreover, in this model Skehan refers to three main aspects of language performance that are: fluency, accuracy and complexity (Ellis, 2005). He also asserts that the extent to which these three aspects are emphasized differs from one learner to another and task characteristics contribute to this difference. Moreover, since learners possess a limited processing capacity, attending to one aspect results in minimizing the other (e.g. if learners attend to accuracy, fluency and complexity will be minimized).

According to Ellis (2005) Skehan’s theory shows how task planning especially strategic planning enhances linguistic complexity but not accuracy, because strategic planning enables learners to access their rule-based system and assist them in accessing “cutting-edge” interlanguage features (that is to say, complexity).

V.2.2. Robinson’s cognition hypothesis. As opposed to Skehan, Robinson provided another model in which he assumes that L2 learners are like native speakers; they have the capacity to attend to more than one aspect of language simultaneously, and increasing the cognitive complexity of a task leads to greater complexity and accuracy (Ellis, 2005). Moreover, task complexity is determined by two sets of features: “resource directing” and “source depleting” or the so called “source dispersing” (Ellis, 2005; Robinson, 2011). The former makes conceptual demands on learners (Robinson, 2011). The latter makes procedural demands on learners (e.g. whether there is an opportunity for strategic planning or not. This is what Robinson (2011) meant by saying that “*source dispersing task characteristic make performative and procedural demands on cognition*”. These two factors affect task production in a noticeable way (Ellis, 2005).

According to Robinson (2011) complex tasks lead to more accurate and complex language than simpler tasks. Another theoretical claim of Cognition Hypothesis is that the cognitive complexity of the task affects the extent of interaction and the learning that occurs. That is, complex tasks lead to more negotiation of meaning (Robinson, 2011).

Moreover, Robinson (2011: 15) postulates that “*increasing the complexity of resource directing task characteristics has the potential to direct learners’ attentional and memory resources to the way the L2 structures and codes concepts*”. That is, increasing the resource directing task characteristics will lead to greater increased accuracy and complexity, whereas an increase in resource depleting task characteristics will lead to greater fluency, in this

Robinson (2011: 20) states that increasing the resource depleting dimension “*promotes consolidation and fast real-time access to existing interlanguage resources*”.

VI. Empirical Studies on the Effect of Task Planning on Writing

While much research was done on the effect of task planning on speech performance, only few researches investigated its effects on writing.

Based on Skehan’s cognitive model, performance can be measured based on three main aspects: fluency, complexity and accuracy. Thus, the effect of planning on writing will be measured on the basis of the extent to which the learners’ production is accurate, fluent and complex. According to Ellis (2003) empirical studies on planning showed its positive effects on fluency and complexity but mixed results on accuracy. This means that the effects of planning on the three aspects of performance vary. According to Ellis (2005) strategic planning is among the most important areas that have attracted considerable attention among researchers, and its effect on three dimensions of production has been found. However, according to Alavi and Ashari Tabar (2012: 41) “*there seems to be mixed results concerning the effects of pre-task planning or strategic planning on accuracy*”.

One of the most significance studies on planning was conducted by Ellis in 1987; he compared learners’ performance on written and oral narrative tasks based on pictures. He examined the effects of different planning conditions on L2 learners’ production mainly in the use of regular past tense. As reported by Ellis (2003), Ellis (1987) found that the learners’ use of the regular past tense forms was most accurate under the planning condition mainly unpressured planning. This leads to the claiming that planning promotes the rule-based system.

Another important study has been conducted by Crookes (1989), he examined the relationship between planning and interlanguage development; in his study Crooks designed two different tasks performed under two planning conditions 10-minutes pre-task planning and non planning. The results of the investigation revealed that planning time leads to greater complexity, elaborated and varied language, but not to greater accuracy. In this Crookes (1989: 378) states that “*after measuring accuracy, no significant difference has been shown between the conditions*”.

Foster and Skehan (1996) found in their studies that both detailed and undetailed planners produce fewer errors than the non-planners on the decision making task, but only the undetailed planners were more accurate than the non planners on a personal task. While no

effect of planning on accuracy was evident in narrative task (Ellis, 2003; Ellis, 2005; Alavi & Ashari Tabar, 2012).

Dellerman et al. (1996) examined the effects of planning on argumentative writing; they hypothesized that the quality of an argumentative text depends on prior planning. Moreover, these studies assume that the presence of planned conditions results in improved written performance. These results are in line with the previous investigations of the effect of planning on L2 oral performance. It is also assumed that planning eases the processing load during task completion and enables learners to produce a higher-quality text (as cited in Shin, 2008).

Alavi and Ashari Tabar (2012) conducted a study on the effect of strategic planning on accuracy, they argued that *“not only did pre-task planning condition influences the learner’s writing accuracy but also all the three experimental groups enjoyed a higher accuracy in the task than the control group thereby affirming the effectiveness of pre-task planning”*.

Bagheridous and Fakoor (2013) conducted another study on the effects of planning on accuracy in argumentative, compare and contrast writing, the results of this investigation rejected the hypothesis stating that planning had no effect on accuracy since learners in the pre-task planning group produced more accurate clauses compared to unplanned one. They say *“there is a positive tendency for learners who have time for planning in advance or online to produce more accurate language in comparison to those who have no opportunity to plan”*.

Ghavamnia, Tavakoli and Esteki (2013) in their study of the effect of pre-task planning on the complexity, accuracy and fluency of EFL written production suggest that time that learners are given for online planning improves the accuracy of their production, in addition the results show positive effect of pre- task planning on fluency, this supports the findings of Foster and Skehan (1996; 1997) also, pre-task planning has some effect on complexity that support the findings of Wendel (1997).

Conclusion

Along this entire chapter, we have provided some background knowledge about our variables. The three variables have been separated into two sections. We have included accuracy within the section of the writing process. We wanted our readers to perceive the relationship between our variables and how they are interrelated in one side and in another side because accuracy is an inseparable part of writing. In addition, accuracy is considered as a distinct feature of high quality writing. So, in the first section we have introduced EFL

writing, its stages, learners' difficulties and learners' strategies in addition to accuracy, how it is defined and how it is measured. The second section has been devoted to task planning in general and pre-task planning in specific. We have reviewed the relevant literature about how planning is defined, its theoretical basis and its effect on language performance mainly accuracy.

Chapter Two: Design, Methodology and Results

Introduction

The current study aims at investigating the effect of pre-task planning on students' writing accuracy. Reviewing the literature in the previous chapter allowed us to provide a clear understanding of our topic.

This chapter aims at providing an answer to our research questions and hypothesis. Hence, we divided it into three sections. The first section represents a detailed description of our methodology. The second section deals with the findings and discussion of our investigation. The third one is about the limitations of the study, some possible implications and suggestions for future research.

Section One: Description of the Study

In this section information about our method, participants, data collection tools and data analysis procedures is presented.

I. Research Design

The aim of our study is analyzing the effect of pre-task planning on writing accuracy. And since the functional relationship between these variables is a cause/effect one and due to the fact that "*causality finds its apotheosis in the experimental design*" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000: 228), we carry out an experiment on learners during the writing expression sessions. The design is a pre-experimental one carried with only one group. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) state that "*one group experiment consists of comparing the growth of a single group under two different sets of conditions*". In our case, the experimental group will be compared under two conditions. The first condition is before implementing the planning strategies (pre-test) and the second one is after their implementation (post-test).

We adopt a hybrid methodology that is defined as an approach of inquiry in which association of more than one method, generally both qualitative and quantitative, is involved (Creswell, 2009). Our methodology consists of a pre-experiment with pre-post tests, questionnaires, textual analysis and classroom observation in order to increase our research validity and reliability.

I.1. The quantitative method: Pre-Post Questionnaire and Pre-Post Test

I.1.1. Pre questionnaire. Students were given a questionnaire to answer anonymously (see appendix 1) before starting the experiment. The questionnaire aims at collecting information about our participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). The pre-questionnaire is composed of open –ended questions that enable the respondents to be free and answer in their own way, and close-ended questions of several types involving: multiple choices questions that enable respondents to choose from a list, rating scales referring to the degree and intensity of the response (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). The questionnaire encompasses four parts: the first one is untitled “General Information”, it involves four questions aiming at collecting general information about our participants: about their age, gender, years of studying English at university and whether English is their personal choice. The second part labelled “Students’ attitudes towards writing” involves three questions aiming at collecting information about learners’ difficulties in writing and how they deal with those difficulties. The third one comprises also four questions grouped under the heading “Accuracy”. They are all about learners’ errors in writing and how to avoid them. The last one is about “task planning” with seven questions. This section aims at checking whether learners plan their essays and how they do so.

I.1.2. Post questionnaire. It aims at collecting data about the learners’ attitudes about the implemented planning strategies and whether they are helpful or not. It comprises six main questions, four close-ended and two open ended questions grouped under the heading “students’ attitudes towards pre-task planning (see appendix 2).

I.1.3. Pre-test. It is considered as a pre-study aiming at collecting data about our participants’ level in writing and the extent to which they write accurately before implementing pre-task planning techniques. The subjects were asked to write an essay about “their future career” on March 2nd, 2016 at 11: 20 a.m. building 3, room 16. All the participants’ essays have been scored using Error-free T units to measure their accuracy.

I.1.4. Post test. It is considered as a post-study of this research. It was addressed at the end of our experiment. It aimed at revealing the actual level of our subjects after the implementation of pre-task planning strategies in the classroom. The results were compared with the ones of the pre-test to check whether an improvement in terms of accuracy has been reached. The subjects were asked to write a story using the Five W’s strategy. It was addressed on April 12th, 2016 at 9: 40 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. building 3, room 1.

I.1.4. The training program. In our research we aim at investigating a causal relationship (cause/effect) through a pre-experiment. This latter is based on five sessions of planning

strategies employed before starting writing in the draft. In each session, we first started by instructing the learners on how to use those strategies, and providing illustrated examples. Then, our participants wrote an essay by using the strategy we taught them and the guidelines we provided them with. Ten minutes were given as time for the learners to think about what they want to write and how to organize it, after the ten minutes the planning sheets were removed. The choice of planning time was based on previous studies (Crookes, 1989., Foster & Skehan, 1996 and Wendel, 1997). The reason behind this (removing the sheets) is to ensure that the language the learners use will be produced within the specified period of time (Yuan & Ellis, 2004, as cited in Ghavamnia, Tavakoli & Esteki, 2013). Finally, we evaluated their essays with the help of their teacher. In the first session, detailed information was given to the learners about the process of writing and the different stages it is composed of (see appendix 3). In the second session, we introduced them the first planning strategy, which is “spider diagram”; it aims at encouraging learners to plan before starting to write so as to organize their ideas and write more accurate writings (see appendix 4). The third session involves the introduction of the second planning strategy, which is the “outline” (appendix 5). In the fourth session, instructions about “Venn diagram” were given as another important planning strategy that learners are encouraged to use to plan their pieces of writing (appendix 6). In the last session, we introduced them the last planning strategy that is “the five W’s” (appendix 7). In addition, during this last session the post-test was addressed.

I.2. The Qualitative Method. In our study, the qualitative method consists of analyzing learners’ texts and classroom observation. And since we are investigating the effect of planning on accuracy, learners’ essays were analyzed in terms of their accuracy in all language aspects (including, grammar, syntax, morphology, semantics...) after the implementation of the taught strategies. The researcher in collaboration with the teacher evaluated a sample of 12 students’ essays out of 13, since one of our participants did not attend all the planning sessions regularly. He has however missed some of them.

