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Grammar and it's Effect on the Process of Writing Skill

A case study

First Year English Licence Students at the University of Ghardaia

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Abstract

The present dissertation aims at investigating the effect of grammar rules on the process of writing skill among first-year Licence's students of English as a foreign language at the department of English language at the University of Ghardaia. Actually, those students face several difficulties while writing, and this might be due to their lack of grammar competence. A sample of thirty licence's students from a general population of two hundred seventy were taken part in this research. To carry out this study, the data were collected using the questionnaire tool. The results obtained from the students' questionnaire revealed that, the majority of students participating in this research lack the mastery of the grammatical rules, and this was reflected in their responses.

Key words: Grammar rules, Writing skill, EFL students.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

The light of my life, my loving mother and father whose words of encouragement and support for persistence ring in my ears.

My sisters, Mimouna, Houda and Rahma who have always been my biggest supporters and motivators. Your unwavering love and encouragement have kept me going during the difficult times.

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Miss, Rihana MEGHAZI

Dedication

I dedicate this work

To myself, i really appreciate the courage and endurance to reach what I have done so far.

To my eyes, my heart, my mother.

To the hard worker from whom i take my power, my father.

To my brothers Kouider, and Bouamama and his fiancée.

To my sisters who have always been my supporters, Sarah and her fiancé, and Nawal and her husband, i love you.

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List of Acronyms

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

FL: Foreign Language

L2: Second Language

PG: Pedagogical Grammar

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General Introduction

General Introduction

1. Literature Review

Language is the manner that allows people to communicate with each other through speaking or writing. According to Collins English dictionary, "language is a system of communication which consists of a set of sounds and written symbols which are used by the people of a particular country or region". However, learning English language requires the mastery of the four basic skills writing, reading, listening and speaking. In other word, the learner should be proficient in both receptive and productive skills, so that, he can use the language correctly.

In addition, learning the English language is not limited to mastering the four skills, students must know all its modules, because these modules are designed to help them develop different aspects of the language competence depending on their specific needs and aims. For example, studying linguistics can help students understand the basic structure of the English language. While phonetics can help them improve their pronunciation. Likewise, studying literature can develop their reading comprehension and deepen their understanding of the English language and its culture. Besides, learning grammar and writing can help students enhance and develop their writing skills and communicate more effectively in written.

Based on our experience in studying English over the past years, we noticed how grammar and writing are related to each other, because without a good knowledge of grammar rules, students won't be able to produce and write well-formed sentences. Grammar creates the first impression of the writer, whether it is bad or good, poor grammar makes his work unreliable, and it makes him look unintelligent.

Lately, grammar and writing connection has been a very common issue in foreign language student's learning, and researchers are interested in investigating the effect of grammar rules on the student's writing skill and the extent to which the two are related, in the case of first-year Licence's English as a foreign language (EFL) students at the University of Ghardaia.

2. Statement of the Purpose

The purpose of this research is to shed light on the effect of grammar on the process of writing skill among first-year Licence's English students at the University of Ghardaia. The researchers seek at exploring the importance of grammar and how it affects student's writing ability. Besides, researchers aim to,

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indirectly, motivate learners to master the grammatical rules of the language, in order to improve their writing skill and to become an easy process for them.

3. Statement of the Problem

Having the ability to write in English is very important, especially after it has become the second language in most countries of the world. Nevertheless, writing has always been one of the challenging activities students encounter during their learning a language. Teachers say that, despite studying English for many years, students still do not know how to write properly, and this is due to several factors. Grammar is one of the most important factors. The effect of grammar on the process of writing skill have been rarely conducted, especially in Algeria. First-year Licence's English students at the University of Ghardaia are neglecting the importance of the grammatical rules, which is reflected in their writing.

The present research is guided by the following questions:

- To what extent is grammar important in the writing process of first-year Licence's EFL students at the university of Ghardaia?
- What is the impact of mastering grammar rules on first-year Licence's EFL students' writing?

Based on what has been mention above and the research question raised, this study aims at exploring the following hypothesis:

- First-year Licence's EFL students at the university of Ghardaia face difficulties while writing, and this may be due to their lack of grammar competence.
- If first-year Licence's EFL students at the university of Ghardaia do not master the grammatical rules, it may affect their writing production negatively.

4. Rationale :

The study of grammar has long been considered an important component of the writing process. The ability to use proper grammar can significantly affect the quality and clarity of written communication. Therefore, the rationale for studying the effect of grammar on the process of writing skill is to determine the

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relationship between grammar knowledge and writing skill. By investigating this relationship, we can help students to gain a better understanding of the grammatical rules, and how it affects their writing production. And also, it may help teachers to recognize the value of teaching grammar to their students, and motivate them to take the time and effort to master these essential component, since it affects both of their speaking and writing in particular.

5. Structure of the Dissertation

The current research is divided into two parts: theoretical and practical. The theoretical part includes two chapters. Chapter one deals with the definitions, types, elements of grammar and its role in the English language. Chapter two deals with the writing skill, its elements, its approaches, its importance and its relationship with grammar. Also, in this chapter, we attempt to explore the impact of grammar on improving students' writing skill. The practical part includes one chapter, which focuses on describing the methodology of the research. It discusses the effect of grammar on the process of writing skill among first-year Licence's English students' questionnaire, data analysis and discussion of the findings. And it ends with the general conclusion.

6. Limitation of the study

The current study investigates the effect of grammar rules on the process of writing skill among first-year Licence's EFL students at Ghardaia University. Furthermore, it is important to mention its limitation. This research includes only 30 students from a general population of 270 students, that is why the findings can not be generalized to all of them. Also, due to the short period of time, we limited this study on the students' questionnaire. Thus, the study should be carried out over a longer period, where it would be better to apply more tools.

7. Definition of Terms

Grammar

Longman dictionary of language teaching and applied linguistics (2002) defines grammar as, "a description of the structure of a language and the way in which linguistic units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language".

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Writing

“Writing is a complex skill to develop and master since it is a part of productive word knowledge, writing skills are only developed when young learners are taught how to write and are given opportunities to practice these skills and strategies with proper motivation, interesting ideas, and creative settings” (Wafa Zoghbor, Thomai Alexiou, p. 85).

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Chapter one: Grammar

1. 1. Introduction

Language is a means of expressing thoughts and ideas, either in a written or spoken form. However, the ability to communicate in written way is an objective of both L2/FL learners in the target language. Furthermore, its success requires a set of basis.

“Grammar is a piano I play by ear. All I know about grammar is its power” (Joan Didion, cited in goodreads, 2022).

If someone wants to learn English, he might wonder how critical grammar is. Grammar is one of the essential elements in learning any language, whether for speaking or writing. It is the set of rules that dictates how a language works. If grammar is used properly, the message will be easily understood. For many students, grammar is considered as a difficult and Unexcited module. They do not like learning it, therefore, they can not have a good achievement in many aspects of the language.

“Everything bows to success, even grammar” (Victor Hugo, cited in overall motivation, 2021).

This chapter has no pretension to investigate the effect of grammar on students’ writing skill. But, it attempts to define grammar deeply, indicate its types and elements, and highlights on its importance in the English language.

1.2. Definition of Grammar

The domain of grammar has been discussed by many linguists and defined in various ways, due to the importance that it represents in language learning. Cambridge Dictionary defines grammar as, “the study or the use of rules about how words change their form and combine with other words to make sentences”.

According to Scott Thornbury (1999), “grammar is partly the study of what forms or structures are possible in language. Traditionally, grammar has been concerned almost exclusively with analysis at the level of the sentence. It is a description of the rules that govern how a language’s sentences are formed” (p. 1). He also states that, “grammar is a process for making speaker s or writers’ meaning clear when contextual information is lacking” (p. 4). Besides, he argues that “grammar is conventionally seen as the study of the syntax and morphology of sentences”. That is to say, it is the study of the manner words are formed (syntax), and how they are combined in a particular order to make meaningful sentences (morphology). For Gerot and Wingel (1994), “grammar is a theory of

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language , of how language is put together and how it works. More particularly, it is the study of wordings” (p. 2).

W. Nelson Francis (1954) had several definitions of grammar, “the first thing we mean by grammar is the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged in order to convey larger meaning”, “ the second meaning of grammar call it grammar 2, it is the branch of linguistic science which is concerned with the description, analysis, and multization of formal language patterns”. Another definiton is claimed by Hirai (2010) that, “grammar is a way to organize the sentence and create a good language”. That is, grammar is the basic rules that show us how to use the language correctly and effectively.

From the description above, we can notice that grammar is the set of principles and rules, that determines how words should be put together to write and produce well-formed and meaningful sentences. It also includes the science of syntax (i.e. the patterns of word arrangement), phonology (i.e. the sound), morphology (i.e. the system of word formation) and semantics (i.e. the meaning). Besides that, mastering grammar rules, helps the student to speak fluently and write correctly.



Figure 1.1: What grammar is and is not. (Leech, Deuchar and Hoogenraad, 1982, p. 5).

1.3. Types of Grammar

Grammar studies the rules and principles of language, including parts of speech, sentence structure, and punctuation. In English language, grammar has three main types namely: descriptive, prescriptive and pedagogical grammar. In fact, all types of grammar deal with rules, but each type has its own method of using the language.

1.3.1. Descriptive Grammar

According to Hinkel (2018), “descriptive grammar is the study of a language, its structure, and its rules as they are used in daily life by its speakers from all walks of life, including standard and nonstandard varieties” (p. 1). This is supported by Hazirah Hassan (2011) who claims that, “descriptive grammar

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refers to the structure of a language as it is actually used by speakers and writers” (p. 11).

“Descriptive grammar is non-judgmental, and it does not have the goal of determining what represents good or bad language, correct or incorrect structures, or grammatical or ungrammatical forms” (Leech, Deuchar, and Hoogenraad, 2006, cited in Eli Hinkel, 2018, p. 1).

In addition, Tamasi and Antieau (2015) claim that, “Descriptive grammar is how native English speakers actually talk and write, and it has no concrete idea of the way it should be structured”(p. 28). That is to say, descriptive grammar focuses on the description of the language and how people communicate in daily life, not how language should be used. For example: he goes... meaning he said.

1.3.2. Prescriptive Grammar

According to Tamasi and Antieau (2015), “prescriptive grammar promotes rules of language that dictate a formal and standard usage” (p. 24). They also state that, “When people talk about grammar, they frequently refer to the rules of proper speech and writing that they were taught in school, these types of rules, referred to as prescriptive grammar, which are generally focused on formal and written language” (p. 24).

This view is shared by Hinkle (2018) who argues that, ”prescriptive grammar specifies how a language should be used and what grammar rules should be followed. A prescriptivist view of language implies a distinction between "good grammar" and "bad grammar," and its primary focus is on standard forms of grammar and syntactic constructions” (p. 1). That is, prescriptive grammar is basically the set of rules, that prescribes or defines how we are supposed to speak or write according to some authorities (teachers, writers, handbooks or even parents), and it can be described as “proper“ or “correct“ language.

1.3.3. Pedagogical Grammar

For Newby (2015), “pedagogical grammar (PG) will be defined as grammatical descriptions, materials and activities developed to facilitate the learning of a foreign language, it thus includes both grammatical description and methodology..., and as a process of facilitating learning through appropriate methodology in which both teachers and learners participate”(p. 14).

