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THE IMPACT OF INTRODUCING BLENDED LEARNING IN AN EFL WRITING COURSE: AN ACTION RESEARCH

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PhD Thesis

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We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Hanife Bensen titled "The Impact of introducing Blended Learning in an EFL writing course: An Action Research" and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all materials and results that are not original to this study.

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ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF INTRODUCING BLENDED LEARNING IN AN EFL WRITING COURSE: AN ACTION RESEARCH

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This study attempted to examine the effectiveness of a writing course designed with the process genre approach (PGA) and a blended learning approach (BLA) for pre-service English language teachers, who are at the same time EFL learners. It also aimed to investigate the attitudes of pre-service EFL teachers towards different approaches to teaching writing after being exposed to aforementioned approaches. A mixed methods approach was adopted to effectively answer all of the research questions posed through an action research design. Students' performances throughout the course were quantitatively evaluated to determine their progress and hence the effectiveness of the course. Data were collected through interviews from 16 participants who took part in the writing course (Stage I) and 17 participants who did not take part in the writing course (Stage II), and through lecturer observation. The results indicated that the participants' writing was improved significantly both through PGA and BLA. However, when their performances were compared, it appeared that the participants produced better written products when they were taught using the BLA. The participants appeared to have positive attitudes towards the use of the BLA in teaching writing as they claimed that it helped them in language in regards to grammar, creating ideas, linking words, expressing ideas, presenting work academically, the process of learning writing and enabled them to work in their own time and pace, to research and see more models and perspectives before writing and producing neater and more professional products. It was also found that students' prior writing experience extensively affected their learning and their approaches to the teaching of writing.

Keywords: process genre approach, blended learning approach, pre-service teachers, English as a foreign language, English language teaching, online work, portfolio work.

ÖZ

HARMANLANMIŞ ÖĞRENMENİN BİR YDİ YAZMA DERSINE ETKİSİ: BİR EYLEM ARAŞTIMASI

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Bu çalışma, İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümünde okuyan ve ayni zamanda İngilizece'yi yabancı bir dil olarak öğrenen öğrenciler için harmanlanmış öğrenme yaklaşımı ile tasarlanan ileri yazma dersinin etkisini incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Ayrıca, İngilizce Öğretmenliği bölümünde öğrenim görmekte olan öğrencilerin sözü edilen yaklaşımlarla eğitim aldıktan sonra, yazma dersini öğretme konusundaki yaklaşımlara karşı gösterdiğikleri tutumu da araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Eylem araştırması şeklinde desenlenen çalışmada, tüm araştırma sorularına etkili bir biçimde cevap verilebilmesi için karma yöntem kullanılmıştır. Ders süresince öğrencilerin gösterdikleri performans, kaydettikleri ilerleyişi ve dolayısıyla dersin faydasını saptamak amacıyla nicel bir şekilde değerlendirilmiştir. Ayrıca, yazma dersinde yer alan 16 ve yazma dersinde yer almayan 17 katılımcıyla yapılan görüşmelerden ve araştırmacının yaptığı gözlemlerden elde edilen veriler toplanmış, nitel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar, katılımcıların yazma becerilerinin hem süreç biçim yaklaşımı hem de harmanlanmış öğrenme yaklaşımı sayesinde önemli ölçüde geliştiğine işaret etmektedir. Buna rağmen, katılımcıların performansları karşılaştırıldığında, harmanlanmış öğrenme yaklaşımı ile öğrenen öğrencilerin daha iyi yazılı ürünler ortaya çıkardıkları görülmektedir. Katılımcıların, yazma dersini öğretme konusunda harmanlanmış öğrenme yaklaşımı kullanımına karşı olumlu bir tutum sergilerken, bu yaklaşımın kendilerine dil içerisinde bulunan dilbilgisi, fikir üretme, kelimeleri bağlama, fikirleri ifade etme, akademik olarak bir işi sunma, yazma becerisini öğrenme süreci gibi konularda yardımcı olduğuna inançlarını belirtmişlerdir. Ayrıca bu yaklaşımın kendi zaman ve ilerleme hızları çerçevesinde çalışmalarına olanak sağladığı görüşünü savunmaktadırlar. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin önceki yazı tecrübelerinin de öğrenmelerini ve yazma becerisini öğretme konusundaki tutumlarını büyük ölçüde etkilediği tespit edilmiştir.

Anahtar kelimeler: süreç biçim yaklaşımı, harmanlanmış öğrenme yaklaşımı, hizmet öncesii, ingilizce yabancı bir dil, ingilizce öğretmenliği, online çalışmalar, porföy çalışmalar.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BLA: Blended Learning Approach

BLL: Blended Language Learning

PGA: Process Genre Approach

ELT: English Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

ELL: English Language and Literature

CF: Corrective Feedback

WCF: Written Corrective Feedback

SPSS: Statistical Package of the Social Sciences

CALL: Computer Assisted Language Learning

MFRM: Multifaceted Rash Model

VLE: Vertual Learning Environment

GPA: Grade Point Average

CGPA: Cumulative Grade Point Average

L1:   First Language

L2:   Second/Foreign Language

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Writing in one's first language (L1) is difficult to master and requires extended practice. If this is true for our mother tongue, then one needs not imagine the difficulties one has to encounter in mastering writing in a foreign language (FL) (Koç& Bamber, 1997). Writing seems a daunting task for a learner as it is a skill that is not naturally acquired like speaking and listening. For this reason, it has to be specifically taught (Brown, 2001; Krashen, 2004). Teaching this skill, on the other hand, is yet another challenge. Starting from our childhood until the present, many approaches and techniques in order to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing have been employed (Badger & White, 2000; Hedge, 1988; Nunan, 1989; Raimes, 1983; Scrivener, 2011; White & Arndt, 1991) and as enthusiastic FL teachers, we are not expected to rigidly adopt one approach in our EFL classroom. In all of these sources, an eclectic approach that develops and fits the teaching of writing to the specific needs of the students is suggested.

As teachers, we are confronted with students that all have their own personal learning preferences, students that come from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds and students that have different priorities and reasons for learning a language. In addition to this, any group of students can often be of mixed ability with different goals or learning styles in the EFL classroom. Therefore, the appropriateness of a task can represent a significant challenge in these circumstances.

Experienced teachers are aware that if a language level in a task is too easy, some students are unlikely to improve. On the contrary, if the task is too difficult, some students may simply give up. Similarly, tasks that do not address a student's interest or learning style may fail to motivate, which is another factor considered essential in language learning (Marsh, 2012).

Another issue that teachers have to deal with is time constraints. Time in the classroom is limited and although some teachers are well aware of the need to provide their students with opportunities to practice the language in different and varied contexts, this sometimes is just not feasible given timetabling constraints (Marsh, 2012). Moreover, writing needs time to develop. With the emergence of the approaches that concentrate on the processes needed to be able to produce a written product, language teachers are encouraged to spend more time on the writing skill and thus pay more attention to the evaluation of work in progress (Badger & White, 2000). Thus, this thesis aims to report the findings of an action research, where a new syllabus was designed with a blended learning approach to teaching academic writing to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, concentrating on the processes needed in order to produce a good product.

The combination of face-to-face classroom activities and online work is named the blended learning approach (BLA) (Hofmann, 2001; Macdonald, 2006; Oliver & Trigwell, 2005; Procter, 2003; Staker & Horn, 2012; Thorne, 2003; Whitelock & Jelfs, 2003). Further details of this approach will be presented in the coming chapters of this thesis. Blending the Internet into the aforementioned writing course would presumably have a number of benefits. First of all, it would enable students to be writing to a wider audience (Lee, 2010; Richardson, 2010) as well as motivating them and encouraging them to come up with ideas for their own writing

that can appeal to their peers and trigger their confidence (Pinkman, 2005; Turgut, 2009; Zhang, 2009). Students would also have enough time and space to share their experiences (Davoli, Monari & Eklundh, 2009; Richardson, 2010; Solomon & Schrum, 2010) in their own pace. Moreover, this blend would encourage informal communication (Richardson, 2010; Solomon & Schrum, 2010) as well as assisting the lecturer with the course management (Bonk & Graham, 2006; Davoli, Monari & Eklundh, 2009; Solomon & Schrum, 2010). During the course, the implementation of the social networking site Facebook.com was believed to enable students to ask as many questions at whatever time they wantedto the lecturer. In addition to this, students would have the opportunity to catch up with missed materials and tasks given during class hours. What's more, students would be provided with extra paths for interaction and opportunities for collaboration (Richardson, 2010; Solomon &Schrum, 2010). The last but not the least, taking into account that the students in question are pre-service teachers, they are given the opportunity to practise providing each other with feedback on each other's writings (Davoli, Monari & Eklundh, 2009; Richardson, 2010; Solomon & Schrum, 2010).

In the coming sections of this chapter, first the background of the study and my experience and observations as an EFL and English for specific purposes (ESP) teacher will be presented. This will be followed by theoretical knowledge withregard to the teaching of the writing skill specifically, which is the main concept of this study. This chapter also provides information about the problems, aim and limitations of the current study.

Background of the Study

This study was initiated based on my personal experience, which has been encountered over 11 years of teaching EFL andESP. My interest in the field of teaching writing began when I started to write my Master's thesis on The Effectiveness of the Process Genre Approach in the Teaching of Writing. Since then, I have had the chance of teaching writing not only to Turkish Cypriot and Turkish students but also to students from various linguistic backgrounds including Arabs, Kurds, Jamaicans, Ukrainians and Russians, as well as different proficiency levels. While teaching EFL at preparatory schools to adult students in different private universities in north Cyprus, I observed that not much attention was being given to the writing skill in the syllabus. As will be discussed in the following sections in more detail, in the north Cyprus university context, especially in preparatory schools of universities where students are EFL learners, writing activities and/or tasks are set as homework or they pop up in exams for students to deal with. This is usually due to teachers trying to cover the syllabus to enable students to take and pass the language exam at the end of a specific period of time. This practice neglects the processes where attention is granted to the writer and shows exclusive concern with the qualities of the finished writing or product (Arndt, 1987; Raimes, 1985; Zamel, 1983). In the English preparatory schools of university students in north Cyprus, adult learners study English for a period of nine months and are expected to increase their (various) language proficiency levels up to the institutions' required English proficiency level. These requirements range from intermediate to advanced level depending on the aims of the specific institution and/or the programme they are enrolled in. In my experience as a language teacher in two of such preparatory schools, I noticed that teachers usually followed a course book. Students are

evaluated in two examinations (mid-term and final) for each term. These examinations primarily focus on the rules of English grammar. The syllabi were mostly grammar based (Bensen, 2007; Bensen & Silman, 2012), despite the fact that every year (or every two years) adjustments and modifications were made, such as, the change of course books, materials and examinations. Contrary to this, the language tests that students took at the end of their nine-month English preparatory school education always included a reading passage, which is followed by comprehension, true/false and multiple choice questions, and a writing task at the end. Here, students were evaluated based on how well they could produce a paragraph, an essay or a composition. In this exam oriented context, teachers tended to encourage students to reproduce what they have learnt in the classroom by giving them product-based writing assignments. That is to say, the writing tasks that students were engaged in were based on the sections presented in the course book. All of these practices and requirements put constraints on the time that can be allocated to the teaching of writing in the classroom. Extra writing activities, materials, discussion, models, drafts and readings were neither employed nor used to support the course book in the classrooms.

In addition to the limitations that the exam-oriented approach brought to the practice of teaching writing, teachers also had a syllabus to cover in a given time frame. Therefore, writing tasks in the course book were given as homework for students to do and submit. After submission, students were given marks or ticks referring to homework done and then given marks at the end for all of the submitted homework in total. However, no written corrective feedback (WCF) was provided. Students did not have the chance to see their errors and work on them to correct their errors. Even in classes where teachers did give WCF, this was done directly and was

not followed up by self-correction by the students. In other words, the writings produced by students were corrected by the teacher and submitted back to students. The corrected homework was put somewhere and never touched again. So, the processes needed in order to produce good products were neglected (Chandler, 2003; Krashen, 2004). Students were, therefore, neither engaged in multiple drafts of a text nor given feedback for the different phases of writing. Attention is not paid to the genre either, which students were expected to produce in exams or tests.

In some classes, where students had higher proficiency levels in English, writing was done in the classroom. Nevertheless, it was never the focus of a whole class. That is to say, once having fulfilled the requirements set on the syllabus, teachers tended to use writing activities to fill in the time left before the examinations. Teachers usually made students write for an hour in class with very little guidance on the genres. Yet again, these would be collected and no feedback or correction was given to the students.

In 2011, when I started working as a lecturer in the department of English Language Teaching (ELT) in Near East University, I noticed further issues with the teaching of writing to prospective teachers of English. In order to graduate from theELT Department, students have to complete 58 courses in total (see Appendix P). Two of these courses include the teaching of the language skills and components. In this respect, only 3% of the current teacher training programme is spent on teaching how to teach language skills and components. However, the focus in these two courses is based on the teaching of all the skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as well as other language components (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary). Due to this fact, not much attention seems to be given to the training of teachers in the teaching of writing. Moreover, the syllabi of these two courses

include only two of the approaches to teaching writing, namely the product and process approaches (Further details of these approaches are discussed in the Literature Review). For this reason, it could be said that when these students become teachers, they are not well trained enough to be able to teach the writing skill in depth, i.e. concentrating on academic texts types which students are expected to produce in every department at any university, and are rigidly expected to adopt between the two approaches to writing that they are presented with.

The study that I conducted earlier for my Master's thesis revealed the effectiveness of the process genre approach (PGA) employed with a group of English preparatory school students in a private university in north Cyprus (Bensen, 2007). This approach is the combination of the product, process and genre approaches which Badger and White (2000) aptly termed the PGA. In one month, students' writing scores showed dramatic progress. Even though it was explicitly proven that the approach improved students' writing skills, the point I would like to focus on is actually the time spent to improve students writing skills. In this approach, students are expected to write several drafts before actually producing their products when one of the process oriented approaches are employed, i.e. the process approach or the process genre approach. Even though this is seen as a long and exhausting process, my study revealed that students improved their writing skills in a very short amount of time. This interestingly shows that with hard work and good preparation on the part of both the teacher and students, it is possible to improve students' writings in a short period of time, which will contribute to students' success in the long run rather than for a temporary period or only for exams.

The PGA put forth by Badger and White (2000) does not seem to be employed in most of the writing classes in north Cyprus. On the one hand, this is due

to the fact that many teachers are only exposed to teaching writing through the product approach during their own experiences of learning English or during their teacher training programmes. Another issue is the fact that some EFL teachers are graduates of English Language and Literature (ELL) departments. In the ELL departments, students are not taught any approaches to teaching writing. Therefore, it is natural for them to be unaware of the approaches to teaching EFL writing. On the other hand, time is another issue for EFL teachers that cause them to avoid using such approaches as the PGA. Even when teachers are aware of the process approach to writing, they tend to have no time to employ this approach due to syllabus constraints. The process approach requires drafts. Students have to write several drafts before actually submitting their products. Giving corrective feedback to these drafts is extra workload for the teacher. For instance, if every week one text type is taught to the students, then the language teacher is expected to give WCF to approximately 20-30 students at least three times in one week. For this reason, teachers need time, effort and a lot of patience. From the students' perspective, they are expected to produce work both in and out of the classroom regarding writing which is considered extra work once combined with the other work they have to accomplish during the week. Therefore, writing becomes a daunting challenge both for the teacher and the students.

In order to overcome these challenges, I decided to employ the PGA and integrate online learning. That is to say, the blended learning approach (BLA) was employed to design a new syllabus for an elective advanced writing course that I was assigned to teach for pre-service EFL teachers at the department of ELT. In this way, I would be both addressing the issues encountered by students of writing as well as enabling pre-service teachers to experience the PGA and BLA approaches first hand.

As I mentioned earlier, students do not have enough writing courses focusing on the approaches of EFL writing and had not yet been exposed to the processes needed to produce good products in writing. Furthermore, students seemed to be unaware of the WCF types. For these reasons, I designed a syllabus suitable for the students of the ELT department who were at the same time EFL learners.

The effectiveness of the PGA in the teaching of writing has shown contribution in the learning and teaching of writing and has resulted in many benefits (Bensen, 2007; Kim & Kim, 2005; Yang, 2005). Adopting such an eclectic approach to teach seemed appropriate in order to prepare students for the global world making them able to write a range of tasks, instead of just memorization and reproduction in exams, which was what they had been exposed to so far. One of the benefits of the PGA is that it boosts students' motivation (Fleet, 2013; Ranchoux, 2006), which is needed in academic writing as students get bored easily while writing. In addition to this, designing a syllabus involving students' everyday routines, i.e. using the Internet, seemed realistic in trying to motivate and involve students in the course. The Internet and tools such as blogs, wikis, YouTube and social networking sites such as Facebook.com and Tweeter also have proven to motivate students (Krebs et al., 2010; Turgut, 2009).

Problem of the Study

Harmer (2004) argues that "the ability to write has to be consciously learnt" (p. 3). In other words, writing is a skill which cannot be acquired without training. For this reason, it has to be specifically taught and only then, it is learnt (Myles, 2002). Similar to our first language (L1), the ability to write in our foreign language

(L2) is a skill, which has to be taught and learnt (Brown, 2001). Tangpermpoon (2008) further argues that:

> When compared with other fundamental skills such as listening, speaking and reading, writing is the most difficult skill because it requires writers to have a great deal of lexical and syntactic knowledge as well as principles of organization in L2 to produce a good writing. (p. 1)

For this reason, writing is considered to be a daunting task for the EFL learner. In north Cyprus, where English is a foreign language, the students of the ELT departments, who are EFL teachers of the future, are EFL students themselves. Therefore, language teachers are usually non-native speakers of the language. In many cases, these pre-service teachers learn writing in-depth and the teaching of writing at the same time. Teaching and learning writing in the EFL context is also an important issue for the native speakers of English, especially in academic writing. Al-Buainain (2009) argues that "many students are not taught how to write academically even in their first language" (p. 321). There is a general consensus among the English language teachers as well as among lecturers in the ELT departments that students are weak in writing courses. This problem is invariably reflected on the other courses, which may not be directly related to the writing skill itself, by exigency of their requirements that entail the continuous writing activities in examinations and assignments.

Students who took part in this research had not been engaged in the processes of writing in their previous writing courses or in their language learning classrooms due to the problems mentioned earlier. Despite, the fact that the effectiveness of process writing has been researched (Badger & White, 2000; Bensen, 2007; Ho, 2006) and attracted attention by many language teachers, the employment of such an

approach seems very difficult in the current context as most English language teachers follow a grammatical/structural syllabus type dwelling on grammar points, giving very limited attention to the four skills, which are considered important when learning a foreign language (Harmer, 2007). Even in classes where the four skills are integrated in the grammatical syllabus design, the focus is on the final product of the writing students are expected to produce. Furthermore, students who are exposed to writing deal with the concept of composition or creative writing, neglecting essay writing, which is actually needed in academic environments. Even though students had been exposed to writing in their writing courses at university, they were not aware of the different types of essays, the language used and the strategies employed in order to be able to write a specific essay. In addition to this, students were presumably unaware of the fact that every essay is composed of an introduction, body and conclusion. So, apart from the difficulties with language, these students were also untrained on the term 'essay writing'. Thus, students were seen to be unaware of the different WCF and assessment types, which they were expected to give back to their students when they become EFL teachers.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study was two-fold. First, it aimed to investigate the challenges faced during the design and implementation of a writing course syllabus designed according to the principles of PGA and BLA. In this respect, it aimed to investigate both the lecturer's perspective and the students' attitudes towards the process. Second, it aimed to find out the effectiveness of implementing such a syllabus in an ELT department where the students who took the course would be future EFL teachers. The following research questions guided this study:

1. How effective is a syllabus designed with a blended learning approach for an advanced writing course in an ELT department?
   a. How do students' writings differ in pen-and-paper (portfolio) work and online work when both modes of writing follow a process genre approach?
   b. What are the challenges faced when applying a blended learning approach in a writing course in an EFL classroom?
   c. What are the students' perspectives on their experiences in a writing course designed with a blended learning approach (BLA)?
2. What are pre-service EFL teachers' perspectives who have not been exposed to the BLA regarding:
   a. the training they received with regard to teaching writing in the ELT department?
   b. the possibility of using different approaches (PGA and BLA) in their future teaching careers when teaching writing?

Limitations

This research was limited with the data collected from the participants who took part in this study. The assessment of the participants' performances was also limited with the methods specified in the course outline designed by the researcher. Time was also a limitation. Only one semester (16 weeks) was spent for the treatment phase, i.e. the use of two different approaches to teaching writing. Therefore, the findings are signified based on the time. In addition, this study was limited in terms of the syllabus designed for the writing course. The writing course

was specifically designed for pre-service EFL teachers and cannot be generalised to students in other departments.

Conclusion

This chapter provided information about the topic under investigation and presented the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, and the limitations. The focus of the current study is EFL writing, dealing with the areas concerning the teaching and learning of EFL writing. In addition to this, the PGA and BLA approaches that were employed in the course to carry out this study were briefly presented. The following chapter will present both theoretical information with regard to writing and teaching writing as well as recent relevant literature on teaching of the writing skill in EFL contexts.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the existing literature is designed to explore the theoretical foundation underpinning the learning of English as a foreign language (EFL) writing and the approaches to teaching EFL writing. It consolidates the two approaches, namely the Process Genre Approach (PGA) and the Blended Learning Approach (BLA), which were employed in the course related to this thesis, followed by syllabi types that are employed in teaching writing. The terms essays and the essay types employed in this study are also presented. Finally, the review recounts research related to feedback and assessment of writing, which are important aspects of teaching and learning of writing in a foreign language.

What is Writing?

Writing as defined in a dictionary is "the act or art of forming letters and characters on paper or other materials, for the purpose of recording the ideas which characters and words express, or of communicating them to others by visible signs" (Oxford Dictionary, 2011, p. 1382). According to many experts, the term writing has several meanings and definitions. For Daniels (1996), writing is the representation of language in a textual medium through the use of a set of signs or symbols. Widdowson (1978) puts forth that writing is the act of making up correct sentences and transmitting them through the visual medium as mark on paper. According to Hornby (1974) writing is in the sense of the verb 'write', which is to make letters or other symbols (egideographs) on a surface, especially with a pen or a pencil on

paper. As can be seen from these definitions, writing is perceived as highly associated to producing something on paper, which is limited in scope when today's technological innovations are considered. As technology advances, instantaneous electronic communication has become available in several different forms replacing paper writing. "The purposes of writing, the genres of written communication, and the nature of audience and author are all changing rapidly with the diffusion of computer-mediated communication, both for first and second language writers" (Warschaucer, 2007, p.107), The Cambridge Advanced Learner's dictionary and thesaurus (2014) online has incorporated the term computer screen in its new definition of writing which is presently " to make marks that represent letters, words, or numbers on a surface, such as paper or a computer screen, using a pen, pencil , or keyboard, or to use this method to record thoughts, facts , or messages." (para. 1)

Troyka (1987) defines writing as a way of communicating a message to a reader for a purpose. The purposes of writing are to express one's self, to provide information for the reader, to persuade the reader, and to create a literary work. In brief, it could be said that, writing ability is the skill to express ideas, thoughts, and feelings to other people in written symbols to make other people or readers comprehend the ideas conveyed. To be able to convey ideas, thoughts and feelings through writing, one should have lexical knowledge, grammatical knowledge, knowledge of the orthography, metacognitive knowledge and knowledge of the addressed readership and of ways texts function. For a writer to express himself/herself in writing, he/she needs to have some vocabulary (lexical) knowledge (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). Knowledge of vocabulary will, to one extent, influence the size of their text. Engber (1995) claims that, the amount of lexical richness of texts correlate substantially with holistic ratings of these texts. Limited lexical resources

seem to reduce a writer's possibility to express his/her ideas. Laufer and Nation (1995) are of the same opinion as they say that the vocabulary size, use of words of different frequency bands and composition rating are exceedingly interrelated. So, the more lexis a person possesses, the more he/she will be able to produce in a text.

Another important factor, which writers should possess in order to express themselves, is grammar. To be able to connect the words and establish a sentence to convey the intended meaning, the writer should have grammatical knowledge (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). These are structures that indicate the relationships between the constituents in the clause. Furthermore, a writer needs to have the knowledge of the orthography of the language, i.e. spelling and so forth (Abott & Berninger, 1993).

The discourse level of the writers' organization of text should also be taken into consideration. They should also take into account the way they express their communicative intentions. That is to say, writers should have knowledge of the addressed readership and of ways texts function in their community to be able to write effective texts (Cumming, 2001; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

In addition to the explicit knowledge mentioned earlier, Schoonen et al., (2003) put forth that writers need to have metacognitive knowledge. Metacognitive knowledge involves knowledge of what constitutes a good piece of writing and which writing strategies are likely to be employed for success in dealing simultaneously with all the constraints writing a text creates (Flower & Hayes, 1980). As a writer to be able to deal with the constraints that arise from lexical, grammatical, orthographical and discourse decisions simultaneously, the writer must have enough cognitive capacity in their working memory (Schoonen et al, 2003). Nevertheless, having knowledge about the above mentioned constraints is not

enough. Writers also need to be able to apply this knowledge efficiently and fluently. Having fluent access may lower the cognitive processing load for the writer, which therefore will enhance the writing process and possibly the quality of what is written (Chenoweth & Hayes, 2001; Cumming, 2001; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; McCutchen, 1996; Penningroth & Rosenberg, 1995).

Good writing. To be able to efficiently and fluently apply his/her knowledge, a writer needs to be familiar with certain strategies. These are the strategies which are adopted to enable the writer to produce a 'good' piece of writing, be it a letter or an academic article. The process in which these strategies are adopted is called the composing process (Krashen, 2004). Studies have shown that good writers utilize several of these strategies. Good writers are seen to have a plan before they write (Krashen, 2004). This plan is often changed and rewritten as new ideas arise. An experienced writer has certain thoughts and plans, whether these are put down on paper or not (Harmer, 2004). Furthermore, good writers are keen on revising. They consider their early drafts to be tentative, and understand that as they move from draft to draft, they come up with new ideas. In addition, good writers delay editing. Once satisfied with the ideas set on the page, formal correctness is taken into consideration. What's more, good writers are seen to stop frequently and reread what they have written (Krashen, 2004).

The above are the 'classical' components of the composing process. Krashen (2004) suggests two more components to be added to these. Firstly, productive writers engage in 'regular daily writing' rather than 'binge writing.' That is to say, instead of waiting until they have large blocks of free time, they write a modest amount each day. This is a strategy demonstrated to produce more writing as well as more new ideas (Boice, 1994). Secondly, a good writer understands the importance

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of short breaks. These breaks encourage the incubation of new ideas and solutions to problems (Krashen, 2001). So, it is crucial for a writer to write a small amount every day and have short breaks.

When a writer fails to adopt these strategies when writing on complex topics, it is one cause of writer's block. According to Rose (1984) writer's block is "an inability to begin or continue writing for reasons other than a lack of basic skill or commitment." (p. 3) A number of cases have been presented regarding writer's block that are evidently due to deficiency of mastery of the composing process (Rose, 1984).

Unlike the other skills, writing is a skill which has no evidence that it contributes to writing competence; those who write more do not write better and increasing writing does not result in better writing (Krashen, 1984, 1994). Krashen (2003) points out that, reading anything at all will help writing at least to some extent. In order to be able to write something for newspapers, it is crucial to read newspapers; textbooks about newspapers will not be sufficient (Smith, 1988). Reading has a significant effect on writing. Therefore, the integration of reading and writing will positively influence learner's writing skills. That is to say, when teaching writing, teachers should present model texts to students before students begin to write.

Teaching and Learning Writing in the EFL Context

People acquire their native language through speaking and listening. These are skills that are learnt naturally without being taught. Writing and reading on the other hand, are not acquired in the same way. For this reason, they have to be

specifically taught and only then are they learnt (Myles, 2002). Harmer (2007) is also

of the same opinion as he states that "the ability to write has to be consciously

learnt." (p. 3) Similar to our first language (L1), the ability to write in our foreign

language (L2) is a skill which has to be taught. This brings forth the importance of

the teacher's role. Hyland (2003) suggests that teachers should spend time on

reflection. Teachers should reflect on their experiences, the things they want their

learners to learn, the activities they use and how they could become better writing

teachers.

Generally speaking, there are some characteristics that effective language

teachers should hold such as being a good manager, patient, enthusiastic, flexible,

and intelligent (Baleghizadeh& Mozaheb, 2011). Apart from these characteristics,

Baleghizadehand Mozaheb (2011) put forth that teachers should have knowledge

about different approaches to the teaching of writing. In addition, an effective writing

teacher should be aware of the historical and experimental orientations in EFL

writing and be able to use them at the appropriate times. As Roland and Martin

(2011) stresses, the teacher should act as a facilitator of the learning process in

writing classes. Murray (1980) also claims that "the teacher has to restrain

him/herself from providing the content, taking care not to inhibit the students from

finding their own meaning, their own subjects, their own forms and their own

language." (p.13) However, teachers should be cautious about performing a type of

'Carl Rogers Therapy' in writing courses where the teacher only listens and nods

his/her head in agreement and does not take an active role in providing feedback to

their students (Carnecelli, 1980). This is one of the key elements of teaching writing.

In the EFL context different from the English as a second language (ESL)

context, learners are only exposed to English and/or academic English in the

classroom. ESL classrooms take place in countries where English is the dominant language, whereas EFL classrooms are in a country where English is not the dominant language (Bell, 2011). Therefore, the teacher's role in the EFL context regarding the teaching of writing plays a different role compared to the ESL context. Students in the EFL context need lots of practice using English therefore, teachers need to create opportunities for students to be exposed to English as much as possible in and outside of the classroom, mainly providing as many opportunities as possible to expose them to "live" and "real" English. In other words, students should not see English like other courses, i.e. memorizing a set of rules and words (Bell, 2011) but rather using the English language for communicative purposes. This could be made possible with the help of new technologies and innovative approaches. It is also suggested by Bell (2011) that "students need reasons to learn English and motivation to stick with it" (para. 10) in EFL contexts. Bell (2011) adds that English may be theoretical for the EFL students who are not living in an English spoken country. The teacher's role is vital here regarding motivation especially in writing courses because writing is seen as a frustrating and daunting task for the EFL learner (Arslan, 2014). In the case of pre-service ELT teachers, students' motivation becomes an issue as they both need to be motivated and able to motivate their students in the future.

Approaches to Teaching EFL Writing

There are four major approaches to teaching EFL writing. These are the product approach (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2007; Hyland, 2002; Silva; 1990), the process approach (Brown, 2001; Raimes, 1985; Silva, 1993; Wang, 2003; You,

2004), the genre approach (Casanave, 2004; Deng, 2007; Harmer, 2007; Hyland, 2003a; Hyland, 2003b; Leki, 2003) and the process genre approach (Badger & White, 2000).

The product approach. This is considered to be historically the most traditional approach to teaching writing. In the product approach, students are expected to produce the correct textual form that conforms to the model provided by their teacher. As the name suggests, in this approach, the final product, that is, the linguistic form, takes precedence over the process of learning to produce the product. In other words, in the product approach, students are taught to "develop competence in particular modes of written communication by deconstructing and reconstructing model texts" (Christmas, 2011, p. 1). Traditionally, this approach was used by many EFL teachers all around the world. Robertson (2008) posits that, "teacher-centeredness is often amplified if instructors organize their curriculum by means of a 'product approach' where instructors teach to and evaluate from sample, 'ideal' 'texts'." (p. 53) Furthermore, Brown (2001) asserted that in the product approach, successful learning is measured by how well-structured and grammatically correct a composition is. It is also important to note that in the product-based approach, students rarely acquire the skills required for creating and shaping their work because of the overemphasis on linguistic forms (Robertson, 2008).

This traditional approach, which has also been named the controlled-to-free approach, the text-based approach, and the guided composition (Raimes, 1983; Silva, 1990), focuses on the final piece of writing students produce and this final piece is measured according to the criteria of "vocabulary use, grammatical use, and mechanical considerations, i.e. spelling and punctuation," together with "content and organization" (Brown, 1994, p. 320). So, the focus is essentially on "the ability to

produce correct text" (Richards, 1990, p. 106). Teachers in this approach assign a piece of writing, collect it, and then return it for further revision with the errors either corrected or marked for the student to do the corrections (Raimes, 1983). The students, on the other hand, are encouraged to mimic a model text, which is usually presented and analysed at an early stage (Badger & White, 2000). That is to say, students are encouraged to imitate, copy and transform models provided by teachers or textbooks and present a perfect product. This product reflects the writer's language knowledge which is highly valued in this approach, even though very few people can create a perfect product on the first draft. The entire activity of writing is seen as "an exercise in habit formation" (Silva, 1990, p. 3). In this perspective, it could be said that the teacher plays a primary role as an examiner (Zamel, 1987).

According to Nunan (1991) those who employ a product approach follow four stages. In stage 1, model texts are read, and then features of the genre are highlighted. For example, if studying a formal letter, students' attention may be drawn to the importance of paragraphing and the language used to make formal requests. Moreover, if studying a story, the focus may be on the techniques used to make the story interesting, and students focus on where and how the writer employs these techniques. Stage 2 consists of controlled practice of the highlighted features, usually in isolation. So if students are studying a formal letter, they may be asked to practice the language used to make formal requests, practicing the 'I would be grateful if you would…' structure. Stage 3 is very important in organising ideas. The ideas themselves have less attention as the way the ideas are presented are of importance as it is seen as the control of language in this approach. Stage 4Is the conclusion of the learning process. Students choose from a choice of comparable writing tasks. Individually, they use the skills, structures, and vocabulary they have

been taught to produce the product; to show what they can do as fluent and competent users of the language.

Similar to the stages suggested by Nunan, Pincas (1982) puts forth four stages which writers go through in order to learn using a product approach: (a) familiarization, (b) controlled writing, (c) guided writing and (d) free writing. The familiarization stage aims to make learners aware of certain features of a particular text. In the controlled and guided writing sections, the learners practise the skills with increasing freedom until they are ready for the free writing section, when they "use the writing skill as part of a genuine activity such as a letter, story or essay." (p. 22)

The product approach has served to reinforce L2 writing in terms of grammatical and syntactical forms. There are a variety of activities which can raise students' awareness in writing from the lower level of language proficiency to advanced, such as the use of model paragraphs, sentence-combining, and rhetorical pattern exercises (Tangpermpoon, 2008). Some examples of these exercises can be found in Appendix N. The most important characteristic of this approach, however, is the lack of assessment done on drafting involved in producing the final product.

The process approach. In contrast to the product approach, the process approach mainly focuses on the stages of writing such as planning, drafting, revisiting or redrafting and editing (Harmer, 2007). In other words, the process approach has a constructivist view of the author; it sees the author as a communal learner and communicator (Murray, 1980). The constructivist theory, which focuses on the importance of social interaction in learning, was first introduced by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978). In the educational psychology literature, Vygotsky's theory is usually compared to Piaget's (1969) cognitive-constructivists

view of learners. Moffett (1992) merged Vygotsky's and Piaget's theories in the field of writing, to propound his own theory of discourse genre, which "focuses on the act of writing from the perspective of author (and reader) in relationship to experience, measuring the rhetorical distance at which an author describes, reports, generalizes and/or theorizes about a given situation or event" (Robertson, 2008, p.55). In the process approach to learning, methods of teaching play pivotal roles and the learning can be regarded as non-linear and discursive.

The process approach to writing initially dwelt on the fundamental issue of first language (L1) writing but with a shift in emphasis from the text to the writer and on "the cycle of writing activities" which are involved in text production (Tribble, 1996, p. 37). Studies on second/foreign language (L2) highlighted the fact that writing as an activity entails the writer or learner to move through identifiable stages of developing the text from data collection to publishing it (Arndt, 1987;Raimes, 1985; Zamel, 1982, 1983). Secondly, it advocates that the writing process is recursive. Additionally, cognitive strategies are central to the working of this approach. This approach treats all writing as a creative act which requires time and positive feedback to be done well. In process writing, the teacher moves away from being someone who sets students a writing topic and receives the finished product for correction without any intervention in the writing process itself (White & Arndt, 1991). The teacher becomes involved in the writing process by facilitating, monitoring and guiding students throughout the drafts they are expected to produce by giving specific feedback and correction.

Even though many different stages have been set forth for the process approach to writing by several different scholars (e.g. Harmer, 2007; Hedge, 1988; White & Arndt, 1991), they all seem to share the same features. Tribble (1996)

identifies four stages for this approach: (1) prewriting, (2) composing/drafting, (3) revising, and (4) editing. These stages are recursive, or nonlinear, and they can interact with each other throughout the writing process (Raimes, 1985, quoted in Tribble, 1996). This is a cyclical process in which writers may return to pre-writing activities after doing some editing or revising. Many writers return to prewriting activities during some stage of the revision process to develop a new idea or refine a viewpoint. The process approach emphasizes revision, and also feedback from others, so students may produce many drafts with much crossing out of sentences and moving around of paragraphs. The correction of spelling and punctuation is not of central importance at the early stages.

Tribble (1996) claims that the process approach brings meaningfulness to the learners in the task that they are dealing with, which is a valuable element. Students make personal connections to the topic and thus come to understand the processes they follow when writing it. This starts with prewriting and brainstorming to generate ideas and activate the schemata, which is the background experience or world knowledge a person possesses that allows a writer to relate personal experiences to the topic and discover everything s/he has to say. Tribble (1996) also defines the process approach as "an approach to the teaching of writing which stresses the creativity of the individual writer, and which pays attention to the development of good writing practices rather than the imitation of models." (p. 160) Thus, the focus shifts from the final product itself to the different stages the writer goes through in order to create this product. According to O'Brien (2004), the concept of this approach as an activity in which teachers encourage learners to see writing not as grammar exercises, but as the discovery of meaning and ideas, is very important. Hyland (2003) argues that the process approach to teaching writing

emphasizes the writer as an independent producer of texts so that teachers allow their students time and opportunity to develop their abilities to plan, define a rhetorical problem, and propose and evaluate solutions. In this way, the aim of writing moves away from being focused on producing a perfect final product towards being good at developing meaningful arguments.

The genre approach. Hammond and Derewianka (2001) define the genre approach as the way to language and literacy education that combines an understanding of genre and genre teaching together in the writing class. This approach is also named differently by different scholars, such as the "English for Academic Purposes approach" (Silva, 1990, pp. 16-17) or the "English for Specific Purposes approach" (Dudley-Evans, 1997, pp. 151-152), as they stress the importance of various types of writing which are tied closely to social purposes (Maley, 1996). The main emphasis of the genre approach is on social contexts (Widodo, 2006). In this approach, writing is not only a linguistic and social activity; it is also a social act (Santoso, 2010). In other words, students are expected to present their work to a particular audience in a particular context, and with a certain purpose (Santoso, 2010). Success in communication is measured by the extent to which a type of written organization and layout is recognized by the members of a discourse community (Paltridge, 2006) because the community members share the same language customs and norms (Harmer, 2007). This approach to writing flourished in the 1980s with the notion that student writers could benefit from studying different types of written texts. According to Bamforth (1993, as cited in Nunan, 2001):

genre theory grounds writing in particular social context, and stresses the convention-bound nature of much discourse. Writing, therefore, involves conformity to certain established patterns, and the teacher's role is to induce

learners into particular discourse communities and their respective text types.

(p. 94)

This theory perceives texts as attempts to communicate with readers (Miao, 2005). Hence, communicative purposes determine the social contexts in which writing is used, and the text types that characterized by both the grammatical items and the overall shape or structure of the discourse. According to Hyland (2002) writing instruction in this respect may be considered as having three stages: "modelling the target genre, analysing the genre through teacher-student negotiation and constructing a final text." (p. 21) The genre approach focuses more on the reader, and on the conventions that a piece of writing needs to follow in order to be successfully accepted by its readership. The student thus will need to be able to produce texts which fulfil the expectations of its readers regarding grammar, organization and content (Muncie, 2002).

Nunan (1999) argues that different genres of writing "are typified by a particular structure and by grammatical forms that reflect the communicative purpose of the genre." (p. 280) In the classroom context, where academic writing usually predominates, writing tasks can be introduced that are based on different genres with roots in the real world, such as the genres of essays, editorials, and business letters. When students are exposed to investigating different genres, they can perceive the differences in structure and form and then be able to apply what they have learnt to their own writing.

This approach acknowledges that writing takes place in a social situation and is a reflection of a particular purpose, and it understands that learning can happen consciously through imitation and analysis (Badger & White, 2000). When teaching a foreign language, the genre approach is useful for sensitizing instructors to link

between formal and functional properties that they teach in the classroom. Bhatia (1993) suggests that it is important for writing teachers to connect the two elements (formal and functional properties) to be able to help students understand how and why linguistic conventions are used for particular rhetorical effects. Moreover, genres reflect a cultural ideology, so the study of genres also opens for students an awareness of the assumption of groups who uses specific genres for specific ends, allowing students to critique not only the types of knowledge they learn, but also the ways in which knowledge is valued and in which it reflects covert assumptions (Coe, 1994).

Cope and Kalantzis (1993) have identified three phases for the genre approach to writing in the classroom context:

(1) The target genre is modelled for the students.

(2) A text is jointly constructed by the teacher and students.

(3) A text is independently constructed by each student. The approach acknowledges that writing takes place in a social situation and reflects a particular purpose, and that learning can happen consciously through imitation and analysis, which facilitates explicit instruction (Badger & White 2000). (p. 11)

According to Badger and White (2000), writing in this approach is regarded as an extension of the product approach since learners have an opportunity to study a wide variety of writing patterns, for example, business letters, academic reports, and research papers. Hicks (1997) also indicates that genre theory calls for a return to grammar instruction, but grammar instruction at the level of text, where personal intentions are filtered through the typical rhetorical forms available to accomplish particular social purposes. In this perspective, it could be said that the central belief

is "we don't just write, we write something to achieve some purpose." (Hyland, 2003, p. 18) Like other writing approaches, the genre approach is increasingly being adopted in the foreign language writing classrooms due to its certain strengths. It could be perceived that the focus of writing, regarding the classroom context when employing this approach, aims to integrate the knowledge of a particular genre and its communicative purpose in order to both help learners to produce their written products and to communicate to others in the same discourse community successfully.

The process genre approach. As its name suggests, the process genre approach is the synthesis of the process and genre approaches, which Badger and White (2000) aptly termed. This approach allows students to study the relationship between purpose and form for a particular genre as they use the recursive processes of prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. By going through these steps, students develop their awareness of different text types and at the same time the composing process.

For Badger and White (2000), as in the genre and product approaches, writing is viewed as involving knowledge about language. It is also knowledge of the context in which writing happens and especially the purpose for the writing as in the genre approach. The process genre approach describes that writing development happens by drawing out the learners' potential as in the genre approach and by providing input to which the learners respond as in the process approach. Therefore, the situation that gives rise to a particular genre of writing allows students to produce some writing in line with their own needs supported by the teacher, peers and sample texts (Badger, 2002).

The six steps students go through when acquiring the process genre approach illustrated by Badger and White (2000, pp. 157-158) are as follows:

1. Preparation. Teachers define a situation that will require a written text and place it within a specific genre, such as a persuasive essay arguing for or against an issue of current interest. By doing this the schemata is activated and therefore it allows students to anticipate the structural features of the given genre.

2. Modelling and reinforcing. Here, the teacher introduces a model of the genre and encourages students to consider the social purpose of the text and lets them determine the audience. For example, the purpose of an argumentative essay is to persuade the reader to act on something. Here, the teacher discusses how the text is structured and how its organization develops to accomplish its purpose. The students may do some comparisons with other texts to reinforce what they have learned about the particular genre.

3. Planning. In this step, many meaningful activities are introduced to activate the students' schemata about the topic. These include brainstorming, discussing, and reading associated material. The aim is to help the students develop an interest in the topic by relating it to their experience.

4. Joint constructing. This step will facilitate later independent composing. The teacher and students work together to begin writing a text. While doing so, the teacher uses the writing processes of brainstorming, drafting, and revising. The students contribute information and ideas, and the teacher writes the generated text on the board or computer. The final draft provides a model for students to refer to when they work on their individual compositions.

5. Independent constructing. At this point, students have examined model texts and have jointly constructed a text in the genre. They now undertake the task of composing their own texts on a related topic. Class time can be set aside for students to compose independently so that the teacher is available to help, clarify, or consult about the process. The writing task can be continued as a homework assignment.

6. Revising. Students eventually will have a draft that will undergo final revision and editing. This does not necessarily mean that teachers have to collect all the papers and mark them one by one. Students may check, discuss, and evaluate their work with fellow students, as the teacher again guides and facilitates. Research literature has widely discussed different aspects of peer-editing pedagogy, which will be further discussed in the following sections on feedback. Some of the benefits of incorporating peer revision in writing instruction include students working in a friendly environment, gaining insights regarding their own work by reading other work, to see other approaches and perspectives of an issue in the given writing, improve students' ability to read a paper critically and strengthening student communication skills, especially in respect to critiquing and providing feedback. Yang (2005) suggests that teachers at this stage may make an effort to publish the students' work, which will impart a sense of achievement and motivate the students to become better writers.