II. Sample and Population

According to Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger, (2005) population is “*all individuals of interest to the researcher*” and sample “*is a subset of the population*”. Our population is second year students of English as a foreign language enrolled at the University of Bejaia. The number of the whole population is 106 students consisting of 05 groups of 21 students for each. Our sample is group four, which has been selected randomly to answer our pre-questionnaire and participate in our experiment. It includes 21 students but only 13 attend the

courses regularly. Our selection is based on randomization viewing that Kumar Singh (2006) argues that random selection is an objective method of sampling that maintained accuracy in the analysis of the results, and Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger (2005) add that it helps to control the external variables that may influence the results and it increases the external validity of the study. The background information got from the pre-questionnaire reveals that our sample consists of 9 females representing 69.2% of the whole population and 4 males representing 32.8% of the whole population ranging from 19 to 24 years old.

III. Data Collection Procedures

We administered the pre-questionnaire on March 2nd with a pilot study to check its clarity, in this sense, Cohen et al., (2000) argue that pre-testing questionnaires is important for its success. We finished administering the questionnaire, in the coming week we planned to start the experiment; yet, because the catch up exams were programmed, we were obliged to start the experiment directly after the spring vacation. We started our experiment on April 4th, 2016. It lasted two weeks. We had three sessions a week, one on Monday from 12:50 a.m. to 14:00 a.m., building 3, room 17, and another on Tuesday from 9:40 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. building 3, room 1. The other one on Wednesday from 11:20 a.m. to 12:50 a.m. building 3, room 16. The duration of each session was 90 minutes. We designed a lesson plan for each session and an observation grid (as it is shown in the appendix 8). In the last session, on April 12th, the last planning strategy was taught and the post test was addressed.

IV. Data Analysis Procedures

The data collected from the pre and post tests and questionnaires have been coded and analyzed using SPSS version 20 and Excel 2007. We rely on frequencies, percentages and descriptive statistics to interpret our data. For the qualitative data we evaluated students' essays. The textual analysis consisted of describing the learners' essays in terms of accuracy including all the language aspects. For the interpretation and discussion of the results, we have used data obtained from the classroom observation.

For accuracy measure we adopted error-free T-units as it is most cited in the literature of accuracy and planning. The learners' essays were first segmented into T-units knowing that T-unit is an independent clause with its depended clauses as mentioned in the first section of the first chapter. Then, the number of error free T-units per T-units is counted to be used for the score.

V. Validity, Reliability and Triangulation

Validity is an important concept in all kinds of research methodology. Internal validity refers to the suitability of research design to make adequate explanations of the result by showing that the independent variable has a direct effect on the dependent variable (Marczyk, DeMatteo & Festinger, 2005). First of all, we cannot ensure full manipulation of the independent variable which is pre-task planning (and different planning strategies) since we are dealing with a metacognitive activity that is related to many other factors including individual differences and we do not really know what learners plan and how they use the planning strategy. In addition, because of the limitations of time we could design only five sessions of planning strategies that are insufficient to ensure the results. Thus, we assume that our research may lack internal validity. External validity refers to the degree to which the results can be generalized and applied to the wider population in other circumstances (Marczyk et al., 2005; Cohen et al., 2000). We would argue that our sample, which consists of 13 out of 21 students representing 12.26% of the whole population, is small and does not permit us to generalize it to the whole population (106/100%). Concerning reliability, it is synonymous to precision and accuracy, that is to say the results of the study can be replicable over time, instruments, context and participants (Cohen et al., 2000). In our study, the questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS that ensures and guarantees objective and consistent results. Concerning textual analysis, the teacher's help guaranteed objectivity. Moreover, classroom observation makes the research reliable through supporting data obtained from the questionnaires and textual analysis.

Finally, we are likely to assume that our research is based on triangulation that is defined as the use of more than one method of data collection. This method ensures the full examination and explanation of complex human behaviors (Cohen et al., 2000).

Section Two: Results and Discussion

In this section, all the data collected through the research instruments are analyzed and interpreted in details. Results of the pre-post questionnaires and pre-post tests are presented in tables and frequencies in addition to graphs and descriptive statistics that aim at comparing the results of the experimental groups in both pre and post tests. Besides, students' essays are evaluated. Finally, we discuss our results in line with the previous findings.

I. Results

I.1. Pre-questionnaire. The results of the pre-questionnaire are presented using frequencies and percentages. We use tables in order to facilitate and organize the analysis.

I.1.1. General Information about the Participants

I.1.1.1. Age.

Table1. *Students' age*

Ages	Frequencies	Percentages
19-21	7	53.8%
22-24	6	46.2%
Total	13	100%

Items in table (1) show that our sample's age varies from 19 to 24 years old. This means that our participants are young.

I.1.1.2. Gender.

Table 2. *Students' Gender*

Gender	Frequencies	Percentages
Male	4	30.8%
Female	9	69.2%
Total	13	100%

As it is shown in the table above, our sample contains more females who represent 69.2% of the whole population than males who represent 30.8% of the whole population. This may be due to the fact that females have more tendencies towards learning foreign languages and English in specific.

I.1.1.3. How long have you been studying English at university?

Table 3. *Years of Studying English at University.*

Years	Frequencies	Percentages
Four	1	7.7%
Two	12	92.3%
Total	13	100%

Table (3) shows that the majority of the students (92.3%) have been studying English at University for two (2) years. Only 7.7% of them revealed that they have been studying English at the university for four (4) years.

I.1.1.3. Is English your personal choice?

Table 4. *Students' decision of studying English.*

Option	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	12	92.3%
No	1	7.7%
Total	13	100%

In table (4) we notice that 92.3% of our participants have chosen to study English, whereas 7.7% argued that English was not their first and personal choice. From the obtained results we can point out that the majority of the participants are motivated to study English as a foreign language.

I.1.2. Students' attitudes towards writing

I.1.2.1. Do you like writing?

Table 5. *Students' liking of writing.*

Option	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	13	100%
No	0	0%
Total	13	100%

All our participants (100%) indicate that they like writing as it is shown in table (5). This demonstrates that the majority of our subjects find writing interesting and worthy to be studied as a basic module.

I.1.2.2. Why do you like writing?

Table 6. *Students' reasons behind liking writing.*

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
Expressing ideas	8	61.5%
Enriching vocabulary	4	30.8%
Expressing feelings	4	30.8%

As it is shown in table (6) most of our participants (61.5%) like writing in order to express their ideas and beliefs. 30.8% of them like writing because it is a means of enriching their vocabulary. And 30.8% also like writing because it enables them to express freely their feelings. From the obtained results, we notice that our participants do not practice writing just to develop it as a skill but also as means of relaxation and self-expression.

I.1.2.3. Indicate to which extent you agree or disagree with the statements.

Table 7. *Students' points of view about writing.*

Options Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Writing is the most difficult skill.	0%	38.5%	15.4%	30.7%	15.4%
Writing is interesting .	76.9%	23.1%	0%	0%	0%
Writing is easy .	0%	15.4%	46.2%	23%	15.4%
I like to be given guidance by the teacher	23.1%	23%	15.4%	30.8%	7.7%
I know the techniques of writing.	0%	0%	61.5%	30.8%	7.7%
The more I plan the more my writing is organized	53.8%	46.2%	0%	0%	0%

The table (7) illustrates our participants' responses to the statements based on features of writing to examine how they actually regard writing. Results of the participants' responses are as follow:

- ❖ Most of the participants believe that writing is the most difficult skill; this was expressed by 38.5% of participants who agree. Yet, 30.7% do not find writing as the most difficult skill. Besides, 15.4% are uncertain about this fact, and 15.4% also strongly disagree, that is, they do not find writing as the most difficult skill. We may relate this variety in answers to the level of the learners.
- ❖ Most of the participants responded positively to the statement that writing is interesting, this was expressed by 76.9% of the participants who strongly agree and 23.1% who agree. In addition, none of the participants is uncertain or disagrees. The results reveal that our participants are aware about the importance of writing.
- ❖ 46.2% of the participants state that they are uncertain whether writing is easy or not. Moreover, 23% of the respondents do not find writing easy that is why they disagree

with the statement, and 15.4% strongly disagree. In addition, 15.4% agree that writing is easy. We can argue that the extent to which writing is easy differs from one student to another. This may be related to the differences in the participants' levels and motivations.

- ❖ Most of the participants do not like to be given guidance from the teacher this was expressed by 30.8 % who disagree and 7.7 % who strongly disagree, whereas, 23% like to be guided by the teacher, so they agree with the statement and 23.1% of the participants strongly agree to be given guidance. Yet, 15.4% are uncertain maybe because their position (either agree or disagree) would depend on the topic and the type of the text they are asked to write.
- ❖ Concerning our sample's mastery of the writing techniques, more than half of them (61.5%) are uncertain whether they know the techniques of writing or not. 30.8% of them state that they do not know the techniques, so their position is disagreement with the statement and 7.7% of them strongly disagree. This may be related to the fact that they do not receive explicit instructions on the different writing strategies.
- ❖ All the participants recognized the importance of planning as a strategy to organize their ideas, this was expressed by 53.8% of them who strongly agree and 46.2% of them who agree.

I.1.2.3. Which kind of difficulties do you encounter in writing?

Table 8. *Students' difficulties in writing.*

Difficulties	Frequencies	Percentages
Lack of vocabulary.	12	92.3%
Grammar.	6	46.2%
Spelling.	2	23.1%
Coherence.	4	30.8%
Ideas' generation.	9	69.2%

From the above table, learners' difficulties in writing vary from one student to another. Approximately for all the participants (92.3%) vocabulary represents a big challenge in writing because they do not have a varied and rich vocabulary and their linguistic repertoire falls short. 46.2% of the participants experience difficulties with grammar, this may be related to the fact that they do not master the grammatical norms of the English language. Also, 23.1% of the participants experience difficulties in spelling. This may be related to the fact

that most of the time English words are spelled differently from the way they are pronounced. Concerning coherence, 30.8% of the subjects find difficulties in making the text coherent; we relate this result to the lack of planning and the lack of using effective writing strategies. In addition, more than half of the participants (69.2%) encounter difficulties in idea generation. This may be because of the learners' unawareness of the different brainstorming strategies.

I.1.3. Accuracy

I.1.3.1. How often do you make errors during writing?

Table 9. *Students' frequency of error making in their writing.*

Options	Frequencies	Percentages
Always	10	76.9%
Sometimes	3	23.1%
Never	0	0%

From the above table, we notice that 76.9% of the participants always make errors, and 23.1% of them make errors sometimes. This may be related to the fact that writing is a complex task that requires different cognitive and meta-cognitive processes. Also, none of the participants say that they never make errors. All in all, writing is in fact a difficult skill.

I.1.3.2. Which kind of errors do you make?

Table 10. *Students' errors in writing.*

Difficulties	Frequencies	Percentages
Grammar.	6	46.2%
Spelling.	4	30.8%
Punctuation.	8	61.5%
Vocabulary.	8	61.5%
Style.	3	23.1%

In the table (10), our participants' difficulties are reported. We have noticed that the areas in which participants find difficulties in writing are the areas in which they most of the time make errors (as it is shown in table 8). 46.2% of the participants make grammatical errors. In addition, 30.8% of the subjects make spelling errors. Besides, more than half students (61.5%) encounter difficulties in punctuation. This may be related to the fact that English language is full of punctuation markers that have multiple uses. Concerning vocabulary, 61.5% of the

subjects experience challenges in vocabulary, this can be related to the fact that our sample's vocabulary is not varied and rich. In addition to all the mentioned difficulties, 23.1% of our participants have problems with the style they use and the choice of the appropriate words. This may be caused by the restricted vocabulary.

I.1.3.3. Do you think that it is difficult to write accurately (correctly)?

Table 11. *Students' attitudes towards accuracy.*

Option	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	5	38.5%
No	8	61.5%
Total	13	100%

The table (11) represents our participants' attitudes toward accuracy, whether they think that writing accurately is difficult or not. Most of the participants (61.5%) state that it is not difficult to write accurately when 38.5% of them argue that it is difficult. We may state that if our participants receive guidance on how to write accurately, they would narrow down the errors they make, since they believe that accuracy can easily be achieved.

