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**Investigating the Role of Self Assessment in the Improvement
of Learners' Writing Proficiency**
**Case Study of Third Year EFL Students at Chadli Bendjedid
University**

A dissertation submitted to the Department of English in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in "Didactique de l'Anglais"

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Dedication

I dedicate my work to

All my family

To my MOTHER and FATHER for their prayers to me and endless support

To my dearest sisters ASMA and BOCHRA

To my beloved brother AMINE

To my best friends HANENE, IMEN, SAHRA and RANIN with whom I will never forget
the greatest moment we shared together.

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

N: Respondents' Number

Q: Question

%: Percentage

Abstract

The present research examines the role that self-assessment has on EFL students' performance in academic writing. In fact, this study aims mainly at raising students as well as teacher's awareness about the importance of self-assessment within the teaching and learning process. Furthermore, it aims to investigate whether learners make use of self-assessment and self-regulation skills or not. Most importantly; this research aims to identify the role of self-assessment in the development of learners' writing skill. In order to investigate this role and prove the stated hypothesis, forty-five EFL third year students from the department of English at the University of Chadli Ben Djedid, El Tarf participated in the study in order to collect needed data. Hence, we followed a mixed method and used a questionnaire to carry out this study. The research reveals the impact self-assessment has on learners' self-regulation and most importantly on students writing proficiency.

Keywords: Self-assessment, writing skill, self-regulation.

المخلص

يهدف البحث الحالي إلى فحص الدور الذي يلعبه التقييم الذاتي في أداء طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في الكتابة الأكاديمية. تهدف هذه الدراسة بشكل أساسي إلى زيادة وعي الطلاب والمعلمين بأهمية التقييم الذاتي في عملية التدريس والتعلم. علاوة على ذلك، تهدف إلى التحقق مما إذا كان المتعلمون يستخدمون مهارات التقييم والتحسين الذاتي أم لا. و الأكثر أهمية؛ تهدف إلى التعرف على دور التقييم الذاتي في تنمية المهارات الكتابية لدى المتعلمين. و من أجل التحقيق في هذا الدور وإثبات الفرضية المذكورة، شارك خمسة وأربعون طالبًا من السنة الثالثة من قسم اللغة الإنجليزية من جامعة الشاذلي بن جديد في هذه الدراسة. في هذا البحث اتبعنا منهجًا نوعيًا وكميًا واستخدمنا استبيانًا لإجراء هذه الدراسة. يكشف هذا الأخير عن الدور الهام للتقييم الذاتي في التحسين الذاتي للمتعلمين والأهم من ذلك في إتقان كتابة الطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التقييم الذاتي ، مهارة الكتابة ، التحسين الذاتي.

General Introduction

In the recent years, English language teaching has witnessed a shift in paradigm from teacher centered to student centered teaching. Primarily, assessment was of teachers' obligation; however, with the emergence of formative assessment, learners were positioned as the central figure of the learning process. Hunt, Gow, and Barnes (1989) assert that for language teaching to be successful, the teaching must start with the learners themselves; therefore, teachers should leave the floor to students to guide the teaching and learning process, yet pave the way for them to self-develop as facilitators and instructors. The growing attention that formative assessment drew on the effectiveness of self-evaluation led scholars to study as well as implement self-assessment within classrooms to improve the various language skills.

Writing, among the skills, has gained much interest in the field of self-assessment since students' proficiency and knowledge are usually measured by writing within their academic life, such in essays, examinations, and even dissertations. Traditionally speaking, writing is usually assessed by teachers but with the sudden focus on the independent and autonomous learning, writing assessment was bound to students. Consequently, learners will be able to reflect on their works and raise awareness about their limitations and strengths. In addition, it increases students' capacity to make reliable and valid judgments about their own writing skill.

Although it is recommended to implement formative assessment, specifically self-assessment, most English language classrooms do not. Most researchers believe that students still struggle to write because it is difficult; thus, it will be even harder to self-evaluate their text production without prior practice. However, the reason behind students' writing deficiencies is nothing but the way their writing is currently being assessed.

1. Statement of the Problem

For the longest, assessing writing has been done by teachers where they score students' work and comment on mistakes and errors without further remedy. However, this way of assessment has not served students' writing proficiency much. So, a switch to self-assessment is suggested to promote students' self-awareness and responsibility for their own learning for the sake of incorporating students in a systematic self-regulation.

2. Aims of the Study

The general aim of the current study is to raise awareness about the importance of self-assessment within the teaching and learning process, with reference to 3rd year students of Chadli Ben Djedid University, El Tarf, it also aims to find whether learners assess themselves or not. Specifically, it aims at investigating the role of self-assessment in the improvement of learners' writing proficiency.

3. The Research Questions

This research attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Do students assess their own written products?
2. Does self-assessment help improve students writing skill?

4. The Research Hypothesis

In the light of the above-mentioned research questions, we hypothesis that:

If learners self-assess their text production, it will improve their writing proficiency.

5. The Significance of the Study

This research is significant because its findings will highlight the importance of self-assessment in writing classrooms. In addition, it will promote students'

independent and autonomous learning. Moreover, it will help students to improve their writing proficiency. Most importantly, it will leave a room for students to reflect on their writing; thus, pave the way for self-regulation. Lastly, it will lift the burden off of teachers where students will be more active within classrooms.

6. Research Design

Our investigation seeks to determine the role of self-assessment in learners' writing proficiency; therefore, we opted for a qualitative and quantitative study. The researcher adopted the descriptive method to investigate the role of self-assessment in enhancing the writing skill.

In order to answer the posed questions and prove the hypothesis, we designed a questionnaire that entails both close –ended and open –ended questions for students to collect the necessary data.

7. The Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation comprises of three chapters. The first chapter provides a theoretical overview related to key element such as definitions of both writing and self-assessment, self-assessment typologies and categories, in addition to writing approaches and purposes. The second chapter includes the research design and procedure, research method, sample and setting, data collection instruments, description of students' questionnaire and lastly the data analysis. The third chapter is devoted to discuss the findings as it also includes a set of suggestions and recommendations.

8. Limitations of the Study

Due to Covid-19 crisis, Algeria's higher education system has witnessed a drastic change following an emergency protocol. This study could not make use of any other research

instruments such as interviews to collect data since in person meetings were far to happen, wherein students were not present most of the time. This also made it hard for the researcher to get hold of the wanted sample since they were not present at that time.

Additionally, due to the short time given to conduct the research, an experimental research was cancelled. Given the current circumstances and time, the researcher was forced to adopt a descriptive method. An analysis using an experimental research could have given more accurate or even different results.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Introduction

Self-assessing writing has been the center of attention lately since it offers students the opportunity to reflect upon themselves to develop their self-regulation, communicative and particularly writing skill. The present chapter attempts to provide a theoretical background about writing and self-assessment. This chapter presents different items concerning our variable including definitions, writing aspects and approaches, in addition to self-assessment guidelines and typologies, as well as a brief overview on self-regulation.

1.1. Writing

Writing is one of the four skills that learners ought to be taught across their academic life. According to Nunan (2003, p. 88) writing is the mental process of generating ideas, deciding how to convey them, and arranging them into concise statements and paragraphs for a reader to understand. It is a complex process that allows learners realize and interpret their inner thoughts into a tangible and concrete existence.

A good writing, according to Hedge (2005), should demonstrate an organized stream of ideas while eliminating any type of ambiguity that might arise; a proper use of vocabulary and grammatical patterns and structures for style variety while taking into consideration the audience.

In spite the fact that writing is a crucial skill that students should possess and try the hardest to master, it is “probably the most difficult thing to do in language” (Nunan, 1999, p. 271). Thus, it is a hard skill to attain. “*Writing is culturally specific, learned behaviors which are acquired only if someone is taught; much like the ability to swim*” (Brown, 2001, p. 334). In other words, writing is not an easy skill to learn; it needs an intensive practice.

1.2. Teaching Writing

To communicate effectively in English, students have to develop and master the four basic language skills: listening; speaking; reading and writing. The writing skill as Nunan (1989) argued is more than using a paper and pen; it is considered a complex activity that allows students to communicate their ideas using text and paragraph forms. It needs to be given extra attention since learners' knowledge and progress is usually measured by the quality of their writing. Freedman and Pringle (1980, p. 177) consider writing as a 'creative process' that makes use of 'perception, linguistic, and cognitive complexity' where meaning is conveyed using written forms. Evidently, the teacher task here is to teach, control as well as evaluate students written products, taking into consideration couple of criteria such as 'organization, coherence, clarity, accurate language, and word choice' (Starkey, 2004).

1.3. The Importance of Writing

As stated before, the purpose of writing is to communicate thoughts and ideas using standard language; therefore, correct spelling, vocabulary, grammatical rules and punctuation are vital.

Harmer (2004, pp. 31-33) discusses why is writing important, the points are summarized below.

- Since students think as they write, it encourages the accurate use of language and mechanics.
- Teachers use writing to evaluate and assess recently learnt materials.
- Student have plenty of time when writing; thus, they have enough time to reflect on the writing done and check for mistakes
- Writing is useful when preparing various classroom activities

- Writing takes essential part in larger activities that have aims aside from writing such as speaking and acting.
- Writing is useful for questionnaire-type tasks such as tests and examinations where students are asked to answer in written forms

1.4. The Purpose of Writing

Writers approach their writing having a purpose in mind that effects its production.

Tarigan (1994, p. 24) summarized the purposes of writing as follows:

- a) Assignment purpose: it aims at fulfilling a request to write something; therefore, the topic or the idea that the writing is based on does not come from the writer itself.
- b) Altruistic purpose: it aims at entertaining the readers and at releasing their negative emotions.
- c) Persuasive purpose: it aims at convincing the readers with a specific point of view or a presented opinion.
- d) Information purpose: it aims at presenting new information or thorough explanations to readers.
- e) Self-expressive purpose: it aims at introducing the writer to the readers.
- f) Creative purpose: it aims at achieving an artistic value of art.
- g) Problem solving purpose: it aims at solving a problem faced by the writer where she/he explains her/his thoughts to be accepted by the readers.

1.5. Aspects of Writing

Effective writing should showcase the mastery of the elements that writing consists of.

Throughout the educational process, learners should try the hardest to master these elements

in order to produce communicative writing. Jacobs (1981) as cited in Weigle (2002, p. 116) explained that content, organization, vocabulary, language use and mechanics should be present in any kind of writing. The elements are discussed below.

- a) Content: it is the material contained in writing and the informative items held within it such as the topic, the discussion and the core of the main topic.
- b) Organization: it is the logical sequence and order that your ideas should be presented in to produce meaningful writing.
- c) Vocabulary: its deals with the accurate and various uses of words in writing. Showcasing a range of vocabulary produces solid writing and adds to its quality.
- d) Language use: it is all about the divergent use of language components, structures and construction.
- e) Mechanics: it refers to the conventions of the written language such as punctuation, spelling and capitalization.

1.6. Approaches to Writing

1.6.1. The Process Approach

During the past 30 years, many models of the writing process have been presented by many scholars such as Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), Flower & Hayes (1981), Murray (1980), Williams (2003) and Williams (2005). These scholars agree that the process of writing is divided into separate stages to reflect on and address the obstacles that arise when writing. They also suggested that the process of writing is not linear but cyclical in which writers can go back and forth to edit, add or delete when needed.

