Perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL Student-teachers towards EFL Writing, and Methods of Teaching and Learning EFL Writing.

Submitted by

Intissar sami Abdul-Hafid Kamil

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers to methods of teaching and learning EFL writing in Kuwait, and the extent to which their perceptions of EFL writing may be affected by these methods. It draws on the finding of ten interviews with student-teachers from one of the higher educational colleges in Kuwait. Students were asked to describe how they perceive EFL writing and methods of teaching and learning practices in their EFL writing classrooms. They were invited to discuss the nature of their teachers' role in their classrooms and assess the extent to which that role enhanced or undermined their attitudes to EFL writing. Students discussed how they felt about EFL writing and their teaching practices. They discussed ways in which their perceptions of EFL writing could be enhanced and explained how their teaching practices influenced their views of themselves as writers.

In the literature, there are no theories for L2 writing to date and L2 researchers have tended to assume that the models of L1 would apply equally to L2 writers, with appropriate modifications. This, it is argued, is not necessarily the case as cultural and language differences between L1 and L2 create difficulties that are not accounted for by L1 research, as L2 writers use their identity and their way of making meaning when they write in L2. The study addresses the gap in L2 writing literature, and more research is needed to understand how to support L2 writers in achieving writing fluency.

This research suggests that change is needed in pedagogical practices in the teaching of EFL writing. EFL writing teachers in this study demonstrated little awareness, both of how to acknowledge their students' out-of-school experiencs of writing and of writing as a social practice. The study recommends that the teaching of writing takes more account of the 'writing process' approach, with attention given to pre-writing activities and to revision processes, and that more attention is paid to genres in writing, as socially-constructed forms of meaning-making. It also recommends that teacher feedback is developed to be more purposeful and formative. Writing needs implicit learning and intensive practice and it cannot be acquired like speaking. Through learning EFL learners will be more familier with the structure of EFL language and they will understand how use this structure to acheive different social purposes in particular context of use.

Well-rained EFL writing teachers will have the ability to help EFL learners write more efficiently. Thus, this research suggests that the students' pre-service training programme and teachers' in-service professional developmental programme for EFL writing need to be seriously improved to cope with the social needs of their students, the needs of their society and the needs of developing education internationally. EFL writing needs to be viewed as a vital communicative medium and students should be taught in a way that helps them interact with others by that medium.

This research recommends further studies to explore methods of teaching and learning EFL writing and EFL in general to develop a strong voice in debate, to listen to the voice of EFL students, to enhance the methods of teaching practices, and to increase students' self-efficacy in their ability to be efficient in their EFL writing in particular, and EFL in general.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This investigation focuses on understanding two central contributory aspects while exploring Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning to write in English as a foreign language in Kuwait. It aims to understand Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' perceptions of writing English as a foreign language and their perceptions of methods of teaching English writing at the higher educational colleges in Kuwait. In a literature review authors Al-Mutawa (1997) Al-Daferie (1998) Al-Sulayti (1999) and Syed (2003) indicate that, teaching and learning English as a foreign language in general in the Arabian Gulf region, and Kuwait is part of that region, are facing serious challenges. Some of these challenges as mentioned by Syed, (2003) are:

> 'English language teachers, in the Arabian Gulf constantly identified student motivation, literacy, underachievement; reliance on rote learning and memorization, and dependence on high-stakes testing. These issues, coupled with outdated curricula and methodologies, insufficient support systems and not enough qualified teachers, paint a very unflattering picture of education in the region... Linguistic and cultural distance between learners and teachers is a serious factor in the Gulf EFL classroom'. *(pp.337, 339)*

