KASDI MERBAH UNIVERSITY-OUARGLA

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Letters and English Language

Dissertation: ACADEMIC MASTER

Domain: Letters and Foreign Languages
Field: English Language and Literature
Specialty: Linguistics
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Title:

The Impact of Teacher's Scaffolding on Students' essay Writing in the EFL Classroom

The Case of Second Year Students at the Department of Letters and English Language- Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla-Algeria

Publicly Defended

On: 12/05/2018

Before the jury

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Academic Year: 2017/2018

Dedication

We dedicate this modest work to our beloved parents whose love always

strengthen our will and provides us with encouragement.

To our dear brothers and sisters who are always supporting us.

To all our teachers throughout our career of study.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, we would like to express our deepest thank to the Almighty Allah. Without His help, this dissertation has never been accomplished.

Our grateful thanks and sincere appreciation go to our supervisor, Dr. Halima Benzoukh for her guidance, encouragement, patience, and comments which help us to accomplish this modest work.

We would also like to thank in advance all the members of the jury who have accepted to examine and evaluate this dissertation.

We would like to extend our thanks to both teachers of written comprehension and Expression and Second Year Students at the Department of Letters and English Language for their collaboration.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all people who helped us to accomplish this work, teachers, colleagues and librarians.

Abstract

Scaffolding is a kind of assistance that a teacher provides to students in order to help them to accomplish tasks which are beyond their abilities. It is considered as an effective strategy that instructors use to develop their students' learning performance. Thus, the present study aims at exploring the impact of teachers' scaffolding on students' essay writing in the EFL classroom. Also, this study seeks to recognize the attitudes that second year students of English hold towards applying scaffolding strategies in their classes. The study is carried out with second year license students at the Department of Letters and English Language. Through the research work, two questionnaire and classroom observation are carried out as tools for data collection and the major findings reveal that teacher's scaffolding has a great impact on improving students' essays writing. Finally, some implications are proposed for conducting further studies.

Key words: EFL students, essay, teachers' scaffolding, writing.

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List of abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

IMSCI: Inquiry, Modeling, Shared, Collaboration, Independent Writing

KMUO: Kasdi Merbah University-Ouargla

SCT: Socio-Cultural Theory

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

ZPD: Zone of Proximal Development

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General introduction

1. Background of the study

EFL teachers are usually concerned with enhancing learners' capacities in the four language skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Although all the skills are important, writing is always on the top due to its significant role. According to Hinkle (2011), writing skills are a means for communication, learning, thinking, and organizing ideas. Thus, EFL learners use writing not only to communicate their ideas, but also to show their way of thinking.

Moreover, in the field of second language learning, Chastain (1988) considers writing as an essential communication skill and a unique asset. He believes that writing is a fundamental skill to communicate effectively and to learn a new language. Nevertheless, mastery of writing skills seems to be a challenge for EFL learners, who encounter different obstacles in their attempts. In this context, Celce-Murcia (2001) maintains that these obstacles are caused by the complexity of the writing skills.

Hence, EFL learners are required to do much effort and practice in order to overcome these difficulties and to develop their writing. On the other hand, teachers are expected to select an effective strategy to facilitate the task and to support learners to overcome their inadequate writing. In this context, Ellis (1994) claims that the process of language learning, especially the productive aspect of language use, is not absolutely an individual-focused process, but an interactive sociological construct. The idea is that language learning requires social interaction because it helps individuals to acquire language and use it successfully. In other words, EFL learners are unable to produce independently without receiving adequate support from their instructor. The latter provides them with scaffolding as they learn to write. That is to say, scaffolding is assistance provided by the teacher to his/her learners to accomplish tasks which they cannot do independently. Bodrova & Leong (1998) argue that in scaffolding instructors provide

learners with sufficient guidance till they can learn the process, then instructors shift the responsibility to their learners to complete the task on their own.

2. The rational

Writing is an essential skill in the EFL class, and learners are required to do their best in order to master it. In spite of the importance of writing, most EFL learners view it as a challenging task because they face many difficulties in terms of accuracy, coherence, and word choice to mention just few. Those difficulties hinder them to produce a good piece of writing like essays. On the other hand, teachers are expected to look for the best ways to solve these problems. As a result, they struggle to find the most appropriate technique which seems to be helpful for their learners in their attempt. Therefore, they have recently recommended using scaffolding; as a result, this study interests in exploring the effectiveness of implementing scaffolding to enhance EFL students' performance when writing their essays.

3. Statement of the problem

Writing is considered as the most complex skill compared to other skills. It is noticed that EFL learners encounter several challenges when they try to produce a piece of writing. For instance, EFL learners have difficulties in grammar, transition of ideas, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation and outlining which leads to incoherent writing. Due to this fact, teachers suggest the strategy of scaffolding to overcome those difficulties and facilitate the writing task for their students. In this respect, the present study attempts to focus on the effectiveness of this strategy on learners' essay writing performance.

4. Research objectives

The main objective of this study is to explore the impact of teacher's scaffolding on enhancing EFL students' writing skills. Also, it aims at recognizing the attitudes that

second year students of English hold towards applying scaffolding strategies in their classes of writing.

5. Research questions

This study tries to answer the following questions:

1. Does teachers' scaffolding affect EFL students' essay writing?

2. What attitudes do second year students of English have towards teacher's scaffolding in their classes?

6. Research hypotheses

In this research work, two hypotheses are designed in order to answer the above-stated questions:

1. Teacher's scaffolding can help EFL students in writing their essays.

2. EFL students can be more motivated in writing essay, as a result of their positive attitude towards their teacher's scaffolding.

7. Methodology

The present study is carried out with second year students of English at Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla. This study is based on mixed method. In other words, it is both qualitative and quantitative. In this regard, two questionnaires are designed. The first is for teachers of written comprehension and expression at English department, KMUO. The second is for second year students of English. In addition, classroom observation is adopted as an instrument to gather authentic data.

8. Anticipated results

Through the research work, we anticipate that teacher's scaffolding will contribute in developing second year students' essay writing in the EFL classroom. Also, this strategy will be feasible in facilitating the writing task when EFL students attempt to write their essays. Above all, teacher's scaffolding will make second year students of English at

KMUO motivated to write. As a result, learners will reach a high level of writing and will become autonomous writers in the future.

9. Limitation of the study

In this study, the sample is restricted only to second year students at the Department of Letters and English Language. However, the size of the sample extended to include more than one group. That is to say, the distribution of the questionnaire includes all the groups of second year LMD students.

10. Structure of the dissertation

The present dissertation is divided into three chapters. Chapter One is devoted for literature review. It is considered as an overview on the concept of scaffolding. Chapter Two sheds light on scaffolding as a teaching strategy in the EFL classroom, and it tackles its implementation in the writing process. Chapter Three is concerned with the data analysis, the discussion of the findings and their interpretation.

Chapter One: An overview on the concept scaffolding

Introduction

Chapter One introduces the definition of the concept scaffolding and its theoretical basis. In other words, it tries to trace back to the origin of scaffolding which is often associated with the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD). Thus, the notion of ZPD will be defined after tackling the concept of scaffolding. This chapter then deals with the connection between scaffolding and the ZPD. In addition, it will shed light on the theoretical basis of the term scaffolding, its characteristics, its types, its aims, and its advantages.

1.1 Definition of scaffolding

The concept of scaffolding lies in the work of Lev Vygotsky in his socio-cultural theory. However, the coinage of the term 'scaffolding' was first used by Bruner, Rossand Wood (1976) in their study of parent-child talk in which the term is used as a metaphor to the verbal interaction between the child and the mother who provides an aid to her child in order to enhance the learning of language (Gibbons,2015). According to Bruner et al. (1976), scaffolding is defined:

> Adult controlling those elements of the task that are essentially
> beyond the learner's capacity, thus permitting him to concentrate
> upon and complete only those elements that are within his range
> of competence (p. 90).

That is to say, an adult (a teacher or an expert) provides support to the learner to enable him/her perform a task, which is beyond his/her unassisted capacity, then he lets him/her complete it independently. Furthermore, scaffolding is used as an analogy to repairing a building in which scaffolding is removed as each bit of the building is finished (Gibbon, 2015). Moreover, a number of scholars and researchers have given a great attention to the concept of scaffolding, and they have implemented it in the educational

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context. According to Ellis (1994), the notion of scaffolding is defined in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) as the dialogic process by which assistance is provided in order to enable a given speaker carry out particular functions that transcend his level of competence and proficiency. That is, Ellis's idea of scaffolding is nearly simulate to Wood's, Bruner's, and Ross's ideas in which scaffolding is viewed as an appropriate help provided to the learner.

Again, the concept of scaffolding, according to Verenikina (2008), means a help offered by a more knowledgeable participant to novice one through social interaction. In other words, scaffolding occurs within a social interaction in which the novice person receives the needed support from an expert whether a teacher or a peer. Furthermore, Holton and Clarke (2006) view scaffolding as an act of teaching which helps the learner in constructing knowledge immediately, and it is considered as the basis for future autonomous learning. Learners' construction of knowledge depends on scaffolding as a cornerstone to independent learning in the future.

1.2 Definition of zone of proximal development (ZPD)

The concept of zone of proximal development was introduced by the Russian psychologist Lev Semenovich Vygotsky during the late 1920. He used the term to criticize the psychometric-based testing in Russian schools which reflects only learners' current level of developments rather than their probable future achievements (cited in Shabani et al., 2010). The ZPD is defined by Vygotsky (1978) as:

> The distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peer (cited in Walqui, 2006, p. 162).

The ZPD, according to Vygotsky, is the distance between what a learner can accomplish independently at the actual development level, and what s/he cannot perform

without any assistance i.e. at the level of potential development. Also, it can refer to the cognitive gap between what can be done with and without the help of an expert (Gibbon, 2015). Additionally, Roosevelt (2008) states that keeping learners in the ZPD, in which learners will be more exposed to problem solving tasks, is the most important goal of education for Vygotsky's point of view(cited in Shabani et al., 2010). However, due to the difficulty of tasks that learners are engaged in, they need to work collaboratively with one another or with the teacher in order to achieve the tasks. Nevertheless, the same tasks will be completed independently next time. Also, the ZPD implies the meaning of supporting learners in their learning stages in which the teacher ought to set a task just higher than learners' current abilities, but it suits their level, and then s/he provides his/her learners with rules which allow them to perform independently in the following stage (Pishghadam & Ghardiri, 2011). In addition, Gibbon (2015) states that collaborative learning makes both the teacher and the learner take an active role in the learning process. Consequently, the learning process has a social nature.

Besides, according to Mitchell and Myles (2004), the zone of proximal development is an area of knowledge where the learner is still unable to perform independently, but s/he can reach the attainable result as s/he gains the needed scaffolding. Figures 1 and 2 show how teaching occurs within ZPD:
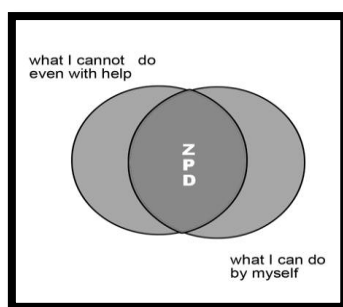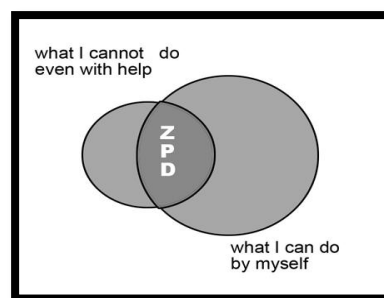
Figure 1: ZPD   **Figure 2: ZPD after teaching has occurred**

Adopted from Vygotsky's ZPD: Instructional Implication and Teachers' Professional development (Shabani et al., 2010).

1.3 The connection between scaffolding and the zone of proximal development

Learning comes through cognitive and social interaction in which the learner is assisted by an expert like an instructor, who removes his/her scaffold gradually to enable the learner complete the task on his/her own (Walqui, 2003, cited in Al hussain, 2012). Instructors tend to involve their learners in problem solving tasks that are within their zone of proximal development, and learners work under the guidance of their instructors. Consequently, working within the zone of proximal development requires scaffold in order to make learning more effective, and to enable learners perform later similar tasks in new contexts (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005). Scaffolding is always in link with ZPD. Al hussain (2012) maintains that scaffolding occurs through classroom interaction where learners obtain support to learn concepts and language that are beyond their abilities. In addition, following the work of Bruner, Wood and Ross (2006), the process of scaffolding is slightly beyond the current level of learners, but within their ZPD (cited in Birjand & Jazebi, 2014). The idea means that scaffolding does not occur above the zone of proximal development.

1.4 The sociocultural theory as the basis of scaffolding

The concept of scaffolding can be traced back to Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory (SCT) that accounts for the processes through which learning and development take place. Dongyu et al. (2013) point out that in language learning interaction plays a significant role and serves as a channel through which learning occurs. Thus, learners learn from each other via social interaction. Moreover, according to Vygotskyian's perspective, knowledge construction happens through the process of social interaction which serves in developing learners' current level. In other words, the interaction between learners and their teacher or among learners gives an opportunity to them to build their own knowledge. In this context,

Wertsch (1985) states that interaction promotes individuals to deal with cognitive challenges, which are beyond their abilities (cited in Turuk, 2008).

