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Teachers' Attitudes towards the Impact of Formative Assessment on

EFL Learners' Writing Accuracy:

The Case of Second Year EFL Students at the University of Mohammed

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Declaration

I hereby declare that the dissertation entitled "Teachers' Attitudes towards the Impact of Formative Assessment on EFL Learners' Writing Accuracy" is my own work and all the sources I have used have been acknowledged by means of references. I also certify that I have not copied or plagiarized the work of other students or researchers partially or fully. In case any material is not documented, I shall be responsible for the consequences.

Signature   Date

                                                 2022/07/12

I

Dedication

In the name of Allah, the Entirely Merciful, the Especially Merciful

We dedicate this dissertation to:

Our parents who kept us in their prayers and their unconditional support,

Ourselves,

Our families,

And our friends.

Abstract

The current study investigates the teachers' attitudes towards the impact of formative assessment in improving EFL learners' writing accuracy. It aimed at determining how teachers use formative assessment to enhance the teaching of writing. This study also examines EFL teachers' perceptions about the effectiveness of written corrective feedback on the learner's writing accuracy. It is assumed that teachers may have a positive attitude towards the impact of formative assessment, which in return can affect students' writing accuracy. Based on the current research problem which required gathering quantitative data, a questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument. It was administered to fifteen (15) teachers at the University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel. After analyzing the collected data, the findings indicated that teachers have positive attitudes towards the influence of formative assessment on EFL learners' writing accuracy improvement. Further, the results demonstrated that punctuation, spelling, and coherence and cohesion are the most common errors second-year students encounter in their writing. Therefore, the practice of providing direct written corrective feedback was appreciated by teachers in the sense that it might bring about greater effects in enhancing EFL students' writing accuracy.

Keywords: Errors, Formative Assessment, Direct Corrective Feedback, Writing Accuracy, Written Corrective Feedback.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

%: **P**ercentage

A: **A**gree

CV: **C**orrective **F**eedback

D: **D**isagree

EFL: **E**nglish as a **F**oreign **L**anguage

F: **F**requency

FA: **F**ormative **A**ssessment

L2: **S**econd **L**anguage

Q: **Q**uestion

S: **S**tatement

SA: **S**trongly **A**gree

SD: **S**trongly **D**isagree

SLA: **S**econd **L**anguage **A**cquisition

SLW: **S**econd **L**anguage **W**riting

WCF: **W**ritten **C**orrective **F**eedback

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General introduction

Writing is regarded as one of the two productive skills in language learning in which most the students experience difficulties in developing clear and accurate expressions and utterances. Writing accuracy has proven to be important predictors of writing quality and language ability and it is essential for English as a Foreign Language learner to reach the desired educational and professional goals. Occasionally, inaccurate writing may affect the reader's ability to understand the intended meaning and message. Therefore, students need to focus on improving the skills needed to write accurately to make their works legible and efficient as much as possible.

In the last few decades, assessment has become of crucial importance in foreign language education which enables teachers to assess their students' achievements and performance. Formative assessment is considered a powerful way of improving students learning. It can be referred to as an ongoing assessment that takes place during the course. Additionally, teachers are required to design instructional practices to create opportunities for students to share their ideas and to take responsibility of their learning and to provide feedback on their learning progress. Subsequently, this research will investigate teachers' attitudes towards the impact of formative assessment on EFL learners' writing accuracy in detail.

1. Background of Study

Assessing students has been an essential pedagogical practice in the educational system. Many studies and researches have been conducted to gain a better knowledge of the various ways in which FA practice affects student learning. Black and William (1998) conducted an effect size, which is a comparison between a range of scores of students who were exposed to a specific practice and to those who were not exposed to the practice to measure the effect of formative assessment on learning outcomes. The results showed an effect size of between 4 and

7 (as cited in Greenstein, 2010, p. 22). Moreover, these researchers, in their review of research studies of FA, concluded that a well-designed and implemented formative assessment can have a positive impact on advancing and improving student learning at all grades level. Besides, it should be pointed out that exploring the effectiveness of formative assessment in enhancing the learners'writing accuracy in the context where English is taught as a second language is vital.

Furthermore, a study was carried out by Torosyan (2011) in the Department of English Programs (DEP) at the American University of Armenia to investigate the impact that formative assessment would have on EFL learners' vocabulary enhancement. Firstly, the study was conducted on two groups, the experimental and comparison using the same teaching program with one difference. The experimental group practiced the vocabulary with the help formative assessment techniques and exercises while the comparison group used of traditional activities and exercises to practice the vocabulary. Secondly, a questionnaire and an interview were administrated to both the experimental and comparison group students. Finally, the data analysis and results of the study revealed that students of the experimental group indicated more positive attitudes towards the use of formative assessment than comparison group students did towards the use of traditional activities, and integrating formative assessment enhanced students' achievement in vocabulary (pp. 68-81). Essentially, this researcher explored one of the important aspects of writing which is vocabulary. Yet, she ignored the role of writing accuracy in the writing process.

Moreover, Mkhwanazi (2014) explored the extent to which teachers use formative assessment to enhance the teaching of reading comprehension to Grade 3 Siswati speaking learners. The instruments researcher used were: (1) semi structured interview, (2) lesson observations, (3) analysis of learners' workbooks. Findings of the study showed that teachers did

not plan to use formative assessment to support the teaching of reading comprehension because the majority of them lacked skills and knowledge on formative assessment. As a result, students did not actively involved in the learning process and did not develop skills and capacities in reading comprehension.

From this researcher' insights, it can be said that formative assessment, when used, can increasingly improve student achievement and enhance learning at all grades. Otherwise, the lack of teacher training and skills on formative assessment affects negatively on students' performance and involvement in learning.

Liu (2013) in his preliminary study on the application of formative assessment in college English writing class reached a conclusion that the application of formative assessment is beneficial in enhancing students' writing ability and promoting their team spirit. Graham et al., (2015) in their research entitled "Formative assessment and writing: A Meta-Analysis". The meta-analysis showed that the use of formative writing assessments that provide immediate feedback to students as a part of everyday teaching and learning should be supported. To elaborate, feedback alone is not sufficient to help students enhance their learning, so it should to be compared with written correction. In line of these, it can be said that little attention has been paid among researchers concerning the impact of formative assessment on improving EFL learners' writing accuracy.

2. Statement of the Problem

From literature review, it became apparent that assessment in higher education has a major role in promoting teaching and learning. Even though EFL teachers at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia are doing their efforts in bringing about a change in students' performance, second year students are still having difficulties in maintaining accuracy in their writing that meets the English language conventional standards. Moreover, it is essential to note

that learners are facing challenges in how to bridge the gap between applying the knowledge being taught effectively in different contexts of use without committing errors. Therefore, it is significant to realize that not all of the methods of assessment are created equally and purposefully by teachers to prove a greater effectiveness in students writing performance.

3. Research Questions

The present study attempts to look for answers to the following research questions:

- ✓ What are teachers' attitudes towards the impact of formative assessment on EFL learners writing accuracy?
- ✓ What are the methods teachers usually use to assess students' writing accuracy?
- ✓ Does direct written corrective feedback affect students' writing accuracy?
- ✓ Does indirect written corrective feedback affect students' writing accuracy?

4. Research Assumption

Based on the above research question, it is assumed that teachers may have a positive attitude towards the impact of formative assessment, which in return can affect students' writing accuracy.

5. Research Methodology

In this research, a descriptive approach was used to get insights on how formative assessment is perceived and practiced by EFL teachers and its impact on students' writing accuracy. Therefore, to answer the above-stated research question, a questionnaire was employed as a data collection tool. It was administered to fifteen teachers of written expression at the University of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel. Then, a quantitative research was adopted to collect and analyze the numerical data.

6. Significance of the Study

This research will guide teachers for future decisions to integrate formative assessments when teaching writing to make the learning process more effective and purposeful. It may provide insights for teachers regarding the implementation of effective formative assessment, and thereby adopt some strategies to help students to gain control over the accuracy of their writing. Hence, the findings of this research can alert teachers to examine how parental corrective feedback could help learners to avoid committing errors and solve their problems with writing. It is worth pointing out that it will provide hints and information for those learners who are interested in developing the writing accuracy.

