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Investigating the Strategies for Writing a Dissertation: The Case of Master Two Students in the Department of at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou

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Dedications

To my beloved parents

To all my family and ghiles.

GaterFatma.

Dedications

I dedicate this work to my dear parents Said and Ouiza

To my dear grand parents

To my beloved brothers: Ali, Ahmed, and Mokrane

To my sister: Liza

To my uncles and aunts

To my FiancéAkli and his Familly

To my sweety friends Fatima,Hakima, Lynda, Katia, Naima, and Lila

To all those who have helped me throughout my studies

To Lynda

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Abstract

The present study revolves around Master two students' strategies for writing a dissertation. It aims to investigate and identify the strategies that Master two students in the English department follow for writing their dissertations, and if they use them in an effective way. It also aims to know whether those strategies help them to produce a written work of high quality. To reach this aim, Master two students enrolled in the different fields have been taken as a case study. It so relies on Ken Hyland's (2003) approach to writing. For the sake of empirically investigating the issue, a mixed method approach is adopted. It relates between quantitative and qualitative procedures for data collection and data analysis. The study relies on a questionnaire administered to sixty graduate Master students as well as semi-structured interviews conducted with ten students from the different options. The data gathered from these instruments are analyzed through the Statistical Package For Social Sciences (SPSS) and Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA).The findings of this research reveal that the participants are conscious these strategies ,so they are expected to plan ,revise ,and edit their Dissertations before submitting them. The results show that these strategies help students to produce a well written and academic dissertation.

Key Words: Writing Strategies, Master two Students, Ken Hyland's framework, Research Work, Qualitative Content Analysis.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

L2: Second Language

MDs: Master Dissertations

QCA: Qualitative Content Analysis

SPSS: Software Package for Social Sciences

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General Introduction

Statement of the Problem

In educational settings, writing is considered as a difficult and complex activity. Academic writing is difficult because it always requires a complex combination of generating and selecting ideas that are appropriate to the writing task, translating this into text and polishing the text to produce a presentable work.

It is necessary to know that there is a difference between free writing and writing an academic genre. The latter is the main focus of our investigation. Indeed, Dudley-Evans, (1994:219) argues that "*a genre is a means of achieving a communicative goal that has evolved in response to particular rhetorical needs*". As far as the Master Dissertation is concerned, it is said to be an academic genre, writing it is the final stage of the Masters degree; it is a complex task to edit; because it requires a range of planning and research skills that will help us for future career. In addition, it provides us with the opportunity to show that we have gained the necessary skills and knowledge in order to organize and conduct a research project.

Thus, in FL research, writing is one of the most challenging skills for almost learners. Writing skill as EFL learners perceive is highly complex if not the most complex in comparison to listening, speaking, and reading. Furthermore, writing academic dissertation is among the crucial and difficult genres that the researchers face in their learning career, what makes the writing of academic research or project a very troublesome for EFL learners is the fact that it requires some strategies that learners must follow in order to produce good final work. In addition to this, most of EFL learners face difficulties when they are required to write in any given topic not only a dissertation. Indeed, Cooley and Lew Kowiz, (1997: 113)

argued that "*the process of writing a research reflects the student's linguistic potentionals as well as their competence. As a result, writing is not an easy task because students are expected to produce an effective piece of writing through respecting all the rules that govern the language use to the latter*". In other words, writing research requires students' cognitive and linguistic abilities for instance students' abilities to summarize and paraphrase. Writing and publishing good research paper is essential for a lot of reasons: not only advancing researchers' academic career but above all for disseminating research findings and advancing the state of empirical knowledge. A paper is the outcome of three different processes: research, writing and publication. Although this paper focuses on the writing process and students' strategies for writing research, it is important to understand that the processes that the one needs to follow before and after writing. A good paper is the outcome of well-structured research, careful writing and successful publication process.

Starting from the point that writing skill is a cognitive process where the three elements: writers, readers and texts interact with each other (Tsai Jui-min 2006), we aim to conduct our research under the light of the process approach to writing. To make it clear, process writing is an approach to writing, where language learners focus on the process by which they produce their products rather than on the products themselves. At the end, learners surely need and required to complete their products, yet the writing process itself is stressed more. By focusing on the writing process, learners come to understand themselves more, and how to work through the writing. They may explore what strategies conform to their style of learning (Kroll, 1990).

Although there has been a recent growth in research on the writing process, only a few studies have described or assessed the efficacy of the different strategies adopted by academic writers. Process theorists, will in the process of the production of pieces of writing go through

many plans, draft, and revise, stages as well as diverging into planning and revision when drafting is taking place (Matsuhashi, 1981; Flower and Hayes, 1981). Studies have found that research into L2 and EFL classes has for long time focused on the written product as a means of studying the writing process Kroll (1990) and Krapels (1990). For this reason writing remains one of the most challenging tasks. In second language context, Arndt (1987), Zamel (1982), Hedgock (2005) and Susser (1994), D. Murray (1972), Hyland (2003), Flower (1980) and Hayes (1981) are leaders in the field of investigating the writing process.

A brief glance at the literature points out that in recent years, the issue of strategies followed by writers for writing an academic research, has attracted more interests from researchers ,scholars, linguists who have pointed out the significance of following and teaching strategies in the world of writing as Woman (1980) "Academics and their Writings". Sommers, N (1980) "Revision strategies of students writers and Experience Adult Writers", Amel Benaissa "Teaching Writing Skills and Strategies in the Algerian Secondary School Syllabuses and Textbooks" (2009). None of the studies has dealt with the issue in relation to Master dissertations in the Algerian context. As far as our Dissertation is concerned, it is a case study which tries to investigate students' strategies for Writing Research Work in the English department at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou (MMUTO).

Aims and Significance of the Study

Writing a dissertation is likely to be the longest and most difficult piece of work a student has ever completed, usually the aim of the dissertation or thesis is to produce an original piece of research work on a clearly defined topic. Thus, the present work is significant for EFL learners in general, and for English department at MMUTO in particular for several reasons: First, English is of great importance in Algeria for vocational, business, and educational purposes. Second, to validate the ground of the research and build the thesis

on solid evidence from the information collected from Masters Degree of the English Department at MMUTO as it is chosen to be the context of our study. Indeed, it is so important since this study investigates in depth strategies that are employed by students to write research. Therefore, this study investigates in depth to the best of our knowledge, this is also the first trial as an empirical study in the English department in Tizi-Ouzou University to investigate product and process, the findings of this investigation will be of vital importance for EFL pedagogy in general, and English department in particular.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Considering what has been mentioned above, the present study tries to identify, investigate, and analyze the writing process of students in English department at the university of Tizi-Ouzou. Most importantly, it studies the role of employing different strategies when writing research. To explore the objectives of the research, the topic will answer the following research questions:

RQ1- What are the strategies that Master II Students of the English department at

 MMUTO employ when writing their dissertations?

RQ2- How do students use these strategies to write their Master dissertations?

RQ3- Do writing strategies help student in writing and creating a good dissertation?

To predict the responses we have put in advance the following hypotheses:

H1- Master II Students use different strategies when writing their Master dissertations.

H2- 1- Students use effectively these strategies to write their dissertations.

2- Students do not use effectively those strategies to write their Master dissertation.

H-3- 1- Yes, writing strategies help students to produce a good dissertation.

2- No, writing strategies do not help students when writing their dissertation.

Research Techniques and Methodology

The present work attempts to investigate and identify the students' strategies for writing a Master dissertation. Thus, to conduct this research we have adopted the mixed method approach which combines both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and the data analysis ones. For this reason, a questionnaire was distributed for students of Master II as a research instrument to help us to conduct this investigation. Students' questionnaire contains both close-ended and open-ended items, in addition to this we are going also to use content analysis as a tool with purpose of discovering the students' strategies for writing their final work. Moreover, we added an interview as a second research instrument that we have conducted with some Master two students.

Structure of the Dissertation

The dissertation is structured according to the traditional complex type. It contains a General Introduction which states the problem and the importance of the work, its aims and significance, the methodology and the structure of the dissertation. The first chapter which is Review of Literature discusses the theoretical framework that underpins the present research and the main concepts related to it. The second chapter presents the methodology of the research which shows the research procedures and instruments used for gathering and analyzing data. The third chapter which is the Presentation of the Results followed by the fourth chapter entitled Discussion of the Findings, show the data obtained and provides explanations and interpretations for it. The General Conclusion comprises the main points of the research and proposes suggestions for further research.

Introduction

The aim of the current chapter is to present a theoretical background of the relevant studies concerning students' strategies for writing a research; it is devoted to the review of the main concepts related to the present work. First, the term writing is defined from different perspectives. Second, much focus is put on the meaning of research. Third, we are going to give the different meanings of strategy according to different scholars at the same time defining the concept of strategies for writing a research according to several scholars. Finally, much importance is devoted to the presentation of the analytical framework that we are going to rely on in order to analyze the data obtained.

1. The nature of Writing

Writing in general is said to be an interactive method of communication that takes place between the reader and the writer via a written text. Nunan (2000) argued that*" writing is considered as the most difficult skill for all language learners, whether the language in question is the first, second or foreign language"*; which means that writing is among the difficult productive skills that learners may face in their studies. In this context, many theorists such as Al-Mutawa and Taisser (1989) said about writing *"is a complex cognitive activity which requires most of the frequent rules governing the structure of sentences that is why it needs a lot of practice from the part of the learner."* In this vein, writing is a difficult skill that requires the mastery of language structure, vocabulary, grammar rules…

Writing in its nature is recursive rather than linear process Hyland (2003). 'Recursive writing' means that the writer who is engaged to write a piece of work, write and rewrite and

each time he/ she comes back to omit words, replace them with others…that is why writing is considered as a process. For instance, students plan, draft, revise and edit what they produce. It is through these different stages that students can develop their writing. The aim of process writing is to help students to be aware of what they are exactly working on. In other words students need to consider how to handle the various steps involved in the whole process. Oshima and Hogue (2007: 15) claimed that:

> Writing is never a one step action; it is an ongoing creative act. When you first write something you have already been thinking about what to say and how to say it. Then after you have finished writing, you read over what you have written and make changes and corrections. (2007:15)

In fact, writing a piece of work is not a one step, it is rather a recursive act where the writer writes, omits, and rewrites to refine the work.

2. The Basic Rules of Writing

Writing is a complex combination of words to form full sentences where writers must clearly state their ideas to make themselves understood .Though writing is a sophisticated skill it is said to be an effective means of communication and self expression. Good writing requires certain criteria such as: clarity, coherence, simplicity and brevity.

2.1 Clarity

Clarity in writing is one important element; that is, when writing in an academic paper the goal is to convey meaning. D.Murray and Hughes (2008: 86) *"emphasize the importance of clarity as a fundamental unit in making one's writing easy to be read and accessible"*. According to them, clarity can be achieved through writing short and relevant sentences....Following what is said by Murray and Hughes; Starkey (2004) identifies many elements to achieve clarity in which we find first, eliminate ambiguity by avoiding writing sentences which have more than one

interpretation. Second, being concise which means to get right to the point without turning just around to say nothing. Finally, word choice, which consists of choosing the right words. According to Starkey (2004) and Koem (2000), there are two aspects the learner should consider while choosing the words to employ: denotation which is the implied meaning of the word, and connotation which is the abstract meaning of the term.

2.2 Coherence

Coherence in writing is the logical bridge between words, sentences, and paragraphs. Coherent writing uses devices to connect ideas within each sentence and paragraphs. Kane, Grene and Lea (2008) agrees that coherence has great role in making a good piece of writing; coherence has to do with arranging and linking one's idea in a way that makes them most easily understood by the learner. D.Murray and Hughes (2008) claimed that a *"good writer is the one who Sticks his ideas together as links in chain, each link connection the one before it with one after. If any links are missing, the structure breaks down"*.

2.3 Brevity and Simplicity

It is better to convey the maximum information with minimum words. Brevity is an elementary rule which saves the reader's patience and time, and helps to communicate effectively. whereas simplicity may be summed up in that it is better to write simple sentences and avoid the complex ones because writing a lot of complex sentences lead the writer especially the elementary ones to fall into language mistakes. In brief, while writing it is better to think with what the traditional saying says *"write to express not to impress"*.

3. Approaches to Teach Writing

Writing unlike other skills needs to be consciously taught and learnt by doing practice. A number of approaches have emerged to develop practice in writing skill. Applying one approach or another depends on the learners' needs, that is to say it is up to them to focus on the product of writing or its process.

3.1 The Process Approach

Unlike other approaches, Donald Murray (1972), Raimes (1983:10), along with Tribble (1996) and Harmer (2001) point out that the process approach emphasis is not on product but rather on the process. This approach involves various stages of research as such discussion, language study...etc. A lot of definitions have been given to the writing process. Among many scholars, Donald Murray (1982:73) defines writing process as *"using language to discover meaning in experience and communicate it"*.

According to Chieko Onozawa (2010:10):

> Process writing is an approach to writing, where language learners focus on the process by which they produce their written products themselves. In the end learners surely need and are required to complete their products, yet the writing Process itself is stressed more.