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In addition, Burner (2015) states that, “when grammar is adopted for the purpose of teaching (didactics), it is referred to as pedagogical grammar” (p. 21). Hence, pedagogical grammar is a term that refers to the description of how to use the grammar of a language, using various grammatical rules, references, and sources to communicate, for people who want to learn the target language.

1.4. Elements of Grammar

The meaning of a word is derived not only from how it's pronounced and spelled, but also from the way it is used in a sentence or in a phrase, and the way a word is used in a sentence determines too what part of speech it belongs to. In this regard, English grammar contains a number of elements that guide the sentence shaping: subject, verb, noun, pronoun, adjectives, adverbs, articles, prepositions, interjections and conjunctions.

1.4.1. Subject:

The word subject is one of the main components of a sentence, it is used to talk about the person, place or thing (a noun or pronoun) that does the action. According to Oxford English Dictionary, “subject is a thing or person that is being discussed, described or dealt with in the sentence”. In other words, the action is "done" by the subject. For example: Mohamed walked to the store. In this sentence, the subject is Mohamed. Also, there are three main types of subject: simple subjects, compound subjects, and complete subjects.

1.4.2. Verb:

Verb is the light of the sentence. According to Frederick and Hamilton (1918), “A verb is a word which asserts or declares. In other words, it makes a noun or pronoun tell something” (p. 8). In addition, Yule (2006) claims that “verbs are words used to refer to various kinds of actions (go, talk) and states (be, have) involving people and things in events (Jessica is ill and has a sore throat so she can't talk or go anywhere)” (p. 82). That is to say, verbs represent the action that takes place in the sentence, for example: Chihab plays football. The shortest sentences in English consist of only one verb, for example, "read". This sentence does not include a noun, but it does include a subject, which is the person to whom it is addressed. Besides, verbs can be expressed in different tenses, present, past or future, depending on when the action is being performed. However, there are regular and irregular verbs especially in the past tense, for example, students think that we add “ed” to all the verbs in the past simple, which is wrong. That is why they have to master the grammatical rules of the language, in order to apply them correctly in their writing.

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1.4.3. Noun:

To Frederick and Hamilton (1918), “a noun is a word used as the name of anything that can be thought of, boy, paper, cold, fear, crowd. There are three things about a noun which indicate its relation to other words, its number, its gender, and its case”(p. 2). In fact, nouns are words that refer to a thing (computer), a person (Aicha), an animal (cat), a place (Oran), a quality (softness), an idea (justice), or an action (acting), anything we see or talk about has a “noun”. Furthermore, students have to make the difference between all kinds of nouns, so that, they can use them in the right way and right place. In this regard, Krapp (1908) classifies the nouns as following:

- “A common noun, as the name indicates, is one that may be applied to any one of a class objects” (p. 40).
- “A proper noun, is one which names a particular and individual person, place or thing” (p. 40).
- “Collectives nouns, are nouns which name objects that are made up of a number of individual elements, as, for example, the noun army, are called collective nouns” (p. 51).
- “Compound nouns which are made up of a non plus a suffix, as handful, spoonful” (p. 51).

1.4.4. Pronoun:

According to Collins Dictionary, “a pronoun is a word that you use to refer to someone or something when you do not need to use a noun often, because the person or thing has been mentioned earlier”. That is to say, pronoun is a short term that stands in for a noun, to avoid the need of repeating the same noun over and over again. In addition, “a pronoun gets its meaning from the noun it stands for. The noun is called the antecedent. For example: Although Seattle is damp, it is my favorite city. Seattle is the antecedent, and it is the pronoun” (Laurie, 2003, p. 9). However, Eastwood (1994, p. 233) classifies them into six main types:

- Personal pronouns: (i, you, she, he, it, they, we). For example: i want you to read this book.
- Possessive pronouns: (mine, yours, his, hers, ours, theirs). For example: is this your phone ? Yes, it is mine.
- Reflexive pronouns: (myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves). For example: Zayneb bought herself a new necklace.

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- Interrogative pronouns: (who, which, what, whom, whose). For example: which side is better ?
- Demonstrative pronouns: (this, that, these, those). For example: this is my favorite song.
- Relative pronouns: (who, whose, whom, which, that). For example: Mouna is the girl whom i was talking about.

1.4.5. Adjectives:

According to Laurie (2003), “adjectives are words that describe nouns and pronouns. And they answer the questions: What kind? Red rose, How much? More sugar, Which one? Second chance or How many? Several chances” (p. 4). That is, adjectives are words that provide us with extra information and details about nouns or pronouns. She also states that, “there are five kind of adjectives: common adjectives, proper adjectives, compound adjectives, articles, and indefinite adjectives” (p . 4).

- “Common adjectives: describe nouns or pronouns. Strong men, green plant, beautiful view” (p. 4).
- “Proper adjectives: are formed from proper nouns. California vegetables (from the noun California), Mexican food (from the noun Mexico)” (p. 4).
- “Compound adjectives: are made up of more than one word. Far-oof country, teenage person” (p. 4).
- “Articles: are a special type of adjectives. There are three articles: a, an, the” (p. 4).
- “Indefinite adjectives: don't specify the specific amount of something, all, each, more, several... etc” (p. 5).

1.4.6. Adverbs:

“Adverbs are words used typically with verbs, to provide more information about actions, states and events (slowly, yesterday). Some adverbs (really, very) are also used with adjectives to modify information about things” (Yule, 2006, p. 82). That is to say, an adverb is a word that modifies or describes a verb (she speaks loudly), an adjective (very small), another adverb (ended too quickly), or even a whole sentence (fortunately, i brought my charger). However, students learn that adverbs are formed by adding -ly to the end of the related adjectives, and they don't know that there are exceptions. For example, they use hard.ly and take it as an adverb, which is completely wrong. Here we can see the importance of mastering grammar to master the skill of writing. Moreover, adverbs answer

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one of the following questions: How? What? When? or Where? and they can express:

- The manner: for example: he ran quickly.
- The place: for example: put the phone there, please.
- The time: for example: i will call you later.
- The frequency: for example: most companies pay taxes yearly.
- The degree: for example: it is extremely hot this time of the year.

1.4.7. Articles:

According to Frederick and Hamilton (1918) “an article is a little adjective which individualizes the noun: a boy, an apple, the crowd” (p. 8). That is, articles are words that come before a noun to indicate whether it is specific or unspecific (i.e. general). However, there are three main articles: the, a, and an, and they are classified into: definite articles (the) and indefinite articles (a, and an). Some students think that we put these articles randomly, but in fact each one should be used in its right place. Here we come back to the importance of mastering grammar rules, and how they affect students’ writing production, if they are not applied correctly. In this respect, Laurie (2003) claims that,

- “The is called a definite article because it refers to a specific thing.
- A and an are called indefinite articles because they refer to general things. Use a with consonant sounds; use an before vowel sounds” (p. 4).

1.4.8. Prepositions:

For Anne (2007), “a preposition is a word that connects one thing with another, showing how they are related” (p. 132). Laurie (2003) states that, “preposition link a noun or a pronoun following it to another word in the sentence” (p. 9). That is to say, preposition is a word that refers to the parts of speech that link between two words or two phrases. However, Cambridge Dictionary defines preposition as, “a word or group of words that is used before a noun or pronoun to show-place, direction, time, or spatial relationship”.

- Prepositions of time: (on, from, after, until, during,... etc), for example: we have a special meal on friday.
- Prepositions of place: (on, behind, over, between, in front of... etc), for example: we spent a nice evening at grandma's house.
- Prepositions of direction: (toward, into, to, from, across... etc), for example: the man started walking toward me.

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- Prepositions of spatial relationship: (against, opposite, besides, around, ahead... etc), for example: Rayhana is ahead of the boy.

1.4.9. Interjections:

“Interjections stand outside the fabric of the sentence and express a general emotion with respect to the whole idea of the sentence, and they are usually followed by an exclamation point” (Krapp 1908, p. 221). For Frederick and Hamilton (1918), “an interjection is a word or sound expressing emotion only such as a shout, a groan, a hiss, a sob, or the like, such as oh, alas, hush” (p. 18). That is to say, interjections are words or phrases people use to convey a feeling, such as (anger, shock, joy, pain, confusion... etc) or to request or demand something. Furthermore, they are common in speech, talking, and in electronic messages rather than formal writing, for example: oh, what a beautiful day!, uh-oh, this looks bad, ouch, it hurts... etc.

1.4.10. Conjunctions:

“In grammar, a conjunction is a word or group of words that joins together words, groups, or clauses. In English, there are co-ordinating conjunctions such as 'and' and 'but', and subordinating conjunctions such as 'although', 'because', and 'when’” Collins Dictionary. That is to say, conjunction is a word used to connect phrases or sentences or to co-ordinate words in the same clause. This is supported by Evans (1921) who states that, “conjunction is a word used to connect words, parts of sentences, or sentences” (p. 37). However, Laurie (2003) claims that, “there are three kinds of conjunctions: coordinating conjunctions, correlatives conjunctions, and subordinating conjunctions” (p. 7).

- “Coordinating conjunctions: link similar words or word groups. There are seven coordinating conjunctions: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, and so” (p. 7).
- “Correlatives conjunctions: also link similar words or word groups, but they are always used in pairs. Both... and, either... or, neither... nor, not only... but also, whether... or” (p. 7).
- “Subordinating conjunctions: link an independent clause (complete sentence) to a dependent clause (fragment). After, although, as, as if, as long as, as soon as, before, even though, if, when, until, unless.. etc” (p. 7).

1.5. The Importance of Grammar in the English Language

“Mathematics is as little a science as grammar is a language.” (Ernst Mayr, cited in overall motivation, 2021).

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In fact, grammar is important for learning any language, not only the English language. Without proper grammar, communication becomes difficult and messages become muddle. Grammar is the golden key that solves all students' problems, because it affects both of his writing and speaking, either negatively or positively. According to Greenbaum and Nelson(1999), “grammar is the central component of language” (p. 1). That is, the existence of language lies in the existence of grammar. Mart (2013) claims that, “language acquisition without grammar structure will be confusing, learners will fail to use the language correctly without grammar skills” (p. 125).

Additionally, Crystal (2004, cited in word and deed) asserts that, “grammar is the structural foundation of our ability to express ourselves. The more we are aware of how it works, the more we can monitor the meaning and effectiveness of the way we and others use language. It can help foster precision, detect ambiguity, and exploit the richness of expression available in English”.

In the same context , Greenbaum and Nelson (1999) believe that, “in the study of language, grammar occupies a central position. But there is also a practical reason to emphasize the study of grammar. It is easy to learn to use dictionaries by yourself to find the pronunciation, spelling, or meanings of words, but it is difficult to consult grammar books without a considerable knowledge of grammar”(p. 6). That is to say, studying grammar is important for both effective communication and clear writing, and it can be challenging and difficult to use grammar books without understanding the underlying meaning.

Besides that, Huddleston, Pullum and Reynolds (2022) state that, “studying English grammar is practically valuable, but it’s also intellectually fascinating. It will give you a deeper insight into sentence structure, opening up new approaches to interpreting, appreciating, and using English effectively. That’s not to say it will magically improve your writing or public speaking; but it will provide a solid basis for making progress toward that goal”. In other words, a good understanding of grammar can be helpful to improve enhance and develop our written and oral communication skills, and mastering the rules of grammar allow us to communicate our ideas to others more effectively and avoid common errors, and mistakes that can distract us.