In Figure 1 below, Badger and White (2000, p. 159), illustrate how these six steps

interact in a recursive way with themselves and with other writing skills:

FIGURE 1: APPLICATION OF THE PROCESS GENRE APPROACH
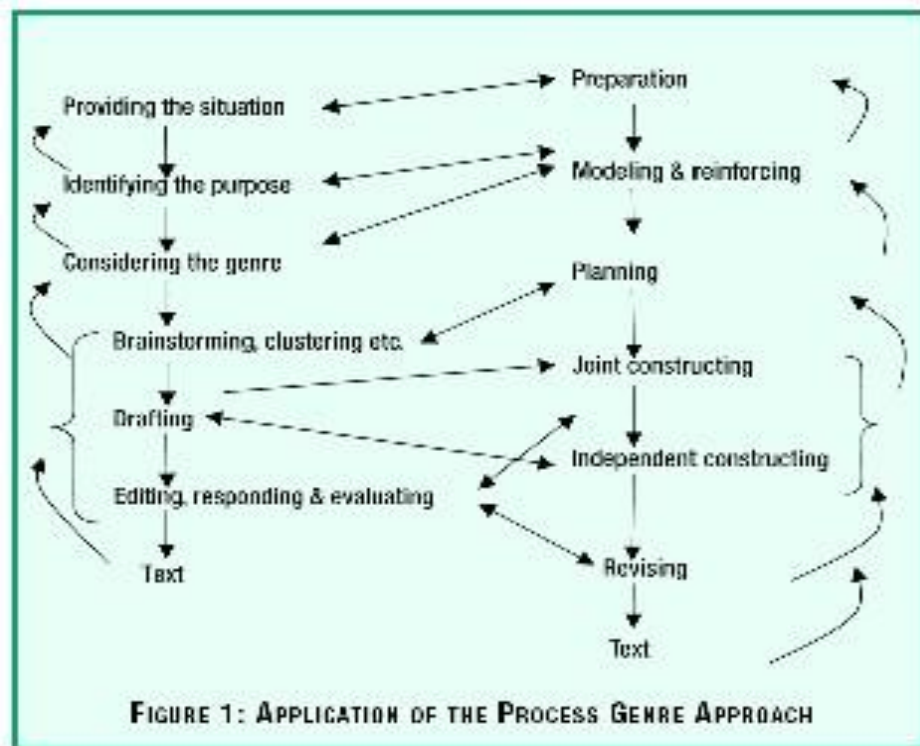
Badger and White (2000) also suggest a genre process model of teaching

writing illustrated below in Figure 2.
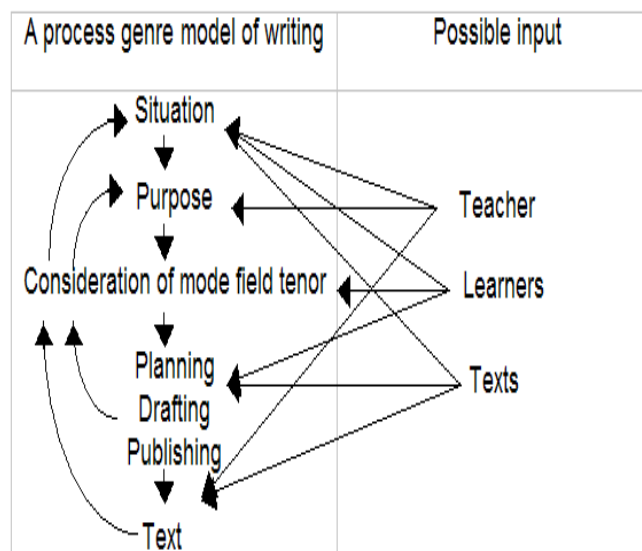
Figure 2. A Process Genre Model of Teaching Writing (Badger & White, 2000, p.

159). This figure illustrates a process genre model of teaching writing.

As can be seen in Figure 2, Badger and White (2000, p. 159) have suggested five features of a process genre model, i.e. situation, purpose, consideration of mode/field/tenor, planning/drafting/publishing, and text. According to them, in the writing classroom, teachers need to replicate the situation as closely as possible and then provide sufficient support for learners to identify the purpose and other aspects of the social contexts, such as tenor, field, and mode of their writing. For instance, writers who want to be car dealers would need to take into consideration that their description is intended to sell the car (purpose), that it might appeal to a certain group of people (tenor), that it might include certain information (field), and that there are ways in which car descriptions are presented (mode). After experiencing a whole process of writing, the students would use the skills appropriate to the genre, such as redrafting and proofreading, and finally complete their texts.

Kim and Kim (2005) put forth that following the conditions set out above, composition courses will not only afford students the chance to enjoy the creativity of writing and to become independent writers (as in process approaches), but also help them understand the linguistic features of each genre and emphasize the discourse value of the structures they are using (as in genre approaches). Yang (2005) suggests three general guidelines for teachers when using the process genre approach. Firstly, because writing is considered to be difficult by many students, the teacher should adopt the role of an assistant and a guide and work closely with students to encourage them, offering helpful feedback and suggestions. It is crucial for teachers to offer positive and constructive advice on what students have written. Teachers can also make efforts to arouse curiosity and self-confidence by matching students interests to the writing topic, and they should be sensitive to any individual differences that arise in the writing process. Secondly, teachers should explicitly

train students about writing strategies. If teachers demonstrate how prewriting activates the schemata and outline strategies for the drafting and revision processes, then students will be more successful in writing compositions. As Yau (1991) states, writing performance is as much a result of student's use of strategies in various processes of writing, as it is of their handling of the language. Thirdly, teachers should integrate the listening, speaking, and reading skills in the writing class. Integrating the four language skills promotes the expansion of the students' overall language competence (Goodman, 1986). The process genre approach makes this feasible, as background material is read during prewriting activities, and speaking and listening occur during lectures and when giving or receiving feedback.

Blended Learning

The most effective teaching and learning have always involved the use of different methods, approaches, and strategies to maximize knowledge acquisition and skills development. Therefore, the integration (blending) of different learning approaches, strategies, and opportunities is not new (Williams, 2003; Oliver & Trigwell, 2005). Masie, in Bonk and Graham (2006), appears to agree with this by stating that "all learning is blended learning." (p. 22) Good teachers will always adopt more than one method or approach in their teaching, and good learners will always combine different strategies during their learning. The practice of blending learning is, therefore, not a new way of teaching, nor is it a single method of learning. The term 'blended learning' first emerged around the year 2000 and was then often associated with simply supplementing traditional classroom learning with self-study e-learning activities. More recently, the pedagogic value of providing blended learning opportunities has received significant attention, and the term has

evolved to encompass a wealthier set of learning approaches and environments (Eydelman, 2013).

Optimal conditions for effective language learning have been identified and characterized in many studies. Most EFL teaching is considered to take place in a classroom. Therefore, a foreign language teacher is faced with a daunting challenge in order to achieve the 'optimal' conditions presented. Even though language teachers have employed various effective methods and techniques into their classrooms (Richards & Rogers, 2001), Marsh (2012) claims that students rarely have the opportunity to actively engage in using the target language in actual settings. Egbert and Hanson-Smith (1999; cited in Marsh, 2012, p. 1) have proposed a general characterization of the optimal conditions which include the following:

1. Learners interact in the target language with an authentic audience.

2. Learners are involved in authentic tasks.

3. Learners are exposed to and are encouraged to produce varied and creative language.

4. Learners have opportunities to interact socially and negotiate meaning.

5. Learners have enough time and feedback.

6. Learners are guided to attend mindfully to the learning process.

7. Learners work in an atmosphere with an ideal stress/anxiety level.

8. Learner autonomy is supported.

In order to achieve the 'optimal' language learning environment suggested by Egbert and Hanson-Smith (1999) teachers use various 'blends.' In the past teachers used to use audio tapes and videos to contribute to their language teaching. Now, the Internet is at the fore and teachers are developing and updating themselves as technology is

developing (Clark, 2003). The introduction of personal computers and access to the internet have provided "unlimited sources of information in the form of readable, authentic texts that address a wide variety of topics that are essential for language development" for both educators and learners in the EFL writing context (Kenworthy, 2004, para. 1). The range of possible components of a blend has expanded as the new digital age has. Therefore, the concept of blended learning has changed over time.

Computers have been used in language teaching since the 1960s, and teachers have been blending face-to-face instruction with various kinds of technology-mediated language learning for years. The terms network-mediated learning and computer-assisted language learning have offered new directions and have gained attention in the field of language learning (Guarda, 2012, Warschauer, 1996). However, the impact of computer-assisted language learning (CALL) has been relatively modest (Reinhardt & Ryu, 2013). This has been mainly due to the absence of technology appropriate to the specific needs of language learners. This all changed with the arrival of the Internet, which provided foreign language learners with immediate access to the worldwide community of English language speakers, and to authentic resources through its billions of interconnected Web pages. The Internet, in particular the emergence of Web 2.0, represents a powerful medium for foreign language teaching and learning (Marsh, 2012). This rapid growth of learning technologies involving the Internet and web-based communication is now at fore even though face-to-face foreign language teaching is still at core. Language teachers and learners have wider opportunities to investigate and explore a suitable mix of teaching and learning styles for given tasks. Computer mediated communication tools for language learning have moved from e-mail and text-based message boards

and forums to blogs, wikis and social networking sites (Chun, 2008). Technologies such as Twitter and Facebook are now replacing the instant text messages. Blogs (Arslan &Şahin-Kizil, 2010; Ducate & Lomicka, 2008; Fellner & Apple, 2006) and wikis are used to engage students to write individually and collaboratively (Elola& Oskoz, 2010).

There are many definitions of blended learning in the literature (Hofmann, 2001; Macdonald, 2006; Oliver & Trigwell, 2005; Procter, 2003; Thorne, 2003; Whitelock & Jelfs, 2003) and Staker and Horn (2012) define it as follows:

> Blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns at least in part through online delivery of content and instruction with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home. (p. 4)

From the teacher's perspective blended learning could be defined as:

> Blended Learning is a pedagogical approach facilitated by a teacher where students have some control over their learning; and the teacher seamlessly incorporates the use of online learning tools (e.g. discussion boards, online collaboration, blogs, etc.), technology tools (computers, digital white boards, cameras, etc.), and face-to-face instruction so that instruction and learning can be accessed at any time by the student through multiple electronic devices. (Darrow, 2012, para. 6)

Nevertheless, all references to blended learning regard the term as a use of face-to-face teaching as a basic building block of the learning experience, enriched and enhanced by the integration of the Internet and other teaching and learning technologies into studies undertaken both in and out of the classroom (Garnham

&Kaleta, 2002; Marsh, 2012; Williams, 2002). Obviously, this integration is done with the monitoring and support of the teacher, together with any selected materials and has a reflection on the aims and needs of the learners.

Teaching and learning in online environments can provide different ways of learning and the construction of a potentially richer learning environment that provides fresh approaches to learning, thereby allowing different learning styles, as well as greater diversification in and greater access to learning (Fry, Ketteridge, Marshall, 2009). Such learning environments can supplement or complement traditional face-to-face learning environments or, may provide a complete learning package that requires little face-to-face contact. Sharma and Barrett (2007) argue that an effective course with a BLA should not replace the efforts of a teacher but rather should be integrated as two complementary parts using technology complementing and face-to-face teaching.

Without any doubt, all teaching in the very near future will be supported by more or less digital or net-based flexible solutions in the educational organization. Taking these into account as teachers, we should ask ourselves how blended learning should be (Marsh, 2012).

In order to enhance students' learning, up-to-date tools are blended into the learning environment. For example, word processing software is used to experiment with collaborative writing, self-assessment, and peer assessment; this function could also be taken outside the classroom by the use of wikis (Krebs, Schmidt, Henninger, Ludwig & Muller, 2010;Turgut, 2009). Furthermore, for students to practice their conversation skills through instant messaging, students are thereby encouraged to use forums for discussion on topics of interest. In addition to this, when students are

given class projects, the Internet is used for research (Miller, Hanfer, Ng Kwai Fun, 2012). What's more, blogs are used to practise writing and engage with the 'real' audience, to create learner diaries which are used to foster reflective practises and help develop skills and strategies that are crucial in independent success. Likewise, to summarize the day's learning for absentees and provide writing practise for the "summary" of the day class blogs are thus employed. All the mentioned examples are already being adopted in classrooms where students have subconsciously been engaged in the blended learning experience (Joutsenvirta & Myyry, 2010; Marsh, 2012).

Although, blended learning, i.e. integrating the use of technology into classroom-based learning and teaching, is currently seen as a relatively new concept, previous research (Pena-Sanchez & Hicks, 2006; Stracke, 2005; Stracke, 2007a) indicates that when implemented appropriately, learning experience could be significantly improved by employing blended learning. Ruthven-Stuart's (2003) study revealed that one of the roles of a computer was not to dominate the classroom interaction but to be "a complement to classroom teaching." (p. 170) Marsh (2012) has identified many benefits of employing a BLA. According to her blended learning:

- provides a more individualized learning experience

- provides more personalized learning support

- supports and encourages independent and collaborative learning

- increases student engagement in learning

- accommodates a variety of learning styles

- provides a place to practice the target language beyond the classroom

- provides a less stressful practice environment for the target language

- provides flexible study, anytime or anywhere, to meet learners' needs

- helps students develop valuable and necessary twenty-first century learning skills (pp. 4-5)

Sharma and Barrett (2007) put forth three additional reasons for employing blended learning in ELT: (a) Learners' expectations – learners nowadays expect technology to be integrated into their language classes, (b) Flexibility – learners expect to be able to fit learning into their busy lives, especially professional adults and university students, and (c) Ministry of Education (or similar) directives – in some contexts teachers are expected to offer blended learning options. Other researchers argue that blended learning improves pedagogy, increased access/flexibility, increased cost effectiveness, convenience working in your own time and own pace, learner expectations, motivation, autonomy, collaboration, market reach, experimental learning (Aborisade, 2013; Bo & O'Hare, 2013; Dudeney & Hockly, 2013; Eydelman, 2013; Fleet, 2013; Krake, 2013; Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013; Peachey, 2013; Sokol, et al., 2013; Whittaker, 2013).

Dziuban, Hartman and Moskal's (2004) study on their blended learning courses found that it had "the potential to increase student learning outcomes while lowering attrition rates in comparison with equivalent fully online courses" and that blended learning results "in success and attrition rates were comparable to the face-to-face modality for all ethnicities." (p. 5) Another study carried out by Harker and Koutsantoni (2005) also found that in terms of student retention the blended learning mode was more effective than the distance learning mode on their English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programme. Other studies conducted focused on leaner's' attitudes when blended learning was employed. Leakey and Ranchoux's (2006)

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study found that students preferred the BLA (CALL experience) because it was more "positive and motivating than traditional classroom learning." (p. 357) Brett's (1996) study revealed that students' attitudes were strongly favourable and that they believed effective learning through multimedia delivered high quality independent learning experiences. Another study carried out among Taiwanese EFL learners showed that learners had positive attitudes toward the use of multimedia resources in their language learning programme (Lin, 2003).In terms of the effectiveness of the BLA approach in language teaching, Banados (2006) indicated that students showed progress in all the skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and language components (pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar) when a BLA was employed. Uluyol and Karadeniz's (2009) study drawing on students' achievement and perceptions regarding a BLA revealed that students have positive attitudes when a BLA is employed and that the methods of online and face-to-face teaching in courses are useful and therefore, should be adopted in all courses.

Teaching writing in a blended learning environment – mixing face-to-face classes with computer-based or web-based activities as part of a language course – has been discussed in several studies (Adair- Hauck, Willingham- McLain & Youngs, 1999; Arslan, 2014; Barr, Koppel, Reeves, Hammick & Freeth, 2005; Chenoweth & Murday, 2003; Chenoweth, Ushida & Murday, 2006; Echavez-Solano, 2003; Eydelman, 2013; Green & Youngs, 2001; Scida & Saury, 2006). Learners of French, Spanish and German with a focus on the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) with grammar, vocabulary and culture were investigated in these studies (Grgurovic, 2010). They report that integrating computers into a blended learning environment can contribute to the teaching and learning of various kinds of language skills. Technologies and activities available in a blended learning

environment with regard to the area of writing appears to be a benefit (Miyazoe & Anderson, 2010).

After having decided to employ a blended learning approach in the language learning classroom, a teacher then has to verify the blend and choose from a multitude of models. It should be taken into account that there is no single optimal mix (Eydelman, 2013). It all depends on the goals and constraints one has in mind (Shaw & Igneri, 2006). Graham (2004) also makes this point, stressing the 'infinite' number of design solutions and their context dependency. As a language teacher one need not rigidly adopt one method or approach in his/her language learning classrooms. Various classroom management techniques are employed together with various methods and approaches in order to introduce the new language (Marsh, 2012). Different software choices of the technology mode of teaching have been employed in several studies. Moodle (Aborisade, 2013; Bo & O'Hare, 2013; Dudeney & Hockly, 2013; Gilbert, 2013; Peachey, 2013), PBWorks (Eydelman, 2013), Wimba (Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013), a Vertual Learning Environment (VLE), e.g. Blackboard (White, et al., 2013), Pearson Fronter (Douglas & Paton, 2013), Mobile phones (Kern, 2013), Posterous (Kern, 2013), Flash (Beagle & Davies, 2013), Email (Keedwell, 2013; Russell, 2013), Screen casts (Russell, 2013), Reward CD-ROMS (Whittaker, 2013), Modules (Sokol et al., 2013), Macmillan English Campus (Bilgin, 2013; Krake, 2013), Internet (Gilbert, 2013; Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013), creating a site called 'New Generation' (Wiki) (Fleet, 2013), Blogs (Arslan, 2014) have all appeared to positively contribute to the learning environment with significantly constructive outcomes.

Despite such positive research outcomes, it is important to remember that blended learning is not simply mixing information technologies with face-to-face

learning. This is not sufficient when the potential of blended learning is taken into account. Considering the term blending, it could be said that "there is no single perfect blend, nor a set or simple formula for making a 'good' blend" (Marsh, 2012 p. 3). Lamping (2004) is also in the same belief that there is "no single perfect blend" (p. 7). However, there is a range of important factors that are essential in order to achieve an "effective" blend. According to Neumeier (2005) finding the most effective and efficient combination of learning modes for the individual learning subject is the most important aim of a blended learning design. Hoffmann (2001) argues that determining the right blend is not easy and should not be underestimated.

Marsh (2012) puts forth that the 'ingredients' of the blend have to complement each other. She adds that the mismatch between the several components on the one hand may cause confusion and frustration on behalf of the students and, on the other hand, it may increase the workload for the teacher who has to attempt to bring the disparate components together to achieve a coherent learning experience. Furthermore, it could be said that in order to establish complementarily, it is crucial to identify the learning outcomes, identify the students' needs, identify the different, potential components available as a teacher.

Choosing the material is also another aspect, which must be taken into account when dealing with a blend. Students should be encouraged and demonstrated that technology has much to offer in terms of their language learning. Evaluating educational materials is yet another must teachers have to encounter. Marsh (2012) suggests that learners should have the opportunity of choosing the medium which best suits their needs, either the newer technologies or the older media such as CD-ROMs. Therefore, teachers should vary the usage of such media to accommodate the

students' needs. In short, needs analysis and negotiation with the students should be taken into account.

Blends in which technology supported self-study is central require support. Marsh (2012) identifies three important ways in which learners will require support: academic, affective and technical. The academic support is crucial as students struggle with the concepts and constructs of language and with learning whether in or out of the classroom. The affective support is related to interaction. Classroom interaction provides an excellent medium to support students who might be struggling with the coursework or feel a bit lost, especially when working at home alone. Finally, whenever technology is involved – and this is the case in any learning environment – things can go wrong. Technical support is vital, and teachers and students need this support in order to feel comfortable in what is a new and challenging experience.

Blended learning is an approach that is student-centred. The classroom is considered the familiar learning environment, where students by no means follow this so called path as a starting point for promoting student-centred learning practices. In student-centred teaching, teachers focus their planning, their teaching, and their assessment around the needs and abilities of their students. The main idea behind the practice is that learning is most meaningful when topics are relevant to the students' lives, needs, and interests and when the students themselves are actively engaged in creating, understanding, and connecting to knowledge (Marsh, 2012). According to Jones (2007) the term student-centred is when students:

- are involved in the learning process.

- don't depend on their teacher all the time.

- communicate with each other in pairs and small groups.

- value each other's contributions.

- cooperate.

- learn from each other.

- help each other.

- in a student-centred classroom, the teacher helps to guide students.

- manages their activities.

- directs their learning.

- helps students develop their language skills (p. 8).

"A blended design allows for a face-to-face induction period and on-going instructor support, while providing flexible opportunities for learner reflection and online collaboration" (Gilbert, 2013, p. 33). Students are given work to accomplish online i.e. projects with only instructor support. These projects are aimed to help learners gain autonomous strategies for evaluating the credibility of online information (Gilbert, 2013). Therefore, a more student-centred approach is provided when taking into account Jones' (2007) above explanation of the term student-centred.

Teacher's role in BLA. Just like our students who are continuously updating themselves in this new era, teachers also need to train themselves in order to use technology effectively. For this reason, the role of the language teacher in facilitating the blend should not be disvalued (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Blended learning is more reliance on student self-directed learning, where the teacher helps students take on the responsibility for their own learning which they are not used to due to the traditional face-to-face classroom environment. Blended learning encourages

students to adopt and use learning strategies that are different from what they are used to. Even though blended language courses aim to foster autonomous learning, this does not mean that students are learning on their own (Eydelman, 2013). Teachers have a significant role in supporting and facilitating this process.

Jones (2007) puts forth that the teachers' role when employing a BLA is to help and encourage their students in order to develop their skills. He adds that "students cannot be ''taught'' –they can only be helped to learn." (p. 25)Sharma and Barrett (2007) point out that the teacher's role in BLA is to help their students develop the skills they require to work independently, especially if the case is where they are learning a language for the first time in a blended learning environment. On behalf of the teaching and learning environment the teacher's role has always remained central in terms of structure. The classroom and face-to-face teaching component is the core of blended language learning and the role of the teacher in the blended learning environment remains vital. Technology is only one aspect, which can achieve up to a certain point. Therefore, the teacher is the one who motivates and is the organizing force that integrates students to the online and classroom learning. In other words, many of the features of the teacher's role remain unchanged in the blended learning environment (Marsh, 2012). Thus, the teacher is still the encourager, motivator, guider and monitor of progress, feedback giver, the booster of confidence and the maintainer of motivation. Nevertheless, the teacher is perceived as a facilitator of move towards a more autonomous learner profile:

> The pedagogical rationale behind BLL (blended language learning) is the desire to allow for a higher degree of learner independence in the teaching and learning of foreign languages (Stracke, 2007b, p. 1).

Supporting students in the new learning environment is crucial. It is often overlooked that students need time to adapt to and develop in a new learning environment. Marsh (2012) suggests that a blended language course should provide students with the tools and the opportunities to interact with their classmates and it is important that students learn to take full advantage of the online community. Many online learning materials are automatically 'marked', so students receive an immediate 'score.' Achieving the correct answers provides students with a clear sense of progress and achievement, but students also need to know what to do when they get something wrong. Hence, supporting the online learning with face-to-face interaction is very important. Allan (2007) points out that blended learning "appears to offer the opportunity to combine the best of a number of worlds in constructing a program that fits the particular needs in terms of time, space and technologies of a particular group of students or end-users." (p. 8)

Syllabi

In order to design a course with a given approach, i.e. the BLA in this case, it is crucial that the course lecturer or designer is familiar with all the possible ways/types of syllabi to enable him/her to achieve the best model according to his/her goals. EFL teachers are accustomed to the process of planning, setting up and the running of courses. In addition, the knowledge about designing syllabi, making choices of content and materials and assessing student performances are similarly reviewed by academic directors of schools (White, Martin, Stimson & Hodge, 1991). The above mentioned are all some aspects of curriculum development, taking into account the fact that the terms curriculum and syllabus are sometimes misused and

misunderstood, and sometimes differentiated and are sometimes used interchangeably (Xiaotang, 2004).

Richards (2005) points out that the history of curriculum development in language teaching starts with the notion of syllabus design. One aspect of curriculum development is syllabus design, but it is not identical with it. Although there are many definitions of the term syllabus (Altman & Cashin 1992; Davis, 1993; Parkes & Harris, 2002; Yalden, 1984),according to Richards (2001), a syllabus is a specification of the content of a course and lists what will be taught and tested and syllabus design is the process of developing a syllabus. Mohseni (2008) argues that language teaching syllabi involve the combination of subject matter, i.e. what to teach, and linguistic matter, i.e. how to teach. The syllabus in this respect performs as a guide for both the teacher and the learner by providing some goals to be accomplished. Therefore, he adds that syllabi deal with linguistic theory and theories of language learning and how they are utilized in the classroom.

A syllabus driven approach is followed by most educational programs around the world (Bensen & Silman, 2012). That is to say, the syllabus determines the kind of materials that are used and the ways they will be exploited in classroom teaching. The syllabus in certain educational contexts can also determine how materials should be designed in the first place (Xiaotang, 2004). As mentioned earlier, one major decision in language teaching concerns the choice of a syllabus. For this reason, this choice should be made as conscientiously and with as much information as possible (Bensen & Silman, 2012). Reilly (1988) suggests the following guidelines to syllabus choice and design:

- Teachers determine what outcomes are desired for the students in the instructional program or define what the students should be able to do as a result of instruction.

- Teachers rank the syllabus types presented as to their likelihood of leading to the outcomes desired.

- Teachers evaluate available resources in materials and in training for teachers.

- Teachers rank the types of syllabus relative to available resources and consider what syllabus types would be the easiest to implement given the available resources.

- Teachers compare the lists of the syllabus types, make as few adjustments and produce a new ranking based on the resources constraints.

- Teachers repeat the process, taking into account the constraints contributed by the teacher, student and other factors.

- Teachers determine a final ranking, taking into consideration all the information from the earlier steps.

- Teachers designate one or two types as dominant and one as one as secondary.

- Teachers translate the decisions into actual teaching units.

Confusion over the years have been made when taking into account what different types of content are possible in language teaching syllabi and as to whether the differences are in syllabus or in the method. A number of distinct types of language teaching syllabi exist, which may be implemented in various teaching situations (Nunan, 1994; Railey, 1988; Richards, 2001). According to Harmer (2007) there are 6 types of syllabi:

Grammatical syllabi (structural/formal syllabi). Grammatical syllabi involve the learning of language which is shaped upon language items/structures, i.e. listing items such as the present simple, countable/uncountables, comparatives, and so on. The most common syllabus type is most probably the grammatical syllabus where the complexity and simplicity of grammatical items are selected and graded (Bensen & Silman, 2012). Each structural step is added to the grammar collection of the learner, who is expected to master these steps. Taking this into account, the focus is seen to be on the outcomes or the product. Learners who are employed the grammar syllabus, learn the structures easily as it moves from simple to difficult.

Topic/Content-based syllabi. Topic/Content syllabi group contents in sequences of topics, such as the weather, sport and so on. A topic/content-based-syllabus's primary purpose of instruction is to teach some content or information using the language that the students are also learning. The students are simultaneously language students and students of whatever content is being taught. The subject matter is primary, and language learning occurs incidentally to the content learning. The content teaching is not organised around the language teaching, but vice-versa. To illustrate content based language teaching is a geography class taught in the language the students need or want to learn, possibly with linguistic adjustment to make the geography more comprehensible (Campbell & Rutherford, 2003).

Functional/Notional syllabi. In this type of syllabi, the content is organised upon a list of functions such as informing, agreeing, apologizing, requesting; examples of notions include size, age, colour, comparison, time, and so on. The content of the language teaching is a collection of the functions that are performed when language is used, or of the notions that language is used to express. In

functional/notional syllabi students learn how to use the target language to express their own ideas, notions and purposes.

Situational syllabi. A situational syllabus is constructed around situations, such as seeing the dentist, complaining to the property owner, buying a book at the bookstore, meeting a new student, and so on. In other words, the content of language teaching is a collection of real or imaginary situations in which language occurs or is used. A situation usually involves several participants who are engaged in some activity in a specific setting. The language occurring in the situation involves a number of functions, combined into a reasonable segment of discourse. The primary purpose of a situational language-teaching syllabus is to teach the language that occurs in the situations. In situational syllabi students learn how to use the target language in authentic communication. The advantage of this syllabus is that when unexpected situations happen in communication, language learners are accustomed to producing language spontaneously. This syllabus is good for language learners who are preparing to go to a country where the language is being learned. This situational teaching has the goal of teaching specific language content that occurs in situation.

Lexical syllabi. Lexical syllabi are based on the teaching of the lexical approach (lexis and language chunks). A lexical syllabus uses vocabulary as the building blocks. Usually stemming from an analysis of high frequency vocabulary and phrases, they work from language in use and build up vocabulary areas. Richards (2001) claims that this type of syllabus is the one that identifies the target vocabulary that will be taught during a language course and points out that lexical syllabuses are the ones that first developed in language teaching.

Task-based syllabi. A task-based approach assumes that speaking a language is a skill best perfected through practice and interaction, and uses tasks and activities to encourage learners to use the language communicatively in order to achieve a purpose. Tasks must be relevant to the real world language needs of the student. That is to say, the underlying learning theory of task based and communicative language teaching seems to suggest that activities in which language is employed to complete meaningful tasks that enhance learning. The task-based syllabus is focused on the meaning. The work is done in the classroom, which is also where the teacher provides all the input so that the learner may communicate. In this model, there is no interaction with the linguist (Yalden, 1984). Mohseni (2008) mentions that task-based syllabi support using tasks and activities encourages learners to utilize the language communicatively in order to achieve a goal. Students engaged in this syllabus learn to carry out activities using the target language. Language teaching through task-based syllabus occurs only as the need arises during the performance of a given task.

Even though Harmer (2007) claimed the existence of the aforementioned six types of syllabi, Reilly (1988) added an additional syllabus and identified it as the skill-based syllabus. In skill-based syllabi, the content of language teaching is a collection of specific abilities that may play a part in using language. Skills are things that people must be able to do to be competent in a language, relatively independently of the situation or setting, in which the language use can occur (Bensen & Silman, 2012). While situational syllabi group functions together into specific settings of language use, skill-based syllabi group linguistic competencies (pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse) together into generalized types of behaviour, such as listening to spoken language for the main idea, writing well-

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formed paragraphs, giving effective oral presentations, and so on. Skill-based syllabi enable students to specify their learning to reach their communicative competence, such as using telephone, booking a hotel, and others. The primary purpose of skill-based instruction is to learn the specific language skill. A possible secondary purpose is to develop more general competence in the language, learning only incidentally any information that may be available while applying the language skills.

As mentioned earlier, the content of language teaching in skill-based syllabi is a collection of specific skills in using the target language. Examples of skills in using the target language may include reading for the main idea, writing good paragraphs, and listening for the main idea. Oshima and Hogue (1983) have presented a sample outline based on a skill-based syllabus:

Part I: WRITING A PARAGRAPH

1. What is a paragraph?

   Paragraph Structure

   - The three parts of a paragraph
   - Two additional elements
   - Assignment format
   - How to write a title

   The Topic Sentence

   - Position of topic sentences
   - The two parts of a topic sentence
   - Writing topic sentences: two reminders

   The concluding Sentence

   Review: What is a Paragraph?

2. Unity and Simple Outlining

   Simple Paragraph Outlining

   Simple outlines

The 'equivalent value" rule

The "parallel from" rule

Review: Unity and Simple Outlining

Even though there are many types of syllabi it is suggested that one type of syllabus or content being used in actual teaching settings is rare (Mohseni, 2008). The combination of syllabi or content types in an integrated way with one type as the organizing basis where the others are arranged and related accordingly is preferable (Frodesen & Eyring, 2000; Reilly, 1988; White, 1988). Mohseni (2008) points out that in actual teaching settings, one type of syllabus is rarely fully utilized and that the important question is not which type of syllabus to choose but which types and how to connect them to one another. Thus, in addition to the syllabi mentioned earlier, Richards (2001) claims the existence of the integrated syllabus (also called the multi-syllabus). In this type of syllabus, all skills, functions, texts, topics and grammatical areas are linked to each other. Karhnke (1989) argues that, a combination of all types of the syllabi is extremely beneficial for language learners because syllabus designers need to aim successful students towards fields of the target language at the end of the program.

For the current study an outline of a skill-based syllabus was chosen to guide the writing course. The fundamental basis of the course was teaching writing where students were engaged in writing good essays. Even though the syllabus was arranged according to the one skill "writing" the other skills, i.e. listening, speaking and reading, were also integrated. Further information regarding the design process will be provided in the Methodology chapter.

Essays

As explained earlier, due to the nature and the aims of the elective course that was the focus of this study, a skills-based syllabus design was chosen. In this respect, essay writing was placed in the centre of the course. Thus, it is worth looking at different types of essays that were focused on and what is meant by each one as they were employed in this course.

One of the most common text types in academic writing is an essay. An outline of an essay is constructed as an introduction, body and conclusion (Collin et al, 2003). This linear structure represents a particular preference of Anglo-American academic writing (Reid, 1984) that students from other cultures may need to be made aware of. Thus, studying the structure of an essay becomes an integral part of EFL writing classes. According to Oshima and Hogue (1999),an essay is defined as "a piece of writing several paragraphs long instead of just one or two paragraphs. It is written about one topic, just as a paragraph is. However, the topic of an essay is too complex to discuss in one paragraph." (p. 100) Therefore, the topic should be divided into several paragraphs, "one for each major point" and then it is suggested to "tie all of the separated paragraphs together by adding an introduction and a conclusion" (Oshima & Hogue, 1999, p. 100).An essay should therefore, consist of an introduction, body and conclusion. The introduction should catch the reader's attention, define the topic and briefly tell the reader what the essay will be addressing. According to Oshima and Hogue (1999, p. 101) an introduction has four purposes:

- It introduces the topic of the essay

- It gives a general background of the topic.

- It often indicates the overall 'plan' of the essay.

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- It should arouse the reader's interest in the topic.

The introduction of an essay consists of two parts (Oshima & Hogue, 1999). These are general statements and a thesis statement. According to Oshima and Hogue (1999), the general statements introduce the topic of the essay and give background information on the topic. The thesis statement, on the other hand, states the main topic, often lists the subdivisions of the topic or subtopics may indicate the method of organization of the entire paper and is usually the last sentence in the introductory paragraph. The second part of the essay, the body, comprises the full content of the essay. The body must be divided into paragraphs, each of which must pursue a specific idea to the end. The writer must address all the ideas he or she wanted to address, keeping to the topic. The conclusion is the ending, the rounding-off of the presentation. This should tie up all that was presented by the writer, a parting shot that justifies the writer's point of view. As this is the end, the writer must not bring in new information in this paragraph.

All essays essentially have the mentioned sections of an introduction, body and a conclusion. However, the style of writing may vary according to the type of the essay. Even though many types of essays are present in the literature, the four main essay types employed to carry out this study will be defined below.

Advantage and disadvantage essay. An advantage and disadvantage essay is a formal piece of writing in which the writer discusses the advantages and disadvantages of a specific topic. A good essay of this type should consist of:

a) an introductory paragraph in which the writer clearly states the topic to be discussed, without giving his/her opinion;

b) a main body in which the writer presents the points for and the points against, in separate paragraphs, supporting his/her arguments with examples and justifications;

c) a conclusion in which the writer states his/her opinion or gives a balanced consideration of the topic.

Argumentative essay. The function of an argumentative essay is to show that your assertion (opinion, theory, and hypothesis) about some phenomenon or phenomena is correct or more truthful than others'. The art of argumentation is not an easy skill to acquire. Many people might think that if one simply has an opinion, one can argue it successfully, and these are always surprised when others do not agree with them because their logic seems so correct. Argumentative writing is the act of forming reasons, making inductions, drawing conclusions, and applying them to the case in discussion; the operation of inferring propositions, not known or admitted as true, from facts or principles known, admitted, or proved to be true. It clearly explains the process of the writer's reasoning from the known or assumed to the unknown. Without doing this one cannot write an argumentative essay. He/she only has an assertion and an essay that is just his/her unsubstantiated opinion. Curry& Hewings (2003, p. 22) present an outline of an argumentative essay as follows:

1) Overall position/Argument (Introduction): Here the writer usually indicates how he/she will approach the topic, and provide a statement of the main argument (thesis statement/point of view).

2) Sub-arguments and supporting evidence (Body): Here the writer puts forward sub-arguments with each one linking (explicitly or implicitly) to his/her overall position. Evidence to support main and sub-arguments is presented

and evaluated. Further arguments and evidence may then be presented and evaluated. Counter-evidence may be presented and evaluated, usually negatively. This process continues until the case for his/her main argument is strong.

3) Reinforcement of overall position/evaluation (Conclusion): Here the writer provides an overall summary of the arguments and evidence together with a final one. This reinforces the position he/she took in argument the introduction.

4) References: List the works the writer has mentioned in the text.

Persuasive essay. Persuasive writing, also known as the argument essay, utilizes logic and reason to show that one idea is more legitimate than another idea. It attempts to persuade a reader to adopt a certain point of view or to take a particular action. The argument must always use sound reasoning and solid evidence by stating facts, giving logical reasons, using examples, and quoting experts. "The goal is to convince the reader to agree with your position" (English & English, 2009, p. 138). Therefore, it is based on the writer's own opinion rather than other sides of the argument. Further details regarding the differences of the argumentative and persuasive essay could be found in Appendix O.

English and English (2009) have stated some important points that should be considered when writing a persuasive essay. These are.

- State your position in the thesis statement. The reader must know how you feel at the start of the essay.

- Present strong arguments to support your position.

- Present strong support for your arguments. Provide detailed examples, anecdotes, quotes, and statistics.

- Acknowledge the counter arguments presented by the opposing side. The counter arguments should be refuted by showing why the counter arguments are weak or strong. This will make your argument stronger.

Compare and contrast essay. To write a comparison or contrast essay that is easy to follow, first the writer should decide on what the similarities or differences are by writing lists on scrap paper. Decisions must be made on which of these points are more significant, i.e. the similarities or the differences. Then the writer should plan to discuss the least significant first, followed by the most significant. It is much easier to discuss only the similarities or only the differences, but one can also do both. Then, for organizing the essay, the writer should choose one of the plans described in Appendix I, whichever best fits his/her list. There are two classical organizational patterns of a comparison or contrast essay. One is "block arrangement of ideas and the other is point-by-point or alternating arrangement of ideas" (English& English,2009, p. 220). Finally, the writer should decide what main point (thesis) might be in the essay about the two people/things being compared.

Feedback and Error Correction

Researchers of the recent past who have analysed ways and means of improving students' writing performance (Archibald, 1994; Bitchner & Knoch, 2008; Cumming, 2001; Hyland & Hyland, 2008; Noroozizadch, 2009; Reid, 2001; Sachs & Polio, 2007; Zimmerman, 2000) appear to support the notion that writing and teaching writing in L2 contexts are still being shaped, are an important educational endeavour and that they continue to be the subjects of considerable amounts of research. Due to the fact that writing is seen as a recursive process,

especially in the innovative approaches, learners are expected to revise their writings several times and go through the process of drafts before actually submitting their products (Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003; Tribble, 1996; White & McGovern, 1994) Written feedback for this reason is seen essential. Students need feedback and comments to facilitate them to compose an essay with minimal errors as well as maximum accuracy and clarity (Creme & Lea, 1997; Ennis, 1996; Ferris, 2002; Harmer, 2001; Krashen, 1987; Kroll, 2001).

According to Ur (1996) feedback is defined as information that is given to the learner about his or her performance of a learning task, usually with the objective of improving this performance. Thus, feedback is provided to ask for further information, give directions, suggestions or requests for revision, to provide students with information that will help them revise and also to provide positive feedback about what has been done by students. Feedback also comes in various linguistic forms, perhaps as questions, statements, imperatives or exclamations, while comments can be softened through the use of a variety of hedging devices (Ferris, 1997). Since teacher responses to student writing are expected to help students develop their ideas fully and present them effectively, feedback needs to cover all aspects of students' written texts i.e. issues of content, organization, style, grammar, and mechanics (Ferris, 1997). Hattie and Timperley (2007) argue that feedback is needed to allow the students to internalise and process the demands of the task. A study conducted by Bitchener and Knoch (2008) examining two groups of students to find out the effectiveness of targeting only two functional error categories with written corrective feedback in order to see if this approach was helpful regarding English as a second language (ESL) learners. Two functional uses of the English article system (referential indefinite 'a' and referential definite 'the') were targeted in

the feedback to one of the groups. The findings clearly showed that the group who received written feedback on their drafts outperformed the group who did not receive any feedback during instruction. Similarly, a more recent study by Arslan (2014) who specifically looked into to what extent receiving feedback from course instructor and peers created ownership in writing and also to what extent giving feedback to peers' writing through blogging and portfolios contributed to a group of prospective English language teachers' writing skill. The results regarding feedback revealed that receiving and giving feedback both on paper and online contributes to student teachers' writing skills considerably. Studies like these are abundant in the EFL writing literature, which highlight the importance of the role of the feedback in helping students improve their written linguistic competences. Gibbs and Simpson (2004/5) argue that feedback can:

> correct errors, develop understanding through explanations, generate more learning by suggesting further specific study tasks, promote the development of generic skills by focusing on evidence of the use of skills rather than on the content, promote meta-cognition by encouraging students' reflection and awareness of learning processes involved in the assignment and encourage students to continue studying. (p. 20-21)

Engaging students in the feedback process. Academics commonly exclaim that students are usually not interested in the feedback given but in the final grade that they would receive from the writing task. This clearly highlights the importance of the kind of the feedback and the way in which it is provided. This can influence what students' later do with it. If teachers spend time providing summative feedback, pointing out what was good or bad about the marked work, students may be less inclined to learn from the feedback, especially if the feedback arrives weeks after it

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was submitted and the student's interest has diminished. According to Boud and associates (2010) in order to: (a) encourage positivity towards learning feedback should be informative and supportive, (b) be used to inform learning and work feedback should be allowed to be timely and (c) guide students learning and work feedback should be frequent and specific. Feedback can be either summative, where it provides an explanation for the grades, or formative, where feed-forward comments are given to assist students in critiquing their learning to inform subsequent work. Race (2010) provides a useful synthesis of the various forms of feedback that can be given to students on their writing performances:

1. Written format: Feedback can be in written format, provided direct onto a hard copy of an assignment or annotated digitally using specialised marking software. It can also be provided in the form of summary sheets, exemplar model answers and so on.

2. Oral feedback: Opportunities to provide oral feedback can occur with individuals or groups. It may be face-to-face or through digital conferencing (e.g. Elluminate Live) or voice over the Internet software (e.g. Skype). Providing specific feedback to an individual or generic feedback during class is especially useful if it occurs when class size is small enough to allow dialogue around the feedback.

It is essential to understand that feedback is not given one-way, i.e. from the teacher to the students. Such an understanding would delegitimize the student-centeredness of the writing course as it would imply that the teacher is the only person with the 'correct' knowledge and has the authority to tell the learners what is right and wrong. Contrary to this, in the innovative approaches to teaching writing in EFL contexts, it is crucial to include other stakeholders in the feedbacking process. Race (2010) also

puts forth certain strategies that teachers could employ to gain feedback from learners and their peers. These are presented below:

1. Self-review: Getting students to reflect on the strengths and opportunities evident in their work. The marker can take this into account and provide feedback on these aspects, which specifically targets students thinking on their own learning.

2. Peer review: Peer review involves students judging other students work. One way that this could be done is to arrange for students to 'blind mark' the work of three other students. The aim is for students to provide formative feedback based on the marking criteria. Race (2010) indicates that this approach is powerful as it supports students to learn from the process by gaining insight into the approaches used by others. Students are able to put their work into context by reviewing other work that may be weaker or stronger than their own and based on this, they are able to recognise how future work could be improved. In addition, peer review can be used in the assessment of oral presentations, whereby students can quickly provide feedback on a rubric style feedback sheet. Race (2010) argues that mark allocation from peers during this process is more complicated and requires careful planning to make it work.

3. Digital feedback: Many digital technologies are now available to assist the marking process. A range of these have shown to improve marking efficiency and effectiveness of feedback. These include (a)text editing tools, which are in common use and include such programs as Microsoft Word track change and drawing facility, and PDF text editing tools such as ADOBE and ReMarksPDF;(b) computer assisted testing, such as

Blackboard having inbuilt electronic quiz features. Audio/video capture tools are becoming increasingly popular and include Audacity audio recording and Echo 360 for screen casts and recorded narration. Feedback comments are recorded by the marker and the recorded file returned to the student with their assessment. This type of feedback is capable of providing plenty of individualised feedback in a relatively quick time period;(c) Cloud-based technologies, such as Google Docs and Microsoft Live, are emerging and their full potential is yet to be realised;(d) Peer assessment tools, such as SparkPLUS.

Any of these feedback strategies can be used on its own or in combination with others depending on the aim of the teacher and the students and the type of the task at hand.

Teaching in an environment with computers is seen to have positive effects. Levy (2009) points out that the word processor has "undoubtedly become one of the most widely accepted technologies for writing" and that its dominant function is to "facilitate the flexible manipulation of text" for easy "drafting and redrafting." (p. 772) Similarly, Ho and Savignon (2007) depicted that the track changes feature in the Microsoft Word document could be employed for computer-mediated peer review via email.