This means that, the process approach to writing emphasizes the writer as an independent producer where the writer discovers that writing itself is a process and should be stressed more. Brown (2001) argues that *"writing is a thinking process; the learner produces a final written product based on their thinking after going through the thinking process."* This means that writing is not a matter of copying and pasting a text, but the student starts first by generating ideas, before translating them into texts for instance writing a journal article. In addition to this, Brown quotes Elbow (1973: 14-16) as saying that writing should be taught of as an organic,

development process... not as a way to transmit a message but as a way to grow a message. This means that writing is a step by step stage. It should be taught as a linear process from the start to the end, as the example of writing an essay, the learner should move from the introduction, development to reach the conclusion taking into consideration coherence and cohesion and the strength of ideas thus to produce a full product.

Kroll (1990:96) also quotes Applebee (1986) as saying that the process approach *"provided a way to think about writing in terms of what the writer does (planning, revising) instead of what the final product looks the (patterns of organization, spelling, and grammar)."* That is, Process approach takes into consideration learners' needs, expectations, goals, learning styles, skills and knowledge. In other words, this approach considers the learner as central in learning.Eventhough the writing process usually involves several steps, most of scholars in which we can mention Hyland (2003), agreed that a typical sequence is comprised of five steps: prewriting, drafting and revising, editing, and publishing. Many definitions has been given to process writing, researchers such as Raimes (1983:76) argue that this approach focuses on the writing process itself rather than the final product. According to these above definitions, we think that Process approach to teaching writing should be a process including several stages, namely prewriting or invention activities (Brainstorming, group discussion, assessing ideas, drafting, seeking feedback from peers or the Instructors, revising on the whole text level (looking at the overall focus, reconsidering organization, deciding whether there is enough evidence, etc…) followed by revising at the paragraph or sentence level, proofreading, and "publishing the final text". In essence, process approach to teaching writing focuses on the writing process rather than on the final product.

3.2 Process Approach versus Product Approach

Review of the Literature

Many theorists make a distinction between process approach and product approach or between Process–oriented and product-oriented writing. James Mc Crimon sees it as the difference between writing as a way of knowing (process) and writing as way of telling (product). For example, formal letters or postcards in which the features are very fixed would be more suited to a product driven approach, in which focus on the layout, organization and grammar help students in dealing with this type of writing. Other genres, such as discursive essays and narrative ones, may lead themselves to process-driven-approach that is to say, when writing this kind of essays the writer (student) is required to pay attention to the enchainment of ideas thus all the process of writing from the beginning till the end. Linda flower sees it as the difference between writer based and reader based prose. In other words, she sees it simply as the difference between writing as a process and writing as a product. Nunan (2001) clearly emphasized on how using and how different this process approach is from the traditional product-oriented approach. While the product approach focus is on writing tasks in which the learner imitates, copies and transforms teachers' supplied models; the process approach focus is on the steps involved in creating a piece of work. The main goal of product writing is the work. Process writing comprises that no text can be perfect, but that a writer will get closer to perfection by producing, reflecting on discussing and reworking successive drafts of a text. Though these theorists differ in their explanations of the distinction between process and product oriented writing, there is one important point upon which they all agree: good product depends on good process.

Figure 1: Features Participating at the Production of a Piece of Writing By (Raimes 1983).

The figure below is a recapitulation of the main elements that are necessary to produce a piece of writing. In other words, any writer starts first by gathering many ideas in his mind and taking into consideration the purpose and the audience for whom he will write, after writing his ideas in a draft, he will effectively orgnize them in paragraphs taking into consideration the grammar rules and word choice, for instance writing a journal article.

Syntax: sentence structure

Boundaries stylistic   **content**

Grammar: rules

For verbs, agreement,

Articles, pronouns, etc…

Clear, fluent, and effective communication ideas

writer's process: getting ideas,

Writing drafts, spelling, pronunciation

12
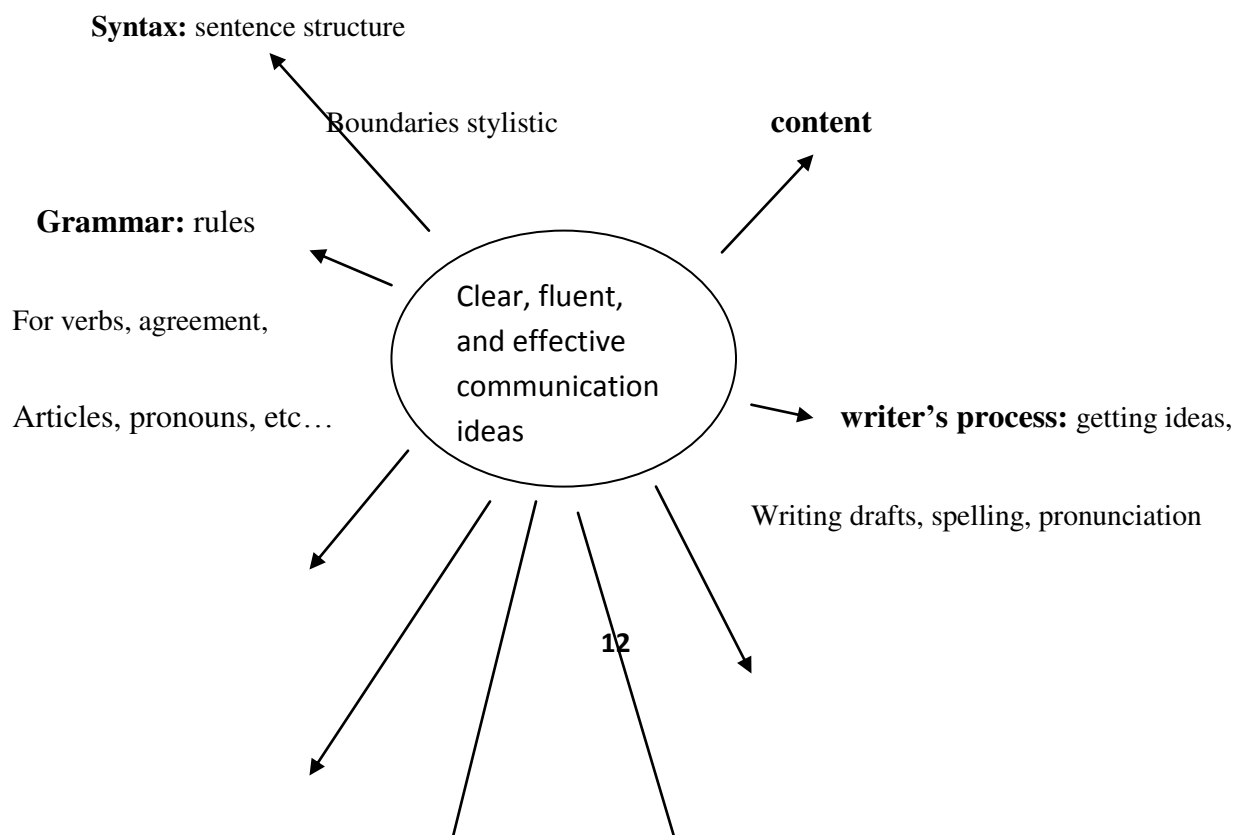
Mechanics: hand writing,

Audience: the readers

 Purpose: the reason for writing

Organization: paragraphs, Cohesion   **word choice:** vocabulary, idioms

According to Donald Murray (1972), the process which should be taught is the process of discovery through language. In other words, it is the process of exploration through language that is the process of using language to learn about our world, to evaluate what we learn and to communicate it. For Murray, the writing process itself can be divided into three Stages as it is shown in the figure bellow: prewriting, writing, and rewriting. In this context, the figure shows that a production of any given written work is an enchanement of three elements: prewriting which resumes any drafting or any plan o

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┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐
│  Prewriting  │ ──►  │   Writing    │ ──►  │  Rewriting   │
└──────────────┘      └──────────────┘      └──────────────┘
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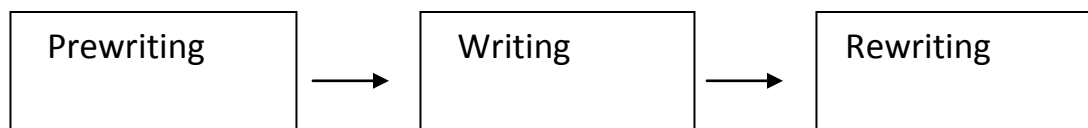
Figure 2: the writing process by Donald Murray (1972).

4. Definitions of Research

There are various and several definitions of research proposed by authors and scholars of their time. Research as defined by Godwin Colibao (2016) comprises *"creative work undertaken on systematic bases in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new application."* Furthermore, scientific research is a systematic of gathering data, "a harnessing of curiosity". The

research provides scientific information and theories for the explanation for the nature…Abroad definition of research is given by Martyn Shutleworth (2008) *"in the broadest sense of the word, the definition of research includes any gathering of data, information and facts for the advancement of knowledge…"* To put it clear, the term research is the journey through which a researcher discovers new area of knowledge. In other words, the student starts from the unknown to reach the known. Another definition of research is given by Creswell (2008) who states that *"research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue It consists of three steps; pose a question, collect data to answer the question, and present an answer to the question."*

4 .Strategies for writing a research

1. Definition of Strategy

Strategy is a term that comes from the Greek "stratigia" which means "generalship". Strategy according to George Steiner (1979), a professor of management, is generally considered as a key figure in the origins and development of strategic planning, known in his book: *Strategic Planning* (2). Yet, Steiner does not bother to define strategy except in the notes at the end of his book. There, he notes that strategy entered the management literature as a way of referring to what one did to counter a complitator's actual or predicted moves (P.348)

Furthermore, strategy according to Henry Mintzberg (1994) is a plan, how a means of getting from here to there. Strategy is a pattern in action over time, it is a position that reflects decisions to offer particular product or services in particular markets. Strategy is a persepective, that is, vision and directions. Mintzberg (1994) argues that:

> Strategy emerges over time as intentions collide with and accommodate a changing reality. Thus, one might start with a perspective and conclude that it calls for a certain position, which is to be achieved by way of a carefully plan, with the eventual outcome and strategy reflected a pattern evident in decisions and actions over time. (1994)

This pattern decisions and actions define what Mintzberg called"realized"or emergent strategy. Finally, according to Shaphira and Lazarovitz (2005), the term strategy refers to "actions and behaviors used by the writer to solve the problems in the writing process.

5. Definition of Strategies for Writing a Research

There are many strategies that the researcher should follow for writing their research. Hyland (2003:10-14) had adopted five stages writing process in which he defines which are those stages and what is their definitions. Those stages for Hyland are: pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. The following is an in-depth look at each of these stages and strategies for writing Students to employ them in EFL writings.

5.1 Pre-writing

The writer or the student gathers, generates information, and plays with ideas during the pre-writing stage. Pre-writing techniques may include brainstorming, free writing, clustering, mapping or listing. The writer can also use graphic organizers like charts, story maps, diagrams or clusters. Furthermore, Pre-writing is an important phase in the writing process because as stated by Flowerdew (2000:371) *"…students who are encouraged to engage in an array of pre-writing experiences have a greater chance for writing achievements than those enjoined to get to work on their writing without this kind of preparation"* .In other words, students cannot start the process of writing without doing brainstorming ,mapping ,listing ,reviewing the literature and preparing all the necessary information that the students need in their writing.

According to Murray and Hughes(2008:16) pre-writing exercises do not only help students to find something to write about a specific topic, they also help them improve their writing skill in that they provide them with opportunities to generate ideas and write with confidence. They state *"practice in writing no matter how short the exercise is to make yourself confident about your writing and to improve your skills"*. Usually the activity of generating ideas ends up by making a plan or an outline. More, the pre-writing stage focuses on stimulating students' creativity and letting them about what to write and how to approach the chosen topic. To implement this stage effectively, Hedge (2005) suggests that teachers remind students of two important questions: the purpose of their writing and its audiences that is students should keep in mind the intended readers and content of the text when they make a global outline for their writing. Most of the researchers mentioned above agreed that pre-writing strategy is of great value and play a role in the beginning of the process writing, that is why students have to focus more on this stage to achieve a good writing.

5.2 Drafting:

Drafting is the real writing stage where the writer develops his or her topic on paper. It is the physical act of writing Richards and Rodgers (2001:43. Hedge (2005:83) defines drafting as *"the stage where the writer puts together the pieces of the text through developing ideas into sentences and paragraphs within an overall structure"*; i.e., at this stage the writer or the student puts together all what he or she has gathered in order to form a suitable and coherent piece of work. In addition to this when writing the first draft, students should focus on content only and forget about language and mechanical aspects such as grammar, spelling and punctuation. He must write freely and try to find the best way to communicate his or her ideas.

