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Enhancing EFL Students' Writing Skill through Brainstorming

Case study: 2nd Year LMD Students of English at
Chadli Bendjedid University El Tarf

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DEDICATIONS

To my beloved parents:

My father Karim Allah Yarhmou

My two mothers Alima & Fahima

To my brothers Mouhamed Haithem, Yakoub, and Chiheb

To my schoolmates: Hind BENTRAD & Zahra BOUCHACHI

To my friends: Khaoula Mehenni & Abir Chibani

To my cousins: Soulaima, Narimen, Rayan, Dounia, Belkis, Sonia, Ferdous, Imen, Inas,

Nadine & Ibtissame

Abd El Krim Khouloud

DEDICATION

To my beloved parents:

My father Abd El Rahmen

My mother Zakia Haffaf

To my sisters Dounia, Amel, Basma Allah Yarhamha, and Sara

To my brother El Hawes

To my Fiends: Abire & Khawla & Hadjer

To my cousins: Basmat El Yakin, Samira, Ilyes, Khaoula, Hamza, and Nadjet

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Abstract

Writing is a means of communication that allows students to express their ideas and thoughts through written forms. This skill can be enhanced by using various strategies such as brainstorming. The current research aims to study the concept of brainstorming, its types and rules and how it boosts EFL learners' writing skill. Indeed, it has been hypothesized that brainstorming enhances students' writing skill, and EFL students' consider brainstorming as an effective method that can enhance their writing skill. In order to confirm the content of these hypotheses and bring up validity to this study, we conducted a questionnaire for second year students of English language at CHADLI BENJDID University so as to realize their perceptions about the effectiveness of using brainstorming in reinforcing their writing skill. Meantime, a questionnaire has been distributed to teachers of written expression. After the analysis and the interpretation of the collected data, the results confirm our hypotheses; brainstorming enhances EFL students' writing skills. We finished our study by highlighting some suggestions and recommendation for both students and teachers with a view about the difficulties that learners may face in writing skill and how teachers can overcome these problems.

Key words: Writing skill. Brainstorming strategy.

ملخص

الكتابة هي وسيلة اتصال تتيح للطلاب التعبير عن أفكارهم و آرائهم من خلال نماذج مكتوبة. يمكن تحسين هذه المهارة باستخدام استراتيجيات مختلفة مثل العصف الذهني.

يهدف البحث الحالي الى دراسة مفهوم العصف الذهني و أنواعه و قواعده و كيف يعزز مهارات الكتابة لدى متعلم اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية. في الواقع, تم الافتراض بأن العصف الذهني يعزز مهارات الكتابة لدى الطلاب, و يعتبر طلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية العصف الذهني وسيلة فعالة يمكن أن تعزز مهاراتهم في الكتابة. ومن أجل تأكيد محتوى هذه الفرضيات و اثبات صحة هذه الدراسة, قدمنا استبياناً لطلاب السنة الثانية للغة الانجليزية بجامعة الشاذلي بن جديد و ذلك لادراك تصوراتهم حول فعالية استخدام العصف الذهني في تعزيز مهارة الكتابة لديهم.

في غضون ذلك أعطينا استبياناً لمعلمي كتابة التعبير, بعد تحليل و تفسير البيانات التي تم جمعها, تؤكد النتائج فرضياتنا, من دراستنا من خلال تسليط الضوء على بعض الاقتراحات والعصف الذهني يعزز مهارات الكتابة لدى الطلاب. ختمنا من دراستنا من خلال تسليط الضوء على بعض الاقتراحات و التوصيات لكل من الطلاب و المعلمين مع وجهة نظر حول الصعوبات التي قد يواجهها المتعلمون في مهارة الكتابة و كيف يمكن للمدرسين التغلب على هذه المشاكل.

الكلمات المفتاحية: مهارة الكتابة. استراتيجية العصف الذهني

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

EFL: English Foreign Language

EL: English Language

FL: Foreign Language

LMD: Licence Master Doctorat

L2: Second language

Q: Question

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The present research is conducted to study the effectiveness of using brainstorming in enhancing the writing skill in learning English as Foreign Language (EFL). This chapter is an introductory part to the research problem; it consists of the statement of the problem and the aim of the study. Also, it includes the research questions, the hypotheses, and the research method.

1. Statement of the Problem:

In the field of learning EFL, writing skill becomes very crucial. Mc Arthur, et al. (2008, p.1) mentioned that "Writing provides an important mean to personal self-expression". It is worthy to mention that EFL students face many difficulties in their writing skill. There are various strategies that are used by teachers in teaching writing skill such as dictating, reading, cooperative learning, etc... Brainstorming is considered as an effective strategy that may enhance their writing skill. Turkenik (1998, p.10) states, "one way to get ideas about a subject is to focus your thoughts on it and then let your mind run free in all directions around it. Let your mind release a storm of ideas. This process is called brainstorming".

2. Aims of the Study:

The focal point that encircles the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of using brainstorming in enhancing EFL students' writing skill.

3. Research Questions:

In order to investigate the effectiveness of using brainstorming in enhancing students' writing skill, it is necessary to ask the following questions:

1. Does brainstorming enhance EFL students' writing skill?
2. Do EFL students consider brainstorming as an effective method that can enhance their writing skill?

4. Research Hypothesis:

1. We hypothesize that brainstorming enhances EFL students' writing skill.
2. We hypothesize that EFL students consider brainstorming as an effective method that can enhance their writing skill.

5. Significance of the study:

The significance of this study is to focus on the use of brainstorming in the classroom as a step toward improving and encouraging English teaching and learning. It is a good opportunity for teachers to be aware brainstorming is an effective strategy for stimulating learners to write.

6. Research Methodology:

Method

To confirm the content of these hypotheses and build up validity to this study, the descriptive method is used to examine the effectiveness of using brainstorming in enhancing EFL students' writing skill, and confirm whether they consider it as an effective method or not. Therefore, the research work yields quantitative data.

Tools

In order to gather the required data for the present study, one instrument is used. The questionnaire is conducted with teachers of written expression to investigate the effectiveness of using brainstorming in enhancing EFL students' writing skill, and examine students' perceptions toward the use of this method.

Population and Sample of the study

The population in this research is selected from the total number of second year (LMD) Student of English language at the University of CHADLI BENDJEDID, El TARF. The sample is thirty (30) students who are randomly selected.

Sample of five (5) written expression teachers are also chosen, for the sake of obtaining their opinions concerning the contribution of brainstorming to enhance students' writing skill.

7. Structure of the Dissertation

The present study is divided into four chapters. Chapter one contains two sections which provide a review related to writing skill and brainstorming. Section one presents an overview of writing skill. It contains the definition of writing skill, its importance, reasons for teaching writing, approaches of teaching writing, the

stages of writing and the role of the teacher in teaching writing. While section two, presents brainstorming definition, and its types, the application of brainstorming in teaching writing, its usage in teaching writing skill, and the benefits of using brainstorming to enhance writing skills. The second chapter is about the situation analyses and the research design, which contains the research approach, research sample, data collection tools, and the research design. The third chapter deals with data analyses of both teachers' and students' questionnaires. Finally, the fourth chapter covers the final results and the recommendation.

Chapter One: Review of the Related Literature

Writing is a music that is not played for ears, but for the eyes. When an orchestra plays, it spends an emotional language to the soul through the medium of a rhythms, and sound. Writing is similar to music because every word is only an instrument, used to affect the tones and rhythms of any and every genre of writing.

Allen Campbell

Section One: The writing skill

Introduction

The writing skill is one of the four basic skills of the English Language. It is considered to be the most difficult and complex skill for both teachers and students. This chapter provides a theoretical framework to our study. It is composed of two main sections that cover all what is related to writing skill.

The first section started by the definition of the writing skills and its importance, reasons for teaching writing, the different approaches in teaching writing, stages of writing and the most important role of the teacher in teaching writing.

1.1. Definition of the Writing skill

Writing is one of the four language skills besides listening, speaking, and reading. It is a way to communicate and to convey thoughts, information, desires and feelings, which performed through written forms. Harmer (2001, p.79) “writing is a way of communication through which we express our ideas, feeling, and emotions”. Writing means the process of production in which the meaning is conveyed through the use of graphic symbols that are called letters and those graphic symbols have to be organized well to form a word, words to form sentences and sentences to form paragraphs and essays as well. Richards & Platt (1992, p.313) define writing as “a system of written symbols which represent the sounds, syllables, or words of a language”. Many researchers think that writing is just about using or produce graphic symbols from what they has been read or heard before in written form. Pincas (1992) stated that “Writing is a system of graphic symbols, i.e., letters or combination of letters which related to sounds we produce while speaking” (p.125). Writing is a complex and complicated process that requires more attention and focus. In other words, writing is not just a case of taking a pen and writing down

what comes to the mind of the writers or putting graphic symbols together so as to generate words and sentences. It is a deep and demanding process which involves several factors as expressed by Nunan (1989, p.36) who claims that:” Writing is an extremely complex, cognitive activity for all which the writer is required to demonstrate the control of a number of variables simultaneously”. This implies that students should demonstrate an ability to use adequate vocabulary, well-formed sentences, consistent content, good punctuation and spelling.

1.2. The Importance of Writing

Language is a tool for communication. We communicate with others to express our thoughts, ideas, feeling, and emotions....etc. Klein (1991, p.224) “Language in the world plays an important role in humans life. Using human languages are allowed to communicate with other people to express the ideas to facilitate the thinking process and to recall the information.”

Learning any foreign language requires learning to speak it more over to write it. Writing is considered as an effective way for learners in expressing one’s personality, foster communication....etc. The importance of writing should be taken into consideration in EFL teaching because it gives different learning styles as an aid to those who find problems and difficulties in learning.

Greenberg and Rath (1985, p.12) “Writing is powerful instrument of thinking because it provides students with a way of gaining control over their thoughts. Writing shapes their perceptions of themselves and the world. It aids in their personal growth and in their affecting change on the environment. Students are often unaware of the power of the written word yet the written word enables the writer perhaps for the first time to sense the power of language to affect another through

using, selecting and rejecting arranging and rearranging language, the student comes to understanding how language is used”.