Although the idea of scaffolding is rooted in socio-cultural theory, the term has never been used before Jerome Bruner. The latter is concerned with the interpretation of Vygotsky's ZPD (Burch, 2007). Therefore, the idea of scaffolding is implied in the work of Vygotsky, but the creation of the concept is associated with Bruner. In addition, Bruner (1978) uses the concept to provide description of parent-child talk in which mother's assistance is characterized by focusing the child's attention on aspects of particular tasks that s/he is later required to perform on his/her own (Bruner, 1978). According to Bruner's perspective, the aid of the mother aims at training the child for future independent performance.

Vygotsky (1978) also points out that learning takes place within the learners' ZPD where they are provided with enough support to do difficult tasks. This support is faded as a learner becomes autonomous or self-regulated (cited in Burch, 2007). During the learning process, the learner receives assistance which allows him/her to perform tasks, but this sort of assistance is removed gradually as responsibility is shifted towards the learner. Again, Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory leads to the conclusion that social interaction is the basis of language learning in which learners receive sufficient support to acquire language.

1.5 Characteristics of scaffolding

Scaffolding is considered as a collaborative process based on teacher-student interaction in which both participants play an active role in this process (Van de Pole et al., 2010). Although scaffolding is interpreted differently, there are common features that can be found in each definition. For example, in the classroom context, scaffolding is characterised by the following:

a) Interaction: According to Searle (1984), interaction must be collaborative either among learners themselves or between learners and their teacher (cited in Masters, 2005).

b) Working within Learner's ZPD: The teacher determines the learners' level through diagnostic strategies, then s/he designs tasks that are slightly beyond their level of comprehension, but those tasks are not transcending the learners' ZPD (Rogoff, 1990 cited in Master, 2005).

c) Fading: It refers to the gradual removal of scaffolding (Birjandi & Jazebi, 2014). The teacher's support is faded as learners become independent. Therefore, fading is related to the transfer of responsibility towards the learner to accomplish the task autonomously. Fading provides learners with a chance to take over responsibility, and increase their self- regulation (Hu, 2006).

In addition, Van Lier (2004) identifies six pedagogical fundamental features of scaffolding which are continuity, contextual support, intersubjectivity, contingency, handover/takeover, and flow. First, continuity means that tasks are repeated with slight variations, but they should be linked to each other. Second, contextual support means that learners are encouraged to explore in safe and in supportive environment. Third, intersubjectivity refers to rapport establishment. Fourth, contingency refers to the adjustment of task procedures that depends on the actions of learners. Fifth, handover/takeover (teacher/learner) are important conditions and without them scaffolding becomes meaningless. Last but not least, flow refers to the balance between skills and challenges.

1.6 Types of scaffolding

Holton and Clarke (2006) distinguish between two types of scaffolding which are domain and agency. The former is classified by them into two types, which are conceptual scaffolding and heuristic scaffolding. The conceptual scaffolding is provided by the teacher

for purposes of conceptual understanding. Conversely, heuristic scaffolding aims at solving problems that encounter learners. In addition, Holton and Clarke (2006) go a step further and suggest that agency scaffolding is categorized into three categories, which are expert, reciprocal scaffolding and self-scaffolding. However, Holton and Clarke believe that as the learner passes the three kinds above during the learning process, another kind of scaffolding might be added, which is the transcendental scaffolding.

Holton and Clarke (2006) also view the expert's scaffolding as passive, and for them the teacher as an expert or a scaffolder should give assistance to the learner or scaffoldee. Teacher's role at this stage is just as a facilitator while learners are required to grasp the picture and construct their knowledge. Furthermore, during this process, learners work collaboratively with their peers. When they work together with others, discovery and joint construction occur. Thus, as the learner learns something new, his/her partner will also experience this new knowledge (Walqui, 2006). As a consequence, reciprocal scaffolding takes place in this process. In addition, Holton and Clarke focus on learners' opportunities to provide scaffolding to themselves. This type of scaffolding is known as self-scaffolding in which learners break down the problems into constituents, and use the available resources to develop knowledge construction (Bickhard, 2007 cited in Agus, 2008). Moreover, since learners can scaffold themselves, they are also able to provide scaffolding to other learners as a sort of transcendental scaffolding. Also, Agus (2008) assumes that transcendental scaffolding is the process of beyond scaffolding. That is, transcending the self, and as a learner passes all the above kinds of scaffolding, s/he becomes autonomous.

1.7 Aims of scaffolding

Scaffolding is a supportive strategy for EFL learners (Al hussain, 2012). Those learners assist each other through social interaction that occurs in the classroom in order to fully understand and master what is beyond their abilities. Thus, scaffolding, according to

Al hussain (2012), has some pedagogical purposes in the following stages. The first stage encompasses a planned curriculum that is progressive and implemented through a sequence of tasks, which are ritual. The second stage includes the procedures used for the activity that is set before in the first stage. The third stage is the process of collaborative interaction. For Walqui (2006), it is the actual achievement of stage.

1.8 Advantages of scaffolding

The implementation of scaffolding in the classroom setting reveals that this strategy is useful both cognitively and affectively. On one hand, learners will be comfortable while doing the task due to their positive feeling towards learning. On the other hand, scaffolding of the others guides learners' attention to the task and keeps them on the right path (Hu, 2006). Further, McKenzie (1999) states that scaffolding provides several advantages:

a) It provides clear directions for students.

b) It clarifies the purpose of the task.

c) It keeps students on the task.

d) It offers assessment to clarify expectations.

e) It points students to worthy sources.

f) It reduces uncertainty, surprise and disappointment.

g) It delivers efficiency.

h) It creates momentum.

Conclusion

To sum up, Chapter One dealt with the origin of scaffolding. It tackled a detailed definition of scaffolding and the ZPD, which is in link with the former. As well as, this chapter provided an explanation of sociocultural theory as a theoretical foundation of scaffolding. In addition, it tried to present scaffolding's characteristics, its types, its aims, and its advantages.

Chapter Two: Scaffolding as a teaching strategy in the EFL classroom

Introduction

Writing is a productive skill that EFL learners need to acquire when learning a new language. However, it is viewed as the most important and the most difficult in comparison to other skills. Therefore, much effort ought to be done by instructors in order to simplify the writing task for their learners. To reach this goal, teachers adopt various strategies as scaffolding, which is recommended in teaching writing in the classroom context.

Chapter Two is devoted for discussing scaffolding as an instructional process as well as strategies to scaffold EFL learners in their writing. In this respect, two sides are considered which are the process of writing and the strategies of scaffolding. After that, we are going to deal with the implementation of scaffolding in the writing process. Last but not least, we will tackle Read's IMSCI model to scaffold writing.

2.1 Scaffolding process

Many scholars apply the metaphor of scaffolding in the classroom context in order to assist EFL learners in achieving unfamiliar tasks. In this context, Al hussin (2012) views scaffolding as a teaching method by which the instructor models specific learning tasks; then s/he transforms the responsibility towards learners. However, the shift of responsibility occurs step by step.

Furthermore, the implementation of scaffolding in the classroom context reflects various strategies where the support is provided during the learning process. Scaffolding as a process is based on gradations. In other words, it grows step by step in which the teacher starts with selecting the appropriate learning task (Gaffney & Anderson, 1991). This task is

required to raise learners' interest rather than frustrating them. As a result, Wood et al. (1976) maintain that the task's evaluation should precede its implementation to decide whether the task is suitable or difficult for learners' level. Moreover, before the application of the task teachers should predict errors to draw the right path for learners.

In addition, Wood (1976) believes that scaffolding has an emotional side. For him, the teacher attempts to make learners more interested within the task during the process of recruitment. Next, s/he controls frustration via encouragement, and simplifies the task by reducing the degree of freedom by which the task is divided into its constituents in order to be manageable. For example, the teacher may ask students to write ideas about a given topic, then transform them into outline. After that, s/he ask students to write the whole essay. Therefore, the teacher supports learners both cognitively and affectively (Reigeluth & Moore, 1999). The former occurs when the teacher helps learner to master the task. On the other hand, the latter has to do with motivating them towards the task.

Moreover, other techniques are suggested by Wood et al. (1976) such as direction maintenance, marking critical features and demonstration. Direction maintenance is based on the assumption that teachers' role is to keep learners motivated on the task. Also, the teacher marks the critical features of the task for the sake of providing discrepancies between the learners' production and the correct product. Nevertheless, learners' task is to make interpretation about these discrepancies. In the final technique, Wood (1976) refers to demonstration as a modeling solution to a given task. Afterwards, learners are required to imitate it in a good way.

In addition to all what is mentioned above, a post task phase is needed to support learners. It encompasses discussion after the task, comprehension checking, teaching the main points again and so on (Graves et al. 1996cited in Wood, 1976).That is, the teacher

provides follow up activities by the end of the task to make sure that his/her learners have understood.

2.2 Strategies and activities to scaffold EFL students in the writing process

Scaffolding is considered as the most powerful instructional technique. It is widely adopted in the classroom contexts to teach reading, speaking and writing in which scaffolding has proven its benefits through empirical studies. Thus, in order to recognize its benefits on writing, both writing process and scaffolding strategies will be discussed.

2.2.1 The writing process

Writing is an essential skill in teaching and learning any foreign language. Furthermore, most EFL learners are judged on the basis of their written production. According to Harmer (2007), writing provides learners with chances to process language because they have much time to think. In other words, learners have the opportunity to learn and to think about language because they are not required to produce immediately. Furthermore, as teachers of writing are concerned with the process of writing rather than the product, learners are allowed to rewrite (Brown, 2001).Therefore, the final product is a result of range of stages that enable EFL learners to create language. According to Harmer (2004), these stages are planning, drafting, revising/editing; and proofreading and publishing (final version):
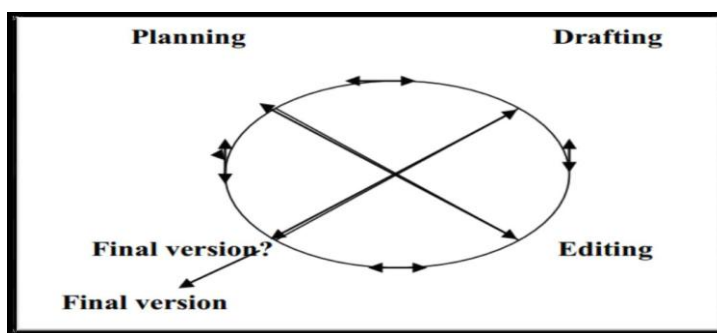

Figure 3: The process wheel (Harmer, 2004, p. 06)

2.2.1.1 Planning

Planning or pre-writing is the first and the most important stage in the writing process. According to Oshima and Hogue (2007), the pre-writing stage is the first step in the writing process which requires generating ideas. The pre-writing stage includes all what precedes drafting. In this stage, learners do not write a whole essay directly, but they are prepared to write it. Hence, learners (as writers) focus their concentration on the topic and generating ideas. Also, according to Roberts (2004), this stage involves choosing a subject, narrowing the topic, analysing audience as well as generating ideas.

In the pre-writing stage, writers are required to narrow the topic as much as possible, and then generate ideas through the process of brainstorming (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). In other words, learners select a topic for their essays and write it at the top of the paper, then, write any idea related to the topic without considering grammar and spelling. In this stage EFL, students will also design a plan for their writing, so that they need to decide which ideas will be included in their writing, then they organize them by which they identify the first idea, the next and the last ones (Zemach & Rumisek, 2005).

2.2.1.2 Drafting

The second stage in the writing process is drafting in which students write a rough draft. The latter is based on the ideas generated by the writer. In drafting, the writer can write phrases, leave spaces, or even violate the margin because the focus is information or the content rather than the mechanics (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). Moreover, this idea is supported by Galko (2001) who states:

> When drafting, you might skip sections or make notes to yourself to come back and add more examples in certain spots to check your facts later. As you draft, you do not need to worry about grammar, spelling or parts of your paper at a later stage (p. 49).

2.2.1.3 Revising/Editing

The third stage is revising/editing, which has a crucial role in the process of writing. Although revising and editing are used interchangeably by most researchers and scholars. Oshima and Hogue (2007) argue that revising is concerned with big issues like content and organisation while edition focuses on the smaller ones such as grammar, punctuation and mechanics.

In this stage, writers check their writing; as a result, they revise both content and organisation for purposes of adding, deleting or rearranging. Writers also aim at checking whether they reach their purpose or not, and make sure that topic sentences fit supporting ideas. They also verify both coherence and cohesion.

2.2.1.4 Proofreading and Publishing

Writers' final task is to proofread their writing before the publication. Therefore, they check grammar, spelling, punctuation and typing errors (Oshima & Hogue,2007). After that, writers rewrite the final draft, make any change they want, and then publish their production (Zemach & Rumisek, 2005).