7. Organization of the Dissertation

The present research is divided into two chapters. The first chapter includes two sections to review the relevant literature and the theoretical background of the study. The first and the second section are entitled "formative assessment" and "Writing Accuracy" respectively. Then, the second chapter is devoted to the field work.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Section One: Formative Assessment

Introduction

1.1.1. Definition of Formative Assessment

1.1.2. Types of Formative Assessment

    1.1.2.1. Planned Formative Assessment

    1.1.2.2. Interactive Formative Assessment

1.1.3. Strategies of Formative Assessment

1.1.4. Forms of Teacher Formative Assessment

1.1.5. Teacher's Feedback

Conclusion

Section One: Formative Assessment

Introduction

Summative and formative assessments are two different types of assessments that also support each other, and only the purpose and timing determined their label. The purpose of summative assessment is to judge the effectiveness of teaching practices and methods and to measure how well students have mastered specific learning objectives and goals at the end of an academic year.

Additionally, summative assessment is called assessment of learning, because it informs parents and administrators about the students' results and the teachers' performance. This section will define the concept of formative assessment along with its types, and then it will review the strategies of formative assessment. In addition, it will shed light on some examples of teachers' formative assessment. To fulfill their responsibilities, characteristics of effective teacher feedback will be addressed.

1.1.1. Definition of Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is a process that provides insights and evidence for teachers to identify the nature of learners' difficulties, which enables them to improve and guide learners towards mastering the learning goals. Many researchers have defined the term formative assessment over the years. In their review, Bell and Cowie (1996) defined formative assessment as "The process used by teachers and students to recognize and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning, during the learning" (as cited in Bell & Cowie, 2005, p. 8). Moreover, Black and Wiliam (1998) defined formative assessment broadly "as encompassing all those activities undertaken by teachers, and/or by their students, which provide information to be used as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged" (Black & Wiliam, 1998, pp. 7–8). Under this definition, FA includes all actions taken by the

teacher to gather information about student learning, including teacher questionnaire and observation, an analysis of students' performance, presentations, class work, and homework, teachers can build in those opportunities to assess students' work or achievement, and then use this information to make necessarily instructional decisions and adjustments to raise its effectiveness.

Moreover, feedback is a core component of formative assessment since its purpose is to provide teachers and students with feedback about learning and desired goals to help them moving forward. Andrade and Heritage (2017) demonstrated that, "When any high-quality classroom assessment is used for formative purposes, it provides feedback to teachers that can inform adjustments to instruction, as well as feedback to students that supports their learning" (p. 3).

Overall, it can be stated that formative assessment is an essential centerpiece in improving learning and teaching, and it takes places during the progression of the course. Formative assessment, in order to be more effective, relies on the relationship between teachers and students, complementing one another to generate powerful learning outcomes. Teachers are having the task of gathering information about students' strengths and weaknesses, analyzing this information, and then providing feedback for students that enable them to persist and regulate their own learning goals. After having defined the term formative assessment, it is worthwhile to touch upon its types.

1.1.2. Types of Formative Assessment

Bell and Cowie (1999) developed a model of formative assessment, which described two types of formative assessment, namely planned formative assessment and interactive formative assessment.

1.1.2.1. Planned Formative Assessment

In this type of assessments, teachers are equipped by multiple measurements of performance to collect data and information about the students' comprehension. These authors suggested that planned formative assessment is used by teachers to elicit permanent information of the student thinking, progress and knowledge about the items they intended them to learn. Such assessment may occurs at the beginning and end of a lesson. Besides, planned formative assessment includes activities such as test, quiz, project, or homework. As diagrammatically represented in Figure 1, the primary purpose of the act of assessing is to improve learning. Then, teachers prepare tasks to elicit information on their student understanding. Finally, they interpret them to take action to enhance the students' learning.
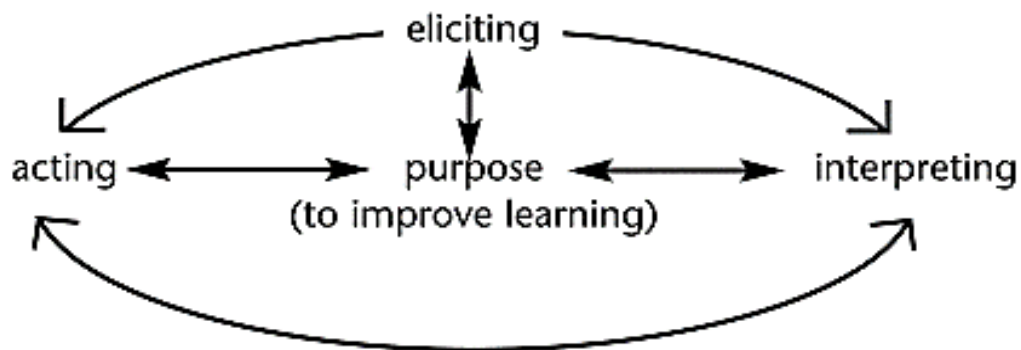
Figure 1: Planned Formative Assessment (Adapted from Cowie and Bell (1999).

1.1.2.2. Interactive Formative Assessment

Teachers spontaneously interact and get in touch with students to measure their involvements. According to Bell and Cowie (1999), interactive formative assessment takes place during student- teacher interactions. It is an unplanned and anticipated assessment in which the interactions can happen, among the whole class, small group, or individuals, in any time during

the lesson. In addition, Bell and Cowie (1999) suggested a process in which during the interactions teachers notice, recognize and respond to students thinking. This process described
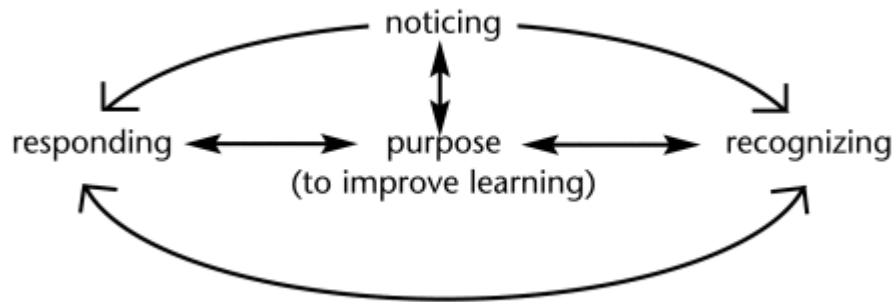
Figure 2*: Interactive Formative Assessment (Adapted from Cowie and Bell (1999)).*

in Figure 2.The purpose of this kind of assessment is to improve and mediate the students' learning. In the first stage, teachers notice verbal ephemeral information about the students thinking and progress such as questions, comments, and suggestions and non-verbal information that can include how students performed in an activity or how they interacted with others, their body language, facial expressions, and writing. Second, teachers recognize the significance of the noticed information. In this stage, teachers are required to use student's prior content knowledge and their prior experience and knowledge. Finally, teachers' responds or acts to student learning will depend on what they have noticed and recognized. Teachers' response in the learning instruction is immediate.

It is noteworthy to say that teachers' choice of what type of formative assessment to implement in the course depends on learners' needs and interests, yet it has to be planned to fulfill its affectivity.

1.1.3. Teachers' Strategies for Implementing Formative Assessment

Teachers have to choose the best strategies for learners to check their understanding and engagement in the learning process, which in turn will put them in the route for autonomy. Chappuis (2015) proposed seven strategies to help teachers develop the needed practices and skills to effectively implement those strategies into their learning process. Each of these strategies is formulated around three questions: Where is the learner going?" "Where is the learner right now?" and "How does the learner get there?" (p. 1).

First, he suggested that in order to answer the first question, teachers must ensure that students are provided with meaningful and purposeful information that enables them to identify the learning objectives of a given task, or lesson. (i.e., what students are able to do at the end of instruction), as well as how teacher will assess their learning. In addition, teachers can use examples of students' weak and strong work and let them evaluate it in order to have an idea about the possible way to solve the various problems and to shape their way of thinking.

To answer the second question, where is the learner right now? Students should be informed about where they are in their learning process and what should be understood to meet the targets. To accomplish this, Wiliam (2007a) claimed that students should be engaged in classroom discussion, activities, and tasks to elicit information about their learning (as cited in Andrade & Cizek, 2010, p. 32). From their responses, teachers can indicate the areas they are still having difficulties with and the aspects that need improvements in order to make appropriate adjustments for instruction. Noteworthy, designing activities and tasks that meet the needs of different students and learning intentions is a challenge for teachers.

During this step in the learning process, teachers are required to provide descriptive feedback rather than evaluative feedback with specific indication to errors (Chappuis, 2005). To

clarify, learners will have an overview about their errors and mistakes and search for methods and strategies to improve their skills and performance to fulfill their needs.

To answer the last question, where am I now? Teachers should provide support and guidance for learners to close the gap and keep moving. Stiggins (2010) suggested that teachers need to design lesson to teach students how to develop the quality of their work, and to learn how to revise it. To monitor and regulate the learning, students should be engaged in self-reflection (Chappuis, 2005, p. 5). While working in groups, students will have the opportunity to share their thoughts and ideas and to have a more detailed knowledge about their peers work and abilities. Essentially, the above strategies will make formative assessment effective and will train learners on how to control their learning, and it is noteworthy to discuss some examples of teachers' formative assessment.

