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Option: Linguistics

The Impact of First Language "Negative Transfer" on EFL Learners' Writing Proficiency
The Case of Second Year LMD Students of English at the University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Anglophone Language,

Literatures, and Civilizations.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this humble work to the apple of my eyes:

My dear parents:"HAMID and YAMINA", for their great support, help and guidance,

endless love. They devote their time, energy to stand by my side along with this

journey of five years to make me who i am today.

May Allah bless them and keep them for me.

To my beloved brother "SALEH'' who deserve to be called my second "Father"

To my second brother "ADEL" and sister: SALWA.

To my best friend: CHAIMA, NESSRINE, IKRAM, MERIEM.

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and Mr. Walid M CHETTIBI.

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ABSTRACT

The present dissertation attempts to investigate the influence of the First Language "Negative Transfer" on the student's writing proficiency, at the Department of English, University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma, Algeria. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of L1 "Negative Transfer" on EFL learner's writing. The research study sample was randomly chosen from second year LMD population of the English Department. In order to test the hypotheses that suggest the probability that the EFL students with low level writing proficiency tend to use their first language "Negative Transfer" during the writing process. In this respect a descriptive method has been adopted, in which two questionnaires were administered and test that is administered to the same sample of the second year LMD students; the student's questionnaire was directed to sample group (55) of second year LMD students who were assigned randomly; whereas, teacher's questionnaire was addressed to (12) English teachers of "Written Expression" module from the English Department. Hence the aim of two questionnaires and test were to collect significant information about effect of L1" Negative Transfer" on the writing proficiency, and to show the attitudes of the students towards the L1 influence. As a result the findings have shown that the First language "Negative transfer" affects negatively the EFL learner's writing proficiency. Moreover, the results of the questionnaires and test have confirmed the research hypothesis. In this light, the low level of the student's writing proficiency is due to the L1 "Negative transfer" and they need to develop the foreign language background that enhances their writing proficiently, in order to reduce the impact of L1 transfer.

Key Words: First language, Foreign language, Negative transfer, Language transfer, EFL, Target language, Writing proficiency, Writing approaches, Writing skill.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAH: Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

EFL: English as a foreign language

ESL: English as a Second Language

ELT: English Language Teaching

LMD: License Master Doctorate

LT: Language Transfer

LL: Language Learning

MT: Mother Tongue

NT: Negative Transfer

PT: Positive Transfer

STL: Second Teaching Language

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

TL: Target language

WE: Written Expression

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Introduction

Writing is considered as one of the main pillars of mastering the English language. Despite the writing instructions that learners had received, they still use some structures, vocabulary, rhetorical patterns of their first language when writing a piece of English language. Hence, researchers have put much attention on L1interference as linguistic phenomena which may lead to low writing proficiency and inefficient academic achievement. Therefore, writing is another form of communication that encompasses words, symbols all governed together to express a certain aim.

Most of foreign language student's errors are due to "the negative transfer" that happens when the speakers and writers transfer items or certain structures that are not common in both languages; in the sense that the more there is differences exist between two languages, the more negative transfer is possible to occur. Additionally, negative transfer turns around the influence of the learner's native language on the foreign language acquisition. So, the impact of the negative transfer on the writing proficiency is a worthy research to be investigated to shed light on the students writing problems in order to get rid of it and to achieve a good academic level of the English language.

1. Statement of the problem

Writing skill had received much interest as an important pattern and for many decades English learners faced many problems when writing well organized and structured piece of language. The main remarked problem is that the majority of the student's writing at the English department, Guelma university has showed that, the native language transfer may influence the learner's writings proficiency. Hence, their writing proficiency is low, due to many factors namely the lack of understanding the meaning of the text ,identifying new vocabulary and the lack of reading the target language which may familiarize them with the

use of language, consequently, their native language background would be less interfered when writing the English writing tasks.

2. The research Questions

To know better about these linguistic phenomena the research will stress on this problematic issue, this research addresses the main following question;

1. Is the low level of students writing is due to the negative impact of the first language "negative transfer"?

2. What are the attitudes of both students and teachers towards the use of the negative transfer?

3. What is the impact of the first language "negative transfer" on the student's writing proficiency?

3. The aim of the study

The present research is conducted to reach the following aims and goals:

1-To explain the reason behind the first language use and whether its application has a negative or positive impact on the student's writing proficiency.

2-To find out successful strategies and solutions that may help the English learners to write the target language without L1 interferences

3-To show the impact of L1 negative transfer on the writing proficiency?

4. The Hypothesis

The L1 "negative transfer" is one of the crucial problems that the English learners may encounter which may lead to a low writing proficiency. So, we hypothesize that learners with low level writing proficiency tend to use their fist language "negative transfer" when writing in English. If students did not use their first language negative transfer, their writing proficiency would increase. Thus, there is a relationship between the two variables. Writing proficiency would be increased when the first language negative transfer is less used by the English students.

5. Research Methodology and Design

5.1. Choice of the Research Method

This research would be conducted through the quantitative descriptive method aiming at confirming the above mentioned research hypothesis through administrating two questionnaires and test students' questionnaire would provide us with reliable information about student's English writing and to which extent their target language is influenced by their mother tongue.

5.2 Population of the Study

The research population represents English students at English department at Guelma University. The sample is chosen randomly which consists of 55 students of second year English students from 200 students as the whole population. Second year students has chosen to the study because they are English beginners and their first language background is more than the target language, thus their first language negative interference is more noticed than the advanced students. Also, the population is suitable for our research.

5.3. Pilot Study

The researcher used two questionnaires to reach a good aim; the students and teacher's questionnaires. 15 students took part in the piloting of the students 'questionnaire in which they react about some abbreviations and some terms, hence, through their feedbacks the researcher has modified the questionnaire to suit the students level.

5.4 Data Gathering Tools

Our research is relied on administering two" teachers" and "students" questionnaires in addition to test, at the English department university of Guelma ,Algeria to the second year English student to provide us with information about the factors of the first language negative transfer when students do the written task and does this strategy is good for acquiring the target language writing proficiency. However, teacher's questionnaire is used to account for the teachers' experience about the writing skill teaching, in addition to their opinions about the use of L1in English writing. Hence, the questionnaire is appropriate for our research because it allow us to collect data about the subject matter for the aim of analyzing information and reach good results.

6. Structure of the Dissertation

This dissertation consists of two parts: "the theoretical part" and "the practical part "the former is dived into two chapters ,the first one tackles the description of the writing skill, the relationship between writing and other language skills, components of writing, approaches to teaching writing, and the writing requirements. The second chapter provides overview about first language negative transfer and shows the impact of the negative transfer on the writing proficiency. Finally, Chapter three is entitled "Field of investigation", it includes a description of both student and teacher's questionnaires and test and its

administration, description, analysis, and interpretations. Finally the research is ended up with a general conclusion that closes the topic.

Conclusion

The research is prompted by the desire to examine the importance of making student's writings grammatically organized and well structured. Correspondingly, they can enhance their writing proficiency. Through the use of the questionnaires many opinions of teachers and student's level about the writing proficiency could be identified, and the impact of the first language negative transfer would be decreased, the results of the questionnaires and the test will confirm or reject our above mentioned hypothesis.

CHAPTER ONE: THE FIRST LANGUAGE « NEGATIVE TRANSFER »

General introduction

Over the past years first language transfer has been a key issue in the field of teaching the second language, (SLA). the questions of first language transfer "Interference" has attained a remarkable English language researchers to investigate about it. Hence, teaching a foreign language requires great attention from both learners and teachers, to bear in mind that, two or more languages, permanently present in the student's mind.In this chapter there are some key concepts related to the first language "Negative Transfer" and the second language. Therefore, the chapter includes an overview about the first language transfer and its history and nature, in addition to the definition of the language transfer. Also the chapter summarises the types of transfer; Negative transfer and Positive transfer. Furthermore the chapter end up with discussing the concept of Interlanguage and transfer and the different errors produced by the EFL learners, Interlingual errors, intralinguagl errors ,and developmental errors. Finally we will discuss the effect of L1 negative transfer on the writing proficiency. Consequently, we will tackle mostly all the issues and the problems that the learners may face in learning the TL.

2.1. Definitions of key terms related L1 and L2

The foreign language (FL)

"It is one not widely used in the learner's immediate social context which may be used for future travel or other, cross cultural communication situation in schools, but with no immediate or necessary practical application" Troike (2006).

Foreign language learning (FLL)

It is generally differentiated from second language acquisition in the sense that, the former refers to the learning of a non native language in the environment of one's native language. Ellis (1994, p.26)

Second language acquisition (SLA)

"Refers to both to the study of individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first one as young children, and to process of becoming and "educational individual" Troik (2006).Moreover, the online dictionary defines second language as "a language other than the mother tongue that a person or community uses for public communication, especially in trade, higher education and administration". (The free dictionary by Farlex).According to Ellis (1994), SLA refers to the process of learning another language after the native language that has been learnt also, the term can refers to the learning of 3rd and 4th language and it can refers to learning of non-native language after learning the native language. Therefore, Second language acquisition can simply defined as the learning of non-native language in the environment, in which that language is spoken.

Second language (SL)

Is non-native language officially recognized and adopted in a multilingual country as a means of public communication, it is called the TL, which refers to any language that is the aim and goal of learning. Troike (2006)

Ellis (1994) defines the foreign language as the language that is acquired after the first language however, according to Sinhano et al, (2009) second language is typically an official or socially a dominant language needed for education, employment, and other basic purposes, and it is often acquired by minority group members or immigrants who speak another language natively.

Native language (NL)

It refers to the first language that a child learner, it is also known as the primary language, the mother tongue, or the L1. Ellis (1994, p.26)

Target language (TL)

"Refers to the language being learnt" Ellis (1994, p.26)

Second language studies (SLS)

The term refers to anything deals with using or acquiring a second /foreign language. Ellis (1994, p.26)

2.2. Overview of First language Transfer

First language transfer has many synonymies and definitions such as:"Cross meaning" Interference" L1 interference", "Linguistic interference" or "Cross linguistic influence". Language transfer is when the learner apply rules and forms of the first language to second language, Skiner (1957) and Waterson (1924) ,Pavlov (1936) and Thorndlike (1936) believe that a child's present learning is influenced by his past learning, in the sense that they had proved that the stored knowledge of the learner's mother tongue would ease the teaching of the second language ,and if the structure of both language is similar, the first language habits will be helpful and useful to acquire the second language habits, however; if the two languages are different it will be difficult for the students to acquire the second language.

According to Weinriech (1953) "Transfer" "is those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which accruing in the speech of bilinguals as a results of their

familiarity with more than language. However, according to Corder (1992) refers to the phenomena as "mother influence "by recognizing the L1 influence on the foreign language production also, he stressed the fact that the Learner cultural experience will interfere with the learning of FL 'patterns' that function differently in the learner's culture.

According to Gass (1996) transfer is the use of the mother tongue or other language information in the acquisition of an FL. However, Odlin (1993) has reinforced the previous definition of transfer in which he refers to it as "is the influence resulting from similarity and differences between the target language and other languages that has previously and perhaps imperfectly acquired" (p.51)

2.3. Definition of the language Transfer (Interference)

The term "Transfer" refers to taking something from "x" situation and put it in situation where the context is different, in other words the term transfer mostly refers to a negative situation, Ellis defines transfer as "L1 transfer refers to the influence that the learner's L1 exerts over the acquisition of an L2".According to, the Behaviorist view transfer is "a habit formation" which means that, native language habits can be translated to foreign language. Therefore, Lado (1957) says clearly:

> Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of
>
> forms and meanings of their native language and culture to foreign language and
>
> culture to foreign language and culture-both productively when attempting to
>
> speak the language and to act in the culture, and receptively when attempting to
>
> grasp and understand the language and culture as practiced by natives.

Additionally, Transfer is related to the productive and receptive skill either in form or meaning .In other words, EFL learners make transfer both in speaking and writing. According to Corder 1975 explains transfer saying that, the learner carries the habits of his or her mother tongue into the second language, when there a similarities between learning the TL and the

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mother tongue .Thus, TL is easy trough the positive transfer, however; when there is differences between learning the TL and the mother tongue, TL would be difficult and it results negative transfer through the occurrence of errors. Temmime (2009) declares that language Transfer has different names used by researchers namely; Selinker(1972) and Kellerman, (1983) called it " Language mixing" ,Schacher and Rutherford (1979),and Ringbon (1987) named it "Linguistic interference". However, Lado (1957) and Selinker (1972) called it "Language transfer"

The concept of transfer "Interference" was first given by Wienrick (1953).Lado (1957) claimed that the second language learner has already stored set of habits of the mother tongue in the sense that, some of the earlier habits would help the learner to learn a new language. However, some other rules and structures will create linguistic problems to the leaner since, the L1 differs from L2.However, in terms of foreign language teaching and learning, transfer refers to the influence of the learner's native language on a foreign language acquisition, in which the important units or structures of both languages share similarities (Lado 1957).Therefore, the notion of transfer is originally related to behaviorism (Lado's work 1957), where Fries states:

Learning a second language, therefore constitutes a very different task from learning the first language, the basic problem arise not out of any essential difficulty in the features of the new language themselves but primarily out of the special "set" created by the first language habits

This means that, individuals transfer the meanings and the forms of their native language and culture to the foreign language and its culture.

In the early of 1970's transfer was challenged in the sense that many studies have carried out to prove that not all the instances of transfer were predicted by CA (Raven 1978), however, the process of acquiring L2 was very similar to the L1 Dulay and Burt

(1973).Moreover, transfer from the native language is considered as a form of influence of L1 habits on L2 learning Fries (1949) argued that L1 interference is one of the main obstacles for students who try to learn the second language in which he stressed on the comparison between a learner's native language and the target language since, they are important ways for L2 likewise, Lado (1957) he considers the ML proficiency as the major cause behind the failure in learning the L2.