In addition, Al-Sulayti (1999) confirmed that educational colleges in the region are run unsuccessfully and are constantly incompetent. Asraf (1996) believes, the priority is to develop socioculturally appropriate materials and pedagogy designed for the specific needs of students in the region. As Al-Mutawa and Islam (1994) describe, many undergraduates in Kuwait are unqualified to manage with their studies given in English as a foreign language in writing, reading and understanding texts written in the target language. This might be related to, as Al-Mutawa (1997) illustrates, a shortage of qualified EFL teachers in Kuwait, including the problem of low linguistic levels among EFL Kuwaiti students. A high percentage of EFL Kuwaiti students are unable to communicate in written English even after having learnt it throughout their schools and higher education. The sample of this research in the future will be EFL teachers in schools all over Kuwait, and their role will be very fundamental for the future of teaching and learning EFL in Kuwait and the region in general. Therefore, investigating the perceptions of these student-teachers to learning and teaching EFL writing at their

higher educational level will be a very influential factor affecting their own future careers and those of their students, and the future of the EFL writing fluency in Kuwait. The researcher of this study will listen to the voices of these EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers at one of the higher educational colleges, to explore their experiences in teaching and learning EFL writing, as each of these individuals represents a unique background. The findings of this research will help people who are involved in the field of teaching and learning EFL writing in Kuwait to adopt appropriate decisions to help improve Kuwaiti student-teachers' EFL writing competency and to avoid any negative factors that influence their learning of the EFL writing process in the future.

Background and rationale

The Arab Human Development Report (2003) has stated that the ability of Arabs to use English writing effectively and the English language in general is deteriorating. In Arab countries in general and in Kuwait in particular there are challenges that prevent Arab learners from reaching the competency level in L2 writing. The problem of teaching and learning writing in the Arab world is therefore the result of two influential factors: Firstly, the use of a diversity of 'Modern Standard Arabic (MSA)' which is different from everyone's mother tongues as the official language and as the means of instruction, that is the 'diglossic' situation. In all Arabic speaking countries 'Modern Standard Arabic' (MSA) is used in formal education exclusively in writing and reading, while the colloquial Arabic is used for all oral communication only. The conflict between the formal MSA and the colloquial forms of Arabic causes serious problems for learners, teachers, and curricula, (Maamouri, 1998). The lack of practice (of MSA) has negatively influenced the Arabic writing fluency among Arab nations in most of the Arabic world. The second factor is the differences between the first language and the second language writing, as culturally, socially, linguistically, and historically they are different. The following explains the two factors in more detail:

Diglossia is considered as one of the major phenomena that has been identified by a number of Arabic language specialists as the core of the problem in literacy, (Watson, 2004). In the whole Arabic speaking world, there are two forms of Arabic that are used differently. The first form is the use of 'Modern Standard Arabic' (MSA) which is called in Arabic 'Al Fusha' (*elfusa'*). Al Fusha is used for education, especially for writing and reading in all schooling levels from kindergarten level until students finish

their higher educational level. It is the language of the Media, the language of the books and the newspapers. On the other hand, the second form of Arabic is the colloquial Arabic, it is the mother tongue of all Arab countries which is called in Arabic 'Al Ameeyiah' (*elamyia)*. Each Arab country has its own dialect Al Ameeyiah, and it is the language of oral communication (spoken) only that is used outside the formal educational setting, and it is often used inside the classrooms, (Al Maamouri, 1998). Al Ameeyiah is learned informally and it is not applicable to be used in a written form. Watson (2004, p.32) argues 'the existence of colloquial forms of Arabic with words that have been borrowed from other indigenous languages or from the former colonial language in addition to the Modern Standard Arabic, has implications that go further than the linguistic into the religious'. Modern standard Arabic is derived from the Quranic Arabic, as Muslims regard Quranic Arabic as a perfect form of Arabic. Quranic Arabic for Muslims historically has been considered as the perfect form of expression for Muslim faith and culture, because of its God-given significance. Therefore, Quranic Arabic is the measure of linguistic purity and appropriateness for reading and writing, (Watson, 2003).   Despite the significant space between the two forms of Arabic, this space is not given official recognition in any Arab countries. Accordingly, Arab students, teachers, curricula, authorities, and decision-makers face fundamental implications for teaching and learning Modern Standard Arabic writing Al Fusha throughout the Arabic-speaking world. As a result of this conflict between the two Arabic forms, Ayari (1996, p. 245) states 'even well-educated Arabs who have mastered Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and are able to read and write in it well enough to satisfy academic requirements will admit to a lack of confidence and skills in using the language'. Zamil (1976) and Raimes (1998) emphasize the importance of the writing accuracy of the first language for learning the second language writing. Ayari (1996) states, there is an explicit correlation between the ability of the Arab students to write in Arabic, and the competency level of 'English rhetorical conventions', (p. 246). Since many studies on literacy acquisition in the Arab world indicate that Arab learners experience challenges in writing in MSA, it is to be likely that they will have similar difficulties composing paragraphs in English, (Watson, 2004).