I.1.3.4. If yes (difficult to write accurately), why?

Table 12. *Students' reasons behind their answers.*

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
We don't master the rules	4	30.8%
We lack effective planning strategies	4	30.8%
Unawareness of techniques of writing	3	23%
Lack of organization of ideas	2	15.4%

Items of the above table show that most of the participants (30.8%) ,who think that writing accurately is difficult, relate this difficulty to the fact they do not master the norms of the English language, and also 30.8% of them relate it to the lack of planning and unawareness of effective planning strategies. 23% of the sample related it to their unawareness of the different writing strategies while 15.4% of them find it difficult because they do not know how to organize their ideas.

I.1.3.5. how can you avoid errors?

Table 13. *Students' suggestions of how to avoid errors.*

Suggestions	Frequencies	Percentages
Learning the rules.	5	38.5%
Applying effective planning strategies.	5	38.5%
Using effective writing strategies	4	30.8%
Practice.	8	61.5%

The table (13) displays students' answers of how to avoid errors and reach accuracy. From the table we notice that most of the participants (61.5%) argue that through practice errors can be avoided. In addition, 38.5% of them believe that the mastery of English rules is the key to accurate writing while 38.5% of them relate accuracy to planning. Thus, we notice that our participants try to find solutions to write accurately.

I.1.4. Task Planning

I.1.4.1 what do you do first when you are given a task?

Table 14. *Students' process of writing.*

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
Brainstorming.	9	69.2%
Outlining.	2	15.4%
Drafting.	2	15.4%

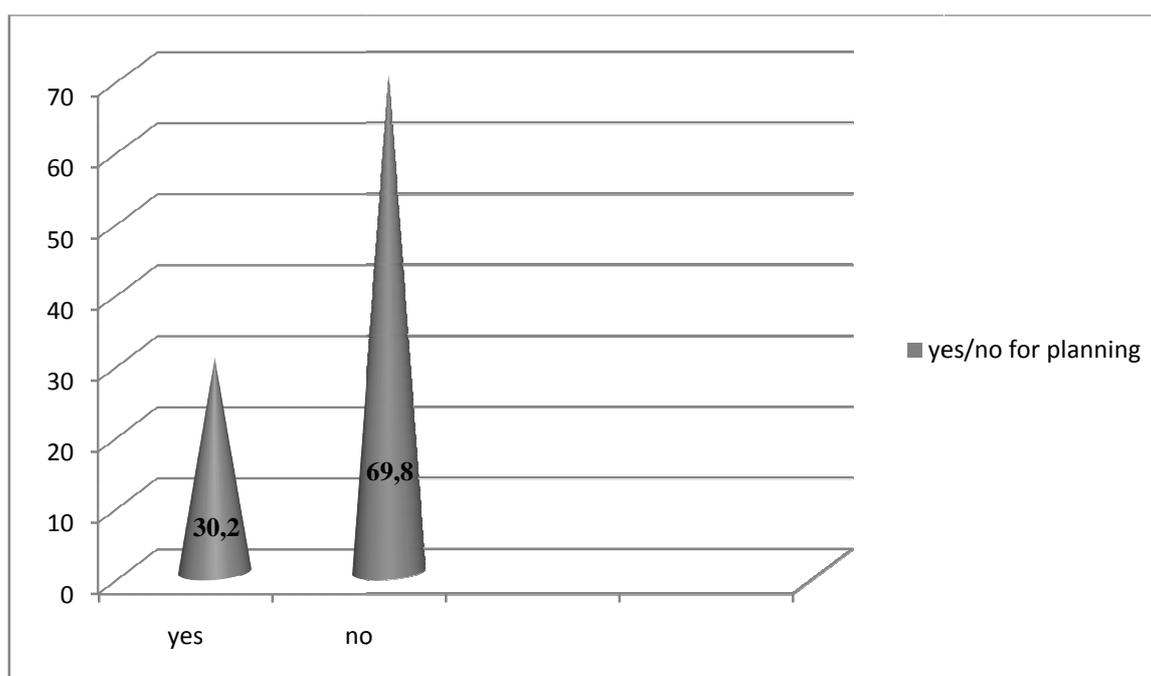
Table (14) gives a clear picture of what students do first when they are asked to write. It is clear from the table that most of the students (69.2%) reported that they start first by brainstorming. While 15.4% of the participants start directly their essays by drafting, the others 15.4% make first an outline. From these results we argue that few of our participants reported that they plan before drafting. Thus, we are likely to argue that our participants do not know how to plan.

I.1.4.2. Do you plan before writing?

Table 15. *Students' planning of their writing.*

Option	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	4	30.2%
No	9	69.8%
Total	13	100%

Table (15) reports students' answers concerning whether they plan prior to writing or not. The items of the table reveal that more than half of the participants (69.8%) state that they do not plan their essays. Hence, we relate learners' lack of accuracy and the making of errors to the lack of planning. Only 30.8% of the whole sample states that they plan before writing.



Graph 1: Comparison between Learners who Plan Prior to Writing and those who do not.

The above graph provides a comparison between the learners who plan prior to writing and those who do not. From the graph (1) it is obvious that most of our participants (69.8) do not plan before starting to write and only 30.2% plan.

I.1.4.3. If yes (you plan) which strategies do you use?

Table16. *Students' planning strategies.*

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
Outlining	2	50%
Drafting	2	50%
Total	4	100%

¹Table (16) displays the kind of planning strategies that our participants use, the items of the table show that 50% of the learners who said that they plan prior to writing use outlines to plan their essays. And 50% of them consider drafting as a planning strategy and not another process of writing. We may say that some of our participants ignore what planning is.

I.1.4.4. Do you think that it is helpful to plan before writing?

Table 17. *Students' beliefs about the importance of planning.*

Option	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	13	100%
No	0	0%
Total	13	100%

Table (17) displays learners' answers on whether they think that planning is important or not. The items reveal that all the participants (100%) recognize the importance of planning prior to the task. From this we can state that the participants who said they do not plan not because they do not think that planning is helpful but because they do not know how to plan.

¹ The total number is 4 instead of 13 because this question concerns only those who said in the preceding question (I.1.4.2.) that they plan prior writing.

I.1.4.5. Why planning is helpful?

Table 18. *Students' reasons behind their answers (yes).*

Suggestions	Frequencies	Percentages
Avoid missing ideas.	4	30.8%
To be organized.	6	46.2%
To write accurately.	2	15.4%
To make the text coherent.	6	46.2%

Table (18) displays learners' multiple answers on why they think that planning is helpful (since all of them said that it is helpful). Most of the participants (46.2%) related the effectiveness of planning to make the text coherent and the same rate (46.2%) relates it to the organization of ideas. While 30.8% of the subjects state that planning helps in avoiding missing ideas, only 15.4% of them recognized its effectiveness in making their writings accurate.

I.1.4.6. Do you receive instructions (guidance) from your teacher on how to plan?

Table 19. *Students' guidance on how to plan.*

Option	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	6	46.2%
No	7	53.8%
Total	13	100%

From table (19), we notice that most of the participants (53.8%) said that they do not receive instructions on how to plan their essays while 46.2% said that they receive instructions. This variation in answers may be related to the fact that our learners were not taught by the same teachers in the previous years, or may be because they newly start writing essays and teachers introduce them things they believe to be the basic more than planning.

I.1.4.7. If yes (receive instructions), what are the different planning strategies your teacher taught you?

Table 20. *Students' awareness of the different planning strategies.*

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
The constituent parts of an essay.	4	30.8%
Collaborative working.	1	7.7%
Brainstorming	3	23.1%
Outlining	3	23.1%
No answer	3	23.1%

Table (20) reports the learners' answers about the different planning strategies they were taught about. It is clear that the participants in fact do not understand what is planning, they moreover ignore it, and even those who said that they plan they mix it up mainly with drafting except few of them who are really aware of. 30.8% of the participants state that the instructions they receive on how to plan their writing are the constituent parts of paragraphs it means how to organize their essays into paragraphs and what should each paragraph contain, this shows that they completely ignore what actually planning means. 7.7% of them suggested that their teacher gives them an assignment in which they work collaboratively and analyze it together. 23.1% of them said brainstorming; it is obvious that our subjects are confused between planning and other writing processes. In addition, 23.1% of them answered by outlining which is in fact a planning strategy. Besides, the remaining 23.1% gave no answer since they said they do not plan their essays at all. All in all, our participants ignore what planning is except few of them.

I.2. Students' Post-Questionnaire

I.2.1. Students' attitudes towards pre-Task Planning

I.2.1.1. after implementing the different planning strategies, did you find pre-task planning helpful?

Table 21. *Students' thinking about pre-task planning.*

Answers	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%
² Total	11	100%

Table (21) reveals that all the participants (100%) recognize the helpfulness of pre-task planning mainly after experiencing it.

I.2.1.2. If yes, how?

Table 22. *Students' way of benefiting from pre-task planning.*

Reasons	Frequencies	Percentages
Avoiding errors.	2	18.2%
Generating as much information as possible.	3	27.3%
Writing coherent texts.	8	72.7%

From table (22), we may argue that how pre-task planning helped our participants differs from one student to another. Nevertheless, for the majority of them (72.7%) planning was helpful in making the text coherent and 27.3% found that planning is helpful in generating as much information as possible. Some other (18.2%) stated that the different planning strategies helped them in making their texts accurate and narrowed down the number of errors they make.

² The total number of the participants is 11 instead of 13 because we handed 13 post-questionnaires but only 11 were returned.

I.2.1.3. which of the strategies did you find more helpful (you can choose more than one)?

Table 23. *Students' choice of the most helpful strategies.*

Strategies	Frequencies	Percentages
Spider Diagram.	8	72.7%
Outline.	5	45.5%
Five W's.	4	36.4%
Venn Diagram.	0	0%

From table (23), we notice that most of our participants (72.7%) found that Spider Diagram is the most helpful strategy. We might relate this answer to the fact that they have succeeded in using this strategy. The second most helpful technique is the outline, this was obvious by (45.5%) of the participants who recognized its helpfulness. 36.4% of the participants said that the five W's strategy is helpful while none of our participants (0%) found that Venn diagram is helpful. This may be related to the fact that they did not succeed in implementing it in a way that it would help them.

I.2.1.4. Do you think that ten (10) minutes planning is sufficient?

Table 24. *Students' thinking about the time devoted for planning.*

Option	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	2	18.2%
No	9	81.8%

Table (24) reveals that the time devoted for pre-task planning is not sufficient, this is obvious from 81.8% of the participants who said that ten minutes planning is not sufficient. And only 18.2% of the participants who found that ten minutes planning is sufficient. This may be because most of the learners find difficulties in managing their time when writing.

I.2.1.5. Why?

Table 25. *Students' reasons of their answers (yes/no).*

Options	Reasons	frequencies	Percentages
Yes	Planning is just deciding what to say.	1	9.1%
	Planning is deciding how to organize the work.	1	9.1%
No	It is not sufficient to generate as much information as needed	6	54.5%
	Because planning is the most important phase of writing. Thus, it needs as much time as possible	3	27.3%
Total		11	100%

Table (25) reveals the reasons why the participants found that ten minutes planning prior to the task is sufficient (or not). 9.1% of them asserted that it is sufficient since planning is just deciding what to write. Here the participants refer to content planning; it is a convincing answer because this is what actually planning means. The remaining ones (9.1%) said that it is sufficient since to plan is just to decide how to organize the work. This answer refers to planning the structure. We may say that these two participants can manage their time so they succeed in planning their essays in the devoted time. 54.5% revealed that ten minutes planning is not sufficient because it is not sufficient to generate as much information as needed in just few minutes. Also, 27.3% stated that it is not sufficient since planning is the most important stage in writing and devoting the longer period possible for it would be more helpful.

I.2.1.6. on which side do you focus when planning?

