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The Importance of Proofreading in minimizing EFL Students' writing Errors

A Case Study of Third Year Students at Mohamed Khider, University of Biskra

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Dedication

Every challenging work requires strength and self efforts as well as guidance from persons that have more experience to teach us, and the ones who are close to our hearts

My humble effort I dedicated it to:

My Mother, a strong, gentle, and most beautiful soul that taught everything in life needs
patience and faith.

My grandmother, for being a true model to me in life.

My father, for his encouragement and support that made me believe in myself

My beloved sisters **Leila, Hassiba, Narimene, Yousra, Zomourouda and Radia**, and brothers

Zine el abidine, Saleh

My lovely and cuties nephews and nieces **Israa, Kossai, Djebriil, Yara, Rym , Djena ,**

MerioumaAs well as for all my family members and my friends

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Abstract

This research aims at investigating and highlighting the importance of proofreading as a popular stage in minimizing and polishing EFL students' writing errors. The reason behind choosing proofreading, it is a crucial step in the process of writing that most students neglect, it is also a very good step that will help students to identify errors and correct their own papers in order to minimize the number of mistakes in written module. In this dissertation, our hypothesis states that if students proofread their own writing then they will be able to identify and correct the mistakes. To test this hypothesis, two different data tools were selected a questionnaire for written module teachers and test with 3rd year EFL students. The sample was requested to write the first draft, and then to proofread it. Both versions were selected to compare between (the first draft and the proofread draft) in terms of the mistakes whether proofreading does really help EFL students to minimize errors. After analyzing the results obtained from both data tools, proofreading stage proves to be a key solution to minimize mistakes done by EFL students in their written products.

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List of abbreviations and symbols

EFL: English as a foreign language

%: Percentage

R.A.F.T : role , audience, format, topic

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General Introduction

Composing a good piece of writing free from errors is a challenge for all EFL students, since writing it is the most important language skill in the fulfillment of the Educational requirement, and also the most sophisticated one, as it obeys different rules and conventions. From an ancient time, they utilized it as mean to provide a different record, information, opinions, beliefs, feelings, theories ...etc. Writing requires the ability to construct a complex array of language skills, from vocabulary, spelling, and punctuation to the ability to organize and convey ideas. Language is utilized as a mean to express and translate human beings culture in different communities; it also expresses thoughts and ideas to communicate between individuals. Not just orally, communication can also happen through written texts.

The essential skill in writing is the ability to construct a correct sentence, that contain all the convention of Standard English and that make sense. Otherwise, a sentence without punctuation is incorrect; it will make no sense Here we can notice that punctuation plays a major role in conveying one message rather than another. Consequently, nowadays students of English as a foreign language, have little interest to write due to the weakness they face in language skills such as Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling.

English language learners, who experience errors in using conventions of Standard English such as grammar, spelling, and punctuation in their writing, are the ones who also fail in organizing and expressing their ideas clearly. In the present research, we will see how proofreading can help in minimizing students 'errors in the writing process.

Literature Review

Proofreading skill is very crucial stage in the process of writing, it helps students to proofread their own compositions by identifying and correcting different errors, according to Norstrom (2011) contends that when the author proofreads his report he scans for mechanical mistakes and he characterizes these mechanical mistakes as: "Mechanical mistakes are those that can be perceived when taking a gander at the materials without referencing the importance. These blunders incorporate transposition, capitalization, dividing, accentuation, what's more, spelling blunders" (p,04).when the writer is proofreading; he will first look at the surfaces errors such as the mistakes of punctuation, grammar and spelling, Unlike editing which is more concerned with the content.

Proofreading can be considered as a positive component for students, since they may gain from their errors through checking for words in lexicons and sentences structures in language structure books to deliver great and clear bits of composing with the correct accentuation, legitimate spelling and proper linguistic use structures. Smith (2003) states that: "The process of proofreading means that you will be correcting mistakes in your writing and looking for ways to improve and perfect your writing"(p, 170)

This research aims at emphasizing and highlighting the role of proofreading as a popular stage in the basic writing skill in eliminating and reducing errors by the EFL students when they are writing. The reason behind choosing proofreading is that to proofread your copy is a crucial step in the process of writing that most students neglect. It is also a very good step that will help students to identify and correct their own papers.

Statement of the Problem

The Vast majority of EFL students face the problem of making mistakes in their writing, using the conventions of Standard English such as grammar, punctuation, and spelling proves a very difficult task for them, as they are considered one of the important parts in a sentence. Since EFL students writing cannot be clear from errors, the interest of this study is to show the importance of proofreading in the writing process, and how it will help them to eliminate and reduce the amount and diversity of errors they make when they start to write the first draft. Unfortunately, this stage is neglected by EFL students.

Question of the Study

-what is the importance of proofreading in minimizing EFL students 'writing errors?

Research Hypothèses

- If students proofread their own written compositions, then they will be able to minimize the number of mistakes they make when they start to write, and they will be able to produce a very organized written production with fewer errors.

Methodology of the Research

The descriptive method seems to be the most suitable that adjust the aim of the present research because the basic objective of this study is to investigate the importance of proofreading stage to minimize errors by EFL students in their writing. Quantitative data will be selected through a structured questionnaire for teachers and a test for students

The case study of this research will be third year EFL students, group 10. Only fifteen students attended the lecture because the others were always absent and because of the Shortage of time and the other teachers refused to work with them; because their students do not know how to proofread, we were obliged to work with this number of sample. We choose them as participants because they deal with proofreading stage in writing process in written expression, also their teacher used to ask them to proofread inside the classroom for time to time. Students were asked to write a first draft, then to proofread what they wrote and giving back both versions.

The reason behind using teacher questionnaire is to see if teachers focus on teaching and practicing proofreading when they ask their students to write inside the classroom. A test will be held in order to see if students proofread their writing, to what extent it will help to minimize the errors in terms of punctuation, grammar, and spelling.

The structure of the study

The present research will consist of three chapters, the two first chapters are concerned with the theoretical background of our topic and the last chapter is concerned with the analysis of the test and the questionnaire. In The first chapter we will discuss different aspects of writing. In the second chapter we will have a general overview of proofreading stage, its definition and how it can help EFL students in minimizing the errors they make when they are writing. The last chapter is concerned with the data collection from the test and the teacher questionnaire, which will be analyzed and discussed. Then we will give a general discussion where we will state some recommendations and suggestions.

Aims of the Study

- To investigate to what extent proofreading stage help students to reduce errors in their writing
- Whether the students will be able to proofread.
- To make students aware of the importance of proofreading in their writing.
- To see what kind of errors and how can we proofread them.
- To see what are the effective methods in proofreading

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will be redounded to the benefit of the students. If students face difficulties in using punctuation, grammar, and other conventions in the process of writing this means that we need to find solutions. This study will help them uncover these difficulties and errors by using the proofreading stage. The proofreading will enable EFL students to reduce and even eliminate errors in their writing before giving the final draft, and they will be able to produce a good-formed written product

Chapter One:
General Overview of Writing

Chapter One: General Overview of Writing

Introduction

Learning a foreign language requires the mastery of the five skills for students; writing is one of these skills. Writing is a very important skill in the educational fulfillment because it is a tool of communication which permits students to express what they know and how they feel about different subjects. Unlike speech, writing is acquired through a process of practice since it obeys different rules and conventions. Students should develop certain basic writing, in order to express themselves. The essential key to a successful piece of writing is the ability to respect all the stages of the writing process such as prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading punctuation, and publishing. This chapter will be devoted to writing, beginning with the definition of writing. Then we will discuss the basic rules of the writing which are: Brevity, Clarity, and Simplicity. Finally, we will shed a light on the stages in which the writing process takes place, and through which we can produce a very good piece of writing.

1-Definition of Writing

Writing is a medium of human communication that represents language and feelings through recording or writing different signs and symbols; it is defined as "the act or practice of literary or musical composition" (Merriam dictionary). It is also defined as the ability to combine words in order to express and convey ideas. Sampson (1985) stated that "to write might be defined, at a first approximation, as: to communicate relatively specific ideas by mean of permanent, visible marks" Sampson (p, 26).this means that through the combination of these permanently visible marks or in other words letters we can express and convey a specific message rather than another. Writing is complement to oral language in most

languages, writing is not language but it is a system developed and it relies as the structure of spoken language.

As human societies appeared there was a need for a mean of communication between nations and also a need for recording information in order to exchange it .Historians in prehistory consider all kinds of painting as writing, but then in history it was not considered a true writing, since it does not represent the language directly, here we can notice that writing has to do with the use of letters to produce words then combine these words to express a limitless number of sentences that convey a clear meaning

Writing is a recursive process which consist of primarily organizing thoughts and communicating meanings, writing is generally a group of letters or symbols written or marked on a surface as a means of communication (Collins dictionary, 2010) this definition shows that writing is a task that requires the use of a piece of written language which by a writer express ideas and thoughts he want to convey for his readers. Unlike speech which requires only the use of sounds, writing has to do more than producing symbols. These symbols should be organized and combined to words, words to sentences, and from sentences to paragraphs, but they should be coherent and adequate in order to convey the intended meaning.

Writing can be also a complex task for both native and non- native from other aspects such as: psychological, linguistic and cognitive, according to Byrne (1991) “The problems related to writing are usually grouped under three headings which overlap to some extent: psychological, linguistic and cognitive.” (P. 4).It is explained in his definition that writing is not an easy process. It involves a lot of work

Because it is not a natural, but a process that is rule - governed and should fellow stages, since the major objective of any piece of writing is to be well-organized and understandable.

In this respect Bell and Burnaby (1984; cited in Nunan, 1989) stated that “Writing is an extremely complex cognitive activity in which the writer is required to demonstrate control of a number of variables simultaneously». (P.36) writing is not just taking the pen and writes; it is a hard task which requires the mastery of the convention of Standard English.

In pedagogical side, writing is very important in teaching the language .It is a process that is used to support both the learning and the improvement of Grammar, vocabulary and other convention .It is used as a supporting system for learning grammar and vocabulary, in addition to its importance as skill needed in teaching the language for a speaker whether in foreign language or in first language (Harmer, 2004).

Cognitive domain is the pillar of the effective writing, it involves more than learning comprehension and the application and synthesis of the new knowledge, and it encompasses inspiration and creativity. For students writing may seem for them and tedious and dull, but if they really use their inspiration and imagination, it will be an enjoyable task.

Writing is also characterized as "an inventive, creative and dynamic discovery procedure by which contains the interplay of content and language: the use of language to explore beyond the known content." (Taylor, 1981) P.6 (as cited in Dakhmouche, 2008 p.) that means a process in which the writer should be creative in using his own appropriate words and expressions, in other words, writers are obliged to write with their own style . Also, the language should fit the content.

Finally, it is not possible to have an agreed and one single definition of what writing is because it is not an easy since it is very sophisticated. It obeys different conventions such as coherence and cohesion, grammar, punctuation ...etc, but there is one point in Common is that writing is the use of symbols and permanent visible marks in order to communicate ideas.

2-Imagination and Creativity in Writing

In order to write productively it is better to have a positive thinking in order to overcome all the difficulties that may encounter while writing ,one should think about all the abilities and capacities he possesses to produce a very good piece of writing .Although the students vocabulary is limited ,they can still manage to express ideas. For example if we suppose that child thinking is limited to one hundred words, adjectives, verbs ... they can express a considerable range of sentences Students can also use their imaginations in order to improve their writing skill. The imagination is the creative energy is the intellectual capacity that empowers us to make pictures in our brains of things that are not really present to our faculties. Imagination in other words helps students to write even about things that do not exist in the real life and describe it and that their thinking will develop. To produce a successful piece of

writing, students should first think of good events and characters before they write about them, they need also to imagine about setting and time where the story or the event they write about is taking place, after they will describe the events scene by scene until they will discover new ideas to add , allowing their creativity and imagination to flourish .