The process of writing allows students to focus on their creation through multiple stages. These stages are illustrated in the figure bellow presented by Hedge (2005, p51)

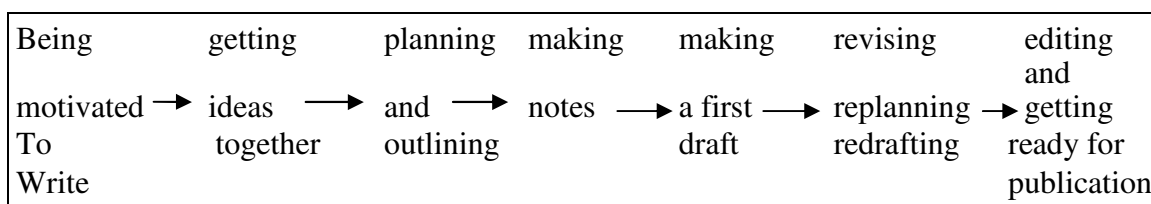


Figure 1. Stages involved in process writing (Hedge, 2005, p. 51)

The process of writing is recursive in nature in which students can alternate between the operations that occur (White and Arndt, 1991, p. 4; Hedge, 2005, p. 50). The figure 2 below demonstrates how writers move forwards and backwards between stages to convey their ideas appropriately and to refine the final product.

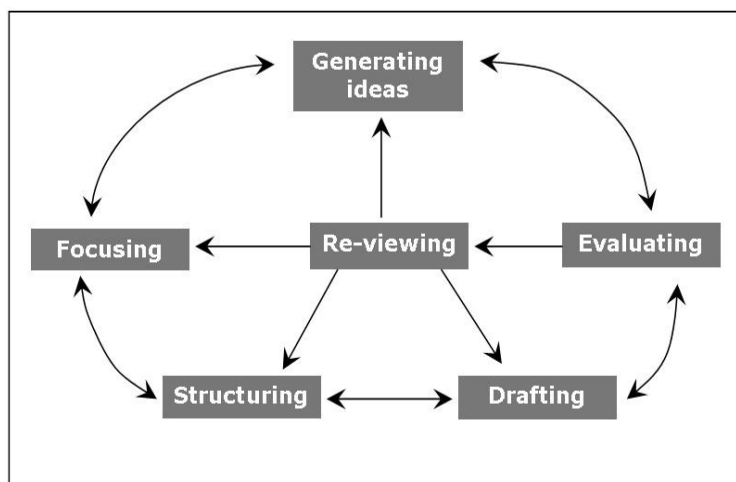


Figure 2. A model of writing presented by White and Arndt (1991, p. 43)

William (2003) also presented a similar model that shares the same idea as Hedge's. William (2003) also agrees that the nature of writing is random or cyclic stating that a written product is "the result of the complex interaction of activities that include several stages of development" (Williams, 2003, p. 106). Williams' model consists of eight processes of writing: prewriting, planning, drafting, pausing, reading, revising, editing and publishing (See Table 1). He also stated that each phase includes multiple activities for successful writing. For instance, the first phase, prewriting, where writers brainstorm ideas, they can

make use of activities such as journaling, discussion and free writing to develop ideas. In the second phase, planning, questioning audience's interest and writer's position, and setting an aim for the paper are activities that need to be tackled. In the drafting phase, tasks such as organizing, time planning and grouping ideas are crucial. At the pausing and reading phases, writers should reflect on their writing and decide about its relevancy. At the revising stage, they should reflect on their role as writers as well as the audience they are targeting. At the editing phase, writers should focus on mechanics of writing as well as their grammar use and style. Finally, at the publishing phase, they should make sure that their product is reachable to the public.

Table 1

Writing process model presented by Williams (2003, pp. 106–107)

Process	Definition	Description
Drafting	Producing words on a computer or on paper that match (more or less) the initial plan for the work.	Drafting occurs over time. Successful writers seldom try to produce an entire text in one sitting or even in one day.
Pausing	Moments when the students are not writing but instead are reflecting on what they have produced and how well it matches their plan; this usually includes reading.	Pausing occurs among successful and unsuccessful writers, but they use it in different ways. Successful writers consider how well the text matches the plan, how well it is meeting audience needs and overall organization.
Reading	Moments during pausing when the students read what they have written and compare it with their plan.	Reading and writing are interrelated activities. Good readers are good writers, and vice versa. The reading that takes place during writing is crucial to the reflection process during pausing.
Revising	Literally ‘re-seeing’ the text with the goal of making large-scale changes so that text and plan match.	Revising occurs after the students have finished their first draft. It involves making changes that enhance the match between plan and text. Factors to be considered during planning include rhetorical stance and rhetorical purpose, among others. Revising almost always includes getting suggestions from friends or colleagues on how to improve the writing.
Editing	Focusing on sentence-level concerns, such as punctuation, sentence length, spelling, agreement between subjects and predicates and style.	Editing occurs after revision of the work. The goal is to give the paper a professional appearance.
Publishing	Sharing the finished text with the intended audience.	Publishing is not limited to getting a text printed in a journal. It includes turning a paper into a teacher, a boss or an agency.

1.6.2. The Product Approach

Unlike the process approach, the product approach emphasizes on the final written product rather than the actual process of writing. It is “a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text, usually is presented and analyzed at an early stage” (Gabrielatos, 2002, p.5). Students are given a text model and are asked to replicate the organization and structure used. This approach focuses more on the grammatical aspect and syntactical structures rather than the creative use of language. Sun and Feng (2009) stated that the ultimate goal of the product writing is a coherent, error free piece of writing; therefore, it is highly concerned with the correctness and the form of the final product.

Steele (2004) presented a four stages model of the product approach.

- a) Stage one: students are provided with models and are asked to read and highlight features and genre. For instance, students should pay attention to paraphrasing and language use when writing formal requests such as letters and focus on storytelling mechanics when writing a story.
- b) Stage two: students undergo isolated, controlled practice on the highlighted features where they refine the skills and techniques required to master the model text. For instance, when studying a formal request or letter model, students go through an intensive practice on the specific language used.
- c) Stage three: this is an important stage since people who support this approach value organization more than the ideas themselves; thus, students are asked to organize their ideas accordingly.
- d) Stage four: in the final stage, students, individually, make use of their obtained knowledge to produce a piece of writing in order to showcase their competency.

1.6.3. The Genre Approach

Genre as an approach to writing is considered a mixed approach of the process and product approaches. Swales (1990) explains that the primary distinguishing feature of a genre writing is its communicative purposes, which influences how a text is realized. Thoreau (2006) states that the genre-based approach takes into consideration three aspects when writing: a writing style, a target of readers and a specific purpose.

Hyland (2003, p. 98) as cited in (Dirgeyasa, 2015) claims that:

Genre implies that students to write not just to write but to write something to achieve some purposes such as it is a way of getting something done, to get things done, to tell story, to request an overdraft, to describe a technical process, to report past event, and so on, we follow certain social convention for organizing messages because we want our readers to recognize our purpose.

Hyland implies that, when adapting the genre-based approach, students do not just write for the sake of writing rather they write to fulfill certain goals. For instance, how to describe a process, how to tell a story, how to explain the way things get carried out or how to report events. To convey clear ideas to readers, students use certain social conventions and follow specific grammatical and rhetorical patterns.

Firkins, Forey, and Sengupta (2007) suggested a three stages model of writing using the genre-based approach. The three stages are a) modeling a text, b) joint construction of a text, and c) independent construction of a text. Then, they explained each stage in details with practical steps to follow in sequential order.

1. Modeling text:

In the first stage, there are four steps to go through:

- a) In order to create classroom activities, the instructor selects a particular form of genre writing. However, the genre chosen must correspond to the needs of the students

- b) Through modeling, deconstructing, and even manipulating the text, the instructor and students explore the text genre.
- c) Students, guided by their instructor, try to grasp and understand the text's function and communicative purposes.
- d) Students, then, study the vocabulary associated with a specific genre, as well as grammatical and structural patterns, before practicing the procedure

2. Joint construction:

In the second stage, students are asked to do something more practical to reinforce the identified features in the modeling stage. It comprises if two steps:

- a) Students are asked to recreate the given genre writing. The vocabulary, grammatical patterns, and textual devices use in the modeling text can be revised and paraphrased by the student.
- b) The teacher constantly encourages students to discuss and orders them to remember so that they have a thorough understanding of the genre form presented.

3. Independent construction of a text:

In the last stage, students are asked to write a specific genre writing using their acquired knowledge with the guidance of the teacher.

Firkin, Forey, and Sengupta (2007) adopted a comprehensive and operational model (see figure 4) presented by Rothery (1996)

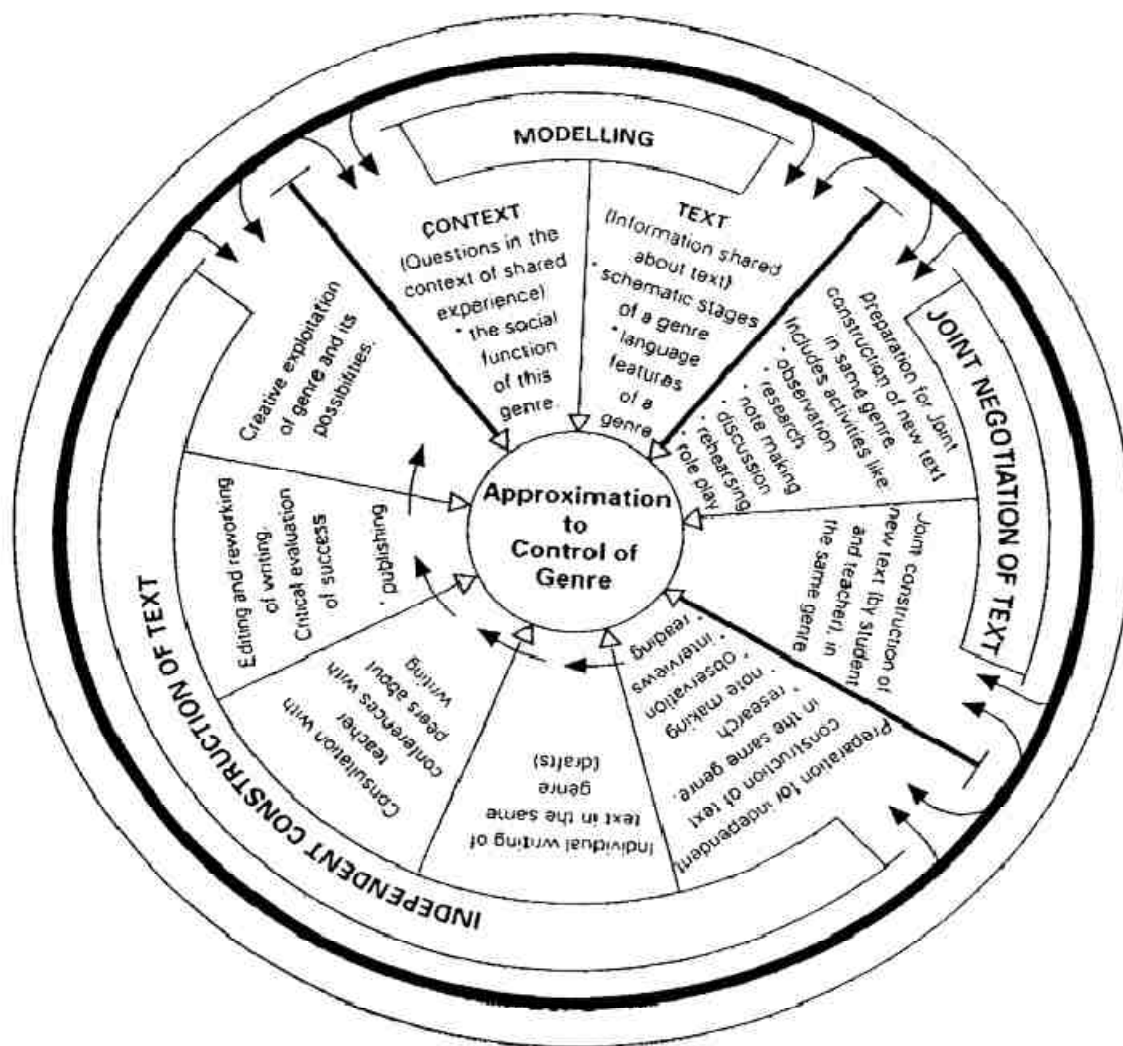


Figure 3. Model of genre presented by Rothery (1996)

This model illustrates the systematic steps that students follow to produce genre writing. Consequently, students' awareness of their weaknesses in writing and the difficulties they face will be raised which will promote self-development.