Table 26. *Students' focus during the planning phase.*

Options	Frequencies	Percentages
Content (Generating ideas).	3	27.3
Form (avoiding errors).	0	0%
Both of them (content and form).	8	72.7%

From table (26), more than half of the participants (72.7%) focus on both content and form in the planning phase. This answer gives us a clear understanding why our participants find planning more helpful in generating ideas and making the text coherent. 27.3% of them try to generate as much ideas as possible in the planning phase this may be the reason why ten minutes is not sufficient for them

I.2.1.7. Do you think that planning helped you to write accurately and avoid errors?

Table 27. *Students' thinking about the positive effect of planning on accuracy.*

Options	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%

Items of table (27) show that all the participants (100%) believe that pre-task planning helps in making the text accurate, this may be due to the fact that they have noticed that the more they plan the more they make fewer errors.

I.2.1.8. Do you think that teachers should focus on teaching the planning stage as a very important process in writing that should not be neglected?

Table 28. *Students' thinking about teaching thoroughly planning.*

Options	Frequencies	Percentages
Yes	11	100%
No	0	0%

Table (28) shows whether students believe that teachers of writing should devote the necessary time to teach planning as a very important stage that should not be neglected or not. The items of the table show that all the participants (100%) think that teachers have to focus on teaching planning. We may argue that our participants actually benefit from planning that is why they insist upon the fact that teachers have to teach them how to plan.

I.2.1.9. Why (teachers should focus on teaching planning)?

Table 29. *Students' reasons why planning should be taught thoroughly.*

Reasons	Frequencies	Percentages
Planning is a very important stage in writing.	6	54.5%
If teachers focus on planning, students' work will be organized.	2	18.2%
Because it is important and teachers often neglect it.	4	36.4%
Most of the students do not know the different planning strategies.	4	36.4%

Items of table (29) represent our participants' reasons behind thinking that teachers should focus on teaching planning. 54.5% of the participants argue that planning is a very important stage in writing that is why teachers should focus on it. 36.4% of the participants stated that planning prior to writing is very important and teachers often neglect it, so it is high time to change the situation. Moreover, 36.4% of them stated that most of the students do not know the different planning strategies while 18.2% of them stated that if teachers focus on planning, students' work will be organized. From all what is mentioned, we are likely to argue that the planning stage is actually neglected by teachers. And after experiencing the different planning strategies, our subjects recognized their importance.

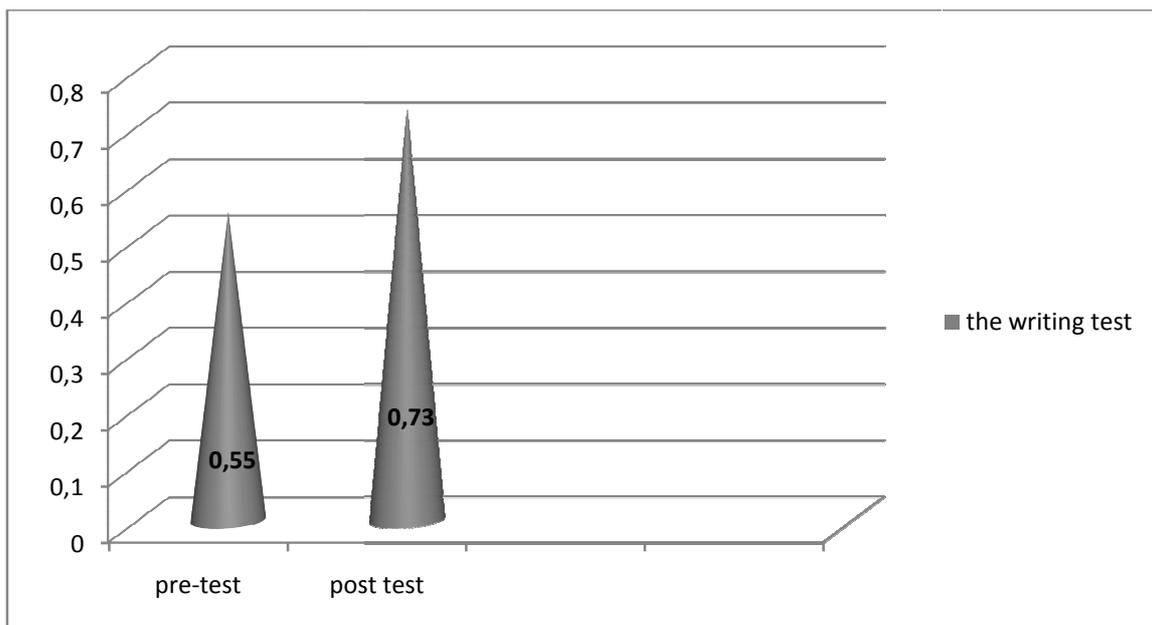
I.3. the Participants' Scores in the Pre and Post Tests

Table 30. *Students' scores in the pre-post tests.*

Students	Pre-test			Post-test			
	Total units	T-units	Error free T-units	Scores	Total T-units	Errors free T-units	Scores
S1	11		8	0.72	27	25	0.92
S2	22		16	0.72	51	45	0.88
S3	16		8	0.50	29	21	0.72
S4	24		20	0.83	38	31	0.81
S5	21		6	0.28	18	10	0.55
S6	13		6	0.46	28	17	0.61
S7	21		9	0.42	21	9	0.60
S8	26		14	0.53	61	42	0.68
S9	17		8	0.47	32	29	0.90
S10	13		7	0.53	19	12	0.63
S11	22		16	0.72	37	30	0.81
S12	23		11	0.47	20	15	0.75
M	0.55			0.73			
SD	0.15			0.12			

NB: "S" stand for Students; "M" for the Mean scores and "SD" for the Standard Deviation.

Table (30) represents learners' scores in the pre- post tests. Each learner's essay was segmented into T-units; the number of errors free t-units per t-units was calculated to measure accuracy. Then, the mean score of the whole group was used to compare the tests.



Graph 2. Comparisons between pre-post tests ‘mean scores.

Graph (2) illustrates the mean scores of both pre and post tests. By comparing the mean scores, we found that the accuracy of second year students’ writing become slightly higher after implementing the different planning strategies than it was before implementing it but the difference is not significant. This is significantly expressed by the learners’ mean scores which increased from $M= 0.55$ to $M= 0.73$.

I.5. Classroom observation. According to Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger (2005) observation is a very important method of data collection. And Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) add that observational data are attractive in the way that researchers are given the opportunity to gather live data from live contexts. In addition, they add that “*it helps the researcher to see things that might otherwise be unconsciously missed*”. That is, it makes implicit things explicit.

During the five sessions, we have observed the students’ behaviors, reactions and we have noted their comments. During the first session, learners were somehow reluctant and hesitant, not all of them participated. After presenting the different stages of writing, we have asked them if they follow the stages. Most of them answered by no and what they almost do is brainstorming and drafting. In the second session, they were introduced the first planning strategy. Approximately all of them told us that it is something new and they have never heard about it or used it before. When they were asked to write an essay using the taught strategy, we have noticed that the learners are still confused between planning and drafting mainly. Since when we have told them you have ten minutes for planning and after that your sheets

will be removed and then you will start drafting, they were astonished. Some of them told us that this is drafting or not? Then we re-explained what is planning. In the following sessions, all the participants were collaborative. They asked and answered questions, they showed interest to the content and they kept saying that pre-task planning is really helpful. Another thing that we have noticed along the sessions is that the participants claimed about the time devoted for planning, they kept saying that it is insufficient.

II. Discussion

In this section, a detailed discussion of the findings is provided in accordance with the previous research findings.

According to our findings, students face many difficulties in writing. They reported having difficulties in both content and structure. Concerning structure, vocabulary is the most challenging (Table 7). Most of our participants (93.2%) have a restricted vocabulary that is why they find it difficult to write in English. During our experiment, we have observed that the learners along their writing use dictionaries or ask their teacher about some words and how things are called and the analysis of their texts showed this difficulty in that most of the time they use inappropriate words. These findings are similar to those of the previous studies such as Al Seyabi & Tuzlukova (2014) and Thanh Huy (2015). In addition to vocabulary, grammar is also challenging. 46.2% of our participants reported difficulties in grammar (Table 7). Our remarks in their essays were turning around tenses; they misuse tenses. Another grammatical issue is subject-verb agreement. This was obvious in their writings, most of the participants have problems specifically subject-verb agreement of the third person (she, he and it) in the present and during our experiment, we have noticed this issue even in their oral answers. This is what Al Seyabi and Tuzlukova (2014) reported in their study. Furthermore, our sample (23.1%) struggles with spelling. When analyzing their essays, we have noticed that they misspell English words (e.g. finnaly, realy, oportunity...), and sometimes they write words as they are pronounced (e.g. lisning). This is what Hussen (2015) also reported in his study. For the content, the biggest problem was finding ideas. 69.2% of our participants face challenge in finding ideas. And in the analysis of their texts, repetition of the same idea is noticed; this reveals their problems in ideas' generation. Another issue is coherence, 30.8% of our participants fail to make the text coherent which is already demonstrated by Ahmed (2010). Our findings answer the first research question that is learners' difficulties in writing. We may relate these difficulties to the teaching methods and

not to the students' lack of efforts because our participants are motivated to learn English mainly writing. This is shown by all of them (100%) reported liking writing (table 5) and 92.3% reported that English is their personal choice (table 4).

Concerning planning prior to the task, 69.8% of our participants reported that they do not plan prior to writing while the remaining 30.2% reported that they plan (table 15). However, when we have asked those who plan about the strategies they use they seemed unaware and they mix it up with drafting mainly. Additionally, only two of our participants who plan prior to the task reported using outlining that is actually a planning strategy. While the two remaining ones suggested drafting, that is another writing stage rather than a planning strategy. During our experiment, we have noticed that they did not plan prior to writing; this was obvious when they were asked to write an essay in the classroom before we introduce them the different planning strategies, they started directly drafting. Also what we have noticed is that learners do not plan because they do not know how to do it, and not because they do not recognize its importance since all of them (100%) reported that planning is important (table 17). From here, we may argue that our learners lack guidance and instructions on how to plan their writings. These findings answer the second research question. Finally, we noticed that when learners are taught the planning strategies, they use them during writing and they recognized their usefulness. Considering the literature, planning prior to writing is very important, this was suggested by different researchers such as Ellis (2005).

Concerning our central issue that is the effect of pre-task planning on accuracy, the findings of the post-test showed almost similar results as the pre-test with a slight difference that is not considered significant. As we have mentioned in the first chapter, section two, mixed results about the effect of pre-task planning (strategic planning is also used as synonymous) on accuracy was found in the literature of planning. In our study, the mean scores of the post-test ($M=0.73$) revealed that pre-task planning has very slightly affected students' writings in terms of accuracy in comparison to the pre-test ($M=0.55$); however, the effect is not significant. This result is in line with the studies of Crookes (1989) in which he reported that planning had little effect on accuracy. In addition, Skehan and Foster (1996) reported that planning had no effect on accuracy in the narrative tasks. In addition, Wendel (1997 as cited in Ellis, 2003) concluded that pre-task planning did not lead to greater accuracy in the tasks he investigated. Moreover, Yuan and Ellis (2003, as cited in Ellis, 2003) found that strategic planning had no effect on accuracy. Nevertheless, our results are not in line with Bagheridous and Fakoor (2013) who suggested that learners in pre-task planning group

produced more accurate clauses compared to unplanned one. Also, Foster and Skehan (1996) report that pre-task planning leads to greater accuracy in the decision-making task. Besides, Ellis (1987, as cited in Ellis, 2003) found in his study that pre-task planning leads to greater accuracy in the use of the regular past tense.