To sum up, grammar is the spine of the English language. It is the principles and rules that govern how words are used to form sentences and convey meaning. Proper use of grammar protects the writer and the speaker from being misunderstood while expressing his ideas. Poor grammar can form a

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negative impression on others. Therefore, grammar is very important, because it allows clear communication that increases credibility and professionalism, avoids misunderstandings and favors the standardization of language.

“Grammar, which knows how to control even kings” (Moliere, cited in goodreads, 2022).

1.6. Conclusion

In fact, the importance of grammar will be never emphasized enough, due to its role in language learning. It is the basic rules that work together to create a language, without a proper grammar, English proficiency would be impossible. Because even if students already know a lot of words, they won't be able to create meaningful sentences without a good understanding of the grammatical rules. A strong understanding of grammar gives them the confidence to professionally express themselves, create new sentences, and use the language correctly and appropriately. After providing some background knowledge about grammar, its types, its elements and its importance in the English language. We attempt to define writing skill, its elements, the main approaches to teaching writing, its importance and also to investigate in the effect of grammar on the students' writing skill, since it is the most important key to a good handwriting.

Chapter Two: Writing Skill

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- 2.2. Definition of Writing
- 2.3. Elements of Writing
 - 2.3.1. Content
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Chapter Two: Writing Skill

2.1. Introduction

“A word after a word after a word is power” (Margaret Atwood, cited in goodreads, 2022).

Besides reading, listening and speaking, writing is considered as a difficult skill for foreign or second language learners. It is the method that allows people to communicate their own feelings, thoughts and ideas in words on paper.

“writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously”(Nunan, 1989, p. 37). While writing, many students encounter several difficulties, that prevent them from producing a correct and coherent texts, and this is related to various factors. One of the main factors is grammar. Because writing can be only satisfying, if learners master grammar rules, vocabulary and punctuation.

This chapter provides a brief review of the writing skill. Besides, it attempts to explore its elements, the main approaches to teaching writing and its importance. Also in this chapter, we are going to investigate the relationship between writing and grammar, and the effect of grammar on the students' writing skill.

“Writing is the painting of the voice” by Voltaire (cited in goodreads, 2022).

2.2. Definition of Writing

Writing is the ability of presenting language in a written way. According to Widdowson (1978, cited in definition today), “writing is the act of making up correct sentences and transmitting them through the visual medium as mark on paper”.

For Nunan (2003), “writing is the mental work of inventing ideas, thinking about how to express them, and organizing them into statements and paragraphs that will be clear to a reader” (p. 8). In other word, writing is a task in which words and sentences are arranged in a right and organized way, with the appropriate use of grammar rules, punctuation, and vocabulary, to convey feeling or thinking into a clear and cohesive whole.

Another definition is expressed by Gaith (2002) that, “writing is a complex process that allows writers to explore thoughts and ideas, and make them visible

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and concrete”. Which means that, writing is not an easy process, because it requires the mastery of various skills: a strong vocabulary, sentence structure, an understanding of genre, organizational skills and word choice... etc.

Byrne (1988) states that, “when we write, we use graphic symbols that is, letters or combinations of letters which relate to the sounds we make when we speak. On one level, then, writing can be said to be the act of forming these symbols: making marks on a flat surface of some kind. But writing is clearly much more than the production of graphic symbols, just as speech is more than the production of sounds. The symbols have to be arranged, according to certain conventions, to form words, and words have to be arranged to form sentences” (p. 1). That is, writing is not just about leaving marks on the page, as it needs a solid understanding of the grammar language and syntax from the learner. The author must be able to use graphic symbols to represent sounds, and apply agreements to produce words and phrases that convey meaning. In general, writing is a complex process that includes technical skill, unique, and creative expressions.

In addition, writing is not only a means of expression, but also a communication tool by which people share ideas and deliver messages. This is supported by Murcia (2001) who claims that, “writing is an act of communication suggests an interactive process which takes place between the writer and the reader via the text” (p. 207). In the same respect, Murray (1982) argues that, “writing is a process using language to discover a meaning in experience, and to communicate it” (p. 73).

“Writing is usually a communication with others. And yet the essential transaction seems to be with oneself, a speaking to one's best self” (Peter Elbow 1998, p. 208). That is to say, writing can be considered as a dialogue with oneself, as people work to express their own thoughts, beliefs, and opinions clearly and coherently. Moreover, writing can be a way of communicating with others and also a means of self-development and self-discovery.

From the definitions above, we can say that writing is the physical and mental activity which enables people to express their own thinking, feelings and ideas using the appropriate written language, in order to be understood clearly by readers. Also, it is a challenging and complex task which requires the mastery of various elements such as grammar rules, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation. Besides, writing is a tool of communication in which the writer

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communicates with the reader indirectly, by sharing his thoughts and experiences.

2.3. Elements of Writing

Writing is the means that allows us to express our feeling and thinking to ourselves and to others, in a readable manner. However, the writing process consists of several components that help a writer to produce a good piece of writing: content, grammar, organization, mechanics, word choice, purpose and audience.

2.3.1. Content

According to Cambridge dictionary, “content is the subject or ideas contained in something written, said, created, or represented”. In fact, content in writing, refers to the message that a writer is trying to convey to the readers through his writing, and it can include ideas, opinions, facts and other components that form the overall meaning and purpose of the writer. Good content is described by being interesting, well-researched and convincing. In other word, the author must be authentic and explains his personal thoughts and ideas using his own way, and his own words, in addition, he must be precise and avoid the unnecessary details.

2.3.2. Grammar

Grammar is considered as the most important element in writing. It is the system of principles and rules that allows people to form and structure sentences. Because, we can not speak or write in a language, without understanding its basic rules. Wilcox (2004) defines grammar as, “a system of rules which allows the users of the language in question to create meaning, by building both meaningful words and larger constructions of sentences”(p. 23). Thus, for effective writing, students have to focus on the appropriate use of grammar rules. In order to be understood properly and clearly by the audience.

2.3.3. Organization:

For Kathleen (2005), “organization is the presentation of ideas, how to link these ideas together in order to make sense, and help to communicate meaningful sentences or texts clearly”. That is to say, organization is how ideas and informations are presented. It also relates to the way phrases, sentences and paragraphs are written. The manner a piece is written affects how readers explain the writer's thoughts. Readers will get bored and confused, if ideas are

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not organized in an orderly way, poorly arranged writing makes the audience search for the information that they need in another place.

2.3.4. Mechanics

Mechanics are the basic rules of spelling, punctuation, capitalization and handwriting. This is supported by Brown (2000) who claims that, “mechanics deals with spelling, punctuation, citation of references (if applicable) neatness and appearance” (p. 37). In addition, Kane (2000) states that, “in composition, mechanics refers to the appearance of words, to how they are spelled or arranged on paper. The rules gathered under the heading of mechanics attempt to make writing consistent and clear” (p. 15). That is, to produce a good and well-structured piece of writing, it is essential to be aware of the different mechanics rules. In fact, the use of mechanics in writing is so important, since they clarify the meaning of the content. Also, it is necessary to choose the appropriate punctuation, spelling, capitalization and words, because they affect the content of the writer either negatively or positively.

2.3.5. Word Choice

Word choice refers to the words the writer uses in his text to support his ideas. Starkey (2004) argues that, “one of the best ways to accurately convey your ideas in your essay is to choose the right words. Doing so ensures that your audience understands what you are writing” (p. 21). However, when the writer chooses words to explain his thoughts, he must consider not only what makes sense to him, but also what will make sense and clear to the audience. A right word choice, makes the reader understand the content of the writer easily, because it clarifies, explains, and develops ideas.

2.3.6. Purpose

According to Taylor (2010), “purpose is the driving force behind the work, it determines the topic and how ideas are arranged to affect the readers, in addition it drives to the intended result”. That is to say, purpose in writing refers to the author's goal and aim for writing, or why a writer chooses a specific piece of writing. And those are to inform and to convince the audience. To put it differently, it relates to the reason behind writing.

2.3.7. Audience

According to Cambridge Dictionary, “the audience of a work of literature is the type of people the writer intended to read it”. That is, audience refers to

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the person or group that the author intends to address in his writing. However, the writer should know the type of his audience, because it helps him to make decisions about what informations he should mention, how he should organize them, and what kind of details will be essential to include, so that, the reader understands what the writer is presenting.

In fact, writing is a very difficult and challenging activity. And in order to produce and create a successful piece of writing, writers have to take into account all these important components.

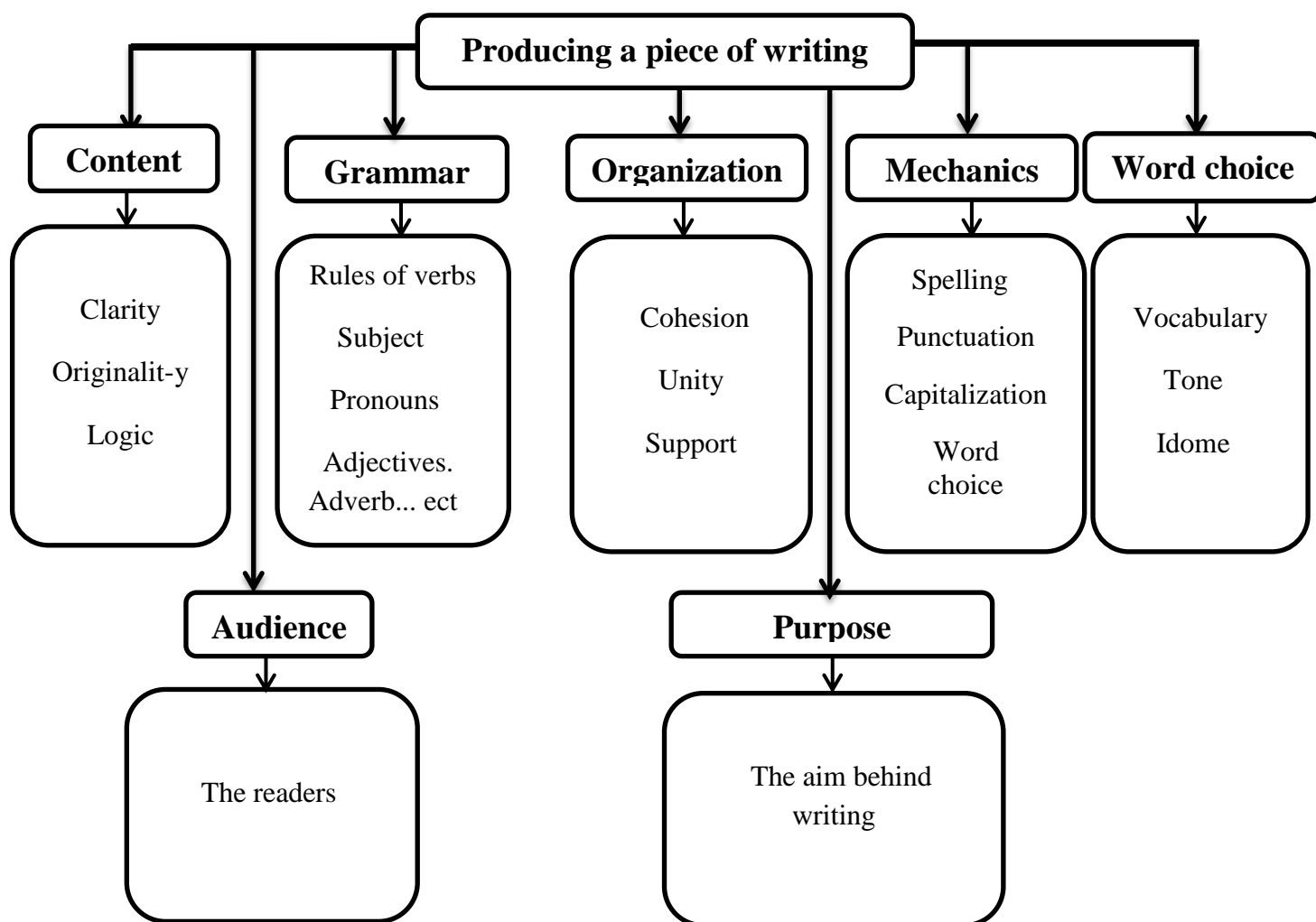


Figure 2.1: Writing elements.