1.7. Self-Assessment

In the educational process, self-assessment has been neglected. As claimed by Blanche and Merino (1989) the first self-assessment studies were written in 1976. Since then, self-assessment has been increasingly used in the L2 teaching and learning process. According to Warne (2008), Self-assessment appears to be an effective tool that helps students develop

their goals, monitor and assess their works accordingly. Thus, self-reflective tasks are given to learners and based on their input and assessment criteria, they are required to review and self-regulate their performance.

1.7.1. What is Self-Assessment?

According to previous literature, self-assessment has two broader perspectives. The first one promotes self-assessment as a teacher centered instructional process in which the phrase “let’s evaluate our work” is frequently heard within classrooms. As Noonan and Duncan (2005) argued, most teachers of different levels use self-assessment as an instructional process. Besides being an instructional process, Black and William (1998) also stated that it is considered as formative assessment in addition to other assessment types. Self-assessment is considered too subjective to be used as summative assessment since the accuracy of the evaluation is affected by multiple variables starting from the assessment itself to item construction, the learners’ individual attributes, affectivity, and level of proficiency (Bachman & Palmer, 1989; Blanche & Merino, 1989; Butler & Lee, 2006; Ross, 1998).

The second perspective is derived from the self-regulation theories. Self-regulating is a process wherein students apply different personal strategies to control their thoughts, actions, emotions and motivation to achieve the goals they set (Zimmerman, 2000).

The following model proposed by Zimmerman illustrates how students’ self-evaluate themselves.

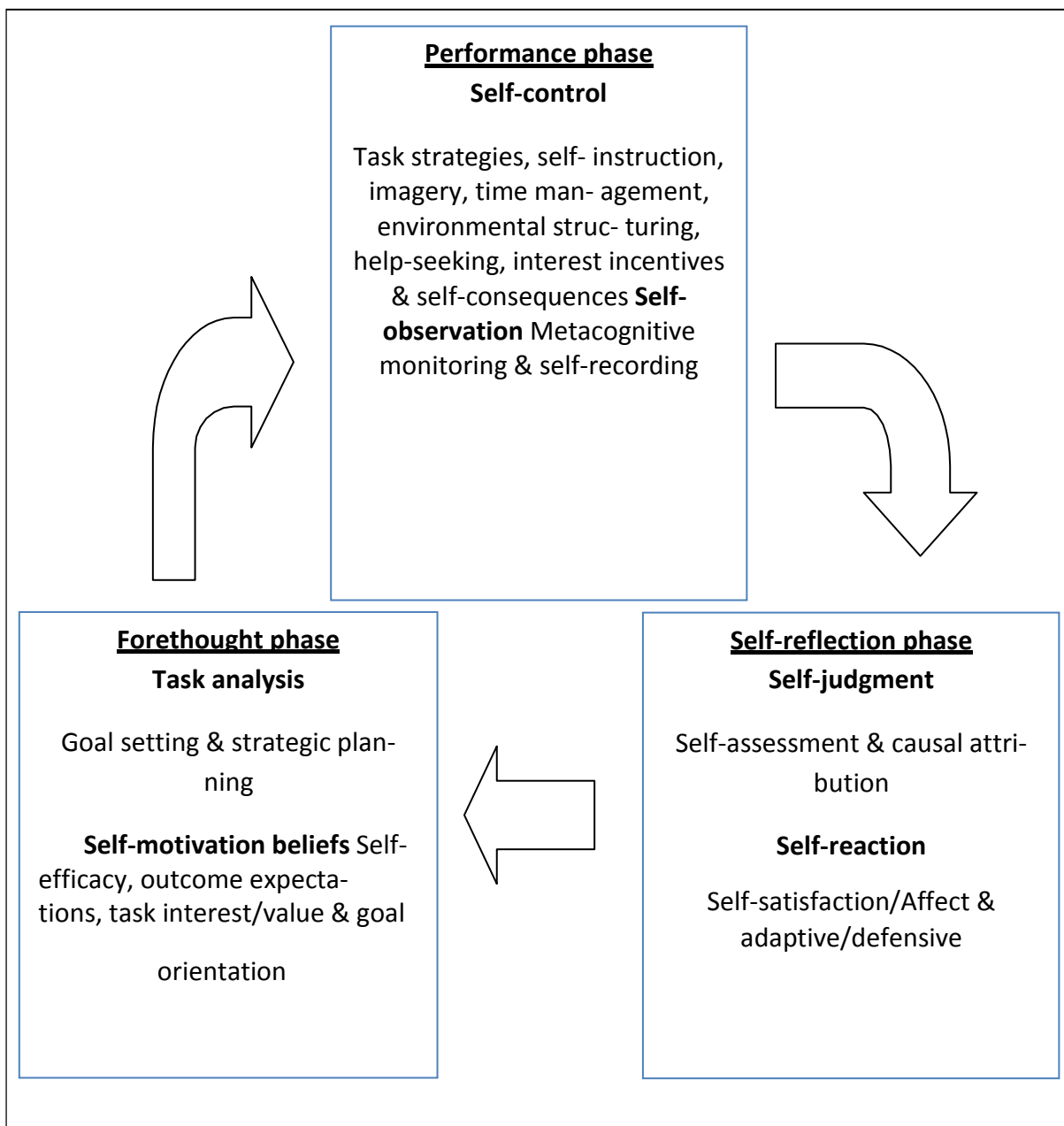


Figure 4. Self-regulation phases and processes presented by Zimmerman and Moylan (2009).

As Brew (1999) argued that self-assessment is directly linked with the power, authority and control learners have on their works. Thus, self-assessment is “the involvement of learners in making judgments about their achievements and the outcomes of their learning” (Boud and Falchikov, 1989, p529).

Panadero (2011) defined self-assessment as “the qualitative assessment of the learning process, and of its final product, realized on the basis of pre-established criteria” (p. 78). This implies that self-assessment is more than giving a score to students’ efforts, rather it promotes the self-evaluation of students work for self-regulation purposes in order to develop their metacognitive processes of planning, monitoring and evaluation (Winne & Hadwin, 1998). He also implies that, throughout this process, learners should reflect on their work. The second part of Panadero’s definition “the assessment of the product” indicates that, unlike most other definitions that insist that self-assessment occurs only within the execution process, self-assessment can happen at the product level as well where student self-evaluate their final product against established criteria. These criteria are set of guidelines that both teachers and students rely on to assess the work done (Goodrich, 1996). They are very important as well as effective since they lead students into achieving their desired goals. However, we cannot ignore the fact that self-assessment indeed takes place in the process where self-assessment occurs in the planning phase (Boud, 1995). This raises students’ awareness on what is actually happening within the process of execution and motivates them to be more involved in their tasks.

1.7.2. How to Self-Assess?

According to previous datasets presented by Alonso-Tapia and Panadero (2010) and Panadero (2011) there are three different ways on how to self-assess.

a) Self-assessment with the absence of a specified assessment criteria

This method follows the traditional way of self-assessment in which students self-evaluate and self-grade themselves without assessment criteria. Many authors expressed their doubts on its effectiveness; the idea of students scoring themselves is in dispute and under question (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009). Asking students to self-score their works does not

guarantee their self-regulation; moreover, the accuracy of self-grading with the absence of self-assessment criteria is low (Tan, 2012).

b) Self-assessment with the use of rubrics

A rubric is an assessment and scoring guide that includes the assessment criteria, the scale of self-grading and the description of levels quality. It helps students understand the assessment criteria and evaluate effectively depending on the models provided.

c) Self-assessment with the use of scripts

A script is a set of questions that guides students when doing a task (Table 2 shows a script example). It encourages reflection when performing a task and sets clear goals and objectives to achieve. It greatly facilitates the process of execution for students considering that scripts provide clear questions and instructions on what should be done and how should the process take place.

Table 2

A script to assess writing

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is my topic clear? 2. Do I have enough key concepts to present? 3. Are my points arranged in a logical order? 4. Are my words chosen carefully? 5. Have I stated the most important items at the beginning? 6. Have I used the right verb tense? 7. Have I used transition words when needed? 8. Are my statements specific? 9. Is my writing clear, precise and simple? 10. Have I provided enough examples? 11. Is my purpose stated clearly? 12. Is my grammar correct? |
|--|

1.7.3. Why to Self-Assess?

“The defining characteristic of self-assessment is the involvement of students in identifying standards and/or criteria to apply to their work and making judgments about the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards” Boud (1995, p.12). Thus, self assessment, simply put, allow students to feel incorporated in their work wherein students judge their own work against a given criteria. Consequently, this will support their learning and develop their assessment skills.

Leach (2012, p.139) presented benefits associated with self-assessment summarized in the following points:

- d) It enhances both deep and lifelong learning.
- e) It helps students understand their place and role in a democratic society.
- f) It makes students feel that they have the power and control on their own work.

- g) It develops learners' cognitive skills and metacognitive processes.
- h) It makes students engage in the learning process.
- i) It encourages greater comprehension of content as well as faster development and thoughtfulness in assignments.
- j) It reduces students' anxiety and eases any teacher-student conflicts that might occur while grading.
- k) It promotes both personal and intellectual development as well as social competencies.

1.7.4. Typologies of Self-Assessment

According to previous datasets on the broad field of self-assessment, many types and formats of self-evaluation have been presented by different authors and scholars. These typologies are discussed below:

1. Knowledge interest typology: This typology belongs to Bound and Brew (1995) where they discussed self-assessment in terms of "knowledge interest" pursued by learners when performing a task. It is split into three sub interests:
 - a) Technical interest: where students self-assess themselves to check the acquired skills, knowledge or ideas.
 - b) Communicative interest: where students review and discuss the assessment criteria.
 - c) Emancipatory interest: where students incorporate themselves in a critique of the provided criteria as well as judging their own work.
2. Student/teacher involvement typology: this typology belongs to Tan (2001) where he discussed teachers' continuum involvement in relation with summative and

formative assessment. He distinguished six self-assessment formats from least to most teacher involvement:

- a) Self-awareness: where students are aware of the thinking processes that they go through and assess them with no external criteria or teachers.
 - b) Self-appraisal: where students expect and predict the possible criteria from the teacher's expectations and assess themselves on that basis.
 - c) Self-determined assessment: where students decide about the needed information to assess themselves as well as how to ask for feedback.
 - d) Self-assessment practice: where students self-grade themselves and compare it to the one of the teacher and negotiate the final grade.
 - e) Self-assessment task: where students self-assess a specific task.
 - f) Self-grading/Self-testing: requested by the teacher, students self-assess themselves with summative purposes.
3. Power and transparency typology: this typology belongs to Taras (2010) where he discussed teacher/student power balance and transparency of self-assessment. He ordered five formats from the weakest to the strongest in terms of teacher and student power balance and decision making:
- a) Self-marking: where students compare their work against a model answer with provided criteria from the teacher.
 - b) Sound standard of student self-assessment: where the teacher provides the students with exemplars and descriptors that include various levels of writing quality.