1.1.4. Forms of Teachers' Formative Assessment

Teachers can assess students' understanding and writing abilities by using a variety of formative assessment practices and testing formats. Lam (2018) summarized their practiced in three categories, which are as follows: timed-essay tests, multiple-choice testing, and portfolio assessment (p. 3).

First, the timed impromptu writing test or timed essay tests emphasized the notion of writing as a product, which is considered one of the earliest approaches of writing. In fact, this approach remains prominent among the others mode of assessment. For the reason that it allows teachers to assess learners directly under time constraints to measure their abilities to solve language problems, think critically and analyze different types of essay questions. In the same light of thoughts, Llach (2011) stated that the design of essay test is easy to administer, although the performance can be hardly evaluated and scored (p. 54).

Second, multiple-choice questions provide an opportunity for teachers to assess a wide range of language items and course materials in which students are required to select the appropriate answer from among multiple answer choices. Llach (2011) claimed that multiple-choice testing or indirect test of writing measures objectively the writing ability and it can be easily administered and marked. The multiple choice items in fact, according to Fisher and Frey (2007), allow students to compare and evaluate related ideas or concepts (p. 106).

 Lastly, portfolio assessment is often viewed as process portfolio which allows teachers to assess and analyze learners' achievements and writing development and skills during the course. Llach (2011) claimed that portfolio assessment often referred to subjective direct testing, and could be used to measure directly the students writing ability. In line with this, Hinkel (2005) expressed his opinion about portfolios' purpose saying that: "A writing portfolio consists of multiple samples of student writing that demonstrates performance on multiple tasks" (p. 608). Additionally, according to Lam (2018), portfolio assessment regards writing as a recursive process rather than as a product, which allows student to be actively involved in planning, drafting, and editing. In other words, portfolio assessment trains students to develop cognitive and thinking skills by exploring, planning, elaborating, presenting and evaluating their work, which helps them to take control over their own learning and to self-regulate their capacities.

Furthermore, during the implementation of formative assessment tasks, asking effective questions is an important pedagogical practice. It is considered as a fruitful opportunity for students to explain their understanding and comprehension, to think more deeply and reveal misconceptions and holes in their knowledge. Moreover, the formative process can start to work according Black and William (1998) if teachers make sure to ask thoughtful and reflective

questions to evoke discussions and dialogue, in which learners can be encouraged to take part to express their ideas and to improve their understanding.

Overalls, it can be noted that the formative assessment tasks in which teachers design are an important means of promoting opportunities for students to share their thinking, and to highlight the degree of current achievement in their writing. Hence, what mode of assessment to choose will dependent on what works best for teachers and all students. After having discussed the different tasks teachers assign to assess students' writing and understanding, it is essential to ensure the quality of teachers' feedback.

1.1.5. Teachers' Feedback

Feedback is an essential component of formative assessment. Teachers during the interaction with students provide information regarding their performance and acknowledge the progress they have made in their learning; this we refer to as feedback. Heritage (2010) stated that, "The purpose of feedback to students is to help them identify the gap between where their learning currently stands, and assist them to move forward to close the gap and achieve the desired goals" (p. 81). In other words, feedback provides information to close the gap between the students' current level and what they need to achieve in relation to the learning goals. Additionally, the literature stressed that there are sets of conditions that must exist for feedback to be most effective. Fong et al., (2016) noted that effective feedback should focus on the task rather than the learner and it must be descriptive, not evaluative (as cited in Andrade & Heritage, 2017, p. 10). Differently stated, feedback should indicate what students have done in a given task and focus on attributes of the student's work and rather than attributes of the student in order to give guidance on strengths and weaknesses to improve learning. It is important to consider that teachers have to affirm any progress, even though small, and to give the means for learners to attain the next steps.

Furthermore, several studies have been carried out on the timing of feedback, particularly immediate and delayed feedback. Box (2019) as the other researchers Moss & Brookhart (2009a) asserted that it is important that feedback should be given as soon as possible to enable students to use it and to take action in order to move their learning forward (p. 30). Moreover, Irons (2008) pointed out that, "The feedback should address complex learning issues, such as addressing quality of argument, completeness of discussion or interpretation of literature, rather than focus on simple feedback such as exceeding word count or spelling and grammar" (p. 74). Stated differently, good feedback should focus on multiple learning difficulties and complex tasks that students face to promote their thinking and understanding. In the other hand, the most appropriate feedback can be written or oral. Moss & Brookhart (2009b) stated that written feedback is more permanent than oral feedback because students can use it once they revise their essays and papers (p. 49).

Overall, it is widely believed that feedback is an essential element in formative assessment and teachers should aim for descriptive and immediate feedback. It is important to consider that feedback increases learners' persistence and help them to recognize the connection between their efforts and the achieved goals.

Conclusion

To sum up, from the above research insights it can noted that formative assessment is designed to extend and encourage learning. What sorts of strategies and the best writing assessment tools will depend on the context of learning, the learners 'needs, and the teachers' style of teaching. This section first defined the concept of formative assessment along with its types, and then it highlighted the strategies of formative assessment. In addition, it shed light on

some examples of teachers' formative assessment. Furthermore, characteristics of effective teacher feedback are addressed.

Section Two: Writing Accuracy

Introduction

Conclusion

Section Two: Writing Accuracy

Introduction

Writing is the most critical and challenging skill for EFL learners, which occupies an extremely essential position in second language teaching. There is enough evidence that complexity, accuracy and fluency are three components in L2 performance and L2 proficiency, which can be developed by students under different learning conditions. However, a number of studies stressed the importance of improving students' writing accuracy. This section will examine writing accuracy in detail. Firstly, relevant literature on the definition of writing accuracy as well as its aspects will be provided. Secondly, it will highlight the role of teachers as writing instructors. Then, the effect of written corrective feedback on writing accuracy will be discussed. Finally, the role of time on the development of student writing accuracy will be looked at.

1.2.1. Definition of Writing Accuracy

The term 'accuracy' has been variably defined by many researchers due to its effectiveness in first and second Language writing. Geyte (2013) stated that when assessing students writing, accuracy is considered to be essential in all types of academic writing (p. 50). Further, Chandler (2004) demonstrated that learners' writing accuracy over a specific period of time will be improved significantly when they rectify their errors (p. 279). From the above definitions, it can be noted that accuracy refers to the learners' ability to write error-free sentences and to communicate their messages correctly and properly. Byrd (2005) stated that, "In most cases, accuracy refers to "grammatical accuracy" but other areas of language use can be involved, too: spelling and/or pronunciation" (p. 551). That is, accuracy refers to the student ability to access his knowledge in different context of use without committing errors in the following criteria: tenses, subject verb agreement, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and articles.

In the same way, accuracy does not refer only to grammatical accuracy but also to lexical accuracy, in which learners' choose the right content words to convey their messages appropriately.

To sum up, it can be stated that the written form is as important as the content to make sure the readers will better understand. Those forms need to be written in a very correct and well-organized way and that what is called accuracy. Having considered the definition of writing accuracy, it is necessarily to mention its aspects.

1.2.2. Aspects of Writing Accuracy

In order for students to reach an accurate and efficient piece of writing, they have to pay attention of the various aspects of writing accuracy. According to Indah (2015), aspects of accuracy are mainly based on three elements: grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics (p. 12).

First, Purpura (2004) viewed grammatical ability as involving "the capacity to realize grammatical knowledge accurately and meaningfully in test-taking or other language-use contexts" (Bielak et al., 2013, p. 218). Similarly, grammar according to Greenbaum and Nelson (2002) refers to the set of rules that allow students to combine words into larger units (p .1). In other words, students are required to internalize a set of rules about the possible combination of words to form meaningful and accurate sentences. Furthermore, Huddleston and Pullum (2005) asserted that grammar deals with the form of sentences and smaller units: clauses, phrases and words (p.1).

Additionally, Lessared (2021) stated that vocabulary can be defined as the words of a language, including single items and phrases or chunks of several words that convey a particular meaning (p.2). Stahl (2005) stated that "vocabulary is acquired incidentally through indirect exposure to words and intentionally through explicit instruction in specific words and word learning strategies" (as cited in Torosyan, 2011, p. 8). Thus, vocabulary can be taught explicitly

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and through suggesting range of strategies such as word grouping, word association to help students increase their vocabulary knowledge. At the same time, it can be acquired implicitly through listening, reading, and repetition.