3-The Basic Principles of Writing

Composing a piece of writing is a very important and modern skill Since it obeys distinctive standards and rules, in order to produce a very successful piece of writing that is extremely organized and clear, Author of "On Writing Well », William Zinsser (2001) said, "Managers at every level are prisoners of the notion that a simple style is a mirror that reflects a simple mind. Actually, a simple style is the outcome of hard work and hard thinking; a complex style is a mirror that reflects a muddled thinker or a person too arrogant, or too

dumb, or too lazy to organize his ideas”. Zinsser explains that the four basic of writing are clarity, simplicity, brevity and humanity, every writer should respect these writing principles (brevity, clarity, simplicity) because they are the bridge for an interesting and enjoyable piece of writing.

3.1-Brevity

Brevity: Concise and exact use of words in writing (oxford dictionaries) Brevity is the soul and the essence of a good piece of writing .The term refers to be brief and concise, in other words the writer have to be aware of redundancy ,repetition, and lengthy sentences that will make the written product boring for readers.

Consequently, sentences should be clear, unambiguous and understandable. For example, instead of expressing one idea in number of sentences, we can write it in one simple, well punctuated, coherent sentence and which convey the intended meaning. In other words write less and say more.

The main objective of writing is to convey crystal clear message, but to be concise is not an easy task when someone want to share all his ideas. It is preferable to avoid: words that are meaningless, words that are synonymies, words are implied by other words, and try to replace them by phrases or words that can express the meaning without being redundant.

In the nineteenth century, very long sentences that are separated by a dozens of commas, and with different punctuation marks were famous, unlike nowadays brief sentences which contain the appropriate punctuation are more preferable Punctuation probably reached its Zenith in the late 19th century, helping to make sense of the then fashionably interminable sentences.” King .G (2001,96) .to achieve brevity one should keep sentences equal in length but generally short and avoid using only full stops because it’s like you are walking without your knees.

e.g.: She eats candy and chocolate and cookies.

e.g.: She loves candy, chocolate, and cookies.

We can notice that the use of comma in the second sentences give us a brief clear sentence.

Finally, brevity means economy in word usage, omitting useless words, or in other words avoiding repetition and redundancy.

3.2-Clarity

Another important principle in writing is clarity, in other words if clarity is missed in writing, the communication will be impossible and the intended message will never be conveyed. Clarity principle is playing a major role in academic writing. the writer have to make sure that everything should be clear and understood otherwise, sentences should be well- structured, well-spelled and organized because it can affect change the meaning and then, it will lead to ambiguity in meaning. Readers in general are not interested if the writer is respecting the rules but, the main interest is that they will be able to understand what is written.

3.3-Simplicity

Every written product should be clear and also simple in order to satisfy readers. Simplicity is the quality or condition of being easy to understand (Oxford dictionary).the more you avoid complicated words and expressions which may be odd for the reader; the best your ideas will make sense. It does not mean that be simple is to be over simple thus, it should be simple, clear, easy to understand but at the same time profound and contain a crystal message. Everything should be written as simple as possible, but not simpler. So, it is good to be simple especially at the level of content by utilizing clear sentences structure with the

appropriate and that contain simple expressions , this will give us an excellent piece of writing.

3.4- Humanity

The final step is humanity .It entails the humanity of the author, he writes in his own voice and own style, a language is human expression that we have to use it in order write to our audience. What they like to read, would they understand? Writing should consist of these four principle elements.

4- Writing Stages

Effective writing is a sophisticated process that is made up of several stages that every writer should follow in order to have a successful piece of writing .It is an activity that cannot be treated in only one step, but require time and a lot of efforts to follow step by step in order to develop it .

The majority of learners do not use these stages while writing, but in reality there is a significant need for student to understand the importance of using these stages on their written communication .It will pave the way for a very successful piece of writing.

According to Clark (2003) "Writing process is made up of related stages referred to as "planning", "drafting" and "revising" often named as "prewriting"," writing" and

"rewriting"(P.8) Writing here is linear ,whose stages are followed one after the other and they are in order ,which mean we start by planning and we finish by writing .

According Dornan and Dees (2007) defined the writing process as:" The composing process is not a linear, step-by-step process in which creative and critical thinking is nearly divided. Instead, it is a recursive process of exploration, inquiry, and evaluation that engages both modes of thinking at different times" (p.47)

every time the writer feel a need to go back from the editing to the first stage to generate and add new ideas is possible .Clark claims that This stages aims to help students to gain control over the organization and clarity of his ideas in writing .In fact, there are a lot of stages, but the most important one are: prewriting, drafting, revising, proofreading punctuation, and publishing.(2003, p.08)

Prewriting Drafting Revising Proofreading Publishing

4.1. Prewriting

Prewriting is the first stage in writing process, it is considered as the warm-up stage where students prepare to write. It has to do with first, choosing topic for example writing about an everyday situation or childhood memory. Second, to brainstorm means to write any idea comes to your mind. Finally, plan it out.

Prewriting also known as planning, should be well organized and well- formed, it is the first task, so it is general, simple and informal. There are certain prewriting strategies to help students to choose and develop a topic:

- Generating ideas of the topic on a paper
- Making a cluster about the topic , which is a visual map of ideas and concepts related to atopic
- Ask question about a topic
- Make an outline to help to organize which idea will be the first to start with and which one to conclude the piece of writing with.

We can use the R. A. F.T to prepare this stage, in order to consider:

Role	Audience
Who am I?(reporter ,family member, alien, animal,etc)	Who am I writing this for? Should my writing be formal or informal

Format	Topic
Which format should I use?(letter ,essay, short story ,etc)	<p>What is my topic? And what do I need to say?</p> <p>What are you writing about?</p>

Table 1: R. A. F.T (Differentiated Instruction Strategy, 2009)

4.2. Drafting

It is the stage where a student’s start to put piece of information gathered in prewriting stage in form of paragraph, where we put ideas down without worrying about grammar and spelling. According to Trimmer (1995)claimed that in the drafting stage writers will know if the information collected and discovered in planning stage will produce a successful piece of writing, and in general a draft paper is not a final paper ,but a first attempt to produce or write a continuous piece of writing.(P,54)

He added:” it enables them to experiment with possible arrangements of thoughts on a topic. They expect this experiment to lead to new discoveries, some of which emerge in the first draft but most of which will emerge in some subsequent draft. Experienced writers try several drafts. With each one, they come closer to what they want to say and how they want to say it” (p, 54)

According to Katz (2006): "as you translate your plans and records into words [...]; you will see what you are doing in a clearer light» (p.52) this means that once we write own

ideas on a paper, this will made them clearer and understandable. The drafting stage will pave the way for choosing the clearer ideas and omitting the ambiguous. When you are drafting a paper, there are five separate techniques that should be taken into consideration:

- Thesis statement: at the end of every introduction, there must be a good thesis statement that will tell the readers what the topic is about.

- Topic sentences: each paragraph should contain a topic sentence that states the main idea of each paragraph, and it will give a clear idea what each paragraph will discuss.

- Supporting sentences: are sentences that support the opinion stated in topic sentences. In other words, they are very important because they will support your opinion otherwise readers will be no longer convinced.

- Coherence: a coherent essay means that the ideas are related one after the other thought through the use of transitional words

- Unity: make sure that all the topic sentences are related to the thesis statement.

4.3. Revising

During the writing process, revising stage represent a very important phase after the two stages before, scholars consider the revision process as a critical step that grounded on clearing of ideas and .” Revision ... is that crucial point in the process when discovery and organization come together, when writers refine and recast what they have written and shape it into coherent written statement.” Taylor (1981, p 7)

It is considered as the core to writing, it consists of clearing off your ideas, assessing your own writing and making changes whenever needed. So, it the re-examination of particular essay on the content level in addition correcting Spelling punctuation and see where the essay needs improvements.

Leki (1995) said when you revise your writing you should “reread everything you have. Ask yourself if this paper can be improved in any way by adding ideas, deleting sections, or reorder what you have.” (p,11) in the revision part students may want to make a list of changes and add new ideas that may be more suitable than the one written before. Then, they can start writing second draft.

Brown and Hood (1989) defined revising as the stage where you discover that you have said what you wanted to say and said it in a clear and appropriate way. It is a very hard task because it takes too much to pay attention to all the details that might become lost or unrecognizable in the repeated examination of what one has written. Finally, revising is the stage where you make sure that write and said what you want to said.

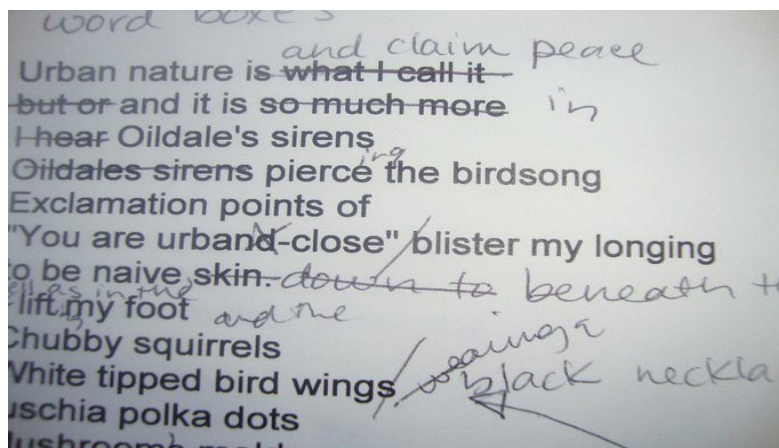


Figure1.1: An example of revising

As we can notice in the example of revising, we can see that the writer is adding new words and omitting the one are not needed. In other words, he is trying to check his piece of writing and make sure there are smooth transitions between paragraphs to be more enjoyable for reading it.

4.4 Proofreading

The next stage after revising the draft is proofreading, according to Leki (1995) “... reread the draft once more ,carefully, looking for any mistakes you can find in grammar, spelling, or punctuation .” (p. 11). It is the stage, all the grammar, sentences structures, punctuation should be corrected carefully. It means in this stage we need to check over any missing capitalization, or missing commas and also correcting grammatical mistakes because after this stage we are supposed to give the final draft.

4.5 Editing

Editing is the step that every writer should not neglect; it consists of analyzing and correcting a text in the deepest errors in the level of content and ideas. It is to check for your paper in order to be more appropriate and done properly; most students do neglect this step, so teachers will take off their points, it is preferable to take a look at your paper to have a good mark.

Writing the Final Copy

The final step is publishing; it consists of writing the final draft. It should be free of all spelling and grammatical errors. Students should be aware because this is the last step and their work, they should give a very clean, organized and good piece of writing without forgetting the title. Of course, these all steps above will overlap and vary to some writers.

5- Sources of student's errors

Writing is the most complicated and difficult task for students, so as we can notice students tend to commit errors .In order to help them uncover those errors, teachers need to understand and analyze its source. It is very beneficial for teachers to understand the mistakes that their students make while writing. According to Carder (1967)the mistakes that EFL students make is important “they provide to the researcher evidence of how language is learned or acquired, what strategies or procedures the learner is employing in the discovery of the language” (p.167) .It means that all the errors that students make are very helpful in the process of learning.

James(1998) explains that the reason that make students do mistakes is the interference of the native language(p.7) . Students do really have problem in translating their thoughts from their native language to the English language, this later will cause a misunderstanding because both languages have different way in conveying one message. Other sources can be the deficiency in using the appropriate language and mechanisms use, student's lack competencies.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, we can say to master the writing skill is a very hard task that requires a lot of practices, efforts, and intensive training in order to get used to the writing rules and conventions, and to write a very good piece of writing. Since writing is communicating, the ideas should be organized, understandable, and as clearly as possible for readers.

Chapter Two:
General Overview of proofreading stage

Chapter Two: General Overview of Proofreading Stage

Introduction

Mistake free written work requires a great utilization of various composition mechanisms. Nowadays it is realized that the vast majority of EFL students disregard the phase of editing when they present their last draft, therefore the mistakes will influence on the precision and the association of thoughts. Proofreading is the key for checking the language structure, grammar, and spelling mistakes. In this section, we will have an outline of the proofreading stage since it is neglected by EFL students and how it can help them to present a piece of writing free from errors.