From the students' perspectives, feedback is in demand and students seem to appreciate 'good' feedback (Higgins, Hartley & Skelton, 2002; Hyland, 2000; O'Donovan, Price & Rust, 2001). However, even though some students find feedback transformative and motivating, others become confused if feedback raises more questions than it answers (Lillis & Turner, 2001). Feedback may also be dismissed as irrelevant. Some students, in order to protect the integrity of their

beliefs and knowledge, will reject and find ways to devalue corrective feedback (Chinn & Brewer, 1993). These reasons cause students not to collect or even reflect on marked coursework containing feedback written by academic staff. The unfortunate reality is that "it is not inevitable that students will read and pay attention to feedback even when that feedback is lovingly crafted and provided promptly" (Gibbs & Simpson, 2002, p. 20).

Feedback viewed, according to Furnborough and Truman (2009), entails the existence of gaps between what has been learned, and the target competence of the learners, and the efforts undertaken to fulfil these gaps. Stern (1992) and Littlewood (1995) argue that in academic writing, some students constantly make certain errors and teachers realize that it is arduous for learners to achieve grammatically demanding accuracy. Stern (1992) includes error correction as a part of the learning processes. Therefore, error correction has a significant role in improving students` writing as errors are an integral part of language learning. According to Corder (1967, as cited in Cook, 1995) errors are learners' way of testing their hypothesis about the nature of the language they are learning. For this reason, errors should be viewed with openness and acceptance especially during students' early stage of language learning. Krashen (1987) is also in the same point of view and argues that errors are "inevitable and plentiful as learners learn and experiment the use of the language they are learning." (p. 74) Likewise, Ellis (1997) argues that classification of errors helps teachers in diagnosing learners' language problems at any stage of their development. It is pointed out by Richards and Lockhart (1996) that error correction is "a response either to the content of what a student has produced or to the form of the utterance." (p. 188) When the focus is on forms, it is supposed to help learners to reflect on the wrong forms and finally produce right forms (Krashen,

1987). More specifically, as Truscot (1996, as cited in Ferris, 2003, p. 42) states "the correction of grammatical errors can help students improve their ability to write accurately." In short, it could be concluded that errors are inherent to learners' works and the feedback teachers give plays a vital role in developing their writing skills. However, it should be kept in mind that feedback should be provided with care on error correction as error correction deals not only with cognitive skills, but also the affective aspects of language learning, which includes feelings and attitudes of the learner (Arnold & Brown, 1999;Bates, Lange & Lange, 1993; Cathcart & Olsen, 1976; Krashen, 1987, cited in Ellis, 1994).

Raimes (1998) points out that there is a tremendous impact of feedback and its potential to influence students' attitudes towards writing. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to reflect on the manner in which corrections are given. The study that Myles (2002) carried out in an attempt to explore errors in writing in relation to the aspects of second language acquisition and theories of the writing process in L1 and L2 concluded that feedback was of utmost importance to the L2 writing process. She also stated that without individual attention and sufficient feedback on errors, improvement would not take place. Myles (2002) points out that teachers must accept the fact that L2 writing contains errors and it is the teachers' responsibility to help learners develop strategies for self-correction and regulation. In addition to this, English L2 writers require and expect specific overt feedback from teachers not only on content, but also on the form and structure of writing. White and Arndt (1991) argue that corrective feedback in writing is a necessity in language learning. The term corrective feedback refers to "any action of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance" (Chaudron,1977, p. 31). Moreover, the definitions by Ur (1996) and

Ypsilandis (2002) explain that the recent and welcome shift of interest from language teaching to language learning affect the way feedback is perceived by both learners and teachers. Consequently, feedback is now recognized, and as a result, understood to be provided not only by the teacher but also by other learners (peers), or generated by the learner him/herself. According to the above definitions and explanation, the concepts of teacher correction, peer correction, self-assessment, repetition and revision can be categorized as feedback techniques. There has also been a shift from an emphasis on language forms to functional language within the communicative context over the past few decades, and the question of the lace held by error correction has become more and more important (Brown, 1994).

Written corrective feedback (WCF). Studies claiming to have found positive evidence supporting the effectiveness of written corrective feedback (WCF) (Ashwell, 2000; Bitchner &Knoch, 2008; Chandler, 2003; Fatham & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1997; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Gazcoigne, 2004; Lalande, 1982;Lee, 1997; Lizotte, 2001; Miaoa, Badger & Zhen, 2006; Rob, Ross & Shortreed, 1986; Sheppard, 1992) have been abundant over the years. In contrast, studies that did not find any positive evidence in support of the effectiveness of WCF (Fazio, 2001; Kepner, 1991;Polio, Flerk & Leder, 1998; Semke, 1984) have also been conducted. Nonetheless, whether effective or not, methods regarding WCF have been identified in the field (Ferris, 2002; Van Beuningen, De Jong, Kuiken, 2012).

According to Ferris (2002) there are two types of WCF. These are direct corrective feedback and indirect corrective feedback, which are seen to constitute the most important dichotomy. In direct error correction, like its name suggests, correct forms are offered by the teacher. On the other hand, indirect error correction needs the equal involvement of both teachers and students in the error correction process as

teachers indicate errors using a code (and the like) and students correct these errors. Van Beuningen, De Jong & Kuiken (2012) put forth that indirect corrective feedback could be done both by underlining the error and by codes of letters. Ferris (2002) also suggests that indirect correction could also be given with symbols. Nevertheless, whether given with codes, underlining or symbols, such feedback is categorized under indirect error correction and all share the core feature where the student is left to correct his/her mistake as opposed to direct error correction, where the correction is done only by the teacher.

Various alternative hypotheses concerning the relative effectiveness of direct and indirect corrective feedback are at the fore. Research studies by Cohen (1987), Zamel (1995), Freageau (1999) and Gray (2000) reveal that there were no significant differences in the writing accuracy of the learners when groups receiving direct and indirect corrective feedback were compared. Furthermore, research studies of Semke (1984), Fathman & Whalley (1990) and Ashwell (2000) investigated comments on content along with grammar correction. However, they, too, did not find any significant difference in learners' writing originating from the type of feedback provided.

In support of direct WCF, it has been claimed that the indirect approach might fail because it provides learners with insufficient information to resolve complex linguistic errors, such as syntactic errors (Van Beuningen et al., 2012). Chandler (2003) argues that direct WCF enables learners to instantly internalize the correct form. Learners whose errors are corrected indirectly do not know if their own hypothesized corrections are indeed accurate. This delay in access to the target form might level out the potential advantage of the additional cognitive effort associated with indirect corrective feedback. Moreover, it may be that learners need a certain

level of (meta)linguistic competence to be able to self-correct their errors using indirect WCF (Ferris, 2004; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Sheen, 2007).

Ferris (2002) puts forth that direct WCF gives learners right answers and learners, especially those of low proficiency, find it less threatening. Yet, it is also important to note what Hedge (2000) reports that the danger of direct error correction's spoon-feeding effect results in learners overlooking their own role in the correction process and become passive.

In support of indirect WCF, on the other hand, it has been suggested that learners would benefit more from it because it engages students in a more profound form of language processing while they self-edit their writing (e.g. Ferris, 1995; Ferris, 2004; Lalande, 1982). In this view, Bitchener and Knoch (2008) put forth that the indirect approach "requires pupils to engage in guided learning and problem solving and, hence, promotes the type of reflection that is more likely to foster long-term acquisition."(p. 415)Lalande (1982) and Noroozizadch (2009) clearly distinguish between direct and indirect correction as feedback and their studies are in favour of indirect correction, which they claim promotes L2 writing more effectively.

Feedback given with codes according to Bartram and Walton (1991)"does not only indicate where errors are located, but also types of mistakes by using a correcting code." (p. 84) In addition, Harmer (2001) points out that coded feedback makes correction effective if simple and systematic codes are used. Besides, codes involve learners in the self-correction process and help them learn more effectively (Gower, Philips & Walters, 1995). In this respect, Ferris (2002) puts forth that, codes arouse learners' responsibility in correction and improve their writing accuracy in the long run.However, since codes just cover the common errors and are usually limited,

individual errors may be ignored. This is seen quite understandable since "errors are usually made by individual students"in writing (Gower et al., 1995, p. 168). In addition, it should be kept in mind that coded feedback is threatening and hard to be self-corrected for low proficiency learners (Ferris, 2002). When coded feedback is used, another core point which teachers and learners must bear in mind is that both parties must understand what the codes mean, be consistent with and accustomed to them (Bartram & Walton 1991; Ferris 2002). Otherwise the misinterpretation of codes may lead to chaos rather than helping students' improve. The study of Sachs and Polio, Fleck and Leder (1998) investigated not only the effect of direct and indirect feedback on composition writing, but also the existence of noticing in the learners through think aloud protocol. However, their findings were inconclusive on whether feedback had a significant impact on the improvement of undergraduates' writing skills. Hence, it is suggested that more research is needed, particularly in a variety of learning contexts (Sivaji, 2012).

Assessment

In higher education, assessment typically frames how students learn because it provides the clearest indication of what the institution gives priority to (Boud, 2007). Assessment sets the agenda more persuasively than any syllabus or course outline and it is "one of the most significant influences on the students' experience of higher education and all that they gain from it" (Boud et al., 2010, p. 1). Unfortunately, sometimes assessment does not adequately focus on the processes of learning, and particularly on how students will learn after the point of assessment (Boud & Falchikov, 2007b). In this respect, Thomas et al. (2011) put forth that this may mean teachers and/or institutions missing an opportunity to better prepare their

students for their professional lives post-graduation. If this is true, then the quality of assessment should not be judged on narrow technical grounds, but "in terms of how it influences the learning for the longer term of those who are being assessed" (Boud & Falchikov, 2007b, p. 9). Kvale (2007) explained that there is new pressure on academics to develop forms of assessment that promote efficient learning for more students for a longer time – assessment for lifelong learning.

According to Boud and Falchikov (2007a) assessment focussed on future learning reportedly improves both short and long term outcomes by helping students to make "increasingly sophisticated judgments about their learning." (p. 186) Brew (1999) argues that assessment is an integral part of the learning process that must play an important role in instructional design. Hence, assessment processes focused on future learning are carefully and constructively aligned (Biggs & Tang, 2007) with the intended learning outcomes in ways that allow learning to extend beyond the completion of the subject. If possible, the instructor and students co-operatively determine the criteria by which judgments are made regarding the quality of student work (Thomas et al., 2011). This approach to assessment requires academics to share the responsibility of learning with the students and helps the students to develop the intellectual skills necessary to make sound decisions in their academic and personal lives well into the future (Boud & Associates, 2010). Brew (1999) argues that when teachers share with their students "the process of assessment – giving up control, sharing power and leading students to take on the authority to assess themselves, (it) enhances the professional judgment of both." (p. 169) Therefore, assessment becomes not something done to students but rather an activity done with the students.

Boud and Falchikov (2007a) describe the ability to evaluate one's learning and performance as an essential part of "becoming an accomplished and effective

professional." (p. 184) Similarly, Biggs and Tang (2007) argue that the ability to make judgements about whether a performance or product meets a given criteria is vital for effective professional action in any field. Tan (2007) also argues for "self-assessment development practices that can develop and sustain students' self-assessment ability beyond its immediate programme of study." (p. 115) However, part of this preparation for the future requires helping students to learn to continuously monitor the quality of their work during the act of production itself, so they can make improvements in real time (Montgomery, 2000; Sadler, 1989).

Self and peer assessment. Thomas et al. (2011) suggest two effective teaching and learning processes that can assist with the development of judgment that would lead continuous monitoring of work. These are self-assessment and peer assessment. Literature on behalf of these processes has been successfully employed in higher education. A third strategy, which Thomas et al. (2011) concentrated on is the use of portfolios as an assessment tool. Portfolios involve students in the direct monitoring and regulation of their own learning as they reflect on their achievements and select work that they believe demonstrates they meet or exceed certain standards (Nicol & Milligan, 2006).Song and August (2002) claim portfolio's "can accommodate and even support extensive revision, can be used to examine progress over time, and can encourage students to take responsibility for their own writing." (pp. 49-50)Baturay and Daloğlu (2010) also support that portfolio entailing students' active participation in the writing process "creates an atmosphere for student centred learning, which requires active student involvement" and also "capitalize[s] on students' natural tendency to save work and to take a second look and think about how they could improve future work." (pp. 413-414)In terms of peer assessment, different aspects of peer-editing pedagogy have been widely discussed in research

literature. Some of the advantages of incorporating peer revision in writing instruction include students working in a friendly environment (Hyland, 2003; Villamil & de Guerro, 1996), gaining a better sense of the audience (Hyland, 2003; Nation, 2009), assuming a more active role in the learning process (Hyland, 2003; Mendonca & Johnson, 1994), and developing skills of critical reading (Hyland, 2003).

Many developments in self and peer assessment have focussed on a form of academic socialisation, which seeks to make the codes or rules of the assessment 'game' explicit and transparent to students (Norton, 2004). For instance, when students use rubrics to assess the work of their peers, it helps them understand the assessment criteria that will be used to assess their own work. However, self and peer assessment can allegedly achieve more than just this. They are also considered to help students become realistic judges of their own performance by enabling them to monitor their own learning, rather than relying on their teachers for feedback (Crisp, 2007; Sambell, McDowell& Sambell, 2006). Furthermore, students' ability to self-assess can provide valuable clues to the teacher about how deeply they have understood the tasks and this information can improve teaching and learning (Montgomery, 2000). A study conducted by Tan (2007), which involved interviews of academics across 12 discipline areas in three universities in Australia, identified three progressive conceptions of self-assessment. These were teacher driven, program driven, and future driven self-assessment. The future driven conception of self-assessment seeks to help students to develop skills to construct assessment criteria, negotiate against external standards, and make judgements using those criteria. According to Tan (2007) only this future driven assessment helps students to

sustain their self-assessment capacity independent of teachers in future contexts because it:

> permits greater reflection by forcing students to look beyond the academic and the program of study when judging what and how well they have learned. This seems to provide students with more scope to reflect critically on their learning as well as their assessment practices. (p. 120)

Falchikov (2007) puts forth that peer assessment includes processes which require students to "provide either feedback or grades (or both) to their peers on a product, process, or performance, based on the criteria of excellence for that product or event which students may have been involved in determining." (p. 132) She further adds that whatever form of peer assessment is used, ideally the method should allow learners to practise making reasonable judgements about the extent to which their peers have achieved expected outcomes (Falchikov, 2007). Using peer assessment as a form of summative assessment, which is counted towards the student's grade may make some academics wary. However, Falchikov (2007) urged us to be wary of all grading processes, not just peer assessment, and she argued that concerns about the validity and reliability of peer assessment can be addressed. In this respect, Falchikov (2007) presents three strategies which teachers can use to improve the quality of both self and peer assessment. These include modelling, scaffolding, and fading. Before engaging students in self and peer assessment, teachers can provide examples of how they personally use assessment tools and strategies to improve reliability and accuracy. In terms of scaffolding, Falchikov (2007) encourages teachers to initially start with structured grading schemes (for example, rubrics), before moving to less structured systems where students negotiate the assessment criteria, students eventually developing their own criteria. Andrade and Du (2007)

also recommend the use of scaffolding to teach students how to use self-assessment tools. They found that students' attitudes toward self-assessment became more positive as they gained experience with it. The students' experiences were more positive when teachers provided clear articulation of assessment criteria and rubrics, which will result in higher grades, better academic work, increased motivation, mindfulness, learning, and reduced anxiety. As students achieve greater independence in peer assessment, the amount of direction and level of support offered by the teacher fades, or is withdrawn, over time. However, this should be discussed and negotiated with students and Brew (1999) maintains that more positive responses to the use of self-assessment are likely when the teacher's expectations are clear and when the students have received systematic practice.

Research drawing on student feedback on the use of a computer assisted peer assessment tool (Davies, 2003) and student responses to surveys after participating in self-assessment (Cassidy, 2007) identify some barriers to the effective use of self and peer assessment. Davies (2003) and Cassidy (2007) report negative consequences which arise if students perceived that self and peer assessment were being used as a means of alleviating pressures for tutors; if students feel ill-equipped or not capable, feel uncomfortable with the responsibility of peer assessment duties and if tutors have concerns about subjectivity and reliability of assessment. Carless, Joughin and Liu (2006) suggest that teachers can improve the effectiveness of self and peer assessment by being very clear with the students how they will benefit from participating. Biggs and Tang (2007) also add that "It is important that these educational outcomes are made clear to the students, not only because the rationale for all teaching and assessing decisions should be transparent, but because it is necessary to get the students on side." (p. 233) Finally, Boud (2007a) argues that

teachers must do more than just align assessment with the subject objectives; teachers must also align assessment with the future. Regarding this, Boud (2007) suggests that it would be preferable for assessment tasks to be designed with due consideration of how the student will be required to use skills and knowledge in the future and he adds that the links to the future should be made explicit. Hence, a course which produces graduates who are required to make critical judgments about the quality of some work output, such as teachers, must provide students with opportunities to make such judgments in a contextually appropriate manner, when they are studying. This extends Biggs and Tang's (2007) concept of constructive alignment beyond its normal application of aligning assessment with intended learning outcomes and activities within a subject. It also becomes a very significant issue for teacher trainers because the contexts within which pre-service teachers are evaluated are very similar to the contexts that they may be evaluating their own students. Thus, their own experience becomes an important reference point for their assessment practices for the future.

Falchikov (2007) cites evidence that students view peer assessment of group work within higher education as relevant to their future careers and having a role in promoting lifelong learning skills, including reflection, autonomy, self-efficacy, diplomacy, problem solving and responsibility. However, assessment of individual contributions to a group project can be difficult for the assessor who is typically not present while the work is being completed and must therefore often rely on peer assessment to differentiate the contributions of individual students. Lejk and Wyvill (2001) compared the application of holistic and category based peer assessment of a group project and found that the holistic approach produced overall higher agreement between peers when compared to the category based approach, which focussed on

specific traits. They concluded that holistic assessment was "more effective at dealing with outstandingly good and outstandingly weak contributors to the group whereas category based assessment leads to a fine-tuning of small differences in group 'contributions'."(p. 69) What's more, self and peer assessment challenges the traditional power relations between learner and teacher, and raises questions about objectivity and reliability in assessment (Leach, Neutze, & Zepke, 2001).

According to Brown and Hudson (1998), the alternative means of assessment require the learners to perform, create, and produce in real-world contexts or simulations. Moreover, the nature of these methods is nonintrusive and lets students be assessed on everyday class activities. The tasks used in these methods represent meaningful instructional activities which concentrate on both the process and the product of learning. Higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills are also the indispensable tools for carrying out the assessment tasks, and the teacher's feedback about the task performance sheds light on both the strengths and weaknesses of the learners.

Due to the fact that current emphasis is on learner independence and autonomy, self and peer assessment have attracted much attention (Sambell, McDowell, & Sambell, 2006). Self and peer assessment have also been viewed as having significant pedagogical values. Brown and Hudson (2002) are adamant that self-assessment requires less time to conduct in the classroom. Moreover, the students are very much involved in the process of assessment, and this inevitably can lead to learner autonomy and higher motivation (Dickinson, 1987; Harris, 1997; Oscarson, 1989). Topping (2003) also emphasizes that self and peer assessment are cognitively demanding tasks which require and encourage intelligent self-

questioning, reflection, learners' ownership and management of learning processes, sense of personal responsibility and accountability, self-efficacy, and meta-cognition.

Despite all the positive aspects of the concept, the literature on self and peer assessment reveals that some factors were found to account for inaccuracy in self and peer assessment (Birjandi & Siyarri, 2010). For instance, Blanche (1988) has concluded from a comprehensive literature review that students' accuracy in self-assessment depends on the linguistic skills and the materials used in assessment. Moreover, more proficient learners tend to underestimate themselves in self-assessment. Some factors such as past academic records, career aspirations, peer; group, or parental expectations, and lack of training in self-assessment could also affect the subjectivity of learners in self-assessment. It is also important to emphasise that, the level of language proficiency has an impact on the accuracy of language learners' self-ratings (Blanche, 1988; Davidson & Henning,1985; Heilenmann, 1990; Janssen-van Dieten, 1989). Brown and Hudson (2002), however, assert that:

> some of these problems can be overcome if the descriptions that students are
>
> referring to in rating themselves are stated in terms of clear and correct
>
> linguistic situations and in terms of exact and precise behaviours that the
>
> students are to rate. (p. 84)

Furthermore, Oscarson (1989) maintains that training in self-assessment, and naturally peer assessment, can indeed end in promising results as far as rating reliability is concerned.

LeBlanc and Painchaud (1985) conducted a sequence of experiments which led to the use of self-assessment as a placement test. Their findings were based on the high correlations between two self-assessment questionnaires, one on the four basic skills and the other on the communicative ability to deal with a situation, and

the results of a proficiency test. Ross (1998) also found significantly high correlation coefficients between 254 adult English learners' self-assessment test matching their course book content, a related achievement test, and teachers' assessment. The study carried out by Patri (2002) compared teacher, peer, and self-assessment of oral presentation skills of undergraduate students of Chinese ethnic background. Students were first familiarized with the assessment criteria through some training sessions. Then they were put into two groups; one group conducting self and peer assessment in the presence of peer feedback, and the other group without any peer feedback. The data was analysed mainly through Pearson correlations. The results revealed that significantly more agreement was found between the teachers and peer assessment in the presence of peer feedback than between teachers and self-assessment in either the presence or absence of peer feedback, or between the teachers and peer assessment in the absence of peer feedback.Saito and Fujita (2004) conducted an almost similar study to Party's (2002) which involved written performance. They found an outstanding similarity between the peer and teacher ratings of essay quality, but no similarity was observed between teacher and self-ratings, and between peer and self-ratings. Moreover, the self-raters made a mixed extreme group of both the most lenient and most severe raters. Saito and Fujita (2004) justify their findings by arguing that "subjective points of view indubitably involve other psychological factors such as students' self-esteem, self-confidence, a cultural value of modesty, habits of overestimating self-ability and the like." (p. 48)

In another study, Cheng and Warren (2005) investigated the attitudes of learners towards peer assessment, the reliability, and probable educational benefits of peer assessment on oral and written language proficiency in English language programs. By comparing the students' attitudes towards assessing both the English

language proficiency and other aspects of the performance of their peers, and the teacher- and peer assessments, they found that students had a less positive attitude towards assessing their peers' language proficiency, but they did not score their peers' language proficiency very differently from the other assessment criteria. They further asserted that two main reasons accounted for most of the students feeling unqualified to assess their peers' language proficiency. The first reason lied in the learners' uncertainty as to what constituted proficiency, and the second reason resulted from the learners' belief that their linguistic competence was insufficient for the task.

Matsuno's (2009) study emphasizes that traditional approaches to measurement, such as true-score approach, do not adequately take into account rater severity and/or leniency and assessment criterion difficulty level. Regarding these limitations, Matsuno (2009) employed Multifaceted Rash Model (MFRM) to compare self and peer assessment with teacher assessment in university writing classes. In this study, a sample of adult Japanese students used essay evaluation sheets based on the ESL composition profile by Jacobs, Zingraf, Wormuth, Hartfiel, and Hughey (1981) to practise self and peer assessment. MFRM analysis revealed that probably due to the Japanese culture for showing modesty, self-raters, especially those who were high achieving writers, were overly critical toward themselves. Peer-raters did not show much variance; they were lenient, internally consistent, and their rating patterns had no bearing on their own writing performance. However, peer-raters rated low-achieving writers leniently and high achieving writers severely, as well as the fact that peer-raters produced fewer bias interactions than the self and teacher-raters. Another study previously carried out by Davidson and Henning (1985) involved a Raschbased microscale analysis on the self-ratings of some

English as a Second Language (ESL) learners whose self-ratings were found to be reliable by classical methods of estimation while it was not the case when the data was analysed through Rasch Model. In other words, lack of response validity was observed in the data, making Davidson and Henning (1985) assertively conclude that "little confidence should be placed in these particular student self-ratings." (p. 176)

According to the studies conducted in relation to self and peer assessment the following could be concluded. Firstly, the design quality of self and peer assessment questionnaires can play an important role in determining the quality and validity of responses (LeBlanc & Painchaud, 1985; Jafarpur & Yamini, 1990; Ross, 1998). Secondly, the nature and content of what is going to be self and peer assessed, such as the kind of skill, can affect the results of the self and peer assessment (Jafarpur & Yamini, 1990). Thirdly, results of self and peer assessment can vary based on how language-proficient the learners are (Blanche, 1988; Davidson & Henning, 1985; Heilenmann, 1990; Janssen-van Dieten, 1989). Furthermore, the users of the self and peer assessment questionnaires or scales need to be trained on how to use the instruments. Modelling by expert raters or teachers is one recommendation in particular (Cheng & Warren, 2005; Jafarpur & Yamini, 1990; Saito & Fujita, 2004). In addition, affective/attitudinal issues and psychological factors such as students' self-esteem, self-confidence, a cultural value of modesty, habits of overestimating self-ability and the like can affect the way self/peer assessment are practiced (Cheng & Warren, 2005; Matsuno, 2009; Saito & Fujita, 2004). What's more, relativity, self-flattery, and mismatch between the self-/peer-assessment items and criterion skills can distort the results of self- and peer-assessment (Ross, 1998). Finally, self-assessment and in particular peer assessment need to be accompanied by constructive feedback from the teachers or peers to be more effective (Patri, 2002).

From another perspective, peer assessment is proposed as an alternative solution that reduces teacher workload (Fisher, 1999; Rada, Michailidis & Wang, 1994). Cho, Schunn & Wilson (2006) explain that, despite the progress made during the last two decades in student writing skills, the courses rarely include real comprehensive writing tasks. According to them, this is due to the teachers' workload: assessing writing skills requires too much time and effort (Rada, Michailidis & Wang, 1994). They suggest resorting to peers in order to assess the students' work rather than systematically resorting to evaluation by teachers (Rada et al., 1994).

In blended learning contexts, online peer assessment allows the students to assess the work of their peers and even assess their own work (Bouzidi & Jaillet, 2009). Dissimilar to the self-assessment techniques, which are generally limited to basic cognitive levels (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom, 1956), peer assessment enables to develop learning at high cognitive levels. By using this method students are involved in the revision, assessment, and feedback process of online work (Bouzidi & Jaillet, 2009). Doiron (2003) puts forth that certain authors criticize the use of information and communication technology for peer assessment, arguing that it is not as rigorous as traditional types of assessment, that it requires too much student effort by putting too much pressure on them, and that it is not necessarily fair and reliable. On the other hand, authors such as Bostock (2000) are convinced that the (formative or summative) assessment of other students' work by the students themselves has several advantages for the learning process, both for the assesse and the assessor. Bostock (2000) also points out that peer assessment encourages the students to be independent and develops skills in high cognitive areas. He acknowledges certain weaknesses of this type of assessment, in particular the over-

estimating of friends' work, but he explains that this can be avoided by setting up a system which would guarantee anonymity, multiple assessments, a great number of assessors, and moderation by the teacher. In addition, he specifies that Internet and information and communication technologies enable an easier management of a greater number of students.

Summative and formative assessment. Summative assessment is usually employed by most educational institutions and is the most visible form of assessment. An assessment is summative when it is given to determine how much students have learned at a particular point in time, for the purpose of communicating achievement status to others (Black & Wiliam, 1998, p. 5). Formative assessment has been defined as

> assessment carried out during the instructional process for the purpose of improving teaching or learning. . . What makes formative assessment formative is that it is immediately used to make adjustments so as to form new learning". (Shepard, 2008, p. 281)

Heritage, Kim, Vendlinski, and Herman (2009) also define formative assessment as "a systematic process to continuously gather evidence and provide feedback about learning while instruction is under way." (p.24)Some characteristics of formative assessment have been presented by Black and Wiliam (1998a, 1998b). These are:

1. Use of classroom discussions, classroom tasks, and homework to determine the current state of student learning/understanding, with action taken to improve learning/correct misunderstandings.

2. Provision of descriptive feedback, with guidance on how to improve, during the learning

3. Development of student self- and peer-assessment skills

Drawing from their analysis of these studies, Black and Wiliam (1998b) make the following recommendations about key components of formative assessment:

> Opportunities for students to express their understandings should be designed into any piece of teaching, for this will initiate the interaction through which formative assessment aids learning. (p. 143)

Writing practice when viewed as a process as in the process genre approach entails continual and constructive feedback given to the drafts of written work (Bitchener, 2008; Hyland, 1988). In addition, peer and self-assessment as mentioned need to be repeated (multiple assessment) in order to be reliable. The employment of formative assessment matches with the requirements of both approaches.

Conclusion

The review of literature related to the learning and teaching of writing has been presented in this chapter. The four approaches to teaching EFL writing were discussed. As can be seen, with the shift in recent innovative approaches, the teacher's role has shifted from being the agent in initiating and evaluating writing as homework and dwelling upon that product to the active participator of the writing process, offering constructive and helpful feedback and correction to the drafts produced by students in the process of producing a good product. This was followed by the BLA, which was employed in this study. According to this approach, integrating online work into a writing course has its positive effects and is seen by researchers and students to foster the production of better writing. In addition, information regarding syllabi types were presented supporting the skill-based syllabi type employed in this study. The definition of the terms essays and the essay types,

which were produced by the students in this study were also discussed. Finally, the effects and importance of feedback and correction were discussed followed by evidence regarding assessment to highlight the employment of peer, collaborative, teacher and self-assessment used in this study. The following chapter will present the methods adopted to collect data to be analysed in relation to the research questioned posed in the previous chapter.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the writing development of undergraduate students of English Language Teaching (ELT) during an advanced writing course designed with a blended learning approach. This was carried out with an examination of the possible differences between initial and final pieces of writing that the students produced during the course. It also aimed to obtain students' perspectives on their experiences of learning writing and learning how to teach writing in general and their perspectives regarding studying writing with a blended learning approach in particular. In order to achieve these aims and answer the research questions stated earlier, a mixed methods approach was employed. A mixed methods approach is a combination of more than one method or approach in order to investigate the research phenomenon from different perspectives, i.e. qualitative and quantitative (Borkan, 2004).

This chapter describes the research methods and approaches used in the study. It begins with a description of the research design and the context within which the study was carried out. Furthermore, detailed information regarding the role of the researcher and the participants who took part in this study will be presented. Data collection procedures, information about the construction of the writing syllabus, the participants' assumed knowledge about the course and then the procedure followed during the course will be discussed. The two approaches used in the study will be described in detail in this procedure. Information concerning

feedback and correction will be further dealt with. Finally, the materials used in this study and how the data were analysed will be discussed.

Research Design

Considering the research questions presented earlier, it was determined that employing action research with a mixed methods approach would effectively answer the posed questions. According to Parsons and Browns (2002) action research is a form of investigation designed for use by teachers who attempt to solve problems and improve professional practices in their own classrooms. It involves systematic observations and data collection, which can be then used by the practitioner-researcher in reflection, decision-making and the development of more effective classroom strategies. Employing action research enables to stimulate step-by-step the development of the course, involving the group and the individual research participants. With these parameters in mind, a two stagestudy was carried out, where in the first phase, principles of action research guided the study with a quantitative data analysis, and in the second phase, a qualitative approach was used to better understand the students' perspectives. A figure illustrating the research design followed can be found in Appendix S.

Stage I. In order to understand the effects of blended learning with a process genre approach (PGA) to teaching writing, an advanced writing course was designed. The course had two sections; one section was taught using the PGA with pen and paper, i.e. in class writing sessions, and the second part was carried out online using the same approach. In this first stage of the study, data about the participants' performances were collected and quantitatively evaluated to measure the individual

changes in students' first drafts and their final products for their portfolio work and online work. After analysing the essays, marks were given and set onto a table to see the changes of both works (see the sections Data Collection Procedure). This rather experimental stage helped to answer the research question about how students' writings have changed during the pen-paper and online work.

Norton (2009) presents the advantages of action research as follows:

- strengthening an existing interest in teaching and learning;

- engaging actively with continuing professional development and quality enhancement of teaching;

- establishing a research track record to enable bids for external funding for pedagogical research projects as well as learning and teaching projects. (p.57)

Following on Norton's arguments, it was important to keep an eye on the process that was going on in and outside the classroom in relation to the teaching and learning processes. Thus, for the whole endeavour of the course, a reflective journal was kept by the lecturer/researcher with the aim of reflecting on the group of participants and the course, and triggering off and stimulating further insights (see Appendix R). According to Goodnough (2003), reflective journals help lecturers/researchers make their thinking explicit, as well as recording how the action research evolves. The journal seemed crucial to critically analyse what was happening in the course by reflecting on the needs of the group and the individual participants and to further deliberate on how to interpret the data and report the findings (see Data Collection Procedures section for further details). Furthermore, students' observed attitudes and behaviours were recorded in the journal for further analysis (Collis & Hussey, 2009).

Finally, structured interviews were carried out with this group of participants to understand their points of view with regard to their experiences in this course. Structured interview questions were employed in this stage to obtain accurate responses. According to Norton (2009), structured interviews are similar to a questionnaire but in the spoken form where the questions are predetermined. The advantage over a questionnaire is that they allow the interviewer to clarify questions that the respondent does not understand or misinterprets.

Stage II. As mentioned earlier, one of the aims of action research design is to provide better learning experiences for students by improving teaching practice. In this respect, additions and amendments were made to the original research design. As the study progressed, it appeared that the structured interviews carried out in the first stage of the study led to further questions regarding the experiences of learning writing that the students had in their four years of teacher training. Moreover, questions of whether they would prefer blended learning as an approach for teaching writing emerged. As a result, a qualitative analysis, which included interpretative phenomenological inquiry, i.e. understanding the individual's perspective and experience (Norton, 2009), was also employed in this study. The interest was on the 'lived experience' of the research participants. Semi-structured interview questions were administered to a second group of participants, who had the same teacher training in the last four years with the first group of participants. Semi-structured interviews were used with this group because they are much more flexible compared to the structured interviews, allowing the interviewer to change the questions and/or elicit further clarification where necessary. "The purpose of a semi-structured interview is to understand the respondent's point of view, so open-ended questions are asked to enable the interviewee to talk more freely." (Norton, 2009, p. 99)

Description of the Context

This study took place at the English Language Teaching (ELT) department of a private university in north Cyprus. For students to graduate and become English language teachers, a total of 58 courses have to be completed in the four years undergraduate degree (see Appendix P). The content and credits for these courses are in line with the rules and regulations of the Higher Education Council of Turkey by whom the department is fully accredited. The assessment breakdown for each individual course differs. However, the overall grading breakdown for each course is presented in Table 1(Student's Handbook, 2013, p.12).

In order to complete every semester on time, students need to have a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.00 and they should receive DD or above from each course. To be able to continue their education in the department, students need to have the following minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPAs) at the end of each semester (Student's Handbook, 2013, p. 7). Students whose CGPAs are lower than the minimum CGPAs mentioned in Table 2 are given an "Academic Incompetence Warning." This warning means that if the student does not meet the minimum CGPA criteria again for the following semester, he/she will not be able to continue his/her education at the university.

Out of the 58 courses mentioned earlier, two courses (ELT 153 and ELT 154) involve the learning of writing by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners (see Appendix P). These two courses, however, include learning of reading skills as well. Throughout the four years, only one course involves training in the teaching of writing. Yet, this course also focuses on the teaching of other skills, i.e. reading, grammar and integrative teaching of skills, as well as teaching writing. The mentioned courses are all compulsory courses and have three lecture hours per week.

Table 1

Grade Breakdown

Points	Letter Grade	Quality Point Equivalent
90-100	AA	4
85-89	BA	3.5
80-84	BB	3
75-79	CB	2.5
70-74	CC	2
65-69	DC	1.5
55-64	DD	1
50-54	FD	0.5
0-49	FF	0

Table 2

Cumulative Grade Point Average

Semester	Minimum GCPA
4th	1.50
5th	1.60
6th	1.70
7th	1.80
8th and consecutive semesters	2.00

The course, which was the focus of this study, is offered as an elective course that senior undergraduate students had the choice of taking. Therefore, the participants who took part in the study were self-motivated. Even though the general aim of the course was to improve students' writing performances (See Appendix F), the course aimed to enable students to distinguish between types of essays, be able to write specific types of essays, be aware of different strategies of writing specific essays, distinguish between and be able to use different transition and linking words, assess and comment on essays written by their peers using the assessment criteria of the department (See Appendix E), be aware of the written corrective feedback (WCF) types, be able to express their own ideas academically and be able to use the internet to make comments and do research. In addition to this, the senior ELT undergraduates were exposed to an innovative approach to writing, i.e. the Process Genre Approach (PGA) under the umbrella of the Blended Learning Approach (BLA). This was an approach that they could apply in their own teaching settings in the future.

With regard to the two approaches used in class, the PGA with portfolio work, involving the strategies (preparation, modelling and reinforcing, planning, joint constructing, independent constructing and revising, as put forth by Badger and White (2000) was administered before the mid-term examination and BLA was used after the mid-term examination. For the portfolio work, students were expected to complete a portfolio, i.e. a flat A4 sized case with the work done in class (See Data Collection Procedures section for more details). The tasks completed every week included writing an introductory paragraph, the body of an essay and the conclusion of an essay were placed into the portfolio together with the WCF given, showing step by step the development of a specific essay. Models of the specific essays

contributed by the lecturer, transitions and linking words with definitions and clarifying examples, pre-plans of essays (jotted notes of ideas and tables), activities/tasks and readings completed in class and the assessment criteria of the department (See Appendix E) were also added to the portfolios of the participants. After the mid-term examination the BLA was employed. According to Macdonald (2006) the term blended learning "is commonly associated with the introduction of online media into a course or programme, while at the same time recognising that there is merit in retaining face-to-face contact and other traditional approaches to supporting students." (p. 2) During the process of the BLA students were administered tasks to complete online, send and receive e-mails online and research online. The online tasks involved watching videos and commenting on YouTube. com, commenting and following task announcements on Facebook.com and reading an article on The Daily Mail and commenting below the article. The sending and receiving of e-mails involved the attachment of the Microsoft Word document in which students wrote their essays. For the research assigned online, students were appointed to search for model essay types for each essay. During class hours the WCF given by an appointed peer or the lecturer were discussed and elaborated on collaboratively. In addition to this, spontaneous issues that arouse during any task or work were clarified.

The course lasted 16 weeks in total including the mid-term and final examination weeks. During the term in which the study took place, there was a total of 30 class periods, each class lasting 50 minutes. Hence, students were engaged in several writing activities over a 30-hour period, which made up the treatment section of the study. The assessment breakdown for the course out of 100 was as follows:

Type	%
Participation and Attendance	15
Portfolio work	35
Quiz	10
Online work	25
Final examination	15

It is crucial to mention that students did more work in the first two weeks of the course (see Appendix K), which involved the treatment of errors and understanding the concept of the term 'essay.' For these two weeks, students produced written work and received 10 points for it. In this respect, students appear to have done more work and were assessed for it throughout the portfolio workcompared to the online work. However, for the actual drafts and essays that they had produced in both the portfolio and online modes, students received 25 marks for each.

Figure 3 below illustrates the writing course designed with a BLA. The work done in class regarding the portfolio work designed with a PGA and the work done online after the mid-term examination until the final examinationis described. For both modes students were engaged in the process twice for both modes as there were two essays types for each mode (see Appendices F & K).

Figure 3

BLA Writing Course Design

Teaching of a → Draft 1 ——————→ Peer WCF
specific essay

In class PGA   Portfolio work ← Draft 2 ——————→ Collaborative

WCF Training

Concept of
Essay Training

Product ——————→ Teacher

Online tasks → Draft 1 ——————→ Peer WCF

Draft 2 ——————→ Collaborative
(in class)

BLA

Online teacher
feedback

Final ——————→ Teacher

In class
teaching of
specific essay
/focused
feedback
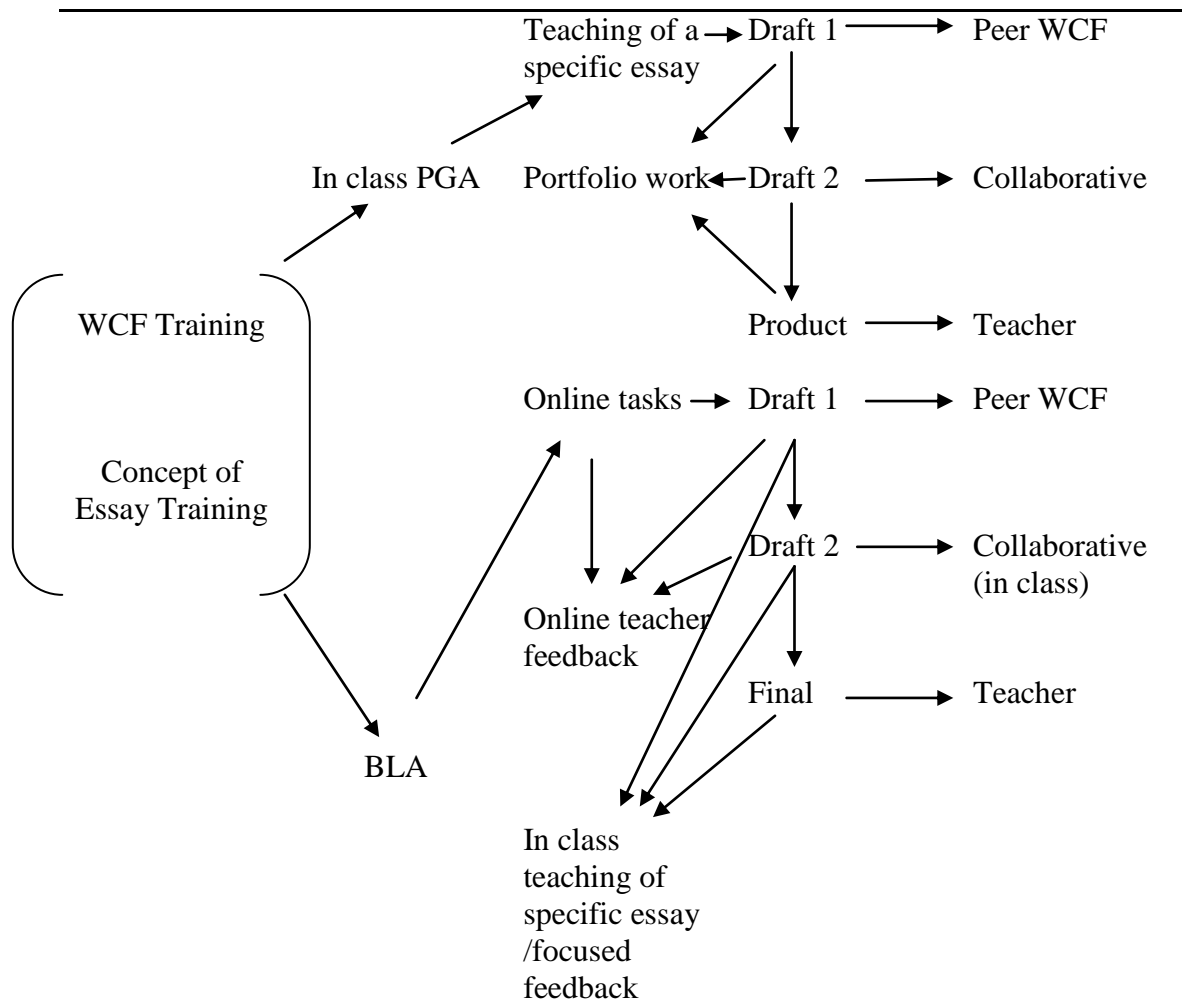
The Role of the Researcher

The lecturer of the writing course was also the researcher. According to

Action research, the lecturer commencing the course is also called a research

practitioner (Norton, 2009). Schön (1983), the author of "The Reflective

Practitioner", argues that in whatever profession, each individual needs to reflect on

himself/herself as new situations and problems inevitably arise in areas which one is

not specifically trained. That is to say, reflection is a very important part of action research. In this respect, as the lecturer of the course I reflected on the process in order to improve in the areas of the teaching and learning of writing and also to prepare an effective writing syllabus for my future teaching/learning settings. This was done through keeping a reflective journal, details of which will be provided later in this chapter (see Appendix R for a sample page).

My primary role as the lecturer was to design a writing course for ELT fourth year students who are at the same time EFL learners, ranging in different proficiency levels of English. Even though the general aim as a lecturer was to improve students' academic writing skills, i.e. learning writing in terms of essay writing, the course also involved the teaching and assessment of writing. As the lecturer of the course, it was possible to have full control and be well equipped in collecting the significant data to carry out this study. That is to say, being involved in the process as a lecturer enabled richer data to be collected because at every step, the researcher was able to observe and experience the attitudes, the behaviours and the setting and interacted with the participants as well as with the context in reality, so issues such as problems, benefits and drawbacks were easier to deal with and amend.

Participants

In the following section, background information about each student will be presented. Such information is important in explaining the attitudes of individual participants towards certain issues discussed in the interviews.

Stage I. The participants of the first stage of the present study were students of a private university in north Cyprus. In total, 16 students participated in this stage. All excluding one were senior ELT students.