- c) Standard model: where students use criteria to evaluate and grade their work as well as provide feedback.
 - d) Self-assessment with integrated tutor and peer feedback: where students assess other students or assess with the teacher prior moving to independent individual self-assessment.
 - e) Learning contract design: where self-assessment is based on a learning contract negotiated by the teacher and the students in which all decisions are made by the students themselves.
4. Presence and form of assessment criteria typology: this typology belongs to Panadero and Alonso-Tapia (2010) where they empirically studied self-assessment. They distinguished three self-assessment formats based on the presence of assessment criteria:
- a) Standard self-assessment: where students self-assess their work without given any sort of explicit standard or criteria.
 - b) Use of rubric: where the students are provided with a rubric that includes the criteria with a description of the final product.
 - c) Scripts: where students are provided with criteria in question form and are asked to go through to produce a descent final product.
5. Self-assessment procedure typology: this typology belongs to Brown and Harris (2013) where they discussed how self-assessment is carried out. They distinguished three formats:
- a) Self-ratings: where students are provided with a rating system such as checklists to judge the quality of their work.
 - b) Self-estimate of the performance (self-marking): where students grade their work against a scoring guide.

- c) Criteria or rubric based assessment: where students judge their work against hierarchical descriptions of increasing quality of writing.

1.7.5. Categories of Self-Assessment

Brown (2003) divided self-assessment into five categories: assessment of a specific performance; indirect assessment of general competence; metacognitive assessment for setting goals; socio affective assessment and student generated tests. In the first category, assessment of a specific performance, students self-monitor themselves when carrying a task and immediately provide an evaluation of the performances done. In the second category, indirect assessment of general competence, student self-assess a performance within a time limit using a scale rating, from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. In the third category, metacognitive assessment for setting goals, evaluation is rather strategic in which students set goals when reviewing a product. In the fourth category, socio affective assessment, an examination of effective factors in learning (writing) takes place where students indicate their preferences as well as comfort zone. In the final category, student generated tests, students construct a test, give it to their peers and grade it.

1.7.6. The Process of Self-Assessment

A necessary skill to effectively assess oneself is self-monitoring. It is the awareness of the thinking and the progress when carrying a task where learners pay close attention to behavior and thinking (Schunk, 2004). Shepard (2001) argued that students’ self-monitoring is important in constructing knowledge. Self-judgment is another component of the self-assessment process where students judge their work against established criteria in which the judgments made enlighten students about what they already know and what they need to learn

(Bruce, 2001). The third component is students' decision making and goals setting in order to enhance their learning.

1.7.7. Self-Assessment for Self-Regulation Purposes

Oscarsson (1989) claimed that self-assessment promotes learning; accordingly, students are required to apply various learning strategies and to stimulate higher order thinking. He also adds that self-assessment raises students' awareness about their abilities, progress and what they are capable of achieving; consequently, it promotes autonomous regulation and learning.

Zimmerman (2001) explained that self-assessment is seen as a broader view of self-regulation where students are "metacognitively, motivationally, and behaviorally active participants of their own learning" (p. 5). Thus, they self-analyze their weaknesses as well as strengths throughout the learning process to regulate themselves. Table 3 explains how students can be involved in their tasks wherein they identify goals while observing themselves for self-development objectives.

Table 3

Elements of Self-Regulation (Zimmerman 2001, p. 5)

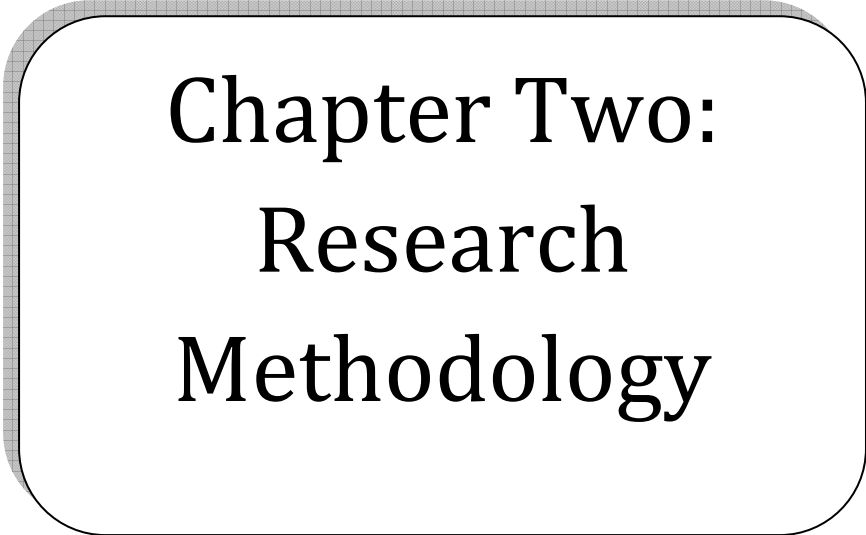
	What students do	Reference points for judgements
Self-assessment	Collect evidence of learning and interpret meaning of evidence	Personal goal, external standard
Self-evaluation	Compare their work	Goal, criteria, exemplar, feedback
Self-correction	Make changes or adjustments Set new goals	Goal, criteria, exemplar, feedback
Self-monitoring	Monitor progress towards closing the gap or reaching amended goal	Goal, criteria, exemplar
Self-reflection	Think about processes, thinking, dispositions towards task	Expressed notions of what learning entails

1.7.8. The Effect of Self-Assessment Training

Many researchers such as Ross, Rolheiser, and Hogaboam-Gray (1999), Fontana and Fernandes (1994), Goodrich and Boulay (2003), Ross (1995) studied the effect of self-evaluation training where they experimented on students by giving them self-assessment tasks while providing models and criteria of assessment. These studies' results showed that self-assessment training had a positive effect on students learning. Students who were trained to self-evaluate their work against given standards or criteria were able to accurately assess their own writing and easily detect its weak points.

Conclusion

The present chapter has provided relevant background knowledge related to writing and self-assessment. In the first part, it gave insight on writing; it tackled its importance, purposes, aspects and approaches. The second part gave an overview on self-assessment where it discussed different typologies, assessment criteria, categories and self-regulation.



**Chapter Two:
Research
Methodology**

Introduction

As aforementioned, this study sought to investigate the role of self-assessment in the development of learners' writing proficiency. The previous chapter provided a theoretical background of key items related to our variables. This chapter is devoted to the research methodology and data analysis. This is a descriptive study that makes use of a questionnaire as an instrument to collect data from participants.

2.1. Research Design

This research aims to investigate the role of self-assessment in developing the writing skill. In doing so, the researcher adopted the descriptive method by taking the writing skill as an independent variable and self-assessment as a dependent variable. This qualitative and quantitative study took third year EFL learners at the university of Chadli Benjedid as a case study through using a questionnaire to collect data for the study

2.2. The Sample

The target population of the present study is third year EFL undergraduate students at the department of English at the University of Chadli Ben Djedid, El Tarf. The selected sample consists of 45 participants that range in age. Third year students were particularly interesting to our research because they were expected to have collected the necessary, pre-requisite linguistic knowledge and have gained considerable experience in paragraph writing; thus, shedding light on the importance of self-assessment for self-regulation was a necessary step for them as future teachers.

2.3. Data Gathering Tools

The instrument used to carry out this study is a questionnaire directed to students, which seemed to be the most appropriate tool, given the present circumstances, to investigate the effect of student's self-assessment on their writing skill.

2.4. Description of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of a total of 20 questions that are divided into three sections. The first one is concerned with students' background where we asked about their age and gender. We also posed two other questions; one is used to know their reason behind choosing English while the last is used to know how they consider their level in English.

The second is concerned with students' proficiency and attitude towards writing where we asked whether they enjoy writing or not and whether they think of themselves as writers or not. In addition, to measure their writing proficiency, we included a Likert scale that consists of eight questions about their ability to construct an academic paragraph, to write a clear topic sentence, to use proper punctuation, spelling and capitalization...etc. Moreover, we asked about the most used writing approach by students.

The third section is concerned with self-assessing writing where we asked questions to know whether they assess their text production or not. We asked if students revise to make changes in structure, organization and content. In addition to what scoring guidelines they use and the reason behind their self assessment. We also posed two open ended questions to know how self assessment helps in developing their writing and what tips and techniques they recommend.

2.5. Analysis of the Questionnaire Results

2.5.1. Section A: Students' Background

Question One: Your gender.

This question aims to know our participants' gender; we have 34 female students and 11 male students.

Question Two: Your age.

- This question is used to know the average age of our participants.

Table 4

Students' age.

Age range	19 to 21	22 to 25	+26	Total
N	26	16	3	45
percentage	58%	35%	7%	100%

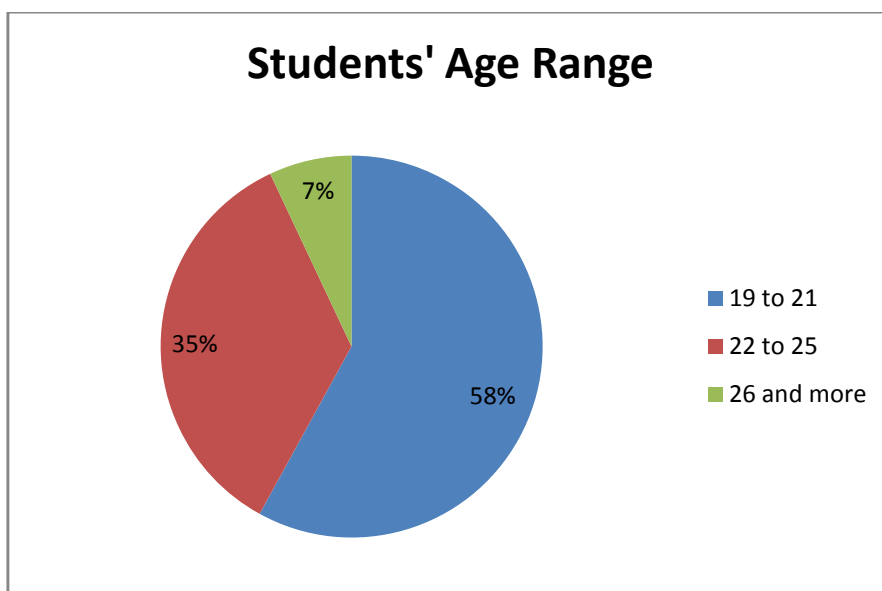


Figure 5. Students' Age Range Percentage.

The results reveal that 58% of students' age ranges from 19 to 21, 35% of students' are from 22 to 25 while only 7% of them are 26 or older.