It would appear from this discussion of our results and the results of the different studies that whether or not pre-task planning had an effect on accuracy depends on a variety of factors that Ellis (2003) argues to be generally uncontrolled. In conclusion Ellis (2003: 131) implies that *“Perhaps the only conclusion possible at the moment is that strategic planning will improve grammatical accuracy in task performance at least sometimes”*. This is why the effect of pre-task planning on accuracy is unclear.

Section three: Limitations, Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

In this section, three main elements are discussed. First of all, we start by summarizing some limitations and challenges encountered throughout this study. Then, we provide some implications and finally we finish by suggesting some recommendations for future research.

I. Limitations

Throughout the present investigation, we have reached important findings; however, it is crucial to cite the several limitations we have encountered. In what follows the conceptual and methodological limitations will be highlighted.

By the conceptual limitation, we refer to the fact that planning is a sophisticated and complex term that has different meanings and what makes it more sophisticated is its relation to cognition, thinking and meta-cognition. In addition, it is also related to cognitive psychology and there is little research on pre-task planning mainly in writing. That is, the main research on planning was done in relation to speaking. Besides, what learners do exactly in the planning phase was ignored. Concerning the effect of planning on accuracy, it is also related to many different aspects including the learners' level, task characteristics and individual differences (such as aptitude and intelligence) that may be difficult and sometimes impossible to control. Thus, the effect of planning on accuracy may also be affected by those aspects.

For the methodological issues, the most obvious limitation in this study is its pre-experimental design. It was difficult to conduct a true or quasi experimental because the population we have designed to work with was second year, and second year students at the university of Bejaia were taught by five different teachers. This inhibited us from having two groups (control and experimental).

Then, the number of the participants is limited to 13 and data were collected in a short period of time. Since, only five sessions were devoted to the experiment, it is insufficient to ensure the effect of pre-task planning on writing accuracy. Thus, we cannot generalize the results.

Furthermore, the use of the questionnaire as a self-reported tool may fail to reveal the real attitudes of our participants. And the honesty of the participants' answers cannot be guaranteed since their answers depend on their moods.

Moreover, many factors could not be controlled such as learners' motivation, their aptitude, their interest and their absences. Also, accuracy may be influenced by the learners' level. For example, intermediate learners make fewer errors than low achieving learners.

In addition, in the comparison of the pre and post-tests only 12 essays were evaluated and used because the 13th participant did not attend the pre-experimental sessions regularly.

Besides, we cannot validate our results since accuracy is also influenced mainly by the complexity of the task. Thus, using two different tasks in the pre and post tests may influence the results.

Also, the use of error free t-units as a measure of accuracy has some limitations. In one side, researchers are still in disagreement about what constitutes an error. In the other side, this measure does not take into account the number of errors in each T-unit. That is a T unit may contain more than one error but it will be counted as one error T-unit.

Finally, regarding all these limitations our findings cannot be generalized even though according to our results from the post test, planning strategies slightly enhanced accuracy.

II. Implications

Our aim of this study is to confirm the hypothesis that pre-task planning enhances accuracy in writing. Yet, through the results obtained, a number of implications are addressed to benefit

from our results and improve and develop both teaching and learning experiences. These implications can be summarized as follow:

II.1. Changing Learners' Views and Perceptions about the Writing Process. It is very important to perceive writing as a process, which includes different steps that should not be ignored. In this regard, teachers can raise learners' awareness of the importance of knowing the different stages of writing, how to move from one stage to another and the importance of each stage. This can be achieved through direct and explicit instructions. Because during our experiment, approximately all the participants said that they have neither been taught the different planning strategies we have dealt with, nor the importance of planning as a whole sub-process of writing.

II.2. The use of an eclectic approach in teaching writing. For better teaching writing and meeting the different needs of the learners, an eclectic approach should be adopted. Thus, teachers should neither ignore the final product nor neglect the steps. In other words, we suggest the use of the product approach mainly with beginners to help them develop their linguistic competence and focus on the form and the structure of the produced texts in order to avoid errors of any kinds. In addition, we suggest the use of the process approach to make learners aware about the different stages of writing, and help them recognize that writing is not just combining words and sentences but rather a creative thinking process. Besides, we are likely to argue that explicit teaching instructions may bring adequate changes.

II.3. Introducing the different planning strategies into the classroom. From what we have noticed and what our participants told us, teachers do not teach the different planning strategies during writing sessions. It is very important to teach learners how to organize their ideas before moving to drafting by using different planning strategies (such as graphic organizers). Also, teachers should come with a wide range of writing tasks to encourage students to practice writing and implement different planning strategies.

III. Suggestions for Future Research

For future studies, with new procedures and long period of time for data collection, the already mentioned limitations might be overcome. Here are some suggested recommendations:

First, other researcher can investigate the effect of pre-task planning on writing accuracy by devoting a long period of time for the study, through the use of different data collection tools such as interviews and different data analysis tools such as ANOVA and MANOVA.

Besides, more research is recommended about learners' difficulties in writing and suggesting different teaching methods and learning strategies as solutions to overcome these difficulties.

In addition, working with a larger sample will lead to more reliable and valid results that can be generalized.

Furthermore, more research on the effect of planning on writing is needed because the main research on planning was done in relation to speaking.

Also, in measuring accuracy different measures have to be used in order to ensure the results. Thus, the researcher may use both general and specific measures.

Besides, investigating the effect of task planning on the overall quality of writing in general including structure and meaning through the use of analytic scoring criteria would open doors to new results and new implementations of planning.

Additionally, investigating the effect of pre-task planning on coherence may show new findings about the areas in which planning may actually be helpful. And since, all the participants of this study recognized its importance and positive effect on coherence, we suggest conducting more research about this.

Finally, taking into consideration other factors such as task characteristics and learners' level will help in controlling the effect of planning on writing accuracy.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we provided a detailed discussion of the findings of the current study and concluded that our planning strategies prior to writing had an effect on our participants' writing accuracy. Nevertheless, because of the small sampling and the short duration, the results cannot be generalized. We have also suggested some solutions to get by with the learners' difficulties in writing and their lack of accuracy. Then finally, we have concluded with some suggestions for future research.

General conclusion

The purpose behind conducting this study is to give a solution to an issue in both language teaching and learning that is lack of accurate writing through investigating the effect of pre-task planning on EFL learners' accuracy in writing among second year students at the University of Bejaia. Specifically, we have hypothesized that if EFL students plan prior to writing, they would write more accurately. We have aimed at teaching learners how to implement the different planning strategies to reduce errors and write more accurately. To confirm or infirm our hypothesis, a pre-experimental study is conducted and to collect the necessary data, pre and post questionnaires, pre-post tests, classroom observation and textual analysis were used. We have divided the work into two chapters:

In the first chapter, we shed light on the theoretical background about our variables (writing, accuracy and pre-task planning).

The second chapter was practical in which we have presented the results, and the analysis as well as the discussion of the data collected.

The data obtained from the pre-post questionnaires, pre-post tests, classroom observation and textual analysis indicate that:

First, our participants encounter difficulties in writing, and they always make errors.

Second, only some learners reported that they plan prior to writing while the others say that they do not. This indicates that our participants do not follow the stages of the writing process.

Finally, the comparison of the pre and post tests revealed that our participants' accuracy has been slightly developed after implementing the different planning strategies. These results are interesting even though we can neither confirm nor disconfirm the hypothesis (since the difference between the pre and post test is not significant).

Last and not least, to benefit from our study, some suggestions are provided and to overcome its limitations, more research on our topic is needed.

“The measure of greatness in a scientific idea is the extent to which it stimulates thought and opens up new lines of research.”

Paul A.M. Dirac

“Highly organized research is guaranteed to produce nothing new.”

Frank Herbert, Dun

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I know the techniques to write a complete piece of writing my self					
The more I plan and organize my ideas before starting to write, the better my writing is.					

- Which kind of difficulties do you encounter in writing?

Lack of vocabulary

Grammar

Spelling

Making the text coherent

Finding ideas

All of them

Others

.....

Part three: accuracy

How often do you make errors during writing?

- Sometimes

- Always

- never

Which kinds of errors do you make?

- Grammar
- Spelling
- Punctuation
- Vocabulary
- style
- All of them

- Do you think that it is difficult to write accurately (correctly)? a. Yes

- b. No

If yes why?

.....

.....

How can you avoid errors in writing?

.....

.....

.....

.....

Part four: task planning:

- What do you do first when you are given a task?

- Do you plan before writing? a. Yes
- b. No

- if yes (you plan), which strategies do you use? (Cite some of them)

.....

.....

.....

.....

- Do you think it is helpful to plan before writing? a. Yes
- b. No

Why? (Whether it is yes or no)

.....

.....

.....

.....

- Do you receive instructions (guidance) from your teacher on how to plan? a. Yes
- b. No

If yes, what are the strategies your teacher taught you?

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix 02: Students' Post-Questionnaire

University A_Mira, Bejaia

Faculty of Arts and Languages

Department of English

2nd year LSD, GA

Dear students,

After conducting our experiment, we would like you to answer this post questionnaire.

Students' attitudes about pre-task planning

Please answer the following questions:

- After implementing the different planning strategies, did you find pre-task planning helpful?

a. yes

b. No

-If yes, how?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- Which of the strategies did you find most helpful (you can choose more than one)?

Spider Diagram

Outline

Five W's

Venn diagram

- Do you think that ten (10) minutes planning is sufficient? a. Yes

b. No

Why?.....
.....
.....

- On which side you focus when planning?

Content (generating ideas).

Form (to avoid errors).

Both of them (content and form).

- Do you think that planning helped you to write accurately and avoid errors? a. Yes

b. No

- Do you think that teachers should focus on the planning stage as a very important process that has not to be neglected?

a. Yes

b. No

- Why?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your collaboration

Appendix 03: The First Session of the Pre-Experiment

University of A-Mira, Bejaia

3rd Year Pre-experiment

Faculty of Arts and Languages

Experimental Group: 3rd year, LSD, G3.

Department of English

Experimenter: Miss Boubeka

Course: Writing

Topic: Task Planning.

E-mail: souad.boubeka020992@gmail.com

Session one: Activating learners' background about the writing process.

Topic: the writing process	Level: Second year student, G4	Date: 04/04/2016	Time: 13:00-14:20
<p>Objective: At the end of the lesson Learners will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Understand what is writing.- The stages of writing.- How to sift between the stages. <p>Warming up: asking questions to activate learners' background:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- How do you start writing the essay?- Do you know some strategies to organize your ideas? <p>Presentation: Introducing the writing process and explaining the five stages the writing process is composed of.</p> <p>Practice: The learners will be asked to write an essay using what has been already explained.</p> <p>Evaluation: students' essays will be evaluated with the teacher's help and thus providing feedback.</p>			

Lesson Outline

Session one: Introducing the Writing Process

Aim: make learners aware of the writing process and that this later is not only a set of combined sentences and paragraphs; it is rather, a creative process where the writer goes through different stages to generate ideas and produce a good piece of writing.

- ***Writing from the process approach:***

Writing is more than a combination of sentences and paragraphs, it is however a sophisticated task that requires the writer's thinking, creativity and linguistic competence. It involves different stages that occur recursively and that the writer should be aware. So, the writer takes into consideration the topic, his/her previous knowledge of grammar, syntax and all the language aspects.

Stages of Writing: the writing is not linear, it is cyclical and the stages occur recursively or repeatedly.

- **Pre-writing:** it is an important step in the writing process and the key to good writing is the planning phase. Before you sit down to write something, you need to figure out what you are going to write about. Start first by analyzing the topic and then decide what you have to say about it. After that, brainstorm ideas and then organize those ideas using an outline, diagram or charts. We can summarize this in:

- ✚ Analyze the topic and decide what to say (the aim).
- ✚ Brainstorm ideas and take notes.
- ✚ Organize those ideas using graphic organizers such as diagrams.

- Drafting: once you have planned your essay, the next step is to start drafting, and writing out your ideas on paper, make reference to the plan you have generated in stage one but you can change it when needed. Organize your ideas logically and add details to your topic. Do not forget that drafting is not perfect; you keep changing as you write because you discover new ideas the more you write. so, in drafting:

- ✚ Translate your ideas into words.