In addition, Muncie (2000) points out that "*drafting consists of neating rough draft without concern for mechanics*"; it means that the writer should not be concerned about grammar or spelling at this stage. The focus is on the content not on the mechanics. Everything about writing is open to change. The ideas should flow easily and the words be written quickly. If students do not know what to write then they should be encouraged to go back to the pre-writing stage. Shorn (2002) argues that careful attention to the order and structure of ideas at this stage will save the writer from having to make extensive revisions later on. The writer begins by looking for structure already existing in the graphic organizer. At this point, the writer may be able to come up with the working introduction to the paper based on the structure emerging from the draft. Next, the writer starts thinking of ways to translate the new draft into coherent and complete sentences on new piece of paper. It is not easy for students to move from planning to actual writing. However, students need to transform plans into temporary text at some point. Equally important, all writing draft should be kept, not only when the writing is being developed, but also after it is completed. These drafts are valuable to the students as a collection of thoughts writing projects, and sources for new directions (Chelsa, 2006).

To sum up this point, as it is agreed by many scholars using many drafts lead the writers (students) to succeed in the writing of their works.

5.3 Revising

The reviewing stage is the process of looking again and discovering a new vision of the writing produced in drafting. It is the stage during which the writer corrects mechanical errors and realizes substantial changes in his or her writing (Grenville,2001).Furthermore, Bodger and White (2000) see that revising is the stage where writers check that they have said what they

wanted to say in a clear and appropriate way. This means that revision is a recapitulation and a step for checking and verifying what the one has written. The right example for this is the case of Master two students who are supposed to revise their final dissertation before submitting it to the administration.

Moreover, these scholars stress that revising includes more than only checking spelling, grammar and punctuation, it also includes checking that content and purpose are clear and appropriate for the reader in the particular writing situation. According to Johnson (2008), revising is the heart of the writing, and it could be more productive of advanced final products if it includes inputs from teachers and/or peers. Indeed, peers review it as a key classroom activity that enhances the students' ability to organize text and increases their awareness of the importance of readership and that of purpose. Muncie (2000:49) states that:

> Students have the chance to refine their work during the revision stage and describe the features of revising as: revision is not just polishing writing; it is meeting the needs of readers through adding, substituting, deleting and rearranging material. (2000:49).

This quotation means that during the revision stage students may modify their works either by adding or omitting some expression as well as rearranging again their previous ideas.

To synthesize, all of White (2000), Johnson (2008), Muncie (2000) agreed on the point that revising is the heart of the writing where writers or students check their language mistakes, errors, content and polish their writings.

5.4 Editing

Editing is the stage where the draft is polished; it is the final step before handing out the final draft. The writer gives attention to mechanics such as punctuation, spelling and grammar. Moreover, editing involves the careful checking of the text to ensure that there are no errors of spelling, punctuation, word choice and word order (Johnson, 2008).In the editing stage, students

proofread their own writing or peer's writing carefully to correct mechanics and grammatical errors. Muncie (2000:51) defines editing as *"putting the pieces of writing into its final form."* Prior to this stage, the students' main concern has not been local grammar errors or mechanics but content. Going into this stage, however, students eventually have time to polish their writing by the correction of local errors and spelling.

Moreover, Atkinson (2003:11) presents what writers should check in the final stage of their drafts as follows the order in which the information is presented, the layout, the spelling, punctuation, hand writing, choice- of words and grammar in the final stages, students should get distance from their composition and read it, checking grammatical and mechanical errors. They can use not only grammar books and dictionaries but also peers and teachers as resources in this stage. Brown (2001) also suggests that teachers should indicate grammatical errors without correcting them by themselves and they can suggest further word choices and transitional words to improve clarity and coherence of writing.

To restate this point, editing stage as it is argued by the mentioned researchers is considered as the final step that writers engage in before submitting the final work. That is why the students should check carefully what they have written in order to make sure that their work is correct enough.

Publishing

Buhrke (2002) illustrates that having students publish their completed works with audience such as peers, friends, families or community, teachers can promote real communication between writers and readers in the process writing classroom since students can have real audiences who can meaningfully respond to their writing and develop confidence as authors.

Also displaying students writing on a classroom bulletin board and making a classroom newspaper can give students the sense of professional authorship. In addition, Brown (2001) highlights the importance of providing authenticity of writing for students and asserts that sharing writing with peers is one of the important ways to improve authenticity. Hence, teachers should encourage students to read each other's work and comment on others final product.

Theoretical Framework

There are many researchers like Totten, (2003), Harmer (2004) and Donald Murray (1972) who acknowledged that writing is a recursive rather than a linear process. When talking about writing as a process, it is understood that ideas are generated, put in first draft, organized and arranged in whole, revised and corrected and finally written in final draft.

The field of writing is an interdisciplinary field of study, investigated by scholars from different perspectives. As every research work should rest on theoretical bases, the present study relies on theoretical framework proposed by Ken Hyland (2003) a theorist in the field of writing. This Framework known as Process Writing; which is meant to be implemented in EFL classes to develop writing skill on the learners. It comprises five main stages in which each one of them includes different strategies that serve to develop learners' writing skill. The first one is 'prewriting' that includes brainstorming, clustering, mapping, and then listing. The second one is 'drafting'. As for the third and the fourth ones, are 'revising' and 'editing', the last stage in this approach is 'publishing'. This framework is an approach developed by Ken Hyland in his book Second Language Writing (2003) .In the sense that this approach stresses the point that writing is seen as a process not a product.

The writing strategies that make up Hyland's framework can summarized as follows:

Prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing.

Conclusion

To sum up, this chapter has put a focus on the important concepts related to the study. The Concept writing, research, strategy and strategies for writing a research have been reviewed. According to different views in the field of writing in general and writing a research Spcecificly.Then a detailed presentation of the theoretical frame work has also been given.

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the research design of the study. It presents the research techniques used to carry out our investigation and to answer the research questions asked in the General Introduction. This chapter is divided into two main parts which present the procedures of data collection and those of data analysis. The first one is mainly concerned with a detailed description of the research methodology, instruments, and procedures. The second one introduces the data analysis yielded by the research instruments.

1. Data Collection Procedures

1.1 Research Method

In the present study, we intend to investigate whether master two students of the English Department use strategies while writing their research, and if the latter has an effect on them to produce an effective academic research. For this goal, data collection and data analysis tools from both quantitative and qualitative methodologies are applied. The mixed method according to Johnston, et al. (2007) is defined as follows:

> The type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines
> Elements of qualitative and quantitative data research approaches (e.g., use of
> qualitative and quantitative view points, data collection, analysis, inference
> Techniques) for the purpose of breadth and depth of understanding and Corroboration.
> (2007)

Our choice to apply this method in our investigation is not random, but based on the fact that it guarantees credibility in reporting the results; since it relates both quantitative and quantitative methods. First of all, the qualitative method makes the process of description and information gathering from the participant easy. Secondly, the quantitative method is a practical method for gathering measurable data for the sake of establishing facts and make predictions to check the hypotheses of the study. (Ronald A. Nykiel, 2007: 55).

1.2 The context of the Study

The present research investigates students' strategies for writing research. It takes place in the English Department at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. The participants are Master two students . They are preparing for writing their academic research which takes place at the end of their fifth year of study.

1.3 The Participants

The participants in our investigation are Master two students (all options) of the English Department at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. Sixty (60) participants have taken part in the current study. The later are randomly chosen to complete the questionnaire with the aim of getting reliable results.

1.4 Instruments of Data Collection

In order to investigate our subject, we have used two main research tools ,a Questionnaire and an Interview administered for Master two students to get information about students' views about those strategies in order to deepen our research.

1.4.1   The Questionnaire

As mentioned above, the present study uses the mixed method approach by relying on a questionnaire and an Interview as its data collection tools. Generally speaking, a questionnaire is a data collection tool that researchers use to collect data from a specific group. Brown (2001), cited in Dorneyei, (2003) defines questionnaire as *"any written tool that contains series of questions and statements which the respondents answer either using their own words, or choosing from the answers they are provided with"*.Dornyei (2003) asserts that the questionnaire is the most used data collection tool in social sciences and that the researchers use in statistical works.

For the goal of getting authentic data to the present study, sixty (60) questionnaires have been handed to Master two students at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou from which we have collected (47). The questionnaire includes twenty five (25) items, both

open ended and close ended questions. The questionnaire is divided into four (4) sections. Section one is about general information of writing in English; it gives information about students' attitudes towards writing in general. The second section is entitled students' knowledge about the writing process; it aims to seek information about writing as a process not a product.

As regards section three, it deals with students' attitudes towards writing a Dissertation. The last section attempts to know what are the most strategies that students use when writing their dissertations. The questionnaires were distributed on October 9th, 10th, 11th 2017. In addition, in order to get more reliable data, we have used another research tool which is the interview.

1.4.2. Piloting the Questionnaire Addressed to Students

The pilot work has been done in order to pretest our questionnaire. We have conducted this operation in order to ensure that the questions can be answered. Our pilot study was in the form of a questionnaire which we have distributed to seven students, we told them to ask us if they do not understand something in the questionnaire. After modifying some questions, we have obtained the main questionnaire which is divided into twenty five questions. So the piloting stage allowed us to make changes and clarifying some questions in the questionnaire order to make it understandable and easy to answer by the students.

1.4.3 Students' Interview

The interview is the second tool that we have used in our investigation to deepen the understanding of the issue under investigation. Indeed, (Tavakoli, 2012:294) defines the interview as *"a data collection method in which a researcher and a participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study. These questions usually ask participants for their thoughts, opinions, perspectives, descriptions for specific experiences."*

An interview is conducted with Master two students for the goal of gaining a second outlook of the study's issue. The interview took place from October15[th] 2017 till October 18th 2017.It

is a semi structured interview which is divided into five (05)open ended questions allowing the participants to answer with their own words.

2. Procedures of Data Analysis

2.1 Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

SPSS is software that is mainly used in social sciences to analyze quantitative data collected from the closed ended questions. Furthermore, SPSS is the name of a series of software packages used for data analysis .Its main selling point is that? it allows researchers to analyze data without using advanced analysis skills (John Lister). In the present research, it is used to analyze and at the same time to present the outcomes and the results obtained from the close ended questions of the questionnaire. Then, the obtained results can be presented in a range variety of means as: graphs, charts…

2.2Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

Qualitative Content Analysis has been defined by many authors, according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005:1278) it is *"a research method for subjective interpretation of the content of the text data through systematic classification process of coding and identifying Themes or pattern"*. This definition indicates that QCA is designed for the analysis of content (texts, messages…); it aims to unveil the hidden meaning. This method then, is used to interpret and analyze the open-ended questions of the questionnaire and the interview.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the research methodology adopted to investigate the strategies that students use to write their Master dissertation. It has presented the setting and the participants, as well as the data collection instruments which include a questionnaire and an interview. Then, it has described the methods used for the analysis of the obtained data; on the one hand SPSS has been used to transform the closed ended questions of the questionnaire

into statistics. On the other hand, Qualitative Content Analysis is used to analyze the open

ended questions of both the questionnaire and the interview.

Introduction:

This chapter presents the outcomes that emerged from the data elicited by means of methodological procedures notably a questionnaire administered to sixty (60) Master two students of all specialties and semi-structured interviews conducted with ten (10) students. For the sake of clarity, the results are converted into statistics, and displayed through various bar-charts and pie-charts. Regarding its organization, this chapter is composed of two main sections. The first deals with the presentation of the findings of the students' questionnaire processed through the SPSS software and QCA and the second presents the results of the interviews, which have been analyzed using QCA.

1.1 Presentation of the Results of the Questionnaire

This first part deals with the presentation of the findings, which have been obtained from the analysis of the questionnaire. Close-ended questions have been processed through the SPSS software; open-ended questions have been analyzed through QCA.

Section 1: General information about writing in English.

Q1- How is writing in English difficult to you?

A - Difficult   b- quite difficult   c- very difficult
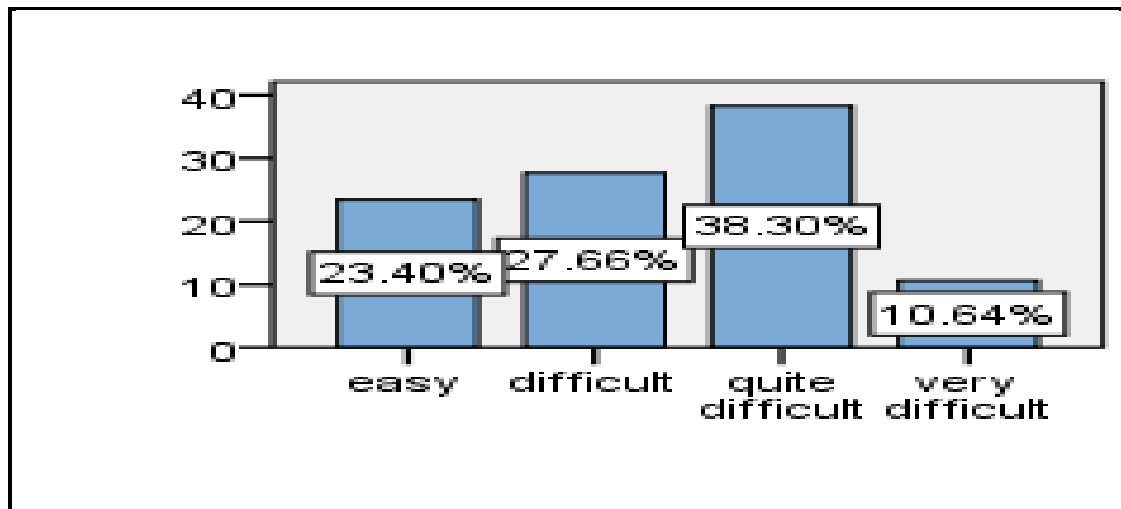
Diagram1: Students' Views towards Writing in English.