Question Three: Why did you choose English?

- This question is used to know why students chose to study English language.

Table 5

Students' reason behind choosing English language.

Items	To get a job	To travel	I like it	others	Multiple Choices	Total
N	9	5	27	2	2	45
Percentage	20%	11%	60%	4,5%	4,5%	100%

Students' answers to the third question regarding their reason behind choosing English stream are presented in the table 5 above. It seems that nine students (20%) chose English to get a job, five (11%) said to travel, while more than half of the participants (60%) confessed that they like it.

As is shown in the table above, there are two students who represent 4.5% chose "others". The first student claimed that they wanted to upgrade their level and master the language while the second student stated that they had no other choice. In addition, there are two other students who also represent 4.5% chose multiple answers where the first student ticked "to get a job", "to travel" and "I like it" while the second student ticked "to travel" and "I like it".

Question Four: How do you consider your level in English?

- This question is used to see how students consider their level in English.

Table 6

Students' Level in English.

Items	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Total
N	3	26	15	1	45
Percentage	7%	58%	33%	2%	100%

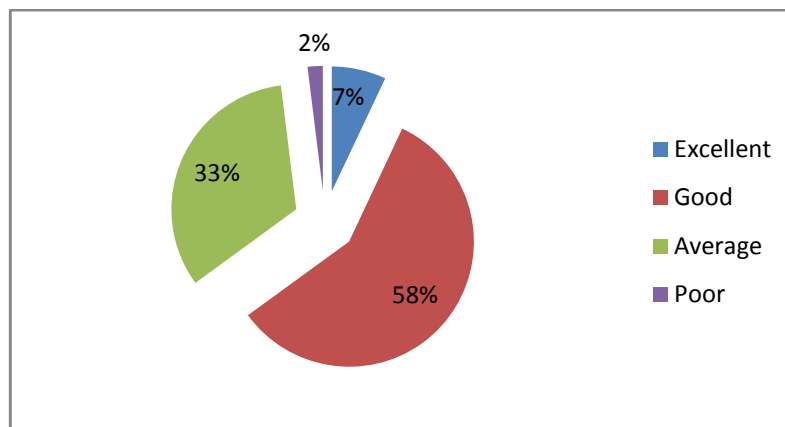


Figure 6. Illustration of Students' Level in English

As far as question four about the students' level is concerned, Table 6 above summarizes their answers. It appears that three students (7%) claimed that they are excellent in English, 26 students (58%) said they are good, 15 students (33%) consider themselves average while only one student (2%) stated that they are poor in English.

2.5.2. Section B: Students Proficiency and Attitude towards Writing

Question Five: Do you enjoy writing?

- This question is to know whether students enjoy writing or not.

Table 7

Students' reaction towards writing.

	Yes	No	Total
N	26	19	45
percentage	58%	42%	100%

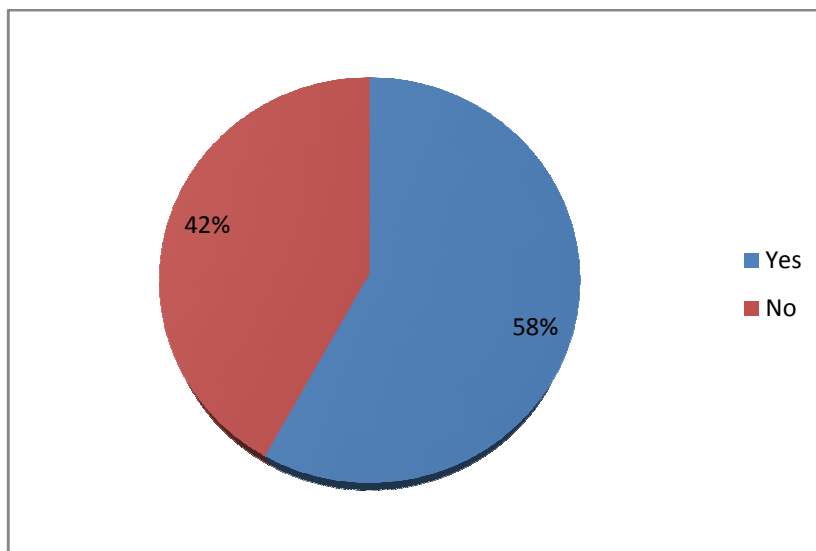


Figure 7. Students' Reaction towards Writing.

In an attempt to know whether students enjoy writing or not we posed question five. Results are reported in Table 7 above. It shows that 26 of our participants (58%) enjoy writing while 19 of them (42%) do not enjoy writing.

Question Six: Do you think of yourself as a writer?

- This question is to know whether students think of themselves as writers or not.

Table 8

Students' opinion on calling themselves writers.

	Yes	No	Total
N	4	41	45
percentage	9%	91%	100%

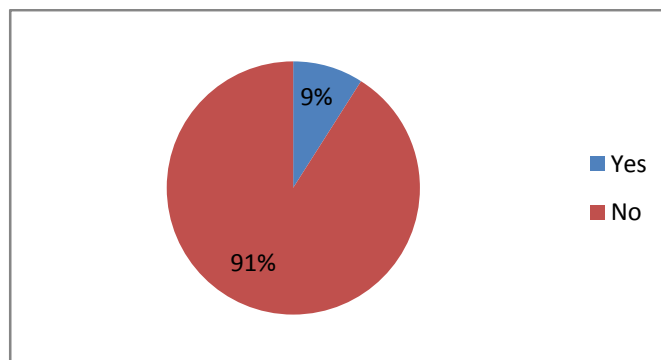


Figure 8. Students' Reaction to Calling Themselves Writers

Table 8 reports students answer on whether they consider themselves writers or not. The reported results indicate that a minority of our participants (9%) consider themselves writers while the majority (91%) stated the opposite.

Question Seven: Please rate your abilities for each item below on a scale between “1” to “5”. Circle your choice. 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

- Using Likert scale, this question aims to know students writing abilities.

Table 9

Students' writing abilities.

items	Scale											
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q1	7	16%	16	35%	14	31%	8	18%	0	0%	45	100%
Q2	13	29%	21	47%	8	18%	2	4%	1	2%	45	100%
Q3	14	31%	20	44%	7	16%	1	2%	3	7%	45	100%
Q4	14	31%	18	40%	7	16%	4	9%	2	4%	45	100%
Q5	14	31%	13	29%	10	22%	5	11%	3	7%	45	100%
Q6	4	9%	16	36%	17	37%	5	11%	3	7%	45	100%
Q7	3	7%	16	36%	16	36%	9	19%	1	2%	45	100%
Q8	10	22%	14	31%	11	24%	7	16%	3	7%	45	100%

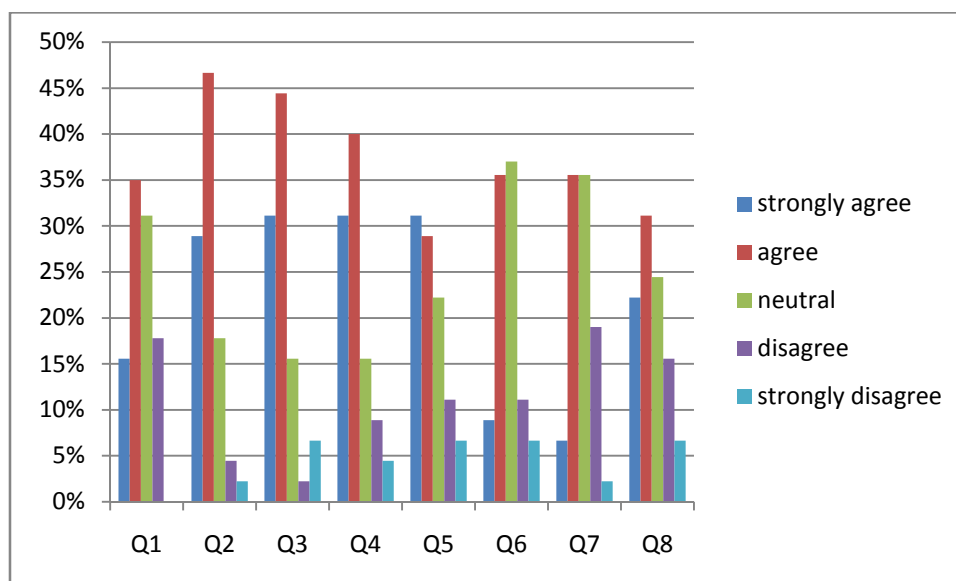


Figure 9. Students' Writing Abilities.

The data provided in Table 9 and simplified in figure 5 hints to students writing abilities. Students' answers regarding Q1 about writing a good academic paragraph indicate that 16% were confident in constructing a decent academic paragraph to tick strongly agree on the statement, 35% agreed to the statement while 31% ticked neutral. Lastly 18% of them disagreed on the statement confessing they lack in academic writing.

The results of Q2 about students' ability to write a clear topic sentence that identifies the topic and supporting ideas of a paragraph shows that 76% reported that they can do that (29% answered by strongly agree and 47% answered by agree). However, 18% of our participants were hesitant in doing so and ticked neutral. Lastly, 6% of the participants confessed they can neither write a clear topic sentence nor supporting ideas (4% answered by disagree and 2% answered by strongly disagree).

Q3 results about logically supporting and developing main ideas when writing indicate that most students, with a percentage of 75%, claimed that they can do it (31% answered by

strongly agree and 44% answered by agree), 16% ticked neutral while 9% were not confident about it (2% answered by disagree and 7% answered by strongly disagree).

Data provided from Q4 about students making their sentences clear to readers from first reading reports that the majority of the participants (71%) can achieve that (31% answered by strongly agree and 40% answered by agree). 16% of them were in between and ticked neutral while 13% revealed that they cannot do it (9% answered by disagree and 4% answered by strongly disagree).

Q5 answers about logically organizing ideas when writing indicate that over half of the students (60%) announced that they can organize their ideas logically (31% answered by strongly agree and 29% answered by agree). 22% picked out neutral while 18% admitted they cannot organize their ideas logically (11% answered by disagree and 7% answered by strongly disagree).

The results of Q6 about using a variety of sentence structures report that only 9% on students were confident to tick strongly agree and 36% to tick agree. Surprisingly, 37% of students picked out neutral as they are not sure whether they can use various structures. A minor percentage of the participants divulged that they cannot use a variety of sentences with 11% of them ticked disagree and 7% ticked strongly disagree.

Q7 is about choosing the most appropriate vocabulary to effectively communicate with readers. The results show that 7% chose strongly agree, 36% chose agree, 36% chose neutral, 19% chose disagree and 2% chose strongly disagree. In other words, the minority were either very confident or diffident in using appropriate vocabulary while the majority just agreed or were in the middle ground.

Q8 answers reports about using proper spelling, capitalization, and punctuation shows that half of our participants (53%) assured that they can do it (22% answered by strongly

agree and 31% answered by agree). 24% were in intermediate position and picked out neutral. A 23% of the participants were uncertain in using appropriate spelling, capitalization and punctuation (16% answered by disagree and 7% answered by strongly disagree).

Question Eight: Which approach to writing do you usually adopt?

- This question is to know what approach to writing students adapt and the reason behind their choice.

Table 10

Approaches that students use.

