

Teachers' Feedback Contribution to the Reinforcement of Students' Writing Competence in Light of AI Widespread: Third-Year EFL Student at Saida University as a Case Study

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Abstract

One of the fundamental skills required in the process of language learning is writing; however, it is the most challenging one as well. EFL Students' deficiency in writing skills is due to the accumulation of different factors such as the limited time allotted for Written Expression, the lack of constructive feedback from teachers, and the influence of Artificial Intelligence mainly after the pandemic. Most learners nowadays show total dependence on using Artificial Intelligence to carry out their assignments; this issue affected negatively their writing level. The present research paper aims to examine the vital role of Written Expression teachers' feedback to reinforce 3rd-year students' writing skills to overcome the potential risks of AI widespread. The investigation made use of both students' questionnaire and teachers' interview at the Department of English as research tools to achieve the desired objectives. Findings proved that teacher feedback has a crucial role in the improvement of students' production.

Keywords: AI impact, reinforcement of students' writing skill, students' deficiency, teacher's feedback, Written Expression

ملخص

إحدى المهارات الأساسية المطلوبة في عملية تعلم اللغة هي الكتابة؛ ومع ذلك، فهي الأكثر تحدياً أيضاً. يرجع نقص طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في مهارة الكتابة إلى تراكم عوامل مختلفة مثل الوقت المحدود المخصص لـ WE، نقص التعليقات البناءة من المعلمين وتأثير الذكاء الاصطناعي بشكل رئيسي بعد الوباء. يُظهر معظم المتعلمين في الوقت الحاضر اعتماداً كلياً على استخدام الذكاء الاصطناعي في تنفيذ واجباتهم، وقد أثر هذا الأمر سلباً على مستوى كتابتهم. تهدف الورقة البحثية الحالية قبل كل شيء إلى دراسة الدور الحيوي لملاحظات معلمي التعبير الكتابي في تعزيز مهارات الكتابة لدى طلاب السنة الثالثة من أجل التغلب على المخاطر المحتملة لانتشار الذكاء الاصطناعي على نطاق واسع. وقد استخدم البحث كلاً من استبيان الطالب ومقابلة المعلم في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية كأدوات بحث لتحقيق الأهداف المرجوة. أثبتت النتائج أن لملاحظات المعلم دوراً حاسماً في تحسين إنتاج الطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تأثير الذكاء الاصطناعي، تعزيز مهارة الكتابة لدى الطلاب، قصور الطلاب، ردود فعل المعلمين ، التعبير الكتابي.

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Introduction

Receiving constructive feedback from the teacher is a triumph for most learners. First, students require teachers' comments about their written forms to make improvements. Second, they also need to build a strong relationship with their teachers to work in a cooperative atmosphere. However, the absence of trust between teachers and their students will generate a feeling of fear from negative feedback especially with learners having low self-esteem. Besides, students also need praise for their efforts and earnest attempts to write even when they are not right. Effective praise will encourage students to be persistent and never stop writing.

However, in large classrooms, teachers cannot provide feedback to all the students, about the different activities and assignments they take in class. In this case, students will not be able to overcome their difficulties and consequently, they will not achieve progress in their studies. In the same line of thought, Bailey (2008) maintained that "regular feedback through one-on-one interaction between students and lecturers could be impossible and the focus would only be on pass rates" (p.2). As far as the Written Expression subject is concerned, the lack of teachers' feedback makes students unconscious of their mistakes and their lack of writing; thus, they will be unable to improve their writing skills. Moreover, teachers noticed an apparent deficiency in writing competence among EFL students after the pandemic. In fact, during the lockdown, the Algerian universities adopted online learning as an alternative to face-to-face learning. Yet, this distance learning harmed the learning process since no interaction was possible between teachers and learners at that period.

Through time, students could not produce any correct written form by themselves. Therefore, they were highly motivated to take advantage of the new technology AI to generate paragraphs and essays. The use of AI for students facilitated content production, yet it resulted in their lack of creativity and inspiration.

To sum up, teachers' feedback is essential for learners to facilitate their writing, and to make progress in learning writing skills. Nevertheless, some factors have a massive impact on EFL students' acquisition of writing skills, such as large classrooms and limited time allotted to W.E. subjects. These factors result in the absence of continuous and practical feedback from teachers, which prevents students from being involved in the learning process. Furthermore, the overuse of AI influenced students' productivity and originality.

EFL teachers have always been interested in improving students' level of writing. Nevertheless, students' deficiency was noticeable in their written productions including; assignments, exam sheets and final research works. In short, many factors contributed to the writing deficiency of EFL students. For example, some noteworthy factors are the limited time allocated to Written Expression sessions; large classes teachers cannot manage; the lack of teachers' feedback in class; the influence of the pandemic that affected students' level of productivity, besides their overuse of AI to generate different written forms. In this regard, the current research paper aims to find an answer to the following questions:

Q1: What are the main challenges hindering students from writing in class?

Q2: To what extent is teachers' feedback in class helpful for students to improve their writing?

Q3: To what extent do students use Artificial Intelligence to produce written forms?

In this vein, the researcher proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Third-year students at the Department of English have many difficulties that lead to their deficiency in writing skills, such as the lack of practice of reading and writing, lack of

motivation in writing, lack of reasonable approach to teaching writing, and the lack of teachers' feedback in class.

H2: Teachers' feedback has a vital role in improving students' writing skills; they can provide support guidance and valuable comments that have an essential impact on students' written productions.

H3: Most third-year students at Saida University tend to use Artificial Intelligence to write different forms in English.

Literature Review

Teaching Writing

One of the significant factors that affect learning writing skills in Algeria is teachers' methods of instruction. Undoubtedly, teachers' methodology plays an essential role in achieving better learning; i.e., effective teaching means successful learning. In effect, teachers are responsible for providing guidance and support, assuring continuous assessment based on constructive feedback, and creating a compelling setting for their students, thus increasing their motivation to learn.

Furthermore, generally, when we say teaching, we say a teacher, and when we say a teacher, we say classroom, which is a suitable place to practice writing, under the direction and control of the teacher. Moreover, students acquire writing skills effectively when they make errors and receive corrective feedback and guidance from their teachers. Of course, teachers should not restrict practice to the classroom. It starts inside it and continues outside it. As a result, teaching writing takes place primarily in class for the countless privileges the class has. First of all, the learning environment in class is unique and irreplaceable, as it offers learners the opportunity to be familiar with appropriate and accurate written forms selected by the teacher. Second, it also gives them the chance to study in a collaborative environment based on different interactions with their teachers and their peers. Third, teachers' feedback is pivotal in reinforcing students' writing skills. In essence, teachers' insightful comments on students' written forms are essential to improve their writing level and encourage them to enhance their level of writing proficiency.