According to, Perkinson (1992) he defines transfer as "When learning in one context enhances or undermines a related performance in another context". Researchers have provide different definitions to the concept "Transfer" Brand &Brown (1999) defines transfer as the ability of extending what the learner has been learned in one context to the new context, this means that the leaner reuse his /her exercised habits of the L1 and apply it on the L2 learning. Alexander and Muphy (1992) defines transfer as "The process of using knowledge or skills acquired in one context in a new or varied context"

To conclude, Language transfer or "Cross linguistic influence as it is called by Kellerman and Sharwood (1986) may result in accurate language production which is called "Positive transfer" i.e. when the first language and the target language are similar, as a result, those similarities facilitates learning, however, when there is a great differences between the target language and the first language structures errors are expected to commit by the learner which is called "Negative transfer"

2.4. Types of Language Transfer

Ellis (1994) illustrates different kinds of transfer through her quotation stating that:

Transfer is to be seen as a general over term for a number of different kinds of influence from languages other than the L2, the study of transfer involves the study of errors (negative transfer),facilitation (positive transfer),avoidance of target language forms and their over-use.(p.25)

According to Ellis's quote there are different types of language transfer, however, positive transfer and negative transfer are the most common ones

2.4.1. Positive transfer "Facilitation"

Positive transfer is beneficial part of the L1 in L2, it occurs when the mother tongue and the target language are structurally the same, in other words when the two languages share the same characteristics, hence ,Robert Lado (1957) summaries the learner's problem in his well know formation stating that "Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult"(Littlewood,1984),therefore, this kind of transfer is rarely occurring, as a result,it was neglected by researchers, Allen and Corder (1957) maintain that "positive transfer help new learning"

E.g: it is easy to learn and pronounce aspirated voiceless stops in L2 in the language that has aspirated voiceless stops.

2.4.2. Negative Transfer

Refers to the negative influence that the knowledge of the L1 has in the learning of the target language due to the differences existing between both languages, in other words negative transfer happens when the learner transfers items, structures that are not the same in both languages, and it has been noticed that the learners sometimes use the stylistic habits of the first language intentionally, as a result frames, sentences will be similar to the mother tongue which results errors if the syntax of the L1 is different from the L2.Setjiit Kaun (1993,p.54) gives example of lexical, grammatical transfer..

E.g:

a) He will not do marriage with her

b) Midas thought he was taking dreams

Moreover, some linguists refers to the negative transfer as interference, Weinreich clarifies that when the process of L2 is taking place and if the linguistic features of the L1 are similar in form, meaning distribution will be regarded as facilitating the process, and transfer seen as positive, however, if they are dissimilar, the transfer is considered as negative, thus, the acquisition of the target language will be seen as distorted due difference in the two structures whereby ,Weinreich called this phenomena as "Interference".

2.5. The Interlanguage and the Transfer

While learning a second language learners produce utterances which are ungrammatical and ill formed, Corder (1987, p.66) called the word interlanguageas as"Idiosyncratic dialect" 1971, which refers to the foreign or second language that learner's go through when moving from the mother tongue to learn the TL, also he clarifies that the study of interlanguage is the study of the learner's language. Moreover, Corder (1957) argued that, the learner has a unique dialect (Language) which is regular, systematic, dynamic, and meaningful, and it is independent system that has a communicative purpose and specific features. Corder (1981) states that EFL learner posses a degree of competence in the second or foreign language learning which called "Transitional competence" (p, 10) which means that ,interlanguage is like any independent system. However, Nemser (1960) refer to the term interlanguage as " The approximate system", and he is the first one who mentioned the term "Deviant learner language" which refers to a learner's speech at a given time ,and it is the patterned product of a linguistic system distinct from mother language and target language and it is internally structured.

Larry Selinker (1972), defines interlanguage as; the state of language learner in between the L1 and L2 as an intermediate state, whereby, the learner go through different steps and phases from L1 to acquiring the L2.Moreover, IL although has been used in relation with SLA, but it has been extended for use in L3A, in other words, the EFL learner at any

particular moment in his or her learning sequence is using a language system, and it is neither native language, nor a TL. Also, interlanguage is a unique language with its own system :grammar, lexicon…Therefore, the learner's rules of his/her interlanguage cannot found in his or her own mother tongue nor in the TL, it is a language system in its own right.

First language
Second language ⟶ **Interlanguage (Learner's independent**
Other influences **Language)**
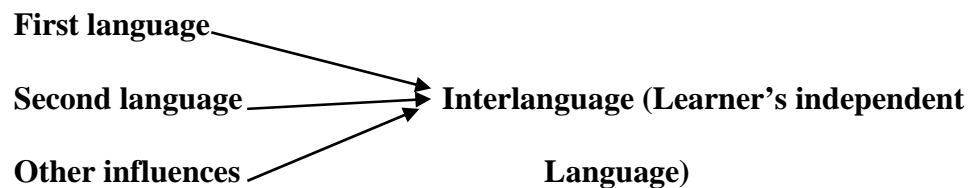
Figure 01: Interlanguage (Ellis, 1994)

Transfer is one of the most important elements that affect the interlanguage system forms, which can lead to better understanding the second language, Lado (1957) believed that people rely on their L1 when learning the TL, however, other researchers Dulay and Burt (1974,p.24) transfer has nothing to do with interlanguage but it should be considered.

L1 | **L2**

·················
Interlanguage
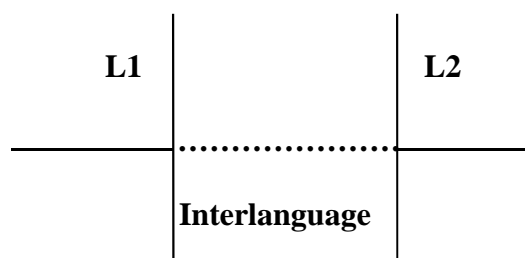
Figure 02: The scope of Interlanguage (Cited in TemmimiAsema, 2009)

Selinker (1972) states that language transfer is one of the cognitive processes that occurs during the interlanguage development in second language acquisition, in addition to transfer of training that refers to how the L2 is thought and strategies of L2.Hence, Selinker adds that only 5% of EFL learners can achieve native like proficiency, considering it as a continuum that starts under the influence of L1and aims at arriving at L2.

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2.6. Errors Taxonomies

Richard (1971) in his study involved many learners from different language backgrounds (Japanese, Chinese, Burmese, French, Czech, Polish, Tagalong ,Maori ,Maltese ,and Italian and West African languages),as a result ,it shown that the different types of errors relating to production and distribution of verb groups, prepositions, articles, and the use of questions, based on his study ,he distinguished three sources of errors :

2.6.1. Interference Errors (Interlingual Errors)

Are errors that results from the use of element from one language while speaking and writing the TL, and they are caused by mother tongue interference which interfere with the TL learning, hence, Brown (1980) Refers to interference errors as the negative influence of the mother tongue on learning the TL.

E.g: German learner of L2 English says: I got not

Because the equivalent sentence in German: Ich geche nicht

2.6.2. Intralingual Errors

Errors reflecting general characteristics of rule learning such as; the incorrect generalization of rules, incomplete of rules (the converse of overgeneralization in other words, it is the absences of using rules by the learner) faulty rules, false hypothesis, and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply. Also, they are caused by the difficulty of the TL itself and occur during the process of learning the L2 at a stage when the learner has not really acquired the knowledge. Therefore, Brown (1980) defines intralingual errors as those errors that occur due to the negative transfer of items within the TL, and he called it "Intralingual transfer".

Intralingual errors are divided into two

1. Overgeneralization errors

It is when the learner create wrong structure based on the structure in the TL

E.g: he can sings   where, English allows: he/she sings.

2. Incomplete Application of Rules

It is when the learner fails to use the fully correct and developed structure

E.g.: you like to sing?   In place of "Do you like to sing?"

3. False Hypothesis

It occurs when the learner do not understand very well a distinction in the TL

E.g: In one way it was happened (was marker of past tense)

2.6.3. Developmental Errors

They occur when the learners attempt to build up hypotheses about the TL on the basis of limited experience. Dulay and Burt (1974) refer to developmental errors as those errors that are similar to L1 acquisition. Therefore, Intralingual errors and Developmental errors are mental errors since, the knowledge of TL is not well acquired.

2.7. The Impact of L1 Negative Transfer on the Writing Proficiency

Lado (1957, p.2) recognizes the mother tongue influence on second language acquisition that involves the use of forms, meanings and culture:

Individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings, and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture-both productively when attempting to speak the language and to act in the culture and receptively when attempting to grasp and understand the language and culture as practised by natives. (Lado 1957)

Which means that, L1 transfer is not only related to transferring the forms only rather, it can be occurred at the level of meanings and culture.

Many studies have done in the EFL students around the world to measure the level of L1 influence on FL writing. Reid (1988) claimed that Spanish English students tend to employ long sentences, and more pronouns, more nouns, and more lexical (McClure 1991),

fewer simple sentences, more synonyms, and more conjunctions which means that, student's writing found to be longer sentences in indirect way including more repletion, in addition to the use of idioms. McClure (1991).

Lay (1982) states that Chinese students prefer to rely on their L1 when writing in TL as a means of help rather than, considering it as negative impact simply because, Chinese students did not want to enrich their English vocabulary.

Cumming (1989) stated that the level of the students determine the quantity of using L1 in L2 writing in the sense that, their low level in English writing is because of relying on their mother tongue for the purpose of generating and producing and composing content .

Khuwaileh and Shoumali (2000) indicated that Arab students are more likely to create their ideas and prepare them firstly in their mother tongue before they start using English;in the sense that, findings show that the Arab students transfer the style and mode of writing into their L2 writing. However, Kobay & Rinnert in their study about the Arab learners of English displayed that different results in which the Arab learners prefer to write directly through using English rather than, Arabic translation.

Odlin (1993) indicates the different consequences due to the L1 negative transfer

4. Underproduction

According to Odlin (1993) the underproduction appears when the learner notices that particular structures in the TL are very different from those in his or her/his language, therefore, he /she will avoid using such structure due to, the fact that some common structure are avoided because of such underproduction, however other structures that are not so frequent in TL are used regularly by the learner because he/she feels more confident when , using them in the TL writings, thus ,the overproduction will arise.

5. Production of errors

The production errors have different types can be distinguished into three as according to Odlin (1993):

5.1. Substitution

It refers to the use of native language forms in the TL

E.g: "Possible"   instead of   "Posible"

5.2. Calque

Claques are errors that reflect a very closely related to mother language structure such as Spanish

E.g: he tenido mipelo cortado

6. Misinterpretation

In some structures in the MT can influence the interpretation of TL messages and this may lead learners to infer something different from the messages that the speaker wanted to convey. According to Odlin (1993) transfer can occur in all the linguistic systems including the morphological and the syntactic ones.

6.1. Substratum transfer

It is the influence of a source language on the acquisition of a TL, and it is more evident in pronunciation, also it is found in syntax more than lexicon, hence, it is the most difficult aspect of a L2 to master

6.2. Borrowing transfer

It is the influence of second language on the previously acquired language, and it is more susceptible to appear at the lexical level.

E.g: Sugar   in English   Sucre in French

Transfer and language

According to, Odlin (1993) Adults seem to be more susceptible to transfer than children, sometimes are not even conscious of using different languages and if they do not always translate from one language into another language, and in some occasions they can even learn to think in two different languages, whereas, an adult learner will always has his/her first language structure internalized and he/she will try to apply them, whereas there is a lack of knowledge in the TL.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have tackled the issue of the impact of the first language "Negative Transfer" as one of the great obstacles and problems in developing the writing skill in acquiring the TL, explaining its different notions. And ,We have focused on the basic elements of the L1,its meaning, types, , In addition to, defining the main terms that are related to both L1 and L1,finally the chapter end up by showing the impact of L1 negative use on the L2 writing proficiency

CHAPTER TWO: THE WRITING PROFICIENCY

General Introduction

Writing is one of the fundamental four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), that plays a vital role in the process of acquiring foreign language; it is seen as the most complex process. Since, it requires linguistic and cognitive analysis, effective writing can be achieved through both practice and obeying the rules and the mechanisms of writing such as: indentation, punctuation, cohesion, coherence in addition to organizing the stages or the steps of Writing such as pr-viewing, drafting, revising, drafting, publishing. Therefore, teaching Writing skill needs great attention from both teacher and learner for producing effective piece of language and to make words convey their abstract thoughts for successful communication.

This chapter starts by the definition of writing, its nature as a productive skill, in addition to showing the different stages and approaches of writing skill. Also, the chapter ends up with pointing out the problems encountered by learners in the writing process, and the relationship of the writing skill to the other skills namely; speaking and reading. Last not least learning how to write becomes a necessity in life no matter what carrier one will reach

1. Writing Proficiency

1. 1.The Definition of Writing

Language skills are classified as receptive or productive; listening and reading are receptive skills, in contrast to writing and speaking which are productive skills. Writing is one of the major skills for the use of language, through which the student can transmit or convey his /her thoughts, ideas and emotions into language, it is a communication tool through which learner's achievement are examined. According to, Widdowson (2001) "writing is the use of visual medium to manifest the graphic and grammatical system of language"(p.62*).*That is to say writing is an production act of sentences as a instances of usage, and it's the students role to be aware of the various aspects of language such as

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;grammatical structure, and the appropriateness of the terminology. Writing is a productive skill that enables the learners to express their thinking into letters. According to ,the Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary (1996, p.23) Writing is "the activity of writing or the skill of producing linear sequences of graphemes in time" which means that, group of patterned of words are produced timely to fulfill a specific meaning.

Also, Writing is a matter of transcribing language into symbols. According to, Byrne (1979, p.01)"writing is clearly much than the production of graphic symbols, just is more than the production of sounds "which means that; the graphic symbols have to be organized under certain rules and coordination to form sentence, also it involves the conventional arrangement of letters into words, and words into sentences that need to flow smoothly to form a coherent paragraph. Therefore, writing is very complex process since it makes the writer engaged in mental and physical efforts .Byrne states three categories that the writer may encounter: the first category is called psychological category which is about the lack of the interaction and the feedback between the reader and the writer. The second category involves the linguistic problems that is about the absence of certain device in the spoken medium like; intonation, pitch. However, the third category involves cognitive problems in the sense that writing requires formal instruction to develop.

Writing is the most common tool, it is considered as creative process and it is mean of communication between people and also is a social activity used for communicative objectives. According to, Brookes and Grundy (2009, Cited in Ghothbene, 2010) referred to the complexity of the writing task by reporting that "it must be worth asking precisely what is difficult about writing, and especially. About writing in a second language" (p.11).However, Pincas (1992, Cited in Ghothbene, 2010) defines writing as "writing is a system of graphic symbols, i.e. letters or combination of letters which relate to the sounds we produce while

speaking". (p.125) so, writing is the production of letters which has sound, this related sound conveys a certain meaning.