From the data gathered, we notice that (38.30%) of students find the writing skill quite difficult. (27.66%) of them argued that this skill is difficult, some of the participants (23.40%) have answered that writing skill is easy while the minority (10.64%) of the students have replied that writing is very difficult.

Q2- How much do you feel your writing skills have improved since you have started your university course?

a- A lot   b- a bit   c- not at all
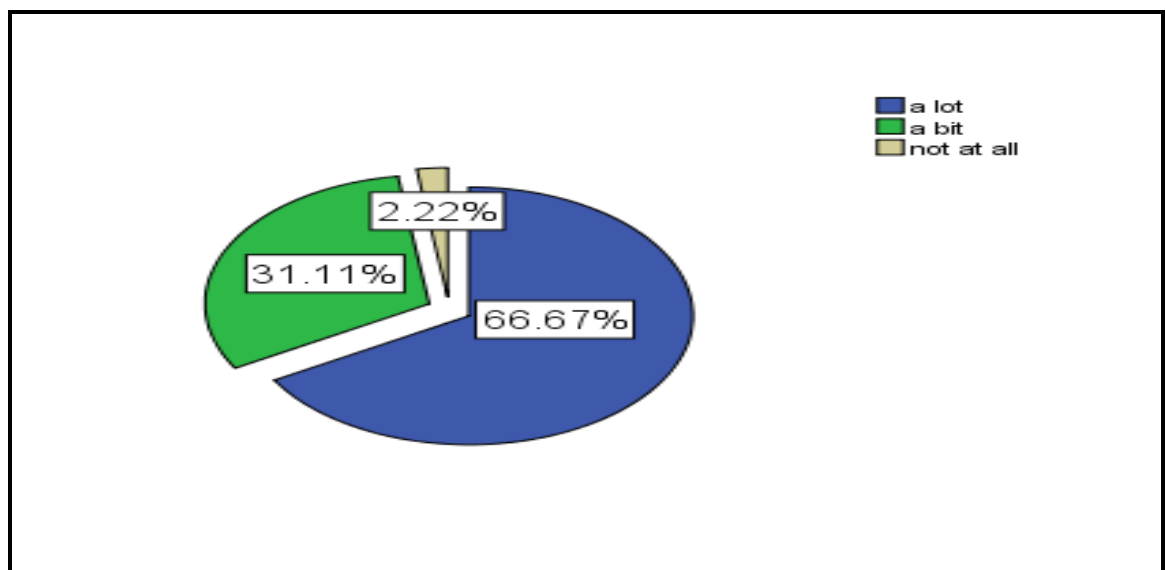
Diagram 2: Students' View about their Writing Improvements since the Start of their University Course.

As diagram 2 shows, the majority of students (66. 67) have answered by a "lot». Among the participants (31. 11%) replied that their writing has improved a little bit. (2.22%) of the participants answered that their writing has not improve since they have started their university course.

Q3- How often do you write in English?

a- Always   b- sometimes   c- rarely
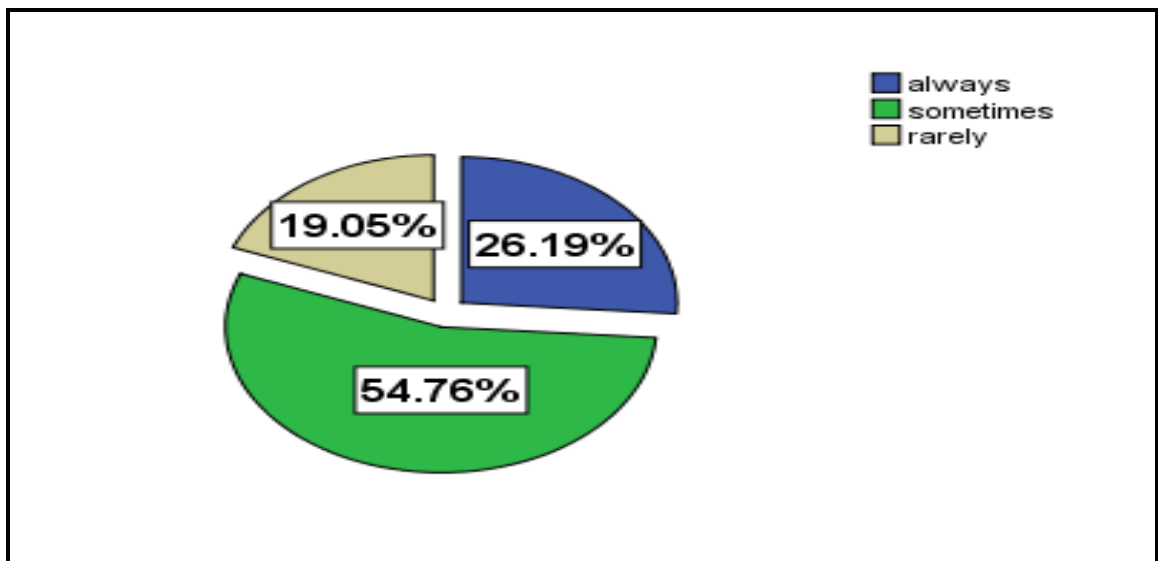
Diagram 3: Students' Frequency of Writing in English

As for the frequency of writing in English by students, the majority of the respondents (54.76%) say that they "sometimes" write in English. (26.19%) have replied that they always do this. The minority of the students (19.05%) have answered that they rarely write in English

Q4- What kind of essays do you write most?

a- argumentative   b- narrative   c-expository   e- others
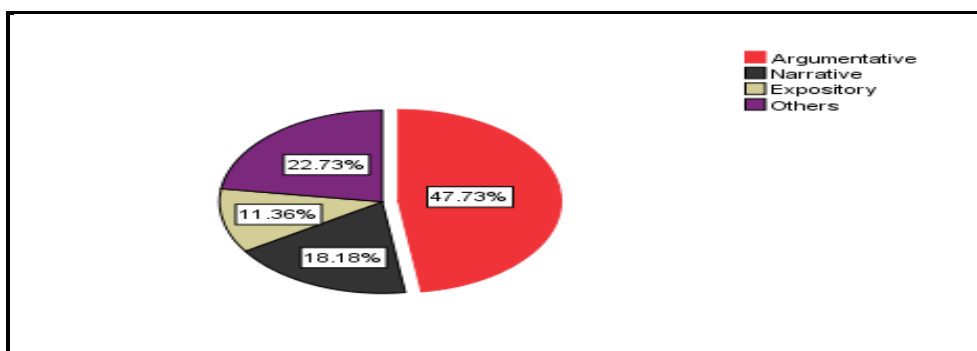
Diagram 4: Types of Essays that Student Write Most.

As indicated in the diagram four, the majority of students (47.73%) write argumentative essays, (22.73%) write other types of essays rather than those mentioned above, some of the participants (18.18%) write narrative essays and few of them (11.36%) answered that they write expository essay.

Section two: students' knowledge about the writing skill.

Q5- "writing is a developmental activity that contains different steps"

a- yes   b- no
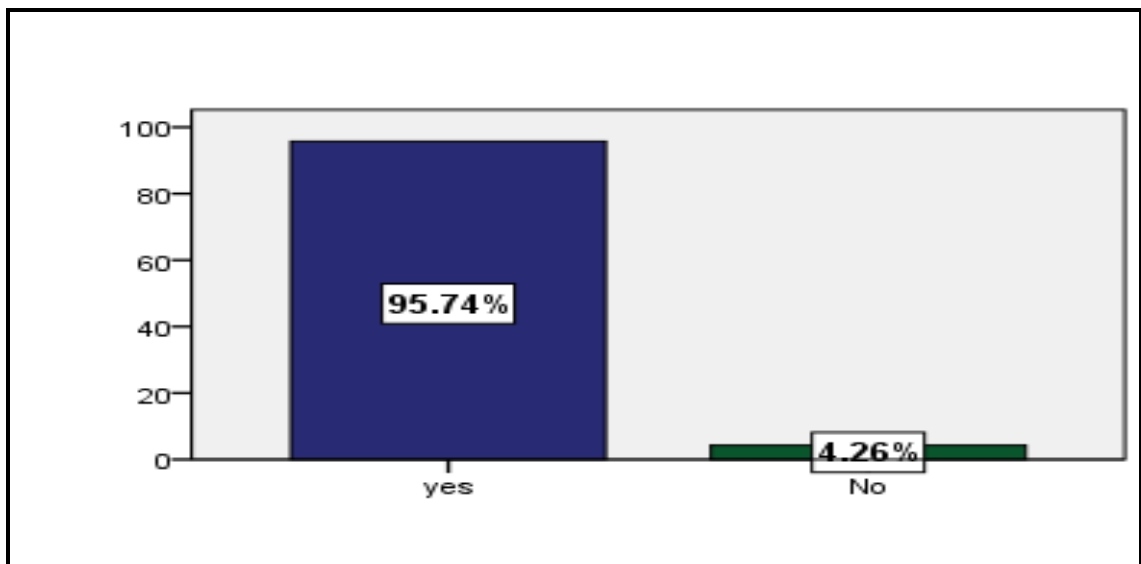
Diagram 5: Students' Views about Writing as a Developmental Activity.

This question is about students' attitudes about writing as a developmental activity. As illustrated in the diagram above, the majority of the respondents that is (95.74%) have answered "yes" Only few of them (4.26%) have answered by "no".

Q6- What strategies do You Use When Writing your Research Work?

a- Prewriting (generating ideas, planning etc…)

b- Drafting   c- revising   d- editing.
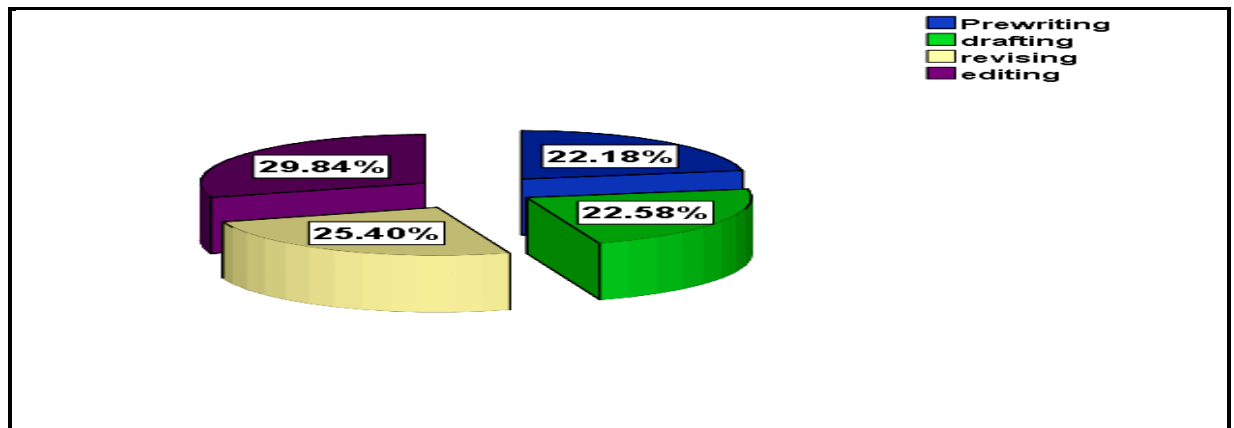
Diagram 6: Students' Strategies for Writing a Research Work.

As illustrated in the diagram above, (29.84%) of the participants point out that they use editing. (25.40%) use revising strategies. (22.58%) employ drafting, as for the rest of students (22.18%) use prewriting.