Furthermore, Young (2008) stated that the mechanics of writing starts by posing a common question to most writers, which comes first, the comma or the pause? Learning the answer to this basic question is the doorway to understanding punctuation as well as structure (p.1). Another definition by Nordquist (2020) "writing mechanics are the conventions governing the technical aspects of writing, including spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and abbreviations". In other words, mechanics in writing are concerned with punctuation marks, capitalization, and so on, and what should come first. It is also about the errors in the sentences and how those errors should be avoided in order to write a correct piece of text.

Overall, it can be said that grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics are three essential components that must to be learned by individuals in order to achieve accuracy in writing. An accurate writing requires a clear and correct form of a text whether it is factual or grammatical. The careful choice of words also will be of a great help for the writer to covey their messages correctly, as to know how to link words and form accurate sentences. Having shed light on aspects of writing accuracy, it is also important to consider the definition of corrective feedback.

1.2.3. Definition of Written Corrective Feedback

In the field of second language writing (SLW), it is quite common that correcting student errors has been a central part of every teachers' job. The kinds of students' errors should be corrected by teachers and the how has been the focus of many researchers. Errors corrections can be referred to as teachers' responses to students' errors by making corrections either to the content, or form of sentences, or both of them. To illustrate, teachers indicate the weaknesses in content and provide correct forms or structures to students' wrong sentences. Richards and

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Lockhart, 1994) claimed that, "Teachers are most likely to correct content errors, followed by vocabulary errors, and errors of grammar or pronunciation" (p. 191). In addition, Guskey (2005) asserted that "feedback alone, however, does little to help students improve their learning. Significant improvement requires the feedback to be paired with correctives: activities that offer guidance and direction to students on how to remedy their learning problems" (p. 6). Differently stated, feedback should be supported by corrections to be most beneficial, which stimulate learners to revise and self-correct the wrong sentences, and to develop their linguistic competences.

Moreover, Truscott (1996) defined written corrective feedback (WCF) as the "Correction of grammatical errors for the purpose of improving a student's ability to write accurately" (as cited in Duong & Nguyen, 2022, p. 251). Hence, learners whose errors are corrected improve the accuracy in terms of grammatical features (e.g., spelling, punctuation, tenses, and other surface structures).

In the same line of thought, different strategies have been used by teachers to correct students' written errors. Ferris and Roberts (2001) made a distinction between two major strategies, namely direct and indirect corrective feedback. Direct (or explicit) written CF refers to the act of providing the correct linguistic forms to learners. It can take the form of inserting the missing word, crossing out the unnecessary word, or providing the correct form above or near the error. Indirect corrective feedback, in the other hand, can be defined as indicating the location and type of an error without providing the correct form and giving the act of error correction to learners. This type of written CF can take several forms such as coding, underlining the mistakes, providing marginal feedback, and giving feedback on the content, or indicating the error number (as cited in Seiffedin & El-Sakka, 2017,p. 168).

Taken together, corrective feedback focuses on what should be commented on (form or content), explains the way errors can be treated (direct and indirect) and with regard to the significant role that corrective feedback plays in improving the student writing accuracy. Having considered the definition of corrective feedback, it is crucial to underline its effectiveness on writing accuracy.

1.2.3.1 The Effect of Teachers' Written Corrective Feedback on Writing Accuracy

In fact, the position of the effect of corrective feedback on writing accuracy has been debated among researchers, theorists, practitioners in the field of second language writing (SLW) and Second language acquisition (SLA).Truscott (1996) claimed that, "Grammar correction has no place in writing courses and should be abandoned" (p. 328). To justify his claim, he argued that corrective feedback is ineffective and harmful since it consumes enormous amounts of teachers' time and energy. In addition to this, Truscott (1999) suggested that correction leads students to use simple and short sentences to avoid mistakes, which affect their chances to practice and experiment with new forms in writing (p. 117).

Ferris (1999), in her response to Truscott's claims, stated that, "Error correction would not help learners if they were not dealt with carefully" (as cited in Amara, 2017, p. 7). That is, teachers need to know that different types of errors require different forms of correction. Furthermore, Ferris (1999) argued that Truscott's claim of eliminating this pedagogical practice has no conclusive evidence. Teacher must spend a great amount of time and energy on correcting students' errors in order to help students improve their language accuracy (as cited in Farjadnasab & Khodashenas, 2017, p. 31).

Additionally, to further examine the issue of the effect of written corrective feedback, a considerable number of studies have attempted to compare the effect of direct and indirect WCF

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on the different types of errors, namely, morphological, syntactic, lexical. Hashemnezhad and Mohammadnejad (2012) compared the impact of direct and indirect feedback on three types of errors (verb tense, prepositions, and the relative pronouns). This study aimed to know the extent to which L2 writers' accuracy will decrease in a new pieces of writing. The findings revealed that the two types of written feedback indicated a positive effect on learners' accuracy; however, direct error correction had a greater effect than indirect one (p. 236). It can be added that students are more likely to benefit from indirect feedback, where the teachers indicate the errors but do not provide the correction, compared to direct feedback, as students are challenged to correct errors.

In another study, Ferris and Roberts (2001) noted that direct CF is probably more effective than indirect CF especially with student of low levels of proficiency. Furthermore, most teachers rely on the code error techniques to correct their students' errors. However, once the learners' essays or paragraphs are full of errors, it become challenging for them to rectify their mistakes based on the codes. So, it is essential for teachers to handle carefully the use of error codes. To illustrate, Lee (2004) stated that, "To make the codes easier to interpret for students, teachers may consider reducing the number of codes they use in correcting errors, concentrating on specific error patterns" (p. 302).

In summary, there are mixed views regarding the effectiveness of written corrective feedback on EFL learners' writing accuracy. Some researchers reported that providing student with corrective feedback would improve their writing accuracy. Meanwhile, others suggested that no improvement would be marked in learners writing accuracy once written corrective feedback is provided. Overall, it can be said that corrective feedback is a useful pedagogical practice that can be effectively used by teachers to improve the learners' ability to write

accurately. The students will benefit from receiving the different types of written feedback once teachers adopt the best techniques and once they act upon the feedback and rectify their errors. Having shed light on the effect of teachers' written corrective feedback, it is essential to review the different writing instructions.

1.2.4. Implementing Formative Assessment in the Writing Process

For the student to become more accurate in writing, teachers need research-based instructional strategies. Lewis (2008) stated that strategy instruction is designed to help students become independent writers by giving students the strategies to be used during the different stages of the writing process (as cited in Egloff, 2013,p. 18). The focus of the writing process approach is to engage and motivate students to acquire good writing skills. However, Brown and Hood (2003) stated that the writing process is made explicit to students through three stages: preparing to write (or planning), drafting, and revising (p. 6).

- Preparing to write

This stage involves gathering thoughts and generating ideas. According to Batubara (2017), students need to select carefully the content structure, the purpose and to have a clear idea about the audience to decide what to say and how to say it. A teacher could begin for example by telling the students what to write about, demonstrating at the whiteboard how to generate some ideas for a given topic, how to create an introductory paragraph, how to develop a topic sentence, and how to arrange the remaining ideas in logical sequence and order. Students then are asked to present their own material, to brainstorm the topic, and to organize ideas.

- Drafting

This process promotes students to start writing (in pairs, groups, or as individuals) using notes they made during the planning stage, without worrying about misspellings, grammar and

punctuation mistakes. However, teachers are expected to offer assistance for students who need help and encouragement to begin composing ideas into written text.

- Editing

According to Hannell (2013), in order to complete any written work students are expected to check for errors and revise what has been written (p. 8). In this process, students may add, delete, modify, or rearrange ideas to make final touches in each section. Fatha and Whalley stated that revision has a positive effect on the quality and accuracy of student writing (as cited in Kroll, 1990, p. 105). Student should be guided to revise and self-evaluate their written work. For example, teachers might ask the following:

- ✓ Have you expressed your ideas clearly?
- ✓ Do your ideas meet the set requirement and seems interesting?
- ✓ What types of words will best achieve your purpose?
- ✓ Did you check grammatical errors as well as spelling and punctuation?
- ✓ Are prepositions and conjunctions used appropriately and correctly?
- ✓ Do the auxiliaries and verb forms agree with their subjects?

Furthermore, there are three stages in writing a course, controlled, guided, and free writing. Controlled or guided writing is a technique designed to help students to limit the variety of errors by giving enough support, until they can write on their owns. For example, answering structured questions, re- ordering, and retelling. Thus, if learners follow directions, they will decrease the number of errors.

To conclude, it can be said that teachers should provide clear instructions for students with attention being given to each stage in the writing process.