Despite the numerous advantages of learning in real classrooms, it also has many limitations. Above all, the allocated time for Written Expression subjects is three (3) hours per week, which is insufficient compared to the program contents. One hour and a half is not enough for a Written Expression subject, as teachers need to ensure effective practice of the different elements taught, mainly with a large number of students in class. Accordingly, teaching large classes is another difficulty preventing teachers from offering feedback to all the students in each group. In this respect, Earthman (2002) maintained that "Evidence continues to accumulate that shows that reducing class size improves students' achievement, reduces discipline problems, and provides a lasting benefit to both students and teachers" (p. 13). In other words, large classes are a barrier standing in the way of teachers, who cannot do their job perfectly since they cannot complete checking assignments in class. Also, they cannot offer immediate and detailed feedback to every student; consequently, they cannot ensure students' engagement in written tasks. In this case, students also can neither learn efficiently nor achieve progress in their studies in general and in learning writing in particular.

On the other hand, the lockdown, caused by the coronavirus pandemic, harmed the learning process. In this period, online learning replaced face-to-face learning; consequently,

learners had no direct interaction with their teachers and peers in real classrooms. Later, after about three years of distance learning, learners showed a catastrophic deficiency in their writing skills, in addition to an ignorance of the basics of the writing skill. Furthermore, students, lately have shown an immense dependence on using AI to do most of their writing tasks, though, written forms generated by AI lack the creativity and personal touch of students. Alternatively, EFL students should write independently and have their style. Teachers may help their students overcome their reliance on AI through extensive guided writing tasks in class, but in this case, policymakers ought to allocate more time to Written Expression sessions.

Teaching Writing in Algeria

In the Algerian context, teaching writing skills has been always the concern of almost all teachers at the tertiary level for years (Ghodbane 2010; Guettaf 2014; Filali 2019; Marouf 2021; Nesba 2022; Sadouki 2023; Boukhelkhal, 2024). The quality of students' written production is highly recommended in the process of EFL learning since assignments, final examinations, projects and dissertations are all in the written form. On the other hand, EFL Students in Algeria have been struggling to write correctly and their deficiency in writing skills was extremely clear. Both their struggle and their deficiency intensified after the pandemic and the lockdown.

One of the major factors that affect learning writing in Algeria is teachers' methods of instruction. A teacher's methodology plays an important role in the achievement of better learning; i.e., effective teaching means successful learning. The teacher is responsible for providing guidance and support, assuring continuous assessment based on constructive feedback, and creating a compelling setting for their students thus increasing their motivation to learn. Recently, learners have been offered more opportunities to take responsibility for their learning as university students and to be successful workers in the future. In this regard, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research implemented the LMD system in all the Algerian Universities during the academic year 2004/2005. The primary goal of the LMD system is to foster the abovementioned skills required for 21st-century students: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication.

However, in Algeria, the allocated time for Written Expression subjects in Algerian Universities is three (3) hours per week, which is insufficient compared to the programme contents. For a Written Expression teacher, one hour and a half would not be enough for better practice of the elements taught mainly with a high number of students in class. Hence, teaching large classes is another difficulty facing writing instruction in the Algerian Universities. In this respect, Earthman (2002) maintained that "Evidence continues to accumulate that shows that reducing class size improves students' achievement, reduces discipline problems, and provides a lasting benefit to both students and teachers"(p. 13). Large classes are a barrier standing in the way of teachers, who are not able to do their job perfectly since assignments cannot be completed in class, also immediate and detailed feedback cannot be offered, and students' engagement cannot be assured. Furthermore, large classes prevent teachers from offering effective feedback to all the students in each group. In this line of thought, Bailey (2008) claimed that "regular feedback through one-on-one interaction between students and lecturers could be impossible and the focus would only be on pass rates"(p.2). As a result, students also will not be able to learn efficiently and achieve progress in their studies in general and in learning writing in particular.

On the other hand, the lockdown, caused by the coronavirus pandemic, harmed the

learning process. During this period, online learning replaced face-to-face learning; consequently, learners had no direct interaction with their teachers and peers. Furthermore, after about three years far from the classroom and the atmosphere of learning, learners showed a catastrophic deficiency in their writing skills and they forgot the basics of writing.

The Role of Teachers' Feedback in the Reinforcement of Writing

Teachers of Written Expression have a vital role in improving EFL students' writing competence owing to the valuable comments they can offer to their students. Teachers' support, guidance and continuous assessment are the keys to students' success in writing effectively. In this respect, Hyland (2002) argued that:

(...) fundamentally, writing is learned, rather than taught, and the teacher's best methods are flexibility and support. This means responding to the specific instructional context, particularly the age, first language and experience of the students, their writing purposes, and their target writing communities, and providing extensive encouragement in the form of meaningful contexts, peer involvement, prior texts, useful feedback and guidance in the writing process. (p.78)

In his definition, Hyland emphasizes teachers' role in facilitating the process of learning writing rather than teaching it. The accomplishment of this goal is principally via implementing the appropriate methods: flexibility and support, as portrayed by Hyland, who also calls attention to the educational environment and the significant factors that may affect it, such as students' age, their first language, writing intentions, etc. In short, to write effectively, students should receive feedback from peers and teachers; predominantly, teachers' feedback has a crucial role in the writing process.

Teaching Writing in the Age of Chat GPT

In the last decade, the world witnessed a significant technological advance in all the fields of life namely education. During this era, new technologies emerged to facilitate both learning and teaching processes, such as Artificial Intelligence that allowed teachers and learners to generate human-like content using ChatGPT applications. In light of the factors stated earlier, students have shown an immense dependence on using AI to do most of their writing tasks to overcome their deficiency in writing. ChatGPT is considered an effective learning tool for the development of educational contexts (Jiao et al., 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023; Susnjak, 2022; Zhai, 2022). This AI technology offers unlimited opportunities to educators and learners alike. Predominantly, it can answer questions and provide information on various topics (Jiao et al., 2023; Rudolph et al., 2023). Furthermore, it can generate content, translate, summarise and paraphrase. In short, "AI technologies offer new tools and applications that have the potential to transform traditional teaching and learning methods". (Adiguzel et al., 2023, para. 4)

On the other hand, despite its countless benefits, ChatGPT also has many drawbacks. First, written forms generated by AI lack critical thinking, creativity and the human touch of students. By contrast, EFL students should write independently and should have their own thoughts and style. Moreover, the risk of using AI by students to cheat in tests and exams. This will harm their learning progress and will consequently impede teachers' constructive feedback since they (teachers) are not aware of the actual level of their students. In addition, AI use causes many problems related to privacy, accuracy, and legal and ethical issues (Khalifa, Albadawy 2024). Accordingly, teachers may help their students by increasing their awareness

about the outcomes of total reliance on AI through guided writing tasks in class, but in this case, more time should be allotted to Written Expression sessions.