2.4. The Main Approaches to Teaching Writing

Actually, both teachers and students know that, writing has specific forms in different settings. As a result, many approaches of teaching appear. Teaching English writing has various approaches, and each approach requires a particular

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way of teaching. In this respect, Harmer (1983) states that, “there are a number of different approaches to the practice of writing skill both in and outside the classroom. We need to choose between them, deciding whether we want students to focus more on the process of writing than its product , whether we want them to study different written genres” (p. 257).

2.4.1. Product Approach

According to Palpanadam, Salam and Ismail (2014), “the product approach is one of the most practiced approaches in schools around the world around the world. This writing approach encouragzs students to produce an end product which may be likened to a model essay normally provided by teachers. The main aim of the approach is to provide some linguistic knowledge about to language student” (p. 790). Harmer (1983) claims that, “when concentrating on the product, we are only interested in the aim of a task and in the end product” (p. 257). That is to say, the product approach emphasizes on the students' final production, and in this approach, students are not required for generating and brainstorming. By contrast, they spend more time analysing the main features of the text model they are asked to write by their teacher, in order to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

“One of the most explicit description of product approaches is provided by Pincas ” (Badger and White, 2000, p. 153). For Pincas (1982, cited in Neupane Pramila, 2017), “writing is seen as being mainly about linguistic knowledge with the proper use of syntax, words, and the unified strategies”. Thus, writing is concerned with the use of correct forms and lexical devices, and the product approach is about the final result of the writing process. Additionally, it focuses on the accuracy and organization of writing more than the content.

This position is supported by Sun and Feng (2009, cited in Neupane Pramila, 2017) who argue that, “the primary goal of product writing is an error-free and coherent text”. They also mention that, “the product approach focuses on writing tasks in which the learners imitate, copies and transforms teachers supplied models”. That is, the product approach requires students to write a text that resembles an essay template provided by the teacher. And they must follow a set of rules to create successful written work. Also, the emphasis is on the accuracy, and students are encouraged to pay attention to grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation.

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Furthermore, Badger and White (2000) state that, “in this approach, learning to write has four stages: familiarization; controlled writing; guided writing and free writing ” (p. 153):

- Familiarization: aims at make learners aware of certain features of a particular text.
- Controlled writing: focuses on developing grammatical patterns, sentence structure, word order and punctuation.
- Guided writing: students replicate and copy the teacher's model text.
- Free writing: students create their own texts by using the skills they have learnt.

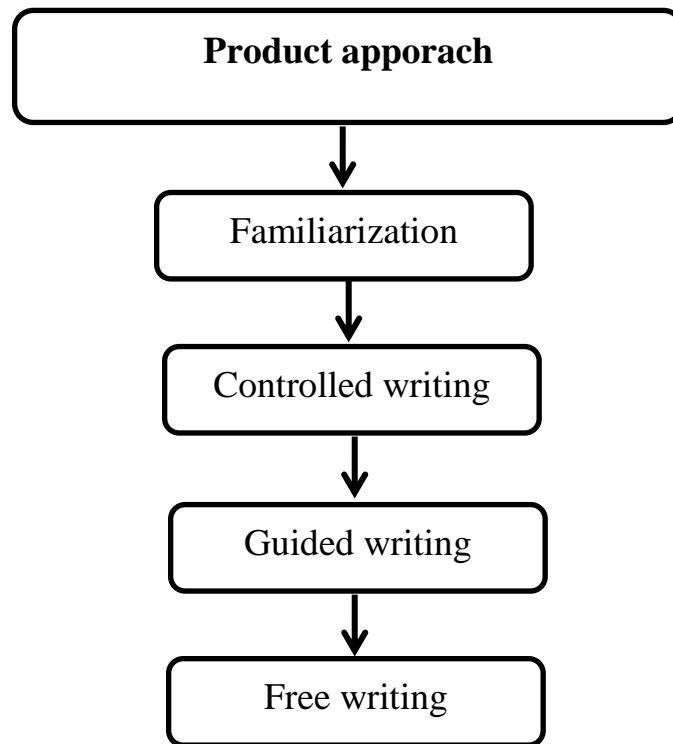


Figure 2.3: Product approache stages (Badger and White, 2000).

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2.4.2. Process Approach

Palpanadan, Salam and Ismail (2014) defines the process approach as, “a cyclical approach. In this approach , students are needed to move back and forth while going from one stage to another stage and thinking part in the writing activities” (p. 790). That is to say, a process-oriented approach focuses on the cyclical nature of writing, where students are encouraged to move through the stages of writing: brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing. Also, it stresses on the importance of the thinking, such as, generating ideas, organizing those ideas, and then transforming them into coherent and effective texts.

In addition, Tribble (1996) argues that the process approach is, “an approach to the teaching of writing which stresses the creativity of the individual writer, and which pays attention to the development of good writing practices rather than the imitation of models” (p. 160). That is, the process-oriented approach focuses on the writing process and aims to help students become more confident and effective writers, rather than just providing models for imitation and copying. In the same respect, Suriyanti and Yaccob (2016) claim that, “in process writing, students are free to choose the topics that they want to write about with some guidance from the teachers and they do not fear writing, because the main focus in writing is not on achieving grammatical correctness, but on the way students write” (p. 73).

Moreover, Badgar and white (2000) assert that, “writing in this approach focouses mainly on the linguistic skills, like planing and drafting: and it gives less importance to linguistic knowledge such as grammar and text structure” (p. 154).

2.4.2.1. Writing Process Stages

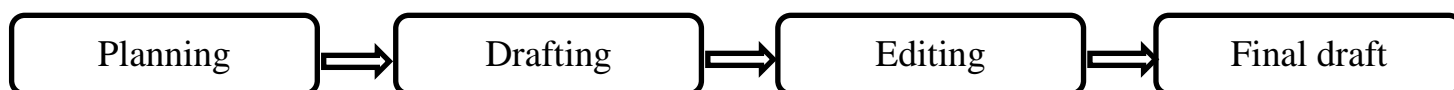


Figure 2.4: The linear model of the writing process (Harmer 2004, p. 5).

2.4.2.1.1. Planning:

According to Harmer (2004), “experienced writers plan what they are going to write, before starting to write or type, they try and decide what it is they are going to say” (p. 4). He also adds that, “when planing writers have to think

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about three main issues: the purpose, the audience and the content structure” (p. 4). Actually, planning is the first stage in the writing process. It starts first, with brainstorming, organizing ideas, and then presenting them in a structured form.

2.4.2.1.2. Drafting:

Harmer (2004) claims that, “we can refer to the first version of a piece of writing as a draft. This first go at text is often done on the assumption that it will be amended later. As the writing process proceeds into editing, a number of drafts may be produced on the way to the final version” (p. 4). That is to say, drafting is the first version of the students’ piece of writing (i.e. not the final one), which may contain added or changed information. In addition, students at this stage write without paying attention to grammar rules, punctuation marks, or spelling...etc, because it is not the final product.

2.4.2.1.3. Editing:

Editing refers to the process of making changes to the text, by checking punctuation, grammar, and spelling errors, in order to prepare it for the final stage of the writing process. Harmer (2004) states that, “once writers have produced a draft they then, usually, read through what they have written to see where it works and where it doesn’t. Perhaps the order of the information is not clear. Perhaps the way something is written is ambiguous or confusing. They may then move paragraphs around or write a new introduction. They may use different forms of words for a particular sentence” (p. 5). He also mentions that, “reflecting and revising are often helped by other readers (or editors) who comment and make suggestions” (p. 5). That is, the reflection and review processes of a written work, can often benefit from input from other readers. By soliciting feedback from others, the author can gain a fresh perspective on his work and suggestions for improvement.

2.4.2.1.4. Final version:

Actually, the final version of a text comes after a lot of editing and modifying. In this stage, students have to be careful, because it is their last chance to correct their errors, before they submit it to the audience. Harmer (2004) says that, “once writers have edited their draft, making the changes they consider to be necessary, they produce their final version. This may look considerably different from both the original plan and the first draft, because things have changed in the editing process. But the writer is now ready to send the written text to its intended audience” (p. 5).

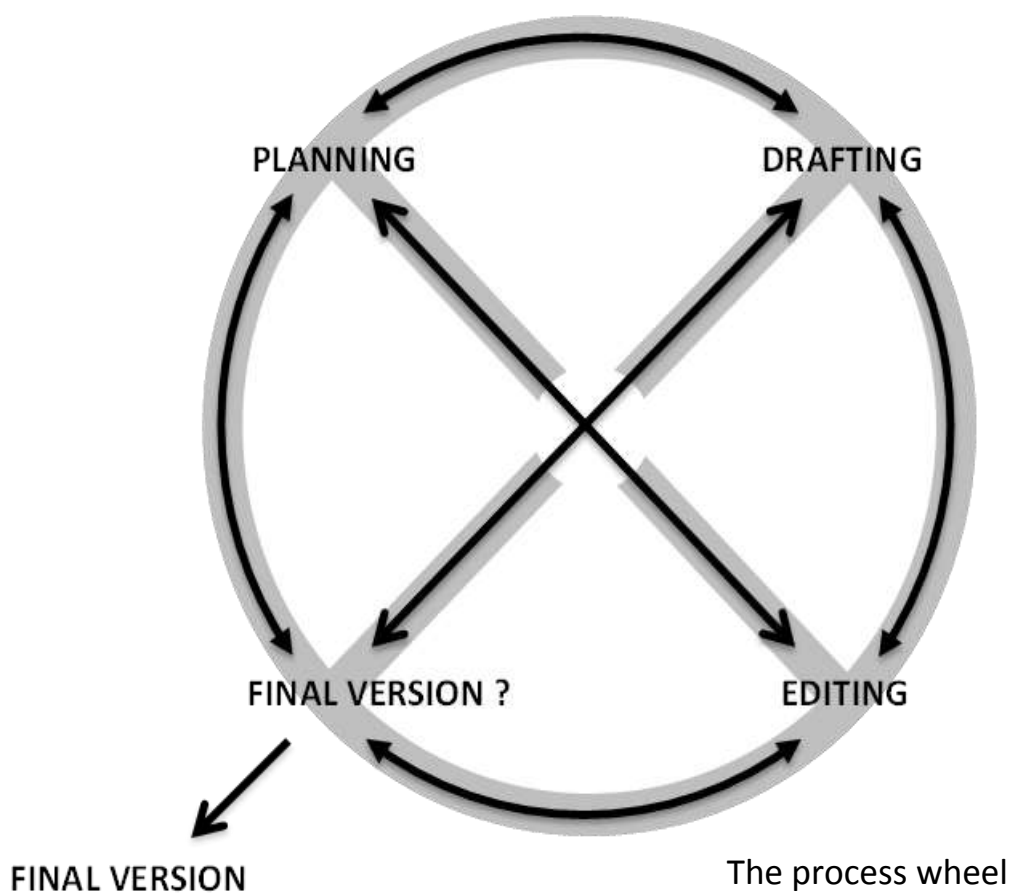


Figure 2.5: Stages of the writing process (Harmer 2004, p. 6).