1.2.5.   The Role of Time Exposure and the Development of Students' Writing Accuracy

Time is considered a key factor in the field of writing; it leads to achieving accuracy in one way or another. Krashen (1982) suggested the relationship between the element of time and the level of grammatical accuracy in his monitor model. Krashen (1982) stated that, "In order to think about and use conscious rules effectively, a second language performer needs to have sufficient time" (p. 16). In that meaning, having enough time allows students to manage suitable rules and structures that promotes a development in writing performance.

Further, Kroll (1990) stated that, "Many students and teachers feel that writing under pressure is a very unnatural situation and perhaps cannot lead to work that is truly representative of anyone's best capabilities" (p. 141). In other words, for both teachers and students the lack of time devoted for writing leads to the lack of achievements. The learners during the writing process need sufficient time to show their best abilities.

In additions, Raimes (2003) argued that, "Time is a crucial element of the writing process and writers have time to make decisions, time to play around with ideas, time to construct and reconstruct sentences, to form and re-form arguments, to experiment with new words, and above all, time to change their minds. Time should not be a constraint" (as cited in Caudery, 1989, p. 122).Thus, teachers need to decide how much time students will be given to complete a task, which enables them to plan and write, and revise.

To put in a nutshell, it can be said that having enough time for writing will increase the students' accuracy as well as his performance on the ground. On the other hand, having less time will allow errors to occur in a piece of writing and that will put much pressure on the student.

Conclusion

In summation, this chapter has been devoted to provide available theoretical background about writing accuracy. First, it presented a variety of definitions of the term writing accuracy along with its aspects. Then, it highlighted the teacher writing instructions. Additionally, the definition of writing accuracy was provided. Moreover, some of the current research debates on the effect of corrective feedback on writing accuracy are discussed. Finally, it shed light on the role of time exposure and the development of student writing accuracy.

Chapter Two: Fieldwork

Introduction

Conclusion

Introduction

This research is conducted to investigate the teachers' attitudes towards the impact of formative assessment on improving the learners' writing accuracy. In this study, the choice of data collection instrument largely depends on the nature of the research question and research assumption. A questionnaire is chosen as a data-gathering tool in order to gain adequate knowledge about teachers' conceptions and experiences with formative assessment at the university. This questionnaire could provide information about teachers 'opinions towards the impact of different types of feedback, particularly written corrective feedback, in improving learners' writing accuracy. This chapter is devoted to the research methods, the sampling, the description, and data analysis, and the interpretation of main results of teachers' questionnaire. At the end, the limitation of the study and the recommendations for further research are discussed.

2.1. Research Methodology

The type of research approach to be used in this study is a quantitative. Through the use of questionnaire, this approach helps in collecting a wide range of data about teachers' attitudes towards the impact of formative assessment in improving learners' writing accuracy in order to answer   the research question. Moreover, quantitative method provides descriptive and statistical analysis to the research under study. Further, the type of research to be followed is the descriptive method. The results generated from the analysis and interpretations of the questionnaire will assist designing better formative assessment that would help in improving the writing accuracy.

2.2.Teacher Questionnaire

2.2.1. Sample

The sample size for this study was fifteen (15) teachers of written expression who were selected randomly from faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages at the University of Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia, Jijel. The rationale behind this selection is because they will provide reasonable, purposeful insights and knowledge about the current study.

2.2.2. Description of Teacher Questionnaire

The data collection tool used for this research was a questionnaire, which aimed to address teachers of written expressions to seek information about their attitudes towards the impact of formative assessment on EFL learners' writing accuracy. This data collection instrument was designed based on the literature review of the current studies in order to find answers to the research question. It consists of fifteen (15) questions divided in three (3) sections. The first section consists of two (2) questions to gather evidence about teachers' academic and professional background. The second section is entitled "Formative Assessment", which aims at examining teachers' perceptions and beliefs concerning the purpose and different aspects and strategies of formative assessment. It consists of seven (7) questions in which respondents are asked to answer close- ended and open-ended questions and to respond on a likert scale to show the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the content of the statement integrated in the question. The last section is entitled "Writing Accuracy" that attempts to explore the teachers' opinions about the importance of writing accuracy and the impact of their instructions during the writing process. It consists of nine (9) questions and teachers were asked multiple choices

questions and close and open ended questions. They were asked equally to justify their answers to gain further insights.

2.2.3. Data Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire

Section A: Background Information

Q 01: how long have you been teaching?

Table 01: Teachers' Years of Experience

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Less than 5 years	7	46.67%
6-10 years	4	26.66%
11-15 years	1	6.67%
More than 15 years	3	20%
Total	15	100%

The aim of this question is to know how much teachers are experienced in the field of teaching. As it is shown in the above table, almost half of the teachers (46.66%) have been teaching for less than five (5) years.

Q 02: How long have you been teaching written expression**?**

Table 02: Teachers' Years of Experience in Teaching Writing

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Less than 5 years	12	80%
6-10 years	2	13.33%
11-15 years	1	6.67%
More than 15 years	0	0%

Total	15	100%

The teachers were asked about their years of experience in teaching writing module. The results from the above table indicate that the vast majority of teachers have been teaching writing for less than five (5) years. However, just one teacher has a long experience in teaching writing. It can be noted that most of the teachers' written expression are working temporarily and they are new graduate teachers.

Section B: Formative Assessment

Q 03: Do you implement formative assessment in your classroom?

Table 03: Teachers' Implementation of Formative Assessment

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	14	93.33%
No	1	6.33%
Total	15	100%

This question seeks to know whether teachers use formative assessment in their classroom or not. The findings reveal that (93.33%) of the teachers implement formative assessment in their classroom. It is essentially to note that formative assessment is practiced by the majority of teachers to gather information about their students' learning and progress. As far as for the one whose answer was "No", it can be assumed that he/she prefers to use other methods of assessment to keep track of the students' improvements.

Q 04: What is your conception of formative assessment?

This question designed to elicit opinions from teachers about their understanding of the purpose and the different strategies of formative assessment. It comprised six statements and frequencies and percentages of teachers' responses to these statements are presented in Table 4. Then, the statistical analysis of the results of each statement is analyzed independently.

Table 04: Teachers' Conceptions of Formative Assessment

	SA		A		D		SD	
S.	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	5	33.34%	7	46.67%	1	6.67%	2	13.33%
2	8	53.33%	5	33.34%	0	0%	2	13.33%
3	7	46.67%	5	33.34%	1	6.67%	2	13.33%
4	11	73.33%	1	6.67%	0	0%	2	13.33%
5	5	33.34%	8	53.33%	0	0%	2	13.33%
6	7	46.67%	6	40%	0	0%	2	13.33%

Statement 1: The purpose of formative assessment is to improve learning and achievement, to monitor and guide students' performance. This statement is intended to find out the teachers' understanding towards the goal behind implementing formative assessment in their classroom. The results from the above table indicate that teachers "strongly agreed", and "agreed" to this statement respectively 46.67% "strongly agreed", 33.34% "agreed" (i.e., a total of 80%). It can

be said that understanding the primary purpose of formative assessment could guide teachers for greater effectiveness of the learning targets.

Statement 2: Formative assessment is a tool that teachers use to measure students' understanding, and to identify students' strengths and weaknesses. This statement describes the aim behind using formative assessment. As shown in the above table, more than half of the teachers (53.33%) "Strongly agreed" and (13.33%) of the respondents "Strongly disagreed" on this statement. It seems that teachers' concerns are directed towards monitoring students' knowledge and grasp and to track their accomplishments and needs during the learning process.

Statement 3: Formative assessment focuses on the learning process and progress. The findings from the above table reveal that 46.67% of teachers "strongly agreed" and 33.34% of teachers "agreed", which amounts to 80.01%. It can be noted that formative assessment is not concerned with the learning product but rather concerned with assessing students at the beginning, during, and at the end of the course to gain evidence about their performance, and to check whether they have executed skillfully the learning aims or not.

Statement 4: Teacher' feedback is effective in promoting students' learning. This statement shows the impact of teachers' feedback on students learning. According to the results shown in table (4), "strongly agreed" received the highest percentage of teachers responses in that 73.33% of teachers showed that feedback has an impact on students learning, while 13**.**33% of teachers indicated that teachers' feedback does not affect the students learning. It is important to note that teachers have to pay close attention to the impact of providing positive and negative feedback in relation to students' learning.

Statement 5: Formative assessment is used to close the gap between the students' current level and where they need to be in relation to the learning goals. The results from the above table

suggest that 33.34% and 53.33%of responses say that they "strongly agree" and "agree" respectively. The results may need to be taken into account in the sense that formative assessment strategies would be used by teachers to close the gap in learning.