1-Definition of Proofreading

Proofreading is the last phase of the altering procedure. The proofreader occupation is to read a proof duplicate of content to distinguish and increase any mistakes or questions with the respect of the language structure, spelling, Punctuation, style or accuracy. Proofreading is the process that signifies checking your work for little mistakes that may make it more troublesome for the reader to see precisely what you need to state, through this we can comprehend that the capacity of proofreading is examining, and checking the students' errors to make their piece of writing more fitting and comprehended by the reader

Proofreading is the process of getting rid of all the mistakes that we made when we are first exposed to write by analyzing and examining each sentence, Anderson (1990) states that: “The real secret to proofreading your own copy is reading it slowly and critically as though someone else had written it” (p, 02), it means that proofreading is reading your own composition in a slow and cautious way keeping in mind the main goal is the correction of what somebody has officially composed. Smith (2003) defines the proofreading process as “it means that you will be correcting mistakes in your writing and looking for ways to improve and perfect your writing” (p, 170), it is a sort of correction of your own writing in order to be more clear and to enhance the style of writing.

According to Nostrom (2011), the process of proofreading is: “the process of reading handwritten, keyed, or printed materials and marking errors to indicate the correction. Thus proofreading is essential to ensure the accuracy of your work” (p.03). In this way proofreading is the basic process that mainly guarantees the precision of your work the accuracy and the correctness of your ideas; this implies that proofreading includes recognizing errors that must be rectified. Proofreading is concerned with the procedure of remedying errors which are the surface mistakes, for example, errors in punctuation and spelling, not with the substance and correcting the deeper errors, since it is the last step of correcting and reexamining a record, altering what the author changes include or erase words and sentences, or including a perspective or change for case a passage or a segment in his composition. So paraphrasing happens before submitting the last draft.

Nordstrom (2011) contends that when journalists proofread as much reports, he searches to find the Mechanical errors. He characterizes these mechanical errors as: “Mechanical errors are the individual’s errors that might be distinguished. These errors incorporate spelling capitalization, spacing, and punctuation. “(p. 04). It means that through the use of proofreading we only check for individuals’ errors which are mainly the

surfaces errors as spacing, capitalization, grammar, punctuation. Unlike proofreading, editing includes the checking for content errors which can be information or facts .content errors are more difficult to identify and to examine than the mechanical errors from Nostrom’s point of view and they can make a confusion and misunderstanding (p,04).

Many researchers have distinguished between editing and proofreading according to Gilad (2007) explains that there is a slight different between the processes, proofreading has to do more with the surface mistakes , whereas editing is the process to get deeper in content mistakes that cause confusion and misunderstanding(p,14) .In this respect May (1997) defines editing as the process that come first before proofreading through which we mainly check , identify , and correct the mistakes that affect on the meaning of ideas and content ,while proofreading comes after editing and it involves the little deletions and changes in terms of the convention to be perfect to submit.(p.p,24.25)

Proofreading is a difficult task that requires a lot of effort to achieve it, Pagel (2011) say: “Proofreading requires both knowledge and concentration. It demands patience and attention” (p,03) it mean that proofreading stage is a very difficult task in fact, the proofreader should be knowledgeable and at the same time concentrate carefully because he is dealing with four basic problems: misspelled words, grammar errors, and errors of citation, informational errors, and punctuation errors (Stark, 2003). Sometimes it is very good that you let other eyes revise your paper, a classmates, and parents. Make sure that all the errors are corrected; all they need to is to point out the problems. Reading and re-reading the draft over and over will give a better piece of writing

2-The Importance of Proofreading Stage

Before presenting or submitting any piece or of writing such as a research paper, essay or any written product it is preferable to precisely proofread it first. Proofreading a composed

material is the last stride that must be taken before a record can be viewed as entire, and it is considered as an essential and an exceptionally successful path for students to clean and accomplish precision in their written work. Proofreading can be considered as a positive element for students, since they may gain from their oversights through checking for words in lexicons and sentences structures in language structure books to deliver great and clear bits of composing with the correct accentuation, legitimate spelling and proper syntax structures.

According to Battaglia: "Proofreading can be the determining factor between getting or not getting a job, earning an A or C on an essay, or upsetting or effectively communicating with a peer... Proofreading helps to remove careless errors from pieces of writing to improve the overall effectiveness of the message. When proofreading a work, read carefully through the text and share it with a peer or teacher for thorough feedback. (Why proofreading is important) From this citation we might see the extent to which proofreading is a crucial and important step in the process of writing for Making and accomplishing an impeccable piece of writing, proofreading is likewise paramount at those Level of getting a job, conveying or managing people, also generating a great pieces of composing without any sort of errors.

Throughout we can also prove that proofreading is an essential for correcting errors in terms of spelling, vocabulary, grammar, structure, also peer review

A great beginning point is to realize that there are different sorts of reading, each having its own function. We usually read for content, in other words, to acquire the information the text contains. Where text needs to be read quickly but superficially or where only the salient points of a text are needed, it may also take the form of skimming or gist reading. Proofreading, however, is a process that focuses mainly on the language mechanisms or

conventions instead of the idea; it is more for checking through a text for errors of spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, and repetition.

May (1997) claims that: “Proofreading involves making only minor changes or deletions to a document, but no major rewriting” (pp, 24- 25).in other words that proofreading has to do fundamentally with the clarity, preciseness and the little changes that happened on a text in terms of punctuation, spelling mechanisms or conventions instead of the idea; it is the more for checking through a text for errors of: spelling, punctuation, grammar, syntax, and repetition. And other different convention, but not on the content. For Sullivan and Eggleston proofreading process is (2006) “you’re working hard to ensure clarity through correctness and consistency” it enables writers to achieve correctness and consistency.(P,88)

Finally, we can conclude that proofreading is an essential step in the process of writing, since it guarantees for students the accuracy, and it ensures the correctness and subsequently they will get great grades, it is likewise a method for eliminating errors.

3-Proofreading methods

In order to proofread any composing text successfully, the writer ought to manage proofreading techniques which will help to upgrade the level in composing there are strategies suggested by Anderson and other strategies which are suggested for us by Fry. There are Strategies that will fit the individual who want to proofread by himself, and there are others which happen with peers or in other words with another person.

3.1-Anderson’s Proofreading Methods

According to Anderson when the students or a writer is proofreading he can use two different methods, which are:

3.1.1-Comparing two pieces of writing

In this method the writer or the students make a comparison between two copies or two documents in order to see or to make sure that these two copies are identical, here we use reading in order to compare between two copies in terms of spelling mistakes, mistyping. We can see that there are also two ways in “the comparison reading method” which are the following:

3.1.1.1- Reading Alone

While are using the “Reading Alone’ way, the students tries to compare between two copies which are basically the original one “dead copy” and the new copy which is known as “live copy”, and the students need to compare word by word and sentence by sentence .

Anderson recommends for students or writers in order to facilitate the comparison between them, is the writer is encouraged to bring two rulers one for the first copy and one for the other. So every time the writer is reading he can spot or move the ruler from one line to the following so as to encourage the examination and concentration on each word for the reason of not overlooking any line in the copy, and to guarantee that he have red all the copy from the earliest starting point to the end. Making sure that the ruler should be near to the pen whenever the students are right or left- handed, is should keep the dead copy by his correct side.

3.1.1.2.-Reading with another Person

When the students are using this way to proofread their copies, they are supposed to give the dead copy to someone else to read it for him; he is asked to read it word by word loudly and carefully concentrating on the misspelling words, misuse of punctuation, structure of sentences. And the students will underline errors in order to rectify them later. At the point when the copy holder read the first duplicate, he should make a decent attempt to keep his voice run easily and deliberately by maintaining a strategic distance from unnecessary stops and delays and furthermore avoiding superfluous remarks or redundancies and hesitations.

3.2-Using a tape recorder

In some situation the copy might be too hard or very lengthy to be read, so the author utilizes the recording device which is a “tape recorder” in order to facilitate the proofreading for him, he needs to record the original copy and reading it gradually and precisely by focusing on everything like spelling, punctuation marks, normal words, the format of the paper. After that, the author proofread the new duplicate by tuning into the first duplicate in the tape record .Now days, people no longer use this method, instead of using a tape and waste their time they opt for the easiest method which is using a computer spell checker such as grammarly, ginger, it is software program feature designed to locate misspelled words and notify the user of the misspellings, still the later method has some inconvenient

3.3-No comparison (or dry) reading

In this method, the writer task will be somewhat hard and there is no help because in this method there will be no dead and original copy to help the proofreader to compare between. And with no recording device, the task will be difficult, the proofreader needs to read alone his work loudly, then he will try to identify mistakes and errors, and it better to read loudly because reading loudly it is considerably much more successful than reading silently. The writer can proofread from a screen of the personal computer or from printout copy. In light of the fact that with the progress of technology and sciences there is a program on the PC to check the spelling and language structure errors. In any case, it is confirmed that proofreading by the program spell checker prompts to a few inconveniences and is not generally compelling, such issues are speaking with messages, or a few issues in importance likewise the PC spell checker can't separate between homonyms, words which are articulated alike, be that as it may, have diverse importance and elucidation. So it is desirable over sort the proofreading on papers or utilizes the hand-composing, then subsequent to rectifying the mistakes either on-screen or on the printout, a last or terminal right copy must be printed out.

4- Fry's Proofreading Methods

Fry (2002) expresses that there are also different methods for writers to proofread their copies, these ways or techniques as indicated by "Fry" are as follow:

4.1-Reading the paper aloud

At this point when the students or the author read a piece of writing, he needs to read it so loudly so anyone might hear, he will see all the absent and misspelled words, since it is more probable simpler to hear every single little mistake than to see them so it is greatly improved to read out loud instead of silently, in some cases when reading quietly we will not focus on the little details. And it is proved that reading loudly is more effective than reading quietly and silently.

When students are reading texts loudly so anyone can hear them, they moderate a typical reading speed. This can help them to discover mistakes that might not put attention to when they are reading quietly. Non-native writers will encounter problems since they are Unpracticed in reading, still reading loudly is very important activity because it will help them to rehearse and gain knowledge from.

4.2Working Backward

Along this method, the writer is asked to read his piece of composition starting from the end point to the beginning in other words starting from backward, students will start to

proofread from the last paragraph or sentence to the introduction ,this method of reading the copy backward is proved to be also a very successful way since it enable the writer to concentrate on the structure and the format of the essay by reading every single detail of the copy rather than on the meaning of ideas and thoughts which will make the task easier on him to correct the different mistakes that affect on his essay.







5- Proofreading skills

Proofreading is an easy task for some students but for other, it proves to be a very difficult. In order to develop their skills in proofreading, students need to improve their attention to little details that can ruin their writings by the excessive practicing, they should be asked inside the classroom to proofread in different activities in order to be more practiced and more knowledgeable about the proofreading stage and how they deal with It is believed that good readers are the ones who proofread their text successfully according to Anderson “An aptitude for reading is, indeed, a prerequisite to good proofreading. Certainly, one who does not like to read will not like to proofread” (1994, p.18)

there are other strategies that can be included to help students to improve their proofreading skills such as students are asked to read the text aloud and slowly and to make a pause when it is needed to correct what seem not right, or maybe they can listen to another person reading aloud, stopping him or her in order to add corrections when there is a need, they can also Read each sentence backward, looking at each word in isolation to catch

spelling errors or Scan for question words (who, what, where, when, why and how) that begin sentences, then check the end punctuation (Shannon Doyne and Holly Epstein, NOVEMBER 8, 2010)

6. Proofreading Symbols

Symbols	Meaning	Example
	insert a comma	The mayor's brother, I tell you, is a crook.
	insert something	I know it, in fact, everyone knows it. }
	apostrophe or single quotation mark	I wouldn't know where to put this vase.
	Use double quotation marks	My favorite poem is "Design."
	Use a period	This is a declarative sentence .
	Delete	The elephant's trunk is is really its nose.

~	transpose elements	He only picked the one he likes.
---	--------------------	----------------------------------

C	close up this space	Jordan lost his favorite basket ball.
#	a space needed here	I have only three friends: Ted, Raoul, and Alice.
¶	Begin newparagraph	"I knew it," I said. ¶ "I thought so," she replied.
No ¶	no paragraph	"I knew it, she said. No ¶ "He's no good."