Q7- "Do You Think That by Following These Strategies You Can Produce an Effective Final Academic Work?"

a- Yes   b- no
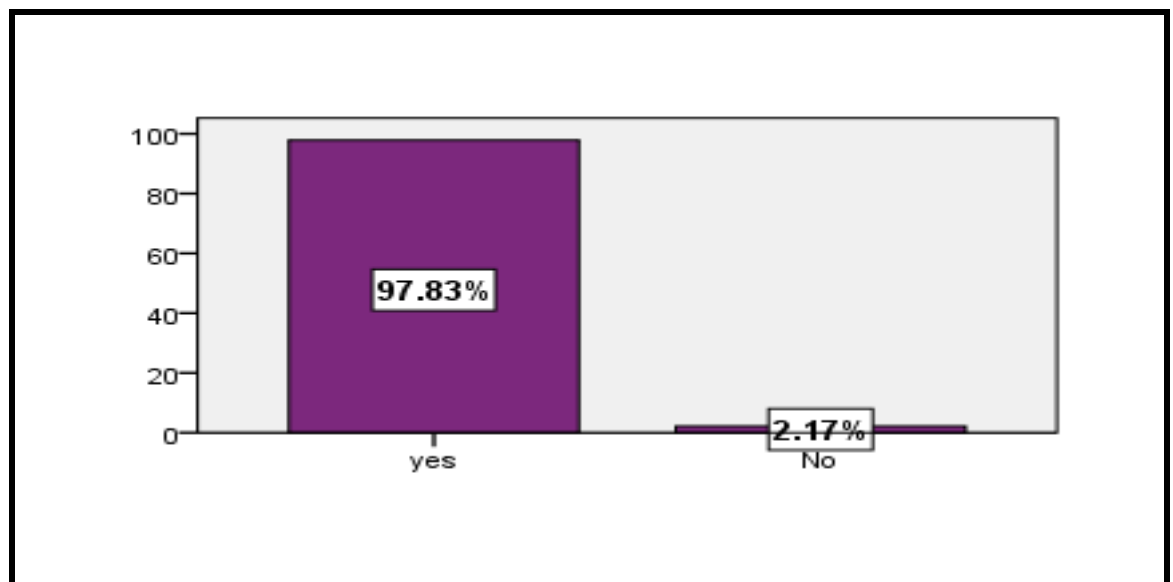
Diagram 7: Students' View About the Importance of Writing Strategies in the Production of an Effective Research Work.

When asked about whether students think that by following these strategies they can produce an effective final work, almost all the participants (97.83%) have answered by "yes". Few of the students (2.17%) have replied by "no".

Section three: students' attitudes towards writing a Master Dissertation.

Q8- How do you find the process of writing a research work?

    a- quite difficult   b- difficult   c- very difficult.
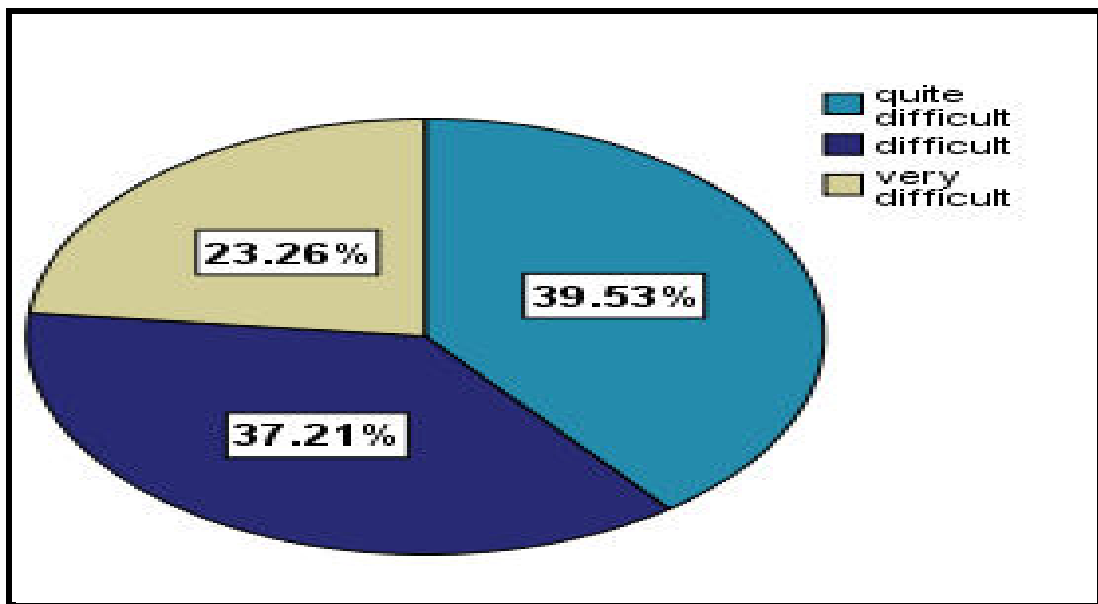
Diagram 8: Students' Attitudes towards the Difficulty of the Process of Writing a Research.

The aim of this question is to know how students find the process of writing a research. As shown in the diagram, (39.53%) of the students have answered that the process of writing a research is quite difficult. (37.21%) find that this process difficult. The rest of the respondents (23.26%) argued that writing a research is very difficult.

Q9- How much time you take to finish one chapter?

    a- one week   b- two weeks   c- more
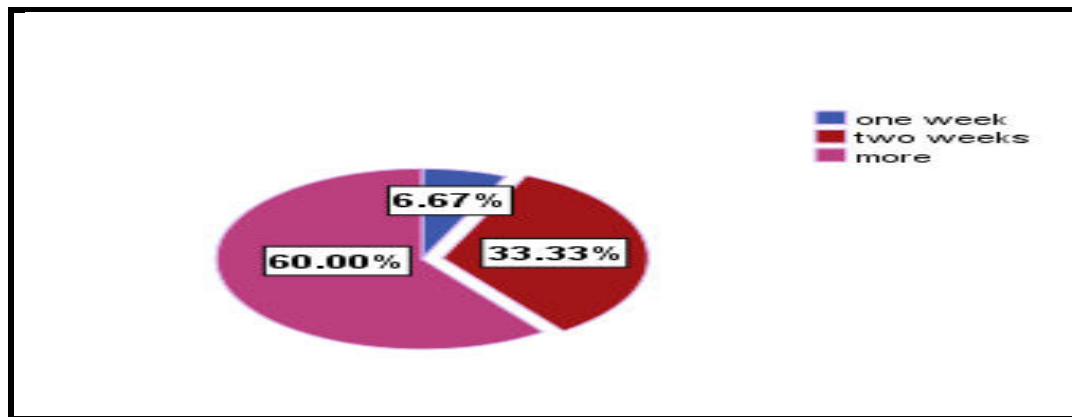
Diagram 9: The Amount of Time that Students Spend to Finish One Chapter.

As seen in diagram 9, sixty percent (60%) of the participants argue that they spend more than two weeks to write one chapter. Some of the respondents (33. 33%) claim that they take two weeks. Only few of the students (6. 67%) assert that they only spend one week to finish one chapter.

Q 10-"How many drafts you use when writing each chapter?

This question is an open-ended one, it aims knowing how many drafts students use when writing their master dissertation. The answers we gathered vary from one student to another. Most of the participants have answered that they use two to three (2-3) drafts, while some of them have responded that they often use "many" drafts. A short number of the respondents have answered that they use only one draft. The last respondents have answered that they use only one draft.

Q11- Do you follow a specific plan when you start writing? If yes, explain

  a- yes   b- no
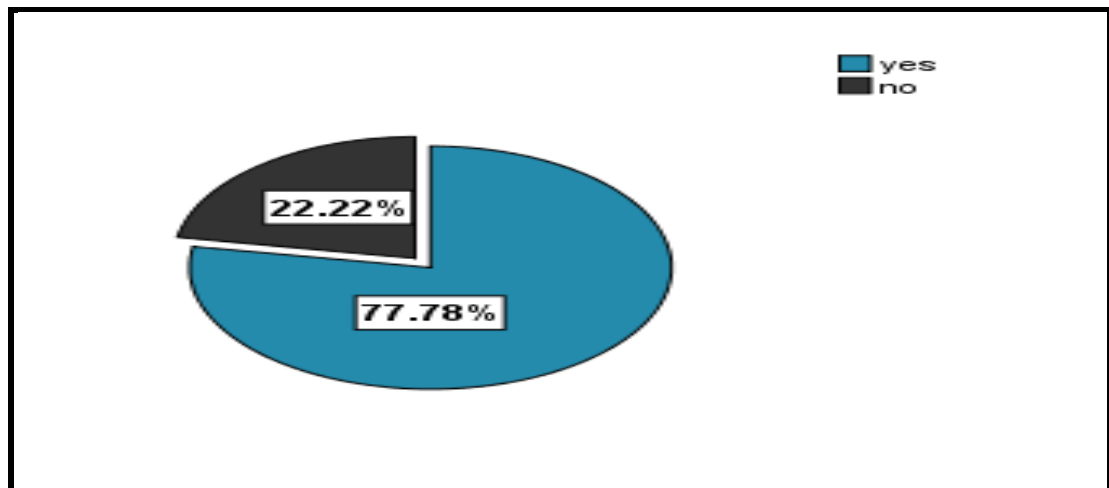
Diagram 11: Students' Perception towards the Use of a Specific Plan for Writing.

Diagram eleven denotes that the majority of the respondents (77.78%) have answered this question by "yes". Few of the participants (22. 22%) have replied by "no". Those who have answered by "yes" justified their answers by saying that following a specific plan helps them to well organize their work. For them, since it is an academic work it needs to be written with following a specific structure.

Q 12- What are the positive outcomes of the process of writing a research work?

Question twelve is an open-ended one; through this question we got information about the outcomes that the students gain during the writing process of their master dissertation. Most of the participants claim that the process of writing a research has many benefits; which means that it helps them to improve their writing in English, testing their knowledge about the language and extend their vocabulary and develop their research techniques. Few of the participants have responded that the research writing helps them to get more knowledge and experience about many theories and authors and at the same time it serves to create confidence in them in the field of writing.

Remark: five (5) students did not answer this question.

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Section four: strategies for writing a research work.

Q13- Before you start writing your research, do you collect everything that might have a relationship with your research subject?

a- yes   b- no
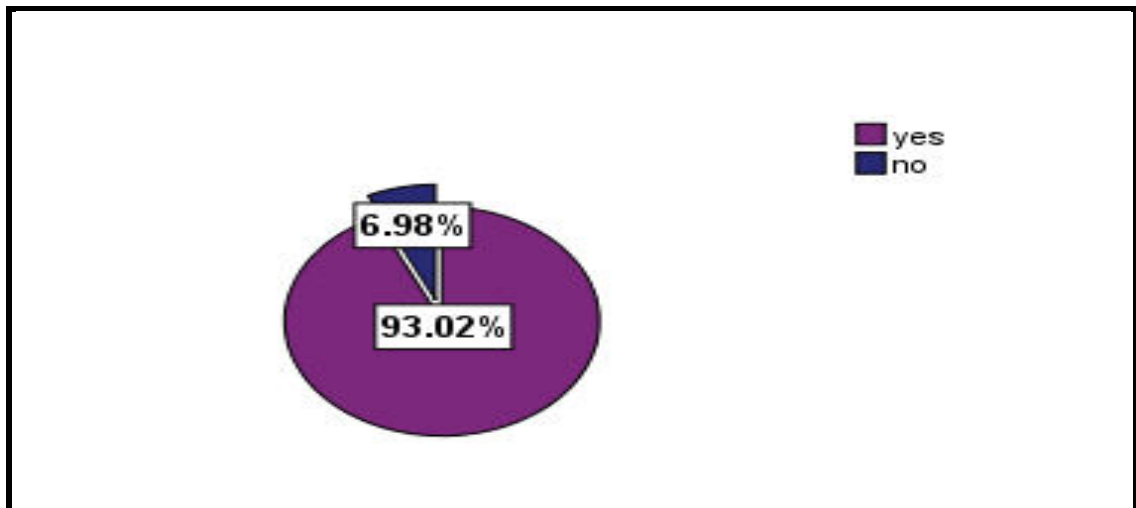
Diagram 13: Students' Preparation Before Start Writing the Research Work.

From the diagram above, we can figure out that (93.02%) of the participants claim that they collect everything that might have a relationship with their research subject; while (6.98%) have answered "no" that they do not collect everything before they start writing their research work.

Q14- Do you read articles or books in English? If yes, do you think that this helps in the prewriting stage?
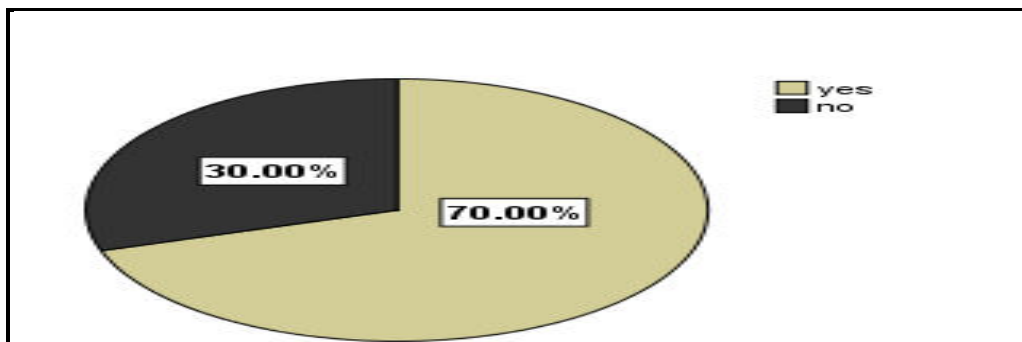
Diagram 14: The Importance of Reading in the Prewriting Stage.