- ✚ Combine the information logically and develop your topic with details.

- ✚ Do not procrastinate or be awkward, focus on meaning and not structure and form.

- Revising: during revision consider your writing from the audience's point of view.

Reread your text, change the order of your information, delete some details and add new ideas. In this stage you need to consider whether:

- ✚ The details and the ideas fit the aim.

- ✚ The information is presented in an organized and logical order.

- ✚ The sentences are clear.

- ✚ The style is appropriate.

- Editing: while revision focuses more on making the ideas and the content clear for the reader, editing focuses on the form and whether the norms of English language are respected. During editing you check:

- ✚ Grammar.

- ✚ Spelling.

- ✚ Punctuation.

- ✚ Sentence structure.

- ✚ Word choice.

- Sharing: you have written something for someone to read it, even if that person is yourself or giving it to your teacher and receive feedback. Publishing includes:

✚ Out loud reading of the essay and text.

✚ Peer's feedback.

✚ Teacher's feedback.

❖ Practice: write an essay following the writing process.

Task: do you think that wearing fashionably is important? Write an argumentative essay to stress your view.

Appendix 04: The Second Session of the Pre-experiment

University of A-Mira, Bejaia

3rd Year Pre-experiment

Faculty of Arts and Languages

Experimental Group: 2nd year, G4.

Department of English

Experimenter: Miss Boubeka

Course: Writing

Topic: Task Planning.

E-mail: souad.boubeka020992@gmail.com

Session Two: planning your essay.

Topic: Planning	Level: 2 nd year	Date: 05/04/2016	Time: 9:30-11:00
Strategy: Spider	students, G4		
Diagram.			

Objectives: At the end of the lesson, learners will:

- Know how to use the spider diagram as an effective strategy to plan their essays.

Warming up: Activating learners' knowledge by asking them whether planning an essay before starting to write it is helpful.

Procedures: the teacher starts by explaining what is the spider diagram and illustrate with an example of how to use it.

Practice: learners will be asked to write an essay using spider diagram.

Evaluation: learners' essays will be evaluated and assessed.

Lesson Outline

Session two: Planning you essay using a spider diagram.

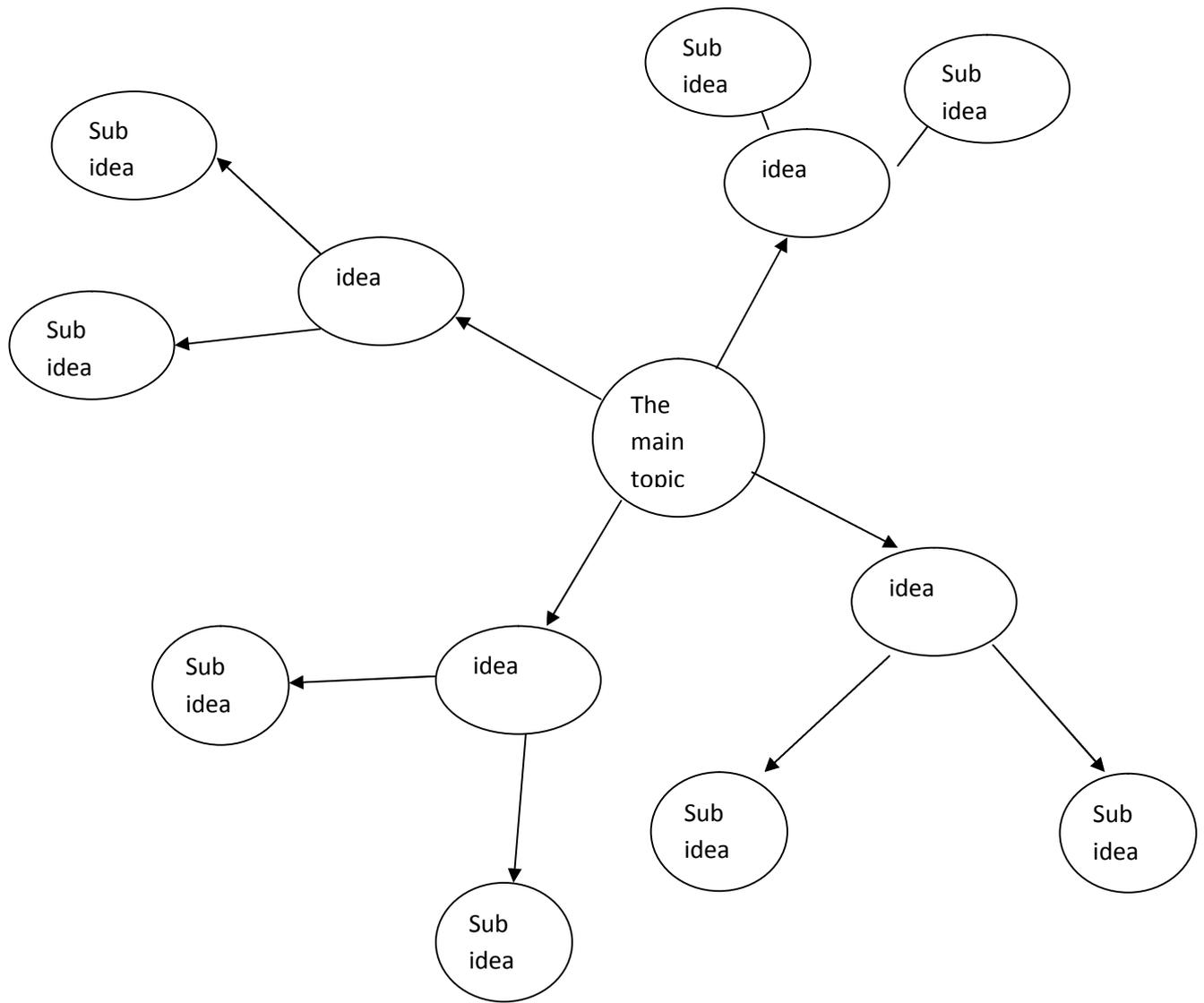
Aim: making learners aware that planning should not be neglected, moreover planning is whole process in writing which helps making the text coherent and well organized. Thus, being aware of some different planning strategies will help reaching higher levels and good writings.

Introducing spider diagrams:

Spider diagrams are mainly used for planning or provoking ideas, they are not the same with mind map but they can as useful in some ways as idea organizer. Spider diagrams are very organized in a neat and clearly structured layout. They start with central idea and branch out. Spider diagrams are so easy and quick to make, they reflect the structure of your brain.

Instructions on using spider diagrams:

- First you write the topic in the middle of the page and draw a bubble around it.
 - Then start with you sub idea: you add the sub idea in a bubble by drawing an arrow from the bubble at the middle outwards.
 - Add sub-heading (sub idea) and sub-sub headings and so on.
- **An Illustrated Example:** the importance of Internet.



Adapted from: <http://www.the-organic-mind.com/spider-diagrams.html>

Appendix 05: The Third Session of the Pre-experiment

University of A-Mira, Bejaia

2nd Year Pre-experiment

Faculty of Arts and Languages

Experimental Group: 2nd year, G4.

Department of English

Experimenter: Miss Boubeka

Course: Writing

Topic: Pre-task Planning.

E-mail: souad.boubeka020992@gmail.com

Session three: planning your essay, strategy 2.

Topic: Planning Strategy: outline	Level: 2 nd year Students, G4	Date: 06/04/2016	Time: 11:15-12:50
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Objectives: At the end of the lesson, learners will:

- Know how to use the outline as an effective strategy to organize their ideas and make a plan

Warming up: Activating learners' knowledge by asking them whether planning an essay before starting to write it is helpful.

Procedures: the teacher starts by explaining what is the outline and illustrates with an example how to use it.

Practice: learners will be asked to write an essay using an outline.

Evaluation: learners' essays will be evaluated and assessed.

Lesson Outline

Session three: Planning your essay using an outline.

Aim: being aware of the importance of planning prior the task and developing effective planning strategies among which an outline.

Introducing the outline:

An outline is a plan for your text that will help you to organize your ideas effectively to better communicate them to the reader. The outline may simply include what the introduction will be about, what you will discuss in the body and what you have to include in the conclusion.

In short, outline is simply a framework for presenting the main and supporting ideas of a topic.

Instructions of using outlines:

- In outlines, a single word or a brief phrase is used to describe a particular idea.
- ❖ First of all, determine the aim of your essay (what you are going to talk about).
- ❖ Outlines always begin with thesis statement or a summarizing sentence that presents the central idea of your essay.
- ❖ Develop a list of “talking points” you want to get across.
- ❖ Add some details to the points you will develop.
- ❖ Place each of the ideas in the appropriate part (introduction, body paragraphs and conclusion).
- ❖ Write a last sentence to sum up your last paragraph (that is a conclusion).

An illustrated example: are you with or against working women?

introduction	The main topic, and your position (agree or disagree)
Body paragraph 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The main idea one:✚ Supporting idea 1.✚ Supporting idea 2✚ Supporting idea 3
Body paragraph 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- The main idea two:✚ Supporting idea 1.✚ Supporting idea 2.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Supporting idea 3.
Body paragraph 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The main idea 3 ✚ Supporting idea 1. ✚ Supporting idea 2 ✚ Supporting idea 3
Conclusion	It can be a summary, a proverb, or stressing your point of view.

Practice: you have produced a new product that did not exist before, write an essay in which you try to convince and persuade people to buy it.

Appendix 06: The Fourth Session of the Pre-experiment

University of A-Mira, Bejaia

3rd Year Pre-experiment

Faculty of Arts and Languages

Experimental Group: 2nd year, G4.

Department of English

Experimenter: Miss Boubeka

Course: Writing

Topic: Task Planning.

E-mail: souad.boubeka020992@gmail.com

Session four: planning your essay, strategy 3.

Topic: Planning Strategy: Venn Diagram.	Level: 2 nd year students, G4	Date: 11/04/2016	Time: 13:00-14:00
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Objectives: At the end of the lesson, learners will:

- Know how to use the Venn diagram as an effective strategy to organize their ideas and make a plan

Warming up: Activating learners' knowledge by asking them whether planning an essay before starting to write it is helpful.

Procedures: the teacher starts by explaining what is the Venn diagram and illustrates with an example how to use it.

Practice: learners will be asked to write an essay using the Venn diagram.

Evaluation: learners' essays will be evaluated and assessed.

Lesson Outline

Session five: Introducing the Venn diagram.

Aim: Encouraging learners to use a Venn diagram to plan their essays when they are asked mainly to write compare and contrast essays.

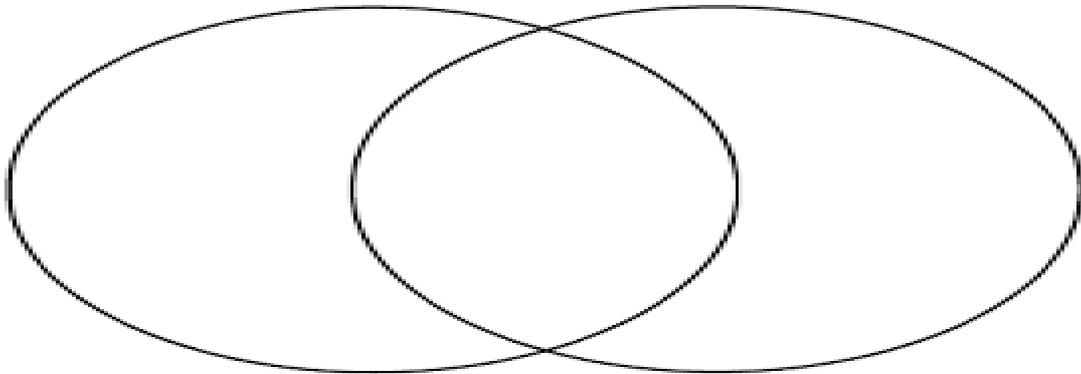
Introducing the Venn diagram:

A Venn diagram is a graphic organizer that is composed of two overlapping circles. Mainly this type of diagrams is used to organize ideas in compare and contrast essays.