Table2: (Proofreading symbols ,capital community college)

7-Abbreviation proofreading symbols

Abbreviation	Meaning	Example
Ab	a faulty abbreviation	She had earned a Phd along with her M.D.
Agr See also P/A and S/V	agreement problem: subject/verb <i>or</i> pronoun/antecedent	The piano as well as the guitar need tuning. The student lost their book.
Awk	awkward expression or construction	The storm had the effect of causing millions of dollars in damage.
Cap	faulty capitalization	We spent the Fall in Southern Spain.
CS	comma splice	Raoul tried his best, this time that wasn't good enough
DICT	faulty diction	Due to the fact that we were wondering as to whether it would rain, we stayed home.
Dgl	dangling construction	Working harder than ever, this job proved to be too much for him to handle.
- ed	problem with final <i>-ed</i>	Last summer he walk all the way to Birmingham.
Fraga	Fragment	Depending on the amount of snow we get this winter and whether the towns buy new trucks.
 	problem in parallel form	My income is bigger than my wife.
P/A	pronoun/antecedent agreement	A student in accounting would be wise to see their advisor this month.
Pron	problem with pronoun	My aunt and my mother have wrecked her car The committee has lost their chance to change things.

		You'll have to do this on one's own time.
Rep	unnecessary repetition	The car was blue in color.
R-O	run-on sentence	Raoul tried his best this time that wasn't good enough.
Sp	spelling error	This sentence is flaude with two misspellings.
- s	problem with final -s	He wonder what these teacher think of him.
STET	Let it stand	The proofreader uses this Latin term to indicate that proofreading marks calling for a change should be ignored and the text as originally written should be "let stand."
S/V	subject/verb agreement	The problem with these cities are leadership.
T	verb tense problem	He comes into the room, and he pulled his gun.
Wdy	Wordy	Seldom have we perused a document so verbose, so ostentatious in phrasing, so burdened with too many words.
WW	wrong word	What affect did the movie have on Sheila? She tried to hard to analyze its conclusion.

Table 3 : abbreviation proofreading symbols

(Proofreading symbols, capital community college)

These tables above represent the different marks or abbreviation used by a teacher when they are correcting students' writings to indicate the errors and mistakes, as it is shown in the table, every error has its own mark used only to indicate it, and those marks appear only in the

margin with a line or an arrow that rely the error in order to help students to understand what kind of errors they need to correct.

Conclusion

To end up this chapter, we can notice that proofreading is a crucial and an important step that students have to be aware of, and also to use it in order to submit a very successful piece of writing free from errors, which contains the proper use of different conventions. We can conclude that proofreading is very beneficial for students; it will enable them to have very good marks in writing skill activities.

Chapter Three: Situation Analysis

1-Introduction

Foreign language learners have been frustrated by their errors in writing; they experience a large number of difficulties in this skill due to the lack of knowledge about the different convention such as the misuse of proper punctuation, grammar, sentences structures, and even the use of misspelled words. Proofreading is totally neglected by EFL students, they are simply not aware of its importance in improving students' level and reducing the errors in their own compositions. Proofreading stage is very important for students, this chapter discusses and analyzes the data obtained from both research tools which are a questionnaire for teachers and a test for third year students in order to test our hypothesis, these tools will help us to investigate proofreading is crucial stage that helps students to minimize errors in writing. This chapter is divided into two sections, the first section is for the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire and the other one is for the analysis of the test.

2-Population and Sampling

For our empirical part, Ten (10) written expression teachers in the English branch at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra have been selected randomly to answer the questionnaire in order to see their opinion about proofreading and to what extent is very important in writing skill, and also to see whether they focus on proofreading inside the classroom. For the test f of third year, only 15 students attended the session and it is always the case for this group, and because the teacher accepted to give me the copies and the other

teachers refused because of the shortage of time we were obliged to work with fifteen students as sample. The sample were asked to write a paragraph (first draft) then we ask them to proofread the first draft in order to correct the mistakes and to write the final draft, both versions were collected in order to compare and to see the difference and the number of mistakes between the two versions of copies (when students write with mistakes, and when they proofread the first draft). Students were used to be asked inside the classroom by their teacher to write and then proofread what they have written, we did not face any problem the only problem was the lack of time.

Section One: The Description of the Teachers Questionnaire

1-Description of the questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to collect data about writing and proofreading stage, it contains fourteen (14) item questions, five (5) of the questions are answered by 'yes' or 'no' or just by choosing the right answer ,and nine (9) left are answered even by ticking or by providing the necessary information by teachers of written expression. This questionnaire is designed first to investigate teacher appreciation of proofreading.

We designed this questionnaire first because we want to see to what extent does proofreading help students to eliminate errors in terms of punctuation, grammar, and spelling errors, and to know the teachers 'point of view about proofreading, and if they focus more on proofreading when they teach writing process in written module, and whether they consider writing as difficult task for their students .All the questions were asked to obtain the data needed to test our hypothesis. The questionnaire is divided into three sections:

Section one: is about the general information of teachers ‘experience with the written module and the level of their student.

Section two: this section is devoted to writing process, it aims at exploring what are the difficulties that students may encounter in their writing, and what are the students ‘common writing problems.

Section three: it is devoted to proofreading; this section contains questions seeking information about students’ awareness toward proofreading and its importance in reducing and minimizing students’ writng errors

2- The Analysis of the Questionnaire

Section one: general information

Question one:

How long have you been teaching written expression?

Years of teaching written module	Number of Teachers
From 0 to 5 years	5
From 5 to 10 years	4
From 10 to 15 years	1

Table 4:Teachers ‘experience in the field of teaching written expression module

This question aims at getting general data about their experience in teaching written expression module at Mohamed Khider University of Biskra .So all instructors have the experience between three to 12 years of teaching the written expression module. The aim of this question is to get general information about teacher experience in the Field of teaching written expression in order to have credible and reliable answers about our question.

Question 2

How can describe the level of your students in writing?

High

Average

Low

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
High	00	00%
Average	08	80%
Low	02	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.5: the level of students in writing

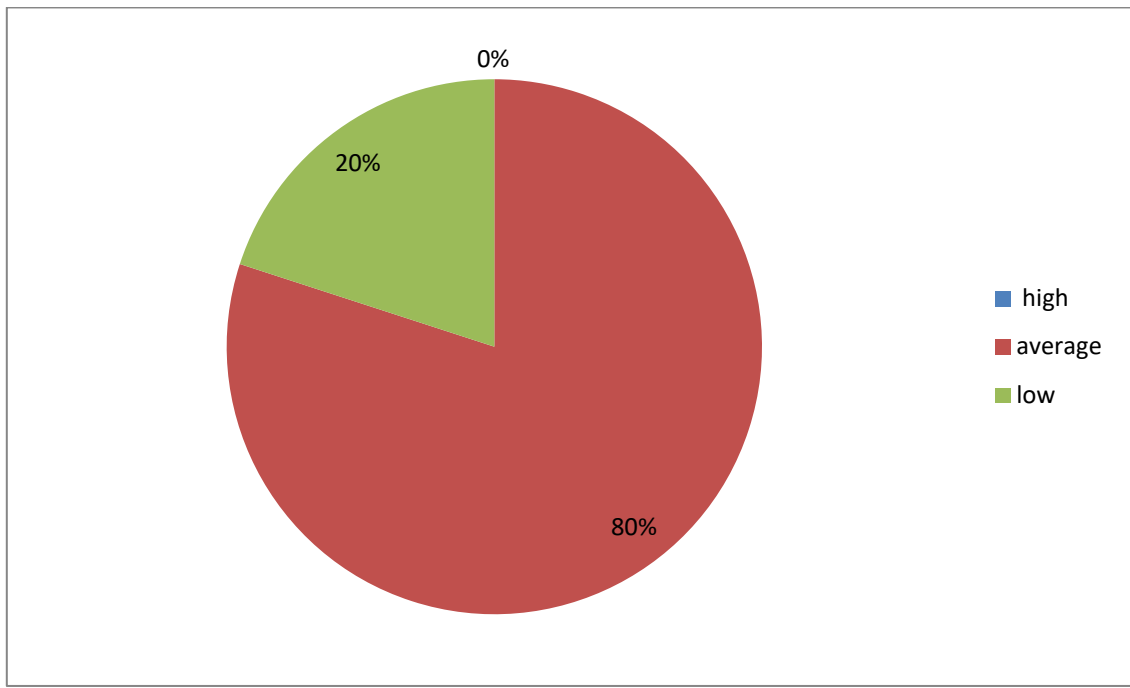


Figure 3.2: the level of students in writing

This question aims to know the level of students in writing and as we can see the majority of teachers with the percentage of 80% answers are that students have an average level in writing and in the other hand few of them with the percentage of 20% assume that their students' level in writing is low as it is shown in table and figure (5), these results explain that students need to improve and develop their abilities and skills in writing

-Section two: Writing Process

Question three

Do you consider writing as a difficult skill to teach for students?

-yes

-no

-somehow

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	06	60%
No	01	10%
Somehow	03	30%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.6: the teachers' attitude toward writing

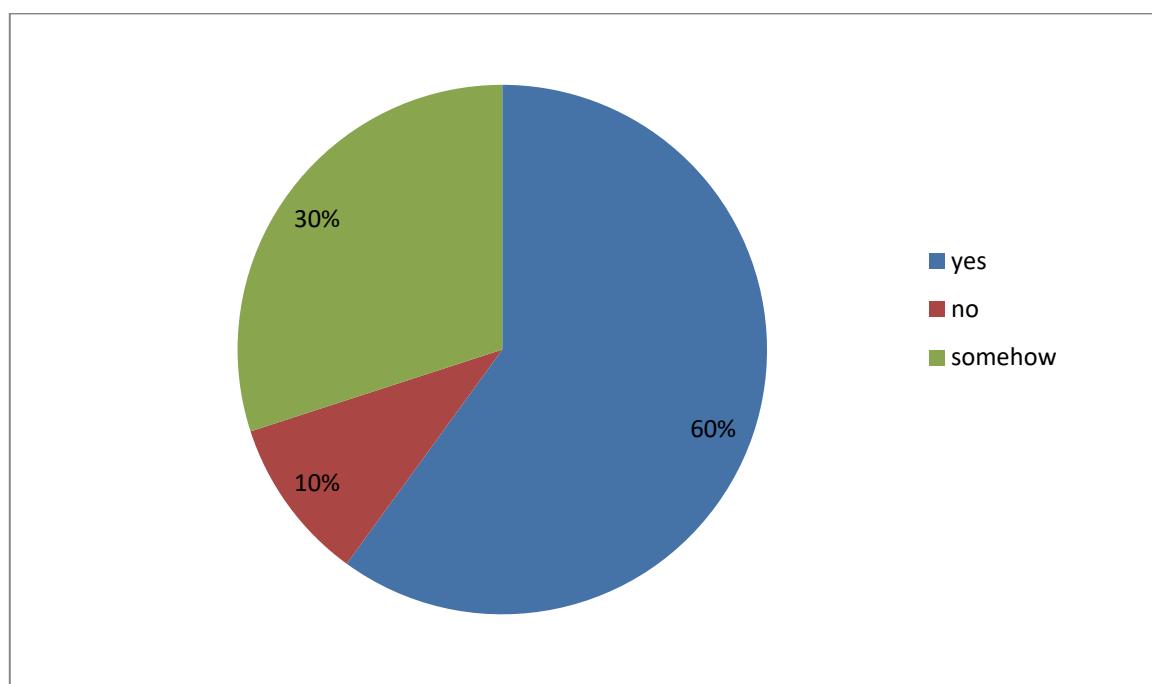


Figure 3.3: the teachers' attitude toward writing

The aim of this question is to know whether teaching writing to students is a difficult or an easy task, according to teachers as shown in the figure and table(6) the answers reveal that

(60%)of them answer “yes” which means the task of teaching writing to students is difficult ,but few of them (10%) said “no” which means writing is an easy task , whereas (30%) goes to “somehow “ that means the task of teaching writing is not an easy task nor difficult. We can see that the majority of teachers reveal that writing is a difficult task to teach due to the different difficulties they encounter with students while practicing writing.

Question four

If “yes», would you tell us what are the difficulties that you may encounter with students in teaching writing skill:

The justification of teachers who said that they find the writing as difficult skill to teach is that the majority of EFL students lack linguistic competence to produce an acceptable piece of writing that contains the appropriate spelling, vocabulary; they face the problem of inaccurate grammar and the shortage of ideas. They do not also respect and follow the order of stages in the writing process, by making a lot of mistakes in terms of mechanisms use and vocabulary use. This question aims at

Question Five

What is the most difficult stage of the writing process for students in your opinion?