As diagram fourteen shows, the majority of students (70%) have answered by "yes". They justified their answer by saying that reading helps them in the prewriting stage in the sense that reading helps them to have background knowledge about their topics of research and get ready to start the drafting. The minority (30%) of the participants have answered by "no".

Q 15- Which of the following stages do you engage in before you start writing your research? You can choose more than one answer.

a- Find a topic of research   b- choose an audience   c- review previous research

Diagram 15: The Stages that the Students Engage in Before Starting to Write.

The diagram above shows the different stages that students engage in before they start writing their research work, (40.56%) have answered that they engage first to choose an audience. (31.11%) of the participants review previous research. (28.33%) replied that they first find a topic of research.

Q 16- Do you make a global outline (structure) before you start writing any chapter of your research?

a- yes   b- no

Diagram 16: Students and Outlining Before Writing any Chapter of a Research Work.

The results gathered from question sixteen show that most of the participants (81.82%) have

answered by "yes". The rest of the students (18.18%) have responded by "no".

Q17-Generally speaking, at what point you decide to start writing?

A-When both ideas and structure are clear in your mind

b-When ideas are clear but not the structure   c-Others
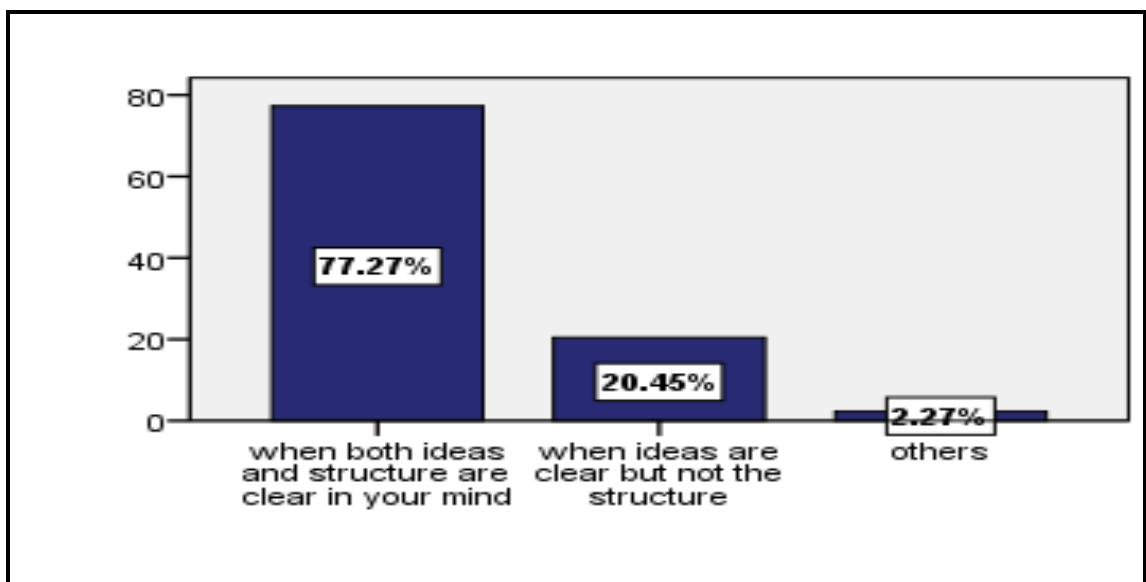
Diagram 17: Students' Perception about the Right Moment to Start Writing

On the basis of the data gathered, we can see that most of the students (77.27%) answered that they start writing when both ideas and structure are clear in their minds. Some of them (20.45%) say that they start writing when ideas are clear but not the structure. Few of the respondents (2.27%) claim that they start writing when other things rather than the mentioned above are clear in their minds.

Q18- While writing your first draft, do you focus only on content or both content and structure? Justify your answer?

This question is classified also among the open-ended ones. Most of the participants have responded that they focus more on content while drafting, because for them it is the most important. This means that in this stage the purpose is to obtain a lot of information while a short number of the participants have answered that they focus on both content and structure since they have no time to revise their written paper later on.

Q19-Students Language Structure has a Great Importance While Drafting.

a-agree   c- disagree   d-strongly agree
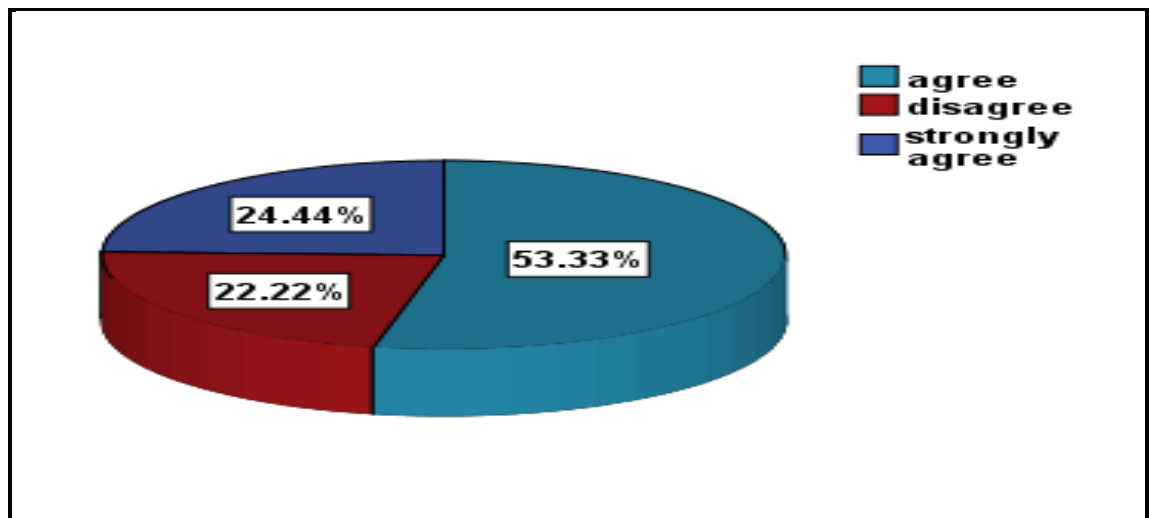
Diagram 18: Students' Attitudes towards Language Structure While Writing.

As seen in **diagram** nineteen (19), the majority of students (53.33%) agree that language structure is important while drafting. the minority of the participants (24.44%)

strongly agree on the idea that language structure has a great importance while drafting. Few of the respondents (22.22%) have answered by "disagree".

Q20- Can we consider that using many drafts before producing your last copy of the dissertation as an important stage? If yes, say why?

This question is an open ended one; it aims at discovering whether using many drafts while writing a dissertation is an important step to produce an effective and clear work. The data obtained from this question show that most of the students are familiar with using drafts and see that using many drafts is an important strategy because according to them drafting is a way to reduce mistakes and organize their ideas to produce a clear final work. Few students have answered that using many drafts is not really important.

Remark: three (3) students did not answer this question.

Q21-Do you revise your writing after finishing each chapter?

A-yes   b-no
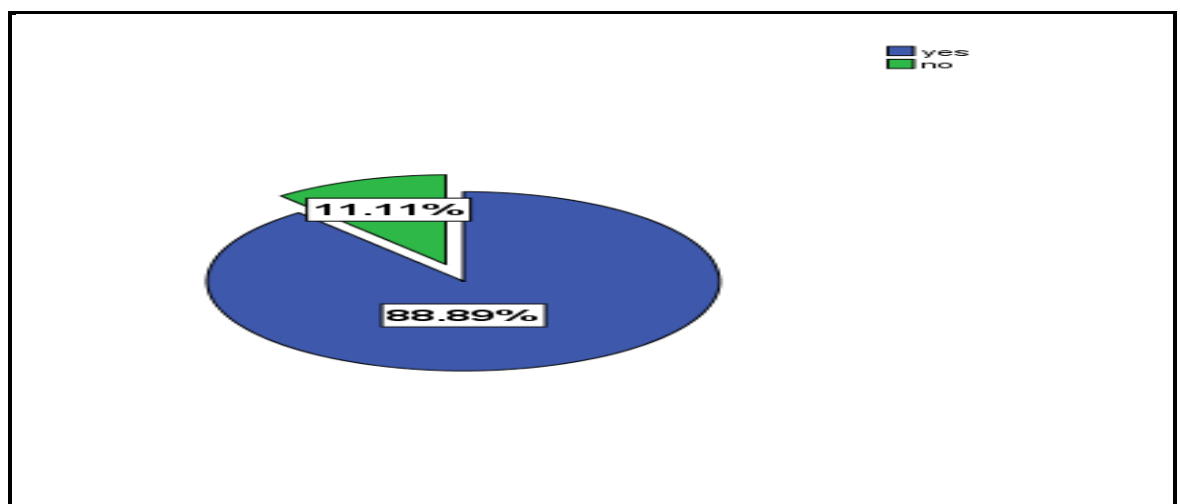
 Diagram 21: Students' Opinions towards Revising their Writings after Finishing each Chapter.

As it is shown in diagram 21, an appreciable number of the respondents (88.89%) have Answered by "yes". Few students (11.11%) claim that they do not revise their writing after each chapter.

Q22- While revising your piece of work, do you correct language mistakes?

a-yes   b-no
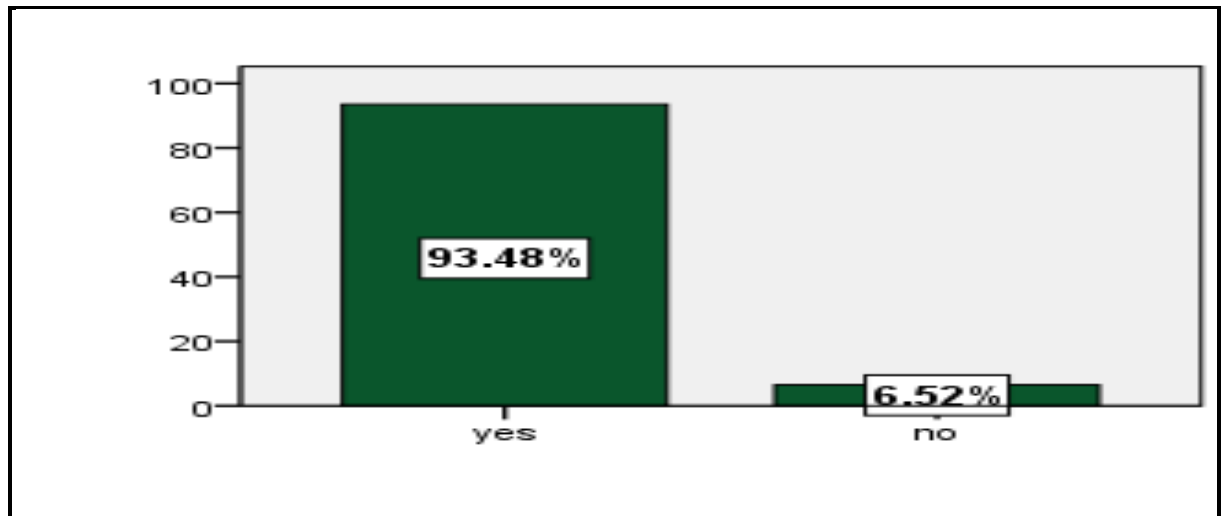
Diagram 22: Students' Correction of their Language Mistakes

The results show that while the majority of students (93.48%) have answered by "yes" (i.e.) they correct their language mistakes after finishing each chapter, (6.52%) replied by "no".

Q 23- What types of corrections do you think that would be most useful to improve your writing?
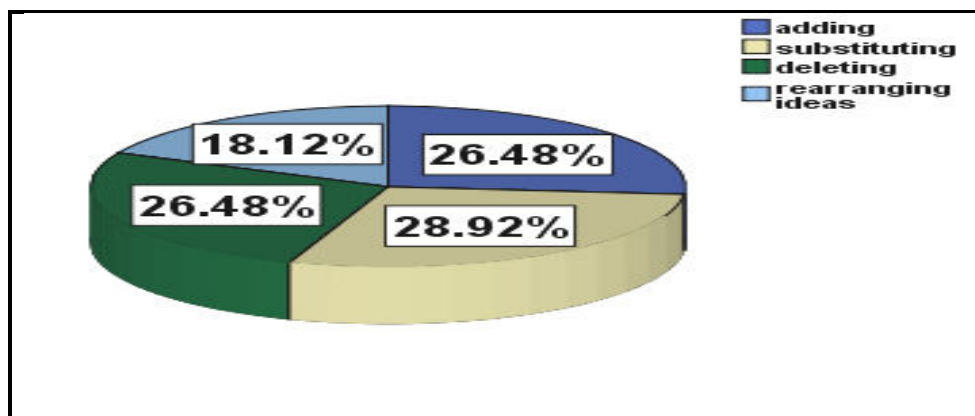
Diagram 23: Types of Corrections Students use to improve Their Writing.