1.3. Reasons for Teaching Writing

According to Harmer (1998) there are four reasons for teaching writing. First, reinforcement refers to the pure acquisition of language (oral/aural) in which the majority of learners are interested much more about the language written down. Second, language development is the mental activity that learners prefer to use in order to build proper written text. This latter is a part of the ongoing learning experience. Third, learning style refers to the style of every learner, in which in some cases the slow production of language is so preferable for learners. Also, it is worthy to mention that writing provides time and facility better than face to face communication. Finally, writing as a skill in this case students have to be aware about the writing of essays, the way of putting reports, and how to write system reports in order to better understand how to pronounce language exactly.

1.4. Approaches of Writing

There are many approaches in teaching writing. Brown (2001, p.335) simplified the teaching writing approaches into product and process approach. Adopting the appropriate approach to teach writing depends on the teachers' objective whether they want their students to focus on the product of writing or on the process.

1.4.1. Product Approach

Product is a traditional Approach that focuses on both final product and the mastery of the linguistic features via imitating. Teachers model; i.e., teachers taught their students by providing them with types texts. This approach focuses on the end of the results of students' production. According to Hedge (2000, p.8) the final product has involved certain aspects which are:

- Getting the grammar right,
- Having a range of vocabulary,
- Punctuating meaningfully,
- Using the conventions of lay out correctly,
- Spelling accurately,
- Using a range of vocabulary,
- Linking ideas and information to develop a topic, and
- Developing and organizing the content the content clearly and convincingly.

1.4.2. Process Approach

The process approach came as a reaction to the product approach. The process approach is one of the approaches in developing the language learning skills that focuses on the stages student goes through in order to create a text instead of focusing on the final product. This approach views writing as an act of discovery of meaning and emphasis on the process and the fluency of writing. According to Tsui (1996, p.97) "writing is this seen as a process of creating, discovering, and extending meaning rather than a process of putting down preconceived and well-formed meaning". In other words, it authorizes the learners to discover new ideas, develop information, and make them more creative. In the process of writing, learners focus

on the content rather than on the form; they give more importance to the content and the organization more than correction of grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and punctuation which occurs throughout the writing process.

1.5. Stages of Writing

Brown, (2001, p.337) mentions that the process writing always involves prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing.

1.5.1. Prewriting

The first step of any writing is prewriting. Prewriting is a successful technique that includes thinking, taking notes, brainstorming, outlining, and gathering information to explore and develop the learner's ideas. Gallo (2001) states that there are other beneficial strategies contain in prewriting in which they learn the opportunity to approach his writing and enhance his ideas and thoughts like: asking questions, brainstorming, free writing.....Before starting to write, learners plan what they are going to write and decide what they are going to say. In this stage, learners have to think about what they are writing (content), why they are writing (purpose), and their audience they are writing for (to whom they are writing). In writing classroom, teachers should make students aware of the value of the prewriting stage and give them more time to think about how to write the topic to make them more productive.

1.5.2 .Drafting

Once the learners have planned out their ideas the next step is to start drafting. Drafting is the first step writing in a learner's paper that may be correct or not. Johnson (2008, p.193) describes drafting as “where students make the first attempt to capture their ideas on paper”. Also Hedge (1988, p.89) defines drafting as the

stage where the writer "puts together the piece of the text [through] developing ideas [into] sentences and paragraphs within an overall structure". In this stage which learner does not have to worry about spelling, grammar, or any punctuation. She/ He just write what he/she thinks about the topic, and tries to find the best way to communicate his/her ideas.

1.5.3. Reviewing

“Revision is that crucial part in the process when discovery and organization come together, when writers refine and recast what they have written and shape it into coherent written statement” Taylor (1981, p.07). Revising is the stage before the final stage in the writing process which is very important. It is the process of looking again and discovering a new vision. It is to check spelling, grammar, punctuation, and content and also about the meaning and the purpose if it is clear for the reader.

1.5.4. Editing

Editing is an important stage in the process of writing because it is considered as a part of the process which makes the piece of writing clear, understandable, and readable to the audience. Smith (1982) claims that, "the aim of editing is not to change the text but to make what is there optimally readable"(p.145).

To sum up, the arrangement of the steps cannot be separated because each step in the process of writing will work in line to help the students in composing the text.

1.6. The Role of the Teacher in the Process of Writing

According to Harmer (2004) there are five roles of the teacher before, during and after students writing which are:

1.6.1. Demonstrating

Demonstrating is the first step that teachers should follow in the process of writing. Teachers here demonstrate and help students learning how to write in good way and make them able to know writing convention such as (punctuation, spelling, capitalization, grammar, usage dictating, correct broken paragraphs).

1.6.2. Motivating and provoking

Motivating and provoking are the second step in the process of writing. Teachers should motivate, provoke, and activate students' schemata. Also, they help them by giving guidelines how to start writing, how to organize their ideas, how to link the information and gives them the opportunity to feel confident.

1.6.3. Supporting

Supporting is the third step in the process of writing teachers here should be a supportive because students face many difficulties when they write. And, encourage them to be involved in writing, and help them to be better writers.

1.6.4. Responding

Then, the next step is responding to the students' writing works. Responding is about the teacher's reaction. i.e., teachers when respond to students writing. They give them feedback, suggestion, and comments about the content, form, errors...etc.

1.6.5. Evaluating

The last step done by the teacher in the process of writing is evaluating the students' works. Teachers when evaluating students' writing, they will focus on the works, writing mistakes and grade them in order to improve their writing skill.

Conclusion

This section has discussed different theoretical issues related to the writing skill. In this part we have tried to give general overview of the writing skill, its definition and its importance. Also, we have mentioned the reasons for teaching writing, the different approaches to teach writing skill, and its stages. In addition, we have provided the crucial role of the teacher in the writing process.

In brief, writing is not an easy skill to be learned or taught. It requires those teachers and learners to have some necessary knowledge and information that would reinforce and make the teaching and the learning writing skill easier.

Section Two: Brainstorming

Introduction

Writing is one of the four skills that students should be learnt and mastered in language learning. It is the most complex process that students need more effort and practices to improve their writing skill. Teachers to improve students' writing skill use many strategies like cooperative learning, Dictating, Extensive reading.....etc. Brainstorming strategy is one of the strategies that teachers use, it plays an important role in teaching writing, as it is one of the most significant areas of teaching and learning Foreign Language (FL). In this section we will present the definition of brainstorming, its types, application of brainstorming strategy (steps and rules) in teaching writing, its stages in teaching and the benefits of using brainstorming.

2.1. Definition of Brainstorming:

According to Oxford dictionary brainstorming literally means using the term brain to storm a problem. It is a method, activity, way or manner in which generally used by group of people to provide a wide range of thoughts, opinions, concepts... which are related to a problem or to solve a particular problem.

Osborn, (1963, p.151) described brainstorming as"...a conference technique by which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by amassing all the ideas spontaneously contributed by its members". It is a strategy or a tool of teaching that is used by the teachers to help students' production ideas for writing, projects, and professional presentations. Also, it is a helpful strategy in developing solutions for certain problems.

Brainstorming is one of the most effective strategies that can be used before starting writing. It is a key part to the creative process in writing. More importantly, brainstorming is a useful way that can improve EFL learners' writing performance. It helps them to generate and gather ideas as much as possible with a certain topic to find solution. Hedge (2005) states that brainstorming is a strategy that seeks to bring ideas that we want to write about it. Also, it can

encourage students to think more freely. According to Bram (2005) brainstorming is a beneficial way that may be used by students in prewriting activities in order to gain a lot of ideas from their minds.

2.2. Types of Brainstorming

The Brainstorming session can be practiced in two different ways, either individually or in groups.

2.2.1. Individual brainstorming

Individual brainstorming is crucial especially for timid and anxious students. This strategy gives the participants the occasion to brainstorm individually, in which they sit alone and brainstorm. It is noted that the study of brainstorming takes a place when some researchers suggested that individual brainstorming is more effective and functional than groups brainstorming.

Individual brainstorming is considered as a significant tool in writing. Learners can write freely their ideas and try to find possible solutions to problems. Also, it lets them to do their best in expressing their ideas and knowledge and avoid self-criticism i.e., individual brainstorming encourages students to be creative and gives them a high self-confidence in which they can explain their thoughts undoubtedly and produce inhibited ideas.

2.2.2. Group brainstorming

Group brainstorming occurs when a group of learners brainstorm altogether through sharing their personal experiences. This strategy aims to collect numerous ideas and knowledge in order to find solutions to problems. In addition, group interactive brainstorming gives students the opportunity to create an abundant quantity of ideas rather than individual brainstorming. In this case, the participants

find themselves free and confident to express their thoughts loudly without fear; they feel motivated and spurred to produce new ideas structured on others' thoughts. Indeed, it is worthy to say that group brainstorming is a crucial strategy that allows learners to share their creativity and experiences with all the participants of the group. It solves their problems especially when finding obstacles and difficulties; any participant can help the other one through sharing assistance in resolving issues.

2.3. The Application of Brainstorming Strategy in Teaching Writing

Brainstorming strategy is supply a classroom activity to support the planning stage of the writing process. The purpose is to help students come up with their ideas, and help them to explore ideas that they want to write.

2.3.1. Steps of Brainstorming

According to Blanchard and Root (1994) learners have to be aware about the steps of brainstorming in order to benefit from it in the wright way. Firstly, students have to choose a broad subject that is interested to talk about it. Secondly, they have to think in five minutes about the ideas and knowledge they have in their mind about the topic and organize them very well. Thirdly, learners should select the similar components and arrange them all together in one list and cut of those who do not belong to them.

2.3.2. Rules of Brainstorming

There are also some rules to be followed in doing brainstorming activity. According to Oshima and Hogue (1999) there are four rules of brainstorming. Firstly, learners have to think about their specific topic and write it out. Secondly, they have to organize their ideas and make a list of their knowledge and what they have in their mind. Thirdly, the use of words, sentences, and phrase is so important; in this case, students should not care about grammar, spelling, and the order of words. Fourthly, learners have to keep writing their thoughts without worrying about the repetition of ideas. It is worthy to mention that the good comprehension of the steps and rules of brainstorming gives students more chance to write paraphrase easily.