Statement 6: Self-assessment is effective if the teacher provides students with support and guidance. From this statement it can noticed that 46.67% of the respondents ticked "strongly agree" and 40% replied with "agree". These findings demonstrated that it is important in classroom culture for teachers and students to be partners in learning, and for teachers to provide students with opportunities and assistance to develop their proficiency.

Q 05: What type of formative assessment do you prefer to use?

Table 05: Teachers' Preferences of the Types of Formative Assessment

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Planned formative assessment	6	40%
Interactive formative assessment	9	60%
Total	15	100%

This question aims to know the most usable type of formative assessment and why. From the above table the results show that the majority of teachers (60%) prefer to adopt "interactive formative assessment" in their classroom. In order to know the reason behind their choice, they were asked to justify their answer.

Their justifications were summarized as follows:

- ✓ Interactive formative assessment is more effective in assessing students' knowledge and understanding of the content freely and unintentionally to satisfy all arising needs and interests of learners.

- ✓ It helps teachers to create different situations for language learners by using discussions and questions. Interaction also will help students improve their abilities as well as teacher will know the level of their students in order to cover their errors and correct them.

- ✓ In some cases, the situation or the environment in the classroom does not go hand in hand with what the teacher has already planned.

On the other hand, 40% of teachers who prefer "planned formative assessment" justified their responses by claiming that it has to be planned to allow teachers to organize their work effectively. Also students as beginners should be equipped by multiple exercises as a source to put them in the way for more advanced course components. It can be said that planned formative assessment and interactive formative assessment are both used by the teachers. Depending on the classroom reality and students' involvement, each teacher will decide what to choose to reach the standards.

Q 06: How do you usually assess your students?

Table 06: Teachers' Tools of Assessment

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Timed-essay tests	**9**	**60%**
Multiple-choice testing	**4**	**26.67%**
Portfolio assessment	**4**	**26.67%**
Others	**1**	**6.67%**

This question is designed to examine the different kinds of assessment teachers usually use to assess students' performance and competence. The results of the above table demonstrate that more than half of the teachers (60%) implement "timed- assay tests" in their classroom. The results obtained show that the respondents prefer to use "multiple-choice testing" and "portfolio assessment" with equal percentage (26.67%). This, in fact, proves that teachers find "timed-assay tests" as the most appropriate tool to measure students' writing capacities. Composing a writing draft in a limited period of time will enable teachers to notice and discover the students' writing gaps and difficulties.

Q 07: How often do you provide your students with oral feedback?

Table 07: Teachers' Frequency of Proving Oral Feedback

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Always	11	73.33%
Sometimes	4	26.67%
Never	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Total	15	100%

The aim of this question is to investigate teachers' views about the use of oral feedback. The analysis of the data gathered indicates that the majority of teachers with a 73.33% provide oral feedback during the course. It can be noted that almost all teachers use oral feedback in their interaction with their students, because it enables students to write with better content, make fewer errors, and to engage them in negotiating meaning.

Q 08: Do you think asking questions to elicit students' thinking and understanding is essential?

Table 08: Teachers' Perceptions on Importance of Questioning

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%
Total	15	100%

This question aims to shed light on the importance of asking to elicit students' understanding. Based on the results from the table (08), all of the respondents affirmed the

effectiveness of asking questions. However, it can be stated that questions create opportunities for teachers to reveal whether students' knowledge is incorrect or incomplete, for this reason giving enough time for learners to answer questions stimulates them to think deeply.

Question 09: In your view, effective feedback should be…

Table 09: Teachers' Opinions about Effective Feedback

Table 9(a)

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Descriptive	5	33.33%
Evaluative	7	46.66%
No answers	3	20%
Total	15	100%

Table 9(b)

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Focusing on the task	2	13.33%
Focusing on the learner	9	60%
No answers	4	26.66%
Total	15	100%

Table9(c)

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Immediate	9	60%
Delayed	0	0%
No answers	6	40%
Total	15	100%

The objective of this question is to figure out how effective feedback should be. Most of the teachers claimed that feedback should be "evaluative" with a percentage of 46.66% and "immediate" (60%) feedback rather than "descriptive" (33.33%) or "delayed". Also 60% of teachers stated that feedback should focus on the attributes of the learners. It can be claimed that the timing of feedback can have positive and negative impact, students would benefit from immediate feedback rather than the delayed, particularly when they are targeted in a new tasks and concepts to support their conceptual knowledge. Moreover, evaluative feedback informs the learner about their learning or accomplishments, but without providing guidance in which they can use to upgrade their performance.

Section C: Writing Accuracy

Q 10: How important do you consider writing accuracy?

Table 10: Teachers' attitudes about the Importance of Accuracy in Writing

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Very important	14	93.33%
Important	1	6.67%
Total	15	100%

This question aims at determining the teachers' attitudes towards the importance of accuracy in writing. According to the results from the table 10, a great majority of teachers (93.33%) endorsed the centrality of writing accuracy. Thus, this implies that teachers regard accuracy in writing as a significance criterion of a high quality of a piece of writing.

Q 11: Do you think correcting students' errors is important?

Table 11: Teachers' Perceptions of the Importance of Correcting Students' Mistakes

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%
Total	15	100%

This question aims to show the importance of correcting students' errors. From the above table, all teachers consider correcting errors as valuable. All of their answers were positive. It can be said that correcting student's errors will give cues and indication to the allocation of different types of errors which in return will help them to identify their mistakes and to self-edit and monitor their writing.

Q12: What kinds of errors do EFL learners most typically make?

Table 12: Teachers' Claims about Types of Students' Writing Errors

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Subject-verb agreement	3	20%
Verb form	6	40%
Word choice	6	40%
Punctuation	9	60%
Capitalization	3	20%
Spelling	8	53.33%
Coherence and cohesion	7	46.67%
All of them	5	33.34%
Others	2	13.33%

This question sought to explore the nature of errors made by EFL learners. As it is shown in the above table, the teachers agreed that students are facing multiple issues regarding the aspects of writing accuracy (grammar rules and mechanics). More than half of the teachers (60%) stated that "punctuation" in particular is the most common issue students encounter when writing; beside 53.33% of the respondents claimed that "misspellings" are found to be amongst the most frequent mistakes most EFL learners produce. Furthermore, the table indicates that 46.67% of the teachers agreed that students encounter difficulties in the use of cohesive devices and the ability to achieve unity in ideas, while 40% of the teachers agreed that students experience difficulties in choosing the appropriate verbs. Two teachers added that learners also commit errors related to sentence structure problems such as fragments.

Based on the above finding, it can be noted that this question identifies common errors produced by EFL learners. Namely, punctuation, spelling, and coherence and cohesion are the main areas learners need to master to attain accuracy. Even though students are equipped with knowledge concerning morphological, syntactic structures and mechanics, students still encounter difficulties in applying this knowledge to writing. In fact, errors can have a positive indication for teachers to design explicit and implicit instructional activities to rectify errors and to improve the areas students have difficulties with.

Q 13: To what extent do instructional strategies help to avoid errors during the writing process?

Table 13: Teachers' Frequency of the Importance of Instructional Strategies

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Very great	8	53.33%
A lot	6	40%
Very little	1	6.67%
Not at all	0	0%
Total	15	100%

This question intends to get an insight about the frequency of using instructional strategies to avoid student's errors. In fact, the majority of teachers agreed that instructional strategies bring out a great help for the students to correct and avoid their errors, as they picked "very great" with 53.33% and "a lot" with 40%.

Q 14: At which stage should students be guided to correct their mistakes?

Table 14: Teachers' Opinions about the Stages should Students be Guided

Options	Frequency	percentage%
Planning stage	3	20%
Drafting stage	8	53.33%
Editing stage	9	60%

This question aimed to identify at which stage students should be guided in order to check and correct their errors. As elicited in the above table, the results show that teachers should provide guidance in the "editing stage" (60%) and in the "drafting stage" (53.33%). Thus, it can

be claimed that giving instruction during the editing stage and drafting stage is critical to minimize the number of errors.

Q 15: Does the element of time influence the level of grammatical accuracy?

Table 15: Teachers' Perceptions on the Influence of the Element of Time on the Level of Grammatical Accuracy

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	12	80%
No	3	20%
Total	15	100%

This question is raised to know if time influences grammatical accuracy. Most of the teachers with 80% asserted that time influences the level of grammatical accuracy, whereas 20% said that it has no influence. It can be said that giving enough time for students will enable them to revise and edit the grammatical errors, and to develop clear and accurate expression through writing.

Q 16: When correcting students' mistakes, do you focus on?