Teachers' Feedback in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

AI made a radical change in the sphere of education as an important source of information for together instructors and students. ChatGPT is believed to be an educational and learning tool that has the potential to replace search engines (AlAfnan, 2023). Nevertheless, the overuse of AI technologies to generate content in English hindered teachers' feedback. In this regard, Bakr and Al-Sofi (2024) highlighted the crucial and irreplaceable role of teachers in teaching writing even in the age of AI; they further emphasized that "AI-based tools should be seen as complementary rather than substitutes for teachers in editing and proofreading students' generated texts"(p.11). Students' use of ChatGPT applications to perform all their written tasks concealed their actual level in English. Moreover, teachers would not be able to recognize learners' weaknesses as well as their needs to provide support and guidance. Also, they would not be aware of their actual level in writing and whether they are making improvements or not. In this case, providing constructive feedback will be a difficult task for teachers as they cannot recognize students' errors and correct them or evaluate their style and language in AI-generated forms. Texts produced by ChatGPT applications are based on a product approach where the focus is only on the outcome while the process of writing is ignored. In effect, the progression of writing through various steps and consciousness about the different elements incorporated in the process of writing are the primary concerns of teachers and they are the key for efficient acquisition of writing skills. Teachers are also concerned with students' application of grammar rules, language structures and writing guidelines, in addition to their use of critical thinking, creativity, and most importantly leaving their personal touch in their written products. Moreover, ChatGPT may be used unethically by students either for cheating in examinations or for committing plagiarism to accomplish assignments, projects and final research works. This is considered academic dishonesty that leads to a serious impediment to academic and scientific progress. Certainly, unethical use of ChatGPT applications teachers presents a significant challenge for teachers to make a distinction between students' personal writing and AI-generated texts. Consequently, students' both overuse and unethical use of ChatGPT applications in the age of AI technologies impeded teachers' effective feedback.

Methodology

The present investigation is an exploratory study; it seeks to examine the most critical difficulties encountered by EFL learners in their process of learning writing and the essential role of teachers' feedback in overcoming these difficulties. Given that, the researchers used qualitative research methods to gather the data required for the study. First, the researchers directed a questionnaire to third-year students to scrutinize their significant challenges in writing in class and to know how they perceive teachers' feedback as an essential component to achieving progress in writing. Students' questionnaire also intends to expose students' use of Artificial Intelligence when writing, and most importantly it seeks to reveal the effect of AI use on their level of productivity. Second, to ensure diversity and reliability, the researchers planned an interview for Written Expression teachers; it aims to discover their understanding of students' writing difficulties; it further intends to know how teachers can contribute effectively to the progress of students' writing levels. Both the questionnaire and the interview provided qualitative data that put forward a deep examination of the process of learning writing, and,

thus, to identify students' existing challenges. Moreover, they served to gain a profound understanding of the fundamental role of Written Expression teachers with their constructive feedback to boost learners' writing proficiency and overcome their dependence on Artificial Intelligence.

Participants

The participants of the present research study are third-year students at the Department of English, University of Saida, Dr. Moulay Tahar, during the academic year 2023/2024. The sample population was randomly selected; the researcher chose 23 students from different groups. The motivation behind the selection of third-year students is to reveal the significant writing difficulties that prevented them from achieving proficiency in writing. In this case, third-year students would be more conscious about their existing language writing difficulties. In addition, the researcher interviewed five teachers of Written Expression from the same department. The teachers were cooperative and answered all the interview questions, providing insightful contributions to the topic according to their experience in teaching Written Expression subjects.

Research Instruments

The investigator used qualitative research methods to collect the necessary data. First, the researcher designed a structured questionnaire for third-year students at the Department of English, Saida University. This questionnaire consists of 10 varied questions. The main aim of the questionnaire is to recognize the students' actual level of writing and to identify their significant difficulties namely after the lockdown caused by the coronavirus pandemic. Second, for more reliability, the researcher directed an interview with five teachers of Written Expression at the Department of English. The interview includes five important questions. The main aim of the interview is to gain a deeper understanding of the students' writing difficulties from the teachers' perspective and to expand the researchers' knowledge about the process of teaching writing, at Saida University.

Research Procedures

The investigation took place at the Department of English at Saida University with a randomly selected group of students and with teachers of Written Expression at the department. The researcher analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively data collected from the different sources cited above, students' questionnaires and teachers' interviews; she thoroughly examined it, either to confirm or reject the hypotheses.

Students' Questionnaire

Q 1: Do you find difficulties when writing in English?

a. Yes b. No

When asked if they find problems when writing or not, thirteen (13) students (57%) answered with "yes" that they have problems in writing; while ten (10) students (43%) answered with "no" that they have no difficulties in writing.