The results presented in **diagram** twenty three demonstrates that (28.92%) of the students use substituting as a type of correction. The other students (26.48%) answered that both

adding and deleting are important strategies to improve their writing, while (18.12%) have replied that they rearrange their ideas.

Q 24- for editing your work, which of these criteria you stress more?

   a- mechanical errors   b- grammatical errors   c- layout   d- spelling
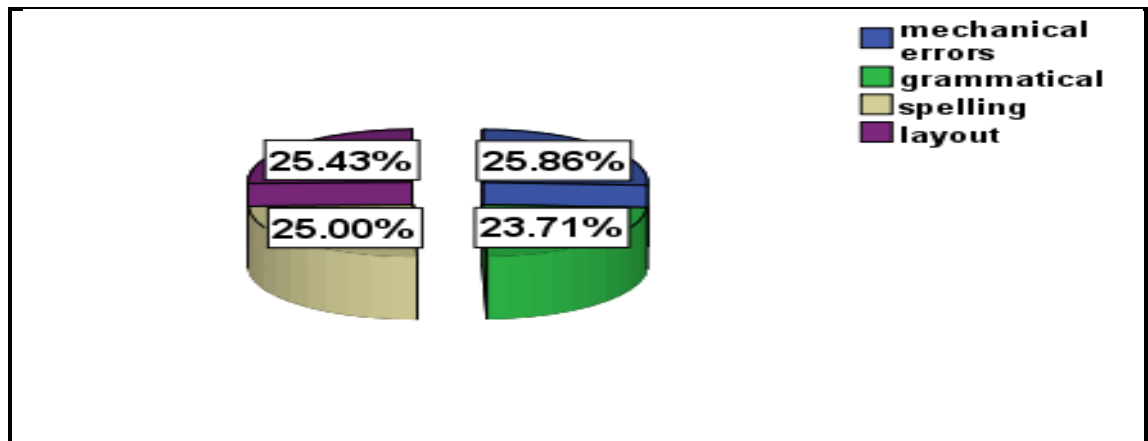
Diagram 24: The Criteria that Students focus on More while Editing

The statistics of the diagram twenty four indicate that (25.86%) replied that they focus on mechanical errors for editing their work. Other students (25.43%) pointed out they stress on the layout. (25.00%) avoid more spelling mistakes while editing. The rest of the participants (23.71%) try to avoid grammatical errors

Q 26- after finishing your research work, do you have a specific audience for whom you present your final work?

The majority of the respondents have answered that after finishing the whole work they present it to their supervisors and the board of examiners and at the same time to other students, only few of the respondents did not provide any answer.

1.2 Presentation of the results of the interviews

This part presents the results obtained from the interviews conducted with twelve (12) students of Master Two that have been interviewed orally and individually. The transcripts of the interviews have been analyzed using the QCA.

Q1- According to you what do you think about the writing skill?

When the interviewees are asked about what they think about writing as a skill, most of them have answered that it is an important skill on the one hand, at the same time the interviewees see it very difficult because it requires more concentration, cognitive abilities, rich grammar and vocabulary. On the other hand, the interviewee number one has answered that "first of all, I think that writing is an effective skill that helps the student to develop their critical writing capabilities, organizing their works… I mean whatever the work is, so it can also help the students to improve their proficiencies especially from simple to complex. The writing skill is also very important in writing dissertation. Moreover, there are some barriers that confront us when writing; I think that writing is not sufficient to write a dissertation".

Q2- To what extent do you agree that it is necessary to follow some strategies to write a dissertation?

All the participants are strongly agree on the fact that writing a dissertation, it is necessary to follow some strategies to write a research, because for them they consider those strategies as a key to produce a more effective and academic written research work.

Q3- Could you name the most important strategies you follow for writing your dissertation?

The answers provided by the participants as regards the question above can be categorized in the following way. Five 4/10 of the interviewees maintain that the most important strategies are "drafting and editing". The sixth interviewee said that "the strategies that I follow when writing a dissertation: first of all, I make an outline which means when I do pre-reading on something I make my ideas in an order, then I write them in a draft just to keep what is necessary, to correct, to choose what is suitable for my dissertation. Finally I revise all

these ideas, and then I write them in a proper paper. Four participants have answered that brainstorming is the most important strategy i.e. reading books, consulting different websites… Another participant claims that writing a dissertation needs many strategies as drafting, summarizing, quoting…Finally, the last interviewee replied that for her the most important strategies that she follows are: drafting, revising, and editing.

Q4- after finishing each chapter, do you make changes concerning language structure and content?

Concerning this question, most of the interviewees (6/10) have answered that after they finish each chapter they do make changes in relation to language content and structure, since they are important in the process of writing a research. The two last interviewees, one of them said that she usually make changes at the level of content and for the second one she stated that "truly speaking, I make changes concerning language structure and content but most of time I make changes on the content rather than the structure but we focus only on the content rather than the structure this is my opinion".

Q5- Writing a dissertation goes through many stages, so what do you think about all the writing process?

The data provided by the interviewees as regards the question above is that three participants have answered that writing process of the dissertation is very difficult at the beginning. For example the introduction, as for the other chapters are quite easy for them. Four other students (4/10) have stated that writing process of the research is difficult because each time they find difficulties concerning grammar, vocabulary and sometimes punctuation. As for the other participants, two have replied that writing process is a very long one it is important but it needs a lot of time, concentration and efforts on the part of the students to realize an academic work. One of the participants has stated that "writing process is quite hard

because I currently move to corrections, to rewrite. It is also difficult when combining the content with the right structure. As for the last participant she has answered by "the writing process is very necessary and effective. If I can say in this department is a useful skill that teachers must teach for their students, "I think that writing a dissertation or whatever work needs some strategies to follow; these strategies are 'very very significant' for the success of the students, as well as their work."

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the results obtained from the two research tools which are the questionnaire and the interview that were conducted with students of Master two from the department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. It is possible to deduce from the results that students of Master two use writing strategies when writing their master dissertations. These results will be discussed in the following chapter by providing interpretation and explanation.

Introduction

This chapter is devoted to discuss the results in relation to the research questions. The data gathered from the students' questionnaire and students' interviews are analyzed and interpreted together. This chapter is divided into three main sections with each trying to provide an answer to the research questions asked in the General Introduction. The first section deals with the students' general information about writing in English. Section two is devoted to students' attitudes towards writing their master dissertations. As regards section three, it discusses students' strategies for writing a research work.

1-Students' General Information about Writing in English

This section is concerned with general information about writing in English. The data gathered from the first question which says " How do you find writing in English?" have a great significance in our study. (38.30%) of the participants point out that writing in English is quite difficult, (27.66%) view writing in English as difficult. (23.40%) of the participants argued that it is easy, whereas the minority of the participants (10.64%) have answered that writing is very difficult. From these important percentages we deduce that most of Master two students consider writing as a difficult activity and a complex skill that requires much time and practice. The reasons behind the difficulty of the writing skill are stated by most of the students in details in the interview. That is, our participants claimed that writing is an important skill and at the same time difficult because it requires a lot of concentration, cognitive abilities, rich grammar and vocabulary. From the findings we notice that most of the participants view writing as a complex activity, but the degree of its difficulty differs from one student to another, this means that for some students writing is quite difficult and does not pose problem, because according to them they have enough language capacities to produce a written work. Even though they have some linguistic weaknesses, they do not consider them

as obstacles. Whereas the other participants assert that writing in English is very difficult. There are many reasons behind the difficulty of writing; one reason that we appreciate more is the lack of reading. Reading has a great importance in developing the writing skill in that it allows students to develop their vocabulary and permits them to ameliorate their critical thinking abilities. In this vein, reading enhances critical thinking abilities in that students deal with different kinds of texts and get more knowledge of the language. In brief, we may say that writing skill is complex because it is not an isolated skill. In other words, the two skills complement each other. A writer cannot start writing on a specific topic without reading few articles, to have an idea about the topic that the writer decided to write on. This confirms Stosky's saying (636; cited in Bader, 2007 : 9)that *"better writers tend to be better readers…and better reader tend to produce more systematically mature writing than poorer readers"* .

The findings obtained after asking students whether their writing skills have improved from the start of their university course reveal that the great majority of them (66.67%) have had a remarkable progress in their writing skill. Such a finding is very encouraging; from it we deduce that practice in writing is a key to its mastery. That is to say, the more we write the more we master a language. Students who entrain themselves to write different kinds of essays have more chance to become better writers. In fact, from the questionnaire we concluded that (47.73%) of students mostly write argumentative essays, (18.18%) are familiar with narrative ones. (11.36%) of learners write expository essays, whereas (22.73%) prefer to write other kinds of essays. So, it is necessary to mention that students who train themselves to write all types of essays know more about language basic rules, thus, those students are more capable to produce whatever piece of writing. The short conclusion we may draw from this section is that writing needs reinforcement in practicing it and, reinforcement is a long

way process; it is not a skill that someone can master in a short period of time but it rather requires much time and more practice.

2- Students' Attitudes towards the Writing Process of their Master Dissertations

2.1 Writing as a Skill

The aim of this section is to know the different views of students about all the writing process of their Master Dissertations. The two questions which asked about "How do you find the process of writing a research work?" that we have included in the questionnaire, and the one of the interview which says" "writing goes through many stages, what do you think about all the writing process?" which is an open-ended question. The results that we have obtained from these questions are of great importance. All the participants argued that the process of writing their research work is long and time consuming as the following percentages show (39.53%) of the participants argue that writing a research is difficult. (37.21%) of the respondents said that it is very difficult. The rest of the participants (23.26%), they claimed that writing a dissertation is quite difficult. From the above results we deduce that all the participants of Master two students at the level of the English department at MMUTO view that writing as a skill in general and writing a research work specifically as difficult tasks.

In addition to this, our participants are aware that writing MDs is a step by step process; it does not consist of producing just the final product, which means that students have to go through generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language, drafting, revising, and writing. Indeed, students are conscious that these steps are helpful in producing a good piece of writing. Furthermore, these results reveal that whatever the length of the research is, the process of writing provides a way to think about writing skill in terms of what the writer does, not in terms of what the final product looks like. To put it clear, the difficulty

of the writing skill does not consist in its impossibility to be achieved, but what lies behind the difficulties of students when performing the writing skill is to choose the appropriate strategies to write a good final work.

2.2 Writing a Master Dissertation

The results obtained from the question about students' strategies to write a dissertation reveal that (22.18%) of students are familiar with prewriting strategies, (22.58%) use drafting, as for the rest of the participants that is (25.40%) and (29.48%) employ revising and editing, but it is important to mention that many participants have chosen more than one writing strategy, and most of them have chosen all the strategies. The reason why many students have selected more than one strategy is because actually writing is a process made up of several stages that contain many strategies, at the same time scholars such as D.Murray and Hyland recognize that the above mentioned strategies are the most recursive ones.

The results obtained from our research tools, reveal that prewriting and drafting are two strategies that take more time, students have answered that they take at least one week to finish one chapter. In addition, most of the participants claimed that they use many drafts when writing their Master dissertation. In fact, our participants do not take into consideration the form of the work while drafting, they just stress the language structure or the content. The participants are aware that using multiple drafts is of great importance in that it allows them to reduce mistakes and improve their writing. Master two students are aware that whatever they write it is not the final product, and the more they write the more they polish their writing to publish a full work. From the results above, we may confirm our research hypothesis in that student use frequently and effectively writing strategies to write their MDs, and strongly confirm that following these strategies influence positively on students' writing to create an academic written work.

Moreover, in our questionnaire, we have asked a question which is what are the benefits of the process of writing a research work? to know whether students have beneficiated from this experience or not, the answers we have got are encouraging, that is mainly all the participants agreed that through the process of writing a research they developed their writing skills and get more familiar with the methodology of writing a dissertation ,as well as to ameliorate their abilities to criticize. The process of writing stresses the importance of the stages writers should follow to produce effective writings. In this context, Raimes (1992:p.78) argued that *"learning to write is seen as a developmental process that helps students to write as professional authors do."* For this, we may say that students need to know that proceeding through the writing steps is not a waste of time; each stage contributes in making effective writing and in diminishing the troubles students face when they write.

3. Students' Strategies for Writing a Research Work

3-1 Pre –writing

As it is seen in (diagram 13), the results clearly expose that the majority of students (93.02%) collect everything that might have a relationship with their research subject. That is to say, most of students do pre-writing as reading books, articles, consult web-sites. Only few of the participants (6.98%) answer that they do not really engage in such activities before they start writing. According to Murray and Hughes (2008:16)pre-writing exercises do not only help students to find something to write about a specific topic, they also help to impose their writing skill in that they provide them with opportunities to generate ideas and write with confidence. Pre writing exercises such as brainstorming, mapping… contribute to help students to write with confidence.