The exceptional student joined the course from another department after the course had started. This student was also a senior student and was advised to take the course by her department. Almost all of the participants who took part in this study were also EFL learners. Therefore, these students had varying proficiency levels in English. Taking into account that some students were better than others in English, the terms high and low proficiency levels will be used in this study to separate students' proficiency levels in English. That is to say, these terms will not reflect their actual proficiency levels but will rather be used relative to their class performances. Three of the participants were males and 13 were females. Out of the 16, three of the students were native speakers of English; two of these students were born and brought up in England but were of Turkish Cypriot origin and one of the native speakers was Nigerian. Seven were Turkish Cypriots and five were Turkish nationals and their native language was Turkish. One participant was Palestinian and spoke Arabic as a native language. In other words, out of 16 participants, three of the students' first language (L1) was English and 13 of the students learnt English as a foreign language (EFL). Although some students agreed to be acknowledged by their real identities, all participants were given pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of the remaining participants.

Table 3

Participants in Stage I

Participant	Age	Native Language	Nationality	Background in Academic Writing
Sue	22	English	Turkish Cypriot	16 years
Hailey	22	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	5 years
Andrew	25	English	Turkish Cypriot	5 years
Jack	25	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Amanda	23	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Katty	25	English	Nigerian	20 years
Zoe	23	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Allie	23	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Matt	23	Arabic	Palestinian	7 years
Anna	21	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	10 years
Zara	21	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	6 years
Mary	23	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Mathew	26	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Claire	23	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	5 years
Sally	24	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Nur	25	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years

Stage II. The participants of the second stage of the study were also students of a private university in north Cyprus. In total, 17 students participated in this stage.

Table 4

Participants in Stage II

Participant	Age	Native Language	Nationality	Background in Academic Writing
Arnold	24	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Betty	23	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Tom	26	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Samantha	24	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Johnny	23	Turkish	Turkish	3 years
Mellie	24	English	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Jane	22	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	3 years
Brian	22	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Tanya	22	English	Turkish Cypriot	12 years
Barry	27	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	5 years
Ozie	25	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Hayley	23	Turkish	Turkish	4 years
Mike	24	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Zullu	22	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Mark	23	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	4 years
Iona	22	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	7 years
Sharon	49	Turkish	Turkish Cypriot	34 years

All of the students were senior ELT students. Almost all of the participants who took part in this stage were EFL learners. Nine of the participants were females and eight were males.

Two out of 17 of these students were native speakers of English, both were born and brought up in England but were of Turkish Cypriot origin, four were Turkish students and the remaining 11 students were Turkish Cypriots. That is to say, out of 17 participants, two of the students' L1 was English and 15 of the students learnt English as a FL.In this stage, all participants were again given pseudonyms to protect the anonymity of their identities.

Data Collection Procedures

Construction of the syllabus. Since this was a course for teaching the writing skill, the syllabus (see Appendix F) was designed according to the skill-based syllabus introduced by Reilly (1988). The main teaching point of the course was 'essays'. Therefore, the syllabus was arranged according to the essay types that were to be taught. However, this design was only a layout for the lecturer to follow. As the Action research design implied, the researcher was able to make amendments to the syllabus where necessary to see the effect. To enable this, the PGA was adopted (Badger & White, 2000; Flower & Hayes, 1981; Kroll, 1990; Steele, 1992). According to Badger and White (2000), the PGA is the combination of the product, process and genre approaches. In essence, the product approach as defined by Pincas (as cited in Badger & White, 2000) is primarily concerned with the proper use of the language, with the students producing a piece of writing after analysing a model text first followed by imitation. The process approach as defined by Tribble (1996)

emphasises "Writing activities which move learners from the generation of ideas and the collection of data through to the 'publication' of a finished text" (p. 37), while the genre approach stresses the social nature of writing and thus "focuses on producing pieces of writing ranging from letters to research articles and reports" (Flowerdew, 1993, p. 307). Such a combination takes into account the students' prior experience in writing and their current and future needs, and helps provide them with the necessary amount of guidance, while at the same time encouraging them to gradually become more independent and confident in their writing (Marsh, 2012).

The genre-based approach was employed to teach writing to the learners as their linguistic knowledge and writing competence was developed enough to create a written product that serves a social purpose. To teach a particular genre effectively, the strengths of the product based writing approach were integrated. The primary concern of this approach deals with the appropriate use of the language for each genre (Widodo, 2006). Moreover, the linguistic skills in the process based approach, such as prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing in the writing class were employed. It was assumed that these were likely to help students to come up with appropriate language use and writing purpose for a specific audience through interaction in the class while students are learning to produce their work. Even though writing in different genres require different kinds of learner knowledge and different sets of writing skills, it still seemed wise to combine the strengths of product, process, and genre approaches together as it was believed that each of these approaches complement each other (Badger & White, 2000). The combination of these approaches, which Badger and White (2000) have aptly named the PGA, seemed appropriate to adopt as its effectiveness was presented in an earlier study in a similar setting (Bensen, 2007).

As mentioned earlier, students studying with PGA enrol in six steps: preparation, modelling and reinforcing, planning, joint construction, independent constructing and revising (Badger and White, 2000). For each essay for the preparation step the lecturer defined a situation that required a written text and placed it within a specific genre, such as for the persuasive essay, arguing for or against an issue of current interest. For the modelling and reinforcing steps of the essays, the lecturer introduced a model of a genre for the specific essay and encouraged the students to consider the social purpose of the text allowing students to determine the audience. Thus, other models were provided to the students to be compared/contrasted and discussions about the organization, structure, linking words and transitions were carried out collaboratively, in pairs, individually or in groups. In this step, the impact of reading to writing was not forgotten in the process as reading contributes to writing (Krashen, 2004). Even in one's first language, reading affects the writing produced. The more one reads, the better writing he/she will produce. Therefore, in order to be able to become a good writer, one should be exposed to as much reading as possible. For example, to be able to write a magazine article one should be exposed to reading as much as possible concerning articles in magazines (Krashen, 2004). Hence, guiding, monitoring and exposing the students to as many models as possible regarding the expected writing was vital in order to make them become better writers and develop their writing skills.

In the planning step, various meaningful activities were introduced that included brainstorming, discussion and reading associated material. In the joint constructing step, the students started writing the introduction/body/conclusion of the specific essay with the lecturer's support. This step involved brainstorming, drafting, and revising. Information and ideas contributed by the students were written on the

white board. Students were engaged in individual, pair and group work for this process. For step five, independent constructing, students would compose their own essays on a related topic. If class time was over, students would continue writing their essays at home. For the revising step the essay would then be brought back to class and WCF would be given by a peer. The second drafts would be written and WCF would then be given by a peer, checked individually or collaboratively. This process was made random in order to try each one. For example, self, peer, collaborative and lecturer correction and/or feedback were given for the first and second drafts of a specific essay. In addition to this, direct WCF, indirect WCF and codedWCFwere also dealt with throughout this process (see Feedback and correction section for details).

By working collaboratively and/or in pairs, it was assumed that learners would improve their writings with the help of their partners' and lecturer's comments and also develop their critical thinking skills. Through the process of writing, it is crucial as a lecturer to help students realize the importance of each writing stage equally and provide them with a chance to self-correct their own writing errors to raise their awareness in foreign language writing (Race, 2010). By doing this, it was assumed that it would draw out learners' writing potential and allow them to see their writing development from the beginning to the end. Students were also able to see their writing development in their portfolios through their first drafts, second drafts and the final versions.

As the lecturer of the class, I decided that providing a clear model for my students would allow them to identify the purpose of the social context in the first stage of teaching. Then, the techniques of generating ideas, namely brainstorming, mind-mapping, and free-writing, helped learners think about the appropriate

vocabulary, grammar, and organization for writing in a specific genre. After the stage of generating ideas, students worked in groups because "collaborative learning will not only lessen students' stress but also promote the skills which are involved in writing development" (Tangpermpoon, 2008, p. 8). Another step, which was assumed to make students' writing effective, was redrafting and proofreading, as these would help learners develop what they lack in their written products and a sense of audience. By learning through the PGA, students would have less difficulty in writing in English since they would have enough input to create their writing tasks (Badger & White, 2000; Bensen, 2007; Tangpermpoon, 2008).

During the PGA period, students were engaged in portfolio work. For all of the activities, pre-plans and ideas of essays, essay drafts and essay products were placed into each students portfolios. The students were also provided with the department's correction coding system (see Appendix E) in order to assess work throughout the process, and a list of linking and transition words. These were placed on the first page of each student's portfolio. In addition, models of the essay, which were going to be focused on, were placed into the portfolio before the first drafts were written. In other words, according to the procedure every piece of work was placed in order of completion. That is to say, the chronology for each essay was models, activities, pre-plans, first draft, second draft and final products. To check that work was in chronological order, work done by students was examined by the lecturer every week and given back to the students. Furthermore, marks for the completed work, i.e. tasks, peer assessment and drafts of writing, were orally announced the following week by the lecturer.

During the portfolio work students were engaged in peer assessment and feedback for each essay. For the first essay students did not give proper WCF, i.e.

only found two-three errors with no comments. For this reason, in order to foster and encourage students to produce their best work for the following essays (until the end of the course including the implementation of the BLA), the first draft was seen by the lecturer and the number of errors were written on each essay. Students then had to find approximately the same number of errors in the work that they were checking. Those students who found more than the lecturer were given bonus points and/or a plus which would affect their participation marks. If students collected three pluses then they would gain two points for their class participation marks. This spontaneous problem solving strategy seemed beneficial to employ at the time in order to encourage students to do their work efficiently. With respect to students' positive attitudes towards this strategy, this continued for all of the following essays.

As mentioned earlier the portfolio work was employed up to the mid-term examination. After the mid-term examination the BLA was used together with the steps of the PGA. However, all the work was done online. That is to say, students were given reading and listening tasks online in order to generate ideas for specific essays. After this, students researched and found model texts online. Like the PGA, the students looked at a model of a genre to realise the social context, organization and so on of the essay in question. The other steps concerning the PGA, i.e. joint construction and individual construction, were carried out in the same way. The peer/collaborative work and WCF were carried out online as well. During the BLA period, students were assigned tasks involving the social networking site Facebook, the MP3 and MP4 site, YouTube and the local gazette in English, the Daily Mail's website. In addition to this, students were also engaged in sending and receiving their or their peers' essays via e-mail, and sending and receiving their e-mails to the lecturer. Students would use a Hotmail, G-mail and/or Yahoo account to accomplish

this procedure. These essays would then be sent with an attached Microsoft word document to the receiver.

Expecting learners to use technology in and out of the classroom setting as part of the learning process is considered new (Marsh, 2012). Currently, communication through writing is carried out on the computer via e-mails, blogs, social networking sites such as Facebook, Tweeter, on mobile via Whatsup, Viber and so on (Scriviner, 2011). People of all ages are engaged in using computers.Sreebny (2007) states that "Email is still the most widely used collaboration tool in the world." (p.3)

Scriviner (2011) presents many benefits of using computers. Firstly, it is reliable (no handwriting jungles). Secondly, multiple copies can be printed out for as many readers as needed. Thirdly, suggestions and edits can be written on hard copies and then editing can be done on the computer – no need to rewrite from scratch. Finally, it can be e-mailed direct to other students or the teacher him/herself. He also suggests several advantages of word processing, which is more likely to be used in an academic environment:

- Select text; change font and font size; apply underline, bold, italic, etc.;

- Use basic editing features 'cut', 'copy', 'paste';

- Set the spell-check language and options for 'check spelling as you type';

- Regularly save back-up copies so that six hours of vital work is not lost after one mistake;

- Use (and be wary of) any grammar-checking facilities;

- Use a 'comment' feature, allowing different readers to leave notes in the body of the text that the writer can then review and use later on;

- Program simple macros (mini-programs that can do frequently repeated actions at the press of a button). For example, I have found that having a word count is very handy on the main toolbar. (p. 5)

A number of studies on behalf of the employment of social networking sites by students concerning course related topics have been conducted (Caruso & Salaway, 2008; MORI, 2008). Technically, Facebook's features could provide useful support for student collaboration, student-generated content, student-student communication and the personalisation and socialisation of student work (Dalsgaard, 2008; Huijser 2008; Pempek et al. 2009). In addition to this, there is conjecture that Facebook's features may encourage students to engage in creative and social learning processes that extend beyond traditional educational settings and institutions (Wiberg, 2007) and thus benefit from access to wide and diverse sources of information and opportunities for communication (Dron & Anderson, 2007). For these reasons, the employment of the social networking site Facebook seemed wise and beneficial to utilize in the blend.Facebook account holders can download or share music, music videos and any other visual script using YouTube (Marentis, 2011). Seeing that those who are acquainted with Facebook are also acquainted with YouTube, employing YouTube into the blend was not taken strangely by the students. Adopting Facebook and YouTube, websites that the majority of the participants of the study seemed to use on a daily basis, also seemed beneficial in order to self-motivate the students and get them to complete the writing tasks. A more detailed account of the procedures followed when teaching the course can be found in Appendix K.

Materials. During the portfolio work, the white board was used to illustrate examples of models. For example, the introduction, the body and the conclusion

paragraphs were demonstrated in detail in order to produce an essay. Questions regarding each paragraph were written on the white board to clarify understanding. In addition, answers that originated through the tasks given in class to the students were also written on the board for students whose answers were different (see Appendix K). Furthermore, topics related to the type of essay focused on were written on the board for students to choose from. Moreover, for both essays during the portfolio work, i.e. persuasive and advantage and disadvantage essays, tables were drawn on the white board with themes to help students write the topic sentences and then support them with supporting sentences, in the body paragraph. Model texts that were downloaded from the Internet were printed out and distributed to students for every essay during the portfolio work. Three models for each essay were given (see Appendix J).

For the online work, students' personal computers and/or mobile phones were used to complete the tasks, check for announcements, give WCF and send and receive essays and models. In order to carry out these tasks, Internet access was required. The tasks given to students involved reading the Daily Mail, listening to and watching YouTube videos and reading and writing on Facebook (see Appendix G). For the task involving the Daily Mail, students read the article '*Sometimes I wish I'd never won: Lottery winning bus driver plans new life in Cyprus after claiming 38 million pounds syndicate win left him feuding with friends*' (Available online at http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2312512/Lottery-winning-Corby-bus-driver-John-Noakes-plans-new-life-Cyprus-win-left-feuding-friends.html).In addition to this, for the tasks relating to YouTube students watched and listened to '*Fiddler on the roof*' (Available online at

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBHZFYpQ6nc) and '*Life before*

technology'(Available online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4jz9rkhYGo).

In order to record the interviews carried out in the first and second stages of

the study, a voice recorder was used. A word processor was used to transcribe and

analyse the recordings. A reflective journal, i.e. a note book that included writing

step by step of the issues, events, problems, every behaviour and movement and

everything employed and carried out during the course, was kept by the researcher

and was later used as data to be analysed.

Reflective journal.As mentioned earlier, data was collected in a private

university in north Cyprus. In order to answer the research question related to the

problems faced when applying a BLA to writing in an EFL classroom, a Reflective

journal was kept where the researcher reflected on the lectures, the group, individual

students and the environment during the 15 weeks of the course (see Appendix R).

Norton (2009) puts forth that writing a reflective journal enables the researcher "to

critically analyse what is happening in the study by reflecting on whether the needs

of the group and individual participants are being met and by deliberating on how to

interpret the data and report the findings." (p. 220) The data collected in the journal

involved the on-going process of the course. Every step that was taken was reflected

on in the journal. In other words, spontaneous issues, the lecturers' attitudes and

problem solving strategies, students' challenges, the students learning and teaching

as a whole class and individually, students' attitudes and behaviour towards issues,

tasks, assignments and homework, the amendments and modifications concerning

the prepared syllabus were written in the reflective journal, then analysed and used as

data for this study. Reflective journals are believed to enable one to keep track of

emerging ideas, stimulate further analysis and data collection, and help in the

development of arguments and theory integration (Angelides, Evangelou & Leigh, 2005).

Essays. The quantitative data collected for this study was obtained from the essays that the participants wrote during the implementation of the portfolio work and online work mentioned earlier. Even though the students had written more than one essay for each section of the course, i.e. portfolio and online work, only one essay for each approach was taken into account to be analysed for this study. The syllabus focused on two essays for each of the sections (portfolio and online) (see Appendix F). Each essay consisted of two drafts and a final product. During the process of both modes (portfolio & online work), students regarded the drafts as products. In other words, students produced their best work for the drafts and products. The last essays for each work were chosen as data for this study, due to the fact that students produced better work in their second essays for each approach.

Interviews.Qualitative data was collected through the interviews carried out in both phases of the study. Interviews were conducted with all of the participants who took part in the study. Two stages of interviews were carried out; interviews with participants that took part in the writing course (stage I) and interviews with participants that did not take part in the writing course (stage II).

Stage I. In order to answer the research question in relation to the students' perspectives on their experiences in a writing course designed with a BLA, it was crucial to interview students and analyse their responses. Qualitative interview data enables more in-depth insights on participants' attitudes, thoughts and actions (Kendall, 2008). Verbal consent from the participants was obtained to record the individual interviews. A structured interview schedule was prepared to be carried out

face-to-face and individually with the participants. Responses in a structured interview "can be pre-set or a combination with some open-ended responses" (Norton, 2009, p. 99). Structured interviews are similar to a questionnaire, which has predetermined questions with fixed wording (Robson, 2002). The only essential difference is that structured interviews have open response questions. For example, Are there any other…, Why…?. The interview schedule used in the first stage of the study included questions with the same wording, which were asked in the same order. The interview questions consisted of 10 items and were as follows:

1. Do you prefer classroom writing or on line writing? Why?

2. What type of assessment best suits you? (direct/indirect/code correction)

3. What type of correction do you prefer for your first drafts (individual/peer/collaborative/teacher)? Why?

4. What type of correction do you prefer for your second drafts? Why?

5. What type of correction do you prefer for your final drafts? Why?

6. Do you prefer to write on a topic without any drafts? Why? Why not?

7. Do you prefer portfolio work or on-line work (in terms of writing)? Why?

8. Do you prefer the traditional style (the one's in your previous writing courses) of teaching writing or the style we used in class? Why?

9. What possible advantages would you suggest the technique we used in class has?

10. What possible disadvantages would you suggest the technique we used in class has?

Each interview question took approximately 2-5 minutes to answer adding up to 20-50 minutes in total for each participant. The data collected from the interviews were

transcribed and analysed. The findings were set onto tables according to their topics and will be further discussed in the findings and discussion chapter of this thesis.

*Stage II.*Data were collected through interviews again, carried out after the interview sessions in stage I. Stage II was carried out due to some unanswered questions which arouse after the interviews in stage I.The interviews conducted with the students that did not take part in this study were transcribed one by one and analysed. This data were further divided into themes and discussed in the findings and discussion chapter of this study. Due to the fact that the questions were semi-structured, answers and questions that arouse during the interview varied. Norton (2009) puts forth that semi-structured interviews "use open-ended questions that enable the interviewee to talk more freely." (p. 99) Verbal consent from the participants was obtained to record the individual interviews. A one-to-one semi-structured interview schedule was presented to the participants in question. The interview questions were originally set as 7 questions. However, during the interviews this number increased in order to clarify understanding and misinterpreted questions and to specify information. The semi-structured questions were as follows:

1. How many courses have you taken concerning the learning and teaching of writing?

2. What have you learnt in terms of writing during the four years at this department?

3. Do you believe you have been exposed to enough writing (learning and teaching) during these four years? Why/why not?

4. How are you going to teach your writing lessons?

5. Have you heard of blended learning? Would you employ it as a teacher?

6. What do you think is good/bad about this approach why?

7. How are you going to assess and give feedback to your future students?

For this stage of the study, each interview question lasted approximately 5-10 minutes, calculating approximately between 14 to 28 hours in total for each participant. The data collected from the interviews were transcribed and analysed qualitatively by focusing on the merging themes. The findings were incorporated with the previous data and discussed in the findings and discussion section of this study.

Reliability of the assessment. To check the reliability of the marks given to the students for their first and final drafts, inter-rater reliability was employed.Phelan and Wren (2006) define the term inter-rater reliability as a measure of reliability used to assess the degree to which different judges or raters agree in their assessment decisions. It is argued that inter-rater reliability is useful because human observers will not necessarily interpret answers the same way; raters may disagree as to how well certain responses or material demonstrate knowledge of the construct or skill being assessed. It is suggested that inter-rater reliability is especially useful when judgments can be considered relatively subjective. It seemed necessary to use such a technique to check the reliability of the assessment done for the essays submitted by the students in order to identify significant differences or similarities in the marking of the essays.

To carry out the stated reliability check, the portfolio work and the online work completed by the students were given to another English language teacher to be re-assessed. The English language teacher has been teaching English to adult EFL learners at a university setting for9 years. For each student, a draft, which they had produced during the term, and the final version of their essays were provided to the

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second assessor. However, she was not informed whether these essays were drafts or the final versions. Each essay was anonymised by removing the names on them and was marked with a letter (A, B,C,D) before it was handed over to the second assessor. This enabled the researcher to understand whether it was the first draft or the final product of the portfolio work or the first draft or the final product of the online work (see Appendix L). This also enabled the researcher to see whether the initial assessment and the differences in the students' marks in the two essay forms were valid and reliable or not.

Both assessors, i.e. the class lecturer (researcher) and the English language teacher examined the essays according to a pre-set criterion (See Appendices A, B, C) and gave marks out of 10. This criterion sheet is used as a standard throughout the department to evaluate students' essays and is also included in the department's Student Handbook. Therefore, the students are familiar with it. The second assessor was also provided with the same criteria sheet for consistency when evaluating students' essays.

Table 5 shows the results of the evaluation by the lecturer and the second rater. It can be seen that the assessment appears to be consistent for both cases. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson's *r*) was computed to assess the relationship between the lecturer's and English language teacher's assessment given for the drafts and final products of students' portfolio and online work. A Pearson's *r* also known as a Pearson product-moment coefficient was employed considering that it is "used with variables that have a curvilinear relationship, the resulting correlation is an *underestimate* of the true relationship between these variables" (Ravid, 2011, p. 119).This procedure was carried out to confirm the reliability of the lecturer's assessment.

Table 5

Assessment Results

Participants	T P/W D	L P/W D	T P/W P	L P/W P	T O/W D	L O/W D	T O/W P	L O/W P
Sue	7	6	8	8	8	7	9	9
Hailey	4	4	5	6	5	5	7	7
Andrew	2	3	4	5	7	6	8	7
Jack	3	3	5	6	5	5	6	7
Amanda	4	4	6	6	4	4	7	7
Katty	10	8	10	10	10	9	10	10
Zoe	5	4	5	5	6	6	8	8
Allie	5	4	6	5	6	5	7	7
Matt	2	2	4	5	5	4	6	6
Anna	8	8	9	9	8	8	10	10
Zara	9	8	9	8	9	9	10	10
Mary	7	6	7	7	7	7	8	8
Mathew	4	3	6	6	4	4	6	7
Claire	5	5	7	7	6	6	7	7
Sally	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	8
Nur	5	5	6	7	6	6	7	7

Key: T: English Language Teacher   L: Class Lecturer   P/W: Portfolio work

O/W: Online work   D: Draft   P: Product

Table 6

Assessment of the Portfolio Draft

		Lecturer's marks	Teacher's marks
Lecturer's marks	Pearson Correlation	1	.961[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	16	16
Teacher's marks	Pearson Correlation	.961[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	16	16

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 illustrates the lecturer's and English language teacher's marks for the drafts of the 16 participants' portfolio work. It appears that there is a strong relationship between the two sets of results because the Pearson *r* is very close to one (*r* = .961)(Kahn, 2010; Ravid, 2011). This means that changes in one variable are strongly correlated with changes in the second variable. The 2-tailed significance test shows that there is a positive correlation between the variables and that the relationship is statistically significant (*r*= .961, *n*=16, *p*= .000). For this reason, it could be concluded that the assessment of the lecturer for the draft portfolio work was reliable.

Table 7 illustrates the lecturer's and English language teacher's marks given for the final products of students' portfolio work. Similar to the previous test results, there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables (*r* = .936, n = 16, p = .000), rendering the assessment reliable.

Table 7

Portfolio Work Product

		Lecturer's marks	Teacher's marks
Lecturer's marks	Pearson Correlation	1	.936[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	16	16
Teacher's marks	Pearson Correlation	.936[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	16	16

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8

Online Work Draft

		Lecturer 's marks	Teacher's marks
Lecturer's marks	Pearson Correlation	1	.960[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	16	16
Teacher's marks	Pearson Correlation	.960[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	16	16

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9

Online Work Product

		Lecturer's marks	Teacher's marks
Lecturer's marks	Pearson Correlation	1	.934[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	16	16
Teacher's marks	Pearson Correlation	.934[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	16	16

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table8and9illustrate the correlation tests for the assessment of the lecturer and the English language teacher for the drafts of students' online work and their final products respectively. In both cases, there appears to be a strong positive correlation (r= .960, n=16, p=.000;r = .934, n = 16, p = .000) between the two assessors' grading.

In conclusion, the correlation tests suggest that the scoring done by the two raters strongly correlate for all of the assessed work. This suggests that the scording of the lecturer is reliable to be used as data for further analysis to assess the improvements in students' writing in the two modes.

Feedback and correction. The term direct WCF consists of an indication of the error and provision of the corresponding correct form in the target language. In other words, the error that the learner makes is deleted and replaced with the correct form. Indirect WCF only indicates that an error has been made. Present literature

shows that indirect correction methods can take different forms that vary in their explicitness which are usually done by underlining the errors or coding the errors with similar features. Instead of the teacher providing the target form, it is left to the learner to correct his/her own errors (Beuningen, Jong & Kuiken, 2012; Ferris, 2002; Sivaji, 2012). In this study, the term 'indirect' as suggested by Beuningen, Jong and Kuiken (2012) only indicates that an error has been made. In other words, the error is underlined and left for the student to figure out what the error is. The term coded WCF specifies the type of error in codes giving the student a clue of the error. Instead of separating the feedback provided during this study into two categories as direct and indirect as in the literature, it seemed appropriate to categorise the correction approach used into three types: (a) direct WCF, referring to the replacement of the correct form of the error, (b) indirect WCF, concerning the underlining of the errors, and (c) coded WCF, referring to codes to represent the type of error. The ELT department's coded correction guidelines (See Appendix E) were employed throughout the course. Students were engaged in both giving and receiving feedback and correction. It should be kept in mind that marks were only given by the lecturer of the course. Students only gave oral and/or WCF and comments to each other to help improve each other's work and this was by no means an assessment procedure.

In order to explain the terms direct, indirect and codedWCF and their operational usage in this study, the following examples concerning grammar are presented:

Table 10

Types of WCF

Direct WCF	Indirect WCF	Coded WCF
Student error:	**Student error:**	**Student error:**
I **go** to school yesterday.	I **go** to school yesterday.	I **go** to school yesterday.
WCF:	**WCF:**	**WCF:**
I **went** to school yesterday.	I **go** to school yesterday.	I **go** to school yesterday.
		WT

In terms of WCF, two of the participants claimed that they had been engaged in direct WCF only and were unaware of any other type of WCF. This was also assumed by the lecturer after having met the students. For this reason, students were presented the WCF types throughout the course. Students had the chance of giving and/or receiving direct, indirect and coded WCF during the drafts of the essays. The lecturer believed that the involvement of three types of WCF methods would be beneficial as students were going to also comment and give marks for the writings of their students in the future when they become English language teachers. The involvements of the direct, indirect and coded WCF types were placed into the students' portfolios.

Regarding the modes of feedback, students were engaged in (a) peer feedback and correction, where a classmate gave feedback and correction, (b) collaborative feedback and correction, where both the lecturer and students gave feedback and correction, (c) lecturer feedback and correction, where only the lecturer gave feedback and correction and (d) individual correction, where the student self-corrected. In regards to collaborative feedback and correction, this was only

employed during class hours and mostly given orally. Individual correction was the least focused on during the course. Before essay submissions, students would self-correct their final products.

The following will present two feedback and correction papers given to students by an appointed peer during the online work. To make understanding clearer, compare and contrast essays from a low English proficiency level student and higher English proficiency level student will be illustrated. In addition to this, an essay regarding positive constructive feedback is also illustrated in Appendix Q.

Example 1

Low English Proficiency Writer

Mathew15.5.2013

Life and Technology

According to me there is a close link between life and technology. The people **starts(WF)** to plan their life within the framework of **technolgy(SP).** Nowadays all the human **emotions has gone with the advance of technology**(SP)**(?).** This situation is very natural for some people but for other is not. Now I am comparing life before **the** technology and life after **thetechology(SP).** You can see the differences between them.

Before the development of **techonology(SP)** the people were happy in their life. **People who were responsible for each other(?)**. The relationship between them **is(WF)** warm and cordial. I remembered **on(WW)** my childhood lots of the people sent each other letters and cards for everything. This situation **inreased**(SP) the respect and love between the people. Before **the technolgy(SP)** people used different way to communicate**(P)** for example they visited each other, they **send(WF)**cards and by this way they would be more happy.

After **thetechonology(SP)** the relationship decreased between the people day by day. We started to devote a large part our life to technology. We concentrated on computers, mobile phones etc. I know **techonology(SP)** is very important for our life but **we carried away ourselves to technology(?). Of course we have to use advantages of technology but the important thing is we don't need to lose our respect and love to each other. So the people has changed the way of their life with technology.(irrelevant)**

Before technology all the people **give more important to communicate, to relationship(?)**between each other but after the technology the people give less important to relationship, to communicate and to their life. I think the technology has changed our life. Therefore we forgot lots of thing related with human emotions.

As a conclusion technology is **much** apart of our life and has lot of advantages but the important thing is we started to live according to technology. I think it is wrong. We need to keep in our mind the relationship between the people is more important than the technology. If we plan our life depending **totechnology we make mistakes(?)**. So we must apply our life and technology **seperately(SP)**

Corrected by Mary

Comments:

- I found about 20 errors (less than yours)

- Introduction part is not appropriate. You cannot start the introduction part by saying according to me. Give background information and state your thesis statement.

- In conclusion part you should summarize thesis statement(points which you will compare)

- Be careful with spelling mistakes especially written form of **technology**, there are some grammar mistakes too

- You have unclear sentences, you have to make your sentences clear and understandable

- There are irrelevant sentences in your essay (?)

- be careful with the usage of 'the'

block method

-Your essay is not in an appropriate organization for the block method

-There should be 4 paragraphs in block method

- In thesis statement you should state the points which you are going to compare in the body paragraphs

- There should be 2 body paragraphs which you should compare the points about two subjects

   1. paragraph   2. paragraph

Life before technology -   life after technology

   1. point   1. point

2. point   2. point

3. point   3. point

Example 2

Higher English proficiency writer

Anna15-5-2013

Technology <u>is becoming</u>wf to take more and more part in our lives. In short, the term technology means <u>the</u> x making and <u>usage</u>wt<u>of</u>x tools in order to solve a problem or <u>simpler the life</u>rw . The history of technology stands for more than 50,000 years. Throughout these long years, technology kept changing and <u>has affected</u> wt the societies in many ways. As <u>the</u>x technological advances affect <u>a</u>x society's values, there are many questions to be answered. <u>Some people believe that p when compared to past, developing technology decreased human productivity. In addition it makes people lazy and fat.</u> rw

The technology was available when Einstein was living but he was able to see the future. With the reference of his famous quote; <u>"I fear that the technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots",(reference?)</u>we can say that technology has started to have a negative effect on our lives compared to the past. First of all, every day the nutritionists tell that the obesity rates are increasing due to <u>the</u> x immobility. The immobility is largely caused by the usage of laptops, watching long hours of television or using cars instead of walking even to the closest places. These all were not available 200 years ago p so people <u>werenot having</u>wt obesity problems. However, people were active because they were either farmers or dealing with livestock. In addition, in comparison to the recent past p the way people communicate <u>changed</u>wt a lot. Moreover, people <u>became</u> wt more dependent on technological devices such as navigation device. Globalization leads to a change in people's lifestyles. The number of people who travel abroad has increased and the technology found a solution which is M navigation device. Without it people would stuck while driving on the road. There are number of inventions like this and there was no dependence in the past like

today's world.

Things are very different from the past. The way people communicate changed<u>wf</u> a lot. In the past p people were visiting each other, sending letters and chatting but now p especially for the past 10 years everything has moved to <u>the</u>ww virtual chat or social networking sites such as twitter, facebook and badoo. Furthermore p with the developments of technology, the way people live and behave changed<u>wf</u>. A recent research stated that 87% of people who have a facebook account check it at least once a day. (reference?) Also, people <u>became</u>wt lazy because technology supplies everything for them. They do not use their brains as they did M and as Einstein predicted p people <u>became</u> wt idiots. Even a simple multiplication <u>becomes</u> ww complex for them because those skills of the brain is wf not used for a long period of time.

As a result it can be concluded that p technology has changed greatly compared to the past and resulted in differences. People <u>became</u>wt lazy because of immobility. There was wf no internet, no websites for information and no high technology devices. Thus, people survived and there were strong family bonds rather than fake networks. We will never deny the amenities that M developments provided and providing to us but it is important <u>to</u> x not to forgive the bad sides.

Checked by : Zara

Attention to Lecturer: I found more errors than you guessed

Comments:

- I think the layout of your essay is not a good one since it is formed of two body paragraphs. And the ideas are a bit mixed. Proper one should look something like this :

For example:Body Paragraph 1 : (climate)

-mountains

-beaches

Body Paragraph 2 : (soil type)

-mountains

-beaches

- You need to rewrite your thesis statement because it looks like 2 different

sentences.

- Topic statement of the second paragraph should be your first sentence not the combination of the two different sentences.

- I think that you need to work on your grammar especially on present perfect and past perfect.

- You need to reference the 'quotation' and the 'research result' you have mentioned in your essay, by making a list at the end of your essay. Keep in mind that your reference list should be in the APA format.

The above examples illustrate how students carried out the coded correction criteria (see Appendix E) giving feedback to their peers. As can be seen, there is a big difference in the students' proficiency levels in English. It could also be seen that there are more errors than the indicated coded ones. This may be due to deficiencies in the assessors' own linguistic competencies in the target language. Considering such contextual issues, the lecturer had collaborative debates and discussions in class concerning each essay. During these debates and discussions carried out in class, the lecturer and/or assigned peer added any other unmentioned error and/or feedback to the essays and reasons and further clarifications were given to each student orally. By doing this, the products of the essays would have better results. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, students were given extra points when they found more errors than the lecturer suggested. It is believed that this decision motivated students to analyse the essays in more detail and actually focus on the essay in depth. Even though the employment of this action seems like a competitive task rather than a collaborative one, students actually seemed motivated as it triggered their knowledge, while at the same time they were placed in the position that they wanted to be in when they graduated before actually graduating. In other words, they were seen as the lecturer and were appreciated for their extra work through the bonus

points. The lecturer specified an approximate number, which was less than the actual errors. For example, if a student had made 10 errors, the lecturer would identify approximately 7 errors. Seeing that such an action was regarded positively by the students, the lecturer continued this for the other essays. All students had the potential to give coded WCF and comments as they were given the coded correction criteria and had models of similar essays. Some students checked grammar books to confirm themselves while checking their peers work and others used the grammar check provided on the Microsoft word programme.

For the WCF given at the end of each essay, peers had incorporated the knowledge that they had gained from the models discussed in class, namely the block and point by point arrangements they had analysed, and the remarks made by the lecturer for the previous essays.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the essays of the participants who took part in the writing course were quantitatively analysed. Quantitative data analysis "is often associated with large scale research, but can also serve smaller scale investigations, with case studies, action research, correlational research and experiments" (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 501). The students who took part in the writing course were engaged in four essay types. These were the persuasive essay, the advantage and disadvantage essay, the argumentative essay and the compare and contrast essay. The persuasive and the advantage and disadvantage essays were focused on during the portfolio work until the mid-term examination week and the argumentative and compare and contrast essay were used during the on-line work. One essay from the portfolio and

one essay from the on-line work were chosen to be analysed in order to see individual changes in the first and final essays of the portfolio work and on-line work and the similarities and differences concerning marks given for the essay products of both portfolio and on-line work. Students' common errors concerning both works were analysed to see if there were any improvements in individual writers' performances. These errors were categorised to explicitly show the type of errors produced by the students (see Findings and Discussion). In addition to this, marks out of 10 were given to each essay in order to differentiate between the two works, i.e. portfolio and online. These marks enabled the lecturer to see the progress or regression in each individual essay. Originally students were not given marks out of 10 for the essays in question. They were assessed according to the work they had done throughout the course. However, in order to understand whether any improvement was made between the first and final essays of both portfolio and on-line work, and be able to use this data for this study, marks were given out of 10 (see Appendix F). To be able to examine any significant differences in the performances of the students, a non-parametric statistical test was employed. According Cohen et al (2007), non-parametric tests offer "quick, relevant and focused feedback on student performance." (p. 415) Non-parametric statistics are "statistics that are used with ordinal and nominal data or with interval and ratio scale data that fail to meet the assumptions needed for parametric statistics" (Ravid, 2011, p. 241). After having checked the reliability with a Pearson's *r* correlation test to see whether the lecturer's and English language teacher's marks were correlated, marks obtained from the products of both the portfolio work and the online work were tested using a Wilcoxon Signed-ranked test to determine if students had any significant change in marks. Palant (2007) defines a Wilcoxon Signed-rank test as follows:

The Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test is designed for use with repeated measures; that is, when your subjects are measured on two occasions, or under two different conditions. It is the non-parametric alternative to the repeated measures t-test, but instead of comparing means the Wilcoxon converts scores to ranks and compares them at Time 1 and at Time 2. (p. 223)

Using a Wilcoxon Signed-rank test to see whether there were any statistically significant improvements in students' marks, students' scores given by the lecturer for the drafts and products of the portfolio and online work were compared.

The data obtained from the reflective journal and the interviews were analysed qualitatively. Compared to quantitative data, qualitative data is more detailed and rich which often focuses on smaller numbers of people (Cohen et al., 2007). While analysing the qualitative data, thematic coding and sorting were used (Charmaz, 1983). In this process, stages of qualitative data analysis put forth by Miles and Humberman (1994) were followed. These stages involved (a) data reduction, where the raw data were read through and reduced to relevant information in the form of codes; (b) data display, where tables were used to illustrate the number of codes in each interview as well as the frequency of specific codes throughout the data; and (c) conclusion drawing/verification, where the codes/themes obtained from early stages of analysis were checked against relevant data and other themes to confirm their validity. The following Table 11 illustrates a sample of themes, which were coded at the early stages of data reduction and data display:

Table 11

Sample Themes

Challenges

Teacher's → cultural
→ instructions
→ assessment
→ convincing

Students' → social
→ personal
→ cultural
→ technical

Preferred → motivating

because:
own time and → on mobile
pace
→ at home

easy and → for working
convenient → students

Teaching

with BLA

Do not prefer

because:
→ no computer
→ no internet
→ no electricity
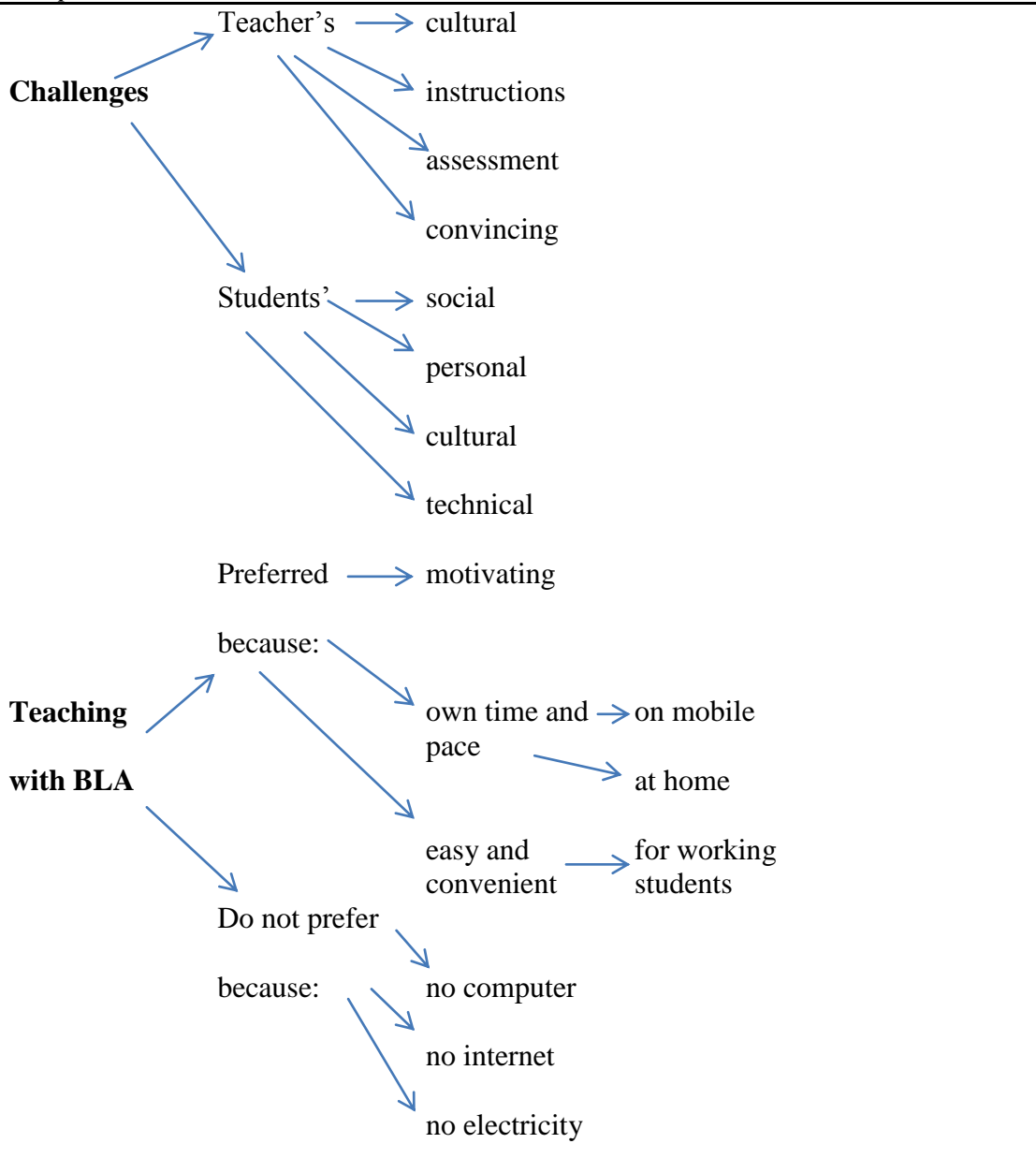
As Miles and Huberman (1994) and Glesne (2006) suggest, qualitative data analysis is not a linear process. Therefore, the mentioned stages were used in a cyclic manner as more coding revealed more themes. During this process, the following coding strategies were employed (Miles & Huberman, 1994), though not in a linear manner:

1. Open Coding: The data was carefully read, all statements relating to the research questions were identified, and each was assigned a code, or category. These codes were then noted, and each relevant statement was organised under its appropriate code.

2. Axial Coding: Using the codes developed in step 1, the data was re-read and statements that fit into any of the categories were searched for. This enabled reduction of emerging themes by relating them to each other.

3. Once the first two stages of coding were completed, a more analytical analysis was employed that looked for patterns and explanation in the codes.

4. Selective coding: This involved reading through the raw data for cases that illustrate the analysis, or explain the concepts. Data which was found contradictory as well as confirmatory were looked for in order to avoid being selective in choosing data.

The data in the reflective journal involved observations concerning my teaching, the group, individual students and the environment during the 15 weeks of the course. Cohen et al. (2007) puts forth that observation as a research process "offers an investigator the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations." (p. 396)The data in the journal were set into themes and then analysed for this study (Nortan, 2009), following the steps explained earlier. In addition to this, throughout the process of the course, things that were going on in the class that were relevant for this study were identified in the Reflective journal. The results of this analysis will further be discussed in the next chapter.

With regard to the interviews that took part in the first and second phases of the study, again, thematic coding of the participants' responses was used. In

structured interviews "interviewers are required to ask subjects to respond to each question" (Berg, 2001, p. 69). The rationale is to offer each subject approximately the same stimulus so that responses to the questions, ideally, will be comparable (Babbie, 1995). These interviews were transcribed one by one and qualitatively analysed.

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the participants who did not take part in the writing course (Stage II). As mentioned earlier semi-structured interviews have pre-determined questions, but the order can be modified based upon the interviewer's perception of what seems most appropriate (Robson, 2002). The interviews were transcribed and transcripts were examined individually at first and then emerging themes were explored across all transcripts to validate the codes

Data was first coded and sorted into coded classifications then systematical patterns in the data were recognised (Berg, 2001; Lofland & Lofland, 1984). The data collected from the interviews were arranged according to their themes and further discussed in this study. These codes were then analysed by taking into account individual characteristics of the participants described earlier.