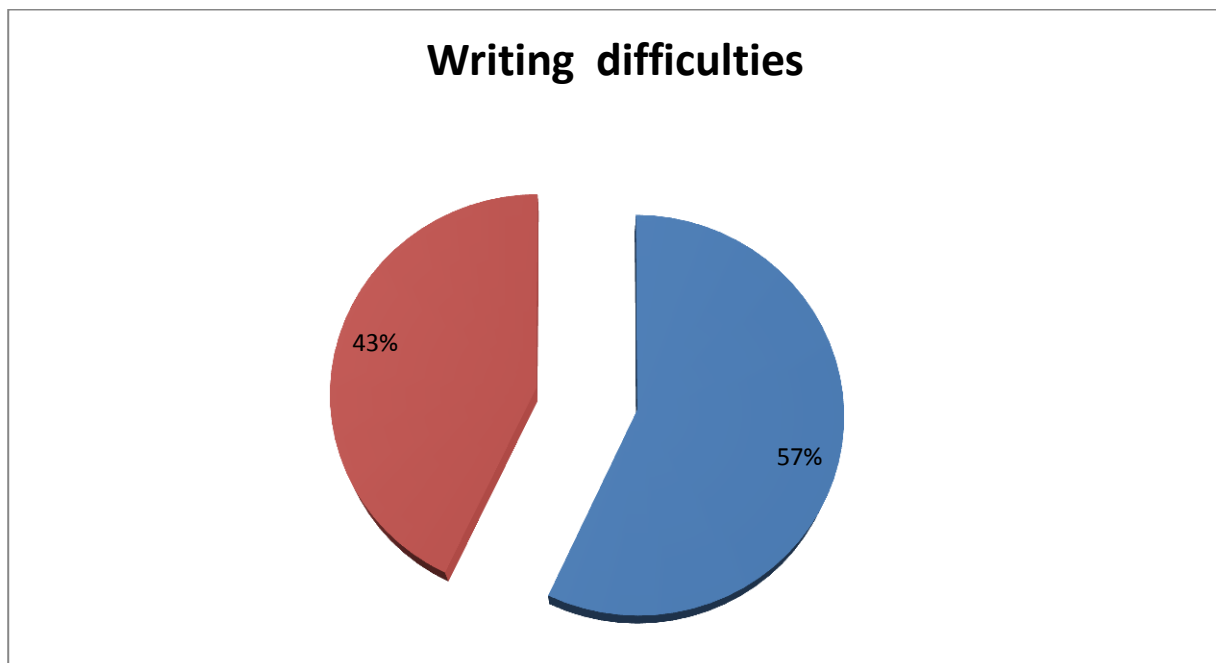


Figure 1. Students' writing difficulties

Q 2: Your weaknesses in writing are due to the

- Lack of practice
- Lack of motivation in writing
- Lack of reasonable approach to teaching writing
- Lack of reading
- Lack of teachers' feedback
- Language transfer (Arabic/ English) or (French/ English)

Answers indicated that students' weakness in writing is in the first place due to the lack of reading (44%) and the lack of practice (39%); then, in the second place, lack of motivation and language transfer (22%); finally, the lack of teachers' feedback (13%) and the lack of reasonable approach to teaching writing (9%) with lesser degree.

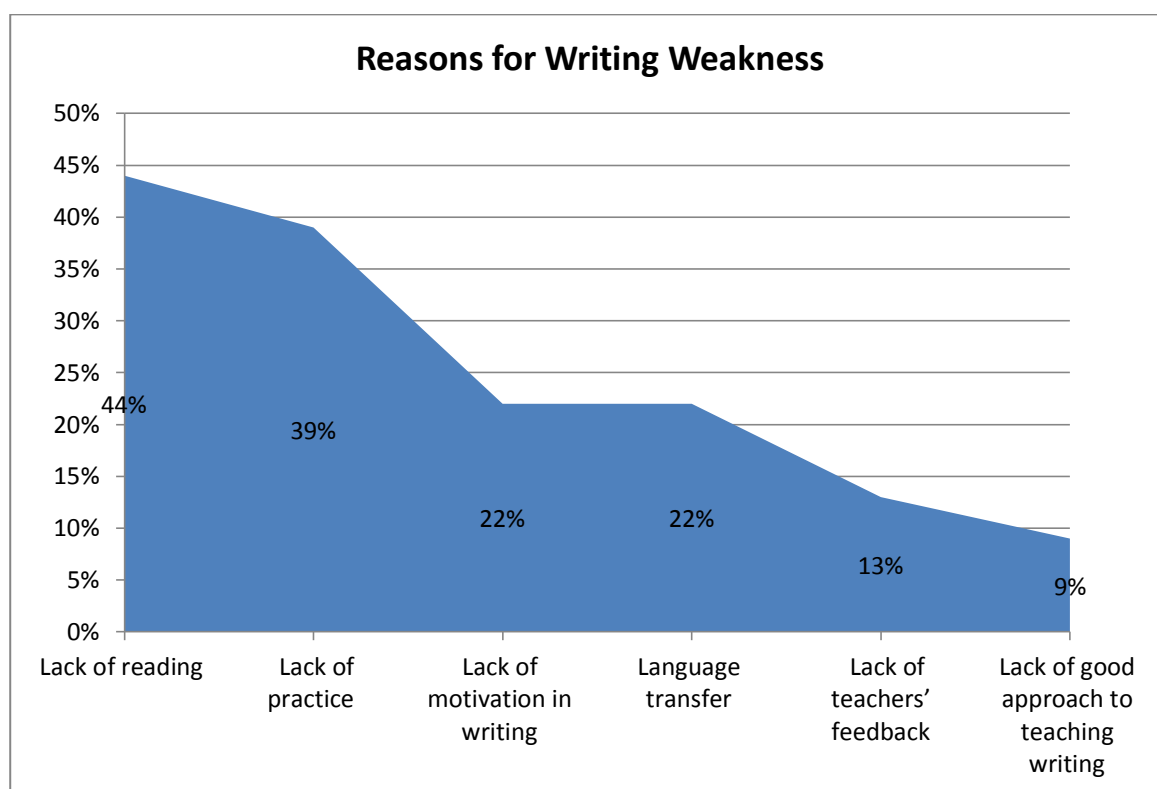


Figure 2. Reasons for writing difficulties

Please add any other obstacles that hinder you from writing correctly.

Some students added other obstacles that led to their deficiency in writing, such as the lack of ideas, the difficulty in connecting and organizing ideas, and their overuse of translation and ChatGPT application in writing.

Q 3: How often do you write inside the classroom?

a. Always b. Sometime c. Rarely d. Never

Ten (10) students (44%) answered the question with always. Seven (7) students (30%) said that they sometimes write inside the classroom. Four (4) students (17%) claimed that they rarely write inside the classroom. Two (2) students (9%) answered that they never write in the classroom.