➤ **Instructions of Using the Venn Diagram:**

- Brainstorm ideas and information about the topic, about the elements you are comparing and contrasting.
- Write the differences in their respective circles (the outside parts of the circle).
- Write the similarities they share in the middle where the circles meet.

An illustrated example: compare and contrast between a bear and a rabbit.



Practice: Compare and contrast between marriage in the past and marriage nowadays.

Appendix 07: The Fifth Session of the Pre-experiment

Post-Test

University of A-Mira, Bejaia

3rd Year Pre-experiment

Faculty of Arts and Languages

Experimental Group: 3rd year, LSD, G3.

Department of English

Experimenter: Miss Boubeka

Course: Writing

Topic: Task Planning.

E-mail: souad.boubeka020992@gmail.com

Session four: planning your essay, strategy 3.

Topic: Planning Strategy: Ws chart.	Level: 3 rd year students, G4	Date: 12/04/2016	Time: 9:40-11:00
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Objectives: At the end of the lesson, learners will:

- Know how to use the Ws chart as an effective strategy to organize their ideas and make a plan

Warming up: Activating learners' knowledge by asking them whether planning an essay before starting to write it is helpful.

Procedures: the teacher starts by explaining what is the Ws chart and illustrate with an example how to use it.

Practice: learners will be asked to write an essay using the Ws chart.

Evaluation: learners' essays will be evaluated and assessed.

Lesson Outline

Session four: Planning your essay using the five Ws chart.

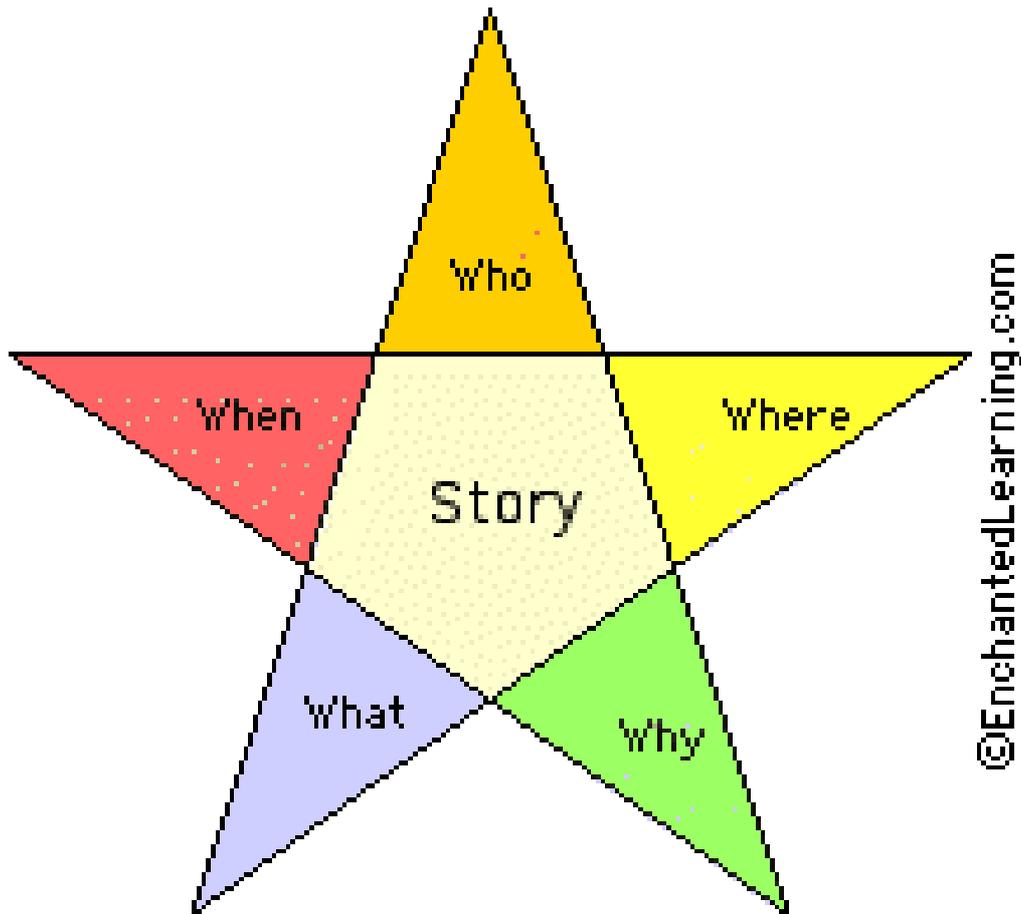
Aim: Providing learners with the necessary information about the five W's chart, how to use it and why to use it in order to help them recognize its importance and encourage them to use it.

Introducing the five Ws chart:

Five W's diagram is a type of graphic organizer that make writers think about and list the "Who, When, Where, What, and Why" of a story or event in a simple visual way. It is useful for organizing your ideas and planning your essay mainly a story. Thus we argue that the five Ws chart is mainly used to plan narrative essays.

- ✚ Who: refers to the characters.
- ✚ When: refers to the timing the events take place.
- ✚ What: refers to the events.
- ✚ Where: refers to the place or the places the events take place.
- ✚ Why: refers to the event happens, the importance of the event.

An Illustrated example: Titanic story.



Adapted from: <http://www.enchantedlearning.com/graphicorganizers/5ws/>

Practice: Write a story of your imagination using the five Ws chart.

Appendix 08: the Observation Grid

The researcher has observed the learners' in terms of:

I. Reaction:

- are students interested to the content taught?

II. Participation:

- How many students participate in each session?
- Do learners ask and answer questions?

III. Collaboration and Interaction:

- Are the learners collaborative?
- Is the interaction reciprocal between the instructor and the learners?

IV. Learners behaviors:

- Do learners listen and keep calm during the lectures?
- Do learners talk with the classmates or concentrate to the content and take notes?

V. Objectives:

- have I reached the objectives and aims of each lesson?

Appendix 09: The First Sample of Students' Essay

To compare between life in the past and now, we will find that there is a big difference. For example if we compare between the marriage in the past and the marriage of nowday we will see that's it is not the same there are a great change.

In the past, the married didn't have the right to choose who or whom she will marry with, but nowday she has the right to choose his partner. In ancient time, there were not a relationship between the wedded. Their parents who chose for him a girl and they go to the house of the girl to ask for her hand, then they will make a marriage. But now it is totally different, the boy will choose freely the girl with whom he will marry. Besides this, in the past there were not meeting between men and woman in

the party, but now there are, on ancient there were not music they just used traditional instruments, but actually there is what we call modern instrument.

In the past, when it was time to bring the Bride they used horse, however, now they use car.

I think even if the wedding of our time is more comfortable and more develop, but we must keep our traditions.

109 units.

110

Appendix 10: The Second Sample of Students essays

Computer is considered as of the greatest and useful modern means that science had produced. It is a programmable electronic machine that performs logical operations especially gathering a large amount of data very quickly.

This modern machine renders a great service to us as it facilitates the way of communication thanks to social media. Then it can do any kind of difficult calculations within seconds and we can get millions of information.

Nowadays computer is used in all fields in the world like education, agriculture, commerce, industry and offices. It's so important in the field of education because it helps the student to find all what they want. As well as, media science has advanced more with the help of computer. So it is used to diagnose various diseases.

Computer has lessened our load of work and made our life easy and comfortable. It works like a magician and the most important point is that it has become a part and parcel of our modern civilization then we can not go a single day without it.

Though the perfect electronic tool is so important and useful, it contains bad impacts in the society mainly on human's health. So we have to be aware using it and know how to use it as a benefit.

Appendix 11: The Third Sample of Students' Essays

[It's a sunny day,] (1) children are playing on the court. people were farming lands when suddenly they heard a huge scream. (2) It was Laura who is raped by a crazy drunk man named Jonathon. (3) The accident has really terrified all the citizens of Beverly Kingdom. All of them were just waiting for the decision (of the queen) that will be pronounced by the queen.

At that night, in front of the court the queen had decided to give Jonathon a kind of strange punishment. She ordered him to find an answer to a riddle in now more than one year and one day. The riddle was what is the most thing that woman desired from a man?

[Jonathon started his conquest in hope to find an answer that will save his life.] Many responses were proposed to him; one said money, one said safety, one said respect, one said just one night. Some of them preferred glory and others to marry. All these answers were rejected by the queen.

[Time is over and Jonathon started to convince himself of his destiny when (3) he met an old ugly woman that told him what is wrong with you (8) as if it's the end of life.] He quietly said: Oh it's really that (20)

[Just tell me "I will help you" said the old woman.] He started to narrate his story and [she responded] will give you the answer if you promise to do whatever I ask you for. [He directly said: yes] and probably the answer is true and his life is saved. [Woman wanted mostly sovereignty but she wanted to marry him.] Jonathon (28) accepted [and at that night he was so sad.] (29)

[The old woman said why are you sad?] [I can make your life better,] [I'm intelligent] and [I know life] [I'm honest] and I will preserve your honor even though I'm ugly. (36) (35)

[Jonathon finally accepted her as she was] and [when he kissed her she was transformed to a beautiful young woman.] (38)

[that's the really power of destiny!] (36)

Appendix 12: The Fourth Sample of Students' Essays

Choosing the right career can be a complicated choice. We always need a little hard work, some planning and some serious reflection in order to set ourselves on a way towards a successful career that can provide for us.

As far as I remember, I've always loved reading. Literature is the field that attracts me the most because it is a pleasurable and entertaining activity that always offers me the ~~most~~ ^{best} way to escape from reality. It has the power to capture the imagination. It has also the power to give us a large variety of experiences through different stories. One story can put us in different places, time periods, events, and cultures.

That's why I chose the path of teaching literature by studying it deeply in order to have the necessary skills. Reading is the only thing that influenced my choice. It allowed me to open my mind to a lot of things that are not accessible in real life. All that gave me an enjoyment and appreciation of literature.

I think that teaching literature is the most suitable career that I can make, because it gives me the chance to work and continue to live my passion in the same time and also allows me to share my love of literature with others.

Appendix 13: The Fifth Sample of Students' Essays

In our days, Many of parents have problems - and they are not

In our days, many parents have problems and they no one understand each other because of many reasons, for that they make a big decision that divorce which is the only way to escape from their plight but they just forget about their children and how they can accept this idea, and how their life ^{will be} changed.

First in this situation which is divorce of parents, children there is a big effect on children because their life will change from the one they used to live, they will receive a hard news about missing one of their parents. they will feel something incredible means don't know what really is it good for them or not. It is really a bad point entered to their life.

Besides this children are innocent and as you treat them they do, they have a nice heart, so according to this divorce they lose confidence, feeling sad and alone, they lose control and being all the time nervous.

Children the most thing are looking for is their parent and if the two of them getting divorce and have problems and misunderstanding children lose hopes and being unfriendly, making no friends, discussions with their friends mainly with their parents.

To sum up with is, divorce or broken marriages are the biggest effect on children in many part of their life, and they will be stressed and having or showing no feelings to other persons.

Appendix 14: The First Sample of Students' Planning sheets

Planining (outline):

Introduction =

1. Regarding the Index of illness on the world people should protect themselves and the solution is the ginger oil!

* body =

① → the history of this miraculous plant.

- Used since antiquity.