A -Brainstorming

B-Planning

C- Drafting

D-Revising

E-Proofreading

F -Writing the final draft

Option	Number of teacher	Percentage
A	2	20%
B	0	00%
C	2	20%
D	1	10%
E	5	50%
F	0	00%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.7: the teachers ‘opinion about the difficult stage in writing process

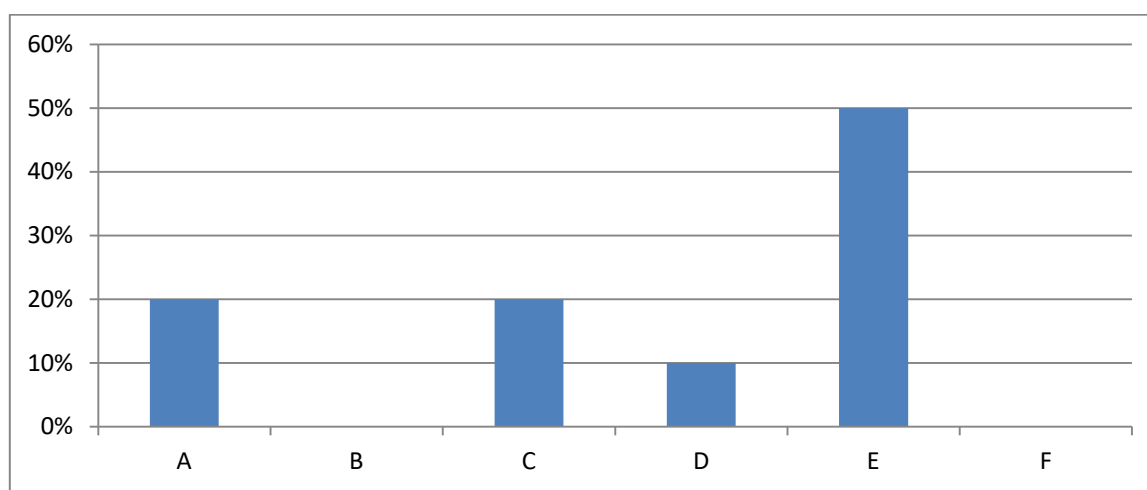


Figure 3.4: the teachers ‘opinion about the difficult stage in writing process

The aim of this question is to know which stage student have problem to deal with according to teachers experience in writing, as it is exposed in the figure and table (7) we can see that 50% of teachers claim that the difficult stage according to their students is Proofreading, while 20% claim that students have problem with drafting, another 20% for brainstorming. Only 10% of teachers claim that students have also problems in revising. The

result of this question is that the difficult stage is proofreading because the majority of students are not aware of this stage they just neglect it because they do not know how to proofread and they are not aware of its importance.

Question six

Do you usually find errors when you are correcting students 'essays?

A-Always

B-Sometimes

C- Often

D-Rarely

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	08	80%
B	00	00%
C	02	20%
D	00	00%
Total	10	100%

Table 8: the frequency of mistakes in students writing

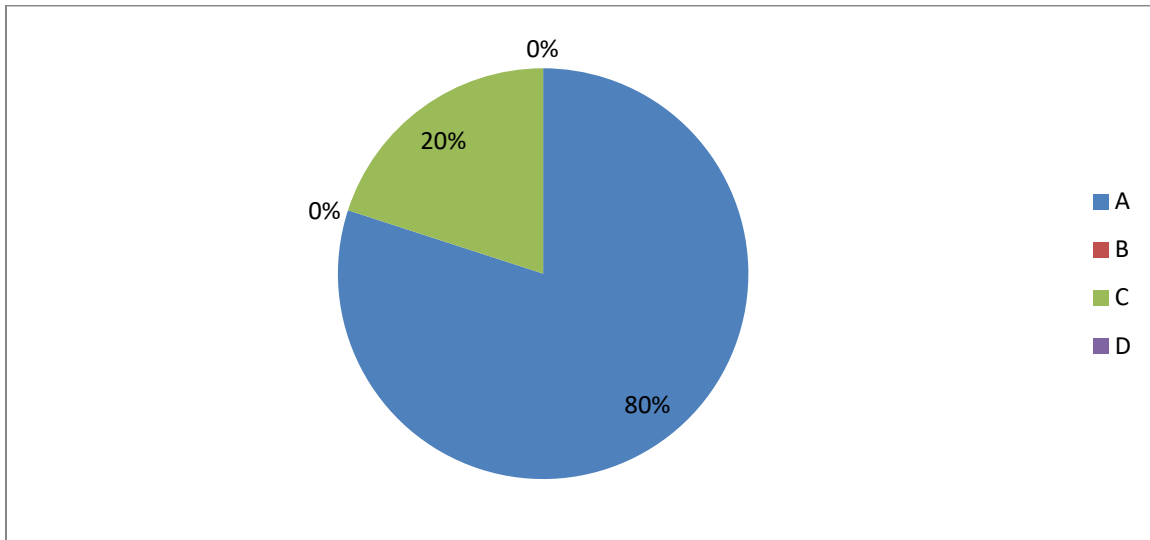


Figure3.5: the frequency of students mistakes in writing

The aim of this question is to confirm that students face problems and that writing is a difficult to teach and to learn . As it is shown in the table (8), 80% of teachers respond that they always find errors when they correct their students ‘copies only 20% claim that they often find errors, which means that writing is very difficult task not only to teach but also to learn, it requires a lot of training and practice .students should be aware in order to learn from their mistakes

Question seven

In your opinion, what are the students’ common writing problems? (You can choose more than one)

-Grammar

-Punctuation

-Spelling

-organization

-language use

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Grammar	10	100%
Punctuation	8	80%
Spelling	10	10%
Organization	10	100%
Language use	10	100%

Table 9: students 'common writing problem

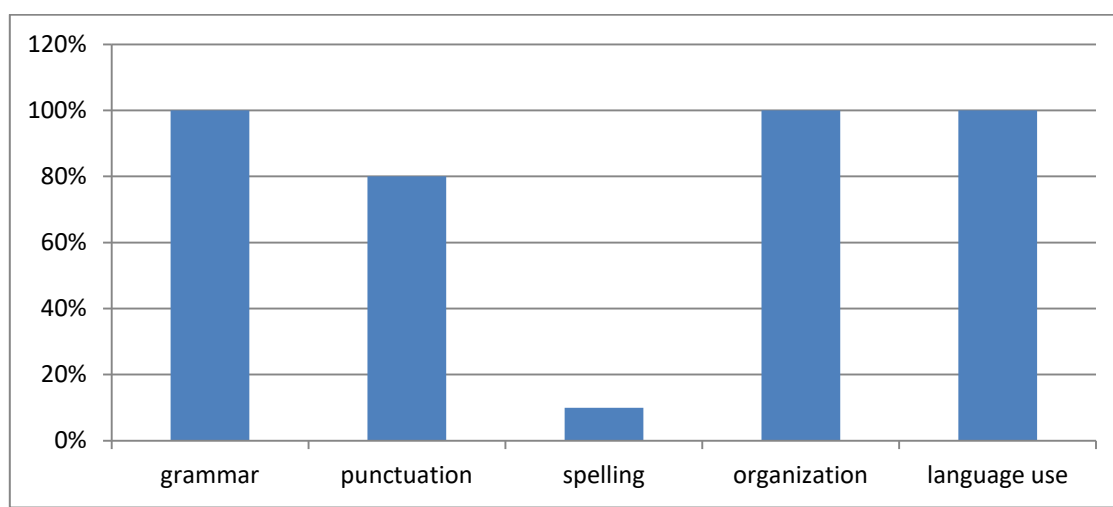


Figure3.6: students 'common writing problem

The aim of this question is to know what are the common problems that students lack in their writing and according to the result, the table (09) shows is that EFL students have problems in all aspects according to teachers students have problems in grammar, spelling, organization, language use with 100% and punctuation with 80% , which means that students fail in producing a good piece of writing due to the problems they face in this aspects and only proofreading can help them to reduce the number of mistakes they make .

Section Three: Proofreading

Question eight

-Do you teach proofreading to your students?

- Yes

-NO

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	09	90%
No	01	10%
total	10	100%

Table10: teaching proofreading to students

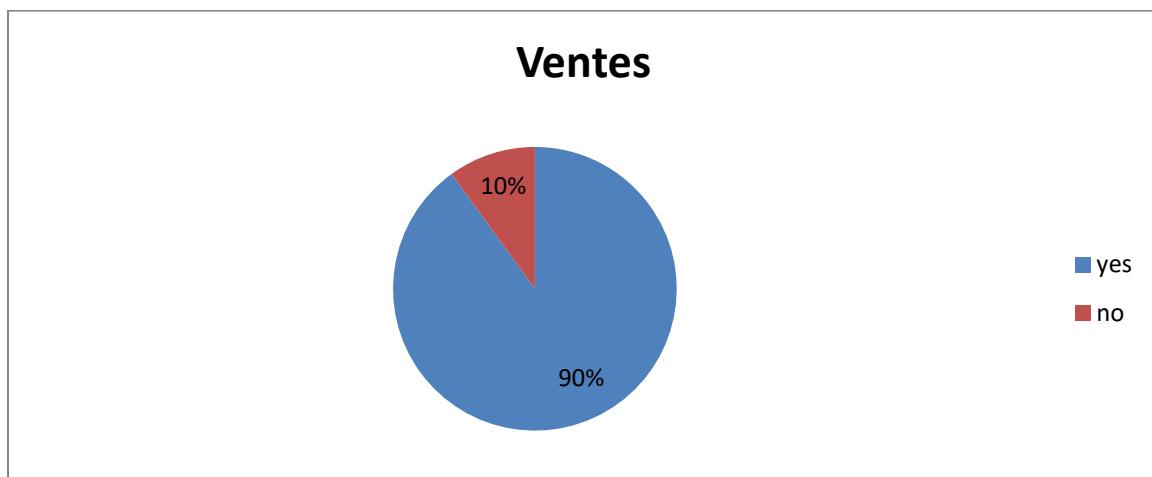


Figure 3.7: Teaching Proofreading to students

The aim of this question is to know whether teacher focus on teaching proofreading to their students , the result of the table (10) shows that the majority of teachers respond by yes

90%, they do really focus on teaching proofreading in written expression only One teacher
10% respond no.

Question nine

Do you think that your students proofread their writing before giving the final draft in exams?

- Yes

- No

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
Yes	7	70%
No	3	30%
Total	10	100%

Table 11: the usage of proofreading by students in exams

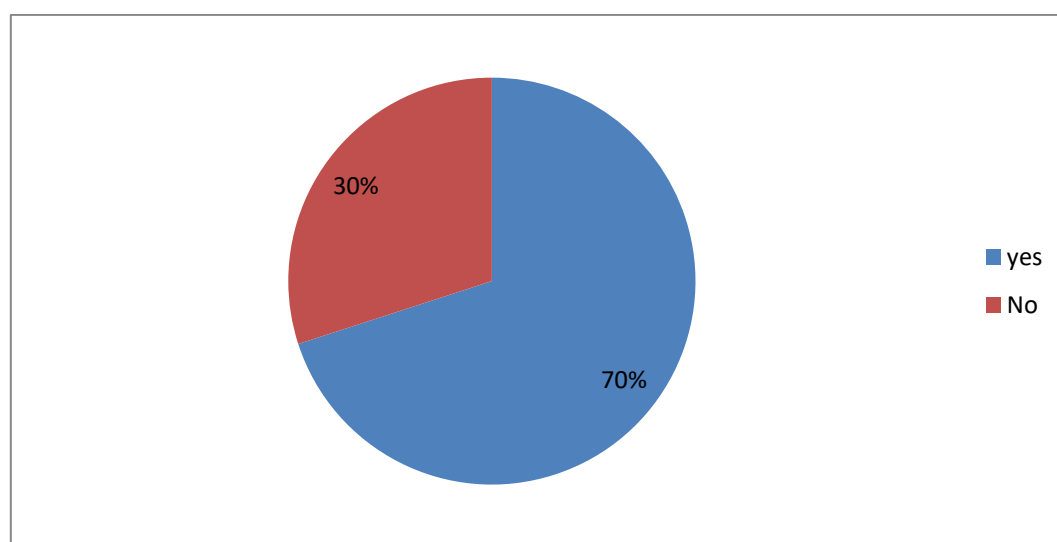


Figure 3.8: The usage of proofreading by students in exams

The aim of this question is to see if students use the proofreading stage or they neglect it, according to results shown by table (11) we confirm that students do neglect proofreading because 70% of teachers' responses said no .only 30% of teachers said yes and it is obviously The reason behind them is not capable of submitting a good written material consequently they will have bad marks in their exams. If students focus on proofreading they will overcome a lot of writing problems in terms of Punctuation, grammar, language use and other mechanisms use. The result show that 70% of EFL students neglect proofreading when they write maybe because they are not used to proofread inside the classroom

Question Ten

If they do not proofread, do you think that this is the reason that they have a deficiency and lose marks in writing?