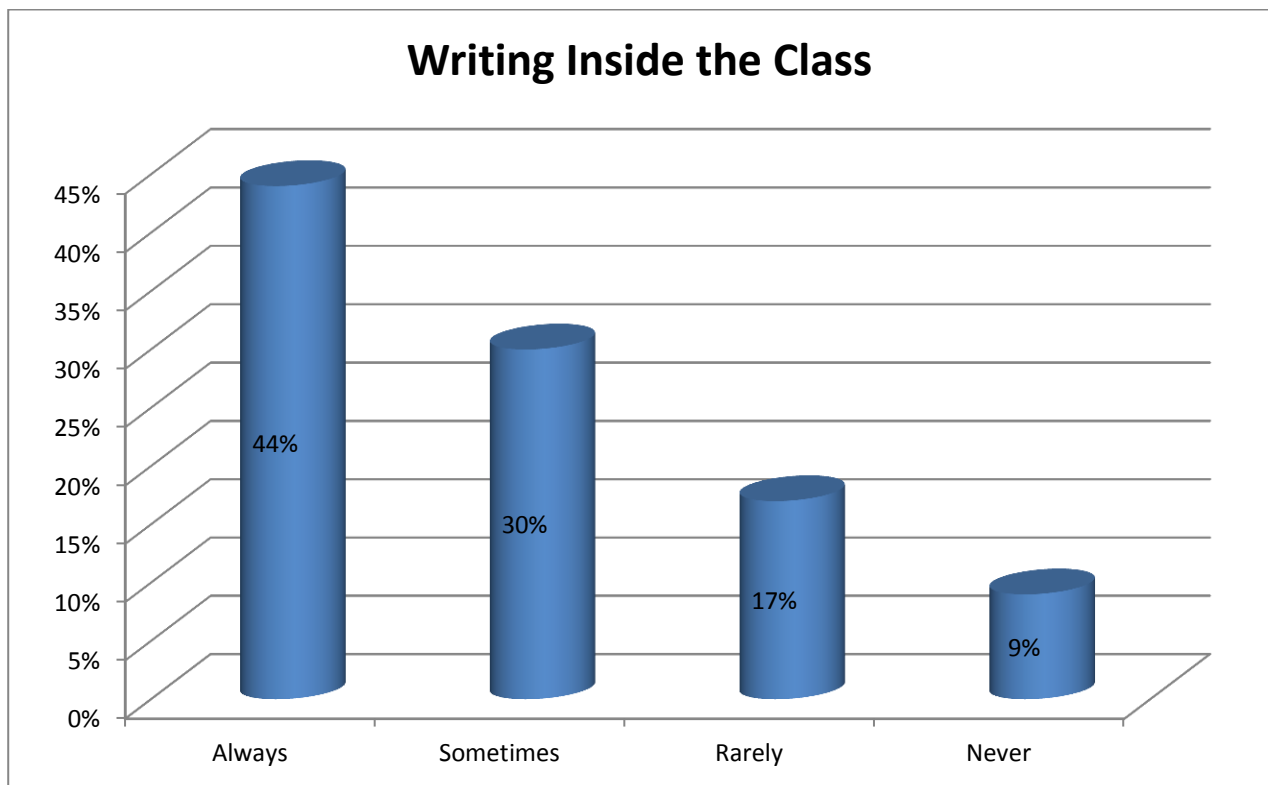


Figure 1. Students practice writing inside the classroom

Q 4: How often do you write outside the classroom?

- a. Always b. Sometime c. Rarely d. Never

Ten (10) students (44%) said that they always write outside the classroom. Four (4) students (17%) said that they sometimes write outside the classroom. Four (4) students (17%) they rarely write outside the classroom. Five (5) students (22%) said that they never write outside the classroom.

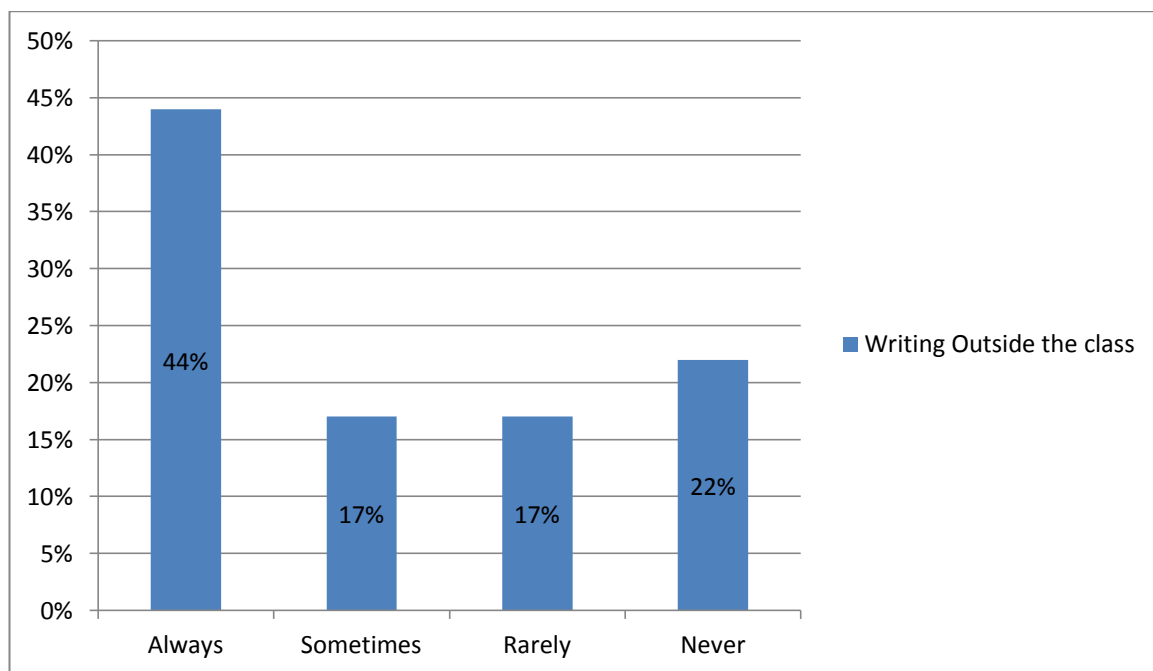


Figure 2 . Students practice writing outside the classroom

Q5: Do you use Artificial Intelligence in writing your assignments? Justify your answer.

Fifteen (15) students, the majority 65% of participants, confirmed their use of Artificial Intelligence to write paragraphs and essays; whereas seven (7) students 35%, replied that they do not utilize Artificial Intelligence to write their essays and assignments.