2.4. Stages of Brainstorming in Teaching Writing

Preparing the good method and technique are very important for the teachers before they come to the class because the appropriate teaching technique is one of ways that may help them to create a successful lesson, and make the students more involved in teaching and learning process. Especially in teaching writing, the teacher cannot force the students to write. Brainstorming is one of the effective methods to push them to write and express their ideas freely. This strategy gives students the opportunities to use all their linguistic skills and helps them to generate ideas, and organize their thoughts a topic to write about. Teacher can guide their students to ameliorate writing abilities through the following stages:

1. Brainstorming: Firstly, teacher should write the topic on the board, invite students say anything connected to the topic, and accept all their ideas and comments.
2. Secondly, teacher should choose the most interesting and relevant items to the topic.
3. From the list chosen items, students decide how to organize their comments and plan how to start writing.
4. Then, they start to write the first draft of their pieces of work and organize their ideas into paragraphs.
5. In the fifth stage, students start to revise their first drafts by checking the content and the organization.
6. After that, they start to focus on vocabulary and look at the aspects of grammar. Then move onto spelling and punctuations.

2.5. The Benefits of Brainstorming

2.5.1. Brainstorming helps to generate ideas:

Many students have difficulties in writing in which they find themselves exhausted. In this case, brainstorming is considered as one of the effective strategies that allows learner to generate ideas easily. This technique can be beneficial whether by using it with others or alone. According to Scarry and Scarry (2008) brainstorming gives students the opportunity to transmit their ideas and helps them

to improve their thoughts to be written in the paper. In the same line, Chesla (2006) stated that brainstorming lets students to link between the subject and the ideas they have in their mind. Indeed, this technique motivates learners to begin with the general idea and after that think about the specific information of the subject.

2.5.2. Brainstorming encourages creativity:

Brainstorming is one of the influential techniques that encourage learners to end their writing projects. It gives them the occasion to be creative; they feel motivated and confident to create ideas that they never think they have the ability to produce them before. This strategy is conducted to let students discover their creativity in transmitting their thoughts for writing. According to Tan (2007) the usage of brainstorming in the classroom heartens students' creativity in writing.

2.5.3. Brainstorming helps to organize ideas:

It is worthy to mention that brainstorming is a technique that not only helps to create ideas, but also to organize them. According to Littel (1985) brainstorming simplifies students' organization of ideas. Additionally, Clark (2003) stated that brainstorming allows learners to arrange their writings ideas and improve a good written text. Also, it stimulates them to understand the organization of their writing.

Brainstorming is used in order to smooth students' thinking. It is a beneficial tool that helps learners to find solution to problems. In addition to that, it creates a warm classroom environment; brainstorming encourages students to express their ideas and knowledge freely without fear and failure. Also, this technique allows them to make a link between their previous thoughts and any specific topic. Furthermore, brainstorming spurs students to listen and understand their classmates' ideas.

Dealing with brainstorming technique, Gebhard (2000, p.226) stated: "Once popular activity is called 'brainstorming', in which a topic is introduced by the teacher or students, after which students call out ideas associated with the topic while the teacher (or a student or two) write the ideas on the board. Although there is no right or wrong association in this activity some EFL/ESL students will shy away from calling out their ideas. As such, some teachers have students brainstorm first in small groups, then as a whole class".

Conclusion

Concerning EFL students, writing is an important skill, that mix to be developed what urges us to think of an effective solution that might help our students to improve their writing skill. Brainstorming is thought to be the most appropriate cure to the problem. In this section, we have dealt with the concept of brainstorming and we talked about its definition, and its types. Then we moved to the application of brainstorming technique in teaching writing (steps and rules). Also, we mentioned the stages of brainstorming in teaching writing. At last, we have shown the main benefits of using brainstorming to enhance writing skill.

Chapter Two: Situation Analyses and Research Design

Introduction

The previous chapter has covered the literature review related to the writing skill and brainstorming. This chapter deals with the situation analyses and research design of the work. This research work relies on the collection of data from second year LMD students and teachers of written expression at the department of English CHADLI BENJDID University. The instrument chosen to gather data is questionnaire which administrated to students and teachers. The questionnaire aims at examine whether or not brainstorming enhances second year EFL students' writing skill. This chapter includes the analyses and the discussion of students' and teachers' questionnaire.

3.1. Research instruments and procedures

The research instruments are from different types: questionnaire, interview, observation.....

In our work one instrument was used to know the opinions of the informants at the University, a questionnaire was selected to collect data from learners and written expression teachers.

3.2. Sample

The current study aims at investigating the use of brainstorming in enhancing EFL students' writing skill. So two types of participants are included in this study, which are: teachers and students.

3.2.1. Sample One: Teachers

The first sample of the study is second year LMD teachers of written expression at the department of English University CHADLI BENJDID during the academic year (2019-2020). Since it is impossible to deal with the whole population, our sample is composed of five (5) teachers who are selected randomly among the total number.

3.2.1.2. The Aim of Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was given to the teachers of written expression at the department of English University of CHADLI BENJDID during the academic year (2019/2020). The main goal of this questionnaire is to investigate the use of brainstorming in enhancing EFL students' writing skill.

3.2.1.3. Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire

The questionnaire was handed out for five (5) written expression teachers on June 04th, 2020 and all the teachers were very cooperative in that they handed back the answered copies in less than a week.

3.2.1.4. Description of Teachers' Questionnaire

The whole questionnaire consists of fourteen (14) questions organized in two sections each one focuses on particular aspect. It involves closed, open-ended questions. The teachers are supposed to answer by "yes" or "no" or tick up the appropriate answers from a set of options, or fill in the blank for further explanation or personal opinions.

General Information

This section aims at collecting general information about the respondents, their gender, their degrees, years of teaching at university, and years in teaching of written expression in particular.

Section One: Writing Skill

The section two is about the writing skill. This section aims to collect some information about the writing skill, the learners' level writing, and how teachers encourage their learners while writing.

Section Two: Brainstorming

This section aims to see to what extent teachers of written expression consider brainstorming as an important strategy to improve students' level in learning foreign language especially developing the writing skill.

3.2.2. Sample Two: Students

The questionnaire was administrated thirty (30) second year LMD students at the department of English University of CHADLI BENJDID during the academic year 2019/2020. It was designed in order to obtain their perceptions about the use of brainstorming in enhancing EFL students' writing skill. 10% of a small population as minimal was chosen randomly among the whole population thirty (30).

3.2.2.2. Aim of students' Questionnaire

This questionnaire was designed to diagnose the students' point of views towards the importance of brainstorming on enhancing EFL learners' writing skill.

3.2.2.3. Administration of students' Questionnaire

As we have mentioned before thirty (30) second year LMD students were selected randomly for this study because it is difficult to deal with the whole population. The participants were given some explanations before they start answering the questionnaire and they took ten (10) minutes to complete answering the questionnaire.

3.2.2.4. Description of Students' Questionnaire

The questionnaire consists of thirteen (13) questions mixed between open-ended and multiple-choice questions. It was classified under three sections divided as follow:

General Information

This section contains three questions, it is concerned with general information of the learners such as gender, their level in English, and in which skill they are interested.

Section One: Writing Skill

This section deals with the issue of writing skill and it consists of five (5) questions (4-9). Question number four (4) tends to know the importance of writing as a language skill. Question five and six (4-6) are designed to show how students consider their level in writing and whether satisfied with it or not. Question seven (7) seeks to know if students are motivated to write academically. Question eight (8) is about the main stages that students are familiar with. The last question nine (9) is designed to show the role of the teacher in the classroom.

Section Two: Brainstorming

This section consists of (4) questions (10-13). Question number (10) tends to know the strategy that is used by the teacher to enhance their writing skill. Question (11) is designed to know if the students use brainstorming while writing or not. While questions number (12-13) are about the contribution of brainstorming in writing, and the way that can improve in writing.

Conclusion

The study was conducted at the department of English CHADLI BENJDID University in EL TARF. The participants were second year LMD students and written expression teachers in the same University. This chapter covers the data collection, research instruments and procedures, sample, aim, administration, and description of both teachers' and students' questionnaire.

Chapter Three: Analyses of the Results

Introduction

The previous chapter has covered the literature review related to writing skill and brainstorming strategy. This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the questionnaires which were submitted for both teachers and students for the sake of obtaining data which serve our research. The aim of the questionnaire which is administrated for teachers is to determine the role of brainstorming in developing written pieces. However, the questionnaire which is distributed to their students is to make them express their ideas and opinions about their strategy that they use to improve their writing proficiency. The main purpose of this chapter is to investigate the research hypothesis, to find solutions to students' writing problems and to improve their writing through brainstorming.

4.1. Analyses of Teachers' Questionnaire:

General Information

Q2: Degree (s) Held?

Table 01: Teachers' Degree(s)

Options	Number	Percentage
Master	0	0%
Magister	5	83.3%
Doctorate(PhD)	1	16.7%

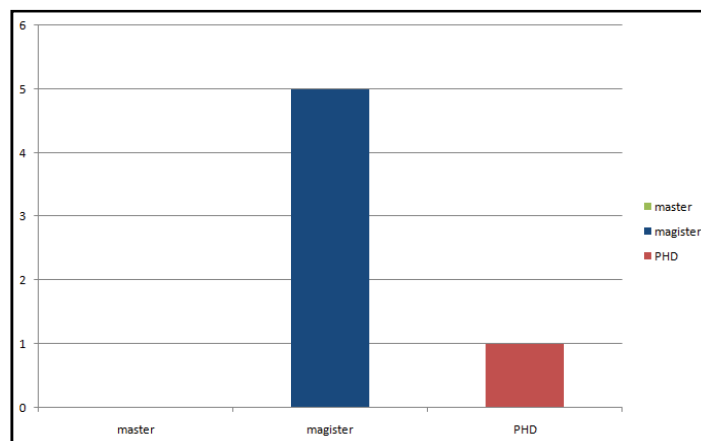


Figure 01: Teachers' Degree(s)

This table shows that teacher degrees are varied from one to another. Five (5) teachers with a percentage of (83.3%) have a magister degree; one (1) teacher with a percentage of (16.7%) has doctorate degree; whereas no one of them holds a matter degree. These degrees show the variation of experiences of our teachers.

Q3: How long have you been teaching English?