2.4.3. Genre Approach

Besides the product and process approach, the genre approach is the last approach in the teaching of English writing. Barger and White (2000) claim that, “there are strong similarities with product approaches and, in some ways, genre approaches can be regarded as an extension of product approaches ” (p. 155). According to Derewianka (2003), “genre based approach is an approach that focuses on the relationship between context and language” (p. 134). That is to say, the genre approach emphasizes on how the text is structured, and at the same time it focuses on the function of the language.

Additionally, Harmer (1983) argues that, “in genre approach to writing students study texts in the genre they are going to be writing before they embark on their own writing ” (p. 258). He also adds that, “a genre approach is especially appropriate for students of English for specific purposes” (p. 259). Which means that, in the genre approach, writing occurs in a social or cultural

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situation, and it is a reflection of a specific purpose. “the genre-based approach emphasizes the importance of exploring the social and cultural context of language use on a piece of writing”. (Tuan, 2011, p. 1472). In other word, when students try to produce a text in the genre approach, they have to take into consideration the social and cultural context, and also the appropriate use of content, grammar, and organization.

Martin’s model of the genre approach (1993, cited in Badger and White, 2000, p. 155).

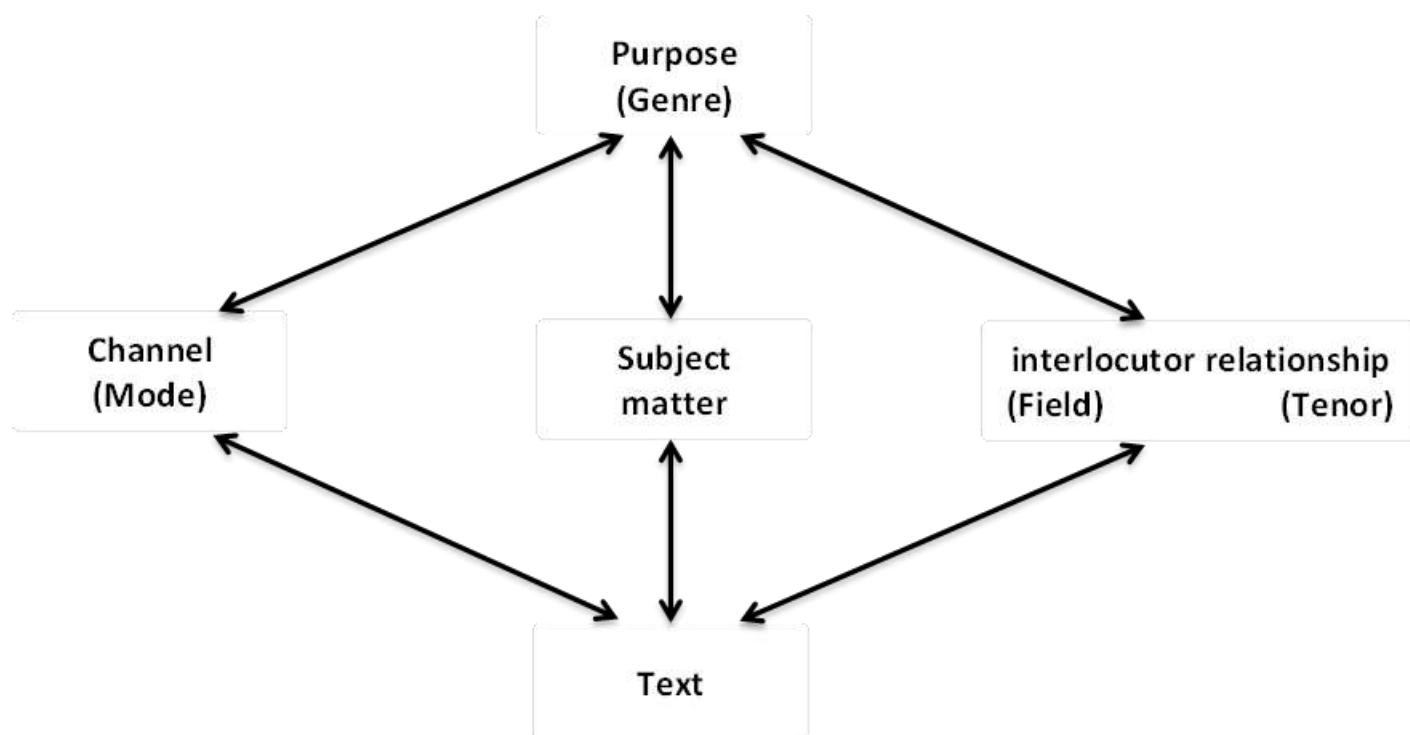


Figure 2.6: Martin’s model of the genre approach (1993).

2.5. Importance of Writing

Writing has always taken an important position in language learning. According to Gustafson, Tran and Buck (cited in Selam Getu, 2017), “writing is the primary basis upon which communication, history, record keeping, and art is begun. Writing is the framework of our communication”. That is, writing is very important in our lives, because it is considered as a communication tool, which allows people to express their own thoughts, opinions and ideas in a written manner. This is supported by Graham (2006, cited in Graham et al 2012, p. 3) who argues that, “writing is an extremely versatile tool that can be used to accomplish a variety of goals”.

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Additionally, Kane (1988) claims that, “interest in writing lies not so much in a topic as in what a writer has made of it” (p. 5). Which means that, the value and the importance of a piece of writing is not determined by the topic being discussed, but in fact, by the unique perspective that the author brings to the topic. In other words, it's not always what's said that matters, but how its said, which can make the work special and unique.

This view is shared by Sakina Chitalwala (2022, cited in young scholarz) who says that, “writing is a crucial process that is challenging for both native as well as non-native English speakers. It involves a focus on content, organisation, purpose, audience, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, and coherence. It also encourages thinking and learning, motivates conversation, and helps to lay out well-rounded thoughts for reflection”. She also adds that, “in a world of texting and messaging, writing is increasingly fundamental in our communication with others. It helps us to organise and refine our ideas by doing an internal edit of words and phrases by filtering and adjusting language to ensure a flawless delivery on paper or on a digital platform”.

In summary, writing is a critical activity and difficult process, that it demands concentration, and attention to details. Also, it is a very important skill that can help people to communicate effectively and reach success in different areas of life.

2.6. The Relationship between Writing and Grammar

“Grammar is one of the English forms that correlates with four English skills, one of them is writing. Grammar is a foundation for writing activities” (Mutiarin, Nurmandi, Kusuma Paksi, and Rafique 2022, p. 231). They also mention that, “grammar and writing cannot be separated because the tow are essential and related. Grammar has also been closely associated with students’ writing skills because whenever they want to write something, they need to pay close attention to the choice of tense, punctuation , or even part of speech to produce a good piece of writing. The ability in writing can be seen by students ‘s ability to master grammar” (p. 231). Which means that, the rules of grammar, help the students to control the mechanics of writing, and that what makes the connection between grammar and writing critical.

“Grammar and writing are dependent each others”(Septiani, 2014, p. 21). In other words, writing and grammar are two inseparable elements, because we can not write in a particular language, if we don’t know how it works.

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Additionally, Mart (2013) asserts that, “learners should study grammar because grammar skills will help learners to organize words and messages and make them meaningful. Knowing more about grammar will enable learners to build better sentences in speaking and writing performances. A good knowledge of grammar helps learners to make sentences clear enough to understand”. That is, it will be difficult for learners to form comprehensible and accurate sentences, without a strong knowledge of the grammatical rules. This position is supported by Fearn and Farnan (2007) who claim that, knowledge of grammar is the fundamental foundation of writing, we should definitely teach grammar in writing, so that, students can better understand how the language functions. Students' writing will get better if they pay more attention to grammar.

Greenbaun and Nelson (1999) believe that, “the study of the grammatical resources of English is useful in writing composition in particular, it can help you to evaluate the choices available to you come to revise an earlier written draft ” (p. 6). That is to say, grammar is very important, especially in writing, because it helps students to evaluate their writing and correct errors, if any.

According to the descriptions above, we can see that, there is a strong relationship between grammar and writing. Some students may be very talented writers with a lot of special ideas, but if they have low level in grammar, they will face difficulties in communicating those ideas in their writing. Therefore, they may get bad Mark's in written expression. That is why both teachers and students have to be aware of this.

2.7. The Effect of Grammar on the Writing Skill

“What is the essence of the art of writing? Part one: have something to say. Part two: say it well” (Edward Abbey, cited in goodreads, 2022).

Grammar is one of the language aspects, which plays an essential role in enhancing students' writing skill. In this regard, Istiqomah, Raja and Kadayryanto (2014) assert that, “as one of components of writing, grammar takes an important role in writing and clearly it affects one's writing. the better one's grammar matery, the better his or her writing. The connection between writing and grammar is very important” (p. 3). That is to say, grammar affects students' writing whether positively or negatively. Using incorrect grammar when writing, can lead to unclear communication and misunderstanding. This position is supported by Mart (2013) who states that, “grammar will give learners the competence how to combine words to form sentences. To create

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fully-developed sentences, grammar knowledge is indispensable”. In other words, creative writing is based on the appropriate use of grammar rules.

Many experts believe that, mastering the grammatical rules, is one of the most helpful way of improving students’ writing ability. Septiani (2014) argues that, “by connecting the mastery of the grammatical concepts and the writing strategy, we can raise awareness about the effect it can have on the ability to write effectively” (p. 21). In the same respect Frodesen and Eyring (2000, cited in Ali Fatemi 2008. p. 7) claim that, “a focus on form of (grammar) in writing can help writers develop rich linguistic resources needed to express ideas effectively”.

In addition, Emery et al (1978, p. 1, cited in Mart, 2013) claims that, “the more you know about the form and function of the parts that make up the larger unit, the sentence, the better equipped you are to recognize and to construct well-formed sentences”. Which means that, the mastery of grammatical structure, enables the writer to develop and reinforce his ability in written expression.

In fact, proper grammar brings clarity to the text. Sometimes even simple sentences or phrases might be difficult to understand, due to the bad use of grammar. Donovan (2016) asserts that, “developing good grammar habits while painstaking, enriches the experience for everyone involved, from the writer to the editor to the reader”. She also says that, “there are many things that lead to better writing, and there are few things that raise a flag to signal poor writing. Bad grammar is one of them”.

To sum up, grammar affects students' writing greatly, because writing success depends on how well the grammatical rules are used. The appropriate use of grammar in writing is a sign of professionalism and competence. Besides that, proper grammar makes students’ writing understandable and clear, since it follows the basic rules of the sentence structure, punctuation, and spelling. Hence, it can be assumed that, the higher students’ grammar mastery, the highest of writing ability will be.