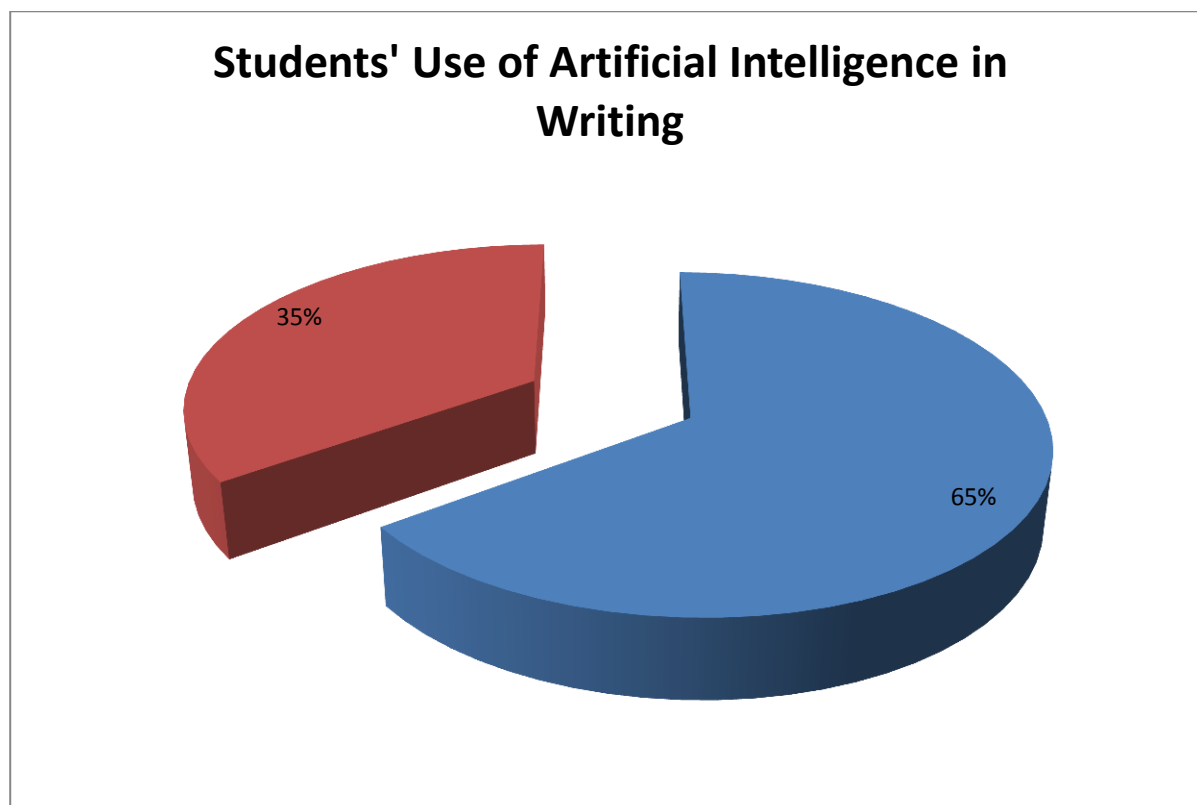


Figure 5. Students' use of Artificial Intelligence in writing their assignments

Regarding their justification, the majority of students claimed that technology emerged to facilitate their studies and to save their time, as a result, they use Artificial Intelligence in writing different forms, answering questions, and doing activities related to their studies. Whereas, the minority of students who did not use Artificial Intelligence consisted of two categories. The first category involved good students, who were against the idea itself, as they do not find it challenging to generate their texts, while the other category merely did not have the opportunity to use Artificial Intelligence, as they were unfamiliar with it.

Q6: How often do you receive feedback on your writing in the classroom?

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

Ten (10) students (44%) said they always receive feedback on their writing in the classroom. Eight (8) students (35%) said they sometimes receive feedback on their writing. Five (5) students (21%) rarely receive feedback on their writing. Nobody said they never received feedback on their writing.

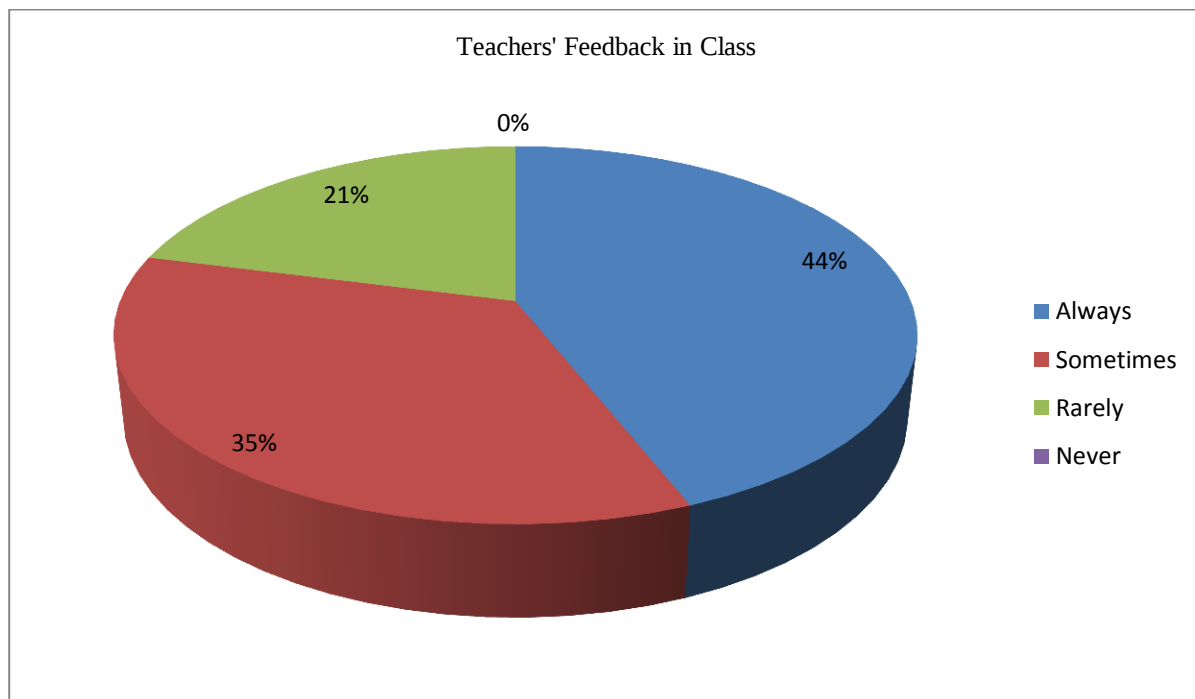


Figure 6. Teacher's feedback in class

Q 7: Does your teacher of Written Expression correct your errors?

- a. Yes
- b. No

As regards the subject of error correction by the Written Expression Teacher, eighteen (18) students (78%) responded with yes, i.e. their teacher of Written Expression corrects their errors when writing; however, five (5) students responded with no, i.e. their teacher of Written Expression does not fix their writing errors.