2.2.2 Strategies of scaffolding

Teachers of English may use different strategies to scaffold their learners. Walqui (2006) proposes six strategies of instructional scaffolding that are workable with learners of English and assist them for better performance:

2.2.2.1 Modeling

When learners are engaged in unfamiliar tasks, their teacher provides them with a model. S/he explains the model explicitly first; then, s/he asks them to imitate it. The teacher shows a clear model to the learner, and demonstrates and uses simple language in order to understand the desired task. Modeling is more beneficial, especially for EFL learners

because it allows them to expose to authentic language and recognize certain features of genre. As a result, EFL learners will be able to perform the assigned task.

2.2.2.2 Bridging

Bridging is defined by Thrap and Gallimre (1988) "as the weaving of new information into existing mental structures" (p. 108). Learners have better opportunities to learn new concepts and knowledge merely with reliance on previous knowledge and understanding. Hence, the teacher helps them to build new information into prior mental construct. That is to say, s/he makes a connection through activating the existed knowledge to build new structures. In order to do that, the teacher may ask several questions to make learners adjust their prior knowledge.

2.2.2.3 Contextualisation

Researchers of education differentiate between everyday language and academic language (Cloran,1999). The former depends on context and nonlinguistic information. It is situation-dependent. In contrast, the latter relies on language alone. It is decontextualised and situation-independent. Thus, in the academic language context, the teacher creates analogies by providing the verbal context according to the experience of learners. Also, s/he puts new concepts with a sensory context such as the use of relia inside the classroom.

2.2.2.4 Schema building

Schema is described by Richard and Schmidt (2010) as a mental representation, a plan or a structure. They mean that the mental structure organises new knowledge and ideas in a way that suits the pre-existing ones. Therefore, learners' task is to know the connection between them through a set of activities given by the teacher. Schema building is top down

process by which learners organize their ideas and make distinction between what is central and what is minor.

2.2.2.5 Text representation

In this strategy, the teacher requests learners to transform a linguistic construction that is modeled in a particular genre into another one. For instance, learners may transform an epic into drama, or they may be requested to make a video as speech that will be performed later. Hence, learners have a better chance to embody what they have understood from the linguistic form.

2.2.2.6 Developing metacognition

According to Bransford et al. (1999), metacognition occurs when someone is capable to control his/her understanding of current level, then decide when it is inadequate. In other words, it refers to the person's ability to monitor his/her level of understanding without relying on the teacher's help.

Besides, Walqui (2006) maintains that metacognition contains various strategies which are resulted from the studies about the way an expert conducts the task. These strategies help learners to control their own learning, and they cover the following: learners' application of the learned strategies when they are involved in activities, the selection of the most effective one that suits a specific activity, the evaluation and the adjustment of their performance in order to plan for their future.

In addition, researchers in the educational context suggest other strategies such as questioning, cueing, coaching, collaborating, and so on. For instance, Palincsare (1998) states that in order to make a given task explicate, modeling, questioning and explanation are used (cited in Master, 2005). In the same context, Pearson (1996) identifies cueing,

coaching, and corroboration as the best ways used by the teacher in the learning process (cited in Master, 2005).

2.3 The implementation of scaffolding in the writing process

Scaffolding has an essential role in guiding learners when they write their own essays. However, during the writing process, learners receive various sorts of scaffolding on the basis of their level, capabilities, and needs. As a result, the implementation of scaffolding strategies in the writing process goes with its stages (Ningrum, 2012).

In the first stage, the pre-writing stage, the teacher prepares learners (writers) to write for the target audience, and then s/he directs them towards the purpose of the assignment through looking at clues in the assignments' prompt. After identifying both audience and purpose, the teacher can use an effective writing sample as a model for the desired task. For example, s/he distributes a photocopied model like a descriptive essay, and asks learners to work in pairs or groups in order to figure out its features. Then, learners write their own essays through imitating the model. Modeling is viewed by Holton and Clarke (2006) as an effective scaffolding strategy that allows learners to imitate the example. Also, exposing learners to models helps them to recognize the main features of each text; consequently, imitating the same model will be easier for them.

In this stage, teacher's scaffolding is continuous through the use of several activities that help learners in their writing. For instance, the teacher tends to use brainstorming with his/her learners as a pre-writing activity in order to stimulate their imagination and to activate their schema. That is, they recall their pre-existing knowledge and construct on them new ones as a form of bridging. In order to reach this goal, the teacher often integrates brainstorming with drawing to help learners bring to mind ideas which suit the task assignment.

The use of brainstorming again allows learners not only to begin quickly and to save time for the following stages, but also to build rapport with their teacher through the interaction that occurs between them (Oshima & Hogue, 2007). This interaction will enhance learners' motivation to write. In addition, during the pre-writing stage, the teacher suggests some effective techniques to facilitate the start such as clustering/mapping or listing. The latter serves in selecting and organizing particular ideas, then listing the related concepts together. The former allows them to explore the relationship between ideas. As a result, the teacher often writes the topic on the middle of board, and asks his/her learners to write all what is associated with it.

In the drafting stage, two scaffolding strategies are suggested which are modeling and questioning. The teacher employs questioning to guide learners when they write their essays, so that s/he asks different questions to extend learners' understanding of the topic. Additionally, according to Hunkins (1972) and Wilen (1986),questioning is commonly adopted to know about the learners' past knowledge, direct and guide learning; and allow them with opportunities for practice. For them, questioning also helps in controlling and maintaining productive learning environments, as well as examining the outcomes of learning (cited in Hu, 2006).

In this stage, questioning is also used as scaffold for extending learning thinking through reflecting in their thoughts. That is, scaffolding allows them to think logically, and encourages them to look at the problem from different angles (Josiah et al., 2013).

In the revising/editing stage, learners are required to revise their writing so as to correct their mistakes. In this stage, the teacher's immediate feedback is very important because learners' writing is not perfect, yet they sometimes receive this feedback the day after. That is to say, comments and suggestions are written by the teacher; as a consequence, learners seem to be unwilling to correct their mistakes.

Furthermore, the teacher attempts to break the routine and uses vital activities to motivate learners to correct their mistakes. For example, s/he enhances working collaboratively in order to endorse communication among them. The latter can work in groups, share what they write and discuss together. Collaborative work provides learners with the opportunity to give feedback on their classmates' writings, yet in this type of environment teachers' assistance is still there (Yau, 2007).

Moreover, the scaffolding strategy that is suggested in the stage of revising/editing is peer scaffolding. It refers to the process of paper exchanging in which partners exchange their drafts, read them, and then comment (Zemach & Rumisek, 2005). It involves reading the texts of others for purposes of feedback providing. In this regard, Mangelsdorf (1992) claims that "learners do not simply evaluate or edit one another's texts, "they are responding to what the essay says as well as how it says it" (cited in Burket & Wally, 2013). Further, through peer-scaffolding, the responsibility is gradually shifted towards learners, as a teacher reduces his/her scaffold, instruction becomes learner-centered. Learners negotiate with each other and communicate their intentions directly. Consequently, in this stage the teacher does not impose his/her opinion, and s/he acts only as a facilitator to offer guidance in the thinking process (Brown, 2001, p. 340).

The final stage is proofreading and publishing. This stage is systematic because it is based on gradation. Thus, learners edit their rough, proofread it, and then publish it. The teacher can direct learners' attention to the incorrect forms and provides hints to help them correct the errors (Geeslish & Long, 2004). In proofreading and publishing, the teacher values learners' products through adding extra marks or giving gifts to motivate them and to enhance their self-confidence.

2.4 Read's IMSCI model to scaffold EFL learners' writing

Read (2010) suggests a model to enhance the writing skills. This model is known as Reads' IMSCI model which is developed on the basis of the study of genre and social learning theory. IMSCI is an acronym, which stands for 'Inquiry', 'Modeling', 'Shared', 'Collaborative', and 'Independent'. This acronym includes a set of stages, which depend on the concept of scaffolding.

Also, many researchers argue that teaching learners through genres and social approach is very important for language learning, and for Swami (2008), learners can organize texts only if they are aware about genre's characteristics. This assists learners for better comprehension of genre's communicative purpose and expectations of the readers. On the other hand, Bandura (1977) and Vygotsky (1978) believe that the interaction between the teacher and learners or among learners lead to a meaningful learning (cited in Read, 2010).

The "I "refers to inquiry in which the background knowledge of students is facilitated i.e., the teacher activates students' prior knowledge; then, "M" stands for modeling that exists after the teacher applies the inquiry stage such as the use of brainstorming. In addition, the modeling step includes all stages of the writing process. The "S" means shared writing that the teacher and students participate in writing and making sense of the topic, sentence structure and the like. The "C" refers to collaborative writing where students have the opportunity to work in groups or peers and arrive at the final text performance. Finally, the "I" stands for independent writing. Students will write independently after passing and overcoming the preceding stages. Interestingly, the last stage is the focus goal of IMSCI Reads' model.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Chapter Two reviewed scaffolding as a teaching strategy implemented by teachers in the EFL classroom. It discussed the process of scaffolding through which the teacher follows systematic phases. Again, this chapter dealt with strategies to scaffold EFL learners in the writing process, and it interested with both the writing process and strategies of scaffolding. Also, this chapter provided an explanation of way scaffolding is applied in the writing process in which teachers of written expression adopt various strategies, activities and techniques to enable their learners produce a well written piece of writing. Moreover, it tackled Read's IMSCI model to scaffold writing as a final point in this chapter.

Chapter Three: Research design and methodology

Introduction

The current study aims at exploring the impact of teacher's scaffolding on enhancing EFL students' essay writing in the EFL classroom, and also recognizing the attitudes of those learners towards this strategy. Thus, this chapter is devoted for the methodology that is used in this research work in order to achieve the objectives of the study. It describes the population and instruments that are adopted in the study. In addition, it presents data analysis and discussion of the findings.

3.1 Methodology

The present study follows qualitative and quantitative methods in order to gather data. Qualitative data was collected via classroom observation while quantitative data was collected through the questionnaires. These methods seem to be the most appropriate for the nature of the research topic because they help to answer the research questions and to reach the stated objectives.

3.2 Sampling and setting

The participants of this study are second year students and teachers of written comprehension and expression at the same department during the academic year 2017/2018.

3.2.1 The selected students

In this study, we have selected second year LMD students at the Department of Letters and English Language, KMUO. They are two hundred and sixty three (263) students, and they are divided into (6) groups. Nonetheless, the sample encompasses one

hundred and forty (140) students. They have been chosen due to the fact that they have written comprehension and expression as a module, and they are required to learn about essay writing at this level. This could help in collecting adequate data about the research topic.

3.2.2 The selected teachers

Five (5) teachers of written comprehension and expression at the Department of Letters and English Language, KMUO are the sample of this research work.

3.3 Research instruments: Description and analysis

Questionnaires and classroom observation are adopted as instruments in order to collect data about the current study. For the analysis of the results, the data collected from the administrated questionnaires are treated by means of the SPSS system version 24 (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) based on percentages.

3.3.1 Description of students' questionnaire

The questionnaire is used as an instrument to collect data, and it is administered collectively. In other words, it is addressed to second year students in their classrooms on 11th March 2018 during TD sessions. Thus, students have got a chance to know about the purpose of the study, to recognize the relevance and its importance, and to ask for clarification (Kumar, 2011). The questionnaire starts with an introductory paragraph that gives students an idea about the research topic. Furthermore, it is divided into two sections: the first one tackles questions about the writing process. This section includes six (6) questions. On the other hand, the second section is devoted to teachers' scaffolding and it contains ten (10) questions (see Appendix A).

3.3.1.1 Analysis of students' questionnaire

Students' questionnaire consists of sixteen (16) questions which are the following:

Section one: The writing process

**Question 1:** How do you find writing in English?
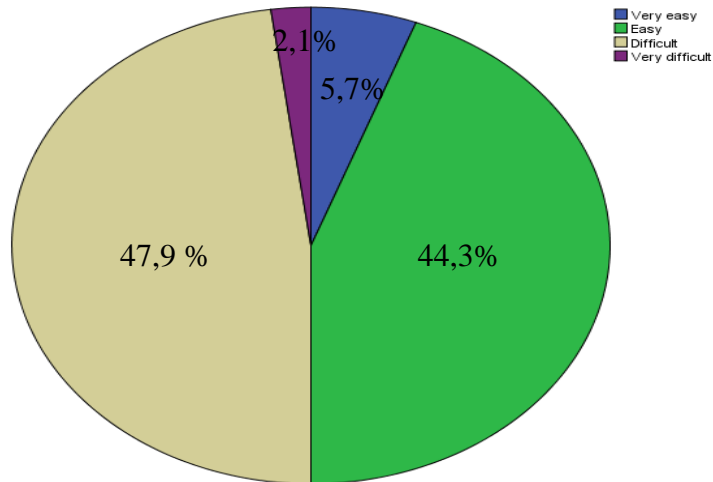
Figure 4: Students' attitudes towards writing in English

Figure 4 shows students' views towards writing in English. The majority of students (47, 9%) consider writing as a 'difficult' skill while others (44, 3%) think that writing is an 'easy' task. On the other hand, only few students respond by 'very easy' (5, 7%) and 'very difficult' (2, 1%).