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2.8. Conclusion

Writing is very critical skill in the learning process of students and in daily life. God has emphasized this in many of His verses, and there is even an entire Surah that assures the importance of writing, which is Al-Qalam: the pen. “Nūn. By the pen and what everyone writes” Juz 29/ Hizb 57 - Page 564. (translated by Dr. Mustafa Khattab, 2022). Glory be to Him, does not swear except by the Great. However, writing is a very difficult and challenging activity, and its success requires many components. Grammar is one of the most significant components. In fact, grammar does play a crucial role in the process of writing skill, and clearly it affects one’s production. It helps the writer to convey his ideas clearly and effectively. The better he knows the grammar rules, the more confident he will feel when writing. Additionally, the use of proper grammar in writing, shows respect for readers. Otherwise, the mastery of the grammatical rules is a key factor to both L2/FL students, to develop and improve their writing skill.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

3.2. The Design

3.3. The Sample

3.4. Data Collection Tools

3.5. Data Analysis

3.5.1. Part One

3.5.2. Part Two

3.5.3. Part Three

3.6. Discussion of The Findings

3.7. Conclusion

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The topic under research highlights on the effect of the grammatical rules on the students' writing skill. The first and second chapter deal with the literature review of the two main variables of the study: grammar and writing. However, this chapter deals with the research methodology, answers the research questions and tests the hypothesis. Also, it includes the sample of the questionnaire, data collection, data analysis, and discussion of findings.

3.2. The Design

The current study applies a descriptive analytical method. Dulock (1993) believes that, descriptive research is utilized, "to describe systematically and accurately the facts and characteristics of a given population or area of interest" (p. 154). This descriptive method is concerned with the quantification of the data and with the numerical analysis (quantitative method, percentage and frequency). The researchers analysed the students' answers by collecting the information from all of the 30 survey items. The data was gathered during the academic year 2022/2023, in the second trimester.

3.3. The Sample

The sample under investigation consists of 30 students from a general population of 270 first-year Licence's students majoring in English at the University of Ghardaia. (270 students were scattered over eight groups). There are many reasons why this population was chosen. Mainly, first-year licence's students may have limited experience in writing at the university level. Therefore, this study will raise their attention to the need of mastering the grammatical rules of the language in order to enhance and develop their writing ability.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

In this study, the tool that has been utilized by the researchers is the students' questionnaire. "The questionnaire is a relatively popular means of collecting data" (Nunan, 1992, p. 143). The main aim of this questionnaire is to collect the data from the participants about their attitudes, experiences, and opinions related to the research study.

In this questionnaire, students are asked to pick the answers 'yes' or 'no', in addition to multiple-choice questions, and they are required to choose their

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own opinions. There are also other questions with a 'yes' and 'no' as an answer, with a space to justify, if the answer was 'yes'.

This questionnaire consists of 17 questions, which were divided into three main parts. The first and second questions (1 and 2) in part one, are about the students' gender and age. The third question (3) seeks to know whether these students like English or not. The fourth question (4) aims to see the evaluation of the students to their level in English.

The second part contains seven questions. It is about the students' impression toward the writing skill. The aim of questions 5, 6, 7 and 8 is to check the students' evaluation of their level in writing expression, to highlight on its importance, and also to see where they prefer to write more (class, library, home or else where). Question 9 and 10 attempts to determine the main difficulties students encounter when they write. The last question (11) in this part, seeks to know whether these students make an effort to improve their writing skill or not.

Consequently, the third part contains six questions. The purpose of questions 12 and 13 is to see the students' level in grammar, and to shed light on its importance. Question 14 aims to demonstrate whether the mastery of the grammatical rules help the students to write better or not. Question 15 seeks to know the students' point of view regarding the grammar sessions (if it is sufficient or insufficient). Finally, the last questions 16 and 17 attempt to determine the students' Marks in writing expression and in grammar.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

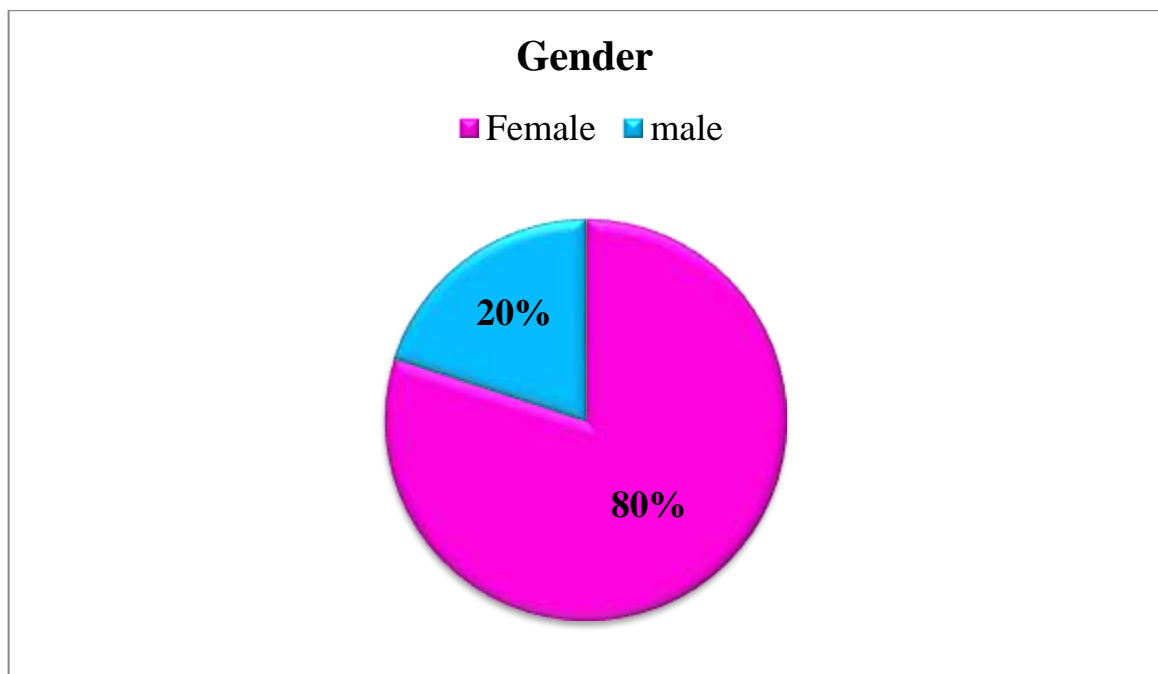
3.5. Data Analysis

3.5.1. Part One:

Question 3.1: Students' gender

Table 3.1: Students' gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Female	24	80 %
Male	6	20 %
Total	30	100 %



Pie chart 3.1: Students' gender

The first table refers to the gender of the students. We can see that the majority of the participants are female (80 %). Whereas the remaining percentage represents male (20 %).

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Question 3.2: How older you?

Table 3.2: Students' age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18	11	36,67 %
19	14	46,67 %
20	4	13,33 %
Over 20	1	3,33 %
Total	30	100,00 %

Table 2 refers to the age of the students who participated in this questionnaire (30 students). We can notice from this table that, the age of first-year Licence's students at the department of English at the University of Ghardaia, differs between 18 and 19 years old, which corresponds to 36,67 % for 18 years old and 46,67 % for 19 years old. Besides, 13,33 % of the students have 20 years old, and only one student is over 20 years old.

Question 3.3: Do you like English?

Table 3.3: Students' perception toward English

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	29	96,67 %
No	1	3,33 %
Total	30	100,00 %

The majority of respondents (96.67%) indicated that they like English. This suggests that, most of the students who answer the questionnaire have a positive perception of the English language (which is their specialty). On the other hand, one student indicated that, he don't like English. This could be due to various reasons, such as finding English difficult to learn, or feeling a lack of interest or relevance in the language.

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Question 3.4: How Do you evaluate your English level?

Table 3.4: Students' English level

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding	0	0,00 %
Good	20	66,67 %
Average	10	33,33 %
Low	0	0,00 %
Total	30	100,00 %

The data shows that, the majority of the participants, around 66.67%, consider themselves to be good in English, while the remaining rate 33.33% state having an average level. Also, it's interesting to note that, none of the participants declare an outstanding or low level in English. This could indicate that, the participants' self-evaluation were generally average, with most of them feeling competent in the language, but not necessarily exceeding or struggling with it.

3.5.2. Part Two:

Question 3.5: Do you like to write?

Table 3.5: Students' interest in writing

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	26	86,67 %
No	4	13,33 %
Total	30	100,00 %

According to the collected data from table 5, around 86.67% of the respondents enjoy writing, while the remaining percentage 13.33% (4 students) do not like to write. This is an interesting finding, as it indicates that, a considerable rate of the students have a positive attitude towards writing skill, which may have a good impact on their academic success and general literacy improvement.

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Question 3.6: How do you find writing?

Table 3.6: Students' attitude towards writing skill

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Very easy	3	10,00 %
Easy	13	43,33 %
Difficult	14	46,67 %
Very difficult	0	0,00 %
Total	30	100,00 %

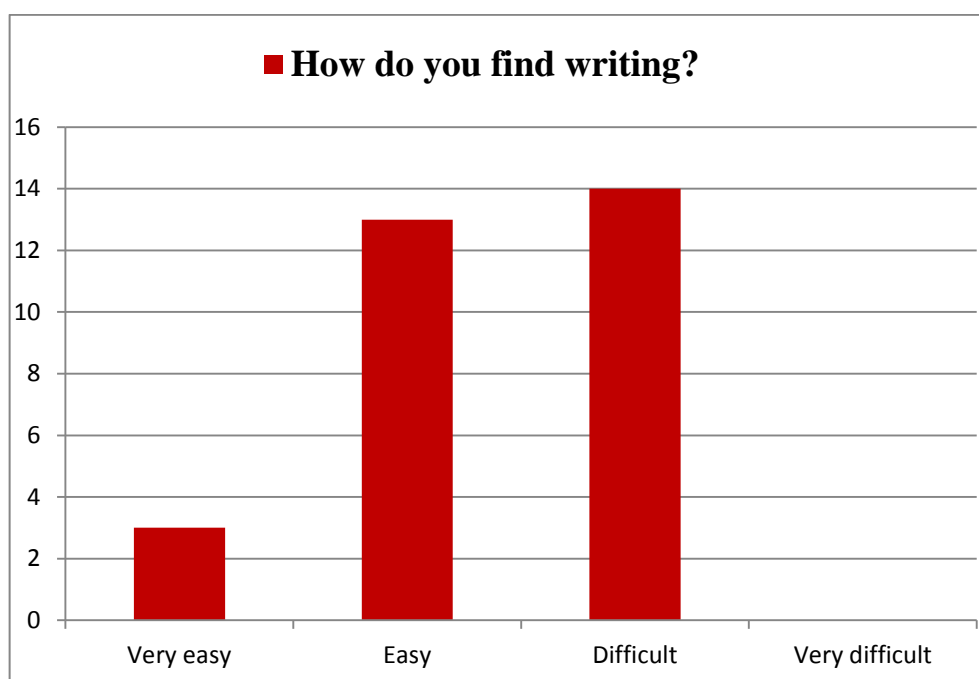


Figure 3.1: Students' attitude toward writing skill

As it is noticed in table 6, 10,00% of the students find writing very easy, while 46,67% of them find it difficult. On the other hand, 43.33% of the students find writing easy. Also, an unexpected result, is that no participant thinks that writing is very difficult. The fact that none of the participants claimed finding writing "very difficult" shows that, while writing may be challenging or difficult for some students, it is not an insurmountable obstacle. This could be seen as a positive sign, as it indicates that students are generally capable of improving and developing their writing skill with the right guidance.