The difference between Arabic and English writing is the second influential challenge for L2 Arabic learners. Competency and fluency of English writing are not being achieved through the learning of English in the Arab-speaking world. That might

be partially related to the differences between the two, writing L1 and L2 as it is explained below:

The direction of writing is different in the two languages. English writing is cursive, and starts from left to right. In contrast, Arabic writing starts from right to left. Arabic and English languages are derived from different historical, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Watson describes some main differences between Arabic and English writing which are mentioned below:

> 'Arabic is written from right to left, whereas, English is written from left to right. The actual forming of the letters also presents difficulties for Arab learners. In Arabic, letters are formed by a series of strokes, unlike the continuous flow of the Roman alphabet used for the English script. There is also difference between the printing and script of Arabic (Thompson-Panus and Thomas Ruzic, 1983:609). Moreover, Arabic writing conventions and spelling systems are vastly different from those of English. For example there are no capitals in Arabic and prepositions are joined to the word that follows them. Arabic is also a very phonetic language and the variations in vowel sounds found in English (for example, the sound of the vowel 'a' in car, make and bat) and in diphthongs cause difficulties for the Arab learner', (Watson, 2004, p.42-43).

When the rhetorical text organization of the first and the second languages in a statement are the same, the old habit will work well for acquiring the new language. In this case, we call it a positive transfer, e.g. the learning process might be easier for students who come from the same languages background, like for example, English and French both derived from Latin or Greek languages. Whereas, when the two languages in a statement are different, the old habit interferes with or 'gets in the way' of the new structure and the learner may have difficulties of transfer, (Ellis, 1985, p.21). AbiSamra (2003) found that one third of the Arab L2 learners' errors can be caused by transfer from L1, and over-application of L2.

The Terminology

There are many main distinctions among learners who need to learn English writing in different contexts. The terminology of using EFL, ESL, EAL, ELL, L2, L1 and L2 is become problematic, as Matsuda, Ortmeier-Hooper and Matsuda (2009, p. 458) state, that 'the traditional distinction between first and second languages as well as foreign

language has become problematic'. English as a foreign language (EFL) courses include students who need to write English and live in countries in which English is not spoken or written as a language of the community, for example, Arab countries, Germany, China, and Indonesia. English as a second language (ESL) courses include those students who need to learn English and live in countries where English is the language of the community such as Ghana, Nigeria, Singapore, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). The English as an additional language, (EAL) term is used in the United Kingdom for students who need to write English and who live in countries in which English is spoken as a first language (native English speaking), for example, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand, and Canada. English language learners (ELLs) is used in the USA schools contexts, to distinguish a population of students from those who are already highly proficient in the target language, (Matsuda, at el, 2009). L1 is used for the first language and L2 is used for the second language. L1 and L2 are widely used in literature to refer to students who need to write English as a second language, and are already fluent and proficient in their first language, for example, native Arab learners who learn English writing. Second Language (L2) is used in a wide sense, it includes second language in a broader meaning, and 'it is referring to non-native language being learned in a context where the target language is dominant', (Matsuda et al, 2009, p.457).

In this research, the EFL term will be used to identify the participants and the teachers of this study. This term is constructed from the Kuwaiti Ministry of Education objectives of teaching and learning English curriculum for Kuwaiti students. The native language of the students is Arabic, and English is their foreign language as it was identified in the Ministry of Education in Kuwait (see Chapter Two). However, in this study L2 will be used only to relate to literature studies and the general history of teaching and learning English writing. In other words, the L2 term will be used in a wide sense only, not for the participants and the teachers of this research.

The participants of this study are EFL student-teachers, however, in this research, the word *students* or *student* and *student-teachers* will be used to refer to the *EFL student-teachers* of this study as well as the use of *teachers* or *teacher* which refers to the *EFL writing teachers* of this research.