Question 2: Your current level in writing is?
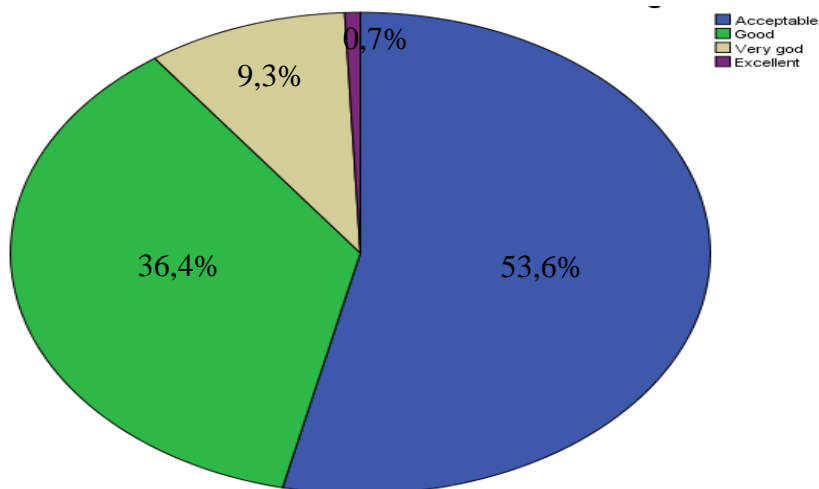
Figure 5: Students' current level in writing

Figure 5 reveals students' current level in writing. Many of second year students, KMUO (53, 6%) agree that their level is 'acceptable', whereas (36, 4%) of students maintain that their level is 'good'. The results reveal that only (9, 3%) of students think that their level is 'very good', and (0, 7) of them consider their level 'excellent'.

**Question 3:** Do you have some difficulties when writing essays?
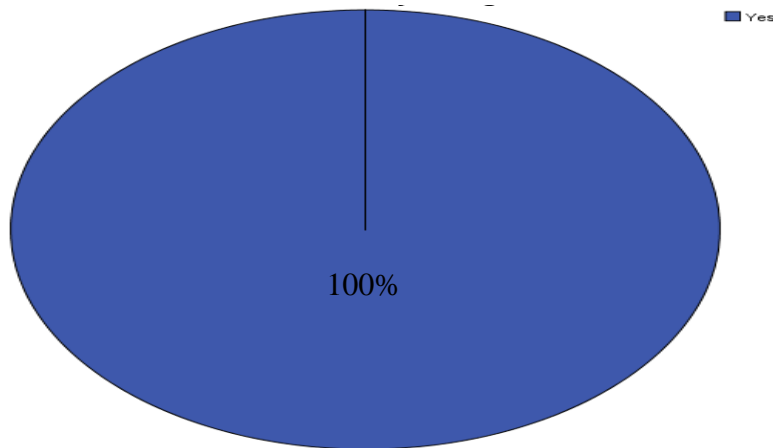
Figure 6: Difficulties in essay writing

The results in Figure 6 show that all the students (100%) agree that they have difficulties when writing their essays. Therefore, writing seems as a challenging task for students.

Question 4: If "Yes", what are the main difficulties that you face?
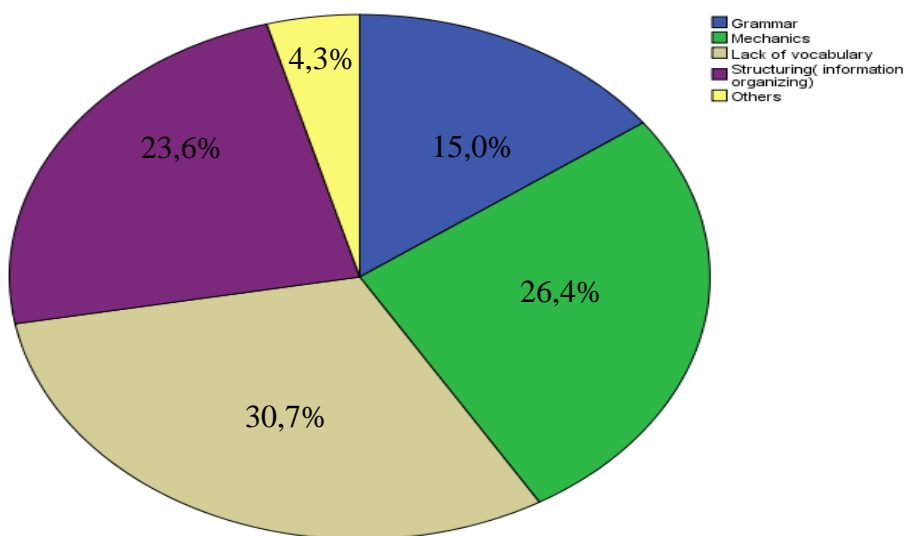
Figure 7: Difficulties students face in writing

According to Figure 7, students (30, 7%) state that 'the lack of vocabulary' is the main difficulty they face when they write while others (26, 4%) respond by 'mechanics'. However, (23, 6%) of students respond by 'structuring' as the main difficulty for them, and (15%) of students reply 'grammar'. Above all, only(4, 3%) of students state that they have 'other difficulties' which face them in their writing such as lack of information, finding ideas and having problems in complicated topics.

Question 5: These difficulties are due to?
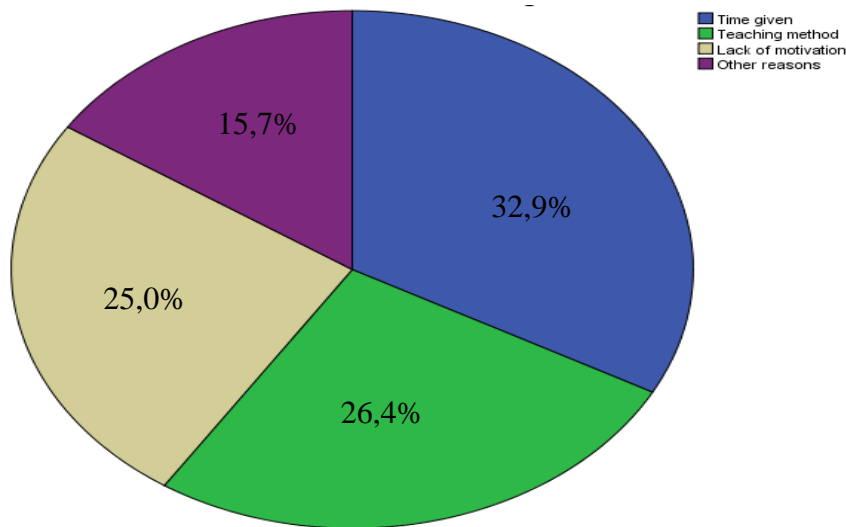
Figure 8: Reasons behind facing difficulties in writing

Concerning the reasons behind facing difficulties in writing, (32, 9%) of the students claim that these difficulties are due to 'the time given' when they write their essays inside the classroom while (26, 4%) of them respond by 'the teaching method'. Additionally, (25 %) of the students maintain that these difficulties are because of 'lack of motivation'. Others (15, 7%) have 'other reasons' such as the lack of practice and reading.

**Question 6:** What stage of the writing process is the most difficult for you?
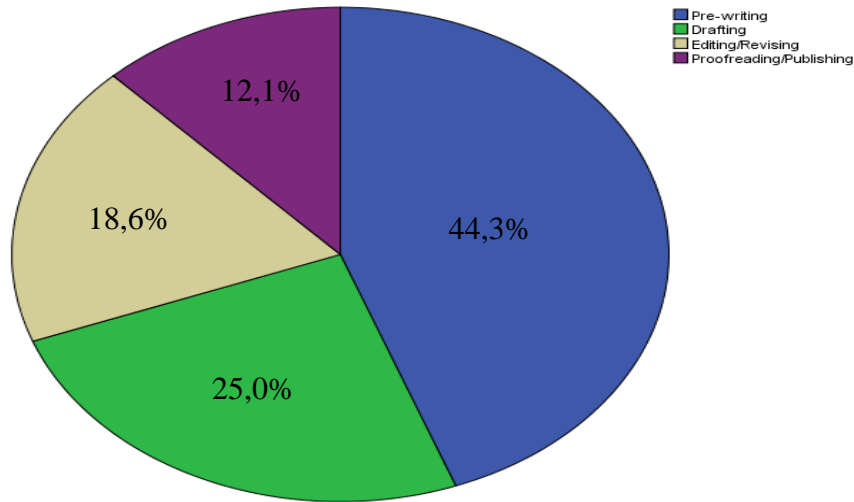
Figure 9: The most difficult stage of writing for students

This question seeks to investigate the most difficult stage in the writing process.

The majority of students (44, 3 %) reveal that the 'prewriting stage' is the most difficult for

them, and (25%) respond for the 'drafting stage'. For the editing stage, (18, 6%) of

students think that it is the most difficult while (12, 1%) choose 'proofreading/publishing

stages'.

Section two: Teachers' scaffolding

Question 7: Does your teacher help you before you start writing?
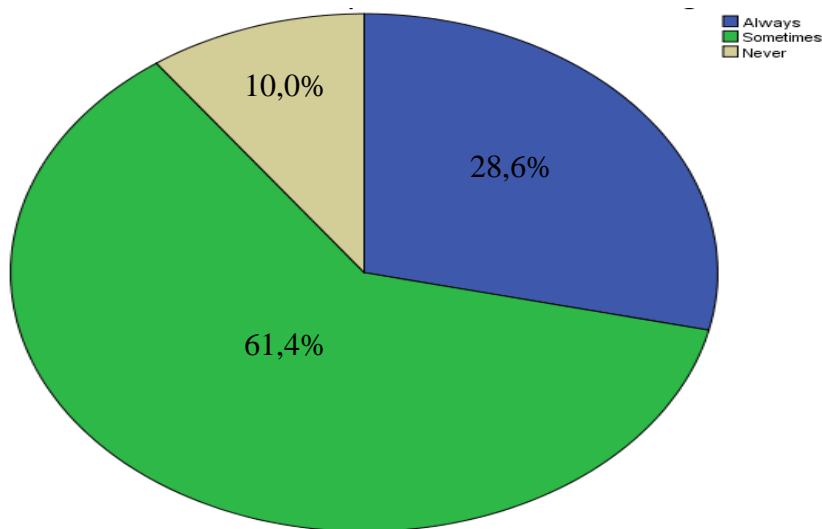
Figure10: The help of the teacher before writing

It is obvious from Figure 10 that (61, 4 %) of the students reveal that their teacher 'sometimes' helps them before they start writing, and (28, 6%) answer by 'always'. Nevertheless, only few students (10%) answer by 'never'.

**Question 8:** When your teacher introduces a new task, does s/he provide a model to follow?
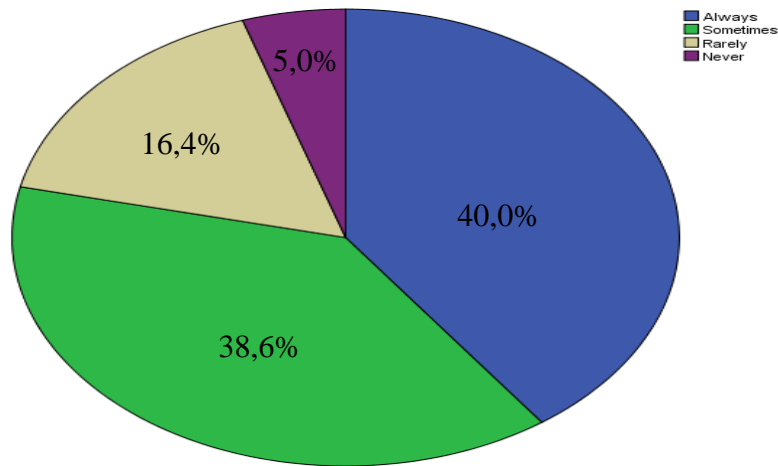
Figure 11: Teachers' modeling of the writing task

(40%) of the chosen students respond that the teacher 'always' models the writing task for students. Also, (38, 6%) of the students state that their teacher 'sometimes' provide them with model to follow when introducing a new task. (16, 4%) of them respond by 'rarely' while only (5%) answer by 'never'.