- ~~All~~ Most of 1st chimists and doctors one the world have sit it

② → It is a healthy product confirmed by many Studies

- Increase intelligence

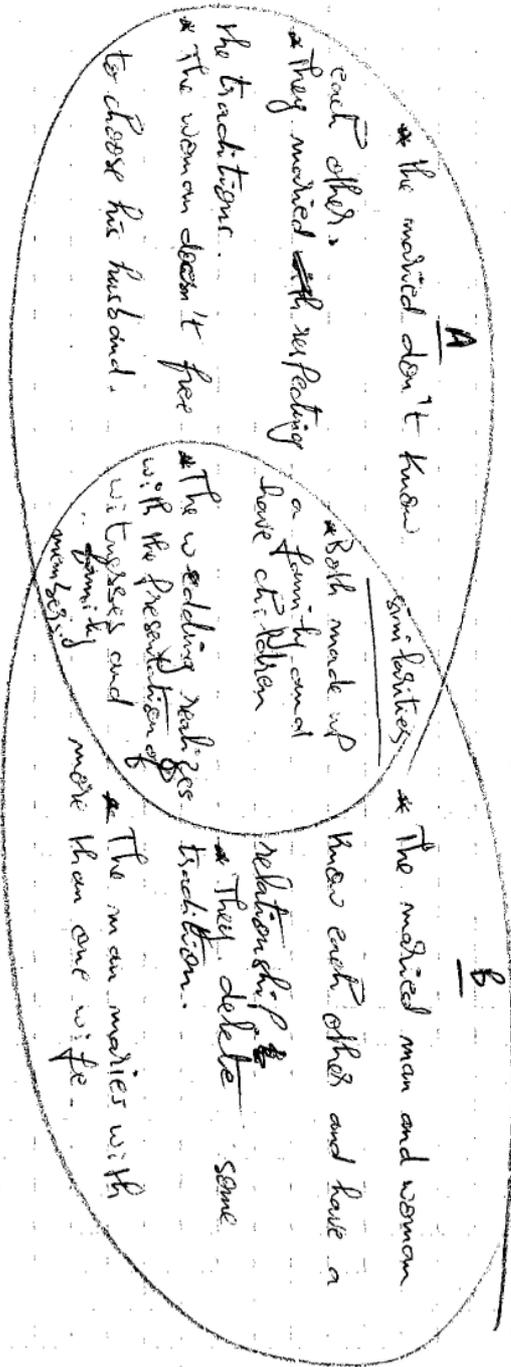
- keep you safe from heriditaire illnesses inherited.

Conclusion: to take this product is to take a guarenty for a safe ~~by~~ way of living!

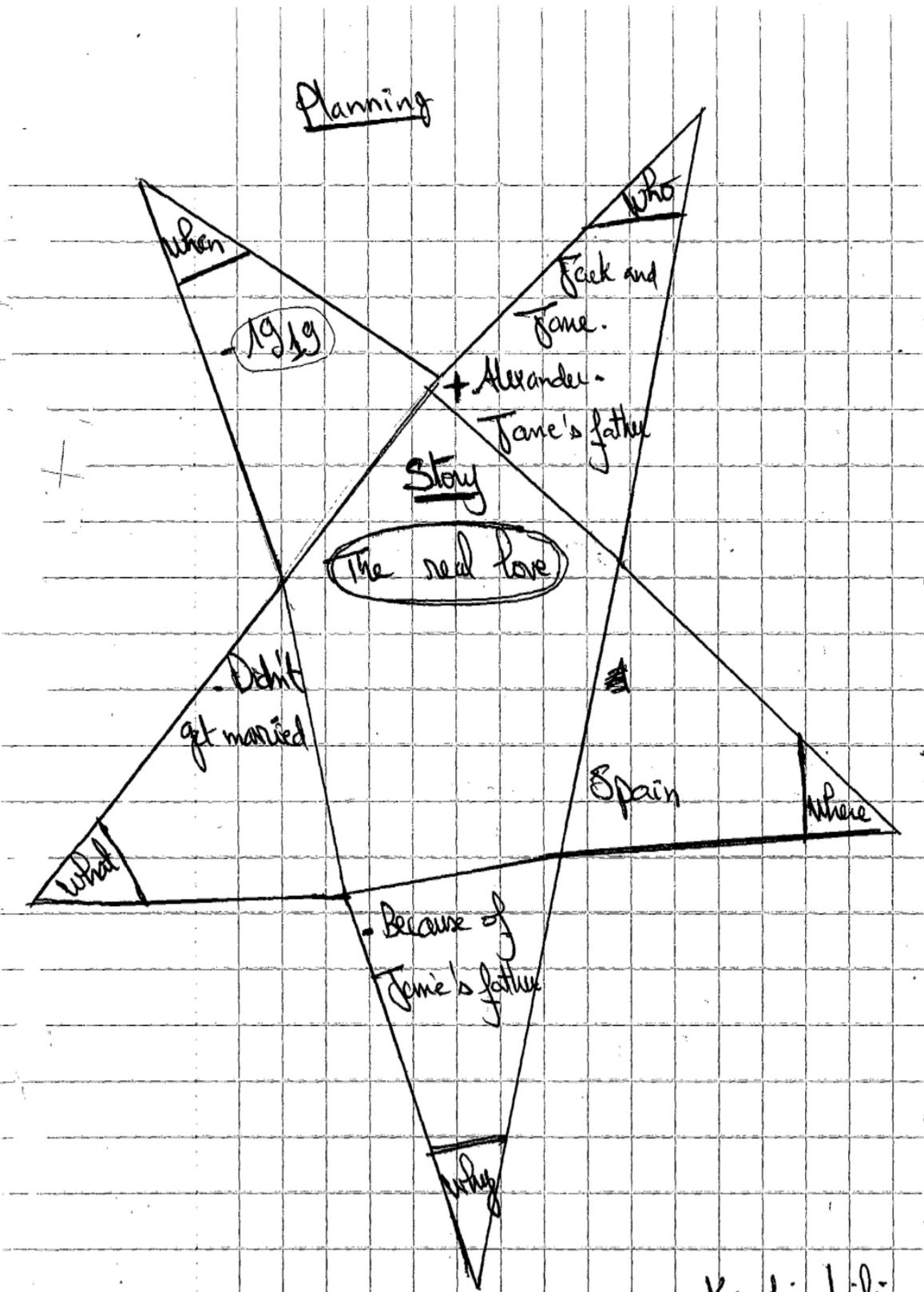
Appendix 15: The Second Sample of Students' Planning sheets

A - Marriage in the Past
B - Marriage in modern days.

Planning sheet

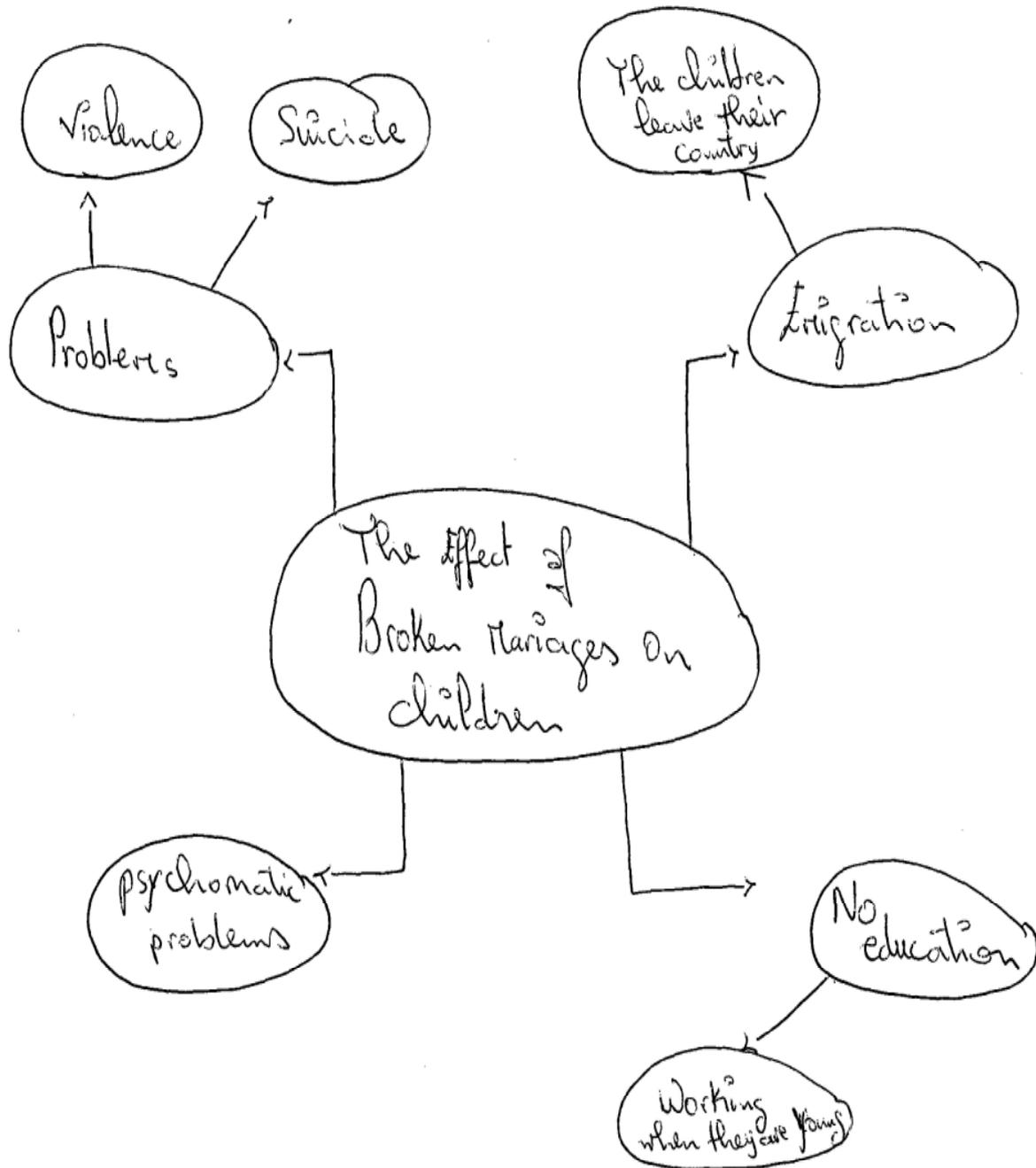


Appendix 16: The Third Sample of Students' Planning sheets



Appendix 17: The Fourth Sample of Students' Planning sheets

What is the effect of broken marriages on children?



Résumé

La présente étude explore l'effet de la planification pré-tâche sur la précision par écrit des étudiants de deuxième année LMD inscrits à l'université de Bejaia. Pour atteindre l'objectif de cette étude, le modèle pré-expérimental est adopté ; il est basé sur l'analyse des données recueillies dans le cadre d'une méthodologie mixte basée sur des méthodes quantitatives et qualitatives. Tandis que l'ancienne était basée sur les tests de l'écrit (pré et post) et des questionnaires, celle-ci était fondée sur l'analyse de texte et de l'observation en classe. Ce qui rend notre méthodologie triangulée. Ces instruments ont servi à répondre aux questions de recherche suivantes : 1)- quel genre de difficultés nos apprenants rencontrent par écrit ? 2)- Est-ce que nos apprenants planifient avant l'écriture ? Si oui, quel type de stratégies de planification qu'ils utilisent pour développer leurs écrits ? 3)- quel effet la planification pré-tâche par écrit a sur la précision de nos apprenants ?

Les résultats de cette étude ont révélé que nos participants rencontrent beaucoup de difficultés par écrit principalement la grammaire, le manque de vocabulaire, et l'orthographe. En outre, ils ont rapporté des difficultés pour rendre le texte exact dans une certaine mesure. Enfin, la précision de nos participants par écrit a été légèrement renforcée et améliorée après l'expérience. La différence entre le pré et le poste test n'est pas significative. Cela nous a fait conclure que nous ne pouvons ni confirmer ni infirmer notre hypothèse.

Mots clés: EFL écriture, l'enseignement de langue basée sur la tâche, la précision, la planification pré-tâche.