Conclusion

In this chapter, information about the research design, data collection procedures and analyses were presented. Relevant details of the individual participants and the role of the researcher were described. In addition to this, the rationale behind the choices made throughout the course as well as the context within which the study was carried out were presented. Moreover, the approaches used in this study with regard to related literature were discussed. Furthermore, information

regarding the feedback and correction procedures were provided with examples. The materials used to carry out this study were detailed. The findings and discussion of the conducted research in relation to the current literature will be provided in the following chapter.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In traditional approaches to teaching writing, students receive points for their final products, i.e. the product approach to writing (Silva, 1990; Brown, 1994).According to Gabrielatos (2002), a product approach is "a traditional approach in which students are encouraged to mimic a model text, usually presented and analysed at an early stage." (p. 5)As its name puts forth, the product approach focuses on the final piece of writing learners produce in which the main emphasis is on individual work usually set as homework (Raimes, 1988), neglecting the several drafts needed, which involvecollaborativecreative processes in order to produce a product. Thus, the organization of ideas in a product approach is more significant than the ideas themselves. In addition, the approach highlights the features including controlled practice of those features rather than focusing on purpose, theme and text types (Steele, 2004).In order to move away from this traditional mode of teaching writing, where teachers focus on and assess the final product of students' writings (Bensen, 2007; Raimes, 1983; Richards, 1990), an advanced writing course for prospective English language teachers was taken as a case to investigate the possible effects of using a blended learning approach (BLA) with the process genre approach (PGA). In order to achieve this, the syllabus of the course was redesigned and three issues were specifically addressed. Firstly, the choice and duration of the approaches that were to be employed were determined. The PGA was used in class during the portfolio work until the mid-term examination and the BLA was employed after the midterm until the final examination. Secondly, the types of written corrective feedback (WCF) students were to receive, i.e. direct, indirect (the underlining of

errors) and codedWCF were organised. Thirdly, the employment of the type of assessment and feedback students were to receive, i.e. self, teacher, peer, collaborative, were determined. The employment ofthese two approaches focused on the assessment involving the processes to produce a product. In other words, students were given points throughout the course rather than being assessed for only one product at the end. In the following sections, the results of this Action research will be presented. The chapter is structured in a way to answer the research questions stated earlier in Chapter I. Discussion of the findings in relation to the related literature in the field will also be provided throughout this chapter.

First of all, the results of the analysis of students' progress in both modes of writing (portfolio and online) will be presented to show how much their writing has improved in individual cases. In addition, comparisons will be made between students' work in both modes of writing. A description of errors made by students in each section of the course and the ways they have improved these errors will further be provided to support the main arguments presented in this chapter.Although a full-scale error analysis is beyond the scope of this study, such a description allows to present students' individual and whole class progress in writing whilst being exposed to the two modes mentioned and revealing the progress in writing within these approaches. Furthermore, in order to answer the research questions presented earlier, students' perspectives regarding their exposure to different types of instruction will be discussed to highlight the significance of the PGA and BLA. This will be supported by the lecturer's problems when both approaches to instruction were employed. Detailed description of the issues that arouse during the employment of the approaches and the spontaneous solutions created to deal with the issues will be

presented. Finally, the views of the participants in Stage II will be discussed to support the views of the participants in Stage I.

StageI – PGA vs. BLA

      Progress in students' writing. In order to investigate the effectiveness of the teaching approaches to writing as used in this study, students' work were assessed based on a given criterion (see Appendix A, B, C). To be able to compare the performances of the students in each case, the first draft and the final product for both the portfolio work and the online work were recorded as quantitative data. As mentioned earlier, students' essays were set onto tables to highlight the differences between each essay. In Table 5, it can be seen that students' writings both during the portfolio work and the online work improved.

      The Wilcoxon Signed-rank test was employed in order to determine whether there was a significant improvement in students' scores from their drafts to products of both portfolio and online work:

Table 12

Comparison of Scores for Drafts and Final Products in Portfolio Work

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Final –Draft	Negative Ranks	0^a	.00	.00
	Positive Ranks	15^b	8.00	120.00
	Ties	1^c		
	Total	16		

    a. Final <Draft
    b. Final >Draft
    c. Final = Draft

The results in Table 12 of the Wilcoxon Signed-rank test revealed that there is a statistically significant difference between the underlying distributions of the marks in the drafts and the final products of the portfolio work ($Z= -3.464, p< .001$). In other words, the participants individually showed progress from their drafts to their final products when they worked with the portfolio.

Table 13

Comparison of Scores for Drafts and Final Products in Online Work

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Final – Draft	Negative Ranks	0[a]	.00	.00
	Positive Ranks	16[b]	8.50	136.00
	Ties	0[c]		
	Total	16		

a. Final <Draft
b. Final >Draft
c. Final = Draft

Test Statistics

Final–Draft

Z   -3.585[b]

Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)   .000

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test   b. Based on negative ranks

The results in Table 13 of the Wilcoxon Signed-rank test show that there is a statistically significant difference between the underlying distributions of the marks in the drafts and the final products of the online work ($Z= -3.585$, $p < .000$) as well. In other words, the participants individually showed progress from their drafts to their final products when they produced essays online.

Further analysis was carried out to investigate whether the difference in students' progress was greater in the portfolio work or in the online work to determine the more effective approach to teaching writing in this case. For this purpose, the final products of the two approaches were compared using the Wilcoxon Signed-rank test. From the analysis, it appeared that students' writings showed more progress in the online work (BLA) compared to the portfolio work (PGA):

Table 14

Comparison of Final Scores for Portfolio and Online Work

		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Online – Portfolio	Negative Ranks	0[a]	.00	.00
	Positive Ranks	13[b]	7.00	91,00
	Ties	3[c]		
	Total	16		

a. Online<Portfolio
b. Online >Portfolio
c. Online = Portfolio

Test Statistics

	Online – Portfolio
Z	-3.307[b]
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Testb. Based on negative ranks

The results in Table 14 indicate that there is a statistically significant difference between the underlying distributions of the marks given for the final products of the portfolio work and the final products of the online work (Z=-3.307,p< .001). In other words, the participants individually showed more progress in the online work compared to the portfolio work.

During the portfolio work and the online work, students' essays showed progress. This could be due to the fact that they wrote two drafts before actually submitting their products. Drafts, in other words the revision stage, are required when improving students' accuracy (Chandler, 2003; Krashen, 2004). Research conducted earlier involving the implementation of drafts, revising work, WCF and individual student writers responses regarding WCF provided a useful template to carry out this present study (Bitchener & Knoch, 2009, 2010a, 2010b; Cohen & Robbins, 1976; Ellis, Sheen, Murakami& Takashima, 2008; Ferris, 2006; Hendrickson, 1980; Hyland, 2003; Lalande, 1982; Sheen, 2007; Sheen, Wright& Moldawa, 2009; van Beuningan, de Jong& Kuiken, 2012; Qi & Lapkin, 2001; Storch &Wigglesworth, 2010). In addition, related literature has stated two distinctive corrective feedback types, i.e. direct and indirect (for further details see Chapter II)that have positive impact on students' writing development in their own respect (Bitchner & Ute, 2008; Myles, 2002).The participants in Stage I had the opportunity to benefit from both corrective feedback types. Directwas employed by providing the correct form of the error and indirect was employed by underlining the error and using codes to describe the error (Ferris, 2002).One significant aspect of this study is that additional support and corrective feedback during both thePGA (portfolio) and BLA (online) were given to the students by the lecturer. During the implementation

of the PGA,this additional support and corrective feedback was orally provided during classroom hours,both individually and collaboratively. During the employment of the BLA, written feedback was provided online via e-mail and Facebook.com by private messaging and oral feedback was also given in office hours. Therefore, not only were the participants engaged in self, peer and collaborative assessment involving both direct and indirect corrective feedback during classroom sessions, but they also had oral and written feedback and support during the use of both approaches. This study, therefore, highlights the impact of extra support and feedback in writing classes, which seems to have a significant effect on students' writing development.

In addition to this, even though both approaches revealed individual progress, when results of both modes are compared, BLA is seen to have improved students' writings more (see Table 5). For this reason,it is argued that the inclusion of technology in writing classes has a significant impact on students' development in writing.As argued by Pena-Sanchez and Hicks (2006), Stracke (2005) and Stracke (2007a), integrating face-to-face sessions with technology has the potential to improve learning significantly.Research drawing on learners' attitudes towards the employment of the BLA revealed that students preferred BLA to face-to-face classroom sessions initially due to the BLA being more motivating (Brett, 1996; Lin, 2003; Leakey & Ranchoux, 2006). Therefore, one of the possible reasons behind the significant improvement in students' performances in BLA compared to PGA could be that they were more motivated in the former.

In addition to students being more motivated by mere inclusion of technology in their classes, the fact that students are continuously engaged in the online community on an everyday basis may be another reason for their increased

motivation, and hence better performance. As Allan (2007) states, the BLA "offers the opportunity to combine the best of a number of worlds." (p. 8)In other words, students are able to see and meet different cultures through social networking sites, be engaged in different tasks online, use different tools presented on a computer, be engaged in peer and collaborative work both online and in class, assess peers and self-asses online, analyse and comment on a 'real' essay and/or article, and at the same time do all of these in their own time (and space) within their daily routines. Thus, the BLA involves an effective combination of different modes of delivery, models of teaching and styles of learning (Proctor, 2003). In the current study, for instance, students benefitted from the social networking site Facebook.com not only to ask task related questions to their classmates and the lecturer but also to complete the tasks involved in the blend. Moreover, students made use of Google.com to find models of essays. Reading current articles in the Daily Mail (online gazette) and making comments below them was another important aspect that they may be doing on an everyday basis. Students were also engaged in watching video clips and demonstrations on YouTube.com, which are again an essential part of our daily lives. Under these circumstances, it could be said that technology plays a vital role in our everyday lives.Due to this fact, the employment of such an approach showed significant difference in students' writings.

Furthermore, it is a fact that some students may miss classes. According to the departmental rules, it is not compulsory for students to attend all the lessons. The requirements state that 70% of the courses are obligatory. Therefore, 30% of the writing course in terms of attendance was not a must. Students who missed classes or who were not present at the time of the implementation of the PGA either had to receive further instructions from their classmates or see the lecturer in office hours.

Receiving instructions from classmates is usually not feasible due to competition and/or social/personal problems. For example, taking into account that these studentswere senior graduate students, i.e. it was the final term, and the student with the highest CGPA was to be chosen as the top student of the English Language Teaching (ELT) department for the year 2013, some sort of competition within grades were at fore. Moreover, some students were not talking to or not in good relations with other students (will be further discussed in the following sections).Another issue was to do with waking up for early classes, which was an issue for many students, especially those who had night shifts at work. Another social issue was that some of the female students were not able to receive instructions or the like from male students as their relatives disapproved of them being close to anyone of the opposing sex.In the light of the presented reasons, students who missed class were unable to complete the assigned work or tasks. In other words, for whatever reason, when students missed classes, their only opportunity was to see the lecturer in office hours, which again was sometimes difficult as they had other lessons to attend, clashing with the lecturer's office hours. Such problems did not appear in the second part of the semester when BLA was employed.

During the implementation of the BLA,students were flexible to complete their tasks at any time or any place they wanted and would at that present moment ask and receive information from the lecturer. Students were able to contact the lecturer in their own pace.Baring in mind that the internet is now available on smart phones,students wereable to send an instant message via Facebook.com private messaging or e-mail their lecturer throughout the process of the BLA. To sum up, one benefit of the BLA over classroom teaching is students being able to contact

andreceive immediate responses from their lecturer outside of the classroom when they needed assistance.

Analysis of errors. An important part of improvement in students' writings deals with correction of errors that are seen as "an inevitable and positive part of language learning, as the learner gets creative in the construction process" (Hedge, 2000, p. 15). Errors are thereby regarded as development and are seen to have a pivotal role in the process of learning a language (Othman, 2012; Stern, 1992). Thus, it is through errors that teachers are able to diagnose learners' language problems and detect students' progress in the learning process (Ellis, 1997). The following section will illustrate some of the errors made by some students in their first drafts, which were amended when producing their final products. Although the statistical analysis showed that overall students progressed more in the BLA compared to the PGA, a qualitative analysis of their errors would provide a better understanding of the nature of this progress.

Students in the ELT department were assessed and given marks in their writing courses according to five aspects: Content, Paragraph and Essay Organization (cohesion/coherence), Language (grammar), Vocabulary and Mechanical accuracy (punctuation/capitalization) (See Appendices A, B, C).It is essential for feedback to cover all aspects of students' written texts for it to be employed effectively (Ferris, 1997).Due to this fact, all the above aspects were taken into account when giving corrective feedback and assessing students. The marks given to students' essays for their final products were also organized according to these aspects.

For the organization of the paragraphs and essay coherence and cohesion play an essential role. According to Richards (1990), coherence is an important element of

effective writing. In order for the reader to follow the flow of ideas and the intended meaning of the writer, "coherence is very essential" (Keshta & Harb, 2013, p. 210). Cohesion on the other hand, is relating each sentence to the proceeding and following sentences (Gebhardt & Rodrigues, 1989). Gebhardt and Rodrigues (1989) mention four tools that are useful in enhancing cohesion. These are repetition of words, ideas, phrases and so on,synonyms,pronoun referenceandtransitional markers (Gebhardt & Rodrigues, 1989). These tools were essentially focused on while teaching the essays during the course of the study. Another aspect which was focused on when teaching different essay writing techniques was mechanical accuracy.Norman et al. (2005) define the term mechanics of writing as the sub-skill, which includes elements such as punctuation, spelling, abbreviations and so forth. In addition, it seems crucial to mention that the aspects of language and vocabulary were not specifically taught in the writing course but were dealt with while giving feedback to the students.

*Portfolio work.*During the portfolio work, the main categories of errors appeared to be concerned with paragraph and essay organization, language, content, mechanical accuracy and vocabulary choice. Content was also dealt with when writing the drafts of the essays but the students' essays chosen for analysis had no or very few errors regarding content. Nevertheless, students made errors and the most common of these will be presented below. As mentioned earlier in the Methodology chapter,students had written more than one type of essay for each approach (PGA & BLA).The essay types in which students had the best results were chosen for this study, which were the second types in both approaches. Therefore, it could be said that students had encountered many problems concerning essay writing because the second essays they had written had better results.

Table 15

Production of Errors during Portfolio Work

Participants	P&EOD		Lang.		MA		Content		Vocab.		Total	Total
		F	D	F	D	F	D	F	D	F	Draft	Final
Sue	3	0	5	3	3	2	1	0	2	1	**14**	**6**
Hailey	3	1	13	10	2	1	1	0	3	0	**22**	**12**
Andrew	6	3	20	11	6	0	0	0	8	6	**40**	**20**
Jack	8	1	18	8	6	1	0	0	6	2	**38**	**12**
Amanda	5	3	8	4	4	2	1	0	2	1	**20**	**10**
Katty	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	**6**	**1**
Zoe	3	2	13	10	2	1	2	1	1	0	**21**	**14**
Allie	4	3	12	10	3	2	5	2	0	0	**24**	**17**
Matt	8	3	17	11	10	3	4	3	5	0	**44**	**20**
Anna	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	**5**	**2**
Zara	1	0	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	**6**	**3**
Mary	4	3	7	5	1	0	2	1	2	0	**16**	**9**
Mathew	6	3	18	8	2	0	2	0	3	1	**31**	**12**
Claire	5	0	15	6	3	1	1	0	2	1	**26**	**8**
Sally	2	1	13	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	**16**	**8**
Nur	6	3	15	6	4	2	4	3	2	1	**32**	**15**
Total	**68**	**27**	**181**	**111**	**51**	**17**	**23**	**10**	**37**	**13**		

Key: *P&EO: Paragraph and Essay OrganizationLang.: Language*

MA: Mechanical AccuracyVocab.: VocabularyD: DraftF: Final

TD: Total Draft   TF: Total Final

Table 15illustrates the number of errors individual participants made during the portfolio work. As can be seen in Table 15, the most frequent errors students produced were related to the aspect of language and the least frequently produced errors were related to content. Students in general produced errors concerning paragraph and essay organization, language, mechanical accuracy and vocabulary. These errors were reduced to almost half when their final products were submitted.

As mentioned earlier, the most frequently produced errors were to do with language, largely regarding grammar. Almost all of the students were EFL learners; this could be one of the main reasons for producing their essays with grammatical errors. Nevertheless, the native English speakers also had grammatical errors (Sue& Andrew). This could be due to the fact that these students wrote their essays as though they werespeaking. In other words, they wrote sentences replicating the utterances made in spoken language. Although this could be anticipated, considering the fact that they were not taught any grammar in their previous education, it did cause language errors in spoken language. Even though they were able to produce good oral language in terms of fluency and accuracy, in the writing course unfortunately, they were unable to produce formal/academic language. For this reason, marks were deducted in their essays as can be seen with Andrew's marks. The following is an extract from one of his essays:

> well being wealthy will make us all happy but we can't complain if were
>
> poor. Nowadays people tend to make their main goal in life to become rich,
>
> which I totally agree with them

As can be seen, Andrew's language sounds more like spoken language, disregardingthe grammatical and punctuation rules.

In addition, students had problems regarding paragraph and essay organization. Students were unaware of how to organize the essay concerning the introduction, i.e. general statements and thesis statement, the body, i.e. topic sentence and supporting sentences, and the conclusion. Although most of the students reduced their errors by modifying their paragraphs and essay organization, some still seemed to have problems. Students were also evaluated in a quiz involving the theoretical knowledge needed to write an essay (see Appendix D). That is to say, the definition of an essay and what each paragraph deals with were tested in the quiz. Students were aware of the theoretical knowledge and scored good marks in the quiz (see Appendix M) but were unfortunately unable to apply this knowledge in practice at the beginning of the portfolio work. So, despite having metacognitive knowledge about writing, they still had problems with paragraph and essay organization. One of the reasons for the problems in essay organisation and students' persistence in making errors in this regard appeared to be the fact that students tried to employ the same strategies for writing/organising different essay types. For example, they employed the strategies used to write the advantage and disadvantage essay as they would for a persuasive essay although this essay had a different format. Errors in this field seemed to have occurred as students compared the paragraph and essay organization with other essay types, for example persuasive essay, which was written before the advantage and disadvantage essay.

Another aspect that students received marks for was vocabulary. Errors related to vocabulary that students produced concerned misusage of words, using informal words and repetition of words. Students seemed to have produced these errors due to direct translation from their first languages. Examples of these will be illustrated below.

Finally, it does not seem wise to disregard the aspect of content although it has the least amount of errors. It should be mentioned that the content aspect dealt with students' ideas rather than the main topic usually given for essay writing. In other words, students did not have any problems concerning what topic/title to write about but rather dividing the topic into themes related to the topic. The correlation between the topic and the themes of the essay were taken into account when assessingcontent. Tables 13-16 present some of the errors students had produced with the feedback they received.

Table 16

Language Related Errors

Participant	Error	Comment
Sue	people have forgotten *how you can have* fun	people have forgotten *how to have* fun.
Hailey	people believe**s**	used a singular word for a plural word
Zara	thing happen	used the present tense
Mary	one of the *goal of people*	one of the *goals* of people
Katty	Apple a technology company has produced laptops, ipads and iphones which *is* constantly upgraded	which *are* constantly…
Anna	they cannot be *hold* responsible	Cannot be *held*…

Table 16 illustrates some of the errors students made in their essays regarding language. One of the main issues students dealt with was grammar. As can be seen

Sue had problems in the structure of words. These errorswere commonly produced by most of the EFL learners taking the course.

For this reason, it could be said that errors concerning structure are common errors that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students generally make. In addition,misusage in tenses and plural/single nouns were also amongst the problems students frequently had. Students were aware of the grammar rules (theoretical knowledge), as they were taught these in their previous studies,though they were unable to produce (practical knowledge) these in a text.

Table 17

Mechanical Accuracy

Participants	Error	Comment
Amanda	is a good thing when it is *dealth*with	*dealt* with
Katty	Mans ability	*Man's* ability

Table 17 shows some of the examples of mechanical accuracy. As can be seen, problems in spelling and punctuation were also among the errors students produced. Students were able to deal with most of the problems concerning mechanical accuracy, as these were errors that could easily be edited and amended. Students modified the errors for the second drafts, so these problems were easier to tackle with.

Table 18 illustrates some of the paragraph and essay organization and content related problems. Students made more errors in relation to these aspects, although these are very difficult to pinpoint here because students made mistakes concerning the whole organization of the essay as mentioned earlier. The examples in Table 16

are mostly concerned with sentence organization and the mode in which students

produced the sentences.

Table 18

Content/Paragraph and Essay Organization Related Errors

Participant	Error	Comment
Mathew	has a very important place for people. Next it is not that important…	There is no connection and no flow of ideas
Jack	I think that it has advantage.	This is a thesis statement produced in his first draft

Table 19

Vocabulary Related Errors

Participant	Error	Comment
Zoe	people were using *nature medicament*	*organic medication*
Anna	Animals are *humans*	*living creatures/beings*
Sally	Imagine functioning without *technological*	*technology*
Claire	people think that earning a lot money is rich	earning a lot *of* money…not clear
Nur	smoking is one of the biggest argument topics in the whole world	the word argument is understandable but for this sentence the word 'controversial' would seem more appropriate.
Hailey	in addition to, people…	here the word 'to' should not have been used.
Allie	we live in today it hard for one imagine	no meaning and is incomprehensible; omission of words

Table 19 reveals students' errors related to vocabulary. These errors were due to incorrect words (wrong words), misusage of lexis, i.e. using adjectives or the alike instead of a noun or the alike, and omission of necessary and addition of unnecessarywords.

*Possible reasons for improvement.*Although the statistical analysis and content analysis of errors show that students have definitely made progress in their writings, the exact reasons for these improvements cannot be pinpointed through such analysis. There may be, however, some possible reasons behind such progress related to the way the course was taught. First of all, the peer and collaborative debates and discussions held in class enabled students to make adjustments and modifications to their work. This strategy also enabled students to understand the reasons behind the change. For example, students were not just given the codes (see Appendix E) and expected to find the correct version.They were also given reasons and examples concerning the correct version. For each error type mentioned above, i.e. grammar, punctuation and so on, the lecturer retaught or revised previously learnt knowledge to enlighten the students. That is to say, students were given extra feedback and tuition after each draft of their essays. Such focused correction seems to work better than general feedback or corrections (Bitchener & Knoch, 2008). For this reason, the results of students' essay products had shown improvement and students were able to produce essays with less errors, resulting in higher marks.A study conducted by Ferris et al. (2013) that took into account students' perspectives,also revealed that focused feedback paired with discussion activities has strong potential to be helpful in three ways:

(1) It is relevant because it is tied to students' own texts;

(2) It is clear because it is specific and because students have opportunities to ask questions and receive explanations; and

(3) It is motivating because it actually gives students practical insights about their own writing challenges and knowledge that might help them solve those problems. (p. 323)

Second, the process of the PGA, which was used both in the first and the second part of the course had a tremendous impact on the students' essays in many ways. Students studied the relationship between purpose and form for a particular genre as they used the recursive processes of prewriting, drafting, revision, and editing. By going through these steps students were able to develop their awareness of different text types and at the same time the composing process (Badger & White, 2000). Taking into account Yang's (2003) suggestions, the lecturer adopted the role of an assistant and a guide, who worked closely with the students to encourage them, offering helpful feedback and suggestions. Moreover, the lecturer offered positive and constructive advice with regard to students' essays. Students' interests were also taken into account when dealing with the topics. The topics given as examples to illustrate the organization of the essays were specifically adopted to arouse students' curiosity, self-confidence and interests. Another suggestion taken into consideration regarded directly training students about writing strategies (Badger & White, 2000, pp. 157-158). In connection to how prewriting activates the schemata, outline strategies for the drafting and revision processes were demonstrated by the lecturer. What's more, the three other skills, i.e. speaking, listening and reading were integrated into the course in order to promote the expansion of the student's overall language competence (Banados, 2006; Goodman, 1986). Background materials, such as model essays were read during the prewriting activities, and listening and

speaking occurred during brainstorming, stating opinions, classroom discussions and during feedback sessions. To sum up, the approach employed during the portfolio work could be one of the main reasons why students showed individual progress from their drafts to their final products of their essays.

The help of additional materials also had an impact on students' improvement. During the PGA students were distributed extra materials illustrating step by step how an essay is organised with supporting tasks which students had to complete (see Appendix K). Students followed all the steps which led them into writing their own advantage and disadvantage essay. These materials gave students the opportunity to gradually produce an essay dealing with chunks of the essay rather than the whole essay at once. In addition, the supporting tasks enabled students to practise the theory of essay writing.

*Online work.*Table 5 clearly shows that students showed progress during online work. When comparing the results of the portfolio to the online work, it could easily be seen that students had less errors during online work (see Tables 15 & 20). Nevertheless students made errors.

Table 20illustrates the errors students made in their drafts to their final products of their essays related to paragraph and essay organization, language, mechanical accuracy, content and vocabulary.As can be seen, students made less errors during the online work compared to the portfolio work. Tables 14 and 19clearly show that students had lessnumber of errors in online work.

Table 20

Production of Errors during Online Work

Participant	P&E		Lang.		MA		Content		Vocab.		Total	Total
	D	**F**	**D**	**F**	**D**	**F**	**D**	**F**	**D**	**F**	**Draft**	**Final**
Sue	1	0	5	2	4	2	1	0	3	1	**14**	**4**
Hailey	4	2	11	6	4	1	2	0	3	0	**24**	**9**
Andrew	3	1	8	6	2	2	1	0	3	1	**17**	**10**
Jack	5	3	10	8	4	2	1	0	1	0	**21**	**13**
Amanda	4	1	11	6	4	3	2	0	0	0	**21**	**10**
Katty	2	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	0	**5**	**1**
Zoe	1	1	7	4	4	1	2	0	2	0	**16**	**6**
Allie	5	3	12	7	4	2	2	0	1	0	**24**	**12**
Matt	6	3	15	10	8	3	4	2	5	1	**38**	**19**
Anna	2	0	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	**6**	**3**
Zara	2	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	**6**	**1**
Mary	3	2	7	5	2	1	1	0	1	0	**14**	**8**
Mathew	4	2	17	9	4	1	1	0	2	0	**28**	**12**
Claire	2	0	13	9	2	0	1	0	1	0	**19**	**9**
Sally	1	0	8	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	**10**	**5**
Nur	3	2	12	5	1	0	1	0	1	0	**18**	**7**
Total	48	**20**	152	**90**	47	**20**	20	**3**	24	**3**		

Key*: P&EO: Paragraph and Essay OrganizationLang: Language*

MA: Mechanical AccuracyVocab: VocabularyD: DraftF: Final

The following examples will illustrate some of the errors students made during the

online work:

Table 21

Vocabulary

Participant	Error	Comment
Hailey	this impact our relationships	this *influenced/affected* our relationships
Zoe	people had no change to learn	people had no *chance* to learn
Anna	Technology plays significant role	*a* signific*a*nt role

Table 21illustrates some of the errors with regard to vocabulary that students produced during online work. Students had problems concerning the misusage of words. As can be seen, Hailey has misused a word, which did not make sense in this sentence. Zoe has also made an error in the above example. Even though she made an error in the meaning of the word, it is actually a spelling error. Zoe orally stated this during the collaborative debates carried out during class hours. Another problem concerning vocabulary involved the employment of articles. Students in general had problems concerning the articles a/an/the. As illustrated in Table 21,Anna had a problem with the definite article 'a.' she omitted the article "a" and then wrote the word "significant"incorrectly. Another error Anna made concerned spelling. Some students had problems regarding spelling but these did not appear in their final products because spelling errors were easily detected and edited on the Word processor.

Table 22

Content Related Errors

Participants	Error
Andrew	So, in conclusion
Matt	Same transition words
Nur	The money that you spend on smoking is the money that you spend for air

Table 23

Language Related Errors

Participant	Error	Comment
Jack	when people *were* rich they want…	when people *are* rich…
Amanda	spend time *for* shopping	*on* shopping
Allie	...in *the* food,... in *the*transportation.	The article 'the' is added in front of every noun: mother tongue interference
Zara	all these things *results* in ..	All these things *result* in
Claire	Technology *made* our lives simple…	Technology *has made* our lives simple…
Sally	..all *kind* of *issue*..	…all *kinds* of *issues*…

Table 22 demonstrates some of the errors students made regarding content during the online work. Andrew, the native English speaker, tended to use colloquial language when writing which had a big effect on his mark. One of Matt's main problems was his constant usage of the same transition words throughout his essay even though he was distributed a list of possible transitions to use. Moreover, one example of mother-tongue (L1) interference is seen in Nur's example. Nur tried to point out that spending money on cigarettes is insane. The sentence in the L1 (Turkish) seems fine

but readers may not be able to comprehend the implied meaning of this particular sentence unless they are familiar with Turkish.

Table 23 presents some of the errors students made with regard to language. Errors in general concerned grammar that involved the misusage of plural and singular nouns, articles, tenses and prepositions. These errors were due to the English proficiency level of the students.

Table 24

Mechanical Accuracy

Participants	Error Comment
Amanda	. technology. Technology
Mary	however....However,

Table 24illustrates the third most frequent made errors concerning the aspect of mechanical accuracy. Students made punctuation errors mostly regarding the omission of full stops and commas after transitions, and using a small letter instead of a capital letter after full stops. After a full stop, Amanda tended not to use a capital letter. These errors could have been due to the fact that it was typed and the speed of students while writing. Errors like these tend to be ignored or missed as one's concentration is on coherence and cohesion. Nevertheless, Word processors have automatic correction, which helped students in their further drafts.

The above section described the errors students made during the portfolio and online work. Examples to illustrate the errors made in each mode were additionally presented. Students throughout both modes produced the most errors in language with regard to grammar and made the least errors in content. The following section

will discuss the comparison of errors related to the portfolio and online work with related literature.

    Possible reasons for improvement.Students' errors were formerly categorized and set into Tables 15 and 20 regarding both the portfolio and online work. Students' performances concerning essay writing showed more progress during the online procedure. When comparing the drafts and final products of students' essays during the online work, again progress could easily be seen. The following section will illustrate the possible reasons for the improvements of students' essays with regard to the errors when online work was implemented.

    The employment of the BLA appears to have had more of an impact on students' essays than the portfolio work in terms of improving their errors. When comparing the errors made during the portfolio work to the errors of the online work, students seemed to make fewer errors in the online work. There may be a couple of reasons for this. During the use of the BLA,students did not need as much clarification as the portfolio work probably because this approach was being employed after the portfolio work, where some of their errors were already corrected. Another possible reason for less number of errors may be because they had the chance to check their work via Microsoft Word in the BLA. When students made errors in the BLA, they seemed to be due to carelessness, which could easily be adjusted. Being engaged in online work, where students prepare their essays usingaWord processor, unfortunately showed its drawbacks in the students' essays, where students produced typing errors. Students became reliant on the proofreaderwithin the Word processor and did not check their work properly. During the feedback sessions students' explained that the errors they had made were due to hastening and/or not revising their essays before submission.

During the BLA approach, students made use of the features available in the Microsoft Word document in order to revise their work. During this action, students' responsibilities involved checking their grammar, spelling, punctuation, repetition of words (finding appropriate synonyms) and definitions of vocabulary, detecting errors and making comments (to their peers) by making use of the features presented in the Microsoft Word document (Ho & Savignon, 2007; Levy, 2009). Students had the chance to self-correct with the help of the devices presented in a Microsoft Word document. For these reasons, it could be said that online work encouraged self-correction and hence autonomous learning. Related literature has also put forth that blended learning fosters autonomous learning (Eydelman, 2013; Marsh, 2012).

As previously stated, students had enough language proficiency to be able to check their own work. The level of the language proficiency of the students also has an impact on self-correction(Blanche, 1988;Brown & Hudson, 2002;Davidson & Henning, 1985; Heilenmann, 1990;Janssen-van Dieten, 1989).It should be taken into consideration that the participants in this study are ELT senior graduates. Therefore, they have enough background knowledge and have the linguistic skills needed to be able to self-correct(Birjandi & Siyarri, 2010). Students were able to self-correct during both approaches but the BLA helped and fostered students' self-correction with the features that were presented in the Microsoft Word document, i.e. grammar check, thesaurus, spelling, track changes and so on. The self-correction technique employed in the BLA made a considerable contribution to the correction of students' errors.

Writing essays during class hours compared to online writing also result in students' making more errors. This could be due to the fact that students have more time to think and are more relaxed while writing their essays in their own time and

pace(Marsh, 2012; Sharma & Barrett, 2007).General issues concerning students' illnesses, laziness and personal problems tend to build a barrier to produce a good piece of writing in the classroom. In addition, the classroom environment may seem too hot or too cold for the students.Online work reduces these excuses and/or issues as students are flexible to write their essays where and whenever they desire in a less stressful practise environment (Marsh, 2012). This assumption was also reflected in the interviews conducted with the students when the question regarding the advantages of blended learning was posed. Almost all of the students said that they preferred online writing for the reason that they were able to write the essaysatany timethat was the most convenient for them (further details will be discussed in the following sections).

Finally, while the BLA was in practice, students were still engaged in face-to-face classroom discussions and feedback. Similar to the PGA employed during portfolio work, discussions and debates elaborating on topics and students' opinions about a certain topic were still in practice. The model texts sent via e-mail to the lecturer (See Appendix J) were also discussed with regard to the organization, usage of transitions, conjunctions and language,during class hours. So, students were engaged in almost the same procedure dealt with during the portfolio work supported by online work(via Facebook.com, YouTube and so forth). This may be another reason why students had less errors in the online work when compared to the portfolio work.

To sum up, students' progress during the portfolio and the online work could easily be perceived. Students made more progress during online work when compared to the portfolio work. Possible reasons for this could be due to additional feedback, support, discussions and debates given and carried out during the BLA

approach, students having the freedom of producing essays in their own pace and time and the help of the features presented in the Microsoft Word document that are seen to have had a contribution on students' progress. Additionally, the BLA is seen to foster autonomous learning where students deal with their own mistakes by self-correcting. In order to have a better understanding of these assumptions,the following section will present the students' perspectives related to the PGA and BLA.

PGA or BLA: Students' Perspectives

One of the main aims of this study was to find out students' perspectives with regard to a course designed with a BLA. In order to achieve this aim, students were interviewed. This section will discuss the participants' views, who took part in the interviews in Stage I of this study. Students' opinions regarding the two approaches (PGA and BLA)will be presented with examples and related literature followed by the advantages and disadvantages of the BLA according to the students and their views on the assessment of writing.

PGA or BLA. Following the completion of the course, students were posed three questions focusing on their preferences regarding PGA and BLA. Their responses are presented in Table 25. When participants were asked whether they preferred writing in the classroom or online writing, 15 out of 16 of the participant's preferred online work and one out of 16 preferred classroom based work. The reasons for their choices indicated that students felt that online work gave them the flexibility to work whenever they felt ready to work on their writing as well as the opportunity to think for longer time before starting writing.

Table 25

PGA or BLA?

Interview Questions	Student Responses	
Do you prefer writing in the classroom or online? Why?	Online	In Class
	15	1
Do you prefer portfolio work or online work? Why?	Online	Portfolio
	13	3
Do you prefer traditional style of teaching writing or the style we used in class? Why?	Traditional	Blended
	0	16

As described as one of the advantages of online work in the literature, it enables

students to do their work in their own pace (Sharma & Barrett, 2007).It also makes

certain tasks available to learners for longer times. Andrew, for example, explained

that he "could do the online work on my mobile phone anytime and wherever I

want." Willingness to work on their own pace was apparent in Katty's words, who

pointed out that she could write when she was "relaxed at home." Similarly, Hailey

and Mary stated that online work enabled them to think before they write. Another

significant point made by a majority of the participants (n=15) was that classroom

work was "time consuming and very boring" (Zoe). The BLA is seen to motivate

students as they find classroom writing boring (Pinkman, 2005; Turgut, 2009; Zhang,

2009). According to Sharma and Barrett (2007),the BLA is seen as a shorter and

more motivating process. The fact that students are involved in online tasks, i.e.

watching video clips, reading 'real live' newspaper articles and being engaged in a

social networking site (Facebook.com), which are all related to their daily habits, could be one of the possible reasons why students preferred the BLA to classroom teaching.

Another reason may be associated with the traditional mode. That is to say, in other classes students are already in class doing similar things. As Mary stated in her interview to the question concerning classroom and online writing "in class we come out of other lessons and my brain doesn't work." Therefore, doing a writing course with a BLA is seen to have attracted their attention as it is something they are not accustomed with. In addition, the classroom atmosphere is sometimes seen frustrating, i.e. a place where students are appointed to fulfil tasks, which is also seen as a defect for them. As Allie stated "writing in class is frustrating."Leakey and Ranchoux (2006) study found that students preferred the BLA approach "positive and motivating than traditional classroom learning." (p. 357)

Finally, Nur argued that the BLA increased the possibilities for individualised instruction, hence, having more attention on individual progress. She pointed out that "not enough feedback can be given in class as there are many students to deal with."Therefore, it is suggested that the BLA provides personalized instructor feedback in and out of class (Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013). The only student contradicting to the other students (Matt) stated that he preferred classroom writing due to the fact that he liked communicating face to face. On the contrary, related literature suggests that:

> Most students nowadays are part of the so-called "Net Generation" that
>
> grew up with the Internet. Virtual space has been an integral part of their
>
> daily life. Face-to-face classes may exploit this venue to accommodate

> students who feel intimidated about participating in the classroom. (Ya
> Ni, 2012, p. 212)

Matt's preference was most probably due to the fact that he did not have continuous Internet access at the time of the study. For this reason, when his peers and lecturer sent him corrective feedback for his drafts, he was not able to check his mistakes at that very moment. Therefore, when classroom collaborative debates and discussions were held regarding the corrective feedback, it was not possible for him to join these discussions as he arrived to the class sessions unprepared. The student in question was individually given feedback after class hours regarding his peer's corrective feedback.

When participants stated their preferences regarding portfolio or online work, 13 out of 16 of the participants said that they preferred online work and three out of 16 stated that they preferred portfolio work. Related literature suggests that students' motivation to learn increases when they are given the same material in different ways using technology and simulation (Cameron, 2003).Similar to the earlier comments about in-class and blended work, students pointed out that online work was more fun, easier and that there are more ideas and things to think about before actually starting to write (Pinkman, 2005; Turgut, 2009; Zhang, 2009). Andrew added that he is online all the time through his mobile devices and therefore he found online work to be less like "work" and hence less boring. This raises the issue of the emerging technologies and their place in the teaching and learning contexts Larson (2012) puts forth that "an advanced cell phone almost has the computing power and features of a desktop computer from a decade ago." (p. 1) With these technological devices, students are able to both keep track of an online course and socialize on the Internet, in other words work with pleasure. Similarly,

lecturers are able to keep track of students' work and help them through the process, for example, by sharing links connected to the topic.

An interesting point raised by Amanda, one of the students who preferred online work to portfolio work, was that it is easier to keep track of and prove that she had done the work to her lecturer. Another student Matt, who was in the same opinion, stated that "every task we did can be proven on the site." Eydelman (2013) also points out that, students are dependent on their peers' feedback for further revision. Therefore, it is an opportunity for students to refer back to both the feedback they have received as well as the feedback they have provided to their friends when they need it. Taking into account that points were deducted for late assigned tasks, students were also able to show their lecturer the dates they had submitted their essays, sent their essays to their fellow classmate for WCF and received their essays after WCF, thus, the dates of the completed tasks were all present on the devices available on the Internet, i.e. e-mail, Facebook.com, YouTube and the Daily Mail. According to McConnell (2000) online work is traceable, whereas classroom evidence is lost after the event. In addition, online work is accessible to lecturers as well. Baring this in mind, the lecturer was able to check the date and time of students' assigned tasks and submissions via email, the date and time of tasks assigned on Facebook.com, the Daily Mail and YouTube.com, and give marks accordingly. Issues related to late submissions, completed tasks and received essays were easily detected during the online work. Furthermore, online work for Sue seemed easier as a student and as a future teacher as she stated that:

> The error correction tool on the Word page really helps when marking others' papers. Plus, there is a grammar check, which means I could give an error

free paper. I also was able to make use of the synonyms – as you said we

shouldn't use the same words continuously.

These words indicate that the implementation of online work has a variety of advantages both as a student and a teacher. Scriviner (2011) also put forth many advantages of word processing, which include many of the points Sue suggested. Race (2010) puts forth the benefits of digital technologies that improve marking efficiency and effectiveness of feedback, which include the Microsoft Word programme that could be used to edit containing the features of track change and drawing facility, and PDF text editing tools such as ADOBE and ReMarksPDF. Similarly, Levy (2009) argues that "the word processor has undoubtedly become one of the most widely accepted technologies for writing" the central purpose of which is to "facilitate the flexible manipulation of text" for easy "drafting and redrafting." (p. 772) Likewise, Ho and Savignon (2007) described how the track changes function in Microsoft Word can be used for computer-mediated peer review via email. Both the students and the lecturer had the opportunity to benefit from many features presented in a 'single' Microsoft Word document when giving WCF.

Students who were against the online work appeared to argue that the reason for being against this approach was their personal dislike towards "new things" (Allie). One of these students, Hailey, stated that her preference was due to her being a "traditionalist."In other words, she preferred to write on paper rather than type on the computer. All opposing students also agreed that online work was a longer process and that there were too many tasks to complete. Eydelman (2013) puts forth that it is a challenge for students to learn to use a new learning environment and adds that "students' prior learning experience which to a large extent is based on a teacher-centred approach to learning and teaching" (p. 49) has a tremendous impact

in this process of adaptation. Therefore, students are affected by the way they had been taught in the past. For this reason, Hailey may have responded in this way. Traditional classes that employ the product approach to writing give instructions and students imitate a model for homework (Raimes, 1983). Students are used to this approach which lasts shorter and expect to be treated in this way in all writing courses.

When students were asked to state their preferences between the traditional writing course syllabus and the style employed in class, all students stated that the style used in class was more efficient. Hailey, the student who earlier stated that she was a traditionalist stated that:

> In my previous writing courses I learnt nothing. In this course, I saw my changes and the strategies needed to write an essay. Before, my teachers used to give a topic and I would do it as homework and get points. I like the style we used.

This statement shows that students prefer to see their progress, which became evident in the process approach employed in both stages of the course. Hailey points out that in her previous experiences, writing would be assigned as homework where students would only get points for a product, ignoring the process of writing altogether. After experiencing the process approach and working on her own progress, she stated that in order to write something coherently and error free, students should go through the process of writing rather than producing one final product. Matt also stated that the traditional style "doesn't teach anything. We just get points for what we write." This statement also shows that traditional writing courses, which are taught using a product approach, dwell upon the product of writing disregarding the process needed in order to be able to write (Bensen, 2007;

Raimes, 1983). Therefore, students' reflections on their experiences of the product approach suggest that this approach is more effective than the product approach and that during this process points should be given to drafts rather than receiving points for a final product.

Peer collaboration was one of the important issues that students raised as a positive point for the approach used in this course. Anna, for example, explained that she was "able to learn from my friends and find out missed things [*sic*]." In other words, she supported collaborative and peer learning. Peer collaboration in writing has been shown to be effective for Learning to Write and Writing to Learn (Graham, Mckeown, Kiuhara& Harris, 2012; MacArthur, Schwartz& Graham, 1991; Yarrow & Topping, 2001).Race (2010) indicates that this approach is powerful as it supports students to learn from the process by gaining insight into the approaches used by others. Students are able to put their work into context by reviewing other work that may be weaker or stronger than their own and based on this they are able to recognise how future work could be improved.

Andrew pointed out that "students cannot learn writing strategies on their own and we have to have a path."From this quote, it can be understood that students see writing as a skill that has to be specifically taught (Myles, 1983) and strategies are needed in order to be able to write well (Krashen, 2004). These strategies were not only useful to the students as writers but as Anna stated, "the strategies etc. that we learnt in this course will help us as future teachers." In other words, learning of writing in steps was not only perceived as a course in writing by the students but was also considered as a course in learning how to teach writing. On this issue, Zara explained that "we focused more on writing which taught me a lot about the teaching and learning of writing." This is significant because it shows that students in the ELT

departments do not only perceive courses such as this one as learning language skills. It shows that ELT students, as prospective teachers, do observe and learn from their instructors. In other words, the way that they are taught at this level has a significant effect on the way that they will teach in the future. Therefore, in teaching ELT students, methods and approaches to teaching language does not happen in the courses that focus on teaching methodologies only. The teaching approach adopted in any course at this level, in such departments have a significant effect for their future careers.

Advantages and disadvantages of BLA. Participants were asked to state their opinions regarding the advantages and the disadvantages of the BLA. According to the participants of this study the advantages and disadvantages of the BLA are presented in Table 26.

The BLA was employed in this study to create and introduce a different and/or flexible learning environment to what students had already been exposed to and been adapted to in their previous writing classes (Hockly, 2011). The traditional mode of teaching where teachers give writing tasks as homework or make students write in class with little or no correction or feedback, was changed in the course. As can be observed in Table 26, from the students' point of view, the advantages of blended learning compared to its disadvantages are vast. Some of these have been discussed previously when comparing the traditional modes of learning writing to the approach used in this class.As the table also suggests, students believe that the employment of the BLA to writing courses have many benefits. Previous literature has stated that writing is easier to accomplish with such a BLA due to the fact that the blended learning environment is more flexible, which enables continuous instructional material given in-class or online (Hyland, 2002).