Kuwaiti EFL students' challenges in EFL writing

Difficulty with English writing among Kuwaiti EFL students at the higher educational level is part of the whole major problem of learning L2 writing in the Arab world. Some Kuwaiti English instructors at the higher educational colleges (Al-Mutawa, 1994; Osman, 1996; Al-Deferie, 1998; El Edwani, 2005) have analysed this phenomenon and they all agree that, the standard of English writing at college level in Kuwait is low. Moreover, most English placement tests at the college level in Kuwait indicate that many students have low English scores (Registration Office, University of Kuwait, 2007, and the Public Authority for applied Education and Training, College of Business Studies, English Unit, 2006). Even though English is taught to Kuwaiti students as a foreign language and as a school subject from the fifth grade in the old system (before 1992/1993) providing eight years of teaching and learning, and from the first grade in the new system (after 1992/1993) to the twelfth grade in secondary school, providing twelve years of English language learning, students remain underachievers. Kuwait EFL students at college level can pass compulsory general courses with low grades in English, (Al-Mutawa & Issa, 1986: Al-Muttawa, 1997). Furthermore, Al-Mutawa & Islam (1994) concluded that EFL undergraduate students at Kuwaiti university are not capable of managing their EFL learning materials or of reading and understanding texts written in the target language. Al-Mutawa (1997) highlights some of the factors that she believes are influencing the EFL writing competency of Kuwaiti EFL students, for example, the constant correction for the students' linguistic errors, the quality of teaching, and the poor linguistic standard of teachers. Osman (1996) conducted a study of Kuwaiti students who were learning English for special purposes (ESP) and found several reasons for underachievement among these ESP students, such as their previous educational experiences, their poor motivation, lack of interest in learning English, and lack of self-confidence. Al-Mutawa (1992, 1994) in one of her studies found several sources of difficulties that Kuwaiti students face in the learning of English at the college level. Her findings could be divided into different causes, as in, for example: insufficient instruction of the English basic language skills, EFL students learn English at school just for passing exams rather than for EFL competency, and unqualified EFL teachers. In English teaching classrooms, Arabic is used as a means of communication and instruction, despite these classrooms being the only source of knowledge about English. The lack of proficiency in speaking English is behind using L1 in teaching L2

(Kharma 1977; Krashen, 1984; Johns, 1990; Hyland, 2003). Memorization strategy is one of the most common learning strategies that is used among Kuwaiti learners in general. This strategy is carried out from the teachers and students' previous educational experiences. Kuwaiti students prefer to memorize the knowledge of any subject for the purpose of passing exams rather than for utilizing and developing higher levels of thinking skills. That is referred to as the absence of the 'self-learning strategy' among Kuwaiti students and does not support their teaching and learning EFL reading and writing, (Al-Mutawa 1992; Al Shalabi, 1988). Kuwaiti EFL students do not speak and write the target language in any serious context outside their classroom. College students who have not been sufficiently exposed to the English language have few opportunities to become proficient, (Singleton, 1989). Thus, exposure to the target language is very important, and Kuwaiti students do not have that opportunity so often. Accordingly, this influences their speaking and writing competency in communicative English.

Statement of the Problem

The negative attitude towards the English subject among learners in Kuwait is inherited from negative language-learning experiences (Osman, 1996; Al-Mutawa, 1997; Al Edwani, 2005). There is a great need to change the quality of teaching English in general and English writing in particular to increase the level of proficiency. Writing skill is the most serious challenge within EFL teaching at college level in Kuwait: students cannot express their thoughts in writing and they do not have the ability to correct their writing errors that are raised by their EFL writing instructors. On the linguistic level, students have difficulties to speak and write in fluent English. The majority of the secondary school graduates are not capable to communicate their thoughts precisely in oral and written English, (Al-Mutawa, 1997).