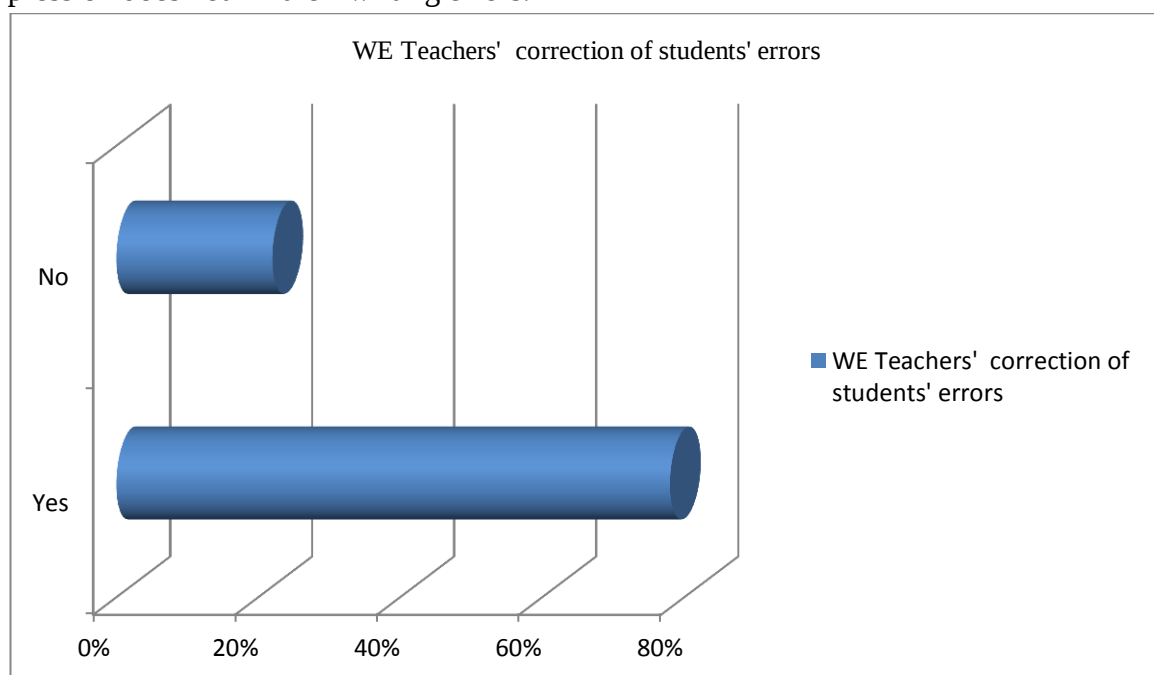


Figure 7. Teachers' correction of students' errors in written expression

Q 8: Which aspects do they emphasize (when correcting)? (Put 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 next to each one) Grammar.b. Vocabulary.c. Content/ideas.d.Organization of ideas. e. Mechanics.

Students' responses showed that Written Expression teachers, when correcting errors, give more importance above all to grammar 67%, then to vocabulary 47%, as well as the organisation of ideas 47%, next, content and ideas 23%, and last mechanics 12%. Students' classification of aspects highly considered by teachers when correcting errors in written forms is presented in the following figure.

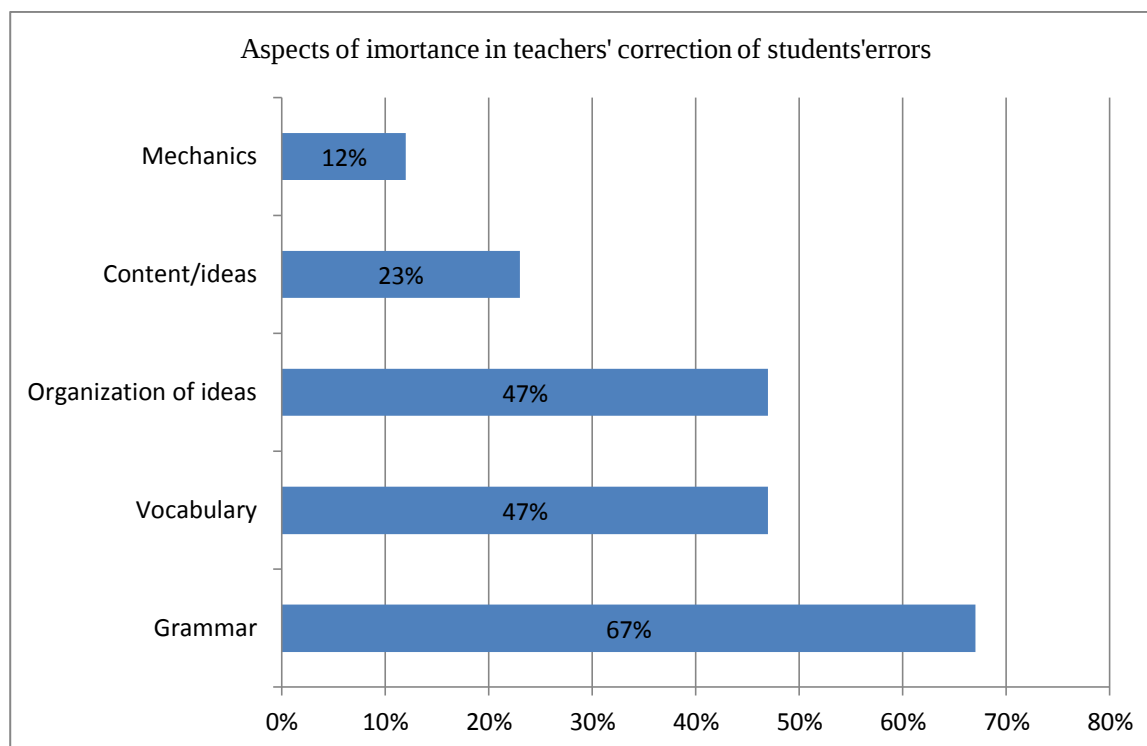


Figure 8. Aspects of importance in teachers' correction of students' errors

Q 9: Do you agree that teacher's feedback is a helpful tool to enhance your writing production?

- a. Agree. b. Disagree. d- Do not know

All the students 100% agreed that teacher feedback is a helpful tool to enhance their writing production.

Q 10: Do you think three hours per week is sufficient for studying the "Written Expression" subject?

- Yes No

Concerning the time allotted to Written Expression sessions, seven (7) students (30%) answered yes, three hours a week are enough for learning Written Expression; nevertheless, sixteen (16) students (70%) answered no, three hours a week are not enough for learning Written Expression.

Teachers' Interview

Q 1: How long have you been teaching written expression?

Teachers' experience was between five (5) and twelve (12) years. One teacher has been teaching writing experience for two (2) years.

Q 2: What is the writing level of the students?