Items	Process Approach	Product Approach	Genre Approach	No Choice	Total
N	23	18	3	1	45
percentage	51%	40%	7%	2%	100%

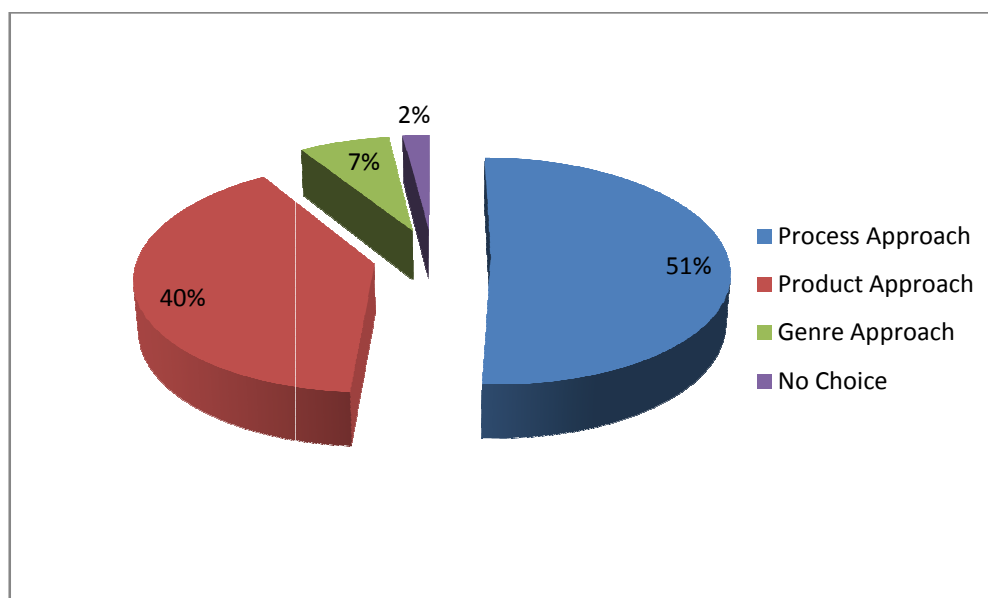


Figure 10. Mostly Used Approaches to Writing by Students.

As far as approaches to writing are concerned, our participants seem to use a variety of writing approaches. The results reported that half of students (51%) use the process approach

when writing while 40% use the product approach. However, a small percentage of 7% makes use of the genre approach. In addition, one student, who represents 2%, said that they do not use any of the approaches when writing.

Some students justified their choices as follows:

- The product approach: some stated that they adopt this approach because they like following specific steps when writing. Additionally, they said that, since it highlights the process and the necessary steps that they need go through, it is the most suitable and the easiest for them.
- The product approach: students who justified their choice said that they adopt this approach because they focus on the quality of the final product. While others stated that it's the easiest for them.
- The genre approach: students who chose this approach said that they like to be eclectic and use a mix of the approaches since it is the best way to learn writing.

2.5.3. Section C: Self Assessing Writing

Question Nine: Do you revise your writing; thus, rethink and change your mind about major things you have written?

- This question aims to know whether students revise and edit their writing.

Table 11

Students' Ability to Revise and Edit their Text Production.

	Yes	No	Total
N	28	17	45
Percentage	62%	38%	100%

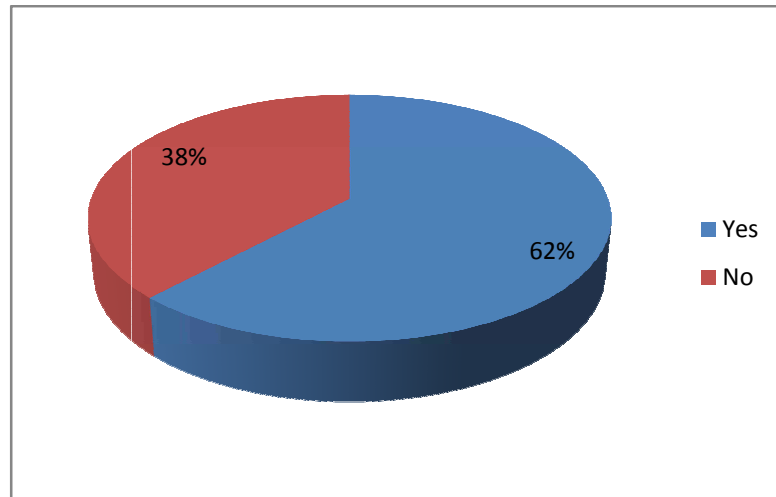


Figure 11. Students' Ability to Revise and Edit their Works

The data displayed in table 11 shows that the majority (62%) do actually revise and make changes in their writing. Yet, 38% do not.

Some students commented on how revising their written products helps in developing their writing, it is summarized below:

- It helps in producing an organized, well formed, error free piece of writing.
- It helps in correcting grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes.
- It helps in developing writing style and performance.

Question Ten: When assessing your writing, do you compare it to...

- This question is used to know what type of scoring guidelines students use.

Table 12

Scoring Guidelines that Students Use.

Items	Nothing	Assessment Rubrics	Assessment Scripts	Total
N	28	6	11	45
percentage	62%	13%	25%	100%

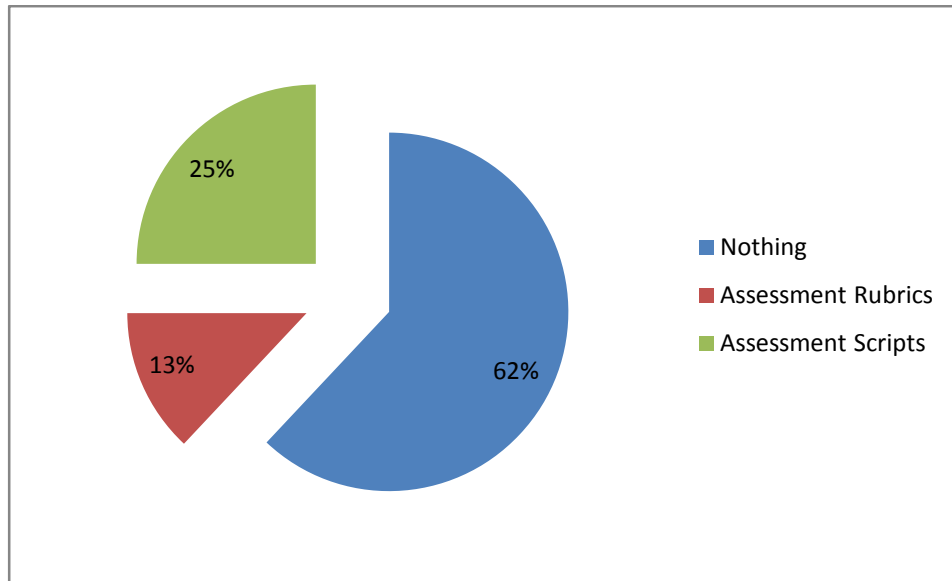


Figure 12. Scoring Guidelines Used by Students

According to the results presented in table 12, a vast majority of students (62%) do not judge their writing against any kind of scoring guideline in which they indicated “nothing”. Nevertheless, 13% use assessment rubrics while 25% use assessment scripts

Question Eleven: Do you self-assess your writing for the sake of...

- This question is used to know why students assess their writing.

Table 13

The reason behind students assessing their written text.

Items	Scoring your writing	Analyzing your writing strengths and weaknesses	Summative evaluation of your writing	Total
N	12	30	3	45
percentage	26%	67%	7%	100%

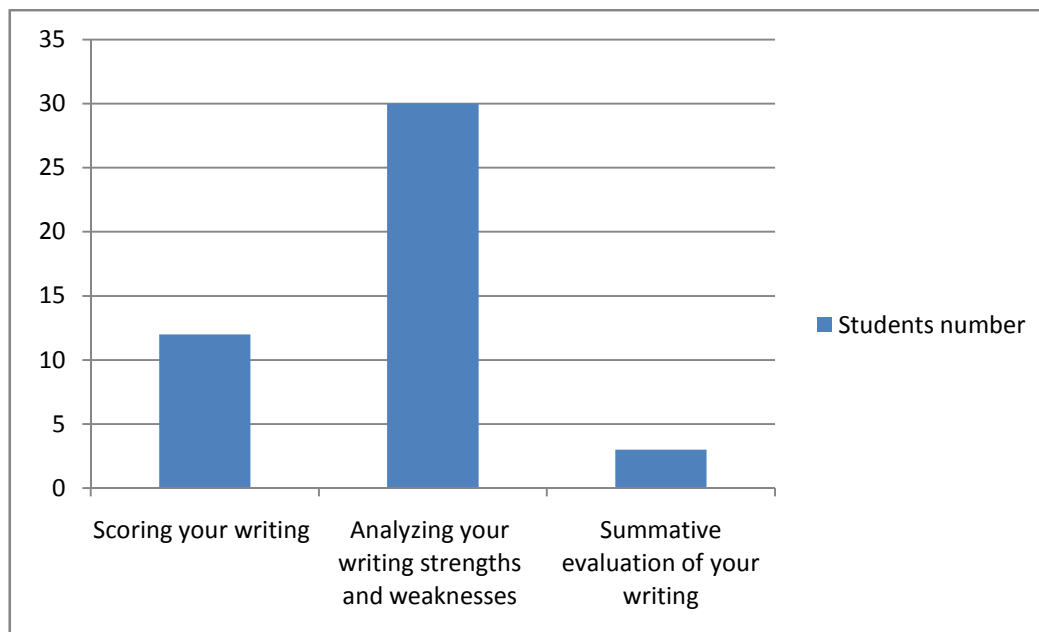


Figure 13. The Reason Why Students Assess their Text Production.

The results show that 67% assess their writing to analyze their strengths and weaknesses. Yet, 26% said to score their writing while 7% to do a summative evaluation of their writing.

Question Twelve: When revising, can you get rid of apparent mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and so on?

- This question is used to know whether students get rid of grammar, spelling and punctuation mistakes when revising.

Table 14

Students' Ability to Get Rid of Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation Mistakes.

	Yes	No	Total
N	39	6	45
percentage	87%	13%	100%

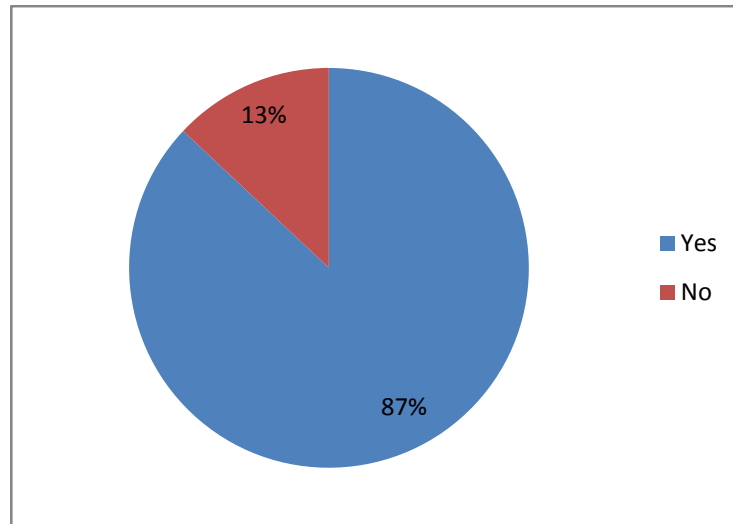


Figure 14. Students' Ability to Get Rid of Mistakes that of Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation.