Even though the English language has spread throughout every level of the Kuwaiti public and private sectors, there is a high failure rate in the intermediate and secondary-school systems, and the proficiency level of many students is still poor, (Al-Defairi, 1998). The problem of EFL writing has a long history among Kuwaiti EFL College students as they have been diagnosed as underachievers in EFL writing by different studies. For example, Al-Mutawa, Hajjaj, and Al-Borno (1985) confirm, the majority of secondary school graduates are unable to read or converse in English. Al-Mutawa (1986) conducted a study at the Kuwait University to investigate the EFL Kuwaiti

communicative weaknesses and students' ability to learn English as a foreign language. This study showed that 24% of the student respondents assessed their writing skills as satisfied and 76% were underachiever writers. Another study was conducted in 1988 by the Faculty of Education at the University of Kuwait by some members from different academic departments to review the English Language programme and the teaching objectives since the establishment of the English Language Unit in 1983 at the Faculty of Education. The findings of the study indicated that, English writing was ranked as the least important skill for the learners, and reading was the most importance skill for them, (University of Kuwait, English Language Unite, Educational report, 1988). Osman (1996) found that Kuwaiti students who study English for specific purposes at the higher level of education were poor writers.

The Significance of the Study

What has become apparent from the literature review and is confirmed by my own personal experience in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) for many years in Kuwait is that, English writing among Kuwaiti students at the higher educational level needs to be investigated carefully. English language proficiency in general and writing fluency in particular is necessary for the future careers of the participants of this study as they will teach EFL writing to their students in the future. The English Department at this higher college was established in 2002 and the first graduates were in 2006. Thus, to the best of my knowledge and according to what has been mentioned previously about the challenges of Kuwaiti EFL students in EFL writing at the higher educational level, and due to the lack of previous studies on English writing among these student-teachers, I decided to conduct this study as I have not come across any study that gives sufficient concern to the voice of these student-teachers towards learning and teaching EFL writing. English writing is significantly important as a communicative means that is used by people across the whole world, and Kuwait is part of this world; therefore, this study will help the Kuwaiti community to interact with other international communities, and develop the educational environment, EFL teachers, the future careers of the student-teachers, including the EFL curricula, the authorities and decision-makers, and finally for the competitive position of the country (Kuwait) among international educational colleges.

The purpose of the study

The study attempts to contribute to the theory and practice of teaching and learning EFL writing through investigating the perceptions, attitude and emotions of the EFL Kuwaiti students-teachers towards EFL writing.

The aims of the study

- To determine the status of the methods of teaching EFL writing at a Kuwaiti higher educational college.
- To identify EFL student-teachers' perceptions towards their EFL writing.
- To identify EFL student-teachers' perceptions towards methods of teaching EFL writing.
- To formulate suggestions and recommendations based on collected input from student-teachers.
- To demonstrate the findings of this study as a reference for further research in the same field.

Research Questions:

This thesis is exploring two main research questions, as stated below:

1. What are the perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers towards EFL writing at the higher educational level?

2. What are the perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers to methods of teaching and learning EFL writing at the higher educational level?

The Participants of this study

This study will be conducted on a group of Kuwaiti female EFL student-teachers from one of the higher educational college in Kuwait. The sample will be taken from students who had finished government high school and were majoring in EFL programme at this college. The age of the participants will be from 18 to 30 years old and they will cover four different years of study.

Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of eight chapters as follows:

- Chapter One is the introduction.

- Chapter Two gives a brief description of the geographical and historical background of Kuwait, Overview of the Educational system in Kuwait, English Language learning in Public Education, and teaching and learning English at the Higher Educational Colleges and universities.

- Chapter Three discusses relevant literature on teaching and learning theories of writing, and theories of developing L2 writing including the history of Arab EFL learners in learning and teaching EFL writing.

- Chapter Four details the research, design and methodology used in this study. The study uses semi-structured interviews and questionnaires to generate data. The approach used here is mostly qualitative using an interpretive paradigm.

- Chapter Five presents the analysis of data generated from the student-teachers' questionnaire.

- Chapter Six presents the analysis of data generated from student-teachers' semi-structured interviews for the research question One: What are the perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers towards EFL writing at the higher educational level?

- Chapter Seven presents the data generated from the semi-structured interviews and answering the second research question: What are the perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers to methods of teaching and learning EFL writing at the higher educational level?

- Chapter Eight presents the conclusions drawn from the analysis of data and the implications of the findings of perceptions to teaching and learning EFL writing in Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers. Recommendations will also be given on how these results may be used to help students learn and teachers teach English writing more effectively and efficiently.