1.2.The Nature of Writing

The writing process is not taking a pen and jotting down one's thought, it takes into consideration the mental activity which is the essential part in writing. The difficulty of writing is represented in the process phases while writing. Therefore, the writer is not writing for his self; rather he is writing for his readers, he must state his /her ideas clearly to make them easy understood for the reader without any ambiguity. The writer may forget an item or he may face a difficulty in stating a certain idea because of linguistic, cognitive, and psychological factors which can be applied to both; the mother tongue and the second language.

Bryne (1979) explains that writing is a difficult activity because is not natural, nor a spontaneous activity. Namouchi (2008, p.18) clarifies that, if a student does not have or know the vocabulary and the rules of a given language he cannot give his point of view, this is means that student must know the right grammatical structure, the appropriate vocabulary, in addition, to the correct use of punctuation in order to convey coherent and understandable piece of writing, in this context Bell and Burnaby (1984, as cited in Nunan (1989) explains:

Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of content, format, sentence structure, vocabulary Punctuation, spelling and letter formation. Beyond This sentence, the writer must be able to set and integrate information into cohesive and coherent Paragraphs and texts. (p.36)

Raimes (1983) declares that, the writer should take into consideration: the content, organization, grammar, syntax, mechanisms, word choice, audience, purpose and the writing steps. It's hard for the student to master all these aspects of language, he states the components of writing in the following figure (1983, p.6)

Figure 03: Producing a piece of writing (Raimes, 1983, p.6)

Audience The Reader (s)	Purpose The reason of writing	Content, clarity Relevance, Logic , Originality….
Word choice Vocabulary, idioms	Clear,Fluent, and Effective communication	Mechanisms, Handwriting, Spelling, Punctuation
Organization, Unity Topic, paragraph and support ideas	Syntax, Sentence structure, Sentence, boundaries,	The writers' Process, Getting ideas, Getting started, Writing

Hyland (2003) claimed that writing is not an easy task and is not individual activity; rather it is considered as a social process since it has a set specific communicative purpose to be accomplished, stating that:

While every act of writing is in a sense both personal and Individual, it is also international and social, expressing a culturally recognized process purpose, reflecting particular Kind of relationship and acknowledging an engagement in given community.(p.27)

This means that, the act of writing is much more than an individual attempt; rather it is a collective process of engaging different members of the whole community.

1.3. The Acquisition of Writing

According to Namouchi (2008.p, 19) there is difference between the acquisition of language and the acquisition of writing as stating, that the acquisition of language, as natural process, it results by itself and occurs at an early age due to the environment. On the contrary, acquiring writing needs intensive process of training and a long-term pedagogical assistance in specialized institutions, i.e. formal instruction environment. Hence, the difficulty of the written form of writing is due to the psychological predispositions that characterize the spoken form. Consequently, writing is a skill that must be adapted to our abilities, so can the students be familiar with it.

1.4. Teaching Writing

1.4.1. Process of Writing/stages

The writing process differ from one linguist to another, however according to scholars that there are five recursive stages in writing, and complete the other one successfully the next stage .In other words, all the stages are overlapped and interrelated.

1.4.1.1. Prewriting

It is the stage, where the author or the writer gathers information, and plays with the ideas, hence during this stage many activities are performed namely; drawing, talking, thinking, reading, and listening to tapes, discussion, role playing ,interviews, problem solving activities. According to, Einstein having a great research needs is a paper, pencil, and waste basket Chesterman & William, (2002, p.14), which means that the most important thing in writing process, is to write down what comes to the mind freely. Therefore, Lipson (2005) calls the prewriting stage; "the planning stage" and according to, him "*good thesis begin by good planning*" (2005) which means that, is the first step of writing informally, also it is simple and easy task. Lipson added that, student must have plan in their mind to help them start writing freely, and in case the thesis is too much detailed, consequently; student have to

put detailed plan to have effective writing. Moreover, Lipson pointed out that the plan is not the final draft, rather it can be modified, whenever the writer feel needed, for instance he can delete or add some items, according to him "planning is the basic work of organizing your material, writing informally about them, and prepare to write a first draft" (2005), that is to say planning has great role in making the good quality of the material.

1.4.1.2. Drafting/Drafting

Once, the writer already has a plan to follow, the second stage is drafting, whereby the writer develops his or her topic on paper and start drafting. Galko (2001)defines drafting as "writing a rough, or scratch from your paper"(p.49),at this stage the writer start a real straightforward writing, taking into consideration his or her plan. Thus, what matters in this stage that the writer will write down his or her ideas since he has already decide what to include and what to exclude.

According to Hayes & Flower (1980) drafting a text (text production) is the expressive process by which the indented document content, at the text base level, this process including planning at the rhetorical level as well as more automated processes of converting rhetorical plans into text. Therefore, at this stage writers focus on the actual writing and leave both grammatical and spelling mistakes later on. However, Katz (2006) indicates that, when the writer translates his or her record words when taking the ideas from his or her mind to the public, consequently; he or she will see the act of doing it in clear way. Additionally, drafting stage can be considered as writing down the ideas paper, to form a convention with the writer himself and with the readers as well. Last not least, at this stage the writer will not worry about punctuation, grammar, or spelling mistakes because it will be taken into consideration in the last stage.

1.4.1.3. Revising/Reviewing

At the revising stage, the writer makes change whatever needed revision, addition, deletion, checking syntax, sentence structure, and organization. Through, this stage the writer can evaluate his or her writing and make improvement. Hood and Brown (1989) defined revising as the stage where the writers want to say, and what already said in appropriate way. Therefore, at this stage the writer will find many errors for instance he may came cross the misused words or the confusing sentences that are not clearly stated .Drafting stage is very important stage since, the writer will revise his writings, and he should take into account the clearness and the appropriateness of the content, and the purpose behind writing, and the audience as well as.

Galk (2001) stated some steps involved when discussing the paper as follow:

-To evaluate and judge what the paper says in the sense that, the writer should read the paper aloud to see if it conveys the exact meaning or not, and whether the ideas are related, clear or not.

-The writer should know what kind of modification he will make, should he add supporting statements, delete some parts that are additional, change structure, add suitable punctuation to make the piece of writing sounds clear .

According to Brown and Hood (1989) revising stage is very useful and helpful in the writing process, through which he knows if his or her writing is effective and successful or not. In this context Galko (2001) states that when someone sends a message to his /her friend at the beginning he /she does not care about the punctuation, yet if he really want his /her massage to be clear and meaningful ,he will give importance to punctuation to avoid ambiguity .The following example explains the significance of punctuation in writing.

- Don't! Stop now!

-Don't stop now.

The first sentence means that, the person is saying "stop now" whereas, the second sentence means that; "now is the good time to stop"

All in all, since the writing process is productive skill, writers should be aware of the writing mechanism for effective writing thus, the more the writer revises well his /her writing the better it will be.

1.4.1.4. Editing/proofreading

Editing is the polishing of the draft ,inhere the writer takes into consideration the mechanisms of writing like, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling, citation, document format. At the editing stage, the writer should do his best to find his /her errors and correct them, taking into consideration the use of the editing marks whenever necessary. Moreover, the writer had to accept the feedback from others and tries to make the writing correct as it can be through the use of different mechanisms and strategies of writing. Hewing and Curry (2003) stated that at the editing stage students should check references and formatting student's writing. Also, at this stage students must use different strategies to correct their mistakes such as; working in groups, in addition to the use of textbooks, dictionaries, or computer (King & chapman, 2003.Hewings & Curry, 2003)

1.4.1.5. Publishing

Publishing refers to the delivery of the writing to its intended audience at this stage the writer should finish his /her piece of writing with legible handwriting. Therefore, he may use illustration in his /her work in appropriate way such as; drawings, photographs, graphic. At this stage the writer should keep portfolio of work, also he may type his /her piece of writing through computer or typewriter, yet he should be familiar with the computer-aided slides .Harmer summarizes the process of writing in the following steps:

Planning ――――▸ drafting ――――▸ editing ――――▸ final draft
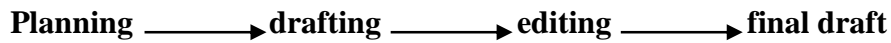
Figure04: Process of writing (Harmer, 2004.p5)

To conclude, the previous mentioned stages are respectively related and if the writer applies the instruction of each stage, he will have an effective piece of writing with conveyed meaning and communication.

1.5. Approaches to Teaching Writing

There are different approaches to teach writing and each stage complete the other one and stress on specific aspect of language and each approach has specific focus and features that differ from the other approaches, the most prevailing approaches are; the product - oriented approach ,the process-oriented approach ,the genre-oriented approach . Brown brings up the complexity of teaching writing: "Just as there are non-swimmers, poor swimmers and excellent swimmers, so it is for writers. Why isn't everyone an excellent writer" (2001, p.334).This is a relevant question and its answer can offer ways of working with writing in the classroom that can take the poor foreign language students writers to the next level.

1.5.1. The Product oriented approach (the model based-approach)

It is a traditional approach to teaching writing since, it focus on rhetoric and the module text in the sense that; students typically are provided by the teacher with a model and encouraged to mimic it in order to produce a similar product. Hence, it emphasizes mechanical aspects of writing such as; focusing on grammatical and syntactical structures and imitating models. This approach is primarily concerned with correctness and accuracy of the form of the final product. Product-oriented approaches to writing largely concern the forms of the written products that students compose.

Additionally, the product-oriented approach makes the student familiarized with the conventions of writing through the model text. According to, White (1988, p.6) "what the

model does not demonstrate" also he says "is how the original writer arrived at that particular product" *(*Cited in Approaches and teaching writing, 2014, p.8) this means that, there is no indication to the process, rather, the rhetorical patterns and form is emphasized. Therefore, the main focus of these approaches is on written form, grammar is emphasized and a particular effort is made to avoid errors, Nmouchi (2014) stated that the product-oriented approach is a mean to an end.

The writing exercises applied in this approach typically deal with sentence-level writing and paragraph-level organization. Students are often given a framework which illustrates a pattern of rhetorical organization; then, they are asked to fit their ideas into this framework. Both the content and the form which the students deal with are largely controlled by the teacher; the product-oriented approach is teacher-cantered approach and among its advantages, it supplies the learner with the linguistic knowledge, and the model text provides clear image about the organization of words and sentences. However, the product approach has criticized by many scholars like Escholz (1980) pointing that, the model texts inhibit the writer instead of empower them, in addition to create anxiety in student, due to the instruction of the text given by the teacher and it ignores the process of thinking and different stages of writing since, the sentence organization is the focus.

1.5.1. The process-oriented approach

The process-oriented approach comes as a reaction to the traditional product-oriented approach, it appeared in the mid of 1970.According to Murray (1992)

"The process-oriented approach refers to a teaching approach that

Focuses on the processes that the writer engages in when constructing

Meaning .This teaching approach concludes with editing as a final

Stage in text creation, rather than on initial one as in product-oriented

approach. The process-oriented approach may include identified stage

Of writing process such as; prewriting, writing, rewriting, once the

Rough draft has the assistance of peer and teacher conferencing, final

Editing and publication can follow if the author chooses to publish

the writing "(p.16).

This means that, the process approach focuses on the cognitive aspects of writing in other word, the process approach focus on what the student need to experience rather than, what they need to know in the same context O'Brein (2004, cited in Thanatkum, 2008) defines this approach as an activity in which teachers encourage learners to recognize that writing at this approach is not no longer give consideration to grammar exercises.

Process-oriented approaches focuses on process of how ideas are developed and formulated in writing. Writing is considered a process through which meaning is created. themes and topics frequently form the basis of process courses, where writing activities are often organized around social issues such as; pollution, relationships, stress, juvenile crime, smoking, and so on. Schema development exercises usually include reading for ideas in parallel texts, reacting to photographs, and various brainstorming tasks to generate ideas for writing and organizing texts.

Additionally, the process-oriented approach characterizes by number of processes, the steps or stages are illustrated and practiced from the generation of ideas and compilation of information through, a series of activities for planning, gathering information, drafting, revising, and editing. Thus this sequence of activities typically occurs in four stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Regarding to prewriting is the phase of idea gathering. Drafting is the process of writing a rough outline of what will be addressed. Once students produce a rough draft, they read it again and share it with peers or a teacher to receive comments.

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Then, they make modifications to their writings based on the feedback from their peers or a teacher; Revising, or elaborating on the first draft, takes place at this point. Editing involves correcting mechanical errors like; spelling or punctuation. Also, Proponents of the process approach argue that, the procedures of process writing help learners to develop more effective ways of conveying meaning and to better comprehend the content that they want to express. However, this approach has been criticized as being a recursive process because in many classrooms, writing continues to be presented as a linear sequence of planning, pre-writing, writing, revising and publishing.
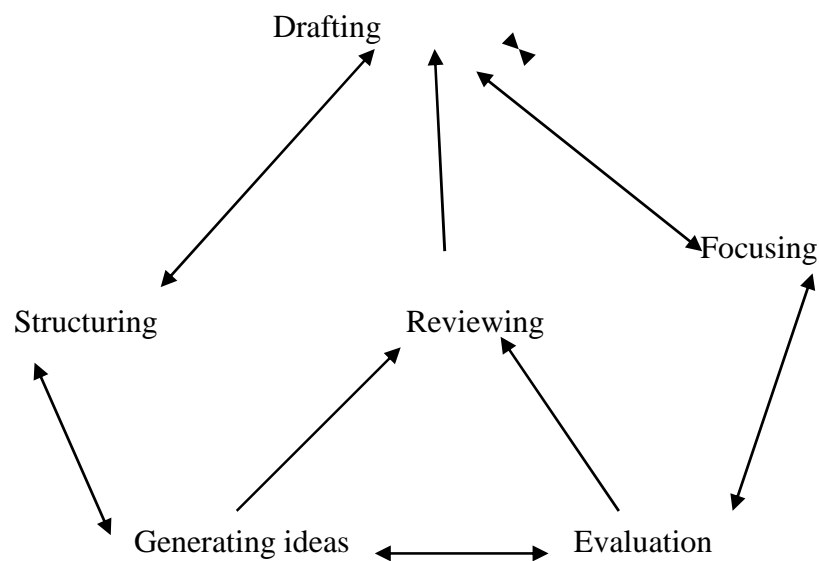
Figure 05: Procedures involved in producing written text from

Process writing (p.4)

By White, R. & Arendt.V.1991, and Harlow, United Kingdom: Longman.