A-Strongly disagree

B-Disagree

C-Strongly agree

D-Agree

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	00	00%

B	00	00%
C	01	10%
D	09	90%
Total	10	100%

Table 12: The attitude of teachers toward proofreading as reason for EFL learners deficiency in writing

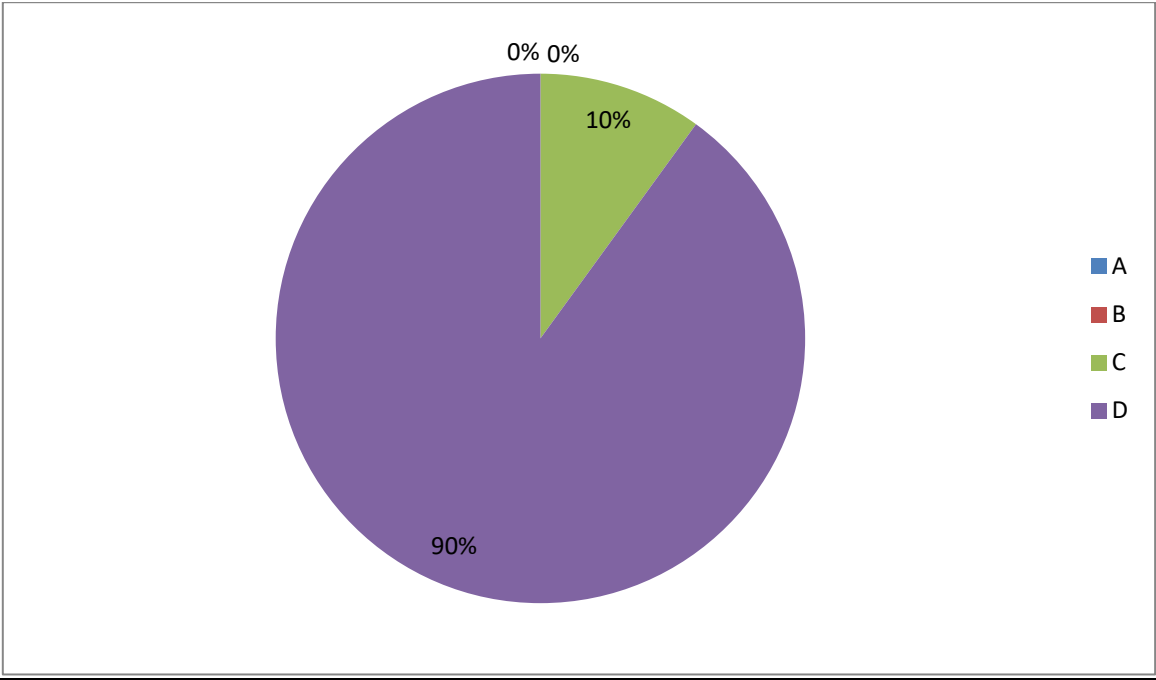


Figure 3.9: The attitude of teachers toward proofreading as reason for EFL learners deficiency in writing

The aim of this question is to see if student who neglects to proofread are the one who confronts a deficiency in writing skill, the table and figure (12) confirm that 90% of teachers agree, and 10% strongly agree that proofreading is the reason behind the deficiency, which

means that students are not aware of the importance of proofreading they need to concentrate more on proofreading in order to learn more and be able to write perfectly. All teachers agree that the reason behind EFL student deficiency is that they neglect proofreading in writing essays.

Question Eleven

-according to you, which method is more effective in teaching proofreading stage?

A-Reading alone method: when student proofread his work without any help

B- Reading with another person method: having another student to read the copy

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	00	00%
B	10	100%
total	10	100%

Table 13: the proofreading methods

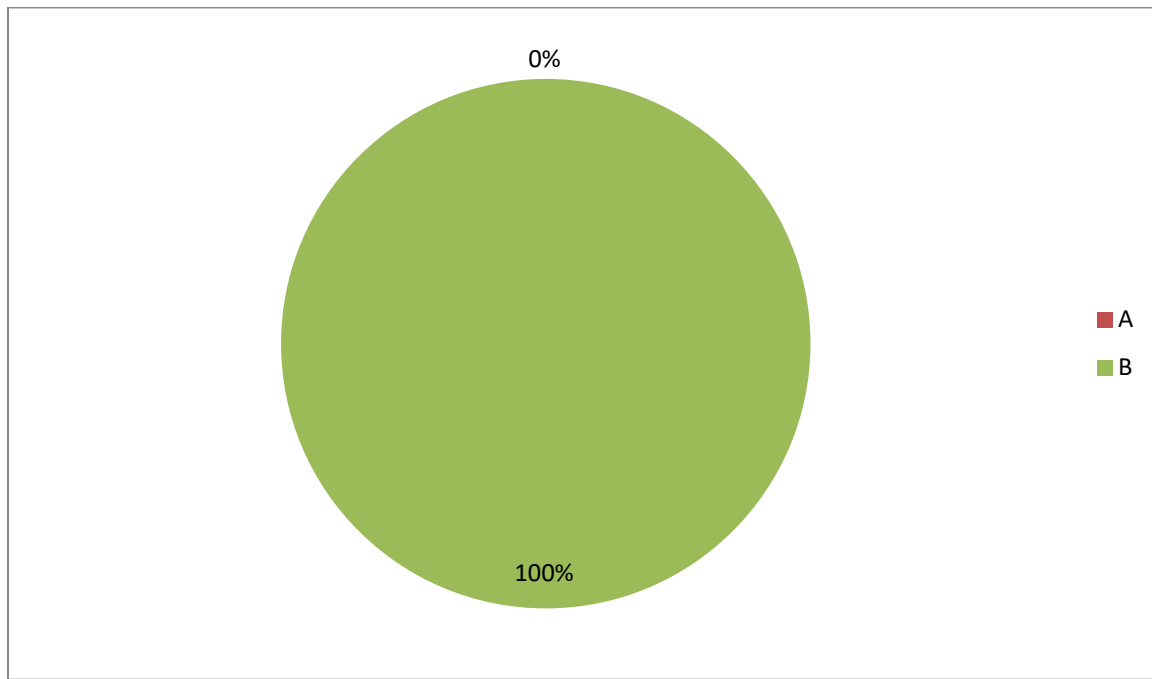


Figure 3.10: The Proofreading methods

According to the table (13), 100% of the teachers show a positive attitude towards the peer method in proofreading and they see that it is more effective for EFL students to know how to proofread , while no teacher choose the “ alone method “.

Question Twelve

Explain why, please:

Teachers’ justification for their choice of peer method is that the t peer evaluation is more effective than self -evaluation because learners cannot identify their errors unless they answer a self- evaluation checklist , when the learner does the task alone he may not be more aware of his errors ,however, when the task is done with another classmates this later would help to spot the mistakes more effectively and the peer will be the second eye for his writing

he may even give him a feedback or valuable advice. Other teacher said it depends on the students because not all of them favor having their copies seen and read by other students.

Question Thirteen

14-how can you raise the students 'awareness of the importance of using proofreading in writing process?

Teachers have different ways to raise their student's awareness of the importance of proofreading in writing process; some of them said that we should teach them the importance of proofreading and how to proofread in the right way. Others said by practicing it inside the classroom with the students repeatedly so that they will be able to do it by themselves in other accessions, or maybe telling them that they will have and gain extra marks in their tests and exams because it will show their weaknesses as well as their strengths in writing.

Another method or way suggested by other teachers is while they are writing, the teacher may ask his students to write an essay by starting to write the first draft, then he will ask them to proofread the first draft and revise it .Therefore, students will be able to compare between the two versions and to see how their writing has been improved .some said by devoting sessions for practicing proofreading and using students own production Some teachers said that they raise their students' awareness by demonstrating how proofreading can help them to reduce the great range of mistakes they make in the first draft.

Question Fourteen

13- Do you think that proofreading can help in reducing EFL student's writing errors?

A-Strongly disagree

B-Disagree

C-Strongly agree

D-Agree

Options	Number of teachers	Percentage
A	00	00%
B	00	00%
C	10	100%
D	00	00%
Total	10	100%

Table 14: the importance of proofreading in reducing EFL learners ‘errors

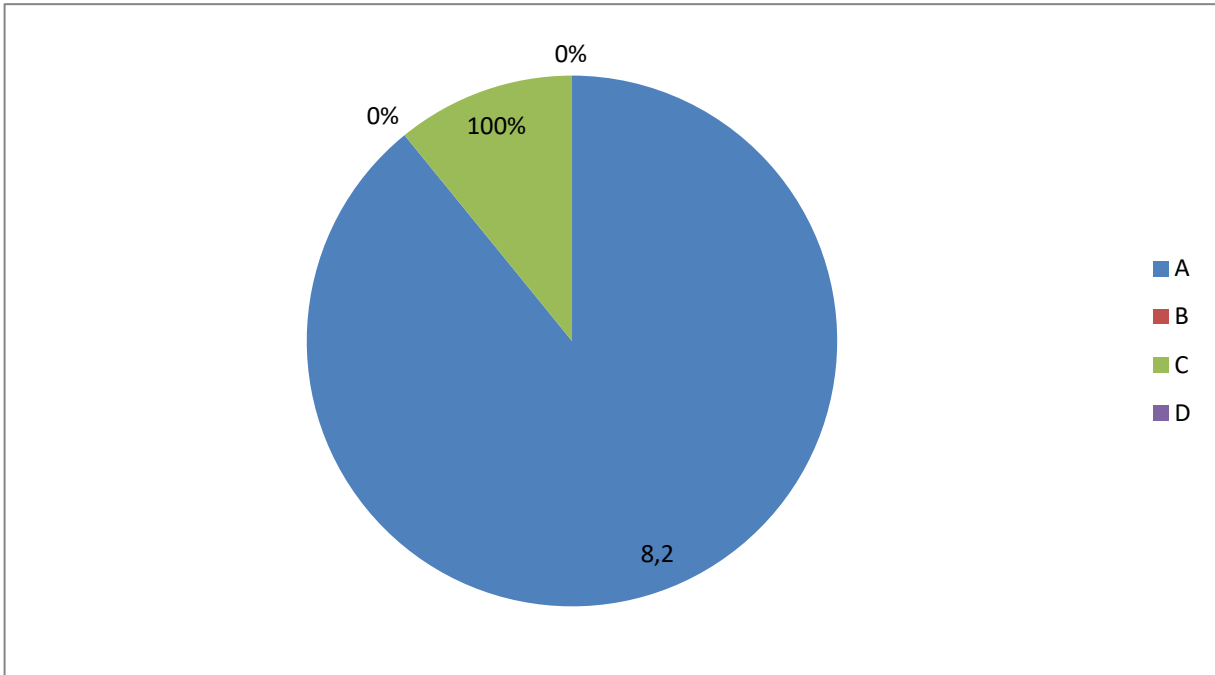


Figure 3.11: The importance of proofreading in reducing EFL learners' errors

As it is shown in the table and figure (14) all teachers strongly agree that proofreading is beneficial and helpful in reducing EFL learners errors in writing skill , the aim of this question is to prove that proofreading is very important , so that students should pay more attention to this stage and stop neglecting it . 100% of teacher said that it is very important in reducing EFL learners

Discussion of the questionnaire

The analysis of the questionnaire shows that proofreading is very important for EFL learners to help them to reduce the errors they make when they start to write the first draft. 100% of teachers strongly agree that proofreading is beneficial for students, it will help them to submit a very successful piece of writing well organized. The result also revealed that all of the teachers teach their students how to proofread but only a few of them use it in the exams before submitting the final draft, and 100% of the teachers agree that the reason behind their deficiency in writing skill is that they neglect to proofread.