Table 26

Students' Perspectives on Blended Learning in Writing Courses

Advantages	Disadvantages
More motivating and fun	Not face to face constantly
More models/more perspectives online to see before writing	No electricity/ no computer/ no internet lose points
Able to check other sources/ more materials	Tasks must be done on time or expires
Enables students to see before writing	Possible for students to cheat
More time to think about plan/ideas	Cultural problems
Finish anytime wanted	
Play back and reread tasks	
Helpslanguage/grammar/linking words/express ideas/ present work academically/ how to write	
Able to resend work as the date is proof/ every task is on the site as evidence	
Continuous personal teacher feedback/ more support	
Enables students to imagine plan/ more ideas	
Brainstorming before writing	
Students learn how to teach and learn writing together/ more effective	
More research is possible	
More professional/ neat work	
Writing seems easier	
Process is longer but more effective	

Able to do work on mobile

Students get points for the process

Students' additionally supported that there are more models, more perspectives online to see before writing begins.Part of the blended learning environment is that it presents easy and convenient access to online learning materials (Chandra & Fisher, 2009; Chang & Fisher 2003). The fact that technology facilitates student and teacher access to different kinds of learning materials was also a part of the findings of Sagarra and Zapata (2008), Cartner (2009) and Sanprasert (2010), thus, students pointed out that they were able to do research during the BLA. Larson (2012) put forth that "The internet has developed very fast during the past decade and is today an important resource for research, learning and socialization for most students." (pp. 1-2) Similarly, Millar et al, (2012) stated as an advantage of the internet that it is useful for research. Furthermore, the BLA seemed convenient as students were able to play back and re-read the tasks given to them. To be able to comprehend, come up with further ideas and therefore produce good writings, it was possible for students to go back and revise the tasks online via YouTube, Daily Mail and Facebook.com.

Students also had help and encouragement in order to develop their other skills(listening, speaking, writing) (Banados, 2006; Jones, 2007), metacognitive (involving knowledge of what constitutes a good piece of writing and which writing strategies are likely to be employed), lexical (vocabulary), grammatical and orthographical (spelling&punctuation) knowledge (Abott & Berninger, 1993; Cumming, 2001; Flower & Hayes, 1980; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Schoonen et al., 2003). Students stated that the BLA helped them improve their language, grammar, the choice of linking words, how to express and elaborate on their ideas, present

work academically and how to write their essays. Before actually writing, students were also able to imagine their plans as online work is seen to provide them with more ideas to employ in their writings. Banados's (2006) study indicated that students showed progress in all the skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and language components (pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar) when a BLA was employed.

As a conclusion, students benefited from the BLA in many ways but also believed that the BLA would not be feasible if students had no electricity, no computer and no internet access. Some of the disadvantages that students presented also involved assuring tasks to be completed on time. That is to say, tasks that students were involved in expired if they were not done on time. Although, students saw this as a defect, from the lecturer's perspective this is seen as an advantage as students' were forced to be punctual. In other words, the BLA promotes time management. Eydelman (2013) also puts forth that the BLA helps students to "learn to manage their time more efficiently." (p. 48)This finding suggests from a student perspective, writing courses taught in a blended learning environment are a viable alternative to regular face to face classroom courses. Considering the various positive findings and advantages mentioned by the students, blended learning is seen as a valuable approach. The following section will focus on students' opinions regarding assessment.

Students' views on the assessment of writing. The following table will present the students opinions in regards to assessment with related literature. The three (direct/indirect/coded) WCF types employed in this study will be focused on. In addition to this, the feedback techniques when giving feedback will be emphasized in accordance to students' preferences.

Table 27

Students' Perspectives on the Assessment of Writing

Interview questions	Student Responses		
What type of assessment best suits you during the course? (direct/indirect/ coded correction)	14 students: codedWCF	1 student direct WCF	1 student indirect WCF
Do you prefer writing on a topic without any drafts? Why? Why not?	16 drafts		
What type of assessment (correction) do you prefer for your first drafts?	13 students: peer CF	3 students: collaborative CF	
What type of assessment do you prefer for your second drafts?	12 students: collaborative CF	3 students: teacher CF	1 student: self-correction
What type of assessment do you prefer for your final drafts?	16 students: teacher WCF		

When students were asked to state their opinions on WCF 14 students out of 16 stated that they preferred codedWCF, one out of 16 stated that s/he prefers direct WCF and one out of 16 stated that s/he prefers indirect WCF. Katty, one of the students who stated that coded correction is of her preference, explained that:

> Coded correction is the best for the teacher and student because we are able to apply it to all of the drafts. If we only had one draft, then maybe direct would seem better but we have more than one draft.

Multiple drafts of assessment imported with coded WCFare essential when writing an essay. Drafts are necessary in the learning process (Creme & Lea, 1997; Ennis, 1996; Ferris, 2002; Harmer, 2001; Krashen, 1987; Kroll, 2001) and coded WCF arises learners' responsibility in correction and improves their writing accuracy in

the long run (Ferris, 2002).Mathew another student in favour of codedWCFbelieves that "Coded correction is more useful when you want to learn."Therefore, it could be said that codedWCF is preferred due to the fact that it enhances learning because as Bartram and Walton (1991) put forth codes do not "only indicate where errors are located, but also the types of errors" (p. 84), which students have to self-correct,engaging them in a more profound form of language processing while they self-edit their writing (Ferris, 1995; Lalande, 1982). Self-correction is seen to promote self questioning, reflection, learners' ownership and management of learning processes, sense of personal responsibility and accountability, self-efficacy, and meta-cognition (Topping, 2003). Self-correction also enables students the opportunity to be independent of teachers in future context, become realistic judges of their own performance by enabling them to monitor their own learning, rather than relying on their teachers for feedback (Crisp, 2007; Sambell, McDowell& Sambell, 2006). Furthermore, students' ability to self-assess can provide valuable clues to the teacher about how deeply they have understood the tasks and this information can thereby improve teaching and learning (Montgomery, 2000). Literature on behalf of coded correction has put forth that it is more beneficial than unlabelled corrective feedback, i.e. underlining the error (Bitchener, 2008; Bitchener & Knoch, 2008, 2010a; Bitchener, Young, & Cameron, 2005; Ellis et al., 2008; Ferris, 2006; Ferris & Roberts, 2001; Sheen, 2007). Codes involve learners in the self-correction process and help them learn more effectively (Gower et al., 1995). In addition, Lalande (1982) and Noroozizadch (2009) claim that coded corrective feedback promotes writing more effectively.

When students were asked to state their preferences on whether they preferred writing drafts about a topic or just giving a final product all students stated that they

preferred drafts. Interestingly, the only native speaker of English who has been learning writing for twenty years, added in her interview that "even if it is a person's native language, drafts are necessary for better writing."It is impossible for any writer to write an error free first draft. Good writers are seen to go through a composing process, which involves drafts (Krashen, 2004). Thus, as Katty pointed out, even in one's mother tongue, drafts are necessary for writing development(Badger & White, 2000; Hyland, 2003; Tribble, 1996;White & McGovern, 1994). In this case, drafts are seen to be vital in writing as they enable students to improve and see their progress. It is therefore, suggested that students have less errors when submitting their products because they are able to edit and amend most of their errors during the process, i.e. first and second drafts before submitting their final products. Furthermore, most of the students believed drafts showed the writer his/her progress. Mathew, a student of the same opinion, stated that the more he wrote the better his writing got, which evidentially shows that writing is improved through drafts. Sally also stated, "Without drafts how can I understand or see or change my writing?" In addition to this, some students added that the feedback received from their drafts enabled the progress of writing. Therefore, writing drafts only without feedback may be considered less effective as feedback provides a direction for possible corrections/changes to the draft. Hailey clearly stated that she "can't produce good work without feedback." Therefore, students' believed that it was possible for them to improve their writings through drafts and feedback (Creme & Lea, 1997; Ennis, 1996; Ferris, 2002; Harmer, 2001; Krashen, 1987; Kroll, 2001).

When participants were asked the question on what type of assessment or WCF they preferred for their first drafts, 13 out of 16responded that they prefer peer

WCF (fellow class mate); three out of 16 stated that they preferred collaborative correction done by their teacher and class mates during the class. Most students stated that they preferred peer WCF but interestingly Sue added that "It should be one of my friends that has the ability to correct or I will be misinformed about the correction" and Mary stated that "My friend gave me a lot of good feedback but if she didn't know then I would change my essay for nothing." From both of these opinions it could be understood that feedback given by peers should be given from a person at the same or a higher proficiency English level and ability as the writer (Blanche, 1988; Bostock, 2000; Cheng & Warren, 2005; Davidson & Henning, 1985; Heilenmann, 1990; Janssen-van Dieten, 1989; Matsuno, 2009).

When participants were asked to state their opinions on the type of assessment or WCF to be done for their second drafts, almost all of the students stated that they preferred collaborative correction and feedback (see Table 27). Only one student out of 16 stated that s/he preferred self-correction. Claire, one of the students who preferred collaborative feedback, stated that "I like getting feedback from other people and my teacher as it gives me more ideas to write about" and Jack also added that "My friends' ideas can help me." As can be seen from both students for the second drafts collaborative feedback enables students to come up with new ideas which will be implemented in their writings (Arslan &Şahin-Kızıl, 2010; Turgut, 2009; Pinkman, 2005; Zhang, 2009). Students also pointed out that collaborative feedback was effective especially when it was supported by feedback by the teacher. They suggested that"The teacher talked about our peers correction and gave feedback to them as well" (Mary) and that "our teacher also talks and gives feedback to our friends' corrections" (Claire), which provides extra assurance about the feedback provided by the peers. From both students' responses, it can be seen that,

after the first drafts were written, the collaborative feedback given was not only for student's individual papers (drafts of essays) but also for the corrections' peers made.

When students were asked to state their opinions on the assessment or WCF of the final products of their essays, all students stated that they would like the teacher to correct and give them feedback. This was strikingly different from their preferences for earlier drafts. Students also added that the lecturer should be the one assessing the final versions of any writing as she was the one giving the "points" (Sue & Zara). Despite the fact that students received points for the process of writing throughout the course and that the final product was not of any more importance in terms of points and grades than their drafts, all students believed that their lecturer should be the one assessing their final products. The traditional power relations between learner and teacher in which students see the teacher as the authority that is responsible for giving marks due to their knowledge and experience is observable here. It seems that this approach has an effect on students' perceptions of assessment of the final products. This is also in line with Arslan's (2014) who investigated prospective English language teachers' attitudes in Turkey regarding the person to give feedback. The results revealed that receiving teacher's feedback was reported as the most favourite type. In this case, teacher assessment and/or WCF is seen an indispensable part of the learning process.

These findings suggest that from a students' perspective assessment should involve drafts with coded WCF. Related to whom these drafts are to be treated, students stated that the first drafts should be checked by a peer; their second drafts collaboratively and their final products by their lecturer. The following section will discuss the issues and challenges related to the writing course according to the lecturer.

Challenges in Conducting a Writing Course with BLA: The Lecturer's Perspective

As mentioned earlier in the Methodology chapter, the lecturer kept a reflective journal, where reflections in relation to the teaching process were noted. This journal was used as a tool to modify teaching in the classroom and make changes as needed during the term. However, the notes kept in this journal were also used as data to analyse the issues faced by the lecturer and the processes through which the course was modified accordingly. The aim of this analysis is to understand the possible challenges that may arise in such a course designed using the PGA and BLA and possible ways of dealing with such challenges.

Online work: Writing with computers? One of the major challenges that emerged during the process of teaching was the fact that students were not used to working with a blended approach. Using the Internet during a writing course was particularly challenging for students. This 'new' approach seemed difficult to adjust to at first but at the end of the course students' opinions had changed as all the students stated in their interviews that they preferred online work to classroom writing (see Table 21). Taking into account the students' educational backgrounds and nationalities, however, the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot students particularly found both the portfolio work and blended learning different to what they had been doing so far in their language courses. As Bensen (2007) points out, in the Turkish Cypriot context, writing is generally neglected due to syllabus constraints or only a limited version of it is covered and it is generally set as homework rather than class work. Even though these students, at some point during their undergraduate studies, had been engaged in portfolio work, the process of writing and producing a portfolio

for writing was unfamiliar and new for a majority of them. Students resented the implementation of this 'new' approach (i.e. as they believed too much work was requested), which they orally communicated to their lecturer and thus, insisted that they would take action by dropping the course and replacing it with another elective course. This is in line with Zhang and Perris's (2004) study which also revealed that university students were uncomfortable with self-directed learning because they were more used to didactic instruction. Due to the fact that some students may resent the implementation of online writing, it is crucial to "include sufficient face-to-face or online synchronous contact to support the needs of the more apprehensive students", in the blend (Macdonald, 2008, p. 119). For this reason, the course was designed by blending both online and classroom work. Face to face discussions and debates, extra teaching and feedback were given during class hours in the second part of the course where BLA was applied.

One particular student, Matt,was totally against the use of the Internet for course work as he neither had access to the Internet or any computers outside of the campus. He additionally pointed out in one of the classroom discussions that computers could have no contribution to learning. Even though he was informed about the fact that this online work was going to be a part of the overall assessment, he did not seem to change his strong opinion. This student also refused to do the tasks and write the essays, as he believed the teacher was responsible of teaching him how to write. He believed that the teacher should be the central figure and the source of knowledge in the classroom. As an extension, the role of the students according to him was to receive knowledge. This issue emerged because the BLA employed after the midterm examination shifted the traditional roles of the teacher-centred classrooms and enabled students to self-correct, peer-review and collaborate. Hence,

this issue is related to how students perceived not only writing as a process but also the teaching/learning process in the classroom. These students were taught in their language teaching methodology courses that active learning is the most desired type of learning: student-centred classrooms are the best learning environments for teaching/learning languages (Jones, 2007; Marsh, 2012). Against this background, it was very interesting to see that he was still insisting on having a strongly teacher-centred classroom. The teacher training that he received during the past four years did not seem to have influenced his views about the issue. This shows how strongly students are influenced by their past experiences of learning and the way they were taught. In Matt's case, these previous learning experiences were more relevant and a more significant factor than his training as a pre-service EFL teacher with regard to his choice of teaching/learning approaches.

Matt's case also brings out another issue about teacher training where theory and practice are perceived as being different/apart from each other by pre-service language teachers in this case. It signifies the lack of convergence between theoretical knowledge taught in methodology classes and the real-life applications of these rather contemporary approaches. Convincing this student and getting him to do the tasks was a challenging task for the lecturer throughout the semester. Considering the fact that the university has a library with computers available for students' use, the lecturer directed the student to make use of these computers during the online work. In addition to this, the lecturer told him to use his mobile phone, which already had an Internet connection. Furthermore, showing this student his progress throughout the drafts seemed to motivate him towards learning and slightly changed his traditionalist view of learning on how to learn writing. In his individual interview, Matt pointed out that "the traditional style doesn't teach anything. We just

get points for what we write." Once this student had actually completed the course and had been through the process of learning how to write, his strong beliefs about the traditional approaches to teaching writing seemed to have reverted.

Technical issues in BLA. There were several technical issues that emerged during the use of the BLA for this particular writing course. Issues such as web pages not being available or students noting down the lecturer's e-mail address wrong were some minor issues that were dealt with. For example, during the process of the online work, students were engaged in commenting on news/articles, such as The Daily Mail ('Sometimes I wish I'd never won: Lottery winning bus driver plans new life in Cyprus after claiming 38 million pounds syndicate win left him feuding with friends'). Those students who did not comment on the tasks at the time given were unfortunately unable to comment as the time given for the news/article application had expired. Students who had tried to comment two days after the article was published were not able to proceed with the task because the website did not allow them to add any comments after a certain amount of time. To deal with this technical issue, Facebook was employed. Students were directed to the Facebook page of the lecturer to post their comments for the articles for which commenting was no longer possible. This also helped students avoid losing points due to technical issues. The students in question copied and pasted the article onto the lecturer's Facebook wall and made their comments below it. Yet again, some students (such as Mathew and Allie) did not have equal points as those who managed to make comments on the news/article on time. Points were deducted from the overall assessment of completed tasks. This was negotiated with the students in class sessions in order to have a fair judgement of marks. Even though not many marks were deducted, taking action in this manner also helped students take on the responsibility of time management. This

was also stated as one of the challenges connected with using the wiki as one of the modes of instruction in an academic writing course designed for EFL learners with a BLA (Eydelman, 2013).

Another similar issue that was soon dealt with was encountered at the beginning of the BLA. One particular student, Mathew, sent his essay to the wrong e-mail address because he had copied the lecturer's e-mail address from the white board incorrectly. As a result, the students' initial assignment did not appear to be submitted on time. However, due to the fact that the time and date of the sent e-mail in the first instance was recorded by the mailing server, this problem was quickly resolved by the student forwarding his essay to the correct address with the indicated date. Hence, the student did not lose any points due to late submission. In this case, such a small detail in the technologies used proved to be very useful in resolving issues.

One advantage of online work was initially seen as a drawback by the lecturer. Students in class misinterpreted the instructions and tasks given by the lecturer. Some students sent the drafts to the lecturer's Facebook inbox instead of e-mailing it. This so called 'drawback' was resolved as the lecturer appointed them via Facebook.com to send it to her e-mail account. Here, it could be said that face to face communication can be a defect considering students' misinterpretation and misunderstanding. Written announcements are unchangeable proof and easier to follow (McConnel, 2000), therefore multiple modes of communication and submission possibilities should be part of the blend.

There were some other issues not directly caused by technological problems but to do with students not following the instructions properly to complete the

assigned online tasks. For example, when the first drafts were assigned online, students were appointed to give feedback and use coded WCF to assess their classmates' work (See Data collection procedure). Some students claimed that their peers had checked their essays but unfortunately the feedback and coded correction they had made were not forwarded to the lecturer, which was perceived as an unfinished task by the lecturer. The student who had assessed the paper was held responsible for not forwarding the draft after assessment. In other words, the task was seen uncompleted and point reduction for the process of writing was made. This problem was resolved when the student forwarded his/her earlier sent copy to the lecturer. So, students were able to get their points as they proved the assessed paper was sent back to their classmates on time. This issue again raises the point about how online interaction can increase student involvement in keeping students on-task and increasing their performances. Initiating interaction with the lecturer or with any of their peers at any time of day and any place rather that during class or office hours only, results in greatly increased student-teacher and student-student interaction (McComb, 1993), which in turn is reflected on students' on-task performances. Despite this advantage, during the procedure of online work, students insisted on seeing their second drafts on paper as they thought feedback in class could be more efficient. Showing and seeing the mistakes and feedback given by their peers seemed much easier to encounter for the same specific reason previously suggested. As mentioned earlier, students' second drafts were assessed by peers and students preferred to talk collaboratively about the feedback and corrections made to confirm reliability of adjustments made to their papers. Students wanted their essays to be checked by the lecturer before writing their final products to see whether their peers had made appropriate alterations and writteneffective feedback. These issues indicate

that online work should be supported by classroom interaction (Macdonald, 2008).Taking into consideration students' needs and preferences for the final essay; students' second drafts were printed and brought to class by the lecturer for collaborative feedback and discussion. Students were able to confirm understanding of feedback, which was a crucial point in making their performances better for the final products.

One final issue that was encountered during the implementation of the online work was related to students' personal/social limitations. More specifically, two students (Zara and Amanda) claimed that they were not allowed to access Facebook and/or open e-mail accounts because their partners/fiancées did not want them to. Interestingly, this was the case with only female students. In some families of the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot society, gossip and rumours concerning Facebook and any other social networking site seem to refer to these sites as tools to get in contact with the opposing sex. In other words, social networking sites are seen as a threat insome relationships as some men/women are totally against their partners' involvement in such sites. This created a serious and rather unexpected dilemma both for the students and for the lecturer. It not only meant that these students would not be able to carry out the assigned tasks but also that they would not have access to essential information about the course. In such cases, we collaboratively decided with the students that they could open accounts with fake names, hiding their original identities, only to be used for the purposes of this course. In this way, such accounts would be used purely for educational purposes. This was negotiated with and was acceptable by their relatives as well. In one student's case, her sister's email and Facebook account was used to be able to complete the tasks.

Drafts, drafts, drafts: Difficulties with PGA. In addition to students' initial negative attitudes towards the BLA, students also found the portfolio work, i.e. the process approach used at the very beginning of the course, challenging. As mentioned earlier, students were generally used to writing being assigned as homework and being directly assessed by the teacher for the final product, where students had to individually make adjustments and even memorise a certain text for the examination (writing something and memorizing it for the exam). Due to this previous experience, the on-going process of assessment seemed difficult for students to accept. Most of the students verbally communicated their discontent to the lecturer. This even came to the point where students thought of dropping the course. However, since the deadline for dropping courses had passed, they only had the possibility of withdrawal. This was not favoured by the students because they were in their final year and they had already collected high marks until that date. For this reason, they decided to take further action by consulting the Chairperson of the department. Students strongly protested the employment of the PGAand argued that it was unnecessary, time consuming, too difficult and that the workload was too much for an elective course. The Chairperson was in favour of innovative methods and approaches in all courses. Thus, he explained to the students that the way the course was designed was for their benefit and rejected their request of changing the format of the course. The chairperson informed the lecturer about this issue, which was further discussed in class with the students and the students accepted to carry on with the designed syllabus.

Convincing students to write more than one draft was also difficult at first. Most of them found writing multiple drafts time consuming, which they orally proclaimed and debated about with the lecturer. However, once they were able to see

the actual improvement in their writing, they came to believe that drafts were necessary. This belief is reflected in their answers to interview question number 6 (see Table 26). The two students who found the portfolio work familiar and not so difficult were from different countries with different educational backgrounds. These students were Katty, who was from Nigeria, and Matt, who was from Palestine. These students did not find this approach particularly challenging as they had already been exposed to such an approach in their high schools and orally expressed this to their lecturer. In addition, these students gave their opinions about how the portfolio was to be designed from their previous experiences regarding the employment of portfolio work, which clearly shows that they were familiar with the concept.

Peer feedback: Problems with collaboration. In any group of students, collaboration can be a challenging task on its own as it requires and assumes that all parties are equally motivated and willing to help each other to complete the assigned task. However, in the specific context of this course, a difficult issue emerged when students were not in favour of the collaborativefeedback provided in class after the second drafts of students had been written. This was particularly challenging in the case of two students who were not on good terms with each other. One of these students refused to have any comments made by the other student on her Facebook status, which was part of the assigned work. To avoid further negative attitudes from forming and to make sure that students would complete their tasks and receive feedback, the lecturer gave feedback and comments to the student in question individually either in her office hours or in class. During the portfolio and online work, these students were intentionally not paired. For example, group work was assigned but these students were placed in different groups. Similarly, pair work was assigned but they were not paired and in the collaborative feedback, more teacher

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feedback was given to these students. According to Kumari (2001) student-to-instructor and student-to-student interactions are important elements in the design of an online course because learners can experience a "sense of community," enjoy mutual interdependence, build a "sense of trust," and have shared goals and values (Davies & Graff, 2005; Rovai, 2002). Initially more student-teacher interaction is fostered (McComb, 1993). Students' relationships with each other may affect the application of a specific approach in class. Therefore, when employing collaborative and/ or pair work, the social relationships between students should be considered.

Another situation which was encountered was the fact that some students were not talking to other students, which created difficulties in pairing students to give feedback and find mistakes in their peers' work. Peers had to be appointed because of the proficiency level and knowledge of each student. Every student had a different proficiency level in English. At first students chose their close class mates to give feedback on their papers. The feedback given was not beneficial as the proficiency level in English of the student giving feedback was not up to the standard of the essay writer. Students' English proficiency level has an impact when giving peer feedback and correction (Blanche, 1988; Brown & Hudson, 2002; Davidson & Henning, 1985; Heilenmann, 1990;Janssen-van Dieten, 1989). In order to resolve this problem, students having the same proficiency level were carefully (the lecturer was aware of students that were not in good relationship with one another) appointed to give feedback. When employing such an approach the language proficiency of students regarding the quality of feedback should be considered.

Stage II

During the implementation stage of the study, issues were resolved as and when they were encountered. However, following the structured interviews with the initial group of students who took the course, further questions emerged in relation to how students perceived teaching and learning of writing in general and whether the training they received in the ELT department in four years prepared them for teaching writing in an innovative way or not. To answer these questions, another group of senior students were interviewed and were asked their opinions regarding the writing courses they have taken in the department as well as their attitudes towards teaching writing in the future as pre-service English language teachers.

As mentioned earlier in the Methodology chapter, students are obliged to complete 58 courses (see Appendix P) in order to graduate from the ELT department where the study took place. In these 58 courses, two courses focus on the learning of writing (ELT 153 & ELT 154). In terms of the teaching of writing, only one course is offered to students. Unfortunately, this specific course does not only focus on teaching of writing in itself but also includes practice in teaching of other skills. In the interviews, senior students Jane and Arnold specified that the "Teaching Skills" courses "were not focused only on writing, had reading too." This in itself constitutes a problem because students appear to express that they feel not trained enough for their future teaching careers.

Learning writing in the ELT department. An analysis of the participants' backgrounds in stage II shows that almost all of the students started academic writing in the ELT department (see the Methodology Chapter). Even though the department offers courses emphasizing the learning of writing, Zullu and Mark stated that they had only learnt how to write two specific types of essays in the past four years and that they believed that these were "not sufficient enough" for prospective English

language teachers. Arnold was also in the same belief as he stated that these two courses were "not enough for teaching" future students. Students seemed to feel that they were not well-equipped in this respect to be able to teach writing in the future.

When students were questioned about the content of the aforementioned two writing courses, majority of them stated that they learnt "how to write an essay."There were also students, such as Brian and Ozie, who claimed that they "did not learn how to write" during the four years at university. Arnold stated that he had learnt the "difference between formal and informal writing, how to use conjunctions and how to paraphrase something." Similarly, Iona also stated that she had learnt how to paraphrase. Even though, Iona stated that she knew "how to write a formal and informal letter," she added that she had learnt these letter types in her previous years of learning English. That is to say, she was not specifically taught how to write a formal and informal letter during the four years of her university study. Another participant, Tanya, stated that she was "told to write an essay but no lesson" regarding the teaching of the type of essay required. That is to say, students were expected to write essays in the writing courses but the strategies, organization and process needed to write a specific essay were not elaborated on. A more traditional perspective of teaching was employed in her previous courses. For this specific reason, Tanya did not feel well equipped to write a specific essay. However, it also emerged from the interviews that students did not feel that they were learning the essay types that would be useful to them in their undergraduate studies. During four years in the ELT department, students were expected to write essays presumably in other courses as well but these essay types had unfortunately not been taught. Hence, students felt that their writing courses were not relevant to their other courses and that they were not useful to achieve better results. Relatedly, Jane stated that she

"only had two courses and only learnt topic sentences. No introduction, that's it." It could be depicted that students who took the two writing courses to learn how to write essays had a problem in the bridging the gap between theory and practice. They did learn the mechanics of writing but they did not apply these, or more specifically were not expected to apply these and were not taught how to apply them in other contexts and/or courses.

A significant issue was raised by Mellie, who stated that she wrote a lot of essays "but for homework, not in class." She explained that lecturers would "tell us how to write a thesis statement, then do the same for the rest of the essay, check it and give feedback." These explanations show that the approach used in the first two writing courses in the ELT department is the traditional, product approach, where students are not expected to write essays in the classroom. In addition to this, essay products were checked and marks were given as summative assessment. Students were not given the chance to write drafts, which are essential in the learning process (Creme & Lea, 1997; Ennis, 1996; Ferris, 2002; Harmer, 2001; Krashen, 1987, 2004; Kroll, 2001).It could easily be perceived that the students who took writing courses followed a product approach disregarding the processes needed in order to produce a product. In the process approach students

> are not expected to produce and submit complete and polished responses to
> their writing assignments without going through stages of drafting and
> receiving feedback on their drafts, be it from peers and/or from the teacher,
> followed by revision of their evolving texts. (Kroll, 2001, pp. 220-221)

In this respect, the reason for students remembering only a few specific details related to their previous experiences in writing courses can be related to the

traditional product approach used in these courses. In the product approach, students

imitate a model text. Texts are deconstructed and reconstructed (Christmas, 2011).

Hence, they are not expected to use their existing knowledge in other contexts. They

also do not have the opportunity to see the progress of their writing or correct it

along the way. This shows that students memorized a model text. As a result they

found it difficult remembering about their writing courses.

Teaching writing for the future: Product, process or none?One

characteristic of an effective writing teacher is that he/she should have knowledge

about different approaches to the teaching of writing(Mozaheb, 2011). Therefore,

teachers who are limited to employ a single approach do not have the chance to

reflect and develop themselves for better teaching and learning. When the

participants were asked to state their opinions on the learning of how to teach

writing, almost all of the students stated that they did not learn "all" of the

approaches with regard to the teaching of writing. In order for teachers to try out

different approaches in their language learning and/or writing classes, they need to

be familiar and have knowledge about the possible approaches available to them. In

addition, teachers need to employ different approaches that best suit their students'

needs. Having limited knowledge about different approaches to writing reduces the

possibility of students being involved in different learning environments.

As mentioned earlier, the two courses in the ELT department's syllabus focus

on teaching and learning of language skills (see Appendix P). Only one of these

courses has a dedicated section for the teaching of writing and it appears from the

students' responses that they feel that this instruction was not enough for them to feel

confident about teaching writing. Arnold and Iona pointed out that in one or two

courses, they were taught how to teach writing but "the teaching language skills

course did not specifically focus on the teaching of writing." Brian and Tanya both stated that they took a course named "teaching writing to young learners" but Tanya added that the course "may not be beneficial as I might not teach that age group." Interestingly,Mellie, who stated that she is "going to teach young learners therefore I will not follow any approach and do something spontaneous," did not specify that she was taught how to teach writing to young learners. Hence, there were serious discrepancies in students' responses to this question. Mike stated that he took two courses regarding the teaching of writing but both courses "focused on all four skills" and that he "did not learn any approaches to writing" in these courses. In other words, students did not seem to be familiar with the four approaches to EFL writing, which are advocated by Badger and White (2000). This created a decrease in students' confidence in terms of feeling ready to teach writing after graduation.

In terms of the approaches to teaching writing, students appeared to have difficult time naming specific approaches that were available to them. Brian, Barry, Samantha and Mark stated that they were aware of all the approaches to teaching writing. Brian affirmed,"I think product, process" were the approaches but he had never heard of the genre and process genre approaches. Even though Barry stated that he was aware of "all" approaches to teaching writing, when he was asked to state the differences between each approach, he argued that "process is topic."Here, it could be pointed out that Barry was aware of the names of approaches (labels) but unaware of the content of each, which was a sign that he probably had memorised these approaches but had forgotten them once the course was over. The memorization technique is an aspect of the traditional approaches,such as the product approach to writing and the grammar translation method (Campbell & Rutherford, 2000; Richards & Rogers, 2001), which teachers have been employing in their

language learning classrooms in north Cyprus (Bensen & Silman, 2012). Therefore, Barry was used to employing such a technique. This suggests the strong relationship between students' previous learning experiences and their future learning/teaching strategies.

When Samantha was asked which approach she would employ when teaching writing in the future, she stated that she doesn't know, "but it would be communicatively." Even though, some students stated that they learnt "all" the approaches to teaching writing, they could not specify their definitions, which shows that they were either not taught all the approaches to writing or that they only memorised certain characteristics of the approaches as course materials and had not had the chance to use them in practice. This raises the same questions discussed earlier in relation to the discrepancies between theory and practice in the learning of teaching. Having theoretical knowledge about approaches is not enough for the ELT students as they will be applying them in the future in their own classes. Therefore, students should be engaged in as much practice as possible to feel prepared and confident for their 'real life' teachings.

When participants were asked about their opinions on how they would teach their writing courses, Tom stated that he would "write on the board and make students copy it," which sounded like a very traditionalist product approach, where students imitate a model text (Raimes, 1983). Johnny stated that he would "give rules and then expect students to write something."Teaching rules with a deductive approach opposes the inductive approach, which students have been taught and encouraged to choose in their teaching practices during their four years at the ELT department. This deductive method to writing raises the question of the way students have been taught writing in their writing courses that were mentioned earlier.

Students seemed to have experienced a very traditional model of teaching where they would concentrate on rules and then be provided with examples (Campbell &Rutherford, 2000; Richards & Rogers, 2001). Seeing such an approach as a model could be a reason for these students' choices. In addition, the issue of not being able to apply what they have studied theoretically in class to real life has yet again comes to fore. Undoubtedly, students in the ELT department are in the process of learning or have learnt many approaches with regard to EFL teaching in general. So, taking these senior students into account, these students were introduced the deductive and inductive methods as part of their theoretical knowledge. Baring this in mind, it could be seen that students most probably had not had the chance to apply this knowledge in practice in order to see the differences in methods and thereby choose the method which is more useful in terms of learning outcomes.

Direct or indirect WCF?The students' opinions on the type of WCF they would employ in their writing courses in the future were varied. Some students were in favour of employing direct WCF. Arnold, for instance, stated that he would "draw a line under the word and write the correct form to show the grammatically correct word." Samantha also stated that she "would underline and write the correct one." Ozie, another student in favour of direct WCF, stated that "I would change the error to the correct form, then give them a mark." All three students were in the belief that this was a useful method as they had learnt writing in this way in the past. It could be perceived that these students in their previous writing courses or lessons were engaged in direct WCF with a product approach to writing mentioned previously.

Concerning indirect WCF, Hailey stated that "I would underline error." Similarly, Tom stated that he "would use a colourful pen and underline the error" and indicate that it is a "grammar mistake and make the students find the error

themselves." So, he would not be using any codes but he would specify the type of error in writing and expect students to self-correct. Another student, Johnny, stated that he would:

> explain in Turkish. I check their error and show them, I would make a circle in red pen then show the student and ask why then I would tell them the rule so they can come up with the mistake on their own[*sic*].

So, all three of these students would let the students to self-correct by indicating the error and writing the type of error for students to figure out the error individually.

The employment of codes was suggested by a great majority of the participants. However, the actual use of the codes differed from one participant to another. Jane stated that she would "write the code and circle the error," while Barry said that he would "underline the error or circle it and show on another page so they can see the error. I would use codes." Mike stated that "as a teacher I will use codes, I didn't learn from codes but it shows the student what kind of error as some students don't know what the mistake is, it emphasizes the error." Zullu also explained that she would employ "codes as students correct themselves." In terms of the reasoning behind using codes, Mark argued that "codes give more of a chance what the error is and why, we don't give up." This highlights that the participants were aware of the advantage of using a coding system for errors in helping students improve their errors for future practice. Interestingly, the level of students' language proficiency emerged as an issue for some students when deciding on whether they would use codes or not. Sharon, for example, stated that "If they are beginners, I will give them the correct form but if they are advanced learners, I have to make codes." In other words, Sharon would directly correct low proficiency level students but employ

codes for higher proficiency level students. Ferris (2002) also argues that coded

feedback is threatening and hard to be self-corrected for low proficiency learners.

Therefore, Sharon's approach to the coding of errors seems to have support in the

current literature.

Even though almost all of the participants stated that they would employ

either direct or indirect WCF, a few of them were in favour of employing their own

approaches. Brian, for example, stated that "on a separate paper I will show them all

their mistakes" [*sic*]. Face to face oral feedback suggested by Race (2010) was

another method that some participants preferred: Tanya stated that "I prefer face to

face feedback." Similarly Betty put forth that she would "explain orally what they

did wrong." In other words, the participants were aware of other possible ways of

providing feedback than the traditional direct correction. This can be an effect of the

coded WCF practice within the ELT department, which was adopted in 2011 and is

being applied in all of the courses where students produce any type of written work.

Hence, the importance of the participants' previous learning experiences within the

department comes to the foreground again.

Students' attitudes towards BLA and learning writing with BLA. All

participants stated that they have never heard of BLA. As a result, they were

provided with a brief explanation ofwhat the approach involves and then asked to

state the possible advantages and disadvantages both as a student and as a

prospectiveEFL teacher. When students were asked to state their opinions about the

possible benefits of BLA, most students pointed out that it could be motivating for

students to use online technologies as this is part of their everyday lives. It is already

claimed in the literature that BLA motivates students as they feel that they keep up

with the new technological era (Krebs et al, 2010; Marsh, 2012; Turgut, 2009).

Tanya's words confirmed this attitude: "The majority of students use internet nowadays. When we write in class, it's boring but when it's for our own pleasure, online, it's not unfamiliar. So it's a benefit." In other words, Tanya pointed out that technology nowadays is part of students' lives outside the classroom environment and utilizing such a tool is important in getting students motivated in taking part in what is going on in the classroom.

Another possible advantage of the BLA that students stated was flexibility. Two benefits posed by Marsh (2012) regarding the BLA are that it provides "a less stressful practice environment for the target language" and "flexible study, anytime or anywhere, to meet learners' needs." (pp. 4-5) Some students were in the belief that they would be able to do their work in their own time in a less stressful environment. Tom stated his opinion by comparing classroom sessions to online work. Doing work at home would be "better because at home I can concentrate there is no pressure on us in class there is pressure but at home we have a clearer mind." Another interesting point put forth by Sharon was that "For me I can learn at home as well because for me, I work, so I will not lose out on anything, I can check. It will be useful for me." Related literature has also put forth that "learners are expected to be able to fit learning into their busy lives especially professional adults and university students" (Hockly, 2011, p. 58). BLA, therefore, enables students to do the initial work online in their own pace. Participants in Stage I were also in the same opinion as they stated that the BLA was flexible, allowing them to do tasks in their own time and pace.

A possible advantage of BLA regards the implementation of computers. Computers are seen as a complement in the teaching environment (Ruthven-Stuart, 2003). One aspect of a computer is Microsoft Word. The Microsoft Word programme was found beneficial by most of the participants in Stage I. As

mentioned previously by the participants of the Stage I, the Microsoft Word programme enabled them to benefit from the track changes and comment features presented in the document (Ho & Savignon, 2007). Correspondingly, Zullu reported that when "writing online there is a grammar check it's useful but pen paper I will not correct my errors. Online I will double check as it is in red it makes you check." One of the strengths of the Microsoft Word programme is the fact that it enables students to check and edit their own mistakes (Race, 2010). This self-editing opportunity of BLA contributes to and fosters learner autonomy (Marsh, 2012).

Another issue that the participants raised in relation to the employment of computers in general and the Microsoft Word programme in particular was the fact that it helped students with illegible handwriting. Mike stated that "from my perspective I have bad hand writing, it would be better. My hand writing is illegible." He also added that "I won't lose points; I will minimize the chance of losing points". Similarly, Mark pointed out that he always loses marks due to his illegible handwriting.Interestingly, he stated that "it ruins everything. The lecturer calls me to their office. It's a waste of time writing by hand for me." Barry also stated that "for the format and everything Microsoft is there…handwriting can't read complicated but online no mistakes" [*sic*]. These statements also indicate that the BLA reduces the possibility of wasting time for students who have illegible handwriting. Thus, compared to pen-paper work, students minimize the chance of losing points as well as saving themselves from embarrassment due to illegible handwriting.

When participants were asked to state their opinions about the possible drawbacks of the BLA, most of them pointed out that the BLA could be distracting. In his statement, Arnold put forth that "if chatting with friends at the same time on the net, it could be distracting." Tom, who was also in the same opinion, stated that

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students would "spend their time on Facebook chatting or playing games." Similarly, Tanya stated that:

> Students may get distracted because there are lots of things online, they would do things for their own pleasure and this would distract them away from their own work this is for some students.

As can be seen,the BLA may distract students' attention, which is seen as a possible disadvantage by many of the participants. This disadvantage, however, may be due to the participants' lack of experience in the BLA as they may be unaware that students are given a specific task to do within a specific timeframe. The results of Stage I showed that students did not experience any lack of attention in this respect as they were expected to complete certain tasks. However, since the participants in Stage II did not have any prior experience with this approach, they anticipated such a possibility. This, again, highlights the importance of previous learning experiences of pre-service ELT teachers in learning writing.

Another possible disadvantage reflected in the interviews carried out with the participants of Stage II involved computers and Internet accessibility. Students who do not have access or possess a computer may have difficulties with the employment of such an approach. Iona clearly stated that "Students may not have a computer so they have to go to the library but sometimes there are a lot of people so you should wait an hour sometimes so it's difficult without a computer." [*sic*]. Likewise, Brian put forth the fact that "students don't have internet access always," which could, according to many of the participants, constitute a problem in applying a BLA in EFL classrooms.

Handwritten or typed? When students were asked to state the possible benefits of BLA, most participants responded comparing handwritten and typed essays. As mentioned earlier, almost all of the participants preferred online work. One possible advantage stated above was the practicality of the Microsoft Word programme and its proofreading functions. Many participants were in favour of BLA due to the fact that they had illegible handwriting. So, the employment of such an approach would be beneficial for them as they would be able to type and produce legible essays. Nevertheless, the few participants who preferred to write by hand should not be underestimated. Jane stated that even though she was in favour of such an approach, she believed that "writing essays on the Internet is not my preference, handwriting is better." Iona also argued that that "I like the pen paper than online." Both students believed that handwriting expresses a person's character. Even though they believed that typed work was "much professional writing" (Iona), "Internet is more formal" (Jane), hence less personal. Moreover, from the teachers' perspective students' hand writing has an effect on their marks. Therefore, as Mike, Mark and Barry put forth illegible handwriting would cause difficulties while reading, which would result in the deduction of marks.

In the light of the argumentsabove, it seems important to mention that the blends in which lecturers and/or teachers use to convey a course should have a balance in order to fit the needs of all of the students. Therefore, while employing the Internet in the blend, students' should have the option of writing and submitting their work sending via email or in handwriting.

Teaching with BLA. In terms of employing the BLA as a future teacher, when the participants were asked how they would design a writing course, Betty stated that she would "give homework related to the Internet because they [students]

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become more motivated to write." Therefore, Betty would employ a BLA as an EFL teacher. Nevertheless, her employment of the Internet in writing courses reflects a very traditional approach. As emphasized earlier in the traditional product approach, teachers assign a piece of writing for homework and give a mark for that product (Raimes, 1983). Zullu argued that "Maybe I will try and employ it [BLA], as a learner I will benefit. It will work as I'm going to get feedback from drafts, would help." Even though Iona stated that she prefers pen and paper, she also found online work to be "more professional" and she claimed that she would employ such an approach as a teacher. Sharon stated that"I will partially use it because in class easier to answer questions maybe I'm a little old fashioned … It will be very useful partially in class and on net saves time too[*sic*]." From these responses, it appears that pre-service EFL teachers still feel strongly attached to the classroom based approach even though they are in favour of online work. Here, it seems crucial to highlight that the BLA is a combination of face-to-face and computer-mediated instruction (Graham, 2006). Students have the opportunity of benefiting from both classroom and online work. It could be seen that although some students prefer writing in class and/or handwriting, they are at the same time in favour of employing such an approach in their future teaching, provided that it included some element of classroom contact with the students.

Conclusion

In this chapter, information about the results and discussion of the findings were presented. First of all, the errors in regards to the pen and paper and the on-line

work were set onto tables and discussions concerning these errors were presented with related literature. The findings revealed that students made more errors during the PGA compared to the BLA. Moreover, the students' perspectives regarding writing courses, assessment and the employment of the BLA were presented and discussed. In StageI,the online work seemed to be more effective than the portfolio work; drafts were a significant part of the process of learning writing; for the first drafts peer, second drafts collaborative and final product teacher WCF were seen to be the most suitable agents to treat errors. The Stage II participants' previous learning experiences seemed to impact their attitudes towards teaching and learning writing greatly. Furthermore, the lecturer's problems were stated and reasons and implementations about these problems were discussed. Students had overcome many challenges, i.e. the writing course designed with a PGA and BLA, the writingskill, academic writing, social/cultural and personal challenges, during the writing course and had changed their negative views regarding both the employment of a PGA and BLA in a writing course, at the end of the course. Students were introduced a new learning environment. The following chapter will present the Conclusion and suggestions as regards to this study.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The previous chapter presented the findings and discussions with related literature regarding the current study. The results of the analysis of students' progress in both modes of writing (portfolio and online) were presented to show how much their writing had improved in individual cases. In addition, comparisons were made between students' work in both modes of writing. A description of errors made by students in each section of the course and the ways they had improved these errors were further provided to support the main arguments presented in the chapter. Furthermore, in order to answer the research questions presented in Chapter I, students' perspectives regarding their exposure to different types of instruction were discussed to highlight the significance of the process genre approach (PGA) and blended learning approach (BLA). This was further supported by the challenges faced when both approaches to instruction were employed. Detailed description of the issues that arouse during the employment of the approaches and the spontaneous solutions created to deal with the issues were presented. Finally, pre-service English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' perspectives towards their training with regard to teaching writing and to the BLA were presented.