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Question 3.7: Where do you write more?

Table 3.7: Writing preferences: where students like to write more

Location	Frequency	Percentage
Class	8	26,67 %
Library	3	10,00 %
Home	16	53,33 %
Elsewhere	3	10,00 %
Total	30	100,00 %

According to table 7, it appears that most of students 53.33% prefer to write at home, followed by 26.67% of them who prefer to write in class. While, a small percentage of students 10% like to write in the library or elsewhere. From this result, we can say that, home may be a more comfortable and familiar environment for students to work in, which can help them relax and concentrate better on their writing activities. In contrast, other locations such as the library or classroom may be associated with more formal settings, which could feel uncomfortable to some students.

Question 3.8: How do you evaluate your level in writing?

Table 3.8: Students' evaluation of their level in writing

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding	1	3,33 %
Good	16	53,33 %
Average	8	26,67 %
Low	5	16,67 %
Total	30	100,00 %

As we have mention above, most of the participants 53.33% state to be good at writing expression, and 26.67% attest to have an average level. Whereas, 16.67% of the participants claim that they have a low level in writing expression, and only one person (3.33%) says that he have an outstanding level. However, the more students practice writing, the more opportunities they have to refine their skills and enhance fluency in expressing their ideas.

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Question 3.9: Do you encounter difficulties when you write?

Table 3.9: Students' attitude toward writing difficulties

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	22	73,33 %
No	8	26,67 %
Total	30	100,00 %

The highest percentage 73,33 % refers to the students who encounter difficulties when they write. Whereas, 26,67 % of them feel they can write easily without any difficulties. From the results above, we may recognize that, first-year Licence' students of English face difficulties when they write. In fact, successful writing, is about effective communication, and the ability to convey ideas clearly and briefly, while engaging it to the audience. However, it requires a combination of elements, grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, spelling... etc.

Question 3.10: If yes, which kind of difficulties?

Table 3.10: Identifying students' writing challenges

Kind of difficulties	Frequency	Percentage
Grammar rules	17	56,67 %
Vocabulary	10	33,33 %
Punctuation	1	3,33 %
Others	2	6,67 %
Total	30	100,00 %

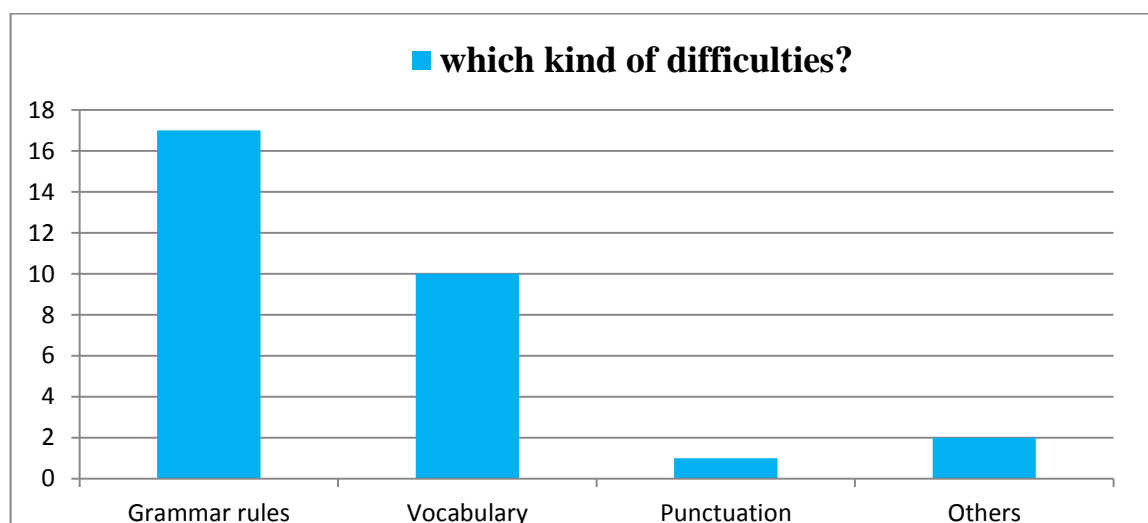


Figure 3.2: Students' writing difficulties

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The data obtained from table 10 demonstrate that, 56,67 % of the students have difficulties at the level of grammar, and 33,33 % of them face problems in vocabulary. However, only one student (3,33 %) states to have punctuation issues. Concerning the remaining percentage, 6,67 % of the respondents (2 students) claim to encounter other kind of challenges in writing. According to this result, we can understand that, those students face several problems in writing at different levels, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation... etc. And these are the reasons that can make their writing bad, incompetent and even meaningless.

Question 3.11: Do you make an effort to improve your writing?

Table 3.11: Students' encouragement to improve their writing skill

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	17	56,67 %
No	13	43,33 %
Total	30	100,00 %

The data in table 11 shows that, 76.5% of the participants are encouraged to improve their writing skills. This is a positive finding, as it indicates that the majority of the participants are interested in developing their writing abilities. While, 23.4% of the participants declare that they do not make an effort to improve their writing skill.

-If yes, please justify your answer: "students' answers".

- Reading books and use applications that help me to evaluate my writing, like: cake.
- Writing every day, and by learning the academic writing.
- Practicing writing more.
- Reading different books and novels.
- Using dictionaries to learn new words.
- Writing my daily routine and my to-do list in English.
- Mastering grammar rules and vocabulary, because i feel it develop my writing ability.
- Rewrite the tasks and the lessons.

Based on the students answers to question 11, we may understand that, the majority of the students make an effort to improve and develop their writing

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skill, through various ways. In fact, using evaluation tools can help them gain feedback and identify areas for improvement and development. Also, practicing writing more, can help them improve their writing skills over time. Additionally, reading books, novels, and using dictionaries to learn new words, can aid them extend their vocabulary and develop their writing abilities. Besides, some students prefer to rewrite the tasks and lessons, because they see that it can help them in identifying mistakes and areas for development in their writing. While others, believe that grammar mastery can help them produce proper and meaningful texts. These results show that, there are various effective strategies, that students can utilize to improve and enhance their writing skills.

3.5.3. Part Three:

Question 3.12: How do you evaluate your level in grammar?

Table 3.12: Students' evaluation of there level in grammar

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Outstanding	0	0,00 %
Good	7	23,33 %
Average	23	76,67 %
Low	0	0,00 %
Total	30	100,00 %

As shown above, most of the students 76,67 % believe that, that they have an average level in grammar, whereas a smaller percentage 23,33 % think that, they are at a good level. However, none of the respondents claim to have an outstanding or low level in grammar.

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Question 3.13: Do you think that it is important to study grammar?

Table 3.13: Student perspective on the importance of grammar studies

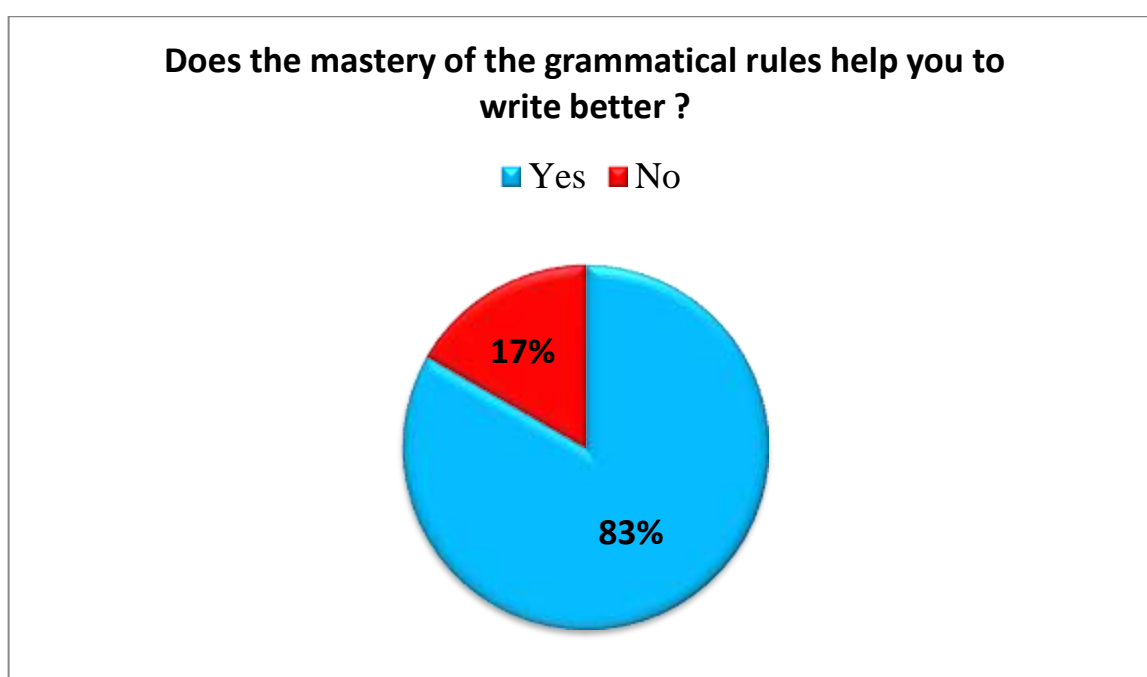
Degree	Frequency	Percentage
Very important	19	63,33 %
Important	10	33,33 %
Inessential	1	3,33 %
Total	30	100,00 %

According to the answers of the majority of the students 63,33 %, studying grammar is very important, and 33,33 % of them think that it is somewhat important. While, only one students see that it is inessential. From this finding, we can say that, most of the participants realize the importance of studying the grammatical rules of the language.

Question 3.14: Does the mastery of grammar rules help you to write better?

Table 3.14: The role of the grammar mastery in enhancing students' writing ability

Answer	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	25	83,33 %
No	5	16,67 %
Total	30	100,00 %



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Pie chart 3.2: The role of grammar in enhancing students' writing ability

As it is noticed in table 14, most of the participants 83.33% affirm that, the mastery of the grammatical rules helps them to develop their writing skills. Whereas, only 5 students do not believe that mastering grammar rules can affect their writing ability. Nonetheless, this is consistent with our point of view that we talked about in the previous chapters, that the use of proper grammar is essential for clear and effective writing production.

-If yes, please explain how: "students' answers".

- You can't write if you don't know the appropriate use of the grammar rules.
- The reader can understand your writing, when it is grammatically correct.
- It is very helpful, because grammar rules help us to avoid mistakes while writing.
- Grammar helps us to create proper sentences.
- Grammar organize my writing.
- The mastery of grammar rules is very important, because it makes your writing clear and effective.

The students' responses highlight on the important role that grammar plays in effective writing. Most of students believe that, the mastery of the grammatical rules, do not only helps them to avoid errors and confusion, but also, enables them to express and explain their ideas, with clarity and accuracy. Additionally, they see that, grammar helps them as tool for organizing their writing. However, by mastering the rules of grammar, they can convey their intended meanings with validity and impact.