In this context, the process approach encourages students to write as much as possible without worrying about mistakes .Thus, the focus is fluency rather than accuracy, and therefore it gives students free time to be comfortable to write freely what comes to their minds, also it gives them the chance to review, revise, clarify their writing. According to Olson (1999, Cited in Paul Deone et all...2008.) there are some essential characteristics of the process approach namely; writing is a social activity, and the act of writing can be learning

and discovery, in addition to making experienced writers are aware of the audience, purpose, context…).The process approach help the novice writers to involve planning and rewriting .the following figure explains the process model of writing instruction. However, the approach criticized by some scholars like; Badger and White stating that writing under this approach does not provide sufficient linguistic knowledge to both learners and writers .

Selection of the topic: by teachers and /or students

      Prewriting: brainstorming, collecting data, note taking, outlining,

Composing : getting idea down on paper

    Response to draft: teacher/peers respond to ideas, organization, Style

    Revising: reorganizing, style, adjusting to readers, refining ideas.

    Response to revisions : Teachers,/peers respond to ideas

     organization, style

,

   Proofreading and editing: Checking and correcting form ,layout

Evaluation: Teacher evaluate progress over the process

Publishing: By class circulation or presentation, noticeboads, websites.

Follow-up tasks: To address weaknesses

Figure06: The process model of writing instruction .Hyland, k. (2003, p.11)

1.5.3. The Genre Approach

The notion of Genre as a framework for language instruction involves analysis of the situational contexts or settings of spoken or written texts, as well as their communicative function, and purpose within those settings. (Routledge Encyclopaedia, 2000).Hence, the approach gains considerable attention in the mid of 1980's. Swales defines genre-oriented approach as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some se of

communicative purposes" likewise, Hyland points out that under a genre-based approach, the writer writes something to reach some purpose .In teaching writing, the genre approach states that student writers can benefit from studying different types of written texts. Genre is defined as "the schematic structure of a text which helps it to achieve its purpose" (Derewianka, 1992).Moreover, the central belief here is that we don't just write, we write something to achieve some purpose; it is a way of getting something done. To get things done, to tell a story, to craft a love letter, describe a technical process and so on, we follow certain social conventions for organizing messages because, we want our readers to recognize our purpose. These abstract is socially recognized ways of using language for particular purposes are called genres.

In the genre approach, the knowledge of language is intimately attached to a social purpose, and more focus is on the viewpoint of the reader than on that of the writer. Writing is mostly viewed as the student's reproduction of text based on the genre offered by the teacher. Learners should be exposed to many examples of the same genre to develop their ability to write a particular genre. Through exposure to similar texts, students can detect the specialized configurations of that genre, and they also can activate their memories of prior reading or writing experiences whenever they encounter the task of creating a new piece in a familiar. However, the approach criticized, because it highlights the narrow emphasis language and text, and it disregard the instructional and disciplinary context in which texts are constructed. Hence, the approach also underestimates the learner's skill to produce texts and makes them passive.

1.6. Features of effective writing

The main goal of the writer is to transmit the message clearly to the reader, in order to achieve this goal, one should put in consideration various techniques and mechanisms which are linked to both the content and the form.

1.6.1. Features of the form

1.6.1.1. Mechanisms

The word mechanisms refers to the instructions that the writer should follow while writing since , it makes the writing process easy to understand, and it makes the writing systematic, and it includes Presentation, handwriting ,indention ,and punctuation.

1.6.1.1.1. Presentation

Presentation is one of the mechanisms of writing. According to, Sundent and Pikiewicz (2006, p.11) the good presentation is characterised by the layouts, graphics and neatness in the writing piece to attract the reader's attention toward his product text.

1.6.1.1.2 Handwriting

Likewise presentation handwriting is also one of the significant mechanisms of the form in writing, in the sense that the writer must have a good handwriting skill to spend much time focusing on the   content of the written piece rather than on the mechanisms of writing itself

1.6.1.3. Indentation

Edward and Shewan (1998, p.43) define indention as "indentation is the offsetting of the first line of the paragraph a specified distance to the right of the left margin", which means that the first line of the paragraph is usually intended five space .Hence, indention is one of the main mechanisms of good writing that shape both the form and the content.

1.6.1.4. Punctuation

Bouyakoub (2011, p.59) clarifies that to be good writer the one should master punctuation correctly, because it facilitates reading, it compresses full stop, comma, and other

punctuation marks .Therefore, writers should be aware of the significant use of the punctuation in writing to be skilful writers

1.6.2. Features of the content

Starkey (2004) clarifies that the effective piece of writing should include organization, coherence, and clarity, Word choice, coherence.

1.6.2.1. Organization

Organization is one of the important components of good writing, it means that the information and the ideas should be organized and in structured format to makes the reading process easy to the readers. Starkey (2004, p.2) clarifies the importance of the organization in the sense that; through organizing the ideas and the information that the writer get will help the readers to believe in what he is saying to follow his lead. Hence, prewriting is one of the organisation techniques. Galko (2002) claiming that brainstorming is to let all the ideas that come to your mind and is one of the effective techniques of developing student's writing which means that the students write his or ideas without any judgement. So, he is free to think and write what appeal to him.

1.6.2.2. Word choice

Nickelsen (2001) defines the word choice as the use of specific and accurate words that facilitate the process of communication between the writer and the reader (p.6).The word choice refers to the learner's style of choosing the structure and the lexical items to convey his massage correctly.

Starkey (2004) claimed that there are two ways that the leaner should consider when choosing the words use; denotation and connotation.

Denotation refers to the literal meaning of the word, however connotation refers to emotions, culture, and suggestions or it is the implied or the implicit meaning of the word that

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can be either positive or negative or neural the learner must be aware of the implied meaning to not create ambiguous ideas to the readers.

1.6.2.3. Coherence

Coherence means that, linking and organizing the information, ideas together to create connection between the previous idea and the next one for facilitating the reader's comprehension. Marry and Hughes (2008) claims that good write is the one who makes the ideas of the text linked and chained together .Hence, the text will be connected and clear, that is to say that the coherence makes the text clear to the readers and to avoid the breakdown of the argument.

1.6.2.4. Cohesion

Cohesion refers to the unity of the written piece, cohesive markers have different names namely, cohesive ties or the rhetorical devices that can be logical, grammatical, or lexical .Bouyakoub (2011, p.67) explains that the cohesive markers have positive effect on the text; for instances, various sentence and their parts are managed by the cohesive ties may help the process of the reading.

1.6.2.5. Clarity

It is another important aspect in writing that the writer should take it in consideration. Galko (2001, p.103)

There are three main strategies that make the writing effective and clear

1-Be precise and concise

2-Avoid the use of passive voice, since the active voice makes sentences clear, and more simple and short and easy to understand

3-The use of well-known words, rather than the unfamiliar words such as acronyms, abbreviations, jargon, that may block the reader's understanding.

1.7. Writing with other skills

1.7.1. Writing and speaking

Speaking and writing are productive skills; they are different in various aspects. Speaking is defined as the process of sharing ideas and information through the use of non-verbal symbols in specific context. O'Grady et al. (1996) clarifies that speaking and writing are different in their origins and practice, in the sense that spoken language is acquired without any formal instructions which means that, the process of its acquisition is innate and natural. However, writing is acquired through the formal instructions and deliberate effort, which means that writing, is hard to be learnt since, it requires cognitive abilities. Grabe and Kaplan (cited in Weigle15) explain that writing is merely the reflection of spoken language, because the written language is more correct, and it has to be more valuable than the oral language. Brown (cited in Weigle15) stated that speaking and writing are different in terms of time of production, in the sense that spontaneous nature of speakers makes conversation continuous with no enough time to check what is being said. However, writers have much time in production through whole processes of planning, drafting, and revising. Brown (1988, p.3) also highlight the differences between speech and writing. In speaking the context is clear however, in writing context is created, also in speaking immediate interaction and feedback like facial expression, comments and questions between the speaker and the listener on the contrary, there is no feedback and direct interaction between the reader and the writer due to distance since ,the reader is unknown to the writer. However, in speaking the addressed person is specific in the communication.

1.6.2. Writing and reading

Reading is one of the four skills that complement the writing skill and the more the one reads books, the more vocabulary, ideas and will acquire since, reading enhance the writing ability and enrich the background of the reader that he/she will be good writer. Krashen (1984) clarifies that the motivation to read is the main source of effective writing, that is to say good readers are good writers, since reading shape the writing proficiency of the learners by learning new vocabulary as well as their knowledge. White (1981) explains that writing skill demands the reading proficiency since, that the writer should read before he writes, to prove that any writing course must contain a large amount of ideas that is developed through reading.

Conclusion

To sum up this chapter clarifies the concept of writing proficiency by exploring its nature and its acquisition since, it is not easy task to do, in addition to explaining the five essential stages of writing for effective writing, starting from the first stage prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and ending up with publishing, and each stage complements the next one in order to make successful writing.

Therefore the chapter also explores the approach of teaching writing namely; the product approach, the process approach, the genre approach and the eclectic approach and each approach has its main features and focus .At the end of the chapter, it explains the main components needed in writing effusively, which are related to the form and the content as well as the relationship between writing and other language skills such as; speaking and reading.

CHAPTER THREE: FIELD INVESTIGATION

General introduction

The present chapter is about the data collection and analysis of Students and Teachers questionnaires. Additionally, a test was designed in order to reach the current study aim. To accomplish this test, a detailed description of it is stated. In addition to, a detailed analysis of students' compositions.The chapter provides a general description of the research method tool, and the procedures that are used in this research, in addition to their interpretations. However, Data analysis is reported in tabular and graphic presentations. The chapter ends with a general synthesis of both and questionnaires results followed by general conclusion and pedagogical implications in order to help teachers improve their students writing proficiency.

3.1. The Students' Questionnaire

3.1. 1.Description of the Students' Questionnaire (see Appendix I)

The Questionnaire is composed of three (03) sections and each section contains different questions. It consists of 21 questions varied between closed, mixed, open-ended and graded questions.

Concerning the first section, the first four questions include general background about the students' age, level, years of study, choice of the study.

The second section includes questions about the writing proficiency (from 5 to 21 questions). It investigates the students' points of view about the importance of writing, and the level of the students in writing, in addition to their preferences concerning writing in English.

The third section tackles the impact of the first language "Negative Transfer" on the writing proficiency of the students (from14 to 21 questions). It turns around the factors that affect the writing proficiency and the difficulties that encounter the EFL students when expressing their ideas in English.

3.1. 1.1.Aim of the Questionnaire

The test attempts to collect information from the students's writings to see to what extent the L1 negative transfer is used in the Target language writing skill. The test is,also, used as a research tool to confirm both the research hypothesis and the results obtained from questionnaires addressed to teachers as well as, to students in order to give reliable findings about the research.

3.1.1.2. Population and Sampling

We have randomly selected a sample of 55 students out of 200 registered in the second year at the Department of English, Guelma - 08 Mai University. Two groups are chosen for the students 'questionnaire.

3.1.1.3. Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaires were designed to be answered by second year LMD English students at the department of English, Guelma University; it was distributed on 15-17 of March 2017.It was randomly administered to (55) of the students.

3.1.4. The Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

The Questionnaire consists of three sections as follow:

Section one: Background Information

Question 01: How old are you?

The subjects aged between 19 and 26years old.

Question 02: How long have you been studying English?

The subjects have studied English between 4 and 6

Question03: Is it your choice to study English?

Table 01: Students' choice of English

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	45	81.81%
No	10	18.18%
Total	55	100%

The majority (81.81%) of the sample opted for "yes" but, only (18.81%) of the students choose "No». Accordingly, most of the students were motivated to study English as a foreign language. Therefore, students could do their best to write proficiently and avoid using their mother tongue when asked to write.
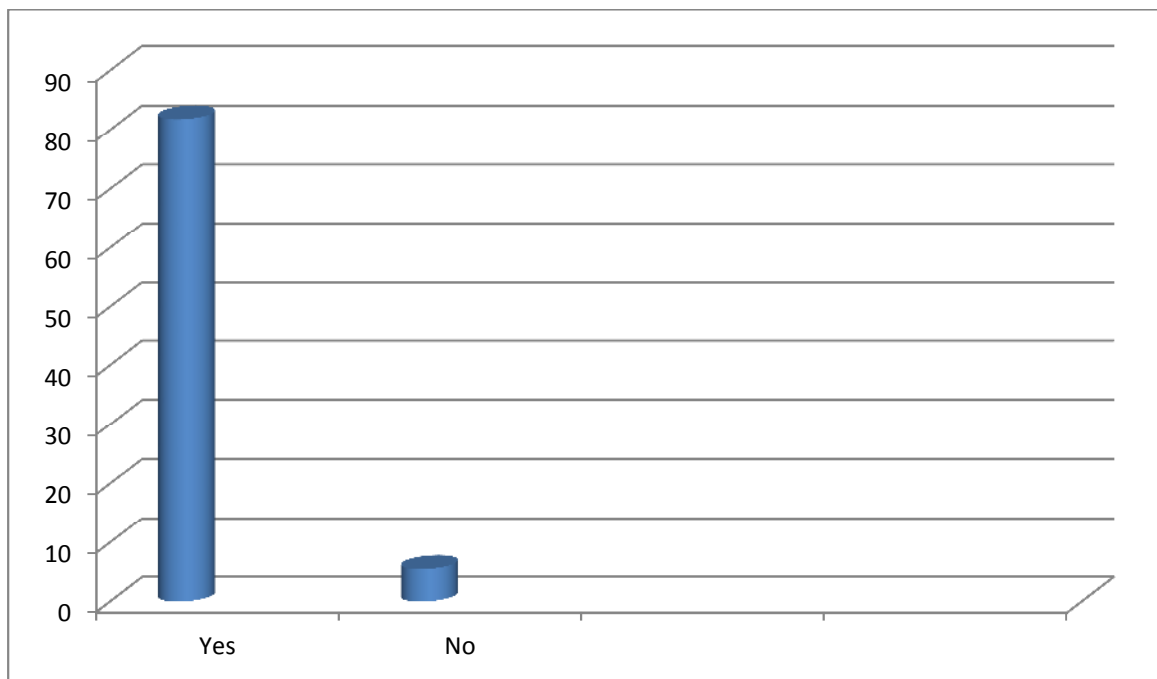
Graph 01:Students'choice of English

Question 04: How could you describe your level in English?