The results reveal that the majority (87%) of the participants can correct the detected mistakes in grammar, spelling, and punctuation while a minority of 13% cannot do so.

Question Thirteen: Can you give a detailed account of what was going on when you were writing: the processes that you go through and the thoughts that go through your mind?

- This question is used to know whether our participants are aware of the cognitive process they go through when writing.

Table 15

Students' Awareness of the Process and Thoughts They go Through.

	Yes	No	Total
N	8	37	45
percentage	18%	82%	100%

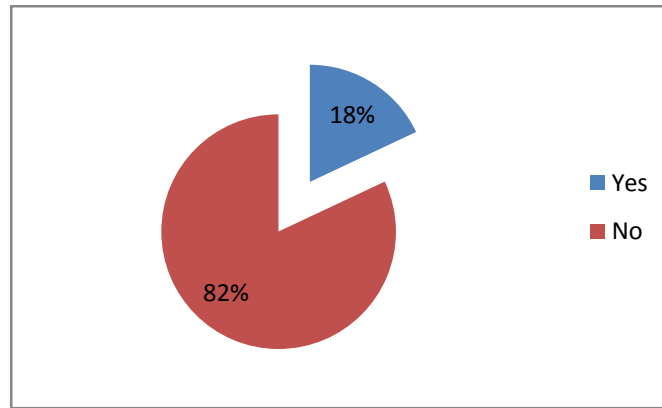


Figure 15. Students' Awareness of the Process and Thoughts They Go through.

The data presented in table 15 shows that the majority of the students (82%) are not aware of the mental processes that they go through when writing. However, 18% of the students claimed that they are aware of it.

Students who answered with yes and commented on how it makes them evolve as writers said that it helps in developing their writing proficiency as it allows them to pick and organize ideas while judging the correctness of it.

Question Fourteen: Do you notice "stuck points" in your writing and figure out what are the causes?

- This question is used to know whether students notice problems in their writing and can figure what the causes are.

Table 16

Students Ability to Figure out Stuck Point and What Causes it in their Writing.

	Yes	No	Total
N	31	14	45
percentage	69%	31%	100%

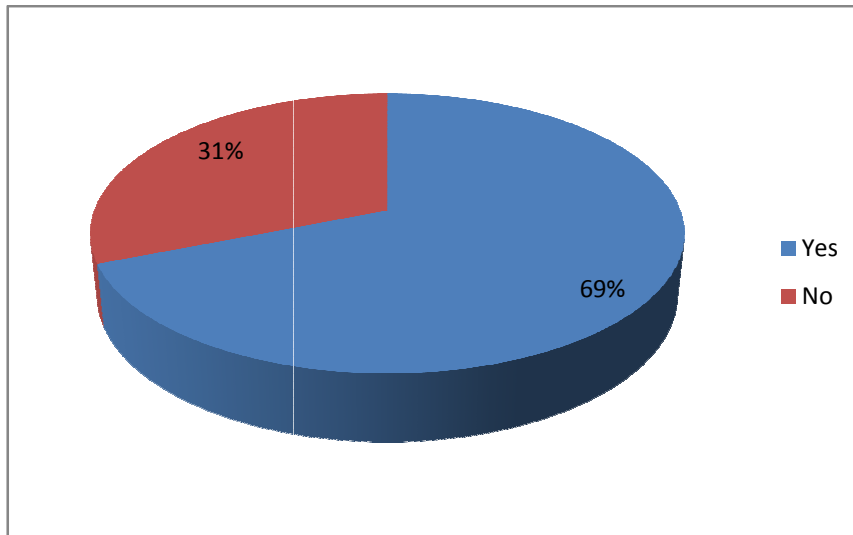


Figure 16. Students' ability to find stuck points and its causes.

Table 16 summarizes the results in which 69% of the participants affirmed they can while 31% declared they cannot.

Question Fifteen: If yes, can you make changes and adjustments in the way you go about writing based on those things you noticed?

This question is targeted to participant who answered yes on question 14. It aims to know whether they can make changes and adjustments when noticing problems

Table 17

Students' Ability to Make Adjustments when Noticing a Stuck Point and its Causes.

	Yes	No	Total
N	31	0	31
percentage	100%	0%	100%

As displayed in table 17, all students asserted that they can make changes when noticing problems.

Question Sixteen: Do you revise your own writing to improve the development and organization?

- This question aims to know if students revise their writing for the sake of improving its development and organization or not.

Table 18

Students' Ability to Improve Development and Organization when Revising their Writing.

	Yes	No	Total
N	39	6	45
Percentage	87%	13%	100%

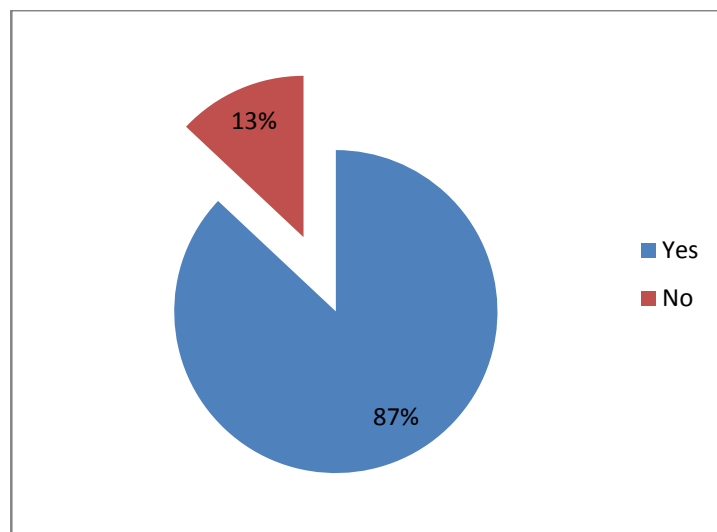


Figure 17. Students' Ability to Improve Development and Organization when Revising their Writing.

As the results reveal, the vast majority (87%) stated that they do revise to improve the development and organization of the writing while a minority (13%) admitted they do not.

Question Seventeen: Do you go back to your writing to revise the content and make your ideas clearer?

- This question is used to know whether students revise their content to resolve any ambiguity that might be found in the ideas written.

Table 19

Students' Ability to Make their Ideas Clearer when Revising.

	Yes	No	Total
N	41	4	45
percentage	91%	9%	100%

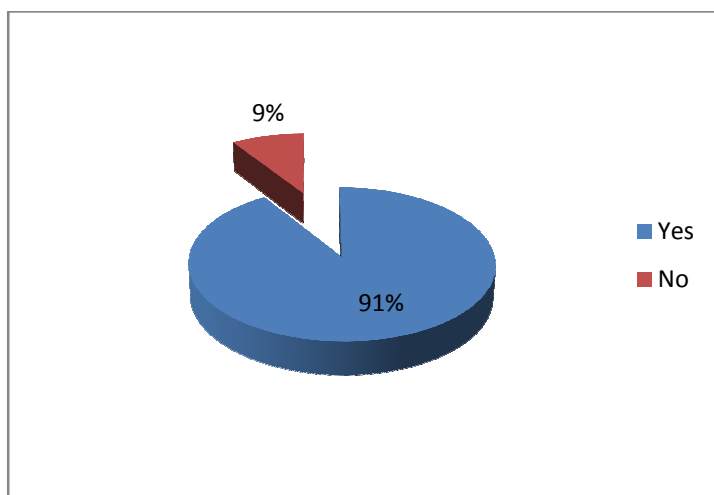


Figure 18. Students' Ability to Make their Ideas Clearer when Revising.

As the data displayed in table 19 above reveals, with a percentage of 91%, almost all students do revise their content and make their ideas clearer while only 9% said no.

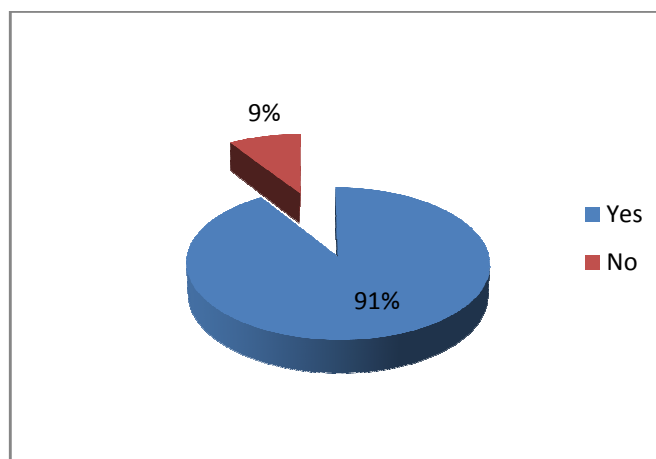
Question Eighteen: Do you keep in mind mistakes from your previous writings to avoid in your next writing?

- This question is used to know whether students avoid previously done mistakes when writing.

Table 20

Students' Ability to Avoid Previously Done Mistakes.

	Yes	No	Total
N	41	4	45
percentage	91%	9%	100%

**Figure 19.** Students' Ability to Avoid Previously Done Mistakes.

The data reported in table 20 above shows that 91% of students keep in mind previous mistakes they have done to avoid in their current writing.

Question Nineteen: How do you think self-assessing your work helps develop your writing?

- This question is posed to explore students' thoughts on the effectiveness of self-assessing writing.

Some students stated that self-assessment raises awareness about mistakes they do. Others claimed that it helps in highlighting their weak points. In addition, they said that it helps in developing their writing proficiency and level in general as well as in producing quality writing. Therefore, it seems that self assessment has a positive effect on students in which it sheds lights of mistakes where they can work and overcome them; consequently, it

helps improving their writing. Moreover, they stated that it injects confidence and sense of responsibility in them towards writing. Thus, it makes them feel they have the complete authority and power over their writing.

Question Twenty: What are the tips and techniques you adapt to improve your writing?

- This question is used to know students' tips and techniques they use in order to improve their writing.

They suggested the following tips and techniques:

- Pay attention to punctuation, grammar and spelling when writing.
- Planning for an organized piece of writing
- Taking into consideration previous mistakes to avoid in my next writing.

The techniques above adapted by students will help in constructing a well formed, error free and organized piece of writing.

- Revising and evaluating my writing
- Proofreading and analyzing my writing to figure out weak points; thus, working on them.

Some students suggested the above-mentioned techniques; their constant analysis and proofreading helps in figuring out limitations and problems in their writing, which eventually will be worked on.

- Incorporate yourself in peer or group works.
- Ask for peers' and teachers' feedback.
- Adopt as well as master different writing methods and approaches.

They also recommended exterior feedback, which will help them notice undetected errors.

- Read novels, articles and books ... etc.
- Build knowledge on various subjects and topics.
- Check dictionaries to gain vocabulary and to learn correct spelling
- Writing drafts, diaries or stories to practice writing.
- Being creative when writing.
- Take into consideration the audience and its preferences.

Other students recommended techniques that include writing and reading to develop their writing and to gain vocabulary.

Conclusion

This chapter attempted to portray the research methodology followed in collecting the required data for the current study and the participants of this investigation. Furthermore, it gave a brief description of the data collection tool used to carry out this research as well as presenting the data analysis. Thus, the next chapter will deal with the discussion of the obtained findings as well as prove some recommendations and suggestions.