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Question 3.15: Do you think that the sessions you take in grammar are?

Table 3.15: The impact of grammar sessions on students' writing skills development

Degree	Frequency	Percentage
More than enough	5	16,67 %
Sufficient	8	26,67 %
Insufficient	17	56,67 %
Total	30	100,00 %

According to the answers of the majority of the students 56.67%, the sessions that they take in grammar are insufficient. And 26.67% of them see that, the sessions are sufficient. While, a smaller percentage 16.67% (5 students) feel that the sessions are more than enough. This indicates that, first-year licence's students of English, feel that they need more practice in grammar, in order to fully master the grammatical rules, and therefore, enhance their writing skills.

Question 3.16: What is your last mark in written expression?

Question 3.17: What is your last mark in grammar?

Table 3.16: Students' Mark's in written expression and in grammar

What is your last mark in writing expression ?	What is your last mark in grammar ?
16	15
16.5	18
14	12
14	15
16.5	18
16	12
14.5	16
16	17
14.5	17
15	16
14	19
11	10
15	13
11	8
17	12
18	12

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15	17
13	12.5
13	16
11	8
12	18
15	17
14	11
16	15
15	16
11	12
12.5	17
16.5	18
12	9
16	12

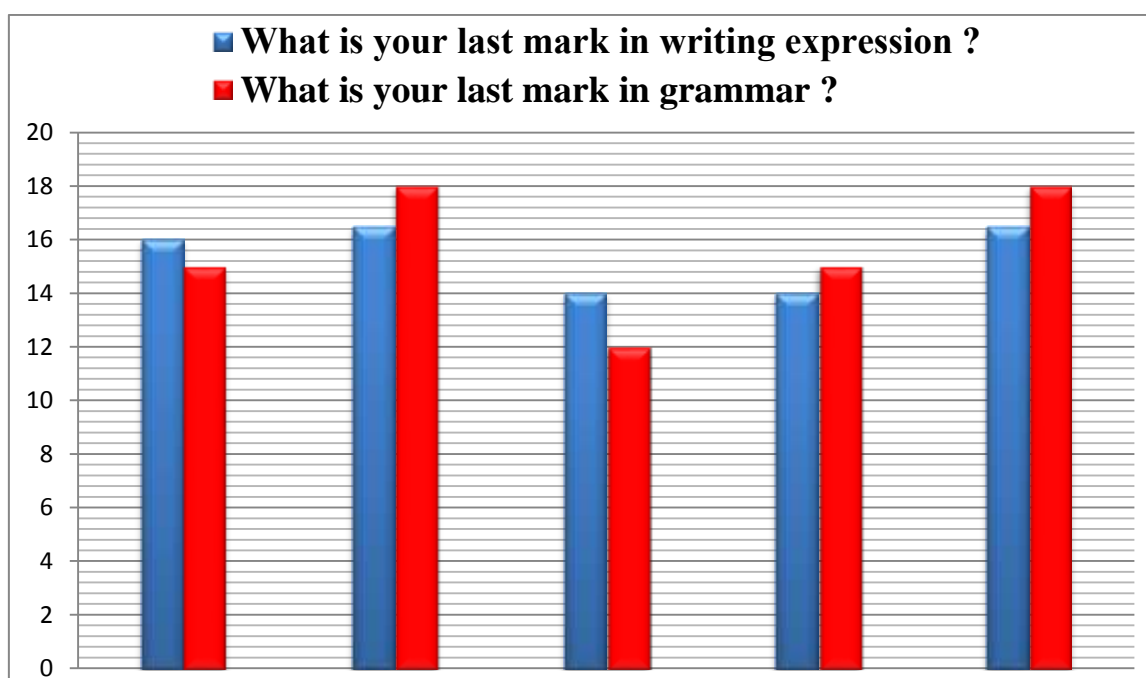


Figure 3.3: Students Mark's in written expression and in grammar.

From table 16 and figure 3, we can notice the students' Mark's in written expression are very close to their Mark's in grammar (i.e. at the same level). As it is shown in figure 3, the first student took 16/20 in writing and 15/20 in grammar. The second student with 16.5/20 in writing and 18/20 in grammar. Whereas, the third one took 14/20 in writing and 12/20 in grammar. This indicates that students' writing Mark's will be affected automatically, if their Mark's are somehow low or bad in grammar. The fourth one with 14/20 in writing and 15/20 in grammar. And the last one took 16.5/20 in writing and

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18/20 in grammar. (We chose a sample of 5 students from the 30 participants in figure 3, due to the difficulty of including all of them in the column chart). Consequently, from the results above, we can confirm that students who have good Mark's in grammar have inevitably good Mark's in written expression and students who have bad Mark's in grammar are inevitably weak at writing.

3.6. Discussion of The Findings

The results of the study are consistent with both of our hypothesis presented in the general introduction, which are: first-year Licence's EFL students at the university of Ghardaia face difficulties while writing, and this may be due to their lack of grammar competence. If first-year Licence's EFL students at the university of Ghardaia do not master the grammatical rules, it may affect their writing production negatively.

The analysis of the students' questionnaires revealed that the majority of first-year Licence's EFL students who participated in this questionnaire realize the effect of the grammatical rules on the process of writing skill. The first part of the questionnaire indicated that most of the participants were female (80 %), their age ranged between 18 and 19 years old, and they have positive perception of English. In addition, 66,67% of them claimed to have a good level in English language.

In the second part, the answers show that writing is seen by the participants as a difficult skill, and they have to master it. However, 53,33 % of the students consider themselves to be good at writing expression, and 26,67 % stated to have an average level. Additionally, when asking students about the aspects of the difficulties that they may encounter in writing, the results detected that, the majority of the students (56,67%) have difficulties in grammar, vocabulary 33,33 % and punctuation issues with 3,33 %. In the same regard, the questionnaire indicated that most of the students (56,67 %) make an effort to improve their writing abilities through several ways. Such as, reading different types of books, using dictionaries, and writing their feelings and their daily routine (i.e. practicing writing not only in the classroom). Besides, some participants believe that mastering the grammatical rules is the key to develop their writing skills.

In the third part, the results indicated that, the majority of the students (76,67%) declared to have an average level in grammar. And this is why they face various difficulties when they write. In addition, concerning the students'

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perspective on the importance of the grammar studies, it detected that 63,33 % of the students realize the significance of studying grammar. Furthermore, most of the students (83,33 %) recognize the essential role that grammar plays in effective writing. And they attest that the mastery of grammar rules help them to develop both of their speaking and writing in particular. Regarding the grammar sessions, the majority of the participants (56,67 %) stated that the programmed sessions are insufficient. Because, in order to get a strong basis in grammar, it should be taught many times in a week, and not only in the module of grammar, but also in other modules such as written and oral expression... etc. Finally, when asking the students about their Mark's in written expression and in grammar, the results revealed that most of the students who have good Mark's in grammar have good Mark's in written expression and most of the students who have bad Mark's in grammar have bad Mark's in writing. Which confirm our point of view that students who master the grammatical rules, their writing production will definitely improve, and students who do not give the importance to grammar while writing, they will fail in producing clear, coherent and effective texts.

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3.7. Conclusion

To conclude, the main point explained in this methodological chapter is that grammar plays a critical role in the learning process of the writing skill, and students who lack the grammar knowledge have more difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly and effectively. Thus, the results of the questionnaire indicated that first year Licence's English students at the University of Ghardaia find writing a challenging skill, and they face several difficulties when they write, this is due to their low level in grammar. Moreover, we can confirm the two hypothesis set at the beginning of the research: first year Licence's students face difficulties while writing, and this is due to their lack of grammar competence. If first-year Licence's students do not master the grammatical rules, it affects their writing production negatively.



General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Developing writing skill has always been a difficult process, because it requires the mastery of various aspects, most importantly grammar. The present dissertation investigated the effect of grammar rules on the process of writing skill of first-year Licence's students at the department of English at Ghardaia University.

Chapter one started with the definition of grammar, then diving deeply into its main types; descriptive, prescriptive and pedagogical grammar, and its elements; subject, verb, noun, pronoun, adjectives, adverbs, articles, prepositions, interjections and conjunctions. In addition, the researchers highlighted on the importance of grammar rules in the English language.

In the second chapter, we defined the writing skill, its importance and its elements; content, grammar, organization, mechanics, word choice, purpose and audience. Then we explained in details the main approaches to teaching writing; product, process, and genre approach. Besides, in this chapter, the researchers emphasized on the relationship between grammar and writing, and the effect of grammar rules on the students' writing skill.

Chapter three was about the practical part, it dealt with the collected data using the questionnaire tool. The results indicated that first-year Licence's EFL students lack the mastery of the grammatical rules, since most of the participants stated to have grammar problems, and this is why they find writing a challenging skill. The research finding helped us achieve the conclusion that first-year Licence's EFL students at the university of Ghardaia face difficulties while writing, and this is due to their lack of grammar competence, and if first-year Licence's EFL students at the university of Ghardaia do not master the grammatical rules, it affects their writing production negatively. Thus, it is fair to say that, both of the hypothesis set at the beginning of the research are confirmed.

Finally, the researchers encourage teachers to motivate their students and push them to more practice in both writing and grammar, inside and outside the classroom. Furthermore, students need to enhance their grammatical knowledge, in order to develop their writing ability. Finally, researchers would like to invite other researchers to extend in this subject with a large numbers of participants and with different goals and aims.

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Appendix A

Appendix A

The Questionnaire

Dear students,

The following questionnaire deals with the effect of grammar on the students' writing skill. We would be grateful if you could answer these questions, and we inform you that your answers will be completely anonymous and used for scientific research only.

Thank you

Part One:

1. Gender :

a- Female

b- Male

2. How older you?

b- 18

c- 19

d- 20

e- Over 20

3. Do you like English

a- Yes

b- No

4. How Do you evaluate your English level?

a- Outstanding

b- Good

c- Average

d- Low

Part Two:

5. Do you like to write ?

a- Yes

b- No

6. How do you find writing?

a- Very easy

b- Easy

Appendix A

d- Low

13. Do you think that it is important to study grammar?

a- Very important

b- Important

c- Inessential

14. Does the mastery of the grammatical rules help you to write better ?

a- Yes

b- No

- If yes, please explain how:

.....
.....
.....

15. Do you think that the sessions you take in grammar are:

a- More than enough

b- Sufficient

c- Insufficient

16. What is your last mark in written expression?

...../20

17. What is your last mark in grammar?

...../20

ملخص

تهدف هذه الرسالة الى التحقيق في تأثير القواعد النحوية على عملية مهارة الكتابة لدى طلبة السنة الاولى ليسانس اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية بقسم اللغة الانجليزية بجامعة غرداية. في الحقيقة، يواجه هؤلاء الطلاب العديد من الصعوبات أثناء الكتابة، وقد يكون هذا بسبب افتقارهم إلى الكفاءة اللغوية، وهي إحدى المشكلات الشائعة بين طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. شارك في هذا البحث عينة من ثلاثين طالب ليسانس من اصل مئتين وسبعين طالب. لإجراء هذه الدراسة، تم جمع البيانات باستخدام أداة الاستبيان. أظهرت النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من استبيان الطلاب، أن غالبية الطلاب المشاركين في هذا البحث يفتقرون إلى التمكن من القواعد النحوية، وقد انعكس ذلك في ردودهم.