Table02: Description of the Students' level in English

Responses	Number	Percentage
Very good	05	9.09%
Good	30	54.54%
Average	20	36.36%
Bad	00	0%
Very bad	00	0%
Total	55	100%
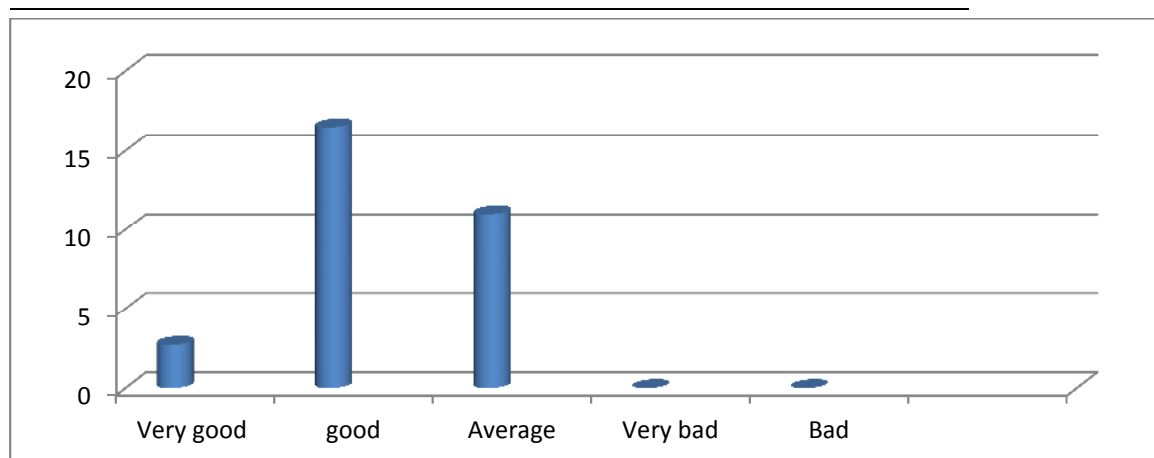
Graph02: Description of the students' level in English

The results of this question show, that (54.54%) of the respondents have good level in English, while (36.36%) of them are average. This can be related to the students self confidence and self esteem. However (0%) of the bad and very bad level which, means that, factors like the hard work by the teachers and the availability of the learning materials improve the learning process.

Section two: The Writing Proficiency

Question 05: How could you describe your level in Writing?

Table03: Description of the student's level in Writing.

Response	Number	Percentage
Very good	13	23.63%
Good	01	1.81%
Average	40	72.72%
Bad	01	1.81%
Very Bad	00	0%
Total	55	100%
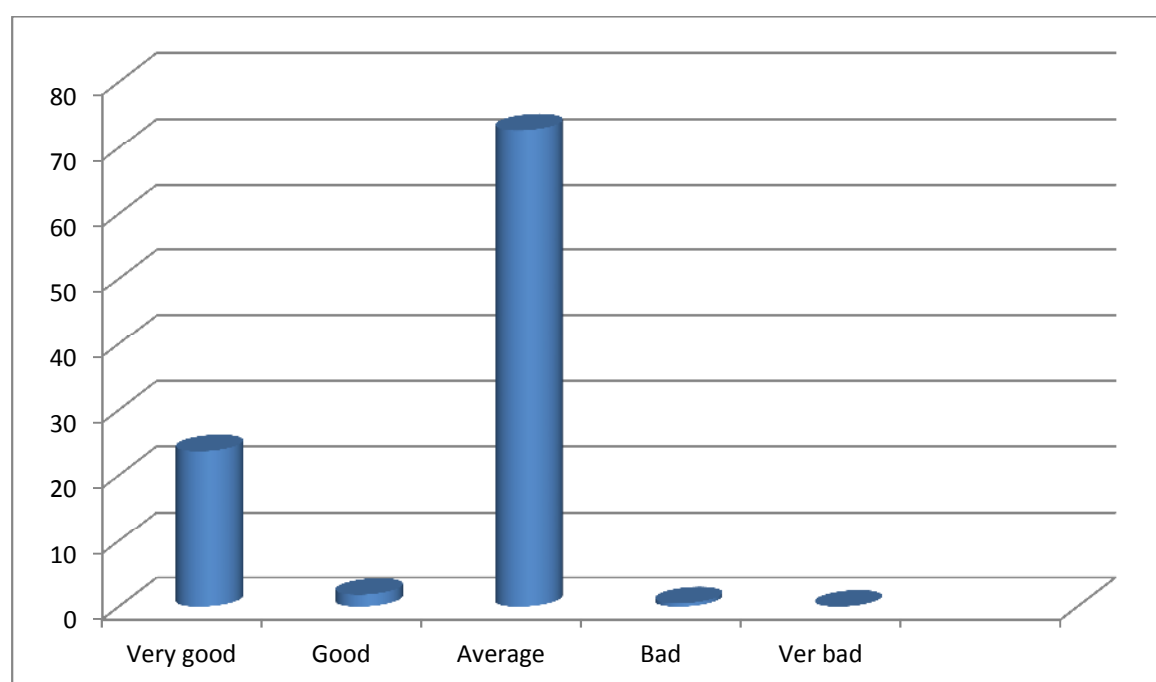
Graph 03: Description of the students' level in Writing

From the result more than half (72.72%) of the students have average level in writing however (23.63%) of the students have very good level ,in contrast to the students who have good level which are too little (1.81%), this means that students are encountering difficulties in writing due to many different linguistic problems. Hence only (1.81%) of the student have bad level of the student, but (0%) of them show that no one have a very bad level in writing.

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Question06: Do you think that writing is an easy task to learn?

Table04: Description of the students' opinions about the difficulty of the Writing task

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	29	52.72%
No	26	47.27%
Total	55	100%

From the table and graphic representation, it is indicated that, (52.72%) of the respondents do acknowledge the importance of the writing proficiency when writing in English, which means that the majority of the students prefer writing as a skill, however only (47.27%) consider it as not important task.

Question07: How often do you write?

Table05: Frequency of the students' Writing Proficiency.

Response	Number	Percentage
Always	05	9.09%
Usually	25	45.45%
Often	06	10.90%
Sometimes	10	18.18%
Rarely	03	5.45%
Never	01	1.81%
Total	55	100%
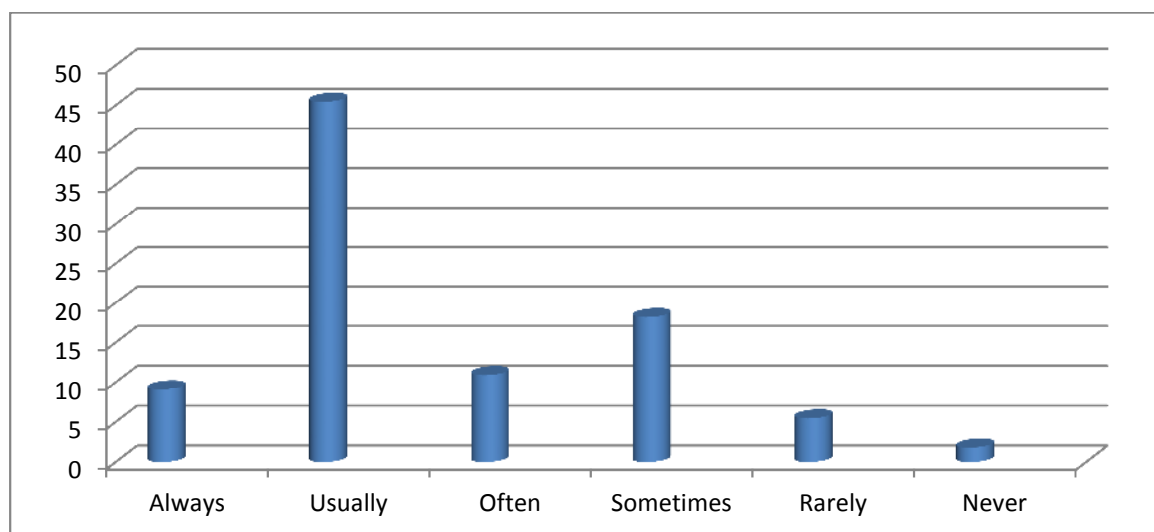
Graph04: Frequency of students' Writing Proficiency

The results show that the majority of the students (45.45%) usually write, while (18.18%) of the students sometimes write. However (9.09%) of the students said had said that they always write. Also, only few of the students (10.90%) who said that they often write, in contrast, only minority of the students (5.45%) who rarely write, which means that they do not like writing at all and only (1.81%) of them they had never write, from these results, it is obvious that students had different degrees of level in their writings.

Question8: How do you find the course of "Written Expression"?

Table6: Description of the students' opinions about the "Written Expression" course

Response	Number	Percentage
Very interesting	**15**	**27.27%**
Interesting	**27**	**49.9%**
Quite interesting	**05**	**9.09%**
Not interesting	**08**	**14.54%**
Total	**55**	**100%**
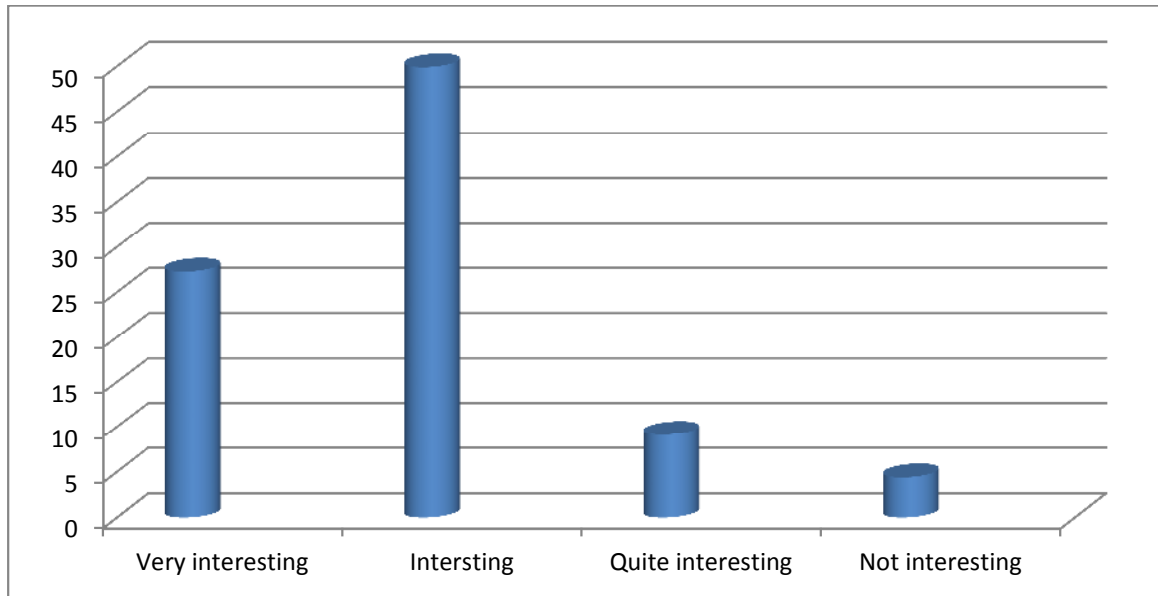
Graph 05: Description of the students' opinions about the "Written Expression" Course

This question attempts to know the different views of the students about the written expression course. According to the results, (49.09%) of the students consider the Written Expression course Very interesting because of many factors. Around (27.27%) of the students consider it interesting course, since they have a desire to write. Also (9.09%) of the students see the Written Expression course as a quite interesting. However, only (14.54%) of the students consider the Written Expression course as not interesting at all since they do not like writing.

Question09: What are the most effective components in Writing ?

Table 07: Student's views about the effectiveness of the writing components

Responses	Number	Percentage
Cohesion	20	36.36%
Coherence	19	34.54%
Handwriting	01	1.18%
Presentation	01	1.18%
Clarity	06	10.90%
Organization	02	3.63%
Word choice	05	9.09%
Total	55	100%
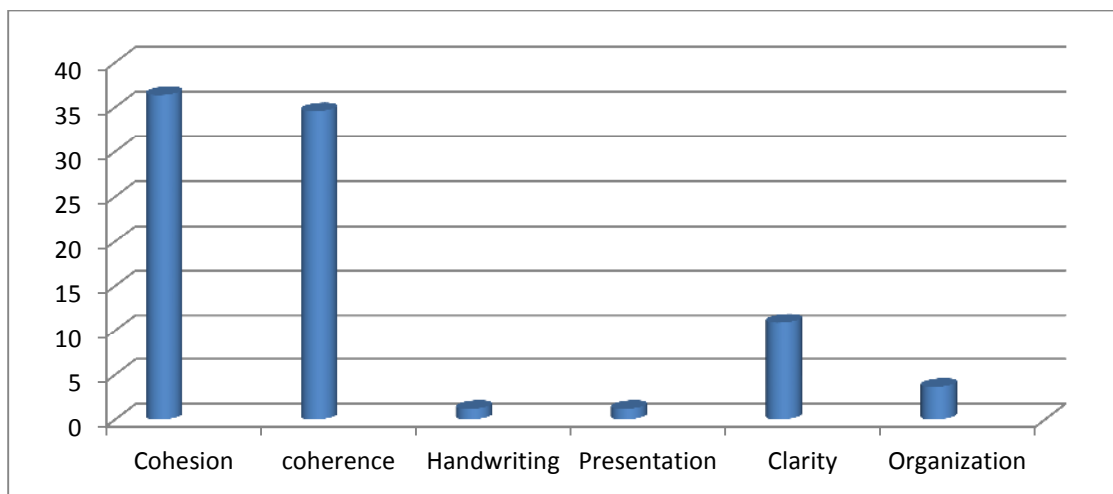
Graph 06: Description of the students' opinions about effective components in Writing

From the table and he graphic representation, it is indicated that (36.36%) of the respondents determine that cohesion is the most effective tool in writing, in addition to coherence which is presented by (34.54%).Hence,(10.90%) of the students consider clarity as somehow effective component when writing, However (9.09%) of the students see that word

choice is less effective in comparison to the other tools, last not least ,only (3.63%) of the students view that organization has not great effect in writing as well as. Both Presentation and handwriting have presented by (1.18%) due to mainly the unfamiliarity of the students of the presentation and the other components.

Question10: Which one of the writing stage you do not follow in writing?