As it is uncovered in these results, all of the teachers find always errors in terms of mechanisms and language use and 50% of them said that the difficult stage in writing process for students is proofreading, students do not know how to proofread and or maybe because they are not used to proofread inside the classroom this is why they find it difficult.

60% of teachers also consider writing as a difficult task for EFL learner to learn, they say that there are some difficulties such as they are influenced by their mother tongue, so they have the tendency to translate their thoughts and ideas from Arabic to English, they also have difficulties to respect the writing process stages and they do not proofread and revise their work consequently they make mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation and lose their marks.

The result also shows that all teachers (100%) support the peer method in teaching proofreading because learners alone cannot detect all the errors that their classmates may detect and find or the writer himself cannot perceive, so proofreading with peers helps the student to spot the mistakes effectively at least at the first stages then when the learner will be able to proofread his work he will do it alone. Teachers also gave several ways to raise their students' awareness about proofreading as the frequent practice of it and training with their learners inside the classroom or devoting a session for practicing more activities of

proofreading and even by demonstrating the great range of errors that they can lessen by using proofreading

Finally we can say that the result show that proofreading is very important in reducing and eliminating EFL learners errors , students should give more attention and importance to proofreading when they are asked to write because it will save and guarantee a good marks for them.

Section two: the Analysis of the Test

1-The Description of the Test

The participants were asked to write the first draft about “The use of facebook”, proofread it then to give us both copies (the first and proofread one) in order to measure the differences between the two versions of copies whether proofreading is very important in reducing mistakes. The test has been done in one session with fifteen (15) third year EFL students group ten (10).It is not the first time that they are asked to do this activity, they use to do the same whenever they are asked to write, so we did not face any difficulty during the activity, the only problem was the lack of time. The duration of the test is 30 minutes (half hour).students are supposed to correct mistakes in terms of grammar, punctuation , spelling and the plural “s” and to give a piece of writing with fewer errors.

2- The results of the Test

-The results of students mistakes in the first draft:

Students	Grammar	Spelling	punctuation	Plural “s”	Result
01	07	01	04	02	14
02	02	04	05	02	13

03	02	03	05	00	10
04	05	03	03	02	13
05	03	01	03	00	07
06	02	02	05	01	10
07	02	05	03	04	14
08	01	03	04	01	9
09	04	04	02	05	15
10	02	04	05	06	17
11	05	03	05	07	20
12	01	03	02	05	11
13	02	05	03	02	12
14	02	05	05	04	16
15	04	05	07	05	21
Total	44	51	61	46	202
Percentage	21.78	25.24	30.19	22.77	100%

Table 15: the result of students mistakes in the first draft

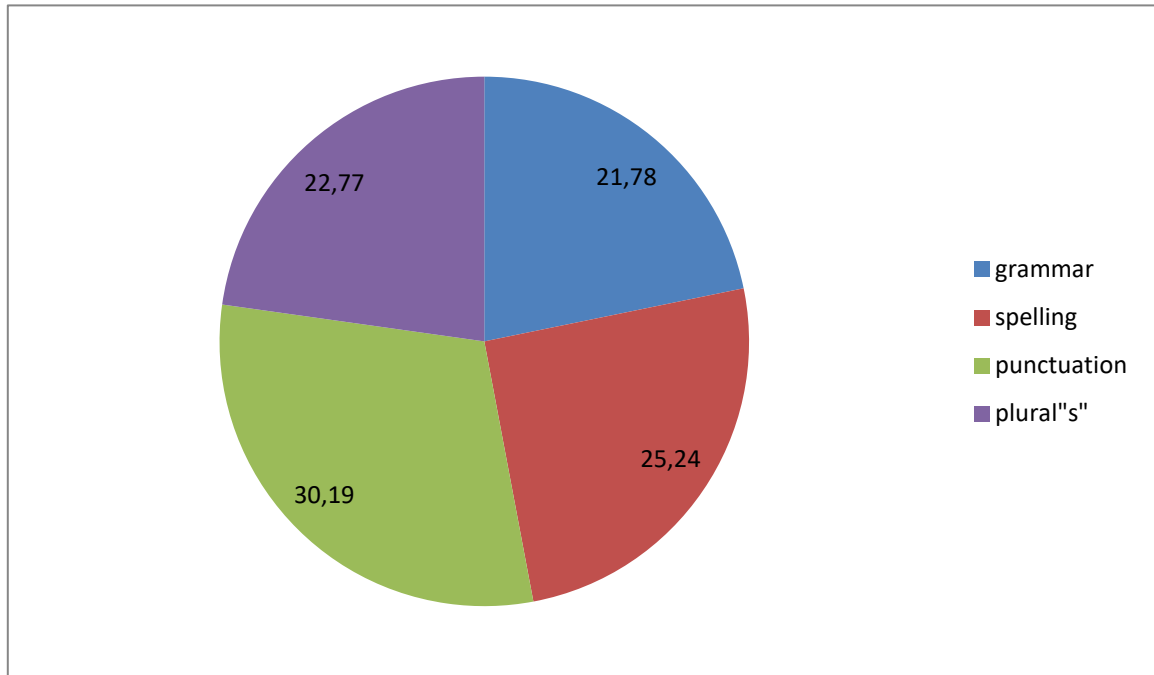


Figure 3.12: the results of students' mistakes in the first draft

Concerning the table above, we can notice that punctuation errors is number one with the highest percentage(30.19) then it is trailed by spelling mistakes with the percentage of (25.24) , in the third place we find plural “s” mistakes with the percentage of (22.77) finally the grammar mistakes with the lowest percentage of (21.78) , and here we can notice that when students are composing a piece of writing at the first time they are not aware of the diverse errors they can commit in grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes and those

mistakes can influence on their ideas and the structure of their essay, this is why proofreading stage is a crucial stage and the only solution that can help students to reduce the number of mistakes and that what we will see in result of the following table through by we will see how the number of mistakes done by students will decrease after using the proofreading stage, and the result were obviously different as we can see in the table below:

the result of students' copies after proofreading

Students	grammar	Spelling	Punctuation	Plural "s"	Result
01	06	01	03	01	11
02	00	02	03	01	06
03	04	02	03	00	09
04	03	02	02	01	08
05	01	01	02	00	04
06	01	02	01	02	06
07	01	03	01	00	05
08	01	01	02	00	04
09	02	02	00	02	06
10	02	00	02	03	07
11	04	04	02	04	14
12	00	01	01	03	05
13	01	02	03	01	07
14	02	02	03	02	09

15	02	03	06	03	14
Total	30	28	34	23	115
Percentage	26.08	24.34	29.56	20%	100%

Table16 : the results of students in the proofread draft

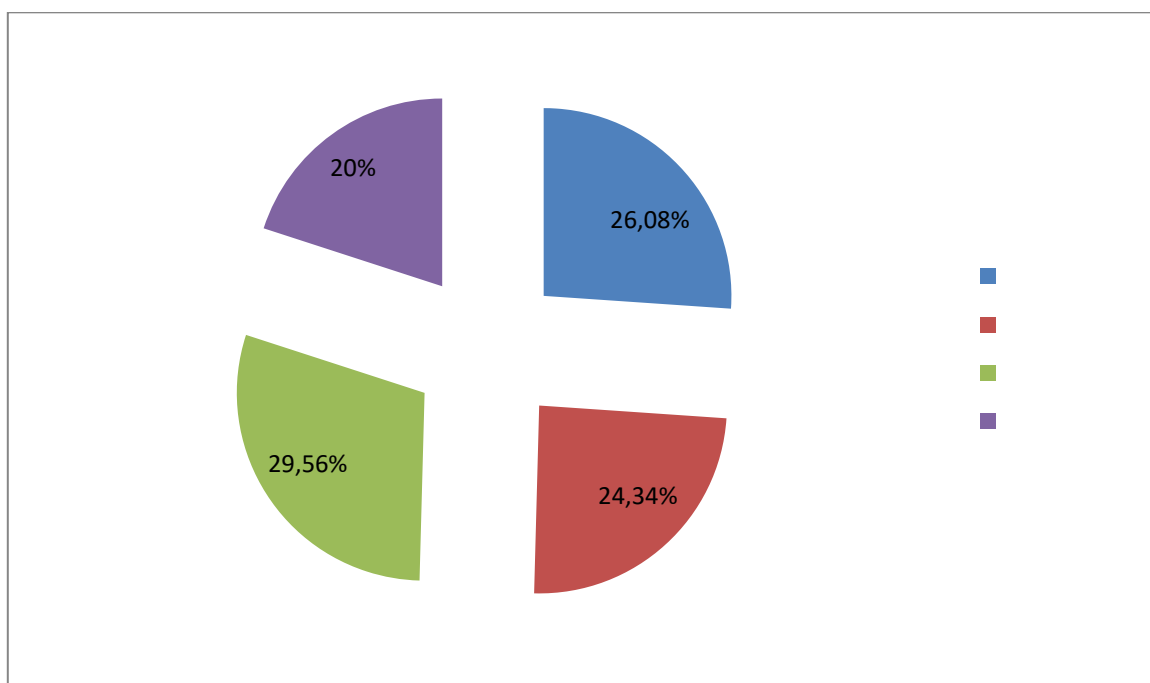


Figure 3.13: the result of students mistakes in the proofread draft

Concerning the table above, we can notice that punctuation errors are number one with the most elevated rate (29,56%) then it is followed by plural grammar with the percentage of (26,08% , in the third place we find spelling mistakes with the percentage of (24,34%), the table 2.2 and figure 2.2 demonstrate the decreased number of mistakes in different areas utilized by EFL students after they were asked to proofread their work, compared with the

first draft we can notice that all students eliminate at least 1 to 2 mistakes in one area, which implies that if there are 3 mistakes in punctuation in the first draft, probably we will find at least two of them corrected in proofread draft and with others areas (grammar, spelling, plural).To show the real result of the decreased number of the mistakes the following table will give more insights about the outcomes :

The difference between the two copies:

Students	Number of mistakes in the first draft	Number of mistakes in the proofread draft	The difference of the number of mistakes of the two versions
01	14	11	03
02	13	06	07
03	10	09	01
04	13	08	05
05	07	04	03
06	10	06	04
07	10	05	05
08	14	04	10
09	09	06	03

10	15	07	08
11	17	14	03
12	20	05	15
13	11	07	04
14	12	09	03
15	16	14	02
Total	202	115	87

The table 17: the difference between the two versions of copies

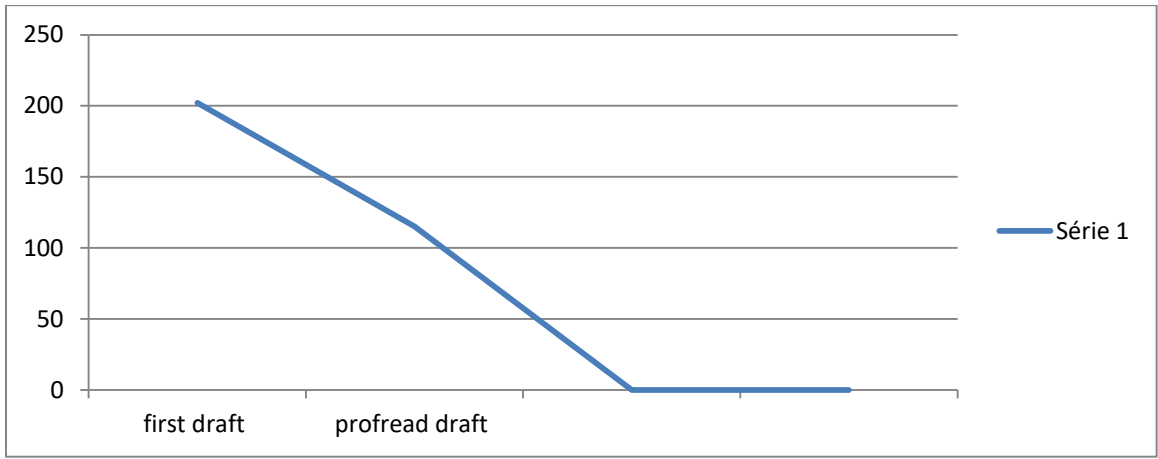


Figure 3.14: the difference between the two versions of copies

as uncovered in table (17) and figure (3.14) there is an enormous contrast when comparing the two versions of copies, and here we can state that the solution for students to polish their writings from mistakes is to proofread their copies, which is a very crucial step that helps them to eliminate different mistakes that they made once they start to write unconsciously. There are 87 mistakes that had been corrected and revised in the aggregate of 202 mistakes in

the first draft and this is a huge number that may influence on the meaning and furthermore on the organization of the ideas which will lead the students to have a bad grade in the written expression module, students need to proofread their works before submitting them otherwise, they cannot be able to control and reduce the number of mistakes that might prevent them from having a good mark in writing.