Table 02: Teachers' Teaching Experience

Options	Number	Percentage
01 year- 05 years	1	17%
05 years- 10 years	2	33%
More than 10 years	3	50%

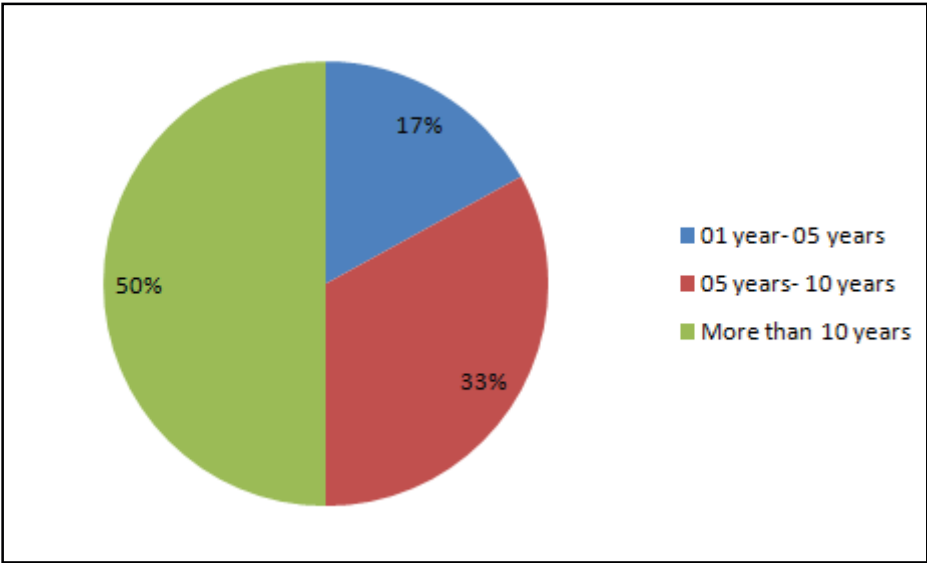


Figure 02: Teachers' Teaching Experience

The aim from this question is to determine the teachers' experience in teaching at the university level we show to specify the level because teaching in higher education skills with matter students with their different needs. The result shows that only one (1) teacher (16.67%) has taught English.

Q4: How long have you been teaching Written Expression?

Table 03: Teachers’ experience in teaching written expression

Options	Number	Percentages
01 year- 5years	4	67%
06 years- 10 years	2	33%
More than 10 years	0	0%

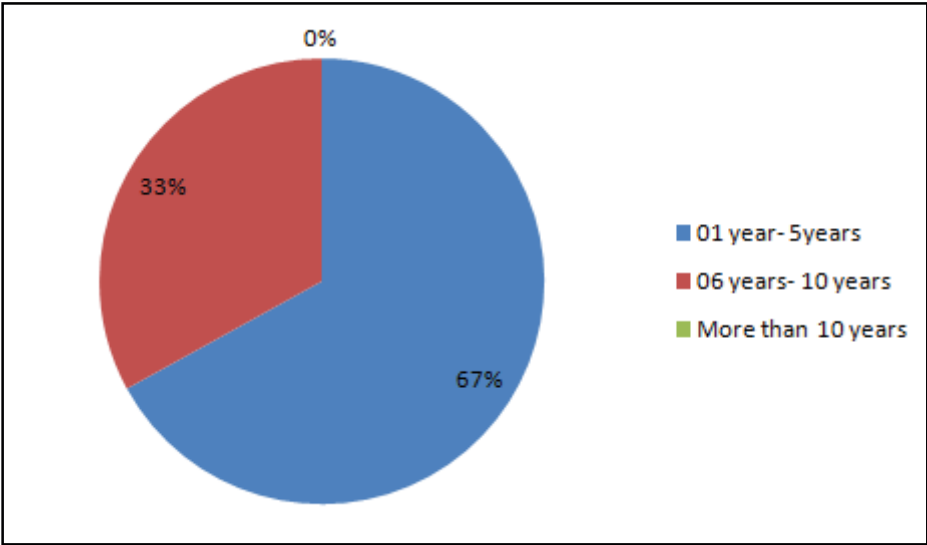


Figure 03: Teachers’ experience in teaching written expression

The table 03 shows that the vast majority of informants 67% have been teaching written expression for 6 to 10 years. This question reveals that only 4 teachers have been teaching written expression module from the beginning of their careers in teaching. When we compare the years of teaching “Written Expression” we can see that teachers should acquire more experience in teaching writing so as they could teach efficiently and let students take an advantage of such an experience to improve their writing.

Section One : Writing Skill

Q5: How do you rate the level of your learners in writing?

Table 05: Teachers’ Evaluation of students’ Level of Writing Proficiency

Options	Number	Percentage
Good	1	16.67%
Average	5	83.33%
Below average	0	0%

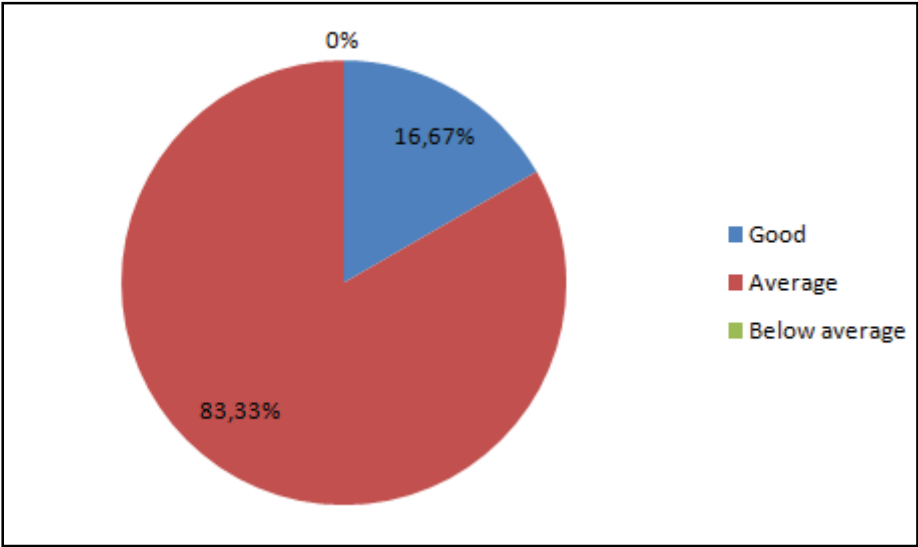


Figure 05: Teachers’ Evaluation of Students’ Level of Writing Proficiency

The table above shows that five (5) teachers with a percentage of (83.33%) claimed that their students written proficiency are average. Only One (1) teacher with a percentage (16.67%) of them claimed that their level is good, and no one claimed that their students’ level is below average. These students need more practice, more effective, and motivating teaching strategies to improve their writing skill.

Q6: Do you help your students when writing?

Table 06: Frequency of teachers' help during writing

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	5	83.33%
No	1	16.67%

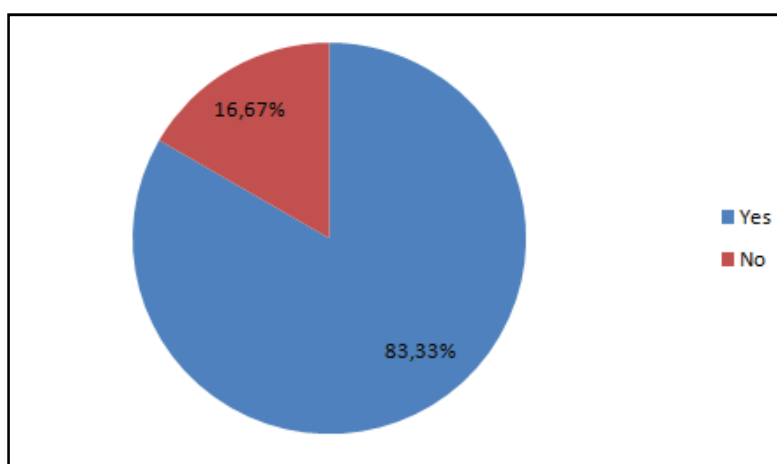


Figure06: Frequency of teachers' help during writing

Because of the students' difficulties and impairment in the writing skill, five (5) teachers with a percentage of (83.33%) provide their learners with help when writing because they think that it is important to help students and guide them to develop their pieces. While, only one (1) teacher with a percentage of (16.67%) states that he/she does not provide their students with help because he/she thinks that students must rely on themselves to improve their writing.

-If yes what kind of help?

When we ask teachers what kind of help they provide us with different ways:

- Providing guidance throughout the writing process by discussing the importance of out ling, making notes, explaining how to select and narrow a topic.
- Providing them with the necessary feedback in order to improve their writing skill.
- Provide them with vocabulary and explain some difficult words.
- Correcting their grammatical mistakes.
- Checking spelling and punctuation.

Q7: How do you encourage your students to write?

The main purpose from this question is to know the main strategies that used by teachers to encourage their students to write. The participants provide us with some ways to motivate their learners.

- Assign brief writing exercises in the classroom.
- Choose always topics that appeal to them, use activities that motivate them, include more discussion in class, group sores, presentations.....etc.
- Motivate them extrinsically and intrinsically, by praising them through giving extra marks for the best assignment and encourage that to keep up with that level of work.

Section Two: Brainstorming

Q8: What type of activities do you use to enhance students' writing skill?

The main purpose from this question is to know the main type of activities that used by teachers to enhance their students' writing skill. The participants provide us with different ways:

- Outlining paragraph or essay.
- Brainstorming the ideas.
- Control to free writing.
- Dictating.
- Free writing outside the class like personal journals, blogs....
- Guided writing activities and after that free writing activities.

Q9: Which of the following stages you think that are most important?