Question 9: How do you prefer to work in order to make any writing task in the classroom?
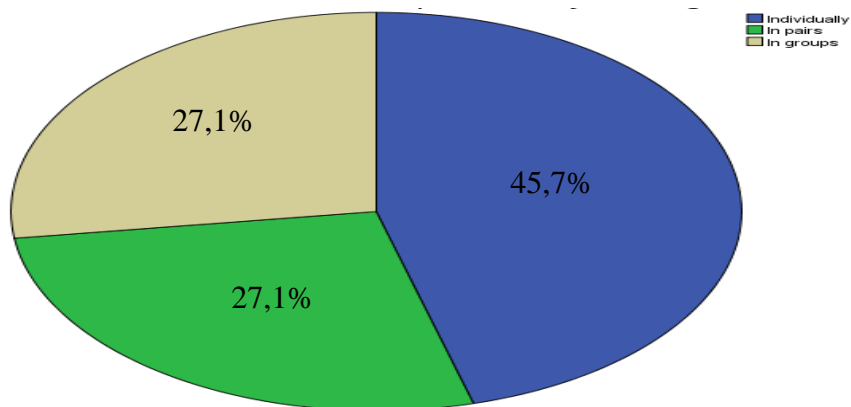
Figure 12: The way students prefer to work

35

The data appeared in Figure 12 show that (45, 7%) of the students prefer to work 'individually' in order to make any writing task. On the other hand, (27, 1%) of the students prefer to work collaboratively whether 'in pairs' or 'in groups'.

Question 10: Which techniques does your teacher use with you before you start writing?
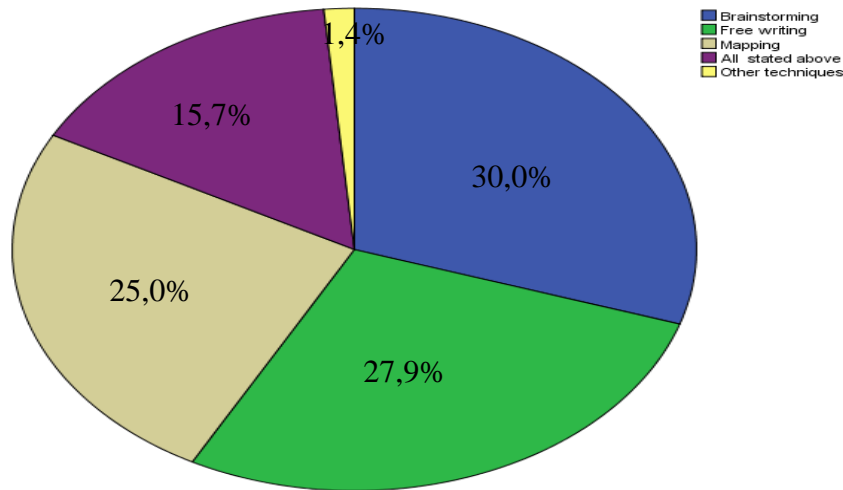

Figure 13: Techniques used by the teacher before writing

(30) Of the students maintain that their teacher uses 'brainstorming' technique before they start writing. Others (27, 9%) claim that they start with the use of 'free writing', whereas (25%) of students answer by 'mapping'. Moreover, (15, 7%) of the students claim that 'all stated techniques' are used by their teacher. Only few students (1, 4%) respond by 'other techniques' as modeling and outlining.

**Question 11**: Does your teacher guide you when writing inside classroom?
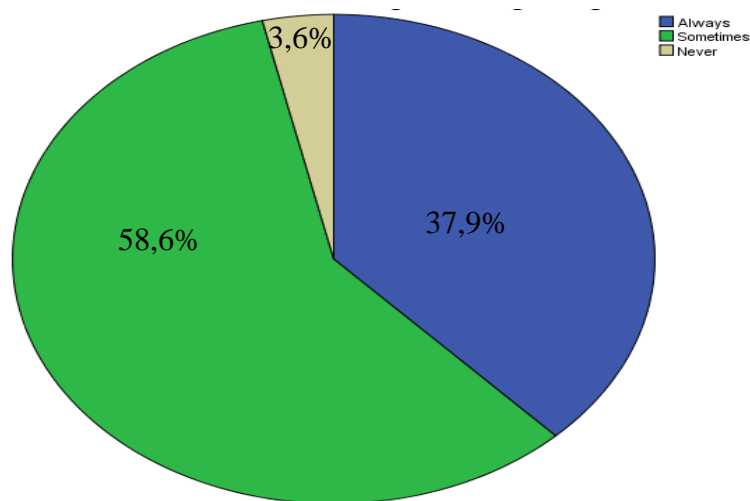
Figure 14: The guidance of the teacher inside classroom

Figure 14 indicates that the majority of students (58, 6%) reply that their teacher 'sometimes' guide them when writing inside the classroom, and (37, 9%) respond by 'always'. Yet, only few of the students (3, 6%) answer by 'never'.

**Question 12:** After finishing writing, does your teacher ask you to correct each other's drafts?
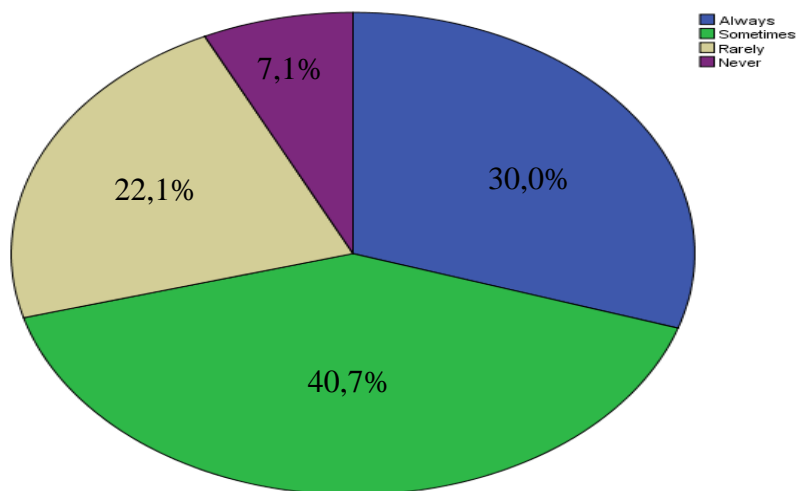
Figure 15: Peer correction

It appears from the Figure above that (40, 7%) of the students are 'sometimes' correct each others' drafts, while (30 %) of them choose the first option, which is 'always'. On the other hand, some students (22, 1%) claim that they are 'rarely' asked for peer correction, and (7, 1%) respond by 'never'.

**Question 13**: Your teacher corrects your essays immediately?
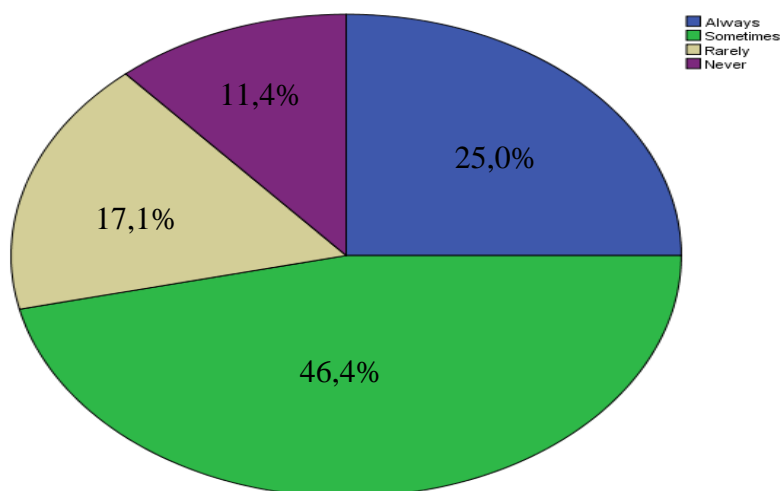
Figure 16: Teachers' immediate correction

Figure 13 shows that most of students (46, 4%) reveal that their teacher 'sometimes' corrects their essays immediately, while some of them (25%) answer by 'always'. Moreover, (17, 1%) of them answer by 'rarely', and (11, 4%) of them reply by 'never'.

Question 14: Do you think that teachers' feedback on your essays is important in developing your writing skills?
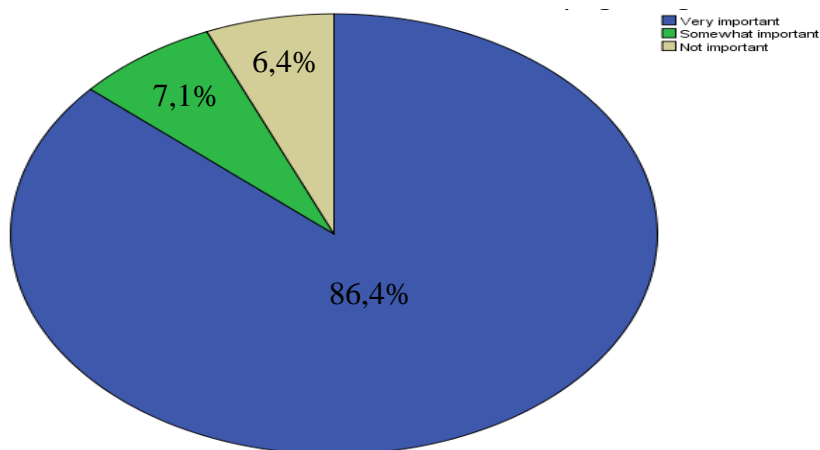

Figure 17: The role of teachers' feedback in developing writing skills

According to the results obtained from Figure 17, (86, 4%) of the students select the first option, which is 'very important', so that most of them are aware of the importance of teacher's feedback in developing writing skills.

**Question 15:** Are you able to write after getting sufficient guidance from your teacher?
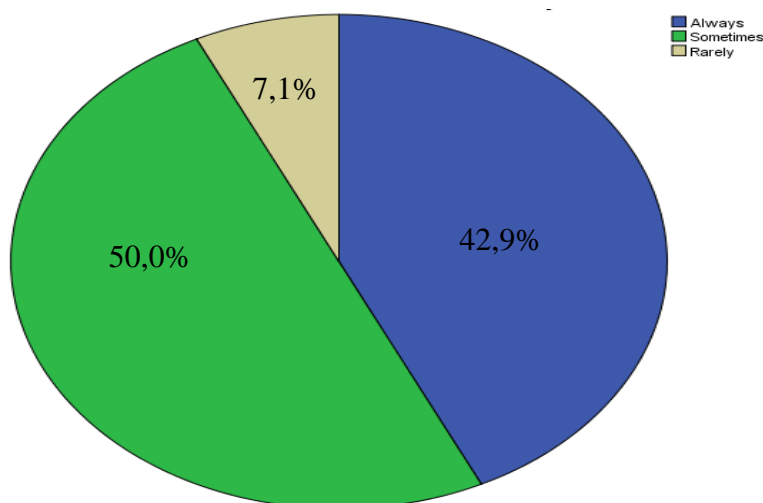
Figure 18: Students' autonomy

Half of students (50%) are sometimes able to write after getting sufficient guidance from their teacher, and (42, 9%) of them choose always. Yet, (7, 1%) of the students are rarely able to do that.

Question 16: Would you suggest some ways that can motivate you to write essays?

In this question, many suggestions are given by students concerning ways that motivate them to write inside the classroom. This proves that students are very interested in writing, and they want to improve their writing skills through different ways. For instance, some students suggest that fanny exercises, games, creative writing and competitions could be the best ways to motivate them to write. Others emphases on the variation of the topics that should be correspondent to their thoughts, levels and interests. Other suggestions are also yielded by students such as adding extra remedial sessions for more practice, using videos and documentaries, and so on.

3.3.1.2 Findings and Discussions

The results obtained from students' questionnaire analysis show some significant points that can be summarised in the following:

Second year EFL students have difficulties when writing essays, especially at the pre-writing stage due to the time given and the teaching method. Nevertheless, they overcome these difficulties gradually when they get the needed aid from their teacher. The latter plays an important role in facilitating the writing task through guiding EFL students, modeling the intended tasks, brainstorming ideas, asking for peer-correction and so on. Therefore, teachers' scaffolding is needed to highlight the role of EFL teachers in boosting their students' writing skills.

3.3.2 Description of teachers' questionnaire

Another questionnaire is addressed to teachers of written expression and comprehension on 11th March 2018 in the Department of Letters and English language, KMUO. It embraces two sections which are preceded by an introductory paragraph that provides the teachers with an idea about the research topic. The first section includes four (4) questions concerning basic information while the second one includes eight (8) questions about scaffolding students in the writing process (see Appendix B).

3.3.2.1 Analysis of teachers' questionnaire

Teacher's questionnaire embraces (12) questions that are the following:

Section one: Basic information

Question 1: How many years have you been teaching writing?
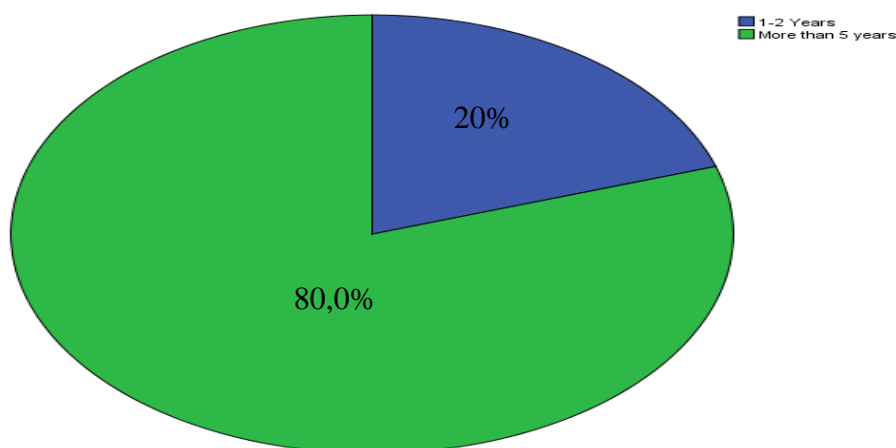
Figure 19: Teachers' experience on teaching writing

According to the given results in Figure 19, almost all the teachers (80%) are experienced in teaching writing because they have been teaching English for more than 5 years whereas only one is novice (20%).