The results of the analysis of both modes of writing revealed that students showed progress during both the portfolio and the online work. Possible reasons for students' improvement during the portfolio work were due to the peer and collaborative debates and discussions held in class, the multiple-drafts approach (PGA) employed and the help of additional materials. However, compared to the portfolio work, more progress was revealedduring online work. Possible reasons for

this were due to additional feedback, support, discussions and debates given and carried out during the BLA approach and students having the freedom of producing essays in their own pace and time. Moreover, the help of the features presented in the Microsoft Word programme were seen to have a contribution on students' progress. Additionally, the BLA was seen to foster autonomous learning where students deal with their own errors by self-correcting. In addition, the results regarding the students' perspectives revealed that students' preferred online work to traditional in-class work. The reasons behind their choices were due to the BLA being more flexible, including more individual instruction, being more motivating and easier to keep track of and prove that work had been done. The students' perspectives with regard to the design of the writing course revealed that students prefer to see their progress which was evident in the process approach and peer collaboration employed in both phases of the course. Moreover, students believe that the BLA has more advantages over its disadvantages.

The findings with regard to the assessment of students' writing revealed that drafts in writing courses are a must. Peer written corrective feedback (WCF) should be employed for the first draft, collaborative for the second draft and teacher WCF for the final product. Students also believed that coded WCF was the most beneficial type of feedback when treating errors throughout the process of drafts.

Based on the overall findings related especially to writing courses, both in terms of learning writing and teaching it, prospective EFL teachers appeared to heavily rely on their prior experiences in learning writing. These will be further discussed in the following section, followed by suggestions for practice and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Findings

The two approaches, i.e. PGA and BLA, that were employed in the teaching of the advanced writing course to pre-service EFL teachers, appeared to have improved students' performances both individually and as a group. The approaches contributed to a new, positive and meaningful learning experience for the participants who took part in the course.

The PGA was helpful and effective during the portfolio work. This approach was supported with extra materials which enabled students to produce the first drafts of their essays. The materials employed during the PGA (see Appendix K) involved tasks for students to complete and finally write the expected essay. So, students were involved in tasks which lead them to eventually produce a product less errors and with the help of peers, collaboration and the teacher during the process. The more students were exposed to extra materials, tasks and activities involving the expected writing, the more they were seen to familiarize and become accustomed to the writing and produce better products. This was the reason why students' second essays in both modes were chosen as data for this study. The extra materials also had similar reading passages to what students were expected to produce. It has been argued that reading contributes to writing when the reading is equivalent to the writing that one will produce (Krashen, 2004). Therefore, students read and produced step by step. These steps introduced the essay in chunks, i.e. the introduction (general statements, thesis statement) followed by the body paragraphs and so forth. It was seen crucial to present the essay in chunks for students to first encounter one problem/challenge and then the other.

Another finding suggests that drafts are a must in writing courses. Students were against the employment of drafts at the very beginning of the writing course.

However, their negative attitudes towards drafts appeared to reverse at the end of the course. Drafts are involved in the stages of the PGA (Badger & White, 2000). The processes in which students go through in order to produce their products have an impact on students' writings whether done in class or online (Badger & White, 2000; Bensen, 2007). Therefore, students should be involved in these processes. Indeed, drafts incorporated with feedback is widely recognisedas an important part of the language learning process and can improve the qualityof writing "when it is done during the writing process, i.e. between drafts" (Krashen,1984, p. 11).

WCF given to the students' drafts was a necessity in order to improve their writing skill (Bitchener, 2008; Ferris, 2003; Harmer, 2004; Hyland, 2003; Hyland & Hayland, 2006; Leki, 1990a). Regarding the agent assessing the drafts, peer, collaborative, teacher and self-correction were employed in the writing course. Students pointed out that, peer feedback was very useful after the completion of the first draft, while they found collaborative feedback more useful after the completion of the second draft. For the final product, teacher assessment was preferred by the participants. This finding suggests that students see the value of collaboration with peers. Incorporating peer work and editing are also seen to include students working in a friendly environment (Hyland, 2003; Villamil & de Guerro, 1996), assuming a more active role in the learning process (Mendonca & Johnson, 1994; Hyland, 2003), gaining a better sense of the audience (Hyland, 2003; Nation, 2009), and developing skills of critical reading (Hyland, 2003). However, they are so pre-programmed about assessment that they think the final (and presumably the most important for them) should be done by the teacher.

In terms of how errors were to be treated direct, indirect and coded WCF were employed throughout the writing course. The results showed that students

believed coded WCF was the most beneficial technique concerning the treatment of errors for all drafts. Coded WCF does not "only indicate where errors are located, but also the types of errors by using a correcting code" (Bartram & Walton, 1991, p. 84). Students were involved in the self-correction process which appeared to help them more than any other type of correction in terms of realising errors and finding the correct version (Gower et al., 1995). In this respect, Ferris (2002) puts forth that codes arouse learners' responsibility in correction and improve their writing accuracy in the long run.

In both the portfolio and online work, peer collaboration was adopted. Students in class were able to ask the lecturer and peers questions regarding their essays. Debates and discussions held in class and online regarding the construction of ideas, WCF, assessment, layout and paragraph organization, individual knowledge concerning the language skills and components and writing strategies about individual essays and essay teaching, all played an effective role in their writing progress. Even though both approaches involved collaboration and peer work, 'extra' collaboration and peer work was valuable during the online work. Logical options for collaboration are presented online (Aborisade, 2013; Gilbert, 2013). The tasks employed in online work "are a major boost for collaboration and communication" (Aborisade, 2013, p. 39) and thus, foster collaboration and communication (Waterhouse, 2005). With the employment of online work in the blend, students needed help with online instructions, choosing appropriate models of essays to read, questions regarding tasks, links and assigned work (Eydelman, 2013).

During this process students worked collaboratively in groups or with a peer to give and receive feedback, which is essential in any language learning context (Bo & O'Hare, 2013). Nevertheless, these had to be specifically supported by the lecturer

and peers during classroom hours, which had more of a positive effect on the unanswered questions, provided confirmation and clarification of tasks and instructions, enabled students to compare and contrast their ideas and organizations related to their essays, re-check their essays, helped them to confirm the WCF done by their class mate(s) and/or the lecturer and enabled them to revise their work according to the discussions of individual feedback given to classmates. It also assisted the lecturer in monitoring the process that individual students went through to be able to give more individual and whole class feedback and to assure all students were on the same page. So, extensive and detailed collaborative work was seen to positively affect students' progress as students were able to see others (Lecturer and class mates) for problems, comments, feedback and reviews of WCF given by peers and the lecturer. Thus, "provides opportunities for students to seek ongoing feedback from peers and teachers on their communicative performance" (Tomlison & Whittaker, 2013, p. 63).

Students also pointed out that the BLA should have some element of classroom contact in the blend to be more beneficial. This is in line with the definition of the BLA pointed out by Tomlinson and Whittaker (2013): "blended learning' is the term most commonly used to refer to any combination of face-to-face teaching with computer technology (online and offline activities/materials)." (p. 12)This also shows that students recognised the significance of face-to-face lecturing (Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013). Macdonald (2008) argues convincingly that face-to-face support is important in a blended learning context to reduce feelings of isolation and to maintain motivation when a course is fully online.

The findings also revealed that with work more personalized, lecturer feedback was given in and outside the classroom during the BLA (Pardo-Gonzalez,

2013). Students who had social/personal and understanding problems were detected and lecturer feedback was given at that instant or during office hours. This shows that more personalized lecturer feedback assisted students' progress during the employment of the BLA.

When the two approaches were compared (PGA & BLA), students' performances showed more progress in online work. "The overall finding of the metaanalysis is that classes with online learning (whether taught completely online or blended) on average produce stronger student learning outcomes than do classes with solely face-to-face instruction" (US Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development 2009, p. 18). It could be perceived from the findings that the employment of the BLA contributed to the writing course in many ways (Aborisade, 2013; Eydelman, 2013; Gilbert, 2013; Graham, 2006; Tomlinson & Whittaker, 2013; Waterhouse, 2005). Firstly, a new mode and experience for the learning environment was introduced for the participants as EFL learners themselves and as prospective teachers. In this new environment, "students have to relearn how to learn" (Dziuban, Hatman & Moskal, 2004, p. 10). Students had the chance to experience something different from the traditional learning contexts, where most of the writing courses are carried out in a generally teacher-centred way (Bilgin, 2013; Eydelman, 2013; Gilbert, 2013; Marsh, 2013; Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013). Eydelman (2013) points out that "Students' prior learning experience which to a large extent is based on a teacher-centred approach to learning and teaching" (p. 48) is transformed into a student-centred approach during online exposure. In the BLA, the teacher's role was shifted to a guide rather than an authority in the classroom to monitor students. This was made possible through the

use of specified Internet sites, such as Facebook, YouTube and the Daily Mail. This resulted in a more student-centred medium of instruction (Bilgin, 2013).

Even though the course outlinewas presented on the Departmental website and students were aware of the adoption of the PGA and BLA, getting students to accept this new learning environment was a difficult job for the lecturer. Teachers and/or lecturers employing a PGA or BLA should be patient and convincing, i.e. tell students that these approaches are for their own benefit, as students may need time to get used to the new learning environment (Eydelman, 2013), especially if they are traditionalists who were exposed to teacher-centred and product oriented (teaching of EFL writing) classrooms in their previous classes.

A writing syllabus designed with both or any one of the PGA and/or BLA means more workload for teachers, instructors and lecturers. It could actually become a tiring process as teachers have to continuously give feedback and WCF to individual students and the whole group, confirm and clarify understanding, in some occasions repeat tasks and instructions more than once, and prepare the tasks beforehand. Time plays a vital role with all the mentioned. Once a task is completed and checked the next one arises which means a lecturer is continuously active during the process. However, peer WCF and editing (assessment) is seen as a possible alternative to reduce lecturer workload (Fisher, 1999; Nicol & Draper, 2008; Rada, Michailidis & Wang, 1994). So, peer WCF and editing is beneficial both for the teacher (instructor/lecturer) and students. It could also be suggested that with larger classes, implementing peer WCF and editing may be even more beneficial again regarding lecturer's (instructor/teacher) workload. Furthermore, with regard to online work, it is also easier to track and edit students' errors as the tools available in Word processors provide effective and efficient possibilities where some of the errors that

need editing are detected, i.e. spelling and grammar check. The tasks followed each other in a chronological order. No time was available for the lecturer to have a break and then continue. If the course was spaced (an extensive writing course rather than an intensive one), then the lecturer would not feel the workload and thus, the frustration and pressure of checking completed tasks, assessing work done, giving feedback and WCF on time would also reduce.

It could also be depicted from the findings that the online treatment of errors was more beneficial due to the many features presented in a 'single' Microsoft Word document when giving WCF. During the online work, the lecturer and students used the track changes available in the document to treat errors. Race (2010) pointed out the benefits of digital technologies that improve marking efficiency and effectiveness of feedback, which include the Microsoft Word programme that could be used to edit containing the features of track change. Similarly, Ho and Savignon (2007) described how the track changes function in Microsoft Word can be used for computer-mediated peer review via e-mail. Therefore, it is suggested that when editing and giving and receiving WCF during the drafts of online work using the track changes in the Microsoft Word programme is easier and useful.

Students should be given marks for the ongoing delivery of the writing course. This will motivate and also make sure that students complete the tasks and give peer WCF on time. It is crucial for students to finish tasks on time because the next task is linked to the previous and latter tasks. Students have to complete the first to be able to start the second task. For example, in order to start writing their second drafts students have to finalize the first draft whether or not marks are given. The lecturer's prior and recent (in this study) experience regarding formative assessment shows that marks boost students' motivation and help time management. Formative

assessment in this sense was to monitor students' progress (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Cody, 2013) with the tasks, drafts and products related to their essays. Formative assessment allows "students to demonstrate their thinking and their teachers to evaluate such thinking in a low-stakes setting" (Cody, 2013, p. 1).Lecturers are able to play with these marks by deducting points for late submission. This also shows fairness among students. In addition, for a writing course it is not wise to divide marks only for mid-term, final examinations, participation and attendance, specifically in the senior ELT context where students are reluctant and dependent on high grades to both achieve a high CGPA and/or pass the 2.00 average CGPA required for graduation (see Methodology).It also seems that students' anxiety and stress levels are higher in exams and they may see exams as a threat because their progress is evaluated in that final product. These are aspects of summative assessment (Cody, 2013). Students are also able to produce more creative ideas through formative assessment (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Cody, 2013), as stress levels are lower especially when employing a BLA because it provides flexibility (Eydelman, 2013; Marsh, 2013).

Students' motivation was increased during the BLA (Fleet, 2013; Ranchoux, 2006)because they were given the choice of working at their own pace. According to Hofmann (2011) in "a learner-centred program…there are opportunities for participants to work in their own pace." (p. 4) The BLA offers a flexible learning environment which addresses students with different study habits and schedules (Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013). One student (Sharon, Stage II) claims that the BLA addresses her needs as she is also working. This echoes the point made by Sharma and Barrett (2007) that course participants can "continue working and take a course"

(p. 10) at the same time. These findings suggest that the BLA motivates students and should therefore be employed in writing courses.

Working in the online environment fostered time management which is essential for the learning process (Eydelman, 2013). Apart from the deadline given by the lecturer for every task, students were engaged in commenting on the 'Daily Mail' website. This task had to be fulfilled in two days or the comment section given would expire. As mentioned some students were not able to comment and were guided by the lecturer. So, students learnt how to manage their time more efficiently in the future tasks (Eydelman, 2013; Natalya, 2013). It is thereby suggested that working with a BLA may help students' time management.

The participants especially in Stage II relied heavily on their prior experiences in the teaching and learning of writing when reporting their attitudes towards PGA and BLA. Students in this Stage, had a traditional perspective towards the learning of writing as they had been exposed to a product approach to writing until that present day. The drafts needed to be able to produce a product, WCF and the agents (self, peer, collaborative, teacher) which are considered to have an impact on students' writings (Krashen, 1984) were neglected in their previous writing lessons/courses. Even though the students in Stage II were in favour of a writing course designed with a BLA, a few still seemed not to have changed their opinions when employing a BLA in their writing classes in the future as EFL teachers. These findings suggest that students' prior experiences should be considered when employing innovative approaches in writing courses.Vanderpyl (2012) argues that students in EFL writing classes are affected by the nature of their previous writing instruction, re-writing model text that had been so engrained in students' "heads and accepted for so long by their teachers, that they had no knowledge of an alternative

way of doing things and therefore, couldn't rightly be held liable for, nor disciplined

for, their actions." (p. 12) In addition, the Stage II students believed that they should

have the choice of hand-writing or typing when a BLA is employed. Some students

may seem more comfortable hand-writing rather than typing, so they should be

provided with the opportunity of selecting either, without any restrictions. As pointed

out in the findings, some students may have illegible handwriting which are reflected

negatively regarding the student and lecturer. On the other hand, some may feel that

through hand-writing their characters and feelings are made more explicit.

Suggestions for Practice

Certain technical issues are inevitable to avoid when computers are employed

in any course. Technical issues are one of the weaknesses of the BLA (Heinze &

Procter, 2004). Based on the findings, all participants (Stage I & II) pointed out that

the BLA is only feasible if students have a computer, electricity and Internet access.

For this reason, it is suggested that institutions should provide computers, electricity

and Internet access to both the lecturers and students' to be able to keep track of the

new technological era and thus enable students and lecturers to make use of the

online work comprised in the blend of a BLA.

It is suggested that students are informed about time restrictions regarding

expiring tasks before the implementation of the BLA. This is essential when websites

such as Daily Mail are employed where the students have limited time to respond to

a given task.

When designing a writing course with a BLA, social/personal and cultural

issues need to be taken into account (Bo & O'Hare, 2013). Lecturers (teachers,

instructors) may face some difficulties with students' prior and former writing

experiences or problems related to culture, personal relationships with other students in the same class and the relationships with their partners. The participants in Stage I were used to traditional writing courses, some had problems with opening up accounts for the tasks because of negative attitudes received by their partners and/or relatives and some were not in good terms with a certain fellow class mate. These should all be taken into account before designing a PGA and/or BLA course or discussed with students at the beginning of the course as these are crucial factors in assuring the success of the students in terms of completion of tasks as well as collaboration during the course.

While designing a course with a PGA and/or BLA, it is crucial for students at any English proficiency level to be introduced with coded WCF, in order to make them better users of the language. The participants in this study were familiar with the concept of coded WCF and all believed that codes played a vital role when treating errors. Coded WCF should be applied in writing courses to help students self-correct and therefore become autonomous learners. Autonomy is defined as "the ability to take charge of one's own learning" (Holec cited in Benson, 2006, p. 22) and it is a crucial element of life-long learning, which is an approach that teachers of the future should adopt.

Teachers need in-service training to be informed about the innovative approaches. It is pointed out that "just as students have to relearn how to learn, faculty have to relearn how to teach" (Dziuban, Hatman & Moskal, 2004, p. 10), especially when adopting a BLA. The fact that the most of the students in this study pointed out that they were not familiar with a BLA (or a PGA) approach shows the extent to which their previous teachers lacked innovation in their teaching. Thus, in-service training about innovative approaches to teaching writing at all levels of

education in EFL is needed. Teachers should be informed and encouraged to use such approaches to be more effective in teaching EFL. For the BLA approach, institutions should provide Internet access and computers for the students, prospective teachers and teachers (instructors, teacher trainers, lecturers), and train teachers to use a Word processor effectively when giving WCF. Moreover, social networking sites such as Facebook.com and so on, with which students are familiar in this new age, are also effective tools when employing BLA (Eydelman, 2013; Fleet, 2013; Pardo-Gonzalez, 2013). Therefore, teachers and institutions should also keep track of and update themselves regarding these tools to be able to employ them in their classrooms when teaching writing and presenting workshops for teachers.

Teachers with time and syllabus constraints could make use of the BLA in their classrooms, especially where institutions follow a grammar-based syllabus with an exam driven approach that is hugely focused on grammar, making it unlikely for them to cover the skill of writing with in-class sessions. In this case, online work could make a contribution to language learning in the long run as students would be able to cover the other skills, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and language components, i.e. pronunciation, vocabulary (Banados, 2006; Jones, 2007) at home in their own time and space.

Recommendations for Further Research

A deeper analysis regarding students' errors in a writing course designed with the PGA and BLA could be carried out to see how the PGA and/or the BLA can contribute to improving errors; which errors are addressed more than others in these approaches and how. Lecturers, teachers, instructors and teacher trainers will have

the opportunity to benefit from such a research as errors are an inevitable part of the learning process (Krashen, 1987) and their treatment as well as the ways they are treated are crucial.

This study could be replicated with students from different departments in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) settings to see if the results will be different when students from non-English related departments (e.g. engineering, medicine, business, and so on) are the participants. These findings will contribute to the field of EFL and ESP in terms of teaching and learning writing.

Furthermore, teachers' perspectives related to a writing course designed with the PGA and BLA could be conducted to see if the findings would change in this case. ELT departments could further make use of this data regarding the benefits and drawbacks in their writing courses with the knowledge obtained from this study to have a less problematic and easier teaching and learning environment.

Conclusion

This final chapter presented the conclusion of the findings of this study. This was followed by suggestions for practice for those employing either a BLA and/or PGA to teaching writing and recommendations for further research. Through this thesis, it is possible to perceive that both the PGA and BLA are beneficial approaches that can be employed in an ELT and EFL writing course. However, the BLA was regarded more effective when the results of both approaches were compared and contrasted. It was also seen that students' perceptions related to the employment ofBLA are more positive compared to PGAand they believe that it is a valuable approach to teaching of writing. Even though, the lecturer of the writing

course faced difficulties, the approaches employed in the course fostered autonomous learning, enabled peer and collaborative assessment, feedback, debates and discussion, boosted students' motivation and changed students' attitudes which were primarily informed by their prior learning and teaching experiences with regard to writing. Hence, it is hoped that the current study will contribute to the field by encouraging current and prospective teachers of English to adopt such innovative approaches and techniques to teaching writing.

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Appendix A

Writing Criteria

Score *9 – 8*

For essays that...

- *are well-organized*
- *demonstrate a command of the elements of composition*
- *display evidence of stylistic maturity*
- *explain with some precision the effect of the literature on the reader*
- *convincingly analyze the specific means by which that effect is achieved*

Score 7 – 6

For essays that...

- *are somewhat less well-written*
- *show occasional lapses in syntax, diction, or organization*
- *explain the effect of the literary passage*
- *include details which support that explanation*
- *analyze with less clarity or precision the means by which that effect is achieved*
- *concentrate on only one of the author's stylistic techniques*

Score 5 – 4

For essays that...

- *are adequately written*
- *do not necessarily demonstrate stylistic maturity*
- *do not necessarily demonstrate confident control over the elements of composition*
- *display an understanding of the passage, but treat it only in generalities*
- *inadequately explain the passage's effects*
- *inadequately analyze the techniques by which those effects are achieved*
- *may simply cite stylistic techniques*
- *concentrate on an inappropriate aspect of the passage*
- *show a lack of the facility of language needed to analyze the details mentioned*

NOTE: If you work at this level, you have achieved comprehension of the material, but you have not moved into higher thinking skills regarding this piece of literature.

Score 3 – 2

For essays that...

- *are poorly written*
- *show consistent errors in diction, spelling, or syntax*
- *provide little explanation of the effects of the passage*
- *produce no explicit analysis of the techniques by which that effect is achieved*
- *may use the passage merely as a springboard for an essay on a general topic*

NOTE: If you work at this level, you do not comprehend the piece assigned and have not yet begun to work cognitively with this piece of literature.

Score 1

For essays that...

- *are poorly written*
- *contain no analysis of the passage*

Appendix B

Essay Evaluation Criteria

	CONTENT		LANGUAGE
10 - 9	Writing is focused on the topic & organized to show a logical progression of ideas which are fully developed with substantial, specific & relevant support [citations, examples etc.] reflecting good synthesis of appropriate sources. Includes accurate referencing & a full bibliography.	5	Uses a good range of sentence structures and appropriate vocabulary. Only minor errors. Appropriate register.
8 - 7	Writing is focused on the topic & organized to show a logical progression of ideas reflecting some synthesis of appropriate sources. Sometimes ideas are not fully developed and / or lack adequate support. Includes accurate referencing & a full bibliography.	4	Uses an adequate range of sentence structures and mostly appropriate vocabulary. Errors do not obscure meaning. Appropriate register.
6 - 5	Writing generally focuses on the topic, but does not always reflect a logical progression of ideas and / or includes some irrelevant information or repetition. Ideas are often not fully developed and / or lack adequate support. Sources not always used appropriately or effectively. Minor errors / omissions in referencing & bibliography	3	Uses an adequate range of sentence structures and mostly appropriate vocabulary, but errors sometimes obscure meaning OR: Although meaning is clear, range of sentence structures and vocabulary is limited and too basic for the task
4 - 3	Writing not focused on the topic and includes a lot of irrelevant information or repetition. Lacks adequate organisation and often does not reflect a logical progression of ideas. Sources often used inappropriately. Ideas are often not developed and / or not supported. Errors / omissions in referencing & bibliography	2	Range of sentence structures is inadequate and vocabulary is often inappropriate. Meaning is sometimes unclear
2 – 1	Writing only slightly related to the topic. Poor organisation lacking logical progression and focus. Little or no attempt to use sources. Little or no attempt to develop and support ideas. Errors / omissions in referencing & bibliography.	1	Range & appropriacy of sentence structures and vocabulary is inadequate. Meaning is often unclear. OR: Evidence that parts of the writing are plagiarized or not the student's own work

0	-Totally unrelated to topic -Insufficient writing to determine whether student was attempting to address the topic -Copy of a published work / another students' work -Evidence that most of the writing is plagiarized or not the student's own work		-Incomprehensible -Insufficient writing to evaluate -Copy of a published work / another students' work -Evidence that most of the writing is plagiarized or ---not the student's own work

USE OF FEEDBACK		**PRESENTATION**	
3	Student has put maximum effort into the task and made full use of teacher's feedback	**2**	Well presented. Word processed or typed with cover page showing the title of the essay, who it is submitted by, who it is submitted to, student's course & section & date of submission. Checked for spelling & typing errors.
2	Student has put adequate effort into the task and made some use of teacher's feedback	**1**	Word processed or typed with cover page which may lack some of the details above. Not checked for spelling & typing errors.
1	Student has put little effort into the task and made little use of teacher's feedback	**0**	- No cover page. Many layout & spelling errors - Copy of a published work / another students' work
0	- Student has made no attempt to use teacher's feedback - Student did not submit a draft for feedback - Teacher did not give feedback because the draft was submitted after a deadline		

Appendix C

Writing Banded Criteria

Band	0	1	2	3
CONTENT	No evidence of ability to perform the task	-Task generally performed poorly -Poor description of topic with poor examples	-Task performed Somewhat competently -somewhat description of topic with few examples	-Task performed competently -Relevant and necessary description of topic with various examples
PARAGRAPH ORGANIZATION (Coherence and Cohesion)	-No apparent organization of content -sentences are not related to each other -comprehension is totally difficult -Very little/no command of connectors	-Very little organization of content (problems in the unity of text) - Sentences are inadequately divided - Some difficulties in comprehension - Some problems in the use of connectors	-Effective logical organization of ideas in evidence (unity of text) - Intelligible and comprehensible to read -Effective and satisfactory use of connectors	
LANGUAGE	-Number and type of errors make comprehension frequently and totally impossible	-Frequent language errors, sometimes causing comprehension problems	Very few language errors, rarely preventing comprehension	
VOCABULARY	Inadequate vocabulary even for the basic parts	-Limited vocabulary] frequent lexical inadequacies. -Excessive repetition	-Active vocabulary almost no inadequacies or inaccuracies in vocabulary	
MECHANICAL ACCURACY	Frequent mechanical (punctuation, capitalization, spelling) errors causing incomprehension	No mechanical errors (punctuation, capitalization, spelling)		

Appendix D

Quiz

Name…………………………………………………………………………………….

Number…………………………………………………………………………………

1- In your own words define the term 'essay'?

……
……
……
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……

2- What are the three main parts of an essay? Explain each of them.

1……….
………
………
2……….
………
………
3……….
………
………

3- Define 'thesis statement'?

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……

Appendix E

Code Correction Criteria

WW	Wrong word	*As our plane flew on the mountains we saw snow.*
WT	Wrong time	*As our plane flew over the mountains we see snow.*
WF	Wrong form	*As our plane flew over the mountains we was seeing snow.*
WO	Wrong order	*As our plane over the mountain flew we saw snow.*
SP	Spelling	*As our plane flue over the mountains we saw snow.*
P	Punctuation	*As our plane flew over the mountains; we saw snow.*
X	Extra word	*As our plane flew over to the mountains we saw snow.*
M	Missing word	*As our plane flew over the mountains saw snow.*
R	Register	*As our plane flew over the mountains we observed snow.*
?	Not clear	*As our plane flew over the mountains we saw snow.*
!	Silly mistake!	*As our plane flew over the mountains we seed snow.*
RW	Try re-writing	*Our vehicle flies, we snow find, over mountains you saw it.*

Appendix F

Syllabus

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Department of English Language Teaching
SYLLABUS
2012-2013 Spring Semester

Course Code	Course Name	Classroom	Weekly Course Hours			Credits	ECTS	Weekly Time Schedule
ELT 479	Advanced Composition	R8	**T**	**A**	**L**	2	5	Monday 13:00-15:00
Prerequisite: ELT 479 Advanced Composition			3	0	0			

Language of instruction: English	Course Type: Elective	Year: Fourth Year		Semester: 2

Learning Outcomes	After the completion of this course, the student will be able to ▶distinguish between types of essays ▶write the given essays (thesis statement/topic sentence/supporting sentences/introduction/body/conclusion) ▶distinguish different transition and linking words ▶assess and comment on a writing according to the code assessment criteria contributed ▶express own ideas academically ▶give constructive feedback ▶use the internet to make comments and do research
Course Description	Introduction to different strategies to essay writing with traditional classroom and blended learning
Course Objectives	The students are expected to conceive, compose and polish academic essays, assess essays and use the internet

Textbooks and/or References		1	Lecturer's own notes (facebook/daily mail/youtube/e-mail)
		2	(Oshima &Hogue 1991-1999)3rd adition Writing Academic English
		3	
		4	
		5	

Course Content	Essay types, error correction (direct/indirect/code), assessment, transition and linking words, writing

Methods and Techniques Used in the Course	Lecture, Individual and Pair Work

WEEKLY OUTLINE

Week	Date	Activities	Notes	Reference
1	11 Feb - 15 Feb	Chapter 8 Writing an Essay		2
2	18 Feb - 22 Feb	Chapter 8 Writing an Essay; Essay types/ How to give constructive feedback	Direct/ indirect/Coded WCF	2
3	25 Feb - 01 Mar	A Persuasive essay (intro)	Quiz / portfolio work	1
4	04 Mar - 08 Mar	A Persuasıve essay		1
5	11 Mar - 15 Mar	A Persuasive essay/		1
6	18 Mar - 22 Mar	A persuasıve essay		1
7	25 Mar - 29 Mar	An Advantage and disadvantage essay		1
8	01 Apr - 05 Apr	An advantage and disadvantage essay		1
9	08 Apr - 12 Apr	Mid-term week		
10	15 Apr - 19 Apr	An Argumentative essay	On-line work	1
11	22 Apr - 26 Apr	An argumentative essay		1
12	29 Apr- 02 May	An argumentative essay		
13	06 May - 10 May	A compare and contrast essay		1
14	13 May - 17 May	A compare and contrast essay		1
15	20 May - 24 May	A compare and contrast essay		1

Attendance: Minimum 70 %

Assessment Breakdown:			Type	Date	%	Reference
		1	Participation and Attendance	02-06/2013	15	
		2	On going process assessment: portfolio/homework	02-03/2013	35	
		3	Quiz	25/02/2013	10	
		4	Online work	03-06/2013	25	
		5	Final examination	03-13/06/2013	15	

Appendix G

Links and Models

Links of Tasks

1. Sometimes I wish I'd never won: Lottery winning bus driver plans new life in Cyprus after claiming 38 million pounds syndicate win left him feuding with friends'; published 21 April 2013: http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2312512/Lottery-winning-Corby-bus-driver-John-Noakes-plans-new-life-Cyprus-win-left-feuding-friends.html

2. Fiddler on the roof: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBHZFYpQ6nc

3. Life before technology: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4jz9rkhYGo

Models of Essays

- **Persuasive essay**:
  - school uniform should not be required

    http://www.timeforkids.com/files/homework_helper/aplus_papers/PersuasiveSampler.pdf
  - Bringing babies back to Japan

    http://www.cambridge.org/other_files/downloads/esl/waw/089110_WritersAtWork_CH04.pdf p. 90-91-92

- Why abortions should not be tolerated

http://academichelp.net/samples/essays/persuasive/abortion.html

- **An advantage and disadvantage essay:**

- The advantages and disadvantages of living in the country

https://www.google.com.tr/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2
&ved=0CCwQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fe-
edu.nbu.bg%2Ffile.php%2F8439%2FOOOK_410_Group_2%2FPORTFOLI
O_Essays_on_Advantages_and_Disadvantages_CLASS.doc&ei=gBoSU5_i
A-OZyAP9yYHgDw&usg=AFQjCNGB-
ztNcSBHs1un1bZpw5PSviblAw&sig2=RHrjmVWvzvCcKLbWc3E05w

- The advantages and disadvantages of living in an apartment

http://ielts.studyhorror.com/writings/people-prefer-live-house-advantages-
apartment/100#IELTS-Writing-Sample

- The advantages and disadvantages of internet

   http://normalessaysinenglish.blogspot.com/2013/04/advantages-and-
   disadvantages-of-internet.html

- Advantages and disadvantages of living in a foreign country

   http://edu.txtshr.com/docs/index-1747.html

Appendix H

Final Examination

Department of English Language Teaching

Advanced Composition

Name: ....   **Number:**

....

Surname: ....

Duration: 75 minutes

A. Choose <u>one</u> of the following and write an essay according to <u>one</u> of the topics presented:

1. An Advantage and Disadvantage essay :

   - living away from your parents
   - getting married at a young age
   - of homework

2. A Compare and Contrast essay:

   - 2 different countries / cities
   - your current lifestyle and the past
   - being a celebrity or a standard citizen

Compare and Contrast Strategy

Block Arrangement (four paragraphs)	
I.	Introduction in which you state your purpose which is to discuss the differences between vacationing in the mountains or at the beach
II.	Mountain A. Climate B. Types of Activities C. Location
III.	Beach A. Climate B. Types of Activities C. Location
IV.	Conclusion

Point-by-Point or Alternating Arrangement (five paragraphs)	
I.	Introduction in which you state your purpose which is to discuss differences betw vacationing in the mountains or at the beach
II.	First difference between mountains and beaches is climate A. Mountains B. Beach
III.	Second difference between mountains and beaches are types of activities

	A. Mountains
	B. Beach
IV.	Third difference between mountains and beaches is the location
	A. Mountains
	B. Beach
V.	Conclusion

Models of the Persuasive and Advantages and Disadvantages Essays

Model 1

Read the sample essay

You are going to read an essay on shrinking families in Japan. As you read the essay,

ask yourself what the writer's main point is and whether the writer has persuaded

you to adopt her point of view. Then share your ideas with a partner.

Bringing Babies Back to Japan

Japanese society is facing its most serious threat in recent years. Japan's birthrate

keeps falling steadily. If this continues, the population will get smaller and smaller.

While the number of babies is decreasing, the average Japanese life span is

increasing. It is one of the longest in the world. This is a national catastrophe because

there are fewer working-age people who pay into the social security system, and

there will eventually be too few workers. The Japanese can no longer delay

addressing the issue of its shrinking population. The only way to grow the population

is by bringing babies back to Japan. Japan's entire social structure, including

families, businesses, and the government, must work together to encourage families

to have babies.

In the past, many people thought raising children to be the only goal and

responsibility of women. Now, Japanese women no longer seem interested solely in

raising children, and society needs to accept this. Japanese women want to work,

either for money or for their own interests. In fact, like many women in the world

today, they would like to both work and raise children. But Japanese society is

against this. Some companies, for example, even tell women to quit working when they get married or have children. As a result, Japanese women are having fewer children or no children at all. Society should help set up ways for them both to work and to have children.

One major force in society that has the power to enable women both to work and to raise children is Japanese companies. Usually, people don't think of a company as a force in shaping families, but this attitude should be reconsidered. Japanese companies need to recognize their role in shaping families and think more about supporting them. First, they should offer affordable child care, and the government should help them. This would allow women to have children and still have a good career. According to my pen pal in Norway, for example, Norway has a good system of child care, where working mothers can even visit their children at lunchtime. Furthermore, in Norway, you can see a high rate of working women and a stable birthrate. The Norwegian child-care system is an appropriate example for Japan to follow.

Even though the raising of children is not an easy job or a traditional job for Japanese men, we must accept that it is partly men's work, too. It is essential that Japanese fathers help more in the home. After all, the children are theirs, too. Also, the Japanese government and companies should set up a better system of parental leave so that both parents can care for their families. My brother-in-law, for example, didn't take his parental leave because he thought it would hurt his career. I have heard many similar stories. It is important that fathers be able to take parental leave without threatening their jobs. In Norway, for instance, men can and dotake paternity

leave without concern for their careers. Perhaps Japanese companies should consider making paternity leave a requirement so that there could be no question about its impact on one's career. Paternity leave is important because it helps families to understand the father's role sooner, when babies are young.

Some Japanese couples think that parenting is too expensive. It is a pity that couples have to abandon having children for economic reasons. It is the government's job to help make child raising more affordable. Many countries' governments are using different ways to help parents financially. These may include tax breaks or one-time payments to new parents. While it is true that many people don't want to pay higher taxes to support other people's children, producing the next generation of Japan is a question of our nation's existence. Everyone, therefore, must help pay.

Increasing the birthrate is a key defense against the shrinking of Japanese society. There needs to be a balance between raising children and working. In order to find this balance, all members of Japanese society should participate in raising and paying for the cost of children. In the long run, a vibrant young population helps everyone, including companies, families, and taxpayers, in Japanese society. We had better take matters seriously for a bright Japanese future. Imagine your own old age, without any children.

What would happen?

Model 2

School Uniforms Should Not Be Required

Should school uniforms be required? Some parents and _ educators say that uniforms help students focus on academics _ instead of fashion. Others believe that kids

should have the _ freedom to choose what they wear to school. After considering both sides of the issue, I strongly believe that uniforms should not be required in school.

Some parents and teachers think that letting kids wear what they want is a recipe for trouble. Without uniforms, they say, kids will focus on clothes instead of schoolwork. There will be pressure to buy expensive clothes, which many families cannot afford. For these reasons, some people insist that uniforms are necessary.

I disagree. There will always be distractions. Kids should be encouraged and trusted to focus on their schoolwork, or they will never learn to be responsible. Uniforms are not free. If families are spending money, they should be able to choose the clothes they buy. Also, uniforms interfere with self-expression. Requiring uniforms sends a message that all kids are the same. If schools want kids to be themselves, they should not force all students to dress alike.

For all of these reasons, school uniforms should not be required. If teachers and principals want to have a say about students' clothes, they should consider a school dress code. That way, kids would have an opportunity to choose what to wear while adults would have an opportunity to set limits.

Model 3

Why Abortions Should Not Be Tolerated

We live in an epoch of complex problems. The ideas of tolerance and human rights protection, based on the idea that every human being is a master of their life, have contributed into letting people live as they want and do what they will – in reasonable measures. In particular, tolerance has seemingly resolved or smoothened

a number of moral dilemmas that humanity faced during the past centuries. However, there still exists several extremely important and disputable questions, such as euthanasia, implanted ID chips, biometric identification, and abortion. Abortion is, perhaps, one of the oldest, and one of the most difficult issues to sort out among them; while proponents of abortion call for its acceptance, its opponents believe that it is immoral and inexcusable. And though many human rights protectors claim that every woman can do whatever she sees as expedient, I am strongly convinced that abortions can not be tolerated, as they harm mothers and their innocent children.

Any reasonable and sound person would be outraged and anxious if someone offered to grant mothers a right to kill their babies immediately after birth. This would be called inhumane and immoral – it would be a crime. However, this is what proponents of abortions actually do by standing for etching of the embryo before birth. They ignore the fact that the baby is already a human being, from the very first days after conceiving. According to W. L. Saunders, "Every human being begins as a single-cell zygote, grows through the embryonic stage, then the fetal stage, is born and develops through infancy, through childhood, and through adulthood, until death. Each human being is genetically the same human being at every stage, despite changes in his or her appearance" (Saunders). In other words, abortion is still infanticide, a killing of a living human being, despite the fact that the child is still in the womb.

Moreover, abortion does not pass without a trace in terms of women's health. Though there exist chemical preparations that allow the stopping of pregnancy without surgery, they are as dangerous as physical intervention. According to the recent research, abortions cause a significant risk of ectopic pregnancy, not to

mention other diseases, such as breast cancer and infertility. "Statistics show a 30% increased risk of ectopic pregnancy after one abortion and a 160% increased risk of ectopic pregnancy after two or more abortions. There has been a threefold increase in ectopic pregnancies in the U.S. since abortion was legalized. In 1970, the incidence was 4.8 per 1,000 live births. By 1980 it was 14.5 per 1,000 births" (AF).

Another argument is that a woman who has decided to get rid of the embryo is about to kill herself as well. Though an abortion may seem to be an option for underage mothers, or victims of rape, etching the baby does not free a woman, or calm her down. According to statistics, women who had abortions tend to commit suicides much more often than those who chose to give birth to a baby: 28% of women who committed an abortion attempted suicides (AfterAbortion). Among other problems are alcohol and drug abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder, sexual dysfunction, and many other issues.

Though abortions are often seen as an option for women who, due to various circumstances, do not want to give birth to a baby, it is perhaps the worst choice. No matter how a child looks like in a womb, no matter how underdeveloped its consciousness and nervous system is, it is still a human being that has a right to live. Besides, abortions cause severe physiological and psychological damage to canceled mothers, such as ectopic pregnancy, terminal diseases, depression and suicidal behavior, alcohol and drug abuse.

Model 1

Advantages and Disadvantages of Internet

Ten years ago, the Internet was practically unheard of by most people. Today, the Internet is one of the most powerful tools throughout the world. The Internet is a collection of various services and resources. The Internet's main components are E-mail and the World Wide Web. Actually, there's a lot more to the Internet than E-mail, search engines, celebrity web sites, up-to-the-second sports scores, and chat rooms full of discussions. The Net also ranks as one of today's best business tools. Almost all households contain the Internet; however, before people connect to the Internet, they need to be aware of its disadvantages and advantages.

Many people fear the Internet because of its disadvantages. They claim to not use the Internet because they are afraid of the possible consequences or are simply not interested. People who have yet connected to the Internet claim they are not missing anything. Today's technological society must realize that it is up to them to protect themselves on the Internet.

Children using the Internet have become a big concern. Most parents do not realize the dangers involved when their children connect to the Internet. When children are online, they can easily be lured into something dangerous. For example, children may receive pornography online by mistake; therefore, causing concern among parents everywhere. Whether surfing the Web, reading newsgroups, or using email, children can be exposed to extremely inappropriate material. To keep children safe, parents and teachers must be aware of the dangers. They must actively guide and guard their children online. There are a number of tools available today that may

help keep the Internet environment safer for children.

Musicians are also concerned with disadvantages to the Net such as, accessibility and freedom. They are upset because the Internet provides their music online at no charge to consumers. File-sharing services, such as Napster, provide copyrighted songs to all Internet users. The main concern is the music is free! Musicians feel they are not getting paid for their work. Because of Napster, it is almost impossible to close down all file-sharing services because there are too many of them to count.

Another major disadvantage of the Internet is privacy. Electronic messages sent over the Internet can be easily tracked, revealing who is talking to whom and what they are talking about. As people surf the Internet, they are constantly giving information to web sites. People should become aware that the collection, selling, or sharing of the information they provide online increases the chances that their information will fall into the wrong hands. When giving personal information on the Internet, people should make sure the Web site is protected with a recognizable security symbol. On the other hand, this does not mean they are fully protected because anyone may obtain a user's information. In other words, the most common Internet crimes are frauds.

Today, not only humans getting viruses, but computers are also. Computers are mainly getting these viruses from the Internet, yet viruses may also be transferred through floppy disks. However, people should mainly be concerned about receiving viruses from the Internet. Some of these dangerous viruses destroy the computer's entire hard drive, meaning that the user can no longer access the computer. Virus protection is highly recommended.

Despite all of the terrible disadvantages of the Internet, there are numerous advantages. In fact, the advantages weigh out the disadvantages. The most common thing the Internet is used for is research. Children and students are among the top people who use the Internet for research. Nowadays, it is almost required that students use the Internet for research. The Internet has become one of the biggest sources for research. Almost everyday, research on medical issues becomes easier to locate. Web sites have become available for people to research diseases and talk to doctors online at sites such as, America's Doctor.

Entertainment is another popular reason why many people surf the Internet. Downloading games, going into chat rooms or just surfing the Web are some of the uses people have discovered. There are numerous games that may be downloaded from the Internet at no charge. Chat rooms are popular because users can meet new and interesting people. In fact, the Internet has been used by people to find life long partners. When people surf the Web, there are numerous things that can be found. Music, hobbies, news and more can be found on the Internet.

Another popular thing to do on the Internet is to check out the news. Almost all local news can be obtained through the Internet. Up to date sports scores are probably the most popular looked at news. Sports scores are updated on the Internet as soon as the game ends. Weather is also a popular source to look up on the Internet. Using the Internet to get the weather allows people to view weather all over the world. Live radar all over the country and local forecasts are just to name a few of the things that may be obtained for weather information on the Internet.

Shopping online has also become a huge success and is considered a great advantage of the Internet. No matter what people are shopping for, it can be found on

the Internet. People do not even have to leave their homes. A few companies have collected millions of dollars using the Internet for selling. Clothing is probably one of the most bought items online. Almost every major clothing store has its on Web site. In fact, In US, people can even go grocery shopping online using such sites as Priceline.com. Just one click of the mouse on the items they want to purchase and the items are delivered to their front door. Unfortunately, this kind of service is not yet available in Malaysia for the time being. Groceries and clothing are only a few of the items that may be bought on the Internet.

In conclusion, today's society is in the middle of a technological boom. People can either choose to take advantage of this era, or simply let it pass them by. The Internet is a very powerful tool. It has many advantages; however, people need to be extremely aware of the disadvantages as well.

Model 2

ADVANTAGES and DISADVANTAGES of LIVING in a FOREIGN COUNTRY

As we know, today there are about six billion people in the world. All of them live in different countries and have special cultures. Some countries have become very sophisticated, while others haven't yet been developed well. For this reason, some people want to go to well-developed foreign countries, especially to the U.S.A. People want to go to well-developed countries to live more comfortably. They also strongly believe that if they go there, they will earn more money. Living in a foreign country has many advantages, but it also has some disadvantages. Therefore, before people come to a decision about going to a foreign country, they should consider the

advantages and disadvantages of living in a foreign country.

One of the main advantages of living in a foreign country is that people have better economic conditions. For example, they may get a good job and a high salary so they can buy what they want and they may live how they desire. In addition, they may benefit from well-developed education and health systems. Moreover, one is given the chance to learn and become fluent in another language through everyday use. Furthermore, one can participate in lots of social activities. Thus, people can improve their abilities. Finally, they become more independent by having to deal with difficult situations on their own.