3- Result and discussion of the Test

Through the obtained results from the test which was done with the third year students group ten (10) in Mohamed Khider, University of Biskra, we observe that students when they are asked to write at the first time they made a lot of errors in terms of grammar, punctuation, spelling and other areas, these errors affect on the meaning and the cohesion of their ideas, at the second time when their teacher asked them to proofread what they have written, we notice that the majority of them corrected some mistakes ,proofreading is very helpful because it gives them the opportunity to check for their work in terms of punctuation and grammar mistakes. Students had the opportunity to reformulate many sentences in order to make it well-structured, they also had the chance to improve different areas in their writing which is very good for them, the results show that all of them have at least corrected one to two mistakes.

Students who used proofreading in the process of writing an essay are more likely to improve their marks in their tasks and exams , we also noticed in many situations that most of the students used the abbreviation of words and contractions in the first draft but then when they proofread they get rid of this abbreviations for example , one student wrote in the first draft “I can’t” but in the proofread version wrote” I cannot “, this is generally something that they could forget when they do not use proofreading which will cause a misunderstanding to their teacher.

Other situations concerning grammar mistakes, for example: forgetting to add an “s” to plural or for the third person in simple present tense , they correct it after they proofread their copies , they forgot to put “is ” they wrote only “face book the most “ but after they proofread they added it , the majority of them also give a title to their paragraphs in the proofread copy the only thing that noticed which I probably think they would not do it if they did not proofread their works. Many of them make mistakes in grammar such as “the using of “then they correct it “the use of”, the majority of students have problems in using the right tense.

Concerning the mistakes in terms of punctuation and capitalization, only some of them were corrected, for example, the misuse of commas, the unnecessary use of commas and periods freely they should be aware of punctuation , but at least we find one to two commas and periods sometimes they get rid of it but most of the time they keep it and this is not very satisfying because even punctuation is very important in written product, for example one students wrote “.. , in addition, those generation, forget about the meaning of to go to friends” every time he wrote two words he put a comma and he did not get rid of them when he proofread his copy but at least he added a title and he made other changes in different spelling and grammar mistakes but not in punctuation, some students wrote sentences without capitalization and even without periods in the end , but when they proofread their work they added a capitalization in the beginning and a period to every sentence. All students had a good handwriting we did not face any problem in reading the copies.

The results obtained from the tables are the best evidence to prove that proofreading is very important in helping students to reduce and eliminate errors, we can notice that the

number of mistakes in terms of all the convention has reduced from the first draft, there is a huge difference which obviously was attained by the use of proofreading, students should be aware and should practice more proofreading activities inside and outside classroom.

We have reached the hypothesis that when students proofread their work they will be able to submit a very good piece of writing, and that proofreading is a tool that will help students To minimize and even eliminate errors. So what we can notice from this experience is that proofreading is such a crucial step that helps students to improve their style and the form of their written products in order to gain extra marks in their writing exams, it will help them to check for any error that could make their copies free from errors.

This chapter has examined the outcomes obtained from the data tools that we choose to test our hypothesis which are a teacher's questionnaire and a test, as we expected the result have demonstrated that proofreading have an importance in reducing and minimizing EFL students' errors in terms of punctuation, grammar, spelling and other areas of concern, it is considered as an important step that should not be neglected by students and teachers.

General conclusion and Recommendation

The present study aims at highlighting and emphasizing the importance of proofreading in reducing mistakes by EFL students to enhance their writing and to improve their style in order to submit a successful piece of writing free from errors. The obtained results confirm our hypothesis which stated that students would produce better writing with fewer errors, if they proofread their work before submitting it. In the light of the obtained results, we have different recommendations to suggest as the following:

- Teachers should devote a session a week for practicing proofreading using students 'own production and should give much importance to proofreading inside the classroom and ask their students to proofread when they write inside the classroom so they will be able to do it by themselves in exams.

Students should practice proofreading inside the classroom and even when asked to write at home

- Students must also use different methods of proofreading in order to be able to manage their time in exams, to process every stage without wasting time, and to not neglect any stage in order to present a very successful piece of writing, essay, or any written material free from errors

- Students should use proofreading because it is the only effective way that helps them to identify and correct their mistakes in order to achieve accuracy.

In order to achieve our objectives, we have designed three chapters; two theoretical supported by practical part. In the first chapter, we have defined the writing and discussed different difficulties and concerns of EFL students with writing skill .The second chapter we discussed the proofreading stage, its importance in addition to its methods, marks and abbreviations.

In the last chapter, we choose two data tools to confirm our hypothesis .First we have discussed the result from teachers' questionnaire which consists that students do not proofread their work because they do not know how to proofread and they are not aware of its importance, then we analyzed the results of the test and we noticed that when EFL students proofread their copies they get rid of a lot of errors and they even added titles to their essays. Finally we can conclude that proofreading is indeed important in reducing EFL students 'writing errors.

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Appendices

Appendix (1)

Teachers 'Questionnaire

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire serves as data collection tool to explore « **The Importance of proofreading in minimizing EFL students 'writing errors** » case study of third -year students at Mohammed Khider, University of Biskra. Your contribution will greatly help us to prepare our Master dissertation and achieve the research work objectives. You are kindly requested to answer the following questions either by ticking or providing your own information whenever necessary. Thank you in advance.

Master Researcher

Researcher's Name: Houfani Sensabila

Section one: General Information

1-How long have you been teaching written expression?

.....

2-How can you describe the level of your students in writing?

-High

-Average

-Low

Section Two: writing Process

3-Do you consider writing as a difficult skill to teach for students?

-Yes

-No

-Somehow

4- If yes would you tell us what are the difficulties that you may encounter with students in teaching writing skill :

.....

.....

.....

5- What is the most difficult stage of the writing process for students in your opinion?

-Brainstorming

-Planning

- Drafting
- Revising
- Proofreading
- Writing the final draft

6-Do you usually find errors when you are correcting students 'essays?

- Always
- Sometimes
- Often
- Rarely

7-In your opinion, what are the students' common writing problems? (You can choose more than one)

- Grammar
- Punctuation
- Spelling
- organization
- language use

Section Three: Proofreading

8-Do you teach proofreading to your students?

Yes

No

9- Do you ask your students to proofread every time you give them a writing task to write inside the classroom?

Yes

No

10-Do you think that your students proofread their writing before giving the final draft in exams?

Yes

No

11- If they do not proofread, do you think that this is the reason that they have a deficiency and lose their marks in writing?

-Strongly disagree

-Disagree

-Strongly agree

-Agree

13-According to you, which method is more effective for students to proofread their work?

-**Reading alone method:** when student proofread his work without any help

- **Reading with another person method:** having another student to read his copy

13-Explain why, please:

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

14-How can you raise your students ‘awareness about the importance of using proofreading in writing?

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

15- Do you think that proofreading can help in reducing EFL student’s writing errors?

-Strongly disagree

-Disagree

-Strongly agree

-Agree

Faced (invade)

(1st Step)

People recently ^X using Facebook all around the world, Facebook used by all ages, young & old, and children. It is something beneficial for the one who know ~~was~~ how to use it, and it is ~~not for~~ the opposite for the others. It makes the world like a

Small Town, and people can post their pictures, states, and do everything they want.

(2nd Step)

People recently ^X using Facebook all around the world, Facebook ~~was~~ invaded our life, it ^{is} used by all ages: young, old, and even the children. ~~It~~ makes in addition to that it makes the world like a small town, people can post their pictures, state and celebrate their memories. Finally, Facebook is something beneficial for the one who know how to use it, and the opposite for the others.

Q10

Go with the open minded off

Fb is very useful social media ~~now~~ day
& Popular social media. ~~Everyone~~ network
net working nowadays.

~~People nowadays~~ ~~can't~~ ~~live~~ ~~without~~ ~~Fb~~ ~~because~~

People nowadays can't live without Fb because
with the ^{growing} ~~growth~~ of Technology, ^{they} can bring their smart
phones and use Fb in whenever & wherever they
want. They use it to short distance with those
who are very far from them. Also Fb is means
of ~~for~~ ~~between~~ + to make relationship with
people in diff places with diff nationalities, ~~you~~

~~can't~~ ~~live~~ ~~without~~ ~~Fb~~ ~~because~~
~~they~~ ~~think~~ ~~they~~ ~~can~~ ~~use~~ ~~it~~ ~~as~~ ~~it's~~ ~~uses~~

In addition to ~~they~~ ~~those~~ people consider it as open
window to the world i.e. without watching news in
TV, just open Facebook this news comes to you easily
in different pages, and always I heard news just
from Fb through the Publication of others.

Fb is good a means of ^{net work site} ~~can~~ ~~just~~ ~~when~~ ~~you~~ ~~know~~
~~just~~ ~~if~~ ~~you~~ ~~know~~ ~~how~~ ~~to~~
use it.

~~use~~ ~~it~~ ~~correctly~~
~~if~~ ~~use~~ ~~it~~ ~~correctly~~

The use of FB

Thanks to the open minded of people, Facebook became a useful & popular social networking site. Nowadays with the growing of Technology people can't live without it for example, they bring it with them for what and in whenever they want. Also, they use it to short distance with those who are very far from them. Then, Facebook is mean to build relatives with others in different places with different nationalities. In addition to its users consider it an open window to the world ie without watching TV, just open Facebook, the news comes to you easily in different pages through the publication and announcement of others. Facebook is a good net working site just if you know how to use it.

Our eyes are fixed in our screens, we look for water inside the ocean, facebook is the best social media website is being used in unreasonable way, nowadays. First, it started as a medium to that connects people to each other, before it becomes a tool of beautification for our true reality. People today do incredibly believe in digitalized feelings and emotions. what make them lose this opportunity to experience the real ones. Facebook is a waste of time + character is colonize our life.

2

1

First draft:

Nowdays, Facebook, the best social media website, is being used in an unreasonable way. First, it started as a medium which aims to connect people to each others, after that it becomes a tool of beautification for our true reality. People today do incredibly believe in digitalised feelings and emotions, this is making them losing the opportunity to experience the real ones. In addition to that, Facebook is a waste of character and time, since it colonizes us from the first use. At the end ~~we~~ as our eyes are fixed in our screens, ^{we} we're doing nothing but looking for water inside the ocean.

1

2

G:10

1st draft.

Work book

- Facebook is ~~every~~ ^{now} the most popular application in social media. ①
80% of people use Facebook in their days, also 50% of the adults use FCB outlet, some of them they use it in bad way by ~~open~~ ^{many} people and Facebook became a disaster even one take pictures of girls and put it on Facebook this is unreasonable.
I saw kids less than 14 years old have Facebook and then we expect to be ~~positive~~ ^{positive} than that to be positive on this new generation.

2nd draft.

Facebook is a social media
web site, 80% of people use Facebook.
50% of them are adults also, we find kids
less of 13 years old have Facebook account
they could create many pages and spend
the nowadays Facebook became a
disaster because they use it unreasonable
there is a phenomenon in Facebook which
is taking pictures of girls or stealing their
pictures and page of them. So then
we expect something from this positive from
this new generation.