Indeed, the results shown in the (diagram 14) the majority of the students (70%) read articles and books; they justify their answers by saying that reading is an important step and at the same time it lets them to obtain background information about their different topics of research. A student reads books online, to meet his/her own needs for doing pre writing. In other words, every student reads books or chose a topic to be investigated, make outlines…That is to say, students prepare themselves before they start writing and this in order to write effectively. The rest of the participants (30%) do not really consider that prewriting strategy is really interesting to write a research work. From this point, the one can deduce that there are students who do not give importance to those strategies, and this is not something good at all. In the sense that, if students neglect these strategies they reduce their chance to produce a good written product.

In this context, we assert that there is a great difference between students who give more attention and devote much time to these strategies as brainstorming, outlining, reading books…and those who do not engage in such preparations. Writing is a complex task that needs a lot of thinking and preparations. So the reasons behind the poor writing produced by those students may be the fact that they do not really give a much importance to the pre writing strategies. Differently saying, good writing is dependent on good pre writing and the more students prepare themselves the more they will improve their writing. As Flowerdew (2000:378)states that *"…students who encouraged to engage in an array of pre-writing experiences have a greater chance for writing achievements than those enjoined to get to work on their writing without this kind of preparation…".*

In addition to what is said, from the results displayed in (diagram 14) one may note that pre-writing strategies require much time since the researcher does many things at this stage. That is, a Master research is not something easy to do; it needs a lot of preparation from the part of the students. Any researcher has to read a lot and gather all the necessary

information that he/she needs in order to find a topic, for instance. Prewriting is considered as the most crucial stage during the writing process of the research work. In this step students determine the topic they are writing about, the purpose of their writing and then the audience to whom they write. Hyland (2003) et al argue that pre-writing or planning out what is going to be written, is an essential step in the writing process.

When the participants were asked about which stages did they engage in before they start writing, most of the participants answer that they almost go through all the proposed stages as; find a topic of research, choose an audience and then, review previous research, this means that any student who is going to do a research, sees that those mentioned strategies are really important. In other words, the best and the most successful researches start with good pre-writing. Hedge (2005) suggests that *"teachers remind students of two important questions, in this sense the purpose of their writing and its audiences"* that is, students should keep in mind the intended readers and content of the text when they make a global outline for their writing.

3-2 Drafting

The following paragraph is going to interpret and discuss the results of questions asked about drafting strategy. Once the students have planned out all the appropriate ideas, the suitable topic, the next thing that they have to do is to start drafting. From the findings, we see that Master two students do not use only one draft while writing because writing chapters of the dissertation are not an easy task at all so in this case the students should take enough time in writing re writing until they reach the final draft. In addition, The results obtained from the questionnaire especially from the question eighteen (18), it becomes clear that they focus more on content while drafting; they justify their answers by saying that they focus only on content rather than on language structure since their purpose is only to obtain a great number

of information, ideas, arguments…Which <means that while drafting most of students do not focus on mechanical and grammatical errors.

The students should write freely and try to find the best way to communicate their ideas. Furthermore, Muncie (2000) points out that *"drafting consists of neating rough draft without concern for mechanics"*. As for the rest of the participants, they answer that while drafting they focus on both structure and content i.e. from this answer we deduce that students prefer to focus on both structure and the form, because they have not time later to do this; or it may be one of the strategies that the students use to save time and efforts. As it is argued by Shorn (2002), for him careful attention to the order and structure of ideas at this stage will save the writer from having to make extensive revisions later on. This is also shown in the diagram (19) in which most of Master two students (53.33%) agree on the point that language structure has a great importance while drafting. Moreover, the data gathered from the question twenty (20) indicates that most of Master students see that using many drafts while writing as an important strategy. Students are required to write and re-write many times, in other words, to develop meaningfully and clear final draft many drafts are necessary. In this context, using multiple drafts let the student discover their mistakes and correcting them each time till they get a correct version.

3-3 Revising

This part is going to interpret and discuss the data gathered from the questions asked about revising strategies. From the findings of the questionnaire, we notice that the majority of students state that they revise their writing after finishing each chapter of their Dissertations (see diagram 21). It is worth noting that Master two students review their writing in the sense that they make appropriate changes that lead them to rich and realize a good written work that the readers (audience) wait from the writer (student).The student, for

example, should make changes concerning the order of the ideas , extend some paragraphs…
Grenville (2001) states that the reviewing stage is the process of looking again and
discovering a new vision of the writing produced in drafting. It is the stage during which the
writer corrects mechanical errors and realizes substantial changes in his or her writing. These
findings are also shown in the data obtained from question(22-23) and(4) from the interview
when our participants have been asked about whether they correct language mistakes and
what types of corrections do they think would be the most useful to improve their writings.
The results obtained from the diagram twenty two, a considerable number of the respondents
(93.48%) have answered that they correct their mistakes i.e. students often go back to what
they have already written to check if they have made mistakes and correct them, at the same
time they verify whether what they wanted to say is well organized.

Furthermore, we can deduce that Master two students do not neglect this stage and its
strategies since it contributes to the improvement of their writings. At the same time the
results obtained from the interview show that most of the interviewees 8/10 have answered
that after finishing each chapter of their dissertation they do make changes concerning
language structure and content. To put it differently, the researchers do not write for
themselves but they write for other persons as their supervisors, the examiners and so on. So,
here the student should put himself or herself in the place of the reader who is going to read
his or her work and try to correct all the language and content mistakes in order to reach good
writing and at the same time avoid the misunderstanding of the reader. In other words, when
students write they often try to express ideas which are clear, well organized and logically
related in the sense that the audience will understand the message that they want to convey.
These findings almost fit what Allman (2000) who states that writers during the Revising
stage have to take into consideration the following steps as reread what they write, consider

what others say about the work. Finally, add or delete parts, select better words or ideas, rearrange ideas, replace any unclear ideas, and complete any ideas that are not finished.

Besides, the results obtained from the questionnaire (see diagram 23) indicates that the majority of the students chose more than one type of correction. For them in order to improve their writing they should each time, add new ideas, put words instead of others (substitution), delete some ideas which seem to be inappropriate and then rearranging, organize and respect the flow of ideas. Muncie (2000: 49) states that students have the chance to refine their work during the revision stage, and she describes the features of revision as *"revision is not just polishing writing; it is meeting the needs of readers through adding, substituting, deleting and rearranging material." So* from the findings, we arrive to a short conclusion that students consider revising as an important phase which contains strategies and techniques that help them to reach a high quality of writing.

3.4 Editing and Publishing

When the participants were asked about which criteria they stress more for editing their work, some of the participants choose two from four (2/4) criteria as for other students chose three from four (3/4) see diagram 24. Furthermore, editing is the final step or the final strategy that students use before handing out the final draft, they tried to polish their work and give more attention to mechanical errors as punctuation, vocabulary, layout…etc Atkinson (2003: 11) presents what writers should check in the final stage of their drafts as follows; the order in which the information are presented, the layout, spelling, punctuation, handwriting, choice of words and grammar. Moreover, the data obtained from the question twenty five of the questionnaires; we see that the majority of the participants receive feedback from their supervisors. That is to say, supervisors provide their students with comments such as giving them remarks concerning punctuation, the choice of words, grammatical errors…etc. In this

sense and from the results obtained from both the questionnaire and the interview we may say that editing is the final draft where students polish their handwriting, spelling, grammar, vocabulary…etc

Indeed, the respondents justify their answers by arguing that such comments and feedback are really important to improve their writing since they use them as other resources to correct their mistakes which means that in addition of using dictionaries as sources of corrections students give also their works to their supervisors to correct it and provide them with the appropriate feedback. Brown (2001) suggests that teachers (supervisors) should indicate grammatical errors without correcting them by themselves and can suggest further word choices and transitional words to improve clarity and coherence.

When the sample of our research were asked if they have a specific audience to whom they will present their final research works .A great number if not most of them replied that they present their final work to their supervisors, the board of the examiners at the same time to other researchers ''students like them'', which means that the students'MDs should be delivered to its intended audience. Sommers and Collin (1984; cited in Nemouchi (2008) and other investigators found that students produce better achievements and get much motivation when their work is published for a larger audience than the teacher, classmates, other students, parents, and friends are among the potential audiences for students' written work. More, having a specific audience to whom students are going to present their work is considered as a positive point in building an effective communication between the writer (student) and the reader and at the same time creating and developing confidence as future authors. To this point , Buhrke (2000) illustrates that having students publish their completed works, with audiences such as peers, friends, families or community, teachers can promote real communication between writers and readers in the process writing classroom. Since students

may have real audiences who can meaningfully respond to their writing and develop confidence as authors.

After discussing the section dealing with strategies for writing a research work, we draw a short conclusion that a great number of Master two Students know about the importance of following strategies while writing their research. Students are aware of the significance of each single strategy. That is to say, each of these strategies helps them to produce a good piece of writing. To sum up, those findings answer the research question which says "what are the strategies that Master two students of the English department at MMUTO employ when writing their Master dissertations?" This is asked in the General Introduction. Thus, the hypothesis which states that the majority of Master two students use different strategies when writing their dissertation is confirmed.

The principal aim of the whole section is to discover what the strategies that Master two students really employ, and the reason behind employing them. In addition, we also stress more what do these strategies brought and what impact they have on students' written product. Generally speaking, the investigation views writing strategies as a set of processes that aim to fulfill two variable functions, in addition to stimulating new ideas, writing strategies help students consciously regulate their learning and improve their writing. The findings obtained from both the questionnaire and interview reveal that Master two students have positive attitudes towards using five writing strategies namely; prewriting, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. The results further show that using those strategies is considered as the most suitable approach that students use for writing. Even though writing strategies are taught implicitly in English classes, their application is not monitored. For this, we may say that every research work requires to be written using those writing strategies.

Conclusion

This chapter has been devoted to discuss and interpret the findings obtained from students' questionnaire and interviews. We have through this chapter, embarked into a thorough discussion of the different results reached in attempt to bring answers to the research questions that the present study has set out to explore. The results revealed that the majority of Master two students are of the strategies for writing a dissertation. From students' responses, we can see that most of them consider prewriting, drafting, editing… as important strategies that each researcher should rely on in order to write a well organized work. The hypothesis which states that Master two students use different strategies to write a research is confirmed because our participants answered that they really use those strategies. Also, the findings showed that the majority of the participants (97.83%) claim that following these strategies effectively serve them to produce an adequate piece of writing of high quality in more explicit terms. The third hypothesis advanced thus confirmed. The chronological analysis of the results obtained from the two research tools the questionnaire and the interview led us to draw a conclusion that more we analyze more we discover that Master two students frequently and effectively employ strategies for writing a dissertation, that is to say, the second hypothesis that we have stated at the beginning is also confirmed.

General Conclusion

This dissertation was carried out to investigate students' strategies for writing a dissertation. Moreover, it intended to know whether those strategies help them while writing. It also targeted to figure out if really these strategies help students in the production of well written Master Dissertation. The present study has taken Master two students of the English department at MMUTO as a case to carry out the study.

For the sake of answering these research questions and approve or disapprove the hypotheses suggested, we opted for a mixed method approach. The approach consists of combining both the qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and data analysis. The study relied on the data drawn from the questionnaire administered to sixty (60) students; the participants were randomly selected to fill in the questionnaires, besides to an interview conducted with ten (10) students. The quantitative data that emerged from the questionnaire were analyzed using a Computer Software known as SPSS. The qualitative data that emerged from the open-ended questions from both the questionnaire and the interview were analyzed through Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA).The study relied and Ken Hyland approach to writing process as the theoretical basis

A conclusion has been deduced after relating the findings to the sustainable framework presented in the first chapter "Review of the Literature", essentially on Ken Hyland (2003) that explains the strategies that learners should go through in order to write a Master Dissertation. The research questions were answered after the analysis of the results. As to students' strategies for writing a research work, most of the participants who took part in the investigation are conscious about the use of these strategies. Moreover, the majority of the student maintains that writing a Master Dissertation is difficult (diagram 8) and state that through using these strategies we can produce a well written research work. As for, how do

students use these strategies, the findings indicate that, a great number of the participants claim that they employ effectively those strategies during the process of writing their dissertations. Indeed, concerning whether those strategies really help students in producing clear and well written product, the majority of the respondents point out that relying on those strategies may help them to achieve writing an academic work. From those findings, we arrived to a conclusion that the three hypotheses advanced in the General Introduction are confirmed.

The present research acknowledges the existence of some limitations but they do not really prevent the validity of our research. First, the fact that we have administered sixty questionnaires we have only received forty seven. Second, due to time limitations we have only conducted twelve interviews because our interviewees did not have enough time to contribute to our study since they were in the period of conducting their research.

To conclude, our dissertation dealt with investigating the students' strategies to write a Master dissertation at the level of the English department at MMUTO.

Yet, our case of study concerns Master II students of all options. It is a wish that the results found in this work will be of a great contribution to the field of writing, and motivates the coming students to use more these strategies. Especially after unveiling that the use of these strategies positively affects the writings of students. Moreover, hopefully this study will shed light and give insights open more research and investigations in the same field of research. From the outcomes achieved, this study could be continued in several directions, for instance developing EFL writing skill though the use of Process Approach. More, investigating the importance of teaching writing strategies in Algerian EFL classes.

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