Table 08: Stages that students do not followed when writing

Responses	Number	Percentage
Prewriting	10	18.18%
Drafting	25	45.45%
Revising	10	18.18%
Editing	05	9.09%
Publishing	05	9.09%
Total	55	100%
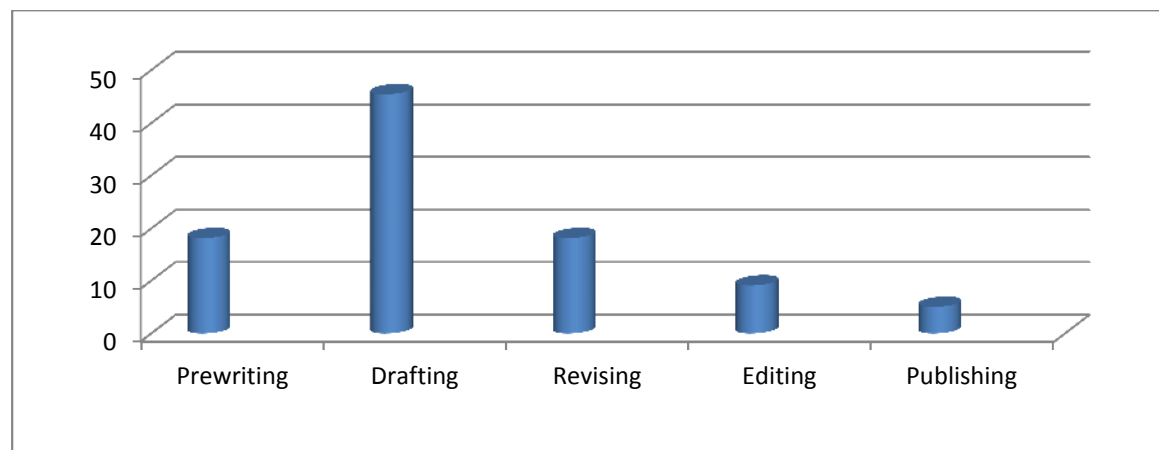
Graph 07: Stages that are not followed by students in writing

From the table and graphic representation, it is indicated that (45.45%) of the students do not precede the stage of drafting stage and around (18.18%) do not precede the revising stage. However (18.18%) of them do not give attention to the prewriting because they lack brainstorming strategies, hence (9.09%) of the students give less importance to editing and, (9.09%) of the students ignore the publishing stage. These results means that students write

for the sake of writing and putting down their different ideas without paying attention to revisiting the form and the content.

Section three: The First Language "Negative Transfer"

Question11: Do you think that the first language (Arabic) has an impact on the Writing Proficiency?

Table9: Description of the students 'attitudes towards the impact of the first language on Writing

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	45	81.81%
No	10	18.18%
Total	55	100%
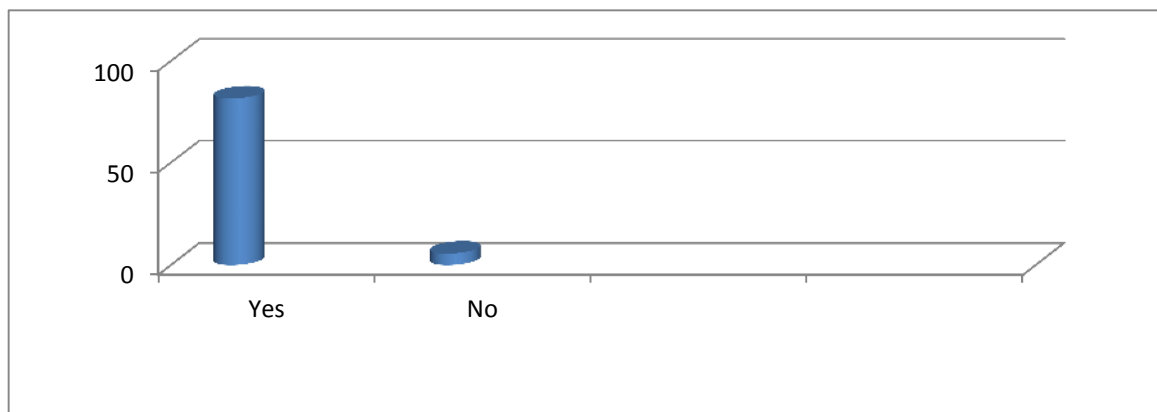
Graph08: Description of the students' attitudes about the impact of the first language

The table above indicates that the majority of the respondents (81.81%) say that the first language has a negative impact on the writing proficiency. However only (18.18%) of the students see that there is no of L1impact in writing, the former refers to many factors namely, the lack of reading, and lack of developing background of the EFL learners.

Justification: In case of "Yes"

Only 45 out of 55 who answered "Yes" to the question they have gave explanation as follow:

-"Because it can help us in our writing since it is our mother tongue"... (20student).

-"Because we get used on it"... (13 student)

-'Because it helps students to improve their level".... (12 student)

Question 12: Should L1 be used by the teacher in the classroom?

Table10: Description of students' opinion about the use of L1 in the classroom

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	40	72.72%
No	15	27.27%
Total	55	100%

The findings show that the majority of the subjects (72.72%) see that the first language should be used in the classroom by teachers, due to many factors, however only (27.27%) of the students in favour of no use of the L1 in the classroom since it, hinders learning the English language.

Justification: In case of "Yes"

Only 45 of 55 students who answered "Yes" to the question, they have provided the following explanations:

✓ "Because English is not our mother tongue."...(10 students)

✓ "Only to make us learn the L2 very well..."(10 students)

✓ "Because some vocabularies are not clear, so teacher should use L1 to simplify the meaning..."(15 students)

✓ "Because sometimes we cannot understand the meaning of the words"... (10students.

Question 13: Do you encounter difficulties when you want to express your ideas in English?

Table11: Description of students' points of view about expressing ideas in English

Responses	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	43	78.18%
No	12	21.81%
Total	55	100%

The results point out that the majority of the students (78.18%) do encounter difficulties when they want to express their ideas in English due to many reasons namely shyness, lack of self esteem and self confidence...whereas (21.81%) of the students do not encounter problems when expressing their ideas in English.

Justification: In case of "Yes "

Only 43 out of 55 students who answered "yes" to the question and they have given explanations as follows:

- "Because speaking in English needs vocabulary and appropriate words...." (15 students).

- "Because I think in Arabic, which looks easier for me...." (13 students).

"Because I cannot formulate pure English sentence due to the lack of the exact words...." (15students....)

Question 14: Rank the following statements according to the reason behind the use of L1 in writing?

Table12: Description of student's rank of the statements

Responses	Number	Percentage
(1) You have limited knowledge of vocabulary	15	27.27%
(2) You think it's useful in your writing	23	41.81%
(3) You think and you write in English language	07	12.72%
(4) You cannot formulate ideas in English	05	9.09%
-Total	55	100%

Among the respondents, there were (41.81%) who choose the second statement in which they think that the mother tongue is very useful in their writings, then only (27.27%) of respondents opt for the first statement in which, they use the first language in their writings, due to the limited knowledge of vocabulary, in addition few respondents (12.72%) do not use the mother tongue instead they think mostly and write in English due to the high level of the background of the English language, last not least (9.09%) of the respondents do use their first language because, they do not formulate ideas in English and they have to ameliorate their level.

Question 15: Are the translated expression from Arabic to English useful in writing?

Table 13: Description of student's attitudes towards the use of translated expression in writing.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	39	70.90%
No	16	29.09%
Total	55	100%

From the results above the majority of the respondents (70.90%) opt for "yes", considering that the translated expressions from Arabic to English helpful in writing, however only few respondents (29.09%) choose "No" and do acknowledge the significance of the using English-English dictionary for translating, that ameliorates the students level in both writing and speaking.

Justification: In case of "No"

16 out of 55 of the students who answered "No" to the question have given explanation as follows:

- ✓ "Because I want to have great level in English language..."05 students
- ✓ "Because the translated expression from Arabic to English looks weird to me and not correct..." (07 students).
- ✓ "The translated expression from Arabic to English makes my style in Writings so bad..." (04students)

3.1.3. Summary of the results from the Student's Questionnaire.

Based on the results obtained from the student's questionnaires, we can say that the there is a kind of contradiction in the student's views about writing in the sense ,that (52.72%) of them consider writing as difficult task even though (81.81%) of the students choose to learn the English language by their will ,the latter contradicts with their level which means that students do not make efforts to learn more about the language.Students think that writing is a complex process, that requires many stages such as; prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing, in which (18.18%) of the student's do not follow the prewriting stage, and do not acknowledge the significance of the other important stages like publishing ,revising and editing which do not accede (9.09%).

Also students do not give consideration to the prewriting stage (18.18%) which is a very important stage in writing piece of language that indicates that students do not follow

neither brainstorming nor outlying because, they are limited by time in addition to ,the lack of the appropriate vocabulary from one hand ,also they are much more interested in the grades and the marks more than the knowledge hence, students recognise the importance of the writing skill since (27.27%) find the course of "Writing Expression" very interesting

(45.45%) of the students usually write in their free time and they see that coherence (34.54%) and cohesion(36.36%) are the most important components in writing, underestimating the other components namely; handwriting, presentation, clarity, word choice which do not accede (18.18%) due to their ignorance about the components and the limited time, therefore, (72.72%) of the students have an average level in writing and only (54.54%) of them have a good level which, indicates that students do use their first language in their writings, in the sense that (72.72%) of them use their L1 when practicing he L2,as a results.

The majority of the students(78.18%) encounter difficulties in expressing the English language, also the main reason behind the use of L1 in writing is that (41.81%) of the students think that the mother tongue is very helpful in explaining some unclear items, consequently (41.18%) of them use mostly the translated expression from Arabic to English, which is in fact not useful, in reference to only (41.18%) of the participants are aware about the significance of using English –English dictionary. (81.81%) of the students know that the first language has a great impact on the writing proficiency, hence reading, writing ,speaking, listening are among the important skills that should be well-developed to avoid the impact of the first language and the transfer.

3.2. Teachers 'Questionnaire

The questionnaire aims at showing the different views of the teachers about the common problems they face when teaching the writing skill, in addition to identifying the

extent to which writing stages are applicable by the teachers, also the questionnaire attempts to investigates the impact of the L1 "Negative transfer" on the EFL writing proficiency.

3.2.1. Description of the Teacher's Questionnaire (see Appendix II)

The questionnaire is divided into three sections, it is made up of 18, and also each section includes mixed questions.

- **Section One:** This section aim at collecting general information about the sample; qualification ,and the teaching experience

- **Section Two:** It tackles the writing proficiency, and attempts to collect data about the writing skill, its stages, and the approaches used in teaching the writing skill, the devoted time for the "Written Expression'' course, and shows the main reasons behind the low level of the student's writing.

- **Section Three:** it investigates the impact of the first language "Negative Transfer" on the Writing Proficiency, also it aims at collecting the teacher's view about the use of L1 in the classroom, and the impact of using Arabic -English dictionary and its translation in writing.

3.2.1.1. Administration of the Questionnaire

The Questionnaire was conducted on 15 March 2017, to address 12 teachers of the written expression module, at the English department in the university of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma.

3.2.3. Analysis of the Teacher's Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Question 01: Qualification

Table 14: Teacher's Qualification

Responses	Number	Percentage
Licence (B.A)	00	0%
Magister (M.A)	11	91.66%
Doctorate (PhD)	01	8.33%
Total	12	100%

As the table indicates the sample is highly qualified for teaching; most of the teachers have a magister degree M.A (91.66%), while (8.33%) of them have doctorate degree PhD and no one have the licence degree B.A (0%).as result most of teachers have competence in teaching.

Question 02: Years of experience

Table15: Teacher's experience in teaching

Responses	Number	Percentage
4years	02	16.66%
5years	01	8.33%
8 years	01	8.33%
More than 8years	08	66.66%
Total	12	100%

As the table shows, (66.66%) of the respondents have experience more than eight years, however only few of the teachers (16.66%) have been experienced four years, and only (8.33%) of the respondents who have been experienced from five to eight years, consequently this implies that teachers are well qualified and experienced in teaching English as a foreign language.

Section two: the Writing Proficiency

Question04: Do you think that writing is an easy task?

Table16: Description of teacher's views about the difficulty of the writing task

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	04	33.33%
No	08	66.66%
Total	12	100%
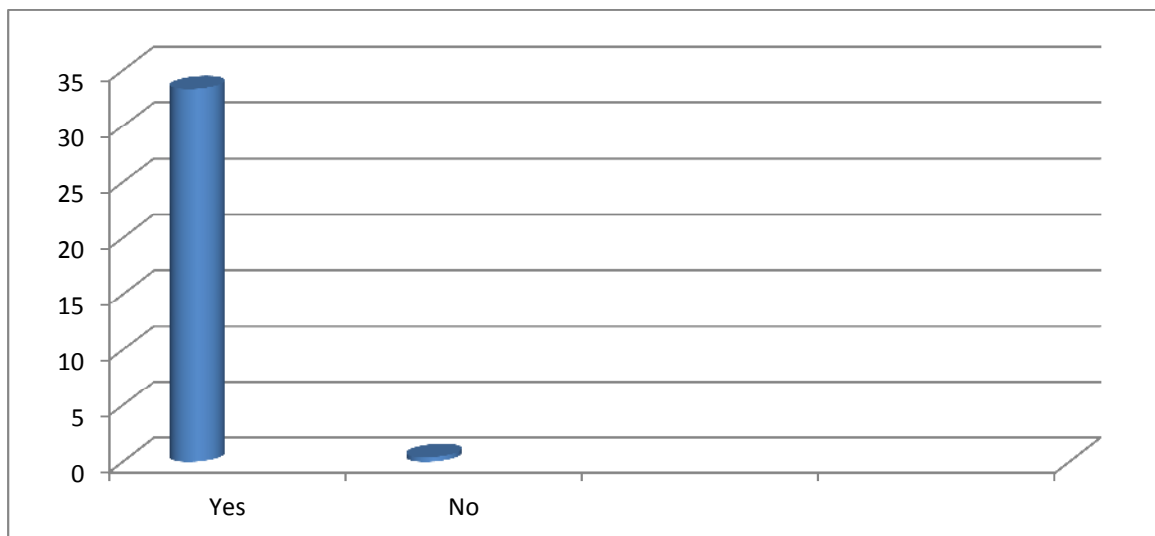
Graph09: Description of the teacher's views about the difficulty of the Writing task

The findings show that (66.66%) of the teachers see that writing is difficult task because it requires cognitive abilities, however only few of the teachers (33.33%) consider writing as an easy task.

Justification: in case of "No "

4 out of 12 of the teachers have answered the question, and they have provided the following justifications:

✓ "because it requires great attention from the teacher and the students..."(01 teacher)

✓ "Because it consists of many stages that have to be respected..."(03 teachers)

✓ "Because it requires time..." (01 teacher).

Question05: Which approach do you follow in teaching the Writing?