Table07: Stages of the Writing Skill

Options	Number	Percentage
Dictating	1	16.6%
Reading	1	16.6%
Brainstorming	4	66.6%
Cooperative learning	0	0%

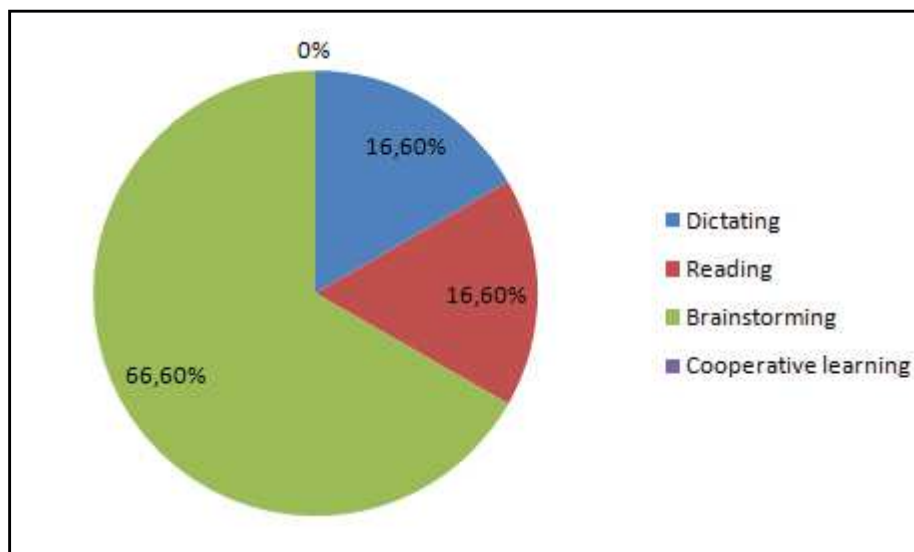


Figure8: Stages of the Writing Skill

This question aims at investigating teachers' opinion about the most important stages in the writing skill. According to the obtained results, (16.6%) of teachers choose dictating and reading, and the majority of teachers (66.6%) stated that the most important stage is brainstorming, whereas no one of them hold a cooperative learning. From the result we noticed that teachers focus more on brainstorming stage.

Q10: Do your students know what brainstorming is?

Table9: students' knowledge about brainstorming

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%

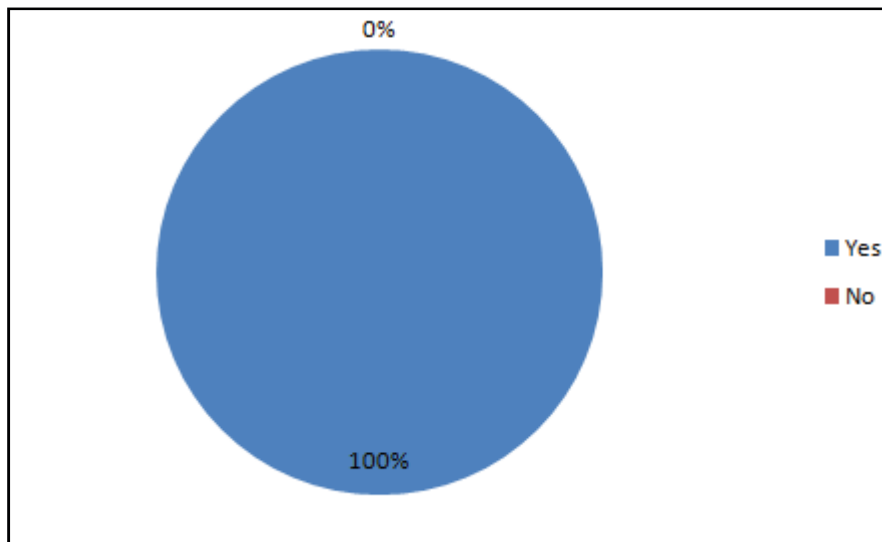


Figure9: students' knowledge about brainstorming

Teachers' answers to this question were all positive they shared the same opinion that students generally know what brainstorming is.

Q11: What type of activities you think that can support the use of brainstorming?

This question is designed to collect the possible types of activities that can support the use of brainstorming and the responses are as follow:

- Mind mapping
- Mapping
- Brainstorming writing
- Listing
- Run-non story

Q12: Do you think that brainstorming is an effective strategy that can enhance your learners' writing skill?

Table10: Teachers' Evaluation of Brainstorming strategy

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	6	100%
No	0	0%

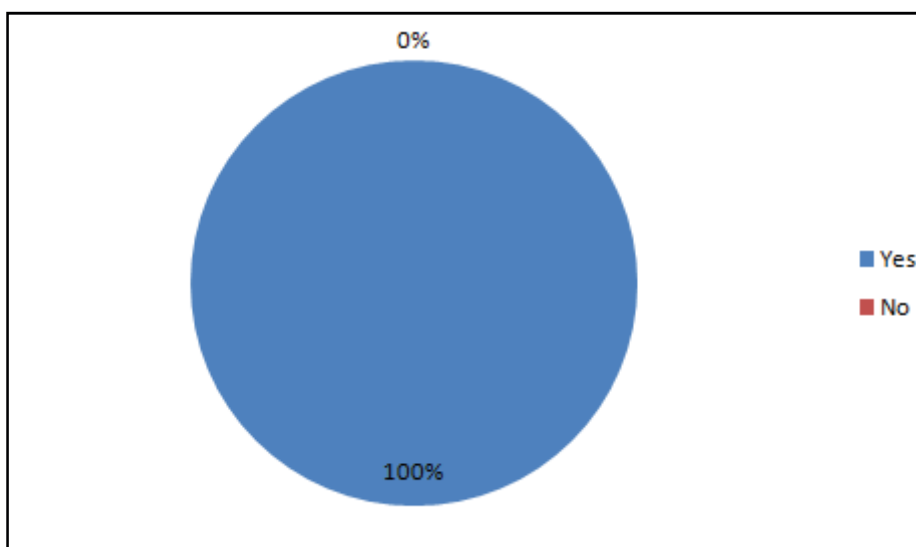


Figure10: Teachers' Evaluation of Brainstorming strategy

According to their experience in teaching written expression, all of the teachers confirm that brainstorming is an effective strategy to enhance learners' writing skill.

If yes how?

- It motivates them to learn (as they share their ideas, knowledge and correct mistakes).
- It provides a free and open environment that engages every student in the learning process.

Q13: In your opinion, what are the main benefits that students may gain from brainstorming while writing?

This question is designed to collect the possible benefits that students may gain from brainstorming and the responses are as follow:

- Gain information and ideas about the subject.
- Develop their registers and vocabulary knowledge.
- Stimulate their creative thinking while writing.

Q14: Could you please suggest some other activities that are used in brainstorming?

The last question aims at providing some other activities that are used in brainstorming. The proposed suggestions vary enormously from one teacher to another. We have noticed that the majority of teachers who answered this question agreed on a free writing activity which is an activity of a great help because students can write without thinking about grammar, spelling mistakes and whether the ideas are organized or not. In this way, students can realize their ideas and afterwards just in editing step, the ideas can be organized. Also, they suggest mind-mapping, break and build strategy, role play brainstorming which includes role storming and figure storming, collaborative brainstorming, and the last activity which is brainstorming-netting means online brainstorming.

4.2. Analyses of Students' Questionnaire

General Information

Q2: How do you consider your level in English?

Table11: Proficiency Level in English

Options	Number	Percentage
Very Good	3	10%
Good	25	83,33%
Average	2	6,67%
Poor	0	0%

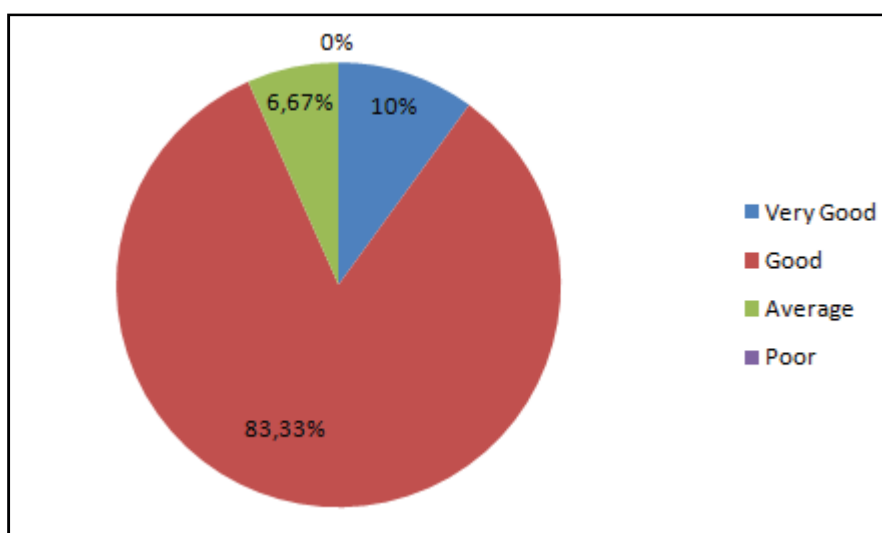


Figure11: Proficiency Level in English

Students are expected to evaluate their English Level from very good to poor. The table is pretend that 10% of them perceive themselves as very good; while 83.33% who have admitted that their level is good. 6.67% declare that their level is average; whereas, no one hold that poor. This means that the learners' level is good in English language in general.

Q3: In which skills you are interested?

Table12: students' interesting on the four skills

Options	Number	Percentage
Speaking	8	26.7%
Listening	1	3.3%
Reading	5	16.7%
Writing	16	53.3%

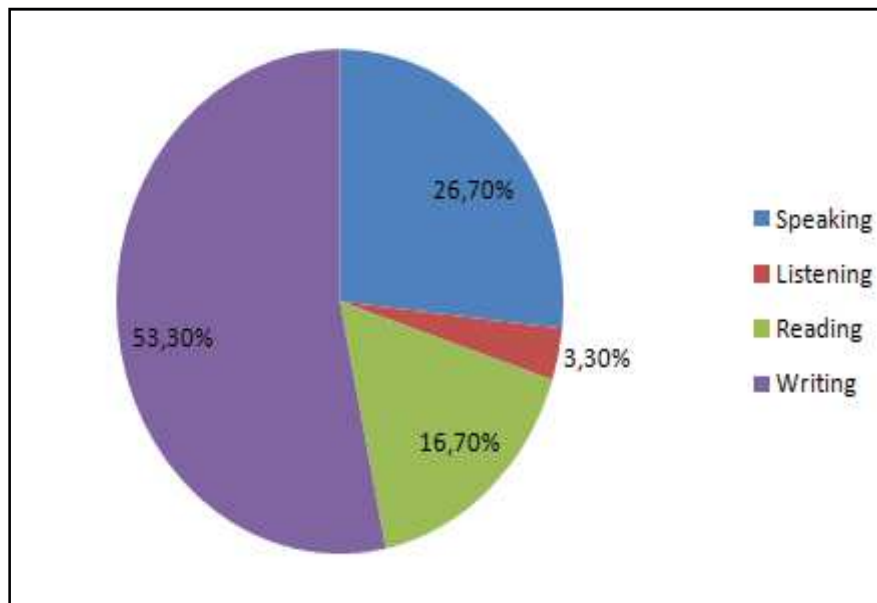


Figure12: students' interesting on the four skills

The aim behind this question is to know in which skill students are interested. The majority of students 53.3% choose writing skill while, 26.7% of students choose speaking. 16.7% of students are interested in reading only, 3.3% of them select listening. According to the results shown, writing is the most interested skill for the learners.