Table 16: Teachers' Main Interest while Correcting Students' Mistakes

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Grammatical errors	5	33.34%
Lexical errors	3	20%
Content	4	26.67%
All of them	6	40%

This question was designed in order to know the aspects of writing that teachers' pay more attention when correcting students' responses. The findings suggested that 40% of the teachers focused on "content", "grammatical errors" and "Lexical errors" when correcting their students' writings. This table demonstrated that 33.34% of teachers agreed that grammatical errors should be corrected. It can be noted that content, grammatical errors and lexical errors are the main areas of focus when evaluating learner compositions.

Q17: Is there any significant difference between the effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedback on enhancing EFL learners' writing accuracy?

Table 17: Teachers' Perceptions towards the Effectiveness of Direct and Indirect Corrective Feedback

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	10	66.66%
No	3	20%
No answers	2	13.33%
Total	15	100%

This question opts to investigate the effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedback on writing accuracy. 66.66% of the teachers agreed that there is a difference between direct and indirect corrective feedback. Some of them support the direct one and others support indirect one. Written expression teachers who were with direct CF believe that direct is more explicit and taken into account and aid learners to learn from their mistakes. Some of their answers were as follows:

✓ Direct feedback is more significant and more effective because it makes students more attentive.

✓ For me, explicit/direct corrective feedback is more effective to make students aware about the different types of errors they may commit in their writing.

✓ Direct because explicit feedback serves as scaffold.

Teachers who supported indirect corrective feedback claimed that indirect assessment is more effective than the direct one because it is much better to illustrate their errors implicitly, whereas the ones who did not answer were not sure because they did not measure the effect of each technique alone, and it depends on what the student want to improve.

It can be noted that for some teachers there is a difference between direct and indirect corrective feedback whereas others see no difference at all; and the two of them can be used according to the classroom circumstances.

Q 18: Do you think that formative assessment has an impact on students' writing accuracy?

Table 18: Teachers' Attitudes towards the Impact of Formative Assessment on Improving Students' Writing Accuracy

Options	Frequency	Percentage%
Yes	15	100%
No	0	0%
Total	15	100%

The aim of this question is to determine whether formative assessment has an impact on students' writing accuracy. Based on the results from the above table, all of the teachers (100%) showed that formative assessment has a positive influence on the learners' writing accuracy

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enhancement. To gain further evidence concerning the relationship between the two variables, teachers were asked to justify their answers.

The justifications for this question were summarized as follows:

- ✓ Formative assessment gives students more opportunities to practice, learn and discuss structure and content and it assesses student current level and to improve their abilities.

- ✓ Formative assessment serves as a scaffold and research has proved that directness is effective.

- ✓ Formative assessment helps learners gradually get rid of their mistakes and errors and train them on how to control their learning, which in return will put them in the route of autonomy.

2.2.5. Discussion of the Main Results

The analysis of the quantitative data (questionnaire) revealed that most of the teachers agreed that implementing formative assessment in classroom is an essential pedagogical practice, which serves as a good tool in identifying students' strengths and weaknesses and helping them to improve their skills and performance. The results also showed that teachers stated that formative assessment concerned with the learning process in which they use activities and strategies to assess students' performance. Noticeably, more than half of the teachers stated that they prefer to use timed essay tests in order to assess students writing ability.

Moreover, a great majority of teachers agreed that interactive formative assessment is more effective in the sense that it gives chances for teachers to interact and get in touch with their students in any time during the lesson, to measure their understanding, and to make the needed adjustments in the instruction. To develop effective use of formative assessment, teachers are required to ask questions, and to provide feedback. The results indicated that all teachers agreed on the importance of asking questions to discover students' level of knowledge. This

finding supports the findings of previous research on the importance of questioning. It was described by Sullivan (2003) as a means that create opportunities for teachers to identify the learners' gap in knowledge and serves as a scaffold of their understanding to enable them close the gap between the current level and learning goals (p. 2).

Additionally, teachers reported that they used feedback frequently in their teaching and they are interested in delivering evaluative and immediate feedback to students. More than half of the teachers claimed that effective feedback should focus on the learners. Contrary to Hattie & Timperley (2007) finding in their research, effective feedback according to them should be focused on how well a task is being accomplished or performed in order to enable students to distinguish correct from incorrect answers, and to acquire more or different information (p. 91). The analysis of the third section of teachers 'questionnaires reveals that all the respondents agreed on the significance of writing accuracy, which means that learners need to develop their ability to write accurately and to reach the required quality. Teachers reported that students' still struggle to extricate themselves from committing the different types of errors in writing particularly, punctuation and spelling, coherence and cohesion.

Furthermore, teachers stated that it is important to consider instructional strategies that encourage students and help them to avoid errors during the drafting and editing stage in order to allow learners to gain control over the accuracy in their writing. It can be noted that they aid learners to pay attention to the originality of ideas, organization and flow of ideas, the various needs of the audience, the accurate use of grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. In addition, the findings of the study revealed that teachers provide written corrective feedback for students with a primarily focus on grammatical errors, lexical errors, content.

In the analysis of the question seventeen, a great number of teachers suggested that there is a significant difference between the effectiveness of direct and indirect CF on the improvement of writing accuracy. They most opted for direct correction. The findings are quite similar to those in several previous studies. According to Pearson (2018), direct written corrective feedback is the most preferred techniques among the other feedback techniques. It can be added that learners who received direct feedback are more willing to revise and correct their errors because it is much easier and faster. It can be inferred that written corrective feedback to be most beneficial, learners should manipulate well its use. Moreover, all of the teachers stated that formative assessment has a positive impact in improving learners writing accuracy. The result of this question allows us to recognize the importance of formative assessment in second language writing.

2.3. Limitations of the Study

In the current study, even though the results of the findings are useful and insightful and fit perfectly its goals and aims. Yet, there are some drawbacks that hindered the gathering of data and interpretation. The most obvious limitation has to do with the size of the sample. The number of teachers who specialized in the written expression module was very small, which in fact did not allow to go more deeply into the investigation of the topic and limited the scope of the study. Moreover, it was challenging to link the knowledge of second year students writing courses and assessments in relation to the current research aims and goals.

2.4. Pedagogical Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study suggest a number of ideas for further research. The first suggestion is to conduct a similar study with a large number of participants in different context of situations (Secondary schools, colleges, etc.) to broaden the scope of the study and to uncover more data on the effectiveness of formative assessment in improving students' writing accuracy.

In addition, this research dealt with the effect of written corrective feedback in helping learners to rectify their errors and improve their writing accuracy. Therefore, more researches are needed to investigate the factors that influence learners to commit the different types of errors.

Moreover, the current research offers insights into different modes of formative assessment. Thus, further research can be conducted in the Algerian context to explore the design of writing assessment. Finally, it could be valuable to investigate the effect of formative assessment on students' writing accuracy using a classroom observation.

Conclusion

In this chapter, data were collected and analyzed using a questionnaire to offer opportunities for teachers of written expression at the department of Mohamed Seddik Ben Yahia to share their perceptions, believes towards the effectiveness of formative assessment that would have in improving the learners' writing accuracy. Research results showed that teachers agree on the significant impact of formative assessment in enhancing EFL learners' writing accuracy. Teachers' answers would be used to offer insights about the classroom reality, the best instructional strategies during the writing process and their teaching style preferences to help improve learning, and to find solutions for some obstacle students may face during their learning experiences.

General Conclusion

Broadly speaking, engaging students in the learning process means that teachers develop assessment tools and strategies that involve collecting evidence about their achievements in order to determine needs in students' writing performance. This study gained insight into teachers' attitudes regarding the impact of formative assessment on improving EFL learners' writing accuracy. The study also focused on the importance of different types of feedback particularly written corrective feedback in improving accuracy in writing.

As for the structure of the dissertation, the present study comprised two chapters. The first chapter was devoted to the review of literature; it comprised two sections. The first section entitled "formative assessment" highlighted a variety of definitions of the term formative assessment, and the different types of assessment were discussed. It give also insights for teachers to decide what to choose depending on the classroom reality and students' demands and concerns. Moreover, this section shed light on some formative assessment practices and testing formats that enable teachers to assess their performance. During this process, the various forms of formative assessment strategies that teachers can use to monitor students' progress were addressed.

The second section reviewed the different definitions of writing accuracy along with its aspects. It presented the teachers writing instructions that would guide learners during the writing process. In addition, the definition of written corrective feedback was defined. Then, the debate among researchers whether written corrective feedback influences learners writing accuracy was discussed. Finally, it highlighted the influence of time on the level of grammatical accuracy.