**Question 2:** How many classes of writing usually teach?
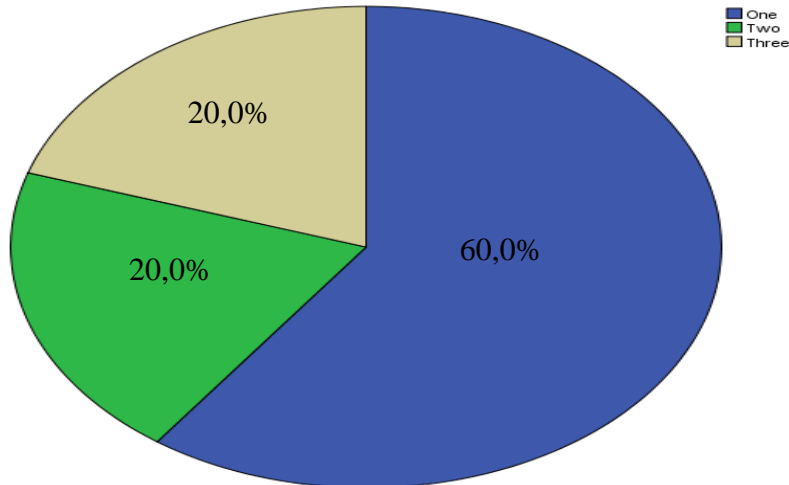
Figure 20: Number of classes

Concerning the results provided in Figure 20, most of the teachers have only one (60 %) class of writing. However, (20 %) of the teachers teach 'two classes' and (20 %) usually teach 'three classes'.

**Question 3:** What is the average number of students in your class of writing?
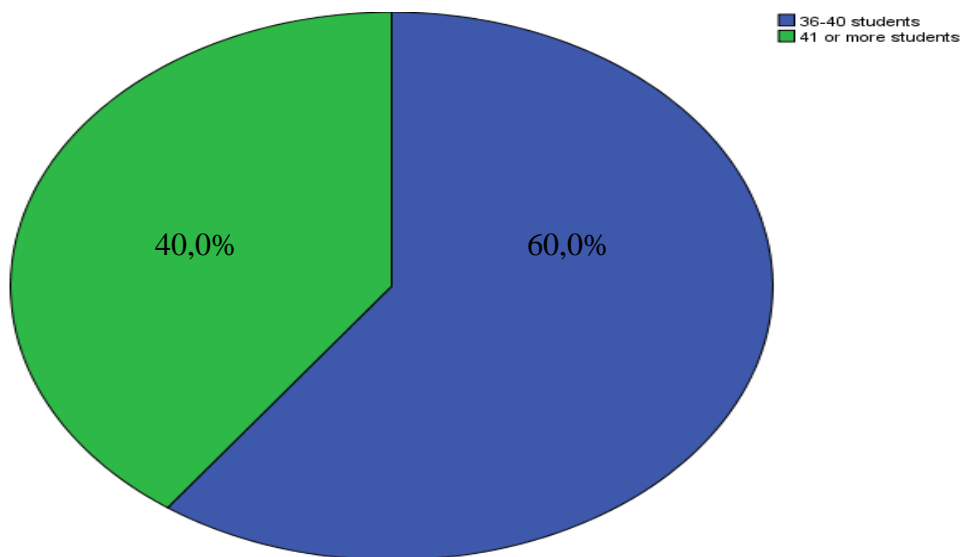
Figure 21: Students' number in the writing class

The results in Figure 21 show that more than half of the teachers (60%) have between (36-40) students in their writing classes while (40%) mention that they have 'more than 40 students' in the class.

Question 4: How can you describe your students' level?
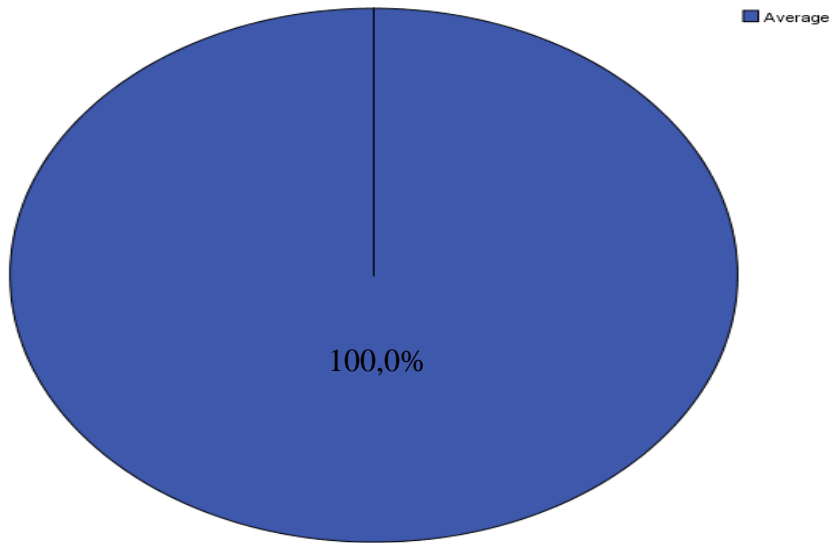
Figure 22: Students' level

All the teachers (100%) agree that their students' level in writing is average.

Section Two: Scaffolding students' writing

Question 5: Do your EFL learners struggle in writing essays?
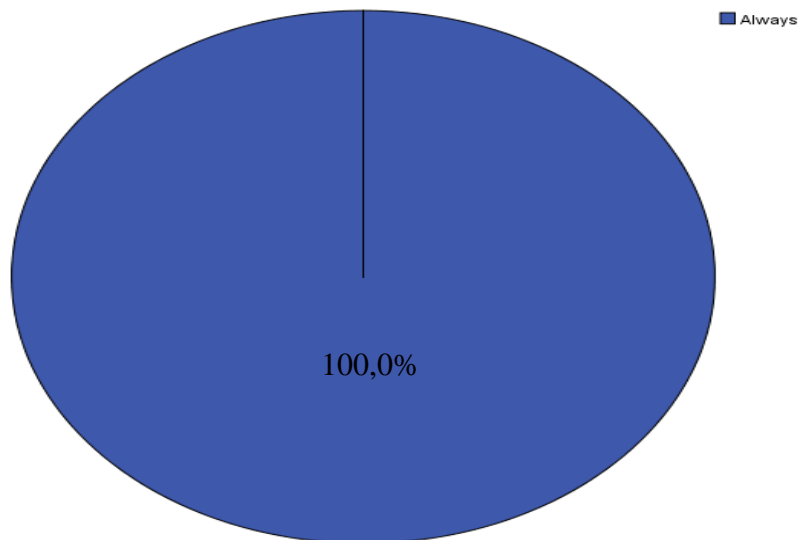

Figure 23: Students' difficulties in writing essays

The results obtained from Figure 20 reveal all the teachers (100%) agree that their students always struggle in writing essays.

Question 6: What are the common problems that your learners encounter when writing essays?
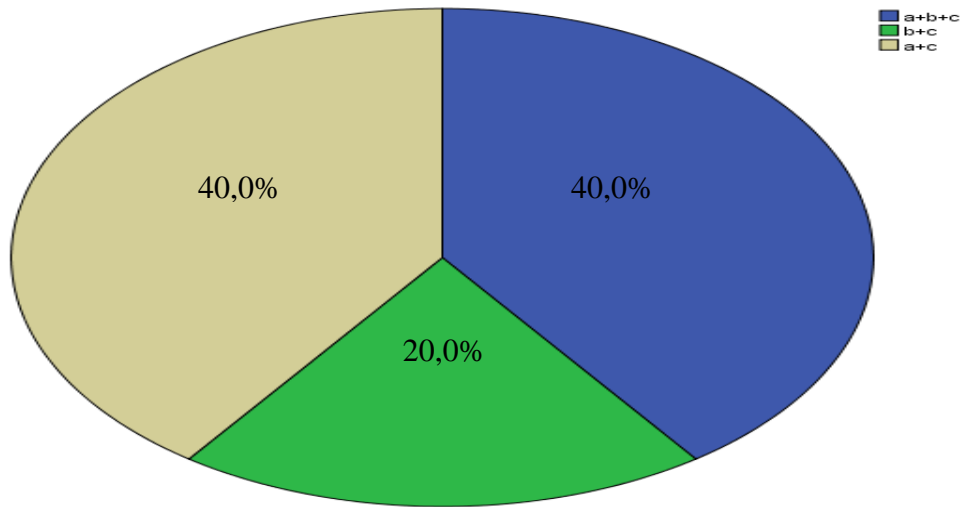
Figure 24: Common problems students encounter when writing essay.

(40%) of the teachers present that 'accuracy', 'mechanics', and 'lack of vocabulary or ideas' are the common problems that their students fall in when writing essays. Also, (40%) of them respond by 'accuracy' and 'lack of vocabulary or ideas', but (20%) reply by 'mechanics' and 'lack of vocabulary or ideas'. It is noticed that all the teachers agree that lack of vocabulary or ideas is the common problem that students encounter when writing their essays.

**Question 7:** Which solutions do you adopt to solve those problems?
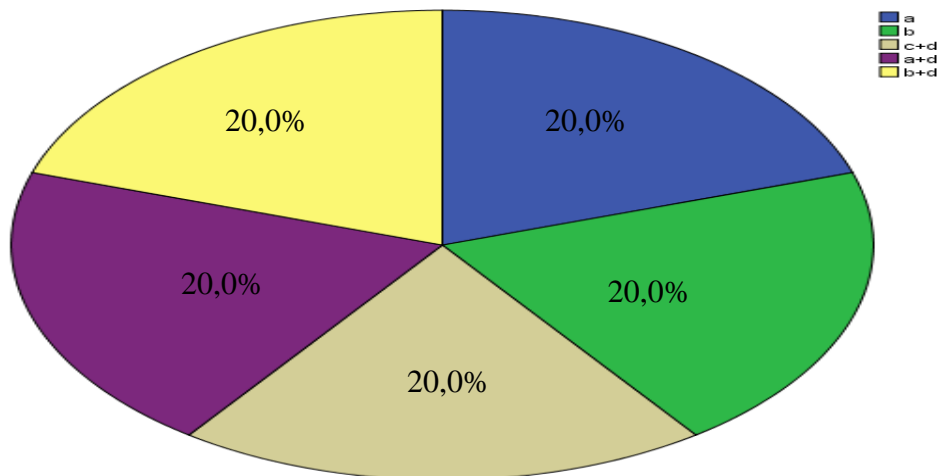
Figure 25: Teachers' solutions to solve students' problems

The teachers adopt different solutions to solve students' problems in writing. (20%) use 'reading', (20%) use 'modeling', and (20%)of the teachers also adopt both 'pair work' and 'group work' as a solution. Moreover, (20%) mention that they use 'reading' and 'group work' to solve their students' mistakes as well as (20%) use 'modeling' and 'group work'.

Question 8: At what writing stage do you apply scaffolding strategies with your students?
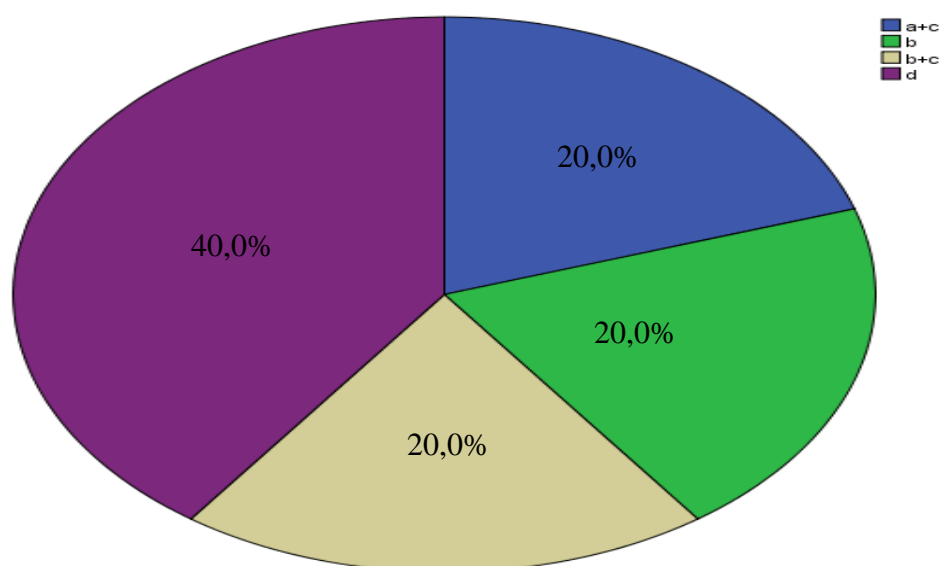
Figure 26: The application of scaffolding strategies

The results in Figure 26 show that (40%) of the teachers apply the scaffolding techniques 'in all stages' of writing process. On the other hand, (20%) of the teachers state that they use these technique 'before' and 'after writing', and (20%) apply them during and 'after writing'. Yet, (20%) of them reply that the implementation of scaffolding techniques takes place only 'during writing'.