Section One: Writing skill

Q4: Do you believe that writing is important as a language skill?

Table13: The importance of writing as a language skill

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	29	96.67%
No	1	3.33%

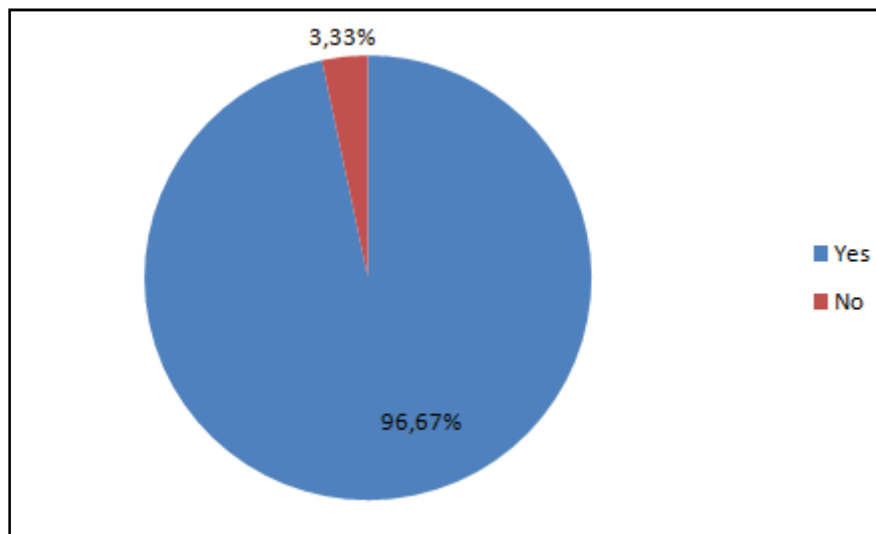


Figure13: The importance of writing as a language skill

As it shown in the table above, and after analyzing the results, we found that 96.67% of students believe that writing is an important as a language skill; while, only 3.33% of the students see that writing is not important. This shows that the students awareness about the importance of writing.

-why?

The students who state that writing is important as a language skill they present the following reasons:

- Is a way to communicate and express our message and our thoughts in clarity and in correctness way.
- Some words are pronounced the same and there are many accents in English so in order to distinguish between a word and another we need to write.
- Influence the way we think.

Q5: Are you satisfied with your level in writing?

Table13: Students' opinion about their level in writing

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	9	30%
No	21	70%

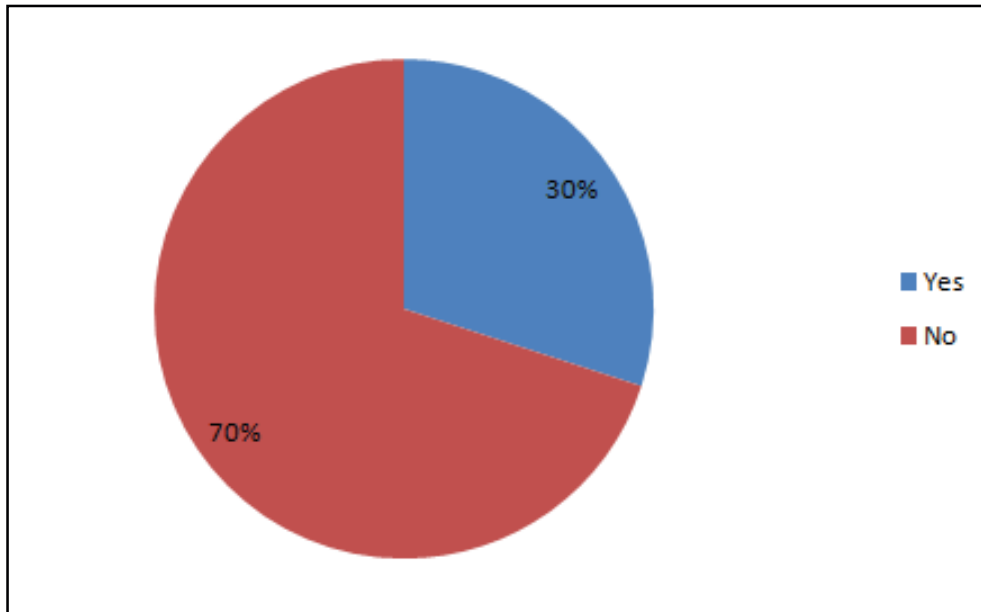


Figure13: Students' opinion about their level in writing

This table presents that the majority of EFL learners 70% are not satisfied with their level in writing for different reasons such as:

- They keep making grammar and spelling mistakes.
- They are not able to write organize and form a piece of writing.
- The lack of vocabulary affects the writing product.

Q6: How do you consider your level in writing?

Table14: students' level in writing

Options	Number	Percentage
Very good	2	6.67%
Good	9	30%
Average	16	53.33%
Poor	3	10%

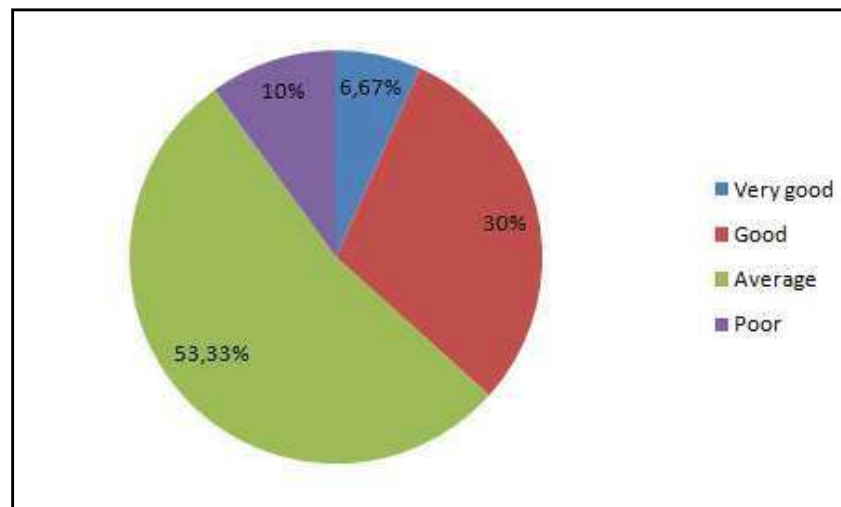


Figure14: students' level in writing

Concerning the number of second-year students, table (14) reveals that 53.33% of the sample considered their level in writing as being average. This percentage means that most of them do not have the experience to be excellent in writing. However, only 30% of students claimed that their level of writing is good. 10% of the students have a poor level in writing. The rest of them 6.67% their level is very excellent. This shows that students at this level are still facing problem for that. They are looking for solutions and ways' to reach improvements.

Q7: Are you motivated to write academically in English?

Table15: students’ attitude towards writing academically

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	28	93.3%
No	2	6.7%

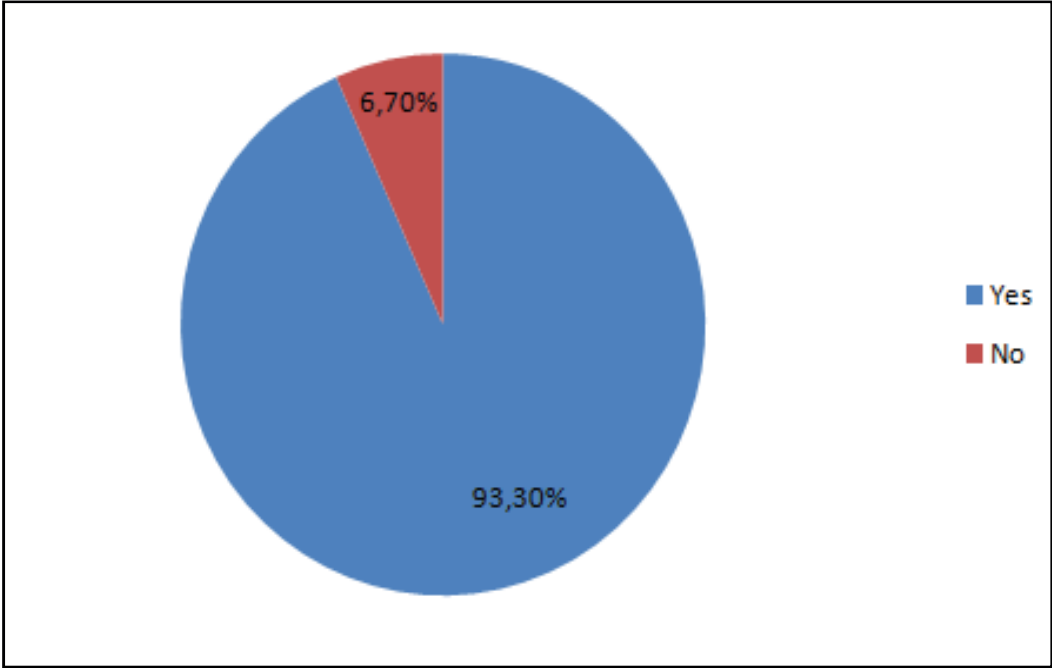


Figure15: students’ attitude towards writing academically

From that table we have found that the large number 6.7% of students are not motivated to write academically because they still facing difficulties in the writing process. While, 93.3% of the students are motivated to write academically because, they are aware of the importance of writing skill in the academic setting.

Q8: What are the writing stages you are familiar with?