**Chapter Three:
Discussion,
Implications, and
Recommendations**

Introduction

The present study used qualitative and quantitative data to shed light on the role of students' self-assessment on self-regulation skills and further on the development of the students' writing competence. In the previous chapter, we have reported the results and analysis of the questionnaire. Therefore, this chapter is devoted to the critical discussion of the results obtained, pedagogical implications, recommendations and limitations.

3.1. Discussion of the Findings

3.1.1. Students' Background

As the results reveal, the sample chosen has more females' than males' students. With a percentage of 76%, it seems that females tend to be more interested in studying foreign languages than males. In addition, most of our participants stated that one of the main reasons to choose English was because they like it and with most of them being young in age, we believe that these factors help to motivate students and develop a positive attitude towards English as well as raise the possibility for future self-development.

3.1.2. General Discussion of the Results

The results obtained from the questionnaire gave a clear idea about third year students' self-assessment and writing proficiency. Answering one of the research questions posed, according to the datasets, students indeed self-assess their written products wherein multiple answers indicate that they revise, assess and evaluate their works. Moreover, most students lean towards the process approach in writing, which highlights the process of writing where they revise, proofread, evaluate and edit to produce an error free writing. Yet, most of the students admitted that they are not very aware of the mental process they go through when writing which indicates that their first draft is not satisfactory at a linguistic level. However, a

minority of our participants indicated that they always reflect on the topic before starting to write; thus, figure out how to approach the writing task and facilitate the writing process

Additionally, relying on the datasets, students seem to regularly assess their works to analyze their weaknesses and strengths, identify and correct mistakes that of grammar, spelling and punctuation...etc, omit any ambiguity that might be found in the content or ideas, and develop their written composition's organization and structure. Consequently, as the results confirm, our participants are considered proficient writers in which they are able to construct a decent academic writing and have an adequate understanding of the target language conventions. However, what harbor doubts is that students' answers to question eleven show that most students have no specific assessment guidelines to judge their writing against, which is not very reliable. Nevertheless, 17 students seem to use either scripts or rubrics.

Furthermore, students claim that they, in fact, self-assess their writing; they even proposed a variety of alternative assessment types including writing diaries, peer and group works, self-assessment, peer and teacher feedback as techniques to improve writing. The data indicates that students recommend self-assessment for self-regulation as it raises awareness about their own writing; builds a sense of responsibility towards writing; helps reflecting on common mistakes and eventually helps them produce a well-developed piece of writing.

Consequently, this answers the second research question and supports the hypothesis that states: "If learners self-assess their text production, it will improve their writing proficiency". Taking the finding into account, the stated hypothesis has been confirmed to disclose that students' self-assessment helps in developing their writing proficiency.

3.2. Pedagogical Implications

As already discussed, self-assessment has been proved to have a significant role in improving student' self-regulation skills and writing proficiency. This section attempts to propose a number of pedagogical implications for EFL classrooms based on result of this study.

To start with, a switch in classroom practices is called for; therefore, both students and teachers have to change the traditional teacher centered teaching and lean towards student centered practices where the teacher is nothing more than an instructor. Consequently, students will be more incorporated in their own learning in which they will have to use as well as develop their high-level thinking skills, effectively communicate in English and grasp the learning process. That is, students have to be aware of the responsibility they have as learner and should be given the opportunity to take control over their own learning. Similarly, teachers should let go of the traditional teaching and learning process and understand their role as facilitator, instructors and motivators wherein they leave a room for students' autonomous learning, build a motivating supportive atmosphere for students, and set goals that aims at self-development and progress rather than rewards and punishments.

Second, implementing self-assessment within classrooms is yet another possible implication. Primarily, teachers should change the traditional view regarding self-assessment that insist on scoring students works and present assessment as a process that aims at evaluating, remedying and regulating one's own work; hence, presenting assessment as tool for reflection and regulation. It is recommended for teachers to introduce as well as incorporate self-assessment techniques in day to day classrooms and establish criteria for assessment such as scripts and rubrics for students to reflect on and recognize their strength and weaknesses.

Third, introducing and adapting the process approach to raise students' awareness on the process of writing and develop writing itself. This approach highlights the steps and stages that involve reflecting, planning, drafting, revising and editing; thus, it opens the gate for reflection and self-development. Its cyclic nature allows students to develop their cognitive and communicative competences in writing. Moreover, it opens the gate for creativity since is not bound nor restricted by the quality of the final product. Therefore; it promotes the view of the writing skill as a thinking, a social and a communicative act.

Lastly, the implementation of self-regulated learning is another possible implication. Following the traditional way of teaching, students seem to be passive, lack in knowledge and self-regulation skills. Thus, it is of teachers' job to highlight the importance of self-regulation and teach it to their students. Integrating self-regulation in daily activities wherein teachers instruct their students on how to use different writing strategies and how to effectively reflect on their writing and overcome the faced difficulties will help them refine their self-regulation skills.

3.3. Recommendations

The current study has yielded important results that provided answers to the research questions posed and confirmed the hypothesis regarding the role of self-assessment on the improvement of learners writing skill. Yet, it has thrown up many questions that are in need for further investigation. This section is devoted to suggest future works on the gaps found.

To start with, this study can be replicated with the use of different tools such as interviews to get more in-depth details on students' cognitive processes and belief about self-assessment. In addition, an experimental study can be carried out by implementing self-assessment at early stages of writing through a long period of time to get more accurate, empirical results on its effect on the writing skill.

Moreover, self-regulated learning has been neglected regarding Algerian universities' context despite its apparent effectiveness on the writing skill. Researcher can explore this concept wherein they implement and promote self-regulation in higher education classes.

Finally, a study about teachers' perceptions about the integration of self-assessment in their classrooms can be carried out. Researchers can investigate teachers' point of views, beliefs, and experiences with self-assessment as well as the need of students' own feedback and wants in the teaching process.

Conclusion

To conclude with, throughout this chapter, the findings of the study are critically discussed. A set of pedagogical implications and recommendations were presented to address the concept of self-assessment and its role in enhancing the writing skill and attain writing proficiency.

General Conclusion

This research has investigated the role of students' self-assessment in developing the writing skill among third year EFL students at the department of English at the University of Chadli Ben Djedid, El Tarf in order to prove the developed hypothesis that claims that students' self-assessment can enhance students' writing skill. The major aim of the study was to investigate students' self-regulation skills and writing proficiency.

In the first chapter, we provided an overview of the available literature concerning our variables. We spoke about writing where we provided brief definitions and tackled its aspects to shed light on the elements that need to be mastered in order to be a proficient writer. We also presented the approaches of writing wherein we spoke about the process, the product and the genre approaches and defined its stages. Moreover, we highlighted the importance of writing and its various purposes as well as the teaching writing procedure.

Furthermore, throughout the chapter, we addressed numerous researches works that studied self-assessment in which we provided definitions fitted to our framework. Additionally, we shed light on the concept of self-regulation in the self-assessment context. We also explored some commonly used assessment guidelines and standards such as rubrics and scripts, and pointed out some benefits associated with self-assessment. In addition, we introduced various typologies and its formats presented by different researchers. As well as the assessment categories, the process of self-assessment and the effect of the self-assessment training.

In the second chapter, we explored the methodology; we described the participants and the questionnaire used to carry out this study. We analyzed the data driven from the instrument used following a qualitative method in order to answer the research questions and prove the stated hypothesis.

Throughout the third chapter, we discussed the results found in alignment with the hypothesis; they provided strong evidence to support the assertion that self-assessment has a positive impact on students writing skill since it raises awareness about students' limitations and develop their meta-cognition. Moreover, we suggested a set of pedagogical implication based on our findings. We recommended a shift in the classroom practices and in the teaching and learning process from teacher centered to students centered learning, in addition to the implementation of self-assessment techniques from early stages of writing. We also called for an adaptation of the process approach since it highlights the steps and stages of writing as well as the implementation of self-regulated learning within classrooms.

Furthermore, we recommended future work on gaps found while conducting this research. We suggested a replication of the same study but with the adaption of an experimental methodology to get more accurate results, a study to explore and implement self-regulated learning in higher education classes as well as a similar study to this but with teachers as a case study to explore teachers' perceptions and opinions about implementing self-assessment in their classrooms.

Lastly, we emphasize the limitations the researcher faced while conducting the research. Starting from the shift in the educational system due to the Covid-19 crisis, moving to the short time given to conduct the research, in addition to the experimental study that was cancelled due to the unavailability of students.

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Students' Questionnaire

Dear students,

Kindly spare some of your valuable time to fill in this questionnaire, which is a part of MA's dissertation that aims at investigating the role of self-assessment in the improvement of learners' writing proficiency.

Please, sincerely answer the following questions. So grateful for your cooperation

Section A: Students' Background.

Tick the appropriate answer.

1. Your gender.
 - Male
 - Female
2. Your age.
 - 19 – 21
 - 22 - 25
 - +26
3. Why did you choose to study English?
 - To get a job
 - To travel
 - I like it
 - Others (specify)

.....

.....
4. How do you consider your level in English?
 - Excellent
 - Good
 - Average
 - Poor

Section B: Students' proficiency and attitude towards writing.

5. Do you enjoy writing?
Yes No
 6. Do you think of yourself as a writer?
Yes No
- 7- Please rate your abilities for each item below on a scale between "1" to "5". Circle your choice.
1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=neutral, 4=disagree, 5=strongly disagree.

1-I am able to write a good academic paragraph. 1 2 3 4 5

2-I am able to write a clear topic sentence that identifies the topic and supporting ideas of a paragraph. 1 2 3 4 5

3-I can logically support and develop main ideas when writing. 1 2 3 4 5

4-I can make my sentences clear to readers from first reading. 1 2 3 4 5

5-I can logically organize my ideas when writing. 1 2 3 4 5

6-I am able to use a variety of sentence structures. 1 2 3 4 5

7-I am able to choose the most appropriate vocabulary to effectively communicate with readers. 1 2 3 4 5

8-I can use appropriate spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. 1 2 3 4 5

8- Which approach to writing do you usually adopt? (Tick your choice)

- The process approach.
- The product approach.
- The genre approach.

Justify your choice

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

Section C:Self-assessing Writing.

9- Do you revise your writing; thus rethink and change your mind about major things you have written?

Yes

No

If yes, how did this help in developing your writing?

.....
.....

10- When assessing your writing, do you compare it to (tick your choice)

- Nothing (I just revise and correct what seems to be wrong).
- Assessment rubrics (descriptions of the criteria and standard answers).
- Assessment scripts (questions about what should be included in your writing).

11- Do you self-assess your writing for the sake of (tick your choice)

- Scoring your writing.
- Analyzing your writing's strengths and weaknesses.
- Summative evaluation of your writing.

12- When revising, can you get rid of apparent mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and so on?

Yes

No

13- Can you give a detailed account of what was going on when you were writing: the processes that you go through and the thoughts that go through your mind?

Yes

No

If yes, how does this help you to evolve as a writer?

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

14- Do you notice "stuck points" in your writing and figure out what are the causes?

Yes

No

15- If yes, Can you make changes and adjustments in the way you go about writing based on those things you noticed?

Yes

No

16- Do you revise your own writing to improve the development and organization?

Yes

No

17- Do you go back to your writing to revise the content and make your ideas clearer?

Yes

No

18- Do you keep in mind mistakes from your previous writings to avoid in your next writing?

Yes

No

19- How do you think self-assessing your work help develop your writing?

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

20- What are the tips and techniques you adapt to improve your writing?

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

Thank you for your cooperation