The second chapter was devoted to the analysis and interpretation of the results obtained by a means of a questionnaire administered to written expression teachers at the department of

Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel. From the teachers' perceptions, the findings of the results demonstrated that formative assessment has a positive impact on improving learners' writing accuracy. It is important to mention that EFL teachers significantly improved their use of different types of writing tasks, activities, and testing formats as teaching different instructional materials in their classroom. As most of them agreed on the beneficial role of timed essay tests would have in assessing EFL learners' writing performance, and giving opportunities to solve language difficulties, hence they would be able to write accurately. Further, the tasks teachers assign will help them to expand their knowledge, and to develop and control the aspects of accuracy in their writing.

Moreover, teachers indicated the effectiveness of formative assessment strategies in improving learning. That is to say, explaining the learning intentions and objectives of a course would help learners to reach the expected standards. Then, asking questions to promote students thinking and understanding became available during teacher and student interactions. It was, therefore, recommended that providing direct or explicit written corrective feedback will show learners the types and nature of their errors and how it should be written correctly, which make them in return conscious about repeating the same mistakes. In the light of the current results, some limitations that were encountered while conducting this research are discussed, and suggestions and recommendations that can contribute to the effectiveness of formative assessment were proposed.

To sum up, this conclusion serves to recommend teachers of written expression to adopt formative assessment in their instructions in order to trace development in their students' accuracy in the target language.

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Appendix

Appendix A

Teachers' Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

This questionnaire serves as a data collection tool for a research work that aims to investigate the teachers' attitudes towards the impact of formative assessment on EFL learners' writing accuracy. Therefore, you are kindly asked to answer the following questions by putting a tick (√) on the appropriate box and expressing your comments when necessary.

Definition of the Concept of Formative Assessment:

The Council of Chief State School Officers (2008) defined formative assessment as, "a process used by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to help students improve their achievement of intended instructional outcomes".   *Many thanks for your collaboration.*

Section A: Background Information

Q01. How long have you been teaching**?**

      a. Less than 5 years   ☐

      b. 6-10 years   ☐

      c. 11-15 years   ☐

      d. More than 15 years   ☐

Q02. How long have you been teaching written expression**?**

      a. Less than 5 years   ☐

      b. 6-10 years   ☐

      c. 11-15 years   ☐

      d. More than 15 years   ☐

Section B: Formative Assessment

Q03. Do you implement formative assessment in your classroom?

Yes   ☐   No   ☐

Q04. What is your conception of formative assessment?

Using the following 1-4 scale, please answer each item by *ticking* the most appropriate response, the extent to which you agree with the statements listed below. The number stands for the following responses:

1- Strongly disagree

2- Disagree

3- Agree

4- Strongly Agree

	Statements	1	2	3	4
1	The purpose of formative assessment is to improve learning and achievement, to monitor and guide students' performance.				
2	Formative assessment is a tool that teachers use to measure students understanding, to identify students' strengths and weaknesses.				
3	Formative assessment focused on the learning process and progress.				
4	Teacher' feedback is effective in promoting student learning.				
5	Formative assessment is used to close the gap between the students' current level and where they need to be in relation to the learning goals.				
6	Self-assessment is effective if the teacher provide students with support and guidance.				

Q05. What type of formative assessment do you prefer to use?

    a. Planned formative assessment   ☐

    b. Interactive formative assessment   ☐

Justify your answer, please

………

………

Q06. How do you usually assess your students?

    a. Timed essay tests   ☐

    b. Multiple-choice testing   ☐

    c. Portfolio assessment   ☐

    d. Others   ☐

…….....

Q07. How often do you provide your students with oral feedback?

    a. Always   ☐

    b. Sometimes   ☐

    c. Never   ☐

    d. Rarely   ☐

Q08. Do you think asking questions to elicit students' thinking and understanding is essential?

    Yes   ☐   No   ☐

Q09. In your view, effective feedback should be…

a. Descriptive ☐ Evaluative ☐

b. Focusing on the task ☐ Focusing on the learners ☐

c. Immediate ☐ Delayed ☐

Section C: Writing Accuracy

Q10. How important do you consider writing accuracy?

a. Very important ☐

b. Important ☐

c. Not important at all ☐

Q11. Do you think correcting students' errors is important?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q12. What kinds of errors do EFL learners most typically make?

a. Subject-verb agreement ☐

b. Verb form ☐

c. Word choice ☐

d. Punctuation ☐

e. Capitalization ☐

f. Spelling ☐

g. Coherence and cohesion ☐

h. Others ☐

……………………………………………………………………………………..

Q13. To what extent do instructional strategies help students to avoid errors during the writing process?

a. A very great deal ☐

b. A lot ☐

c. Very little ☐

d. Not at all ☐

Q14. At which stage students should be guided to correct their mistakes?

a. Planning stage ☐

b. Drafting stage ☐

c. Editing stage ☐

Q15. Does the element of time influence the level of grammatical accuracy?

Yes No ☐   ☐

Q16. When correcting students' mistakes, do you focus on?

a. Grammatical errors ☐

b. Lexical errors ☐

c. Content ☐

d. All of them ☐

Q17. Is there any significant difference between the effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedback for enhancing EFL learners' writing accuracy?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, which is more effective?

....

Q18. Do you think that formative assessment has an impact on students' writing accuracy?

Yes [ ]   No [ ]

Please, justify your answer

....

....

....

Thank you so much.

Résumé

L'étude actuelle vise à effectuer une recherche sur les attitudes des enseignants à l'égard de l'impact de l'évaluation formative sur l'amélioration de la précision d'écriture chez les apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère. Il vise à identifier comment les enseignants utilisent l'évaluation formative pour améliorer l'enseignement de l'écriture. Cette étude examine également les perceptions des enseignants d'anglais langue étrangère quant à l'efficacité des commentaires correctifs écrits sur la précision d'écriture des apprenants. On estime que les enseignants peuvent avoir une attitude positive envers l'impact de l'évolution formative, qui en retour peut impacter la précision de l'écriture des élèves. Sur la base de la question de recherche actuelle qui exigeait la collecte des données quantitatives, un questionnaire a été utilisé comme un instrument de collecte des données. Il a été administré à une quinzaine (15) d'enseignants de l'université de Mohammed Ben Yahia, Jijel. Après l'analyse des données collectées les résultats indiquent que les enseignants ont des attitudes positives à l'égard de l'influence de l'évaluation formative sur l'amélioration de la précision de l'écriture des apprenants d'anglais langue étrangère. De plus, les résultats ont également démontré que la ponctuation, l'orthographe, la cohérence et la cohésion sont les erreurs les plus courantes rencontrées par les étudiants de deuxième année dans leur rédaction. Par conséquent, la pratique consistant à offrir un feedback correctif, écrit et direct a été appréciée par les enseignants dans le sens où elle pourrait avoir des grands effets sur l'amélioration de la précision d'écriture des élèves d'anglais langue étrangère.

Mots clés : Erreurs, Évaluation Formative, Feedback Correctif Direct, Feedback Correctif Écrit, Précision D'écriture.

الملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى البحث في مواقف الأساتذة تجاه تأثير التقييم التكويني على تطوير دقة الكتابة لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، وكذلك تحديد كيفية استخدام الأساتذة للتقييم التكويني لتعزيز تدريس الكتابة. تبحث هذه الدراسة أيضا في تصورات أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية حول فعالية التعليقات التصحيحية المكتوبة على دقة كتابة المتعلمين. من المفترض أن الأساتذة قد يكون لديهم موقف إيجابي تجاه تأثير التقييم التكويني والذي في المقابل يمكن أن يؤثر على دقة كتابة الطلاب. بناء على سؤال البحث الحالي الذي يتطلب جمع البيانات الكمية تم الاعتماد على استبيان كأداة لجمع البيانات، ولقد تم توزيعه على خمسة عشر (15) أستاذا بجامعة محمد الصديق بن يحي بجيجل، بعد تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها أشارت النتائج إلى أن المعلمين لديهم مواقف إيجابية تجاه تأثير التقييم التكويني على تحسين دقة الكتابة لدى متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، علاوة على ذلك أظهرت النتائج أن علامات الترقيم والتهجئة والتناسق هي من أكثر الأخطاء شيوعا بين طلاب السنة الثانية في كتاباتهم، ولذلك فإن عملية إثبات الملاحظات التصحيحية المكتوبة والمباشرة لاقت استحسانا من قبل الأساتذة بمعنى أنها قد تحدث   تأثيرات أفضل في تعزيز دقة كتابة طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التقييم التكويني، دقة الكتابة، الأخطاء، ردود الفعل التصحيحية المكتوبة، ردود الفعل التصحيحية المباشرة.