Table17: Description of the approaches to teach Writing

Responses	Number	Percentage
The product-oriented approach	05	41.66%
The process-oriented approach	04	33.33%
The genre-oriented approach	03	25%
Total	12	100%

The findings show that the process approach is the most adopted approach while teaching writing (41.66%).This advocates the effectiveness of the approach, since it help the students because it help teachers to provide feedback to their learners whenever necessary. However, (33.33%) of the respondent teachers use the product approach because to improve their writings, and it emphasise on the grammatical correctness of the student's production, and also, it satisfy their needs, last not least only few teachers opt for the genre approach (25%) since it focus on the features of the text which, is less important for the students due to their focus on the other approaches.

Question 06: Do you follow the writing stages when teaching writing; prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing?

Table18: Description of teacher's views towards the use of the writing stages

Responses	Numbers	Percentage
Yes	11	91.66%
No	01	8.33%
Total	12	100%

The participant's teachers with (91.66.3%) claimed that they do apply the stages of writing when teaching the writing and only few of them not use the stages of writing (8.33%).

Justification: In case of "Yes''

11 teachers out of 12 have provided the purpose of the answer "Yes" of the question as follow:

- "Because it facilitates the process of writing in general...."(04 teachers)

- "Because writing task is not one stage, rather it is a complex process...."(03 teachers)

- "Because it is good plan before writing..."(05teachers)

Question07: What are the main reasons behind the low level of your students in Writing?

Table 19: Description of teacher's answers about the reasons behind the student's level in Writing

Reponses	Number	Percentage
- (1) Limited amount of knowledge Of the students	05	41.66%
- (2) They do not like writing	03	25%
- (03They do not know of how to organize a Coherent sentence	02	16.66%
- (4) The first language interference	02	16.66%
Total	12	100%

(41.66%) of the respondent' teachers opt for the limited knowledge of the students as the main reason behind the low level of the students writing; however, few of them (25%) see that students avoid writing and do not have a desire to practice ,it is also one of the considerable reasons behind the low level in their writing, meanwhile (16.66%) of the teachers consider that the first language interference is one of the reasons that lead to the low

level of the students, and with the same percentage (16.66%) teachers see that most of the student's low level is due to the misuse of the organizing a well-coherent sentence.

Question 08: How could you rate your students?

Table20: Description of teacher's rating of the student's level in writing.

Responses	Number	Percentage
- (1) Very good writers	01	8.33%
- (2) Good writer	00	0%
- (3) Average writer	03	25%
- (4) Poor writer	07	58.33%
- (5) Bad writer	01	8.33%
- (6) Non-writer	00	0%
Total	**12**	**100%**

It is found that the majority of the teachers (58.33%) see that students are poor writers; however, few of teachers (25%) see that students have an average level in writing even thought their students are motivated and interested in the "Written expression" module, meanwhile (8.33%)of the teachers consider only few students have a bad level, and with the same percentage teachers (8.33%) rate their students as very good writers, finally (0%) of the teachers see that one has a bad writing level, and no one is good writer as well as

Question 09: How many hours you think are sufficient for teaching the writing skill?

Table21: The devoted time for teaching the writing skill

Responses	Number	Percentage
03 Hours	03	25%
04 Hours	04	33.33%
More than 4 hours	05	41.66%
Total	12	100%

The displayed results show that (41.66%) of the teachers prefer to devote more than four hours for teaching the writing skill, because is a very complex skill, and it needs many stages to be respected and applied, meanwhile, (33.33%) of the teachers prefer to devote the writing skill four hours, finally (25%) of the teachers see that teaching the writing skill requires only three hours, to teach the writing skill.

Section Three:

Question10: Should L1 be used by the teacher in the classroom?

Table22: Description of teacher's opinions toward the use of L1 in the classroom.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	02	16.66%
No	10	83.33%
Total	12	100%

The majority of the he participants (16.66%) claim that L1 should not used in the classroom, however only few of them disagree with the fact (83.33%) see that L1 is possibly

used in the classroom, this means that teachers acknowledge that L1 use is not a helpful tool in learning the L2 necessary for the students .

Justification: In case of "Yes"

Only 2 out of 12 of the teachers answer the question and they provide the following explanation:

- "L1 is rarely used to explain some unfamiliar words for the students..." (01 teacher")
- "To provide some instructions...."(01 teacher)

Question 11: When performing a writing task, did you find that your students make use of their first language to express their ideas?

Table23: Description of teacher's views towards the use of L1 in the students' ideas

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	83.33%
No	02	16.66%
Total	12	100%

The results show that (83.33%) of the teachers do agree that their students use their first language in their writing; this means that the majority of the teachers know that students make transfer from their L1 to their L2.due to many factors. namely lack of reading and lack of practising the English language. However, (16.66%) of the teachers deny the fact.

Question 12: How often do your students use their L1 in their writing?

Table24: Description of teacher's frequency about the L1 use in writing

Responses	Number	Percentage
Always	02	16.66%
Usually	05	41.66%
Often	01	8.33%
Sometimes	02	16.66%
Rarely	02	16.66%
Never	00	0%
Total	12	100%

The findings show that (41.66%) of the teachers determine that students usually make use of their first language in their writing, however (16.66%) of the teachers think that students always use their L1 in writing, meanwhile (16.66%) of the participants teachers agreed that students sometimes use L1 depending on the cases, and with the same percentage others see that they rarely use their L1, finally the majority of the teachers confirm that L1 use is mostly present in the student's writing.

Question13: Rank the following statement according to the main reasons behind the student's L1 Transfer

Table25: Description of teacher's ranking of the reasons of L1 transfer

Responses	Number	Percentage
- (1) Limited amount of English vocabulary And the inability to express them	03	25%
- (2) Problem in selecting and generating ideas In English language	02	16.66%

	Number	Percentage
- (3) Anxiety and fear of making mistakes	**01**	**8.33%**
- (4) The appearance of L1 habits of learning	**06**	**50%**
When acquiring the L2		
Total	**12**	**100%**

(50%) of the teachers acknowledge that the main reason behind student's use of L1 transfer is the appearance of the L1 habits of learning when acquiring the second language, however some of the teachers (25%) see that the limited amount of the English vocabulary is also another reason behind the L1 transfer, however few of them think that (16.66%) students have problem in the selection of both ideas and word when expressing the English language

Question 14: Do you think that your students use the first language deliberately, undeliberately, or subconsciously?

Table26: Description of teacher's views towards the student's consciousness of L1 use in writing

Responses	Number	Percentage
Deliberately	**01**	**0.1%**
Undelibrately	**07**	**58.33%**
Subconsciously	**04**	**33.33%**
Total	**12**	**100%**

The results show that (58.33%) of the teachers determine that students use their L1 in their writing unconsciously, this means that they include some L1 features and items when writing without being aware of them, however some of the teachers (33.33%) see that students make use of L1 in writing due to their total ignorance of the fact, finally few of the

respondent's teacher think that (8.33%) of the students do know about their L1 use in writing to get a good marks.

Question 15: What are the most noticeable errors in the students writing when learning the English language; interlingual errors, intralingual errors, developmental errors?

Table 27: Description of the teacher's observation of the student's error in L2

Responses	Number	Percentage
Interlingual errors	06	50%
Intralingual errors	02	16.66%
Developmental errors	04	33.33%
Total	12	100%

Depending on the findings (50%) of the teachers determine that EFL learners mostly encounter interlingual errors in writing due to the L1 interference, however (33.33%) of the participant's teacher see those students also do encounter developmental errors due to the interlanguage system between the L1 and the L2.finally (16.66%) of the teachers see that the intralingual errors are rarely found in the student's writings in comparison to the other errors.

Question16: Do you think that first language "Negative Transfer ''has an impact on student's writing?

Table28: Description of teacher's opinions about the impact of L1 on student's writing

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	83.33%
No	02	16.66 %
Total	12	100%

The majority of the teacher (%) agree that the first language "Negative Transfer" do has an impact of the English students, however no teacher deny so (%), this means that teacher confirm that students encounter difficulties in their writing mostly, due to, the L1 Negative Transfer.

Justification: In case of "Yes"

12 out of 12 of the teacher have answer question 19 and they have provided the following justification:

-"Because the L1 habit appears when acquiring the new language... (08 teachers)

-"It affects the second language, when the L2 background is not well-developed ..." (04 teachers).

Question 17: Is the English-Arabic dictionary effective for the EFL learners?

Table29: Teacher's views towards the effectiveness of English-Arabic dictionary.

Responses	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	83.33%
No	02	16.66%
Total	12	100%

The displayed results show that,(83.33%) of the teachers confirm that the English-Arabic dictionary is helpful for the students, to acquire new words, however few of them (16.66%) see that is not effective.

Justification: In case of "Yes"

10 out of 12 of the teachers have answered the question and they have given the following justification:

- "It is helpful for the beginners students in acquiring new vocabularies ..."(08teachers)

- "It is effective sometimes of the students, when they are not familiar with the strange words...." (04 teachers).

Question23: Do you agree that the translated expressions from Arabic to English are useful for your students?

Table 30: Teacher's views towards the usefulness of the translated Arabic-English expressions

Responses	Number	Percentage
Totally agree	**00**	**0%**
Partially agree	**01**	**8.33%**
Agree	**00**	**0%**
Disagree	**08**	**66.66%**
Totally disagree	**02**	**16.66%**
Partially disagree	**01**	**8.33%**
Total	**12**	**100%**

The results show that (66.66%) of the teachers disagree about using the translated expression from Arabic to English,howevre,(16.66%) of the teachers totally agree about the fact,meanwhile (8.33%) of the teachers partially agree.This is means that he use of the translated expresson from Arabic to English are not helpful for the EFL learners,since it do not ameliorate their level in L2.

3.2.4.Summary of the results from the Teacher's Questionnaire

The analysis of the gathered data demonstrates that writing skill is not easy task to learn (33.33%) ;because it equires time,and great attention by both teachers and students,also it consists of different stages that have to be applied,in which (91.66%) of the teacher's responses do follow all the different writing stages;prewriting, drafting,revising,edting,

publishing, because it facilitataes the writin task from one hand ,and its very good plan before writing.

Therefore, most of the teachers(41.66%) adopt for the process approach to teach the writing skill,since it help learners to produce well-structrued production,also to avoid the grammatical mistakes,however,(58.33%) of the teacher's responses rate their students as poor writers and only (25%) of them only have an average level,due to many reasons,in the sence that (41.66%) of the teacher's responses refer to the limited amount of knowledge from one hand, in addtion to (16.66%) of the students encounter problem of selecting the appropraite vocabulairies and generating ideas from another hand.consequently, (41.66%) of the teachers responses determine that writing skill needs more than four hours to fullfill the needs of student's writing,moreover,(50%) of the teacher's answers shown ,that the crucial reason behind the low level in writing refers to the use of L1 in writing, throught the use of translated expression from Arabic to English (70.90%),in addition to the use of English-Arabic dictionary ,that is should be used only by the biginners,as a result students encounter different errors in the writings specailly (50%) of the interlingual errors.Last not least accorind to most of the teachers (83.33%) the first language "Negative Transfer" has a great affect on the student's writing proficiency,and its convient that since the first and second language are different, L1 influence L2 negatively.

3.3.Students's Test

3.2.1..Description of the Students's Test   (see Appendix III)

Students were asked to write a small paragraph about their favorite hobby in their free time.Thus,the main focus in the analysis of students' paragraphs is to find out L1use in their writings,by underling the senences that include L1 interference for each paragraph. Then, counting the correct sentences(without mother tongue negative transfer) and the sentences that include L1 intereference along with their percentage.

3.2.1.1.Aim of the Test

The test is attempted to collect information from the students's writings to see to what extent the L1 negative transfer is used in the Target language's writing skill,also the test is used as tool besides to previouse questionnaires of both teachers and students to reinforce the results in order to give reiable findings about the research.

3.2.1.Sample choice

We have chosen randemly a sample of 55 of the whole population,addressed to the English second year students at the English deparmet of Guelma University.

3.2.1.1.Administration of the Test

The test is used to be written by second year LMD students. In other words, it is the same sample to whom the questionnaire was addrressed . The test was conducted during one session with 55 Second year LMD students, Department of English at Guelma University. It was distibuted on 15 May 2017.

3.2.4.Analysis of the Test and the Results

Table31:Description of the the L1 interefence in the students's paragraphs

Responses	Numbers	Percentage
Correct sentences	145	47,54 %
Sentences that include L1	160	52,46 %
Total	305	100%

The results show the majority of the students sentences in their paragraphs use their L1 (mother tague) in the sence that (52.46%) of their sentences is not purely correct due their lack of practicing the tagert language and the low level of their vocabulariy,lack of

knowledge as well as,howover, (47.54%) of their sentences are correct out of (100%) that explains that students's low level in writing is due to the L1 use in their writings,in which they should to ameliorate their level in the four skill so that can avoide the L1 negtaive tansfer.

Description of Students' Error

The analysis of student's compositions reveals that they make a significant number of errors of different types when they write. More interestingly, most of the errors committed are because of the negative transfer of Arabic (students' mother tongue). Moreover, when analyzing the students' paragraphs, there is evidence of transfer in the study related to word order. They tend to make the adjective follow the noun according to Arabic word order system "Verb, Noun, Adjective" in contrast to the English word order

"Noun, Verb, Adjective"

Such as: girl beautiful instead of "beautiful girl"; however, the adjective should precede the noun in English, these kinds of errors occurs in students' writing mainly because of Arabic negative interference.

Example

"It's very interesting travelling which gives me the chance to introduce new places, cultures, peoples" instead of " It's very interesting to travel since it gives me the chance to discover…." In English students use Arabic thinking in formulating English sentences mainly the verb "Introduce" due to the L1 interferences

Example

"….to kill the daily routine." Instead of "to get rid of the routine" in English this sentences explains the L1 use in the student's compositions

Example

"…this free time should profit it to group up our skills" the structure of the sentence includes L1 interference, instead of "this free time should be spent to enhance our skills..." in English

Example

"This only thing which make me happy and satisfied of myself"; the sentence includes Arabic adjective "satisfied of myself" instead of "self satisfied" in English in the sense that, students apply for the Arabic items and adjectives due to the lack of their vocabulary in English.

The study shows that students needs to decrease the use of L1 in order to improve their written production,thus teachers should rise awareness about how to employ the L1 and using the L1 should be as learing strategy,taking in consederation the its use .