Table16: students' stages in writing

Options	Number	Percentage
Prewriting	3	10%
Drafting	12	40%
Revising	9	30%
Editing	6	20%

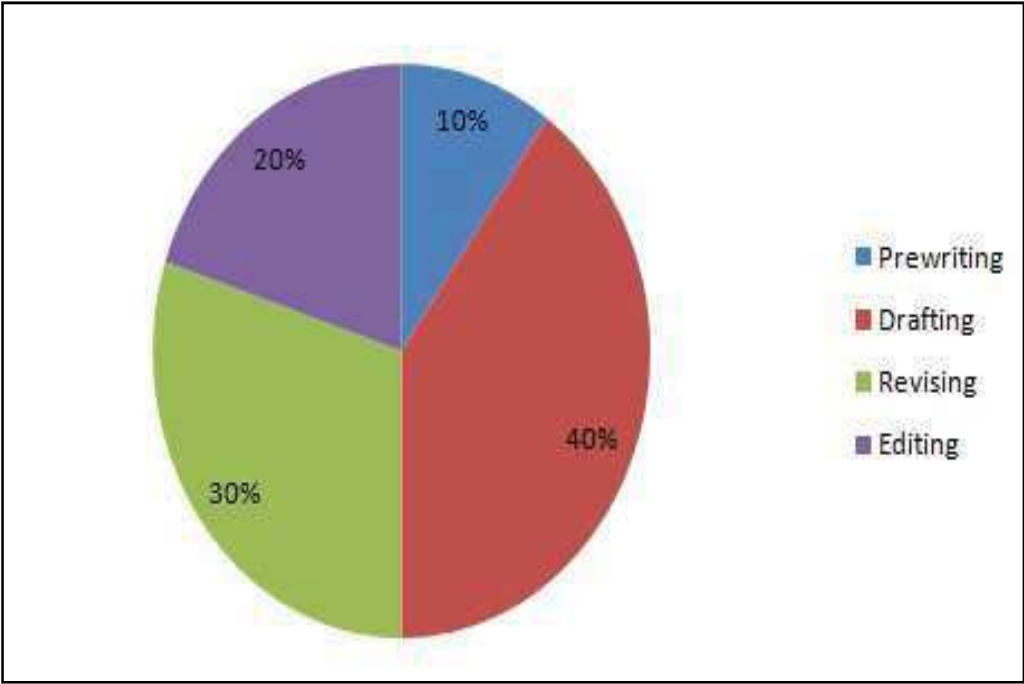


Figure16: students' stages in writing

This question aims at investigating students' opinions about the writing stages that they are familiar with. 10% of students choose prewriting stage. 40% of them choose drafting. Furthermore, 30% of the students choose revising and 20% of students choose editing. From the results we noticed that students focus more on drafting and revising stages.

Q9: In the classroom, your teacher is?

Table17: frequency of teachers' role during writing

Options	Number	Percentage
Motivating	4	13.33%
Demonstrating	18	60%
Supporting	8	26.67%

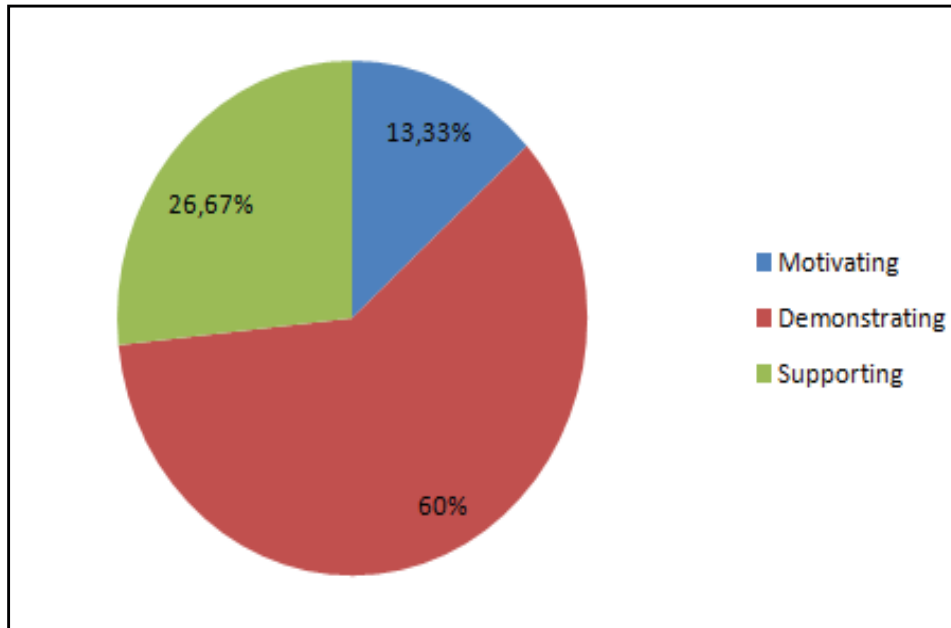


Figure17: frequency of teachers' role during writing

This question aims to know the teachers' role in writing and the results were as followed. 60% of students choose demonstrating. 26.67% of students see that their teachers support them. But, 13.33% of students choose motivating.

Q10: Which strategy does your teacher use to enhance your writing skill?

Table18: students’ strategy in writing

Options	Number	Percentage
Reading	10	33.3%
Brainstorming	8	26.7%
Dictating	12	40%
Cooperative learning	0	0%

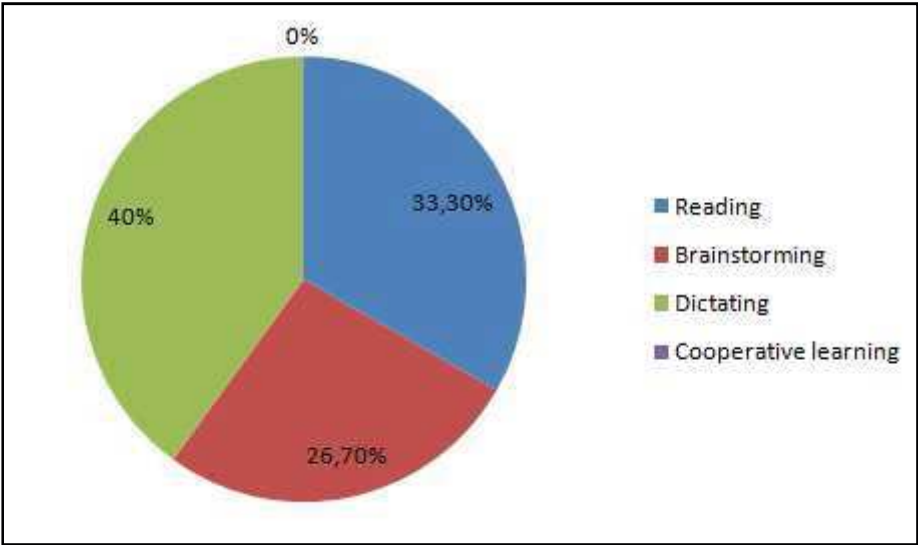


Figure18: students’ strategy in writing

According to the results obtained, 40% of students state that students use dictating in their writing process. 33.3% of the informants choose reading as a strategy during this process. 26.7% of students select brainstorming whereas, no one of them hold cooperative learning. From this analysis we determine that students use different strategies in the writing process.

Q11: Do you use brainstorming while writing?

Table19: the use of brainstorming in the writing process

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	30	100%
No	0	0%

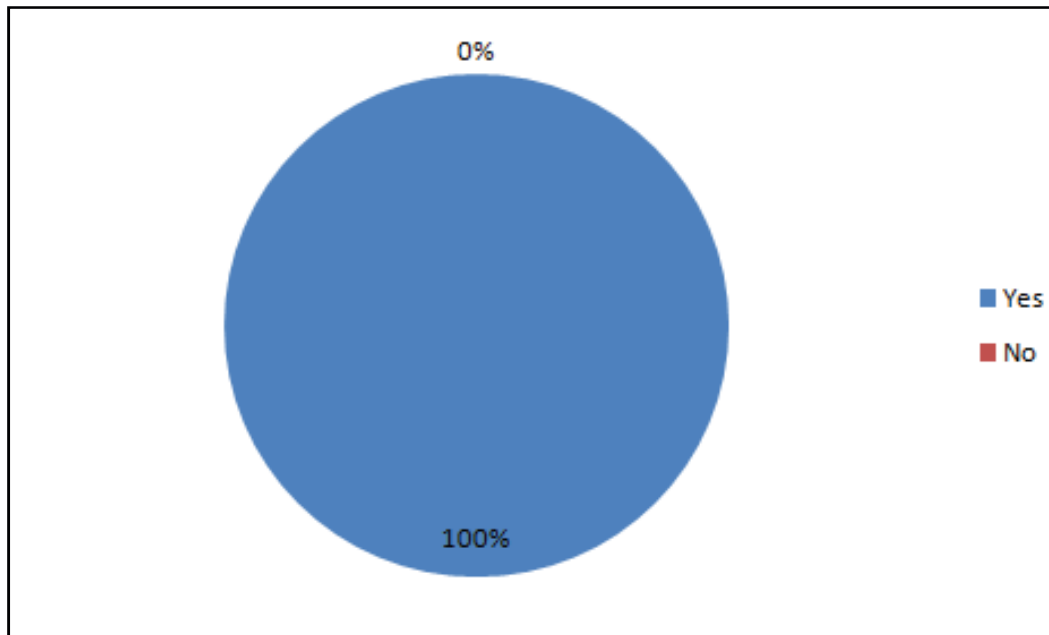


Figure19: The use of brainstorming in the writing process

It is obvious from the table that all the students (100%) select a positive answer. From the analysis of the question we notice that all of them use brainstorming as a strategy while writing.

Q12: How does brainstorming improve your writing skill?