Question 9: On which basis do your learners receive your scaffolding?
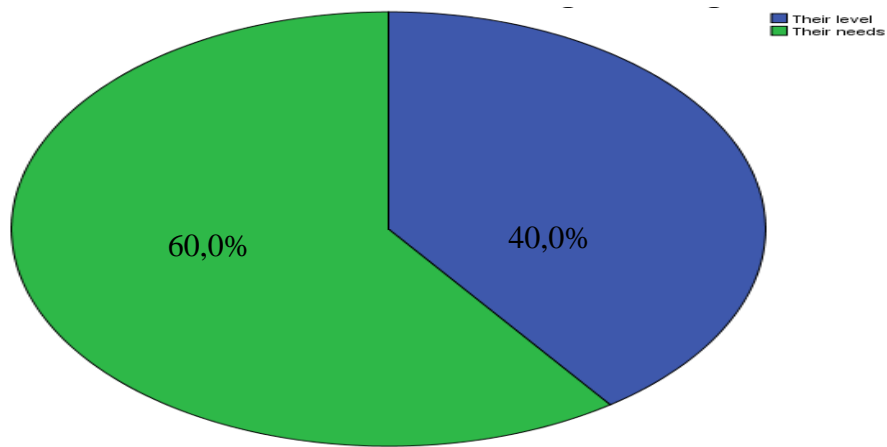

Figure 27: The basis of receiving scaffolding

The results obtained from Figure27show that the majority of teachers (60%) provide their students with scaffolding 'on the basis of their needs', while (40%) maintain that scaffolding is given according to students' level.

Question 10: Which of the following do you think is an effective way to facilitate the writing task for your learners?
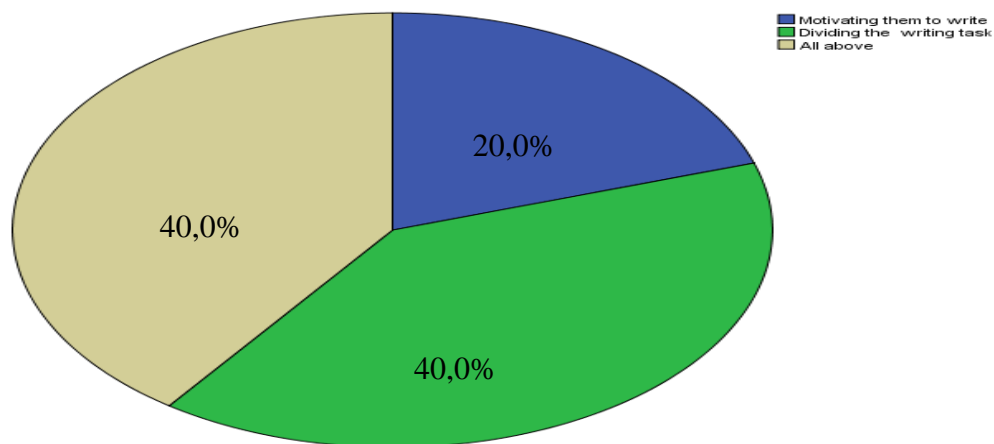

Figure 28: Teachers' ways to facilitate the writing task

(40%) of the teachers think that 'dividing the writing task' is an effective way to facilitate it for their students, as well as (40%) select 'all stated options', i.e. motivating

students to write, simplifying and dividing. In contrast, only (20%) of the teachers prefer to 'motivate students to write'.

Question 11: What teaching techniques are you implementing in your writing classes?
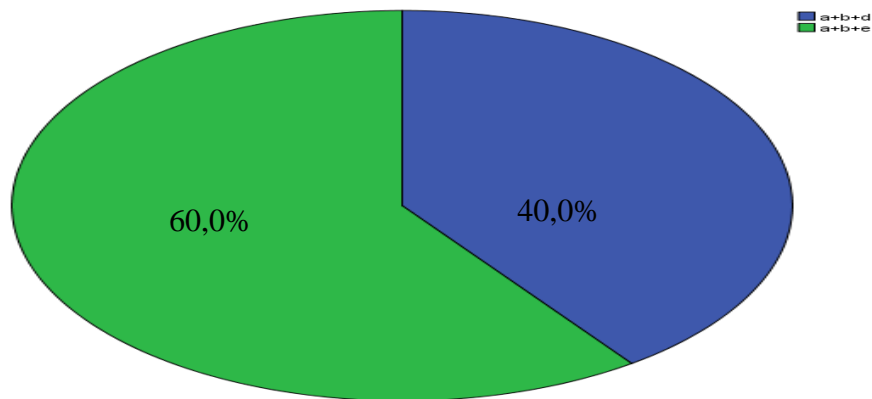

Figure 29: Teaching techniques in the writing class

The majority of the teachers (60%) claim that: 'modeling' 'brainstorming' and 'questioning' are the main teaching techniques that they implement in their writing classes. Others (40 %) state that they use 'modeling', 'brainstorming' and 'peer scaffolding'. However, none of them mention 'drawing' technique.

Question 12: Do the scaffolding strategies you are applying reflect your students' essays writing?
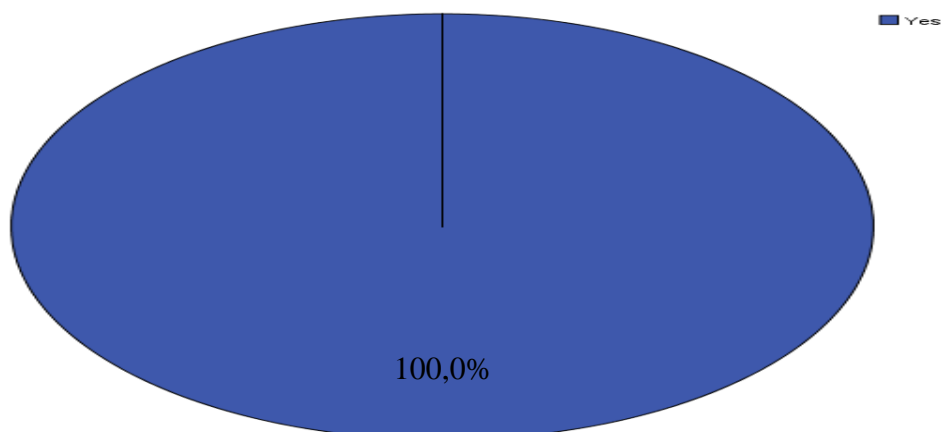

Figure 30: The reflection of scaffolding strategies in students' essay writing

(100%) of the teachers reveal the fact that scaffolding strategies that they are use reflect on students' essays writing. That is to say, students are able to produce essays after gaining sufficient support from the teacher. This proves that scaffolding is very effective.

3.3.2.2 Findings and discussions

The interpretation of teachers' questionnaire indicates that several techniques of scaffolding are used by the teachers. The latter use those techniques in order to enhance students' writing and to help them to overcome difficulties that face them in essays' writing. Since most of the teachers are experienced in teaching writing, they know when to use scaffolding and how to apply it in order to improve their students' level in writing.

In addition, the findings of the questionnaire show that during the stages of the writing process, teachers scaffold EFL students on the basis of their needs and level. Moreover, this kind of scaffolding affects students' written production, and it motivates them to write more essays.

3.3.3 Description of the classroom observation

According to Kumar (2011), observation is not only purposeful, but also it is systematic and selective way which enables the researcher to watch and to listen to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place. It is also considered as the most appropriate tool to gather authentic data from the context of the study. Furthermore, the reason behind observing the EFL classes of writing at KMUO is to ensure the results of the questionnaires. Also, classroom observation is an appropriate tool since it goes with the qualitative method.

Classroom observation sheet, which has been used, embraces an introduction that includes general information which are: the name of the observer, class, group, the topic of

the session, the module, date and time, and objectives. The second section deals with the way the teacher delivers the lesson and scaffolds the students in the writing process. The third section includes remarks and observations while the last one is devoted for comments (see Appendix C).

3.3.3.1 The analysis of classroom observation

After attending ten (10) sessions with second year students and their teacher of written in the classroom (starting from 15th March to 12th of April), the following observations were made:

On the basis of the criteria that we have set (items from 1to 4), it is observed that in the planning stage (Prewriting), the teacher introduced the lesson through providing students with a model of the intended task. Students read the model and then they discussed its features with their teacher. The latter commented on students' answers through immediate feedback. Furthermore, after students became familiar with the topic of the new task, the teacher used brainstorming in which students tried to generate ideas about the topic. It is remarked that the strategy of modeling the activity of brainstorming was more effective because it allowed students to interact with their teacher, to save time, and to be motivated to write.

In the second stage, which is drafting, students wrote their rough draft after they brainstormed ideas. In this stage, it is observed that the teacher used the strategy of questioning in which several questions were asked. Those questions concerned the intended task such as the purpose of the topic, the audience, the thesis statement, the topic sentences, and so on. This strategy directed and guided learners, and helped them build well structured essays.

In revising stage, it is observed that the teacher asked the learner to exchange each other's essay drafts. As a result, the teacher's role was reduced while students' role was increased. As it is remarked, students tended to underline grammatical mistakes, spelling mistakes, or only addressed capitalization and punctuation. In this regard, although peer-correction is an effective strategy in writing, it is sometimes insufficient with low achievers students. Hence, teacher's intervention is still needed in this stage.

In the proofreading/publishing stage, after students corrected their mistakes, the final version was prepared for publishing. Thus, it is observed that students read their essays before the audience i.e. classmates. In this case, the teacher commented on students' final products and collects them. Also, the teacher asked the students to do another task independently as homework.

3.3.3.2 Findings and discussions

According to the observation that has been done, we infer that EFL students benefit from their teacher's scaffolding which allows them to process all stages of writing. In addition, it enables them to overcome the difficulties of the writing tasks through using different techniques such as brainstorming that could help them in enhancing their essay writing. Teacher's scaffolding also plays an important role in raising the interaction whether between the teacher and students or among students themselves, and it increases students' motivation to write as a result of their positive attitudes towards teacher's scaffolding.

Conclusion

To conclude, Chapter Three dealt with the methodology of the research as well as results and discussions. It covered the methodology, sampling and setting, and research instruments. It also tackled the description of each instrument and its analysis. Based on

the results of the two questionnaires and the classroom observation, it is noticeable that EFL learners can improve their level in writing through the scaffolding provided by their teachers.

General conclusion

General conclusion

The current research work attempted to explore the impact of teachers' scaffolding on enhancing EFL students' essay writing in the EFL classroom and to recognize the attitudes that they hold toward it. To reach these aims, both questionnaires and classroom observation were conducted. Questionnaires were carried out with second year LMD students of English and teachers of written comprehension and expression at KMUO. The findings of students' questionnaire revealed that second year EFL students struggle when they try to write essays because of the lack of vocabulary, ideas, and mechanics. However, their difficulties are reduced gradually as they receive sufficient support from the teacher. Furthermore, the findings of teachers' questionnaire showed that teachers always attempt to develop their students' level in writing through the use of various techniques of scaffolding that help in facilitating the writing tasks. In addition, it is appeared from the analysis of this questionnaire that teacher's scaffolding is based on students' needs and level, and it exists in all stages of the writing process. On the other hand, the analysis of classroom observation proved that teachers' scaffolding encourages teacher-students interaction in the EFL classroom and increases students' motivation toward essays' writing due to their positive attitudes.

It is also ensured that the strategy of teachers' scaffolding truly has an impact on students' essay writing in the EFL classroom since it is reflected on their writings and their attitudes towards writing. Also, this strategy motivates EFL learners to write more essays independently after obtaining sufficient guidance from their teachers.

Based on the findings of the present research work, it appears that teachers' scaffolding has a great impact on enhancing EFL students' writing skills and increasing their interest to write. Therefore, it would be better for teachers to apply scaffolding strategies in teaching other skills such as reading and speaking because language skills are

integrated. Additionally, since teachers' scaffolding proved its effectiveness in reducing learners' frustration, teachers can implement it in teaching other subjects.

Further studies may also investigate scaffolding from different angles such the relationship between scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development or students-students scaffolding. Moreover, future researchers may adopt other tools for data collection as using experiments or surveys because they may help to gain detailed information.

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Appendix A: Students' questionnaire

Kasdi Merbah University Ouargla

Faculty of Letters and languages

Department of Letters and English language

Dear students,

We are conducting a study on the impact of teachers' scaffolding on students' essay writing in the EFL classroom. Thus, you are kindly requested to answer the following questions in order to help us in obtaining data for our research work.