On the other hand, it may be difficult for people to adapt to their new surroundings. If they live alone, they miss their families and countries. Sometimes they may feel isolated, frustrated, and lonely. In addition, if someone can't speak the language yet, he or she may face communication problems. What is more, there is racial discrimination in some countries. Foreigners aren't easily accepted in these places. It is possible that racist people may hurt them.

To sum up, even though living in a strange place may be hard at first, in time one can adjust to it. In my opinion, if a person has an opportunity to go to a well-developed foreign country, he or she should benefit from this opportunity for his or her future. (*TURAN KOÇAK* C/4 8/ 4/ 2003)

Model 3

Advantages and disadvantages of living in an Apartment

There are several reasons why people choose to move into a house or apartment.

Generally, while most people seems to prefer living in houses apartments offer some practical advantages. Personally, I prefer living in an apartment at this stage of my life but at some time in the future I want to move in a house of my own.

There are clear benefits of living in a house in terms of privacy and safety and having more room but it may also involve more costs and effort. Usually, houses are more spacious than apartments. They may even come with a private yard or garden or extra space for hobbies. Another important aspect of having your own building is privacy and safety. For families it can be particular important to have a safe playground for their children. Moreover, neighbours life in some distance and therefore conflicts with them are less likely compared to living wall-to-wall in apartments. However, there are also downsides to staying in your own house. Not only are the costs usual higher but the residents are usually responsible for all repairs and maintenance. One must expect to spend more time working in the garden or repainting the walls of a house. Such responsibilities are usually shared among the residents when living in an apartment building.

In contrast, apartment are more cost effective and require less commitment by the inhabitants. The principal benefit of dividing a house in several units is cost savings as some facilities and common costs are shared are fewer expenses for each resident. Certainly, this units have less space in most cases. I would therefore argue that apartments are more adequate housing in places where space is scare, such as large cities. Moreover, living in an apartment means less commitment and more flexibility. Flats are more often rented instead of sold. Hence, it can be easier to simply move if one's requirements of space changes. also there are less duties in terms of maintenance and administration compare to living in a house.

All things considered, the best type of housing depends on the circumstances and

personal preferences. In a large city or for young people without a family apartments

can be a more cost effective and convenient solution. In the countryside houses tend

to be more affordable. They are also more suitable for the space and safety

requirements of a family or a person working from home.

Appendix K

Weekly Procedures Followed in Class

Beginning of Course

The first two weeks of the course was spent on the concept of an essay. The main course material followed for these weeks was Writing Academic English, Edition 3 (Oshima & Hogue, 1999). Students were taught about writing an introductory paragraph involving a thesis statement, body of the essay, topic sentences and supporting sentences as well as transitions and linking words, and finally the conclusion paragraph of the essay. The initial writing exercises included writing sentences using lists of transitions and linking words given to the students by the lecturer. Then, students were guided to build their sentences into paragraphs and then into a coherent essay. All of the mentioned were placed into the student's portfolios to reread or revise if necessary in the future. For example, students would be able to look back and check the linking words to see if they have used them appropriately. After this process, a quiz was administered to check the understanding of the term 'essay' (See Appendix D).

In addition to the above, students were trained on how to give written corrective feedback (WCF) to their peers according to the principles of direct, indirect and coded WCF mentioned in the Methodology chapter. Students were also trained how to give constructive feedback (positive and negative) to a written piece of work. Models of essays from previous students were given for students to work on.

Portfolio work

The portfolio work commenced in the third week of the course. All essay types brought to class by the students were written on the board. Then, the essay types that were to be covered during the term were identified by circling them. These choices were made considering the fact that the participants in the study were pre-service teachers. In other words, the researcher chose the essay types that she believed to be potentially the most useful for this group of participants. Students also gave their opinions about the choice of essay types, which were taken into consideration by the lecturer. The lecturer gave short oral descriptions for each essay type and students chose the most useful and efficient one for themselves. Two of the essays they had selected were already on the teacher's syllabus therefore, two more were chosen.

Students were given the code correction criteria printed from the departmental website (See Appendix E). Three assessment criteria, which were direct, indirect and code correction (See Feedback & Correction Section), were explained to the students. These three written corrective feedback (WCF) types were chosen in order to familiarize students with different types of WCF for their future teaching and for them to be able to differentiate between the WCF types, as they will be making comments on related to them in their interview.

The lecturer brought models of persuasive essays and asked students to differentiate between them (see Appendix G & J). Students analysed the sample essays in small groups of three, shared their ideas and commented on each essay. Three model persuasive essays were given to each student (see Appendix G & J). Students looked at each essay in terms of paragraph layout, language (words used; formal/informal), the usage of linking and transition words, cohesion and clearness. Students also identified what each essay has in common in terms of layout and

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organization and to whom the audience is. Collaboratively, topics for such an essay were written on the board. Students had task given with the essay to complete (See Appendix J). The students and the teacher spoke about what could be written in a persuasive essay. Students were then asked to choose one of the topics and write the introductory paragraph for their persuasive essay. The introductory paragraphs were orally presented in class and collaborative feedback was given to each student individually. For example, if the introductory paragraph did not go from general statements to the specific thesis statement, all students and the lecturer would comment and help the student in question to construct the introductory paragraph. After the introduction was written, the lecturer chose another topic and wrote on the board the advantages and disadvantages of this topic. This was done spontaneously in order to clarify what was needed for the next step of the essay. Three advantages and three disadvantages were written on the board. The lecturer asked students to do the same for their topics. Once this was finalized the lecturer told the students to choose a side, i.e. either advantage or disadvantage according to what was written on the board. Then, the students were told to support the topics regarding each of the mentioned points for the side they had chosen. Students were divided into two, those who had chosen the advantage side and those who had chosen the disadvantage side. Students of each side, i.e. advantage or disadvantage, debated on their choice and the points in regards to their choice. The lecturer monitored both groups (advantage group and disadvantage group). For example, the topic 'getting married at a young age'- three advantages and three disadvantages were written on the board. Those who approved of marriage at a young age and those who disapproved were divided into two groups. Students elaborated on the example advantages and disadvantages written on the board and a debate was carried out between the two groups in class.

The following will illustrate the process that the students had followed:

Notice the essay structure

Organization Of Persuasive Essays

A persuasive essay is like an imaginary dialogue between a reader and the writer. The writer uses arguments to try to convince the reader to think something or to take a certain action. But the writer also has to imagine how the reader will argue against his or her arguments, and answer those objections.

Body paragraphs in persuasive essays, therefore, often have a unique organization. First the writer expresses a reader's likely response (a counterargument) to the argument that will follow. Then the writer presents the argument and its support. By addressing a reader's likely response first, the writer strengthens his position.

The organization of such a body paragraph looks like this:

counterargument

argument

support

Practice

Answer these questions about "Bringing Babies Back to Japan." Then discuss your answers with your classmates.

1 What is the thesis statement? Underline it twice.

2 This essay has four body paragraphs. Underline the topic sentence in each one.

3 Look at the following lists. They show the four main arguments and the four counterarguments in the essay. Draw lines to match the counterarguments with the arguments.

Counter arguments	Arguments
Looking after children is hard work, and most Japanese men don't have experience with it.	Japanese companies need to make it easy for working parents to keep their jobs and have children, too.
Nobody wants to pay for another person's children.	Women should be able to have a career and to raise children.
Many people consider child raising the work of women.	Men must also participate in raising children.
It is not generally considered a company's job to help raise families.	Producing Japan's next generation is so important that the nation should offer attractive financial incentive for this work.

4 Find where the four arguments and counterarguments appear in the essay. Notice that in one paragraph the counterargument does not come at the beginning of the paragraph. Which paragraph is it?

5 Which of the following functions does the conclusion serve? Check (✔) as many as

apply.

_____It summarizes the arguments.

_____It recommends a course of action.

_____It gives a final comment on the topic.

6 If you were writing on this topic, what other arguments would you use to support

the writer's thesis?

Select a topic

Choosing a Topic

When you select a topic for a persuasive essay, choose one that is controversial. It should not be a topic about which most people have the same opinion. You should also choose a topic that you have a strong opinion about. It should be a topic that you have some personal connection to and that you know something about.

Here are some good questions to ask yourself as you choose your topic:

1 Is this really a controversial topic that people will have different opinions

about?

2 Do I have a strong opinion about this topic?

3 Do I have enough knowledge about this topic?

4 Do I have a personal connection to this topic?

5 Will my readers be interested in this topic?

Practice

The writer of "Bringing Babies Back to Japan" brainstormed about her topic before she chose it for her essay. Read her brainstorm notes below. They show why this is a

good topic for this writer because the content of each underlined part shows that she could have answered "yes" to the five questions in the *Choosing a Topic* box. Discuss with a partner how each underlined part matches up with one of the questions in the box.

My sister wants to have two kids. She's an architect and she wants to keep her paid job. Child care is so expensive, they can't afford it. Lots of couples can't afford it. It makes me angry. My sister is 37 and still has no children. This is sad because she really wants kids. Her husband can't help because of his company's rules. My friends and their families have the same problem. My pen pal in Norway says it's easier there. They have great ideas. Companies offer affordable daycare. Government gives tax incentives there. Men take leave to help raise children.

Japanese culture doesn't train men to help with raising children. It's a huge problem. I know not everyone will agree with me, but everybody needs to work together to solve this problem. Someday I want to have children, but I don't want to have to give up my career to do it. I'm not the only one. This affects everybody.

Your turn

Choose a topic from the list below or use one of your own ideas. Ask yourself the questions in the box *Choosing a Topic* above.

1 The adoption of children from a foreign country

2 Cell phone manners or safety

3 Requirements for getting into a university

4 Global warming

5 Downloading music or movies without paying

6 School uniforms

7 Other topic:_____

E Brainstorm arguments

Follow these steps to find arguments to support your topic.

1 Brainstorm about your topic using listing or free writing.

2 Read through your brainstorming notes and circle any arguments that you can use

to support your topic.

3 Write down three arguments that you might use in your essay.

F Discuss your ideas with others

With a partner or in a small group, follow these steps to share your topic and your

main arguments.

1 Explain why you chose your topic.

2 Ask your classmates if the topic is interesting to them.

3 Explain to your classmates your main arguments. Ask them which arguments they

think are the most persuasive.

4 Ask what other arguments they can think of to support your thesis.

5 Ask what arguments they can think of that oppose your thesis.

6 Choose three or four arguments to focus on in your essay. Write them down.

A Compose the thesis statement

Persuasive Essay Thesis Statement

An effective thesis statement for a persuasive essay contains the following:

• the topic

• the writer's opinion about the topic

• a course of action, either implied or stated

• the reason the course of action is necessary

In each pair of sentences, decide which sentence is not an effective thesis statement for a persuasive essay and explain why. Then identify the elements that make the other sentence an effective thesis statement.

1 a.Private gun ownership should be legal because it increases the safety of

individual citizens.

b.Private gun ownership is a hot topic of debate among Americans.

2 a.Teachers who grade students strictly inspire their students to perform at a higher

level.

b.Teachers in the United States don't grade as strictly as teachers in my country.

3 a.Recent technological innovations have made battery-operated cars more fuel-efficient.

b.Governments should increase buyers' motivation to purchase battery-operated

cars because of their fuel efficiency.

4 a.To prevent people from taking drugs, we need to first understand why they are

tempted by drugs.

b.People who take drugs are often aware of the dangers of drug use, but they abuse

them anyway.

5 a.Following a traditional Greek diet can help you lose weight and build health.

b.Greeks eat a lot of olives and olive oil, which are high in "good fat."

6 a.High schools should help students find part-time jobs in their field of interest, both to help them learn the employment process and to gain work experience.

b.High schools don't support students' career building enough.

Your turn

Write the thesis statement for your essay.

Plan the introduction

CATCHY HOOKS

Remember that you should begin an essay with something that catches your reader's interest – a hook. Look at three other ways to help you get ideas for your hook.

• Appeal to emotions or find multiple meanings in key words in your title or thesis.

Babies are so sweet and adorable and lovely. But what if women stopped wanting them?

• Put forward a common stereotype that you might challenge in your essay.

All women want to do is to stay home and bring up babies. Right? Wrong!

• Refer to a song, a common saying, or proverb that relates to your topic.

A famous Japanese poem compares the treasure of children to silver, gold, and jewels. Butmany Japanese women are saying, "No children for me!"

Your turn

Write down three or four possible hooks for your introduction. Show them to a partner. Have your partner tell you which hook might work best for your topic.

Organize your arguments

IDENTIFYING THE STRONGEST ARGUMENTS

The main ideas in a persuasive essay should be ordered to maximize their persuasiveness. It is often a good idea to put your strongest argument at the end. That way your reader considers it last and may finish your essay feeling persuaded.

Identifying your strongest argument often requires thinking and rethinking the possibilities. Consider which arguments are most persuasive, and also which ones you can most easily support with explanations, examples, and facts.

In week four, the body paragraphs for the persuasive essays were orally presented in class and collaborative feedback was given. Students made necessary changes accordingly in class. Then in class, students were asked to write the conclusion part of the essay. During the writing of the conclusion part, students asked questions regarding the structure of the conclusion and necessary feedback was given orally by a peer or the lecturer. The lecturer clarified certain aspects on the board i.e. showing the students which transition word is used for a certain paragraph.

In week five, for the completed essay drafts, students were randomly asked to have their paper checked according to the direct assessment criteria. Each student chose a peer to give feedback for his/her work. Peers directly changed grammar, spelling and punctuation, layout and paragraph settings where necessary on their peers' papers. In addition to this, comments in terms of thesis statements, topic sentences, usage of transition and linking words and supporting sentences were given and also clarified on the board.

The comments and WCF that were made by the specific peer were confirmed by the lecturer where needed. Some students were not sure whether they had changed something correctly or gave efficient feedback. Other students commented on their

peer's WCF. For example, when giving WCF some students changed certain things even though they were correct. Thus, some students wanted clarification why something was changed and for what reason.

In week six the completed second drafts were collaboratively focused on. Students and the lecturer commented and gave feedback to each student's essay orally. Some of the amendments made were written on the board and retaught e.g. a specific grammar point which all students had trouble with. Students were then asked to write the final draft of their essays during the class hours. The portfolios were collected by the lecturer for assessment and the departmental correction codes were used as the criteria (see Appendix E).

In week seven, activities related to the next essay type were carried out. The lecturer gave the topic 'shopping on the internet' and asked students to write down as many advantages and disadvantages as possible in groups of three. Here, the lecturer was carrying out the first steps of the 'Process Genre Approach' (Badger & White, 2000). Each group wrote on the board three advantages and three disadvantages. Collaboratively debates and discussions concerning the topic were carried out. For example, a group wrote as one of the advantages 'it isn't cheaper', other groups would comment and discuss opposing this sentence. Then, in groups, the students were asked to support the advantages and disadvantages they had stated in written form. Collaboratively, the introduction and the conclusion parts of the essay were debated and ideas were given for students to develop and incorporate into their essays.

In week eight, students' first drafts were collected and randomly given to different students for direct assessment. These were then collected by the lecturer

and again randomly given to different students (not the essay writer) and collaborative oral adjustments and feedback were given. This second assessment seemed necessary here at the time because not all errors were found and students were still not sure of what to actually look at while assessing. Therefore, general suggestions by the lecturer were given and questions were asked to students to confirm why a certain mistake was considered an error. In addition to this, the lecturer tried to engage students as much as possible in direct WCF and collaborative work (see section Feedback and Correction) for students to be able to differentiate between the WCF types and work type i.e. individual, peer and collaborative. This was also necessary in order to prepare students for the interview questions. Three models of an advantage and disadvantage essay were contributed to students (see Appendix G & J). Students analysed and differentiated between the models, looked at the way the topics were presented, discussions about the organization of paragraphs, linking words and transition words were orally carried out. In addition to this, the language of the models presented and the topics were also discussed about. While students were analysing the models of an advantage and disadvantage essay, collaboratively the following was also completed:

I. Topic Sentences

Exercise 1 Read the following essay about living abroad and fill in the topic sentences given below:

a) One of the main advantages of living in a foreign country is that people can enjoy better financial opportunities.

b) To sum up, even though living in a strange place may be hard at first, in time one can adjust to it.

c) On the other hand, it may be difficult for people to adapt to their new surroundings.

d) As we know, today there are about six billion people in the world.

Advantages and disadvantages of living abroad

1 _____All of them live in different countries and have diverse cultures. Some countries have become well developed, while others haven't as yet. For this reason, some people want to go to well-developed foreign countries to live more comfortably and earn more money. Living in a foreign country has many advantages, but it also has some disadvantages.

2 _____For example, they may get a good job and a high salary so they can buy what they want and have a better lifestyle. For example, they may benefit from well-developed education and health systems. Moreover, one is given the chance to learn and become fluent in another language through everyday use. For instance, people can participate in lots of social activities thus improving their communicative skills. Finally, they become more independent by having to deal with difficult situations on their own.

3. _____If they live alone, they miss their families and countries. Sometimes they may feel isolated, frustrated, and lonely. In addition, if someone can't speak the language yet, he or she may face communication problems.

What is more, there is discrimination in some countries. Foreigners aren't easily accepted in these places.

4. _____In my opinion, if a person has an opportunity to go to a well-developed foreign country, he or she should benefit from this opportunity for his or her future.

Exercise 2   Look at the outline of the essay you have just read. The arguments in the two paragraphs have been messed up. Put them in the right order.

Introduction – people choose where to live; living abroad has advantages and disadvantages

Body

Paragraph I – Advantages

Argument 1 - better financial opportunities;   example – jobs, education and health care

Argument 2 - foreign language problems;   example – difficult to communicate

Argument 3 – discrimination;   example - foreigners not easily accepted

Paragraph II – Disadvantages

Argument 1 – getting used to the new country;   example – living alone

Argument 2 – learning a foreign language;   example – social life;

communication

Argument 3 - becoming independent;   example – coping with difficult situations

Conclusion – Summing up and expressing a personal opinion

Exercise 3   Write down the linking words and phrases used in the sample essay.

II. Supporting statements

The sentences which follow the topic sentence are called supporting statements. They are used to support the topic sentence by giving additional information. There must be a strong link between the topic sentence and the supporting statement.

Exercise 4   Parts of the following text have been removed from the article. As you read the article, choose which extract (1-4) fits each gap.

Virtually no life at all

The Internet was born to almost universal acclaim, but it has a dark side, too.

A

We are in danger of creating a generation of Internet introverts, who can only interact with others when they are sitting behind a computer screen.

B

Parents need to take a positive action to stop the growth of this new social phenomenon.

C

The Internet is an artificial world.

D

Extracts

1) They do everything on-line: they write on-line, they order books and pizzas on-line, they view the world from on-line.

2) It is a world without touch, which ignores years of social evolution. We need to ensure that it is not the only world that our children grow up in. Otherwise, our children may end up preferring it to the real, more loving but more frightening world outside.

3) This concerns the effect on people who spend twelve hours on-line, isolated from other people, from social functions, from the breeze of a spring day, or the touch of someone's hand.

4) They should set limits on the amount of time they allow their children to play on computers. They should find time to spend with their children doing other real activities.

Exercise 5

Look at the following points. Give examples to support the advantages and disadvantages of traveling by bicycle.

e.g. Traveling by bicycle is environmentally friendly because you do not have to use petrol and a bicycle does not produce pollution.

Advantages

Environmentally friendly

Good exercise

Quick in heavy traffic

Disadvantages

Dangerous

Does not protect from weather

Not good for long trips

III. Consolidation

Task 1

Fill in the blanks with one of the following words and phrases. Do not use the same expression twice.

First of all/Firstly/Second/Secondly/Third/Thirdly/Finally

In addition/Moreover/Furthermore/What is more So/As a result/Therefore

However/On the other hand/In contrast In conclusion/To sum up/On the whole

Advantages and Disadvantages of Living in the Country

Living in the country is often the secret dream of certain city-dwellers. ………..(1), in reality it has its advantages and disadvantages.

There are many advantages to living in the country. ………….. (2), one is much closer to nature and can enjoy more peace and quiet. …………… (3), life in the country is much slower and people tend to be more open and friendly. A further

advantage is that there is much less traffic, and as a result it is a much safer place to bring up children.

…………….. (4), there are certain drawbacks to life outside the city. ………………. (5), because there are fewer people, one has a smaller number of friends. ………….. (6), entertainment, particularly in the evening, is difficult to find. Furthermore, the fact that there are fewer shops and services often means that there are fewer employment opportunities. …………. (7), one may have to travel long distances to work elsewhere, and this can be extremely expensive.

………… (8), it can be seen that the country is more suitable for some than others. ……… (9), it is often the best place for those who are retired or who have young children. ………….(10), young, single people who are following a career and who want some excitement are better provided for by life in the city.

Task 2: Comment on the essay, answering the questions below. Compare your answers with the answers of your peers.

1. Does the essay include all the points asked for in the question?

2. Does each paragraph have one clear topic?

3. Does each paragraph have a clear topic sentence (TS)?

4. Does the writer use linking words and phrases to make the meaning clear?

5. Does the introduction give the reader an overall idea of the essay?

6. Does the conclusion summarise the whole essay and make a personal comment?

Task 3: Write a brief summary of each paragraph in the spaces below:

Introduction:

Paragraph I: Topic Sentence:

    1.

    2.

    3.

Paragraph II: Topic Sentence:

    1.

    2.

    3.

Conclusion:

After analysing the model essays and completing the above tasks collaboratively, students were given back their essays and were asked to write the second drafts of their essays in class. Once the essays were finalised all essays were collected by the lecturer and assessed indirectly.

In week nine, the essays were submitted back to the students. Students checked their mistakes,i.e.asked questions about a certain error, read the comments and asked questions regarding the feedback given by the lecturer. Then, they wrote the final drafts of their essay in class. After completing this task in class, students gave the whole portfolio to the lecturer for assessment. All marks and grades were announced on the departmental website and orally during office hours.

Homework during portfolio work

For the first two weeks, students were asked to research different types of essays, i.e. how many types of essays there are and what sort of characteristics each one has.

The portfolio work started to take place in the third week of the course, at the end of this week students wrote example sentences using the transitions and linking words covered in the lesson. For each transition and linking word covered in class students were asked to use them in sentences. These were then checked by the lecturer and feedback was given accordingly.

For the persuasive essay the introductory paragraph was carried out during class hours. For homework students, were asked to write the body paragraphs of the same essay, for the following lesson. Students were also asked to draw a table and divide it into two i.e. one for the advantages and one for the disadvantages set forth. As mentioned in class students wrote three topics for each. These topics were supported and examples were to be given in the body part of their essays according to the side they had chosen.

At the end of week four students were asked to combine all the paragraphs of a persuasive essay which was to be given to the lecturer the following lesson for

corrective feedback. After the peer feedback and correction carried out in week 5, students received their portfolios and were asked to write the second draft of their essays for homework. In week 9, students wrote the first drafts of their advantage and disadvantage essays. Students were also asked to draw a table consisting of the advantages and disadvantages dealt with in their groups. Students wrote the themes or the topics of the advantages and disadvantages of shopping on the internet expressing the themes and/or topics with one or two words. For example, one of the themes/topic set in the advantage column was 'it's fast'.

On-line work

For the first week of the blended learning approach, students were asked to search example modals of an argumentative essay on Google, choose one and send it to the lecturer via Facebook before the next class. Students were also asked to read an argumentative essay on YouTube. There is an empty space provided on YouTube for people to write a song name or the alike; students write argumentative essay in the empty space. Automatically several argumentative essay clips or videos are presented. Students click on one and watch what is presented in the clip or video. By doing this students are able to see visually the arrangement and style of an argumentative essay. Tips on how to write the essay in question could also be found in these several clips or videos presented. In other words, everything to do with i.e. tips, style, organization and layout about an argumentative essay is available to watch on the YouTube site. Students were then given two days to read the Daily Mail article "*Sometimes I wish I'd never won: Lottery winning bus driver plans new life in Cyprus after claiming 38 million pounds syndicate win left him feuding with friends.*" Students were also asked to make an online comment below the article (See links to sites, Appendix G). Each student individually sent the time of his/her

comment to the lecturer's Facebook inbox, which enabled the lecturer to read each comment and provide the mark for the task. As mentioned earlier, students were given marks for the on-going process of assessment i.e. the tasks were calculated and one mark was given for the total tasks at the end of the course. After reading the article and making comments, students were asked to come up with a topic related to the article to write their argumentative essays. The aim of this task was to enable creative thinking so that students would generate the theme of their argumentative essay. Students wrote their first drafts of their essays and sent it to the lecturer via e-mail before the next class.

In the second week, students were asked via the lecturer's Facebook status to watch on YouTube '*Fiddler on the Roof*' (See Appendix G) and make comments below before coming to class. For every personal account on Facebook, every individual has a profile page and status page, which enable him/her to write anything he/she wishes for connections to see on his/her main page. For example, if someone writes something on their profile page or status page, selected connections are able to see this on their main page. These connections could be limited to close friends or any either group selected, or made public for every connection to see. Songs, videos e-mail links and/or anything concerning the internet could also be published on this Facebook status. The term private messaging on Facebook refers to the private message inbox/outbox of a personal account, which everyone who has a Facebook account possesses.

The task assigned for the Daily Mail and the task on YouTube were related to money (being poor or rich). Debates and questions about both the reading and watching the music video were dealt with in class. These debates were about what was understood after having read i.e. Daily Mail/ the article and watched i.e. the

music video/ YouTube, questions were asked to students to facilitate creative thinking and to generate ideas. For example, what would you do if you won the lottery? How would you feel if you had no money? What do you think the life of a rich person is like? and so on. Having read the article and watched the music video, students made necessary changes to their written first drafts. Both topics were similar, therefore individual necessary changes were made accordingly. That is to say, some students did not understand or get the idea that both themes were related. After being asked questions and debating on the above tasks, i.e. Daily Mail and YouTube these students' ideas were clarified. In other words, they understood that they did not understand at first and after the debates and questions they understood so they changed what they had written.

Those students who had made necessary changes resent their first drafts via e-mail to the lecturer. The lecturer checked each essay and gave an approximate number of errors to be found by a peer in the class (a classmate chosen by the essay writer). The peer then resent via e-mail the essay after correction and feedback to the essay owner (See Examples 1 & 2/ Appendix Q). After peer WCF, students were informed from the lecturer's Facebook status to write their second drafts and send it to the lecturer via e-mail.

For the third week, all drafts were printed and common language mistakes i.e. students kept placing the article 'the' in front of every noun, were written on the white board and re-taught or reminded. Comments made on each students essay were collaboratively analysed and strategy types i.e. from the models of the essays previously assigned to be completed, were illustrated to students by the lecturer to make adjustments for their final drafts. Individual oral feedback was also given. All complete and absent tasks were orally announced to students together with the

collected marks (see Appendix F/ assessment breakdown). Students were informed to send their final drafts within three days via e-mail to the lecturer.

For the fourth week, students were asked to send example models or a model of a Compare and Contrast essay to the lecturer's Facebook inbox together with a YouTube link that they had watched related to the topic. Students were given three days to accomplish both tasks. During the week after both tasks had been accomplished, students were asked via Facebook status to watch the music video *'life before technology'* on YouTube (See Appendix G) and write comments below it. The times at which students made the comments were sent to the lecturer via Facebook private message to be checked and noted for the on-going process mark. Students were then asked via Facebook status to write their first drafts of their essays and send it to the lecturer via e-mail before the next lesson.

In week five, the lecturer read all papers and wrote the approximate amount of mistakes on the essay and sent it back to the student via e-mail before the class. In class, the lecturer appointed a peer (based on the student's proficiency levels) to find approximately the same number of mistakes which the lecturer had found on each paper and give necessary feedback within 3 days after the lesson to the essay writer (See examples 1 & 2). To be able to do this, each student was asked to forward the lecturer's e-mail i.e. the essay which states the number of errors to the appointed peer. After papers had been checked and commented on, students were asked via the lecturer's Facebook status to send the checked and commented essay back to both the lecturer and the essay writer before the next lesson. After all papers had been submitted to the lecturer via e-mail, the lecturer announced on Facebook status for students to write their second drafts and send it via e-mail to the lecturer two days before the next class.

In week six, students who found more or the same amount of mistakes and comments as the lecturer were given bonus points, which were orally announced in class (See examples 1 & 2/ Appendix Q). In addition to this, the tasks that were individually completed were orally announced and marks were informed. The second drafts were printed by the lecturer and brought to class. All papers were collaboratively debated on and problems were dealt with. Whole class feedback and comments were given. Language problems and strategies, i.e. Block and Point by Point arrangements (See Appendix I) were dealt with individually and collaboratively concerning the organization of the compare and contrast essay. The lecturer clarified both arrangements in class giving examples from personal experiences. The students wrote notes in order to comprehend the differences between these arrangements. Students were assigned three days to write their final drafts and send it via e-mail to the lecturer. All essay types were revised and questions regarding the examination were collaboratively focused on.

In week seven, the examination was administered. A duration of 75 minutes was set to write a complete essay. Students were given two essay types consisting of three topics for each to choose and write an essay (See Appendix I). Fifteen points were given for the essay (See Appendix F).

Appendix L

Anonymised Essay Table

Participants	Portfolio work Draft	Portfolio work Final	Online work Draft	Online work Final
Sue	D	C	B	A
Hailey	B	A	C	D
Andrew	A	B	C	D
Jack	C	D	A	B
Amanda	B	C	D	A
Katty	D	B	A	C
Zoe	B	A	D	C
Allie	A	B	C	D
Matt	D	C	B	A
Anna	A	D	C	B
Zara	C	B	D	A
Mary	A	C	B	D
Mathew	D	C	A	B
Claire	A	B	C	D
Sally	D	C	B	A
Nur	B	A	C	D

Appendix M

Quiz Results

Name	Results 10%
Sue	9
Hailey	8
Andrew	7
Jack	6
Amanda	10
Katty	8
Zoe	7
Allie	8
Matt	6
Anna	7
Zara	10
Mary	8
Mathew	9
Claire	8
Sally	8
Nur	9

APPENDIX N

Product Approach Examples

Example 1

I am Mr. Baroni. My first name is Robert. I am twenty-five years old. I am a student. I am in the classroom now. I am at my desk. Mr. Peter is my teacher. He is in the classroom now. He is at the blackboard. He is busy now. The Classroom is on the tenth floor. It is a small room. The classroom is in an old building. The building is near the river. It is in the busy city of Detroit.

Instructions:

Write one paragraph about yourself and your school. Follow the model, but change all information that is not correct for you. For example: you write down your information and take as many structures and words from the model as you can use in your paragraph.

(Blanton, 1979, p. 7-8)

Example 2

Instructions:

Combine the following sentences as logically as possible.

1. The writer is young.

2. The writer is developing.

3. The writer works with options.

Possible "transformations" or combinations:

- Options are worked with by the young, developing writer.

- The writer who is young and developing works with options.

- The young, developing writer works with options.

- The young writer who is developing works with options.

Example 3

Instructions:

  Using cause-effect development, write a composition in which you describe the effect- negative or positive- that a teacher has had on your personality, your feelings about school, or your approach to life in general. Be specific:

1. Mention at least three real effects

2. Explain each one, using examples, details, or anecdotes

(Arnaudet & Barret, 1984, p. 111)

APPENDIX 0

Differences between Persuasive and Argumentative Essays

1. Example

Persuasive	Argument
Claim based on Opinion	**Claim** (Opinion, Position, Hypothesis, Thesis Statement, Theory)
Not Always Substantiated Claim (e.g., Propaganda, Advertisements)	**Substantiated Claim** (Based on Relevant & Sufficient Evidence)
"Pathos"—Appeal to Audience Emotion, Desires, Needs	**Some "Pathos" but emphasis is on "Logos"**—Appeal to logical reasoning and evidence (e.g., Facts, Examples, Historical and Legal Precedents)
"Ethos"—Appeal to writer's or speaker's character, credentials, trustworthiness	**"Ethos"**—Appeal to writer's or speaker's credibility (more so than character); credibility is established through knowledge of subject matter and merits of reasons and factual evidence
Persuasive texts may make an "argument," but they don't always include elements of a formal argument	**Include the following elements of Argument:**
	Warrants (Statements about How Evidence Supports Claims)
	Backing (Support for Warrants)
May not take opposing views into account	**Counterclaim** (Opposing Argument)
	Rebuttals (Respond to and Try to Refute)
	Heart of Critical Thinking

2. Example

Persuasive	Argumentative
Goal of persuasive writing: To get reader to agree with you/your point of view on a particular topic.	*Goal* of argumentative writing: To get reader to acknowledge that your side is valid and deserves consideration as another point of view.
General technique of persuasive writing:	*General technique* of argumentative writing:

Blends facts and emotion in attempt to convince the reader that the writer is "right."(Often relies heavily on opinion.)	Offers the reader relevant reasons, credible facts, and sufficient evidence to honor the writer has a valid and worthy perspective.
Starting point of persuasive writing: Identify a topic and your side.	*Starting point* of argumentative writing: Research a topic and then align with one side.
Viewpoint presented in persuasive writing: Persuasion has a single-minded goal. It is based on a personal conviction that a particular way of thinking is the only sensible way to think. Writer presents one side— his side. (Persuasive writing may include ONE opposing point, it is then quickly dismissed/refuted.)	*Viewpoint* presented in argumentative writing: Acknowledge that opposing views exist, not only to hint at what a fair-minded person you are, but to give you the opportunity to counter these views tactfully in order to show why you feel that your own view is the more worthy one to hold. Writer presents multiple perspectives, although is clearly for one side.
Audience of persuasive writing: Needs intended audience. Knowing what they think and currently believe, the writer "attacks" attempting to persuade them to his side.	*Audience* of argumentative writing: Doesn't need an audience to convince. The writer is content with simply putting it out there.
Attitude of persuasive writing: Persuasive writers want to gain another "vote" so they "go after" readers more aggressively. Persuasive writing is more personal, more passionate, more emotional	Attitude of argumentative writing: Simply to get the reader to consider you have an idea worthy of listening to. The writer is sharing a conviction, whether the audience ends up agreeing or not.

Appendix P

Courses

1   **1st Semester**

Course Code	Course Name	T	U	C
ELT 151	Contextual Grammar I	3	0	3
ELT 153	Advanced Reading and Writing I	3	0	3
ELT 155	Listening and Pronunciation I	3	0	3
ELT 157	Oral Communication Skills I	3	0	3
ELT 159	Effective communication	3	0	3
EDS 101		3	0	3
TUR 101	Turkish I: Composition	2	0	2
COM 101	Computer I	2	2	3
Total Credit		**19**	**2**	**20**

02   **2nd Semester**

		T	U	C
ELT 152	Contextual Grammar II	3	0	3
ELT 154	Advanced Reading and Writing II	3	0	3
ELT 156	Listening and Pronunciation II	3	0	3
ELT 158	Oral Communication Skills II	3	0	3
ELT 160	Lexical Competence	3	0	3
TUR 102	Turkish II: Speech and Communication	2	0	2
EDS 102		3	0	3
COM 102	Computer II	2	2	3
Total Credit		**22**	**2**	**23**

03   **3rd Semester**

		T	U	C
ELT 251	English Literature I	3	0	3
ELT 253	Linguistics I	3	0	3
ELT 255	Approaches to ELT I	3	0	3
ELT 257	English-Turkish Translation	3	0	3
ELT 259	Oral Expression and Public Speaking	3	0	3
AIT 201		2	0	2
EDS 201		3	0	3
Total Credit		**23**	**0**	**23**

04   **4th Semester**

		T	U	C
ELT 252	English Literature II	3	0	3
ELT 254	Linguistics II	3	0	3
ELT 256	Approaches to ELT II	3	0	3
ELT 258	Language Acquisition	3	0	3
ELT 260	Scientific Research Methods	2	0	2
AIT 202		2	0	2
EDS 202		2	2	3

EDS 204		2	2	3
Total Credit		**20**	**4**	**22**

05	**5th Semester**			
ELT 351	Teaching English to Young Learners I	2	2	3
EDS 305		2	2	3
ELT 353	Teaching Language Skills I	2	2	3
EDS 303		2	0	2
ELT 355	Literature and Language Teaching I	3	0	3
SFL 301	Second Foreign Language I	2	0	2
EDS 307		2	0	2
Total Credit		**15**	**6**	**18**
06	**6th Semester**			
ELT 352	Teaching English to Young Learners II	2	2	3
ELT 358	Turkish-English Translation	3	0	3
ELT 354	Teaching Language Skills II	2	2	3
ELT 360		1	2	2
ELT 356	Literature and Language Teaching II	3	0	3
SFL 302	Second Foreign Language II	2	0	2
EDS 308		3	0	3
Total Credit		**16**	**6**	**19**
07	**7th Semester**			
ELT 451	Language Teaching Materials Adaptation and Development	3	0	3
SFL 401	Second Foreign Language III	2	0	2
Elective I	471,473,475,477,479,481	2	0	2
ELT 453		2	2	3
EDS 405		2	0	2
EDS 401		1	4	3
EDS 403		3	0	3
Total Credit		**15**	**6**	**18**
08	**8th Semester**			
ELT 452	English Language Testing and Evaluation	3	0	3
Elective II	472,474,476,478	2	0	2
Elective III	480,482,484,486,488	2	0	2
EDS 406		2	6	5
EDS 402		2	0	2
EDS 404		2	0	2
Total Credit		**13**	**6**	**16**
TOTAL		**143**	**32**	**159**

Sample Positive Feedback Essay

Technology plays significant role in our lives and it has brought many changes into the world we are living in for many ages..Nowadays, technology is embraced by many people and each development regarding the technology has caused people to live a mechanical life. It is true thatwithout technology one would not have been able to communicate with a decent friend or human kind would not have been able to make his first discoveries relating the universe. Nonetheless, when we compare the lives of people today with the ones in the old times, we can easily notice the differences, which have been occurred because of the technological developments. With the examples of the lives of today's people and past's, I shall contrast the lives of today's people who are using technology with the people of past who were not using technology in their lives.

The first difference between the lives of today's people with the peoplein the past is the issue of socializing. Today the usage of technology is so wide spread it causes people to be less sociable. What I mean with this is that, just because people started to integrate technology into their daily lives, they start to loose their wiliness to do outside activities. For example, instead of spending more time with their family or meeting with friends in a café in order to socialize and communicate, people started to use their android cell phones to text each other or speak to each other with

video calls or use social media applications to do so. They started to shop online or look at their bank accounts from the ATM machines or online sites and many people do not even know their neighbors names because they prefer to spend much time

using technological devices than socializing or sharing things with their surroundings. On the other hand, in the past people were more sociable because there weren't many technological devices and they had to meet face to face with their family and friends in order to communicate and socialize. For example, in the past people used to spend more time in public meetings, go to mosques where all the people gathered to hear a speech and discuss or they used to share things with their neighbors.

The second difference between the lives of today's people with the people in the past is the issue of respect that one has towards the environment. Nowadays, if the world ends, it is the technology to blame because the effect of technology on the daily lives of people of today has made people to be less caring about the nature and having less respect to the world we are living in. For example, the invention of batteries which do not dissolve in the nature, factory chimney or exhaust gases which pollute the air, are all poisonous to the nature. Also, people are destroying the mountains and forests in order to use the materials of rock and wood to make buildings or roads. What's even worse is the fact that some of the animal species have started to extinct, climates started to change and people started to become more careless about these things. In the past, people used to care about the environment and used to respect the nature. They used to use the energy coming from the sun instead of electricity or batteries or chimneys. People used to walk for example and they also used to build their houses from the materials they used to collect from the environment without giving any harm to it. They used to live in harmony with the trees, mountains and animals by having respect towards them and use to feel cycle of the earth by having great respect towards it.

The third difference between the lives of today's people with the people in the past is the issue of the feeling of accomplishment. In these days, with the development of technology, people started to loose the feeling of accomplishment because the technology made things easier to find and have. For instance, people started to use internet to find information or use the GPS services to find the place they want to go or even get online education without being have to go to schools. All these things cause people to loose their feelings of accomplishing something because everything is easier to find and one do not need to put much time or effort on something. On the other hand, in the past people used to possess the feeling of accomplishment because they used to try hard in order to find or have something they want because things were not so easy to access. For example, in order to find information about a topicthey had to go to the libraries if they had one in the country or do interviews with the people who have knowledge about the issue they were looking for or they have to walk miles and miles in order to reach their destination. No matter they used to do , because they used to put much effort and time on the things , people in the past used to feel the feeling of accomplishing something at the end of an activity.

In conclusion, it is true that technology plays important role in our lives and it has been embraced by many people today. However when we contrast the lives of today's people who use technology as a part of their daily lives with the people in the past who did not use technology as a part of their daily liveswe can notice the differences so easily. We can see that today's people are less sociable, they have less respect towards the nature and they do not possess the feeling of accomplishment at the end of an activity compared to the people in the old times. I believe that technology has a unique contribution to our lives but the world would

have been a better place without it because it caused out lives to be more mechanical and we can understand this when we look at the lives of people who used to live in a world without technological devices.

Written by: Zara

The organization and the planning of the essay are very good. The ideas are clearly explained and supported with several examples. Three ideas are well contrasted and have fluency within each other. Yet, there are some punctuation, spelling and grammar mistakes. In one of the paragraphs I couldn't understand what you mean so I underlined it. Also there are some clauses which are repeated after and after. In general, it is a good essay. Nice Work.

Checked by: Anna

Appendix R

Reflective Journal Sample Page
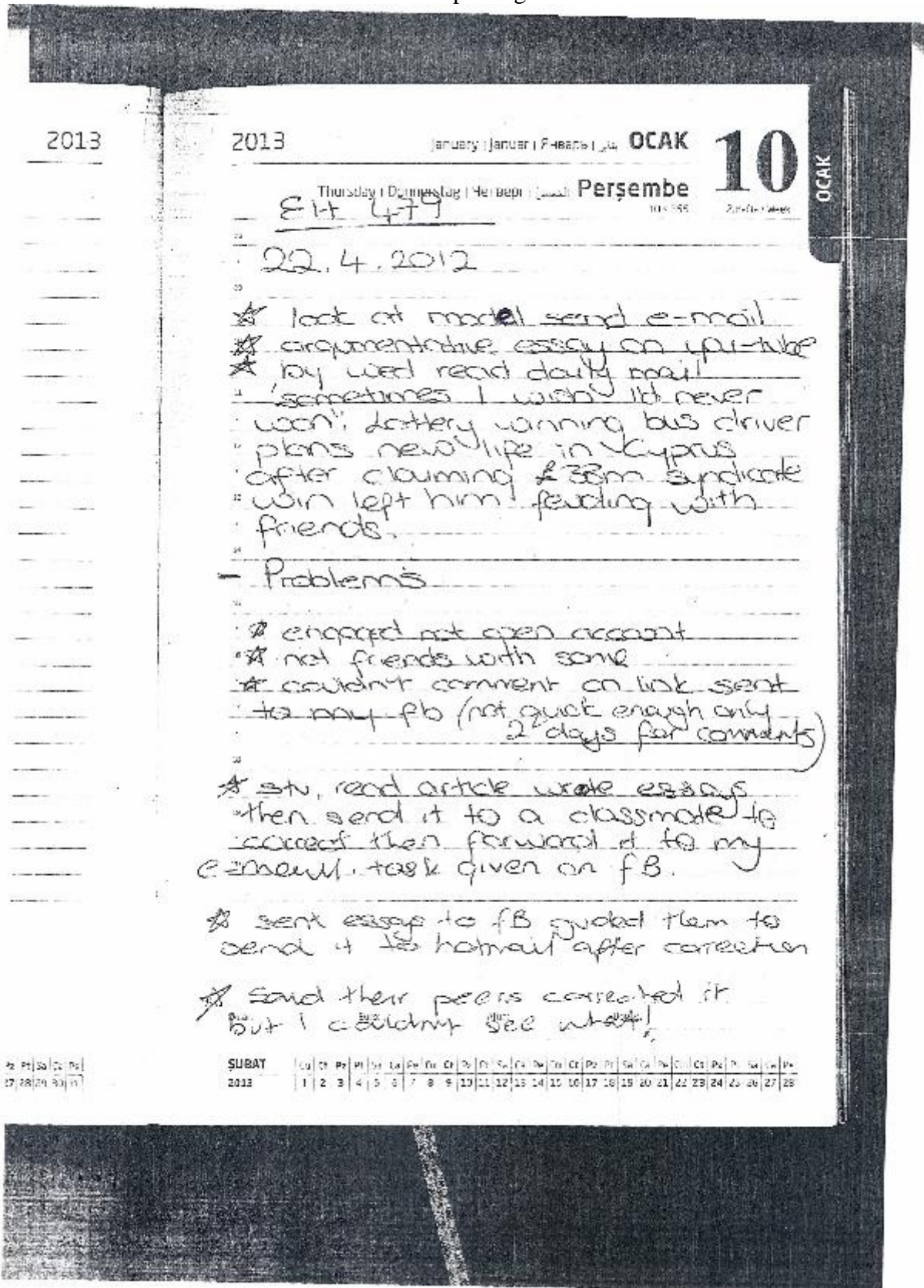
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- Problems

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  e-mail. task given on fB.

* sent essay to fB quoted them to
  send it to hotmail after correction

* said their peers corrected it
  but I couldn't see what!

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Appendix S

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Action Research Design