Table20: the ways of improving writing skill

Options	Number	Percentage
Organization and content	16	53.3%
New ideas	11	36.7%
New vocabulary	3	10%

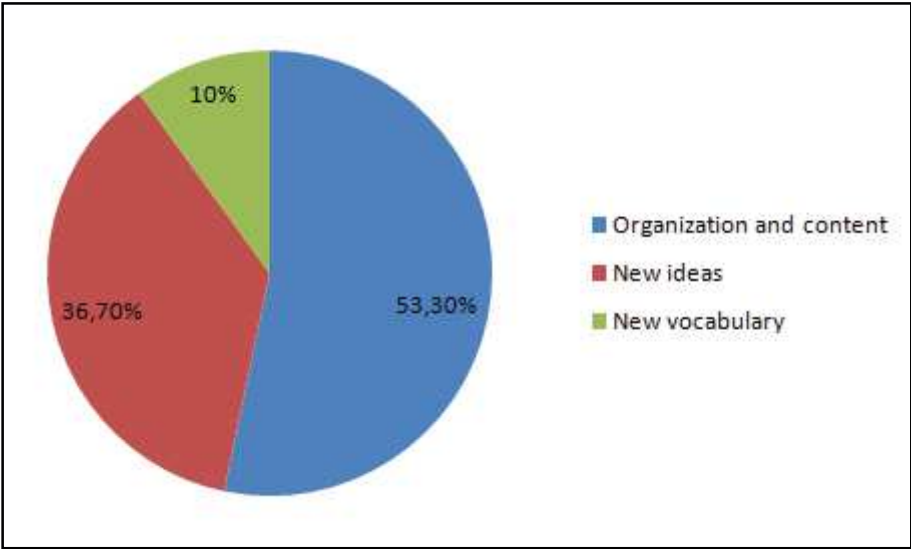


Figure20: the ways of improving writing skill

This question aims at investigating students' opinion about does brainstorming improve their writing skill. The majority of them 53.3% of students choose organization and content. 36.7% of students choose new ideas whereas few of them 10% of students choose new vocabulary.

Q13: Do you consider brainstorming as an effective strategy to enhance your writing skill?

Options	Number	Percentage
Yes	29	96.7%
No	1	3.3%

Table21: The Consideration of Brainstorming as An Effective Strategy

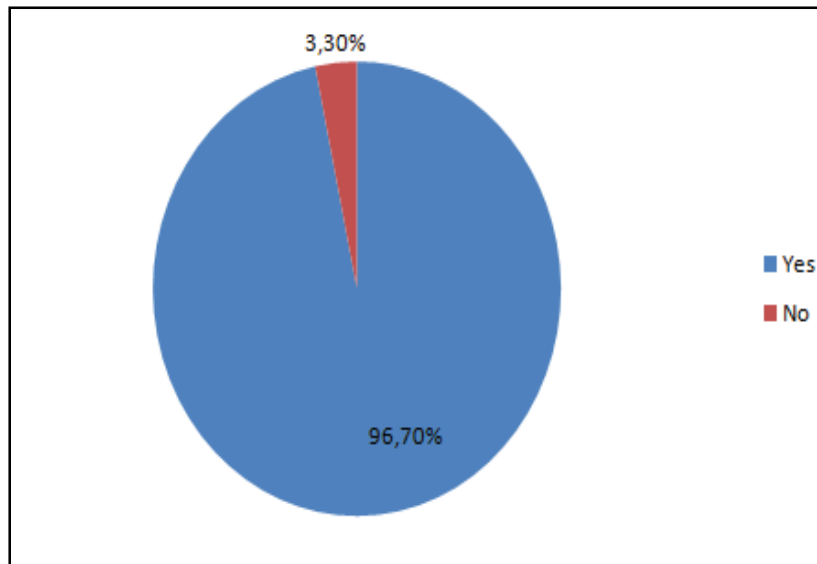


Figure21: The Consideration Of Brainstorming As An Effective Strategy

From this question the majority of the students 96.7% said yes. They said yes for many reasons:

- Help them to get new ideas, organize and manage their work.
- Get more ideas and information in order to develop their general idea.
- It is a way to improve their language.
- Give them all the ideas they have on their mind and making them easy to organize their thoughts.

While, just one student 3.3% said no. he/she said that brainstorming alone is not effective because it has to be followed by other strategies to insure that the enhancement of writing in a healthy process.

Conclusion

This chapter is concerned with getting real data about enhancing students' writing skill through the use of brainstorming strategy. Data was gathered through a questionnaire for both teachers and students. The chapter dealt with the different results we obtained from both teachers' and students' questionnaire that includes questions which may help us to discover the results we aim to find.

Chapter Four:

Results and Recommendations

Introduction

Referring to the findings of the study, teachers indicated that they face different challenges while teaching writing skill in order to overcome, these challenges and enhance students' ability to write. We can suggest some recommendations for our teachers.

5.1. Recommendations:

- Writing mostly known as difficult subject. English teacher should be able to develop their strategy to teach the students in order to make them interest in learning the subject.
- To improve writing skill, students have to develop their knowledge and do many exercises in order to get a better achievement in providing written text.
- Teachers should be aware of their students' needs and abilities and choose the suitable methods for them.
- Teachers should develop students' awareness about importance of the writing skill in EFL context because many students consider that learning English is just limited to speak and right pronunciation.
- Teachers of written expression should do their best to improve the written capacities of their learner. They ought to vary written activities as much as possible.
- Teachers should make students aware of the importance of grammar respect and appropriate vocabulary in writing.
- Teachers should encourage students to ask question about their writing.
- Students should pay more attention to teachers' explanation inside the classroom in order to gain more knowledge and vocabularies.
- Students should use dictionaries as a source to check a spelling of difficult words.
- Teachers should avoid teacher-centered class and more towards students-centered class.

Conclusion

This concluding chapter tends to give some remedial recommendations of future research. We hope that these recommendations and other researchers' recommendations can be used by EFL teachers to ameliorate the level of our learners; in this case we wish our learners become good writers.

General Conclusion

Conclusion

Teaching writing FL context requires using many strategies and techniques brainstorming strategy is one of them. The current research encloses four chapters: chapter one is about the review of the related literature, chapter two is situation analysis and research design, chapter three is about analysis of the results, and chapter four is about results and recommendations.

The first chapter includes two sections which are writing skill and brainstorming. In the first section we have started by the definition of the writing skill, its importance, reasons for teaching writing, the different approaches in teaching writing, stages of writing and the most important role of the teacher in teaching writing. The second section we have dealt with definition of brainstorming, its types, the application of brainstorming technique in teaching writing, its stages and the benefits of using brainstorming.

The second chapter is about situation analysis and research design which includes data collection, research instruments and procedures and the sample for both teachers and students.

The third chapter includes the analysis of the data gathered from teachers' and students' questionnaire. The fourth chapter dealt with the results and recommendations.

The main aim of the present research is to examine whether brainstorming strategy enhances EFL students' writing skill or not. It is hypothesized that brainstorming is considered as an effective strategy to enhance EFL students' writing skill. In order to examine that brainstorming strategy enhances EFL students' writing skill, two questionnaires were designed; one for teachers and the other one for second year LMD students at the department of English CHADLI BENJDID University El-TAREF.

The conclusion drawn from this research has confirmed the proposal hypotheses, so brainstorming strategy enhances EFL students' writing skill.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire is part of a *Master's* degree project we are carrying out about the use of a brainstorming strategy to enhance learners' writing skills. Hence, the aim is to gather information about the topic and to solve problem. So, we would be so grateful if you could respond to the following questions honestly. Please, tick (✓) the appropriate box and/or provide full statements whenever necessary.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

CHADLI BENJDID University

Department of English

(Ms BOUKAFA ANOUAR / Ms ABD ELKRIM KHOULOUUD)

1. General Information

1. Gender:

a- Male

b- Female

2. Degree(s) Held:

a- Master

b- Magister

c- Doctorate (PhD)

Field of Study:.....

3. How long have you been teaching English?

a- From 01 to 05 years

b- From 05 to 10 years

c- More than 10 years

4. How long have you been teaching Written Expression?

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

SECTION TWO: Writing Skill

5. How do you rate the level of your learners in writing?

- a- Good
- b- Average
- c- Below average

6. Do you help your students when writing?

- a - Yes
- b - No

If (yes), what kind of help do you provide them with?

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

7. How do you encourage your students to write?

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

SECTION TWO: Brainstorming

8. What type of activities do you use to enhance students writing skill?

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.....
.....

9. Which of the following stages you think that are most important? (You can choose more than one).

a- Dictating

b- Reading

c- Brainstorming

d- Cooperative learning

10. Do your students know what brainstorming is?

a -Yes

b -No

11. What type of activities you think that can support the use of brainstorming?

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.....
.....

12. Do you think that brainstorming is an effective strategy that can enhance your learners' writing skill?

a - Yes

b - No

If (yes) how?

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.....

13. In your opinion, what are the main benefits that students may gain from brainstorming while writing?

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

14. Could you please suggest some other activities that you are use in brainstorming?

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

Thank you very much for your cooperation

Appendix B

Students' Questionnaire

Dear students

We will be grateful if you help us to answer these questions whose aim is together information about the use of a brainstorming strategy to enhance learner's writing skill. Please, tick () the choice that corresponds to your answer.

General Information:

1. Gender:

a- Male

b- Female

2- How do you consider your level in English?

a- Very good

b- Good

c- Average

d- Poor

3- In which skills you are interested?

a- Speaking

b- Listening

c- Reading

d- Writing

Justify

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SECTION ONE: Writing Skill

4- Do you believe that writing is important as a language skill?

a- Yes

b- No

Say, Why?

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.....

5- Are you satisfied with your level in writing?

a- Yes

b- No

Explain, why

.....

.....

.....

6- How do you consider your level in writing?

a- Very good

b- Good

c- Average

d- Poor

7- Are you motivated to write academically in English?

a- Yes

b- No

8- What are the writing stages you are familiar with? (you can choose more than one answer)

- a- Prewriting
- b- Drafting
- c- Revising
- d- Editing

9- In the classroom, your teacher is:

- a- Motivating
- b- Demonstrating
- c- Supporting

SECTION TWO: Brainstorming

10- Which strategy does your teacher use to enhance your writing skill?

- a- Reading
- b- Brainstorming
- c- Dictating
- d- Cooperative learning

11- Do you use brainstorming while teaching writing?

- a- Yes
- b- No

12- How does brainstorming improve your writing skill?

- a- Organization and content
- b- New ideas
- c- New vocabulary

13- Do you consider that brainstorming as an effective strategy to enhance your writing skill?

a- Yes

b- No

Justify

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.....

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Thank you for your collaboration