Thanks in advance.

Section one: The writing process

1.   How do you find writing in English?

   a. Very easy ☐   b. Easy ☐   c. difficult ☐   d. Very difficult ☐

2.   Your current level in writing is?

   a. Acceptable ☐   b. Good ☐   c. Very good ☐   d. Excellent ☐

3.   Do you have some difficulties when writing essays?

   a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

4. If "Yes", what are the main difficulties that you face?

a. Grammar ☐   c. Structuring (information organization) ☐

b. Mechanics ☐   d. Lack of vocabulary or ideas ☐

e. Others ☐

Specify…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

5. These difficulties are due to?

a. Time given ☐   c. Teaching method ☐

b. Lack of motivation to write ☐   d. Other reasons ☐

Specify…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………

6. What stage of the writing process is the most difficult for you?

a. Pre-writing ☐   c. Editing ☐

b. Drafting ☐   d. Proofreading/Publishing ☐

Section two: Teachers' scaffolding

7. Does your teacher help you before you start writing?

a. Always ☐   b. Sometimes ☐   c. Never ☐

8. When your teacher introduces a new task, does s/he provide a model to follow?

a. Always ☐   b. Sometimes ☐   c. Rarely ☐   d. Never ☐

9. How do you prefer to work in order to make any writing task in the classroom?

a. Individually ☐   b. In pairs ☐   c. In groups ☐

10. Which techniques does your teacher use with you before you start writing?

a. Brainstorming [ ]   c. Mapping [ ]

b. Free writing [ ]   d. All the stated above [ ]

e. Other techniques [ ]

Specify………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

11. Does your teacher guide you when writing inside classroom?

a. Always [ ]   b. Sometimes [ ]   c. Never [ ]

12. After finishing writing, does your teacher ask you to correct each other's drafts?

a. Always [ ]   b. Sometimes [ ]   c. Rarely [ ]   d. Never [ ]

13. Your teacher corrects your essays immediately:

a. Always [ ]   b. Sometimes [ ]   c. Rarely [ ]   d. Never [ ]

14. Do you think that teachers feedback on your essay is important in developing your writing skills?

 a. Very important [ ]   b. Somewhat important [ ]   c. Not important [ ]

15. Are you able to write after getting sufficient guidance from your teacher?

a. Always [ ]   b. Sometimes [ ]   c. Rarely [ ]d. Never [ ]

16. Would you suggest some ways that can motivate you to write essays?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

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Appendix B: Teachers' questionnaire

Kasdi Merbah University Ouargla

Faculty of Letters and languages

Department of letters and English language

Dear Teacher,

We would be so grateful if you would collaborate with us and answer the following questions concerning our research topic which is about the impact of teacher's scaffolding on students' essay writing in the EFL classroom.

Thanks in advance.

Section one: Basic information

1. How many years have you been teaching writing?

    1-2 years ☐   3-5 years ☐   More than 5 years ☐

2. How many class of writing usually teach?

    a. One ☐ b. Two ☐ c. Three ☐ d. More than three ☐

3. What is the average number of students in your class of writing?

a. 25-30 students ☐   c. 36-40 students ☐

b. 31-35 students ☐   d. 41 or more students ☐

4. How can you describe your students' level?

a. Poor ☐   b. Average ☐   c. Good ☐

Section Two: Scaffolding students' writing

5. Do your EFL learners struggle in writing essays?

    a. Always ☐   b. Sometimes ☐   c. Never ☐

6. What are the common problems that your learners encounter when writing essays?

    a. Accuracy ☐   b. Mechanics ☐   d. Lack of vocabulary or ideas ☐

7. Which solutions do you adopt to solve those problems?

    a. Reading ☐   c. Pair work ☐

    b. Modeling ☐   d. Group work ☐

8. At what stage of writing do you apply scaffolding techniques with your students?

    a. Before writing ☐   c. After writing ☐

    b. During writing ☐   d. In all stages ☐

9. On which basis do your learners receive your scaffolding?

  a. Their level ☐   b. Their writing abilities ☐   c. Their needs ☐

10. Which of the following do you think is an effective way to facilitate the writing task for your learners?

    a. Motivating them to write ☐   c. Dividing the writing task ☐

    b. Simplifying the writing task ☐   d. All the above ☐

11. What teaching techniques are you implementing in your writing classes?

    a. Modeling ☐   d. Questioning ☐

    b. Brainstorming ☐   e. Peer scaffolding ☐

    c. Drawing ☐   f. All the above ☐

12. Do the scaffolding strategies you are applying reflect in your students' essays writing?

    a. Yes ☐   b. No ☐

Appendix C: Classroom observation sheet

Kasdi Merbah University Ouargla

Faculty of Letters and languages

Department of Letters and English language

This sheet aims at observing the role of teacher's scaffolding in enhancing EFL students' essay writing.

Name of the observers:
Class: 2nd year License
Group: Module: Written comprehension and expression
The topic of the session :   Date and time:
Objective:

Stages of the writing process	The way the teacher delivers the lesson	Yes/ No	Students' response and reaction	Remarks and observation	Comments
1.Planning	-The teacher starts the lesson with a model for the intended task. - The teacher uses brainstorming, mapping, listing and clustering.				
2.Drafting	- The teacher uses questioning techniques for more practice as a kind of scaffolding. -The teacher uses other techniques.				
3.Revising/ Editing	-The teacher uses peer correction. -The teacher asks students to work in group work. -The teacher uses other activities with students.				
4.Proofreadi-ng/ Publishig	- The teacher gives immediate feedback and comments on the final product of students. - The teacher collect the final product in order to read it later and write comments and remarks. -The teacher provides students with checklist to evaluate their own final essays.				

Appendix D: Tables of students' questionnaire

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very Easy	8	5,7	5,7	5,7
	Easy	62	44,3	44,3	44,3
	Difficult	67	47,9	47,9	47,9
	Very Difficult	3	2,1	2,1	2,1
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table1: Students' attitudes towards writing in English

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Acceptable	75	53,6	53,6	53,6
	Good	51	36,4	36,4	90,0
	Very good	13	9,3	9,3	99,3
	Excellent	1	,7	,7	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 2: Students' current level in writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	140	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 3: Difficulties in essay writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Grammar	21	15,0	15,0	15,0
	Mechanics	37	26,4	26,4	41,4
	Lack of vocabulary	43	30,7	30,7	72,1
	Structuring (information organizing)	33	23,6	23,6	95,7
	Others	6	4,3	4,3	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 4: Difficulties students face in writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Time given	46	32,9	32,9	32,9
	Teaching method	37	26,4	26,4	59,3
	Lack of motivation	35	25,0	25,0	84,3
	Other reasons	22	15,7	15,7	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 5: Reasons behind facing difficulties in writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Pre-writing	62	44,3	44,3	44,3
	Drafting	35	25,0	25,0	69,3
	Editing/Revising	26	18,6	18,6	87,9
	Proofreading/Publishing	17	12,1	12,1	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 6: The most difficult stage of writing for students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	40	28,6	28,6	28,6
	Sometimes	86	61,4	61,4	90,0
	Never	14	10,0	10,0	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 7: The help of the teacher before writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	56	40,0	40,0	40,0
	Sometimes	54	38,6	38,6	78,6
	Rarely	23	16,4	16,4	95,0
	Never	7	5,0	5,0	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 8: Teachers' modelling of the writing task

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Individually	64	45,7	45,7	45,7
	In pairs	38	27,1	27,1	72,9
	In groups	38	27,1	27,1	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 9: Students' preferred way in writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Brainstorming	42	30,0	30,0	30,0
	Free writing	39	27,9	27,9	57,9
	Mapping	35	25,0	25,0	82,9
	All statedabove	22	15,7	15,7	98,6
	Other techniques	2	1,4	1,4	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 10: Techniques used by the teacher before writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	53	37,9	37,9	37,9
	Sometimes	82	58,6	58,6	96,4
	Never	5	3,6	3,6	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 11: Teacher's guide during writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	42	30,0	30,0	30,0
	Sometimes	57	40,7	40,7	70,7
	Rarely	31	22,1	22,1	92,9
	Never	10	7,1	7,1	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 12: Peer correction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	35	25,0	25,0	25,0
	Sometimes	65	46,4	46,4	71,4
	Rarely	24	17,1	17,1	88,6
	Never	16	11,4	11,4	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 13: Teachers' immediate correction

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very important	121	86,4	86,4	86,4
	Somewhat important	10	7,1	7,1	93,6
	Not important	9	6,4	6,4	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 14: The role of teachers' feedback in developing writing skills

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	60	42,9	42,9	42,9
	Sometimes	70	50,0	50,0	92,9
	Rarely	10	7,1	7,1	100,0
	Total	140	100,0	100,0	

Table 15: Students' autonomy

Appendix E: Tables of teachers' questionnaire

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-2 Years	1	20,0	20,0	20,0
	More than 5 years	4	80,0	80,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 16: Teachers' experience on teaching writing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	One	3	60,0	60,0	60,0
	Two	1	20,0	20,0	80,0
	Three	1	20,0	20,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 17: Number of class

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	36-40 students	3	60,0	60,0	60,0
	41 or more students	2	40,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 18: Students' number in the writing class

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Average	5	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 19: Students' level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	5	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 20: Students' difficulties in writing essays

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	a+b+c	2	40,0	40,0	40,0
	b+c	1	20,0	20,0	60,0
	a+c	2	40,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 21: Common problems students encounter when writing essay

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	a	1	20,0	20,0	20,0
	b	1	20,0	20,0	40,0
	c+d	1	20,0	20,0	60,0
	a+d	1	20,0	20,0	80,0
	b+d	1	20,0	20,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 22: Teachers' solutions to solve students' problems

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	a+c	1	20,0	20,0	20,0
	b	1	20,0	20,0	40,0
	b+c	1	20,0	20,0	60,0
	d	2	40,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 23: The application of scaffolding strategies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Their level	2	40,0	40,0	40,0
	Their needs	3	60,0	60,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 24: The basis of receiving scaffolding

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Motivating them to write	1	20,0	20,0	20,0
	Dividing the writing task	2	40,0	40,0	60,0
	All above	2	40,0	40,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 25: Teachers' ways to facilitate the writing task

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	a+b+d	2	40,0	40,0	40,0
	a+b+e	3	60,0	60,0	100,0
	Total	5	100,0	100,0	

Table 26: Teaching techniques in the writing class

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	5	100,0	100,0	100,0

Table 27: The reflection of scaffolding strategies on students' essays writing

Résumé

L'échafaudage pédagogique est un soutien effectué par l'enseignant à l'égard de l'élève pour le rendre capable réaliser des activités qui sont au départ au dessus de sa capacité. C'est une stratégie efficace adoptée par les enseignants afin de développer les compétences des apprenants. A ce propos cette étude vise les objectifs suivants : découvrir l'impact de cette stratégie sur les étudiants de la langue anglaise en tant langue étrangère. Ensuite, connaitre les opinons des étudiants de deuxième année sur cette stratégie mise en œuvre par leurs enseignants. Cette recherche est effectuée sur les étudiants de deuxième année licence de même département auxquels nous avons distribué un questionnaire. Nous avant aussi mène une observation en classe pour récolter des données à ce sujet. L'étude à démontré clairement que cette stratégie a permis l'amélioration de la réalisation de l'écriture d'essais. Nous avons enfin fait des propositions pédagogiques à ce sujet qui pourrait faire l'objet de futures recherches.

Mots clés : les étudiants d'anglais comme langue étrangère, essai, les échafaudage de l'enseignants, l'écriture.

الملخص

تعتبر السقالات نوع من أنواع المساعدة التي يقدمها الأساتذة لمساعدة طلبتهم في انجاز مهام قد تتجاوز قدراتهم. وهي استراتجية فعالة كثيرا ما يتبناها المدرسون لتنمية أداء طلبتهم. ولهذا فان الدراسة الحالية تهدف إلى استكشاف أثر هذه السقالات على طلبة اللغة الانجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية حين كتابتهم مقالات. كما تسعى هذه الدراسة أيضا إلى معرفة أراء طلبة اللغة الانجليزية قسم الاداب واللغة الانجليزية في تطبق هذه الإستراتجية من قبل أساتذتهم. تم إجراء هذه الدراسة مع طلبة السنة الثانية ليسانس في نفس القسم, وقد تم هذا البحث بالاعتماد على استبيانين والقيام بملاحظة داخل إستراتجية السقالات التي يتبناها الأساتذة كان لها الأثر الفصل من اجل جمع المعطيات. وقد أظهرت النتائج النهائية أن الواضح في تحسين عملية الكتابة عند الطلبة و ختمت الدراسة باقتراح بعض الخطط البيداغوجية التي تمهد الطريق لدراسات لاحقة.

الكلمات المفتاحية :طلبة اللغة الانجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية،مقال،سقالات الأساتذة، الكتابة.