Teachers agreed that students' level is average.

Q 3: Do you consider teachers' feedback a vital element to enhance students' writing level?

All the teachers 100% agreed that teachers' feedback is a helpful tool in enhancing students' writing production. One of the interviewed teachers confirmed that positive feedback is vital in improving writing.

Q 4: As a teacher, what are the strategies you suggest to improve students' writing skills?

The investigator received different answers about the ways teachers use to help their students improve their writing skills. The most prominent answers were as follows:

- Give them homework and consider this homework for the assessment mark
- Via guiding them, giving extensive practice, and providing feedback to each student
- Encouraging them to write individually and in groups
- By acting as a facilitator and a motivator (providing support to help students develop their writing skills)
- Helping them by creating a supportive and comprehensive learning atmosphere where they feel at ease to speak out their ideas
- Collaborative writing, and practicing at home
- Extensive listening, speaking, and reading, in addition to writing
- Moreover, the presentation of model paragraphs is an excellent way to introduce and review the essential vocabulary used in writing. Reviewing grammar, punctuation, spelling, and capitalization is also needed.

Q 5: In your opinion, as a teacher, is the time allocated to the Written Expressions program enough to remedy students' difficulties?

All teachers answered that the time allocated to the Written Expressions program is not sufficient to remedy students' difficulties. One added that it could be sufficient just when having a small number of students in each class.

Discussion

On the whole, the investigation revealed that the majority of students find writing a challenging task. Answers indicated that students' weakness in writing is, in the first place, due to the lack of reading and practice of writing (Marouf, 2021); then, in the second place, the lack of motivation and language transfer. Finally, the lack of teachers' feedback and the lack of a sound approach to teaching writing, to a lesser degree (Ghodbane, 2010). Some students added other obstacles that led to their deficiency in writing, such as the lack of ideas, the difficulty in connecting and organizing ideas, and their overuse of translation and ChatGPT application in writing (AlAfnan, 2023). Most students claimed that they practice writing inside the classroom, while a high number contended that they do not practise writing either inside the classroom or outside it. Moreover, most of the participants confirmed their use of Artificial Intelligence to write paragraphs and essays, since it facilitates their studies and saves their time. Most students agreed that they receive feedback from their WE teachers in class more than outside it, yet their correction of errors is limited. Students' responses also showed that Written Expression

teachers, when correcting errors, emphasize grammar, vocabulary, the organization of ideas, content and ideas, then mechanics. All the students agreed that teachers' feedback is a helpful tool to enhance their writing production; however, three hours a week is insufficient for learning Written Expression, mainly in large classes.

Most teachers are experienced in teaching writing, yet they have the same opinion that students' level of writing is average. In addition, they agreed that teachers' feedback is a helpful tool to enhance students' writing production. When asked about the way they help students improve their writing skills, teachers had different answers. The most prominent answers were to encourage reading and the practice of writing, under the control of teachers, providing positive feedback and a supportive and collaborative atmosphere as sustained by Hyland (2002).

All teachers argued that the time allocated to the Written Expressions program is insufficient to remedy students' difficulties. One teacher added that it could be sufficient just when have a small number of students in each class. In this respect, Marouf (2021) emphasized that there should be more time devoted to the practice of writing.

The investigation proved the hypothesis: third-year students at the Department of English face many writing difficulties. Fundamentally, this is due to the lack of reading and writing outside the class, their dependence on AI to generate forms in English, and the lack of teachers' feedback in class. The significant factor behind the lack of feedback in class is the limited time devoted to teaching Written Expression regarding the vast amount of information being taught. In addition, the high number of students in a group is sometimes more than 40 students. In this case, teachers would not be able to interact with every student in the class, checking errors, correcting them, and providing guidance for all the students in the group. In the existing learning situation at the Department of English, Saida University, teachers cannot afford immediate, detailed and constructive feedback to every learner in the classroom. For these reasons, EFL students are struggling with learning the writing skill, in addition, they are unable to improve their writing competence. Since they are unaware of their mistakes, they cannot correct them and, thus, develop their writing abilities. Teachers' feedback has a significant impact on learners' writing proficiency owing to the different roles they have in class. According to Bakr and Al-Sofi (2024), AI can be beneficial in many ways; however, it cannot replace humans and their imaginations; it cannot be trusted all the time. Furthermore, students are required to produce their texts in an authentic atmosphere, the classroom, and under the guidance of their teacher through their valuable comments and constructive feedback. To ensure effective writing, and consequently contribute to the improvement of students' writing abilities, the researcher suggests supplying a number of necessary conditions.

Recommendations

Regarding the findings obtained from the investigation, the researcher proposes for teachers the following suggestions that might enhance the learners' writing level:

- Giving students more homework, and taking into account the assessment mark
- Guiding students, giving them more written tasks and providing feedback to each student
- Encouraging students to write individually and in groups
- Encouraging students to minimize their use of Artificial Intelligence in writing
- Acting as a facilitator and a motivator through providing support to students to develop their writing skills

- Helping students by creating a supportive and comprehensive learning atmosphere where they feel at ease to speak out their ideas
- Encouraging collaborative writing
- Promoting extensive reading
- Presenting model paragraphs with exciting topics to introduce new vocabulary
- Reviewing frequently rules of punctuation, spelling, and capitalization
- Increasing the number of sessions dedicated to Written Expression subjects per week
- Minimizing the number of students in each group

Conclusion

The main aim of this investigation is to examine the vital role of Written Expression teachers' feedback in reinforcing 3rd-year students' writing skills to overcome the potential risks of AI widespread. In addition, the present research work attempts to identify the main difficulties that students encounter when writing, as well as the best teaching methods and conditions required to develop their writing skills.

Writing is one essential skill for EFL learners since it is the outcome of their studies, and is almost the only tool used in exams except for oral expression. Certainly, learning writing is not an instant process but a progressive one that develops through time with constant practice and regular reading. It also develops through teachers' continuous assessment and regular feedback. The latter has a fundamental role in improving students' writing skills. Nonetheless, the existing circumstances of teaching writing at Saida University, such as the limited time, the large classes, and students' dependence on AI applications, hinder the progress of students' writing skills. Research findings demonstrated that teachers' feedback has an important role in the improvement of students' written productions. However, the absence of teachers' feedback leads to a clear deficiency in students' level of writing and consequently their total reliance on AI to generate content.

Accordingly, the researcher suggests some necessary recommendations to enhance the learners' writing level. Most importantly, the key to effective teaching and learning of writing is minimizing the number of students in each group.

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