Conclusion

To conclude,this chapter consists of two questionnaires are and test used as a tool of data collection;teacher's questionnaire and student's questionnaire,with its analysis,the latter shows that students have positive attitude towards the development of their writing skill,and building good backgound as well as ,eventhought their current level in writing,which means, that students are interested in the writing task ,motivated to overcome their difficulties in writing even thought their bad level in writing throught the test due to their L1 negative transfer .Regarding to, the analysis of the teacher's questionnaire and the test,it is convient that teachers confirm that students have to avoid the use of L1 when paractising the L2,to reach a good level,also teachers attempting to help their students to overcome the student's encounted difficulties through encourage them to read more and more to decrease the L1 interference

Suggestions and Recommendations

Writing is one of the four pillars that should be masterd by EFL learners for better achievements in English in order to have skilled and confident writers. Therefore, there are some recommendations that needed to be adressed mainly:

- Teachers should be well prepared to teach the writing skill effectively.

- Teachers need to rise the spirit of reading different documents to develop the student's level and to decrease the cases of the L1 negative transfer.

- Teachers need to enhance the students' writing through encouraging practice of writing in English.

- Teachers, also, have to reinforce the students' writings by providing positive feedbacks .

- Teacher have to avoid the L1 use in the classroom to not give the chance to the students to use their mother tongue.

- The first language "Negative transfer" shuld be reduced using varied techniques.

- Teachers have to organise study day for writing to estimate the significanec of writing.

- Teachers should provide immediate feedback to the EFL students when using L1 intreference.

General conclusion

This research was conducted to explore the impact of the first langauge"Negative tranfer" on the learners writing proficiency,this study deals with the sedonf year LMD English students at Guelma university,hence many EFL writers aknowlege that the writing skill is a complex task to master,since it requires practice,certain instruction and stages to follow.The purpose behind this research is to rise student's awarenes toward the importance of the writing skil in the EFL domain,and to show the affect of L1 on aquiring

the L2.Throught this research two tools are used to collect data ;teacher's questionnaire and student's questionnaire,in adition the Test ,in which a descriptive method is followed.

The study is divide into three basic chpapters,the very first two chapters are theoratical one,that related to the review of the litereature,while,the third chapter is concerned with the practical part of the investigation.The first chapter deals with a general overview about the writing proficiency,and introduce the most basic concepts and elements related to the writing proficiency including ;its definition,its nature,and its acquisition,and it presente its different stages; prewriting ,drafting ,revising, edtiting, publishing,

The chapter hightlight the approach of teaching the writing skill,in addition,the components of effective writing such as ;clarity,organization,word choice,presentation…moreover the chapter provides an inseight about learner's difficulties in writing production,the chapter ends up with the relations of writing skill with other skills namely; speaking,and reading.Regarding to the second chapter,it provides a detailed description of the impact of the first language"Negative transfer" on the writing proficiency,it includes backgound about the first languagen,definition of the transfer,its types,in addition to the types of errors,putting emphasis on the affect of Negative transfer on the writing proficiency.

Concering the practical part,two questionnaire and test of data collection were present for the academic year 2016-2017,the first one was adressed to the second year English students in the department of English at the Guelma 08 Mai 1945 to investigate the student's level in writing,however the second one was adressed the teachers of the "Written Expression "module in the same department,to explore teacher's views about the use of L1 intereference ,and the significance of the writing proficiency,hence the whole chapter beguins with deep analysis of both students and teachers questionnaires and

ended up with a Test.Consequently, the obtained results from the questionnaires and the test confirm that the first language "Negative transfer" has impact on the writinf proficiency. In the sence that students rely on their L1 and translate their ideas from Arabic to English. Depending on the gathered data obtained from the students questionnaire and the tset,it is proved that most of the students face difficulties during writing process,due to the L1 "Negative Transfer" which is negatively affect the student's production, due to the limited vocabulairy of the Engish language,inaddtion ,this study found that the majority of teachers confirm that the low level of the student's writing is due to the difficulties in generation ideas in English in addition to the use of Arabic-English dictionaries.

The analysis of student's compositions reveals that they make a significant number of errors of different types when they write. More interestingly, most of the errors committed are because of the negative transfer of Arabic (students' mother tongue). Moreover, when analyzing the students' paragraphs, there is evidence of transfer in the study related to word order. They tend to make the adjective follow the noun according to Arabic word order system; however, the adjective should precede the noun in English, These kinds of errors occurs in students' writing mainly because of Arabic negative interference

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Appendices

Appendix I

The Student's Questionnaire

Dear students,

Dear students, you are kindly requested to fill in this questionnaire. We are carrying out an investigation about **The Impact of First Language "Negative Transfer" on EFL Learners' Writing Proficiency** and opting for finding solutions to our research problem. So, your answers are very significant for the validity of the research we are conducting .We would appreciate your collaboration, interest and your full attention. Your answers are going to be treated with tremendous care and great confidentiality.

Please, tick (×) the appropriate answer or make a full statement when necessary. May we thank you hearty in advance for your cooperation.

Name: ABDELMALEK Hanane

Level: Master 02; L.M.D

Department of English

Faculty of literature and languages

University of 8Mai1945, Guelma

Section One: Background information

1-How old are you?

…………………………..years

2- How long have you been studying English?

Primary school		Years
Middle school		Years
Secondary school		Years
University		Years

3- Is it your choice to study English?

A-Yes [ ]   B-No [ ]

4. How could you describe your level in English?

-Very good [ ]   -Good [ ]   -Average [ ]   -Bad [ ]   -Very bad [ ]

Section Two: The Writing Proficiency

5. How could you describe your level in writing?

-Very good   -Good   -Average   -Bad   -Very bad

[ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]   [ ]

6-Do you think that writing is an easy task to learn?

A-Yes [ ]   B-No [ ]

-if "Yes", please justify your answer (explain "why")

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………..

7. How often do you write?

Always ☐

Usually ☐

Often ☐

Sometimes ☐

Rarely ☐

Never ☐

8- How do you find the course of "Written Expression"?

a - Very Interesting   b -Interesting   c -Quite interesting   d-Not interesting

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

09-Which one of the writing stages you don't follow?

A-Prewriting ☐

B-Drafting ☐

C-Revising ☐

D-Editing ☐

E-Publishing ☐

10. What are the most effective components in writing?

-Clarity ☐

-Organization ☐

-Coherence ☐

-cohesion ☐

-Word choice ☐

-Organization ☐

-Hand writing ☐

11. Which one of the writing stages you do not follow in writing?

-Prewriting   -Drafting   -Revising   -Editing   -Publishing

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Section Three: The First language "Negative transfer"

12. Do you think that the first language (Arabic) has an impact on the Writing proficiency?

     -Yes ☐   -No ☐

- In case of "Yes" Justify your answer, please

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

13-Should L1 be used by the teacher in the classroom?

     A-Yes ☐   B-No ☐

- In case of "Yes" Justify your answer, please?

………………………………………………………………………….....................

14-Do you encounter difficulties when you want to express your ideas in English?

     A-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

-Justify your answer, please?

………………………………………………………………………………………….

15. Rank the following statements according to the reasons behind the use of L1 in writing?

-You have limited knowledge of vocabulary ☐

-You think and you write in English ☐

-You cannot formulate ideas in English ☐

15. Are the translated expressions from Arabic to English useful in Writing?

     -Yes ☐   No ☐

In case of "Yes" justify your answer, please

…………………………………………………………………………………………..

Appendix II

The Teacher's Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

For the purpose of accomplishing our master dissertation in linguistics, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions concerning **The Impact of first Language "Negative transfer" on EFL Learners' Writing Proficiency.** We will be very grateful to you if you could share with us your considerable ideas, opinions and experience about this subject matter.

Please, tick (×) the appropriate answer or make a full statement when necessary.

Thank you for your academic collaboration and guidance.

Name: Abdelmalek Hanane

Level: Master02; L.M.D

Department of English

Faculty of Literature and Languages

University of 08 May1945, Guelma

Section one: Background information

1. Qualification:

  -License (B.A) ☐

  -Magister (M.A) ☐

  -Doctorate (P.H.D) ☐

2. Years of experience: …………………………………

Section Two: The Writing Proficiency

3. Do you think that writing is an easy task?

  a-Yes ☐   b-No ☐

In case of "Yes "justifies your answer, please

………………………………………………………………………………………….

4. Which approach do you follow in teaching the writing?

  - The product approach ☐

  -The process approach ☐

  -The genre approach ☐

5. Do you follow the writing stages (prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, publishing) when teaching the writing skill?

  -Yes ☐   -No ☐

In case of "Yes "justifies your answer, please

…………………………………………………………………………………………………..

6. What are the main reasons behind the low level of your students in writing?

     -Limited amount of knowledge of the students   ☐

     -They do not like writing   ☐

     -They do not know of how to organize a coherent sentence ☐

     -The first language interference   ☐

7. How could you rate your students?

Very good writers	Good writers	Average writers	Poor writers	Bad writers	Non-writers
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. How many hours a week you think are sufficient for teaching the "Written expression" module?

-2 Hours ☐   -3Hours ☐   - 4Hours ☐   -More than 4 ☐

Section Three: The first Language "Negative Transfer"

09-Should L1 be used by the teacher in the classroom?

     A-Yes ☐   B-No ☐

- Justify your answer, please?

…………………………………………………………………………….......................

10. When performing a writing task, did you find that your students make use of L1 to express ideas?

     -Yes ☐   -No ☐

-Justify your answer, please

……………………………………………………………………………………………

11-How often do your students use the L1 in writing?

     -Always ☐

     -Usually ☐

-Often ☐

-Sometimes ☐

-Rarely ☐

-Never ☐

12. Rank the following statements according to the main reasons behind the student's L1

transfer?

-The limited vocabulary and the inability to express their ideas ☐

-Problem in selecting and generating ideas in English ☐

-Anxiety and fear of making mistakes ☐

-The appearance of the L1 habits of learning when acquiring the L2 ☐

13. Do you think that your students use L1?

-Deliberately ☐

-Undelibrately ☐

-Subconsciously ☐

14. What are the most noticeable errors committed by the students in writing?

-Interlingual errors ☐

-Intralingual errors ☐

-Developmental errors ☐

15. Do you think that L1 "Negative transfer" has an effect on the writing proficiency?

-Yes ☐   -No ☐

In case of "Yes" justify your answer, please

……………………………………………………………………………………………

16. Is the English-Arabic dictionary effective for the EFL learners?

-Yes ☐   No ☐

In case of "Yes" justify your answer, please

……………………………………………………………………………………………

17. Do you agree that the translated expressions from Arabic to English are useful for your

students?

     -Totally agree

     -Partially agree

     -Agree

     -Disagree

     -Totally disagree

     -Partially disagree

Thank you for your attention.

Appendix III

Students' Test

Drawing is my hobby since childhood. Drawing everything I like was, still and will always be my passion. Colors pop out of everything I see and guess they are the reason after my love to this hobby. Since I was 4-5 years old every one admired my work and my family members were my big supporters with it. At school all my copy books contained drawings sometimes a copy book can contain more drawings then lessons and teachers supported me a lot to and never got mad from me when I draw in their lessons. Now being a university student I participated in many contests and won and the main reason after that was my friends and family's support. Finally me drawing everywhere and anywhere will never change because drawing is me, it always been like that, I guess since I was a baby.

Le Résumé

La présente dissertation tente d'enquêter sur l'influence du «Transfert négatif» de la langue maternelle sur la compétence en écriture des étudiants, Au Département d'anglais, Université des 8 Mai 1945, Guelma, Algérie. Le but de cette étude est d'examiner l'effet de L1 "Transfert négatif" sur l'écriture de l'apprenante langue étrangère, en regardant en définissant la première langue "Transfert négatif", En plus d'expliquer les différents types d'erreurs possibles commises par les étudiants. Par conséquent, l'échantillon de l'étude de recherche a été choisi au hasard à partir de la deuxième année de la population de LMD du département d'anglais. Afin de tester les hypothèses qui suggèrent la probabilité que les étudiants EFL ayant une compétence en écriture de bas niveau aient tendance à utiliser leur "Transfert négatif" de première langue pendant le processus d'écriture. À cet égard, une méthode descriptive a été adoptée, dans laquelle deux questionnaires ont été administrés, en plus du test qui est administré au même échantillon des étudiants de deuxième année LMD; Le premier a été dirigé pour échantillonner le groupe (55) des étudiants de LMD de deuxième année qui ont été assignés au hasard; Tandis que le second était adressé à (12) enseignants d'anglais du module "Expression écrite" du département d'anglais, à l'Université Guelma, D'où l'objectif de deux questionnaires et test était de recueillir des informations importantes sur l'effet de L1 «Transfert négatif» et sur la compétence en écriture et de montrer les attitudes des élèves à l'égard de l'influence L1 .Les résultats ont montré que la langue maternelle «Transfert négatif» affecte négativement la compétence en écriture de l'apprenant de la langue Anglaise . De plus, Les résultats des questionnaires et des tests ont confirmé l'hypothèse de recherche. Dans cette optique, le faible niveau de la compétence en écriture de l'élève est dû au L1 "Transfert négatif" et ils doivent développer le fond de langue étrangère qui améliore leur écriture de manière compétente, afin de réduire l'impact du transfert L1.

ملخص

حاول هدا المقال للتحقيق في تاتير "النقل السلبي" ا

اللغة الإنجليزية، جامعه 8 1945 . الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو

دراسة تأثير " " المتعلمين

ولدلك تم اختيار عينه الدراسه البحتيه بشكل عشوائي من السنه التانيه من قسم LMD

الإنجليزيه. لاختبار الفرضيات التي تشير إلى احتمال

حيث يميلون إلى استخدام على "ا "

وفي هدا الصدد، تم اعتماد المنهج الوصفي الادي كانت تدار استبيانين

بالإضافه إلى الاختبار الادي يدار لنفس العينه من طلاب السنه التانيه LMD.

موجها لأخذ عينات من المجموعة (55) LMD السنه التانيه عشوائيا. بينما

(12) معلما ومعلمة اللغة الإنجليزية من وحدة "الكتابة" قسم اللغة الإنجليزيه،

جامعه قالمه وبالتالي هدف الاستبيانات والاختبارات تأثير

" " .

" سلبي" يؤتر سلبا على كتابة إجادة متعلمين.

الاستبيانات والاختبارات فرضية البحث. وفي هدا السياق، ومن المقرر ان"

للغه الام يؤدي إلا انخفاض مستوى مهارة كتابه الطالب، ويجب ان تتطور خلفيه اللغه

الاجنبيه التي تعمل على تحسين كتاباتهم بكفاءة، للحد من تاتير نقل .