- The Bibliography and Appendix will be attached at the end of the thesis.

CHAPTER TWO

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In this chapter there are three main sections; the first section presents a review of the geographical and historical background of the state of Kuwait. The second section describes the educational system in Kuwait, including its general objectives and goals. The final section provides a descriptive account for the purpose of teaching the English language in Kuwait.

The geographical and historical background of Kuwait

The State of Kuwait is a part of the greater Arab nation and Islamic community which is located in the north-east of the Arabian Gulf area. Kuwait is bordered to the north and north-west by Iraq, and Saudi Arabia to the south and south-west. Kuwait occupies an important strategic position in the Arabian Gulf region. In past history Kuwait was a small town with a wall around it. '*Qurain*' is the old name for Kuwait in the 1600s. *Qurain* is derived from the Arabic word '*Gran*' meaning a high hill. However, Kuwait is derived from '*Kout*' in Arabic, meaning a fortified house built next to water.

The land area of Kuwait approximately amounts to 17,818 square kilometres (6,969 square miles), with a coastline of 195 km on the Arabian Gulf which eases the exportation of Oil, (Ministry of Planning, 2001). Kuwait is one of the Arabian Gulf petroleum-producing countries and a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). There are six GCC countries: Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, The United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, and Bahrain. On June 19th 1961, Kuwait become an independent country and a draft constitution was approved in 1961 and adopted in November, 1962, outlining Kuwait's system of government as a *"fully independent Arab State with a democratic style of government, where sovereignty rests with the nation, which is the source of power",* (Kuwait constitution, 1962). The Amir is the national Head of State and must be from the family of Al Sabah. He holds legislative authority in combination with the elected National Assembly. Islam is the state religion, and *Sharia* (Islamic law) is the main source of legislation. As an Arab nation, Arabic is the official language of the country.

The impact of Oil on the Economic and Social life

The country has benefited from the oil incomes generated since the discovery of oil in 1938. The new economic situation followed oil revenue, significantly changing the features of the old Kuwaiti culture, values and traditions by the new labourers (expatriates) who come from different countries and cultures. The booming of the Kuwait economy after the discovery of oil attracts Arab and foreign labour, "from unattractive environment, it become a focus one for Arab and foreign labours wishing to work in these new industries, especially in the absence of trained Kuwaiti personnel", (Esmaeel, 2001, p. 147). The population of Kuwait is 2,390,592 of whom only 935,922 are Kuwaiti nationals, according to the 2004 census. The rest being expatriate workers residing in the country, providing their services in areas such as business and commerce, or providing the manual labour needed in areas such as construction and cleaning. The foreign labour population is estimated at around two-thirds of the total populace.

Kuwait was transformed from a poor city-state dependent upon fishing, pearl-fishing and trade for subsistence, into an ultramodern nation-state able to provide the highest level of social services and welfare benefits that money can buy for its citizens - not to mention a comfortable level of living for about one million and a half expatriates living and working in Kuwait. In addition to oil exports, other areas of economic development have included manufacturing industries, building material, trade, real estate, petrochemicals, food industrials, and communication.

Social development has been a priority of the Kuwaiti government, and oil wealth has made possible the use of the latest technologies and resources in education and the social services sectors.

Overview of the Educational system in Kuwait

Before super-wealth caused by oil discovery, education took place at mosques, at which religious scholars taught people the provisions of Islam. Then a new method appeared named '*Katatib,*' (educational gathering at the house of the scholar). '*Katatib*' is Quranic schools providing religious instruction, such as how to recite the Holy Quran, the tradition of the prophet Mohammed, the history of the prophet and his companions, the narrative of the brave actions of Arabian personalities from the past, in addition to

teaching basic Arabic literacy. In 1911 the Al Mubarakia School was founded (Ministry of Education, 1995) as Kuwait's first modern educational school. Al Mubarakia was supported by some merchants to supply clerks who had a basic foundation in commerce, good arithmetic skills, and good letter drafting skills. Later, social studies were added to the curriculum such as history, geography, and art. In 1921 the Al Ahmadia School was founded (Ministry of Education, 1995) and it was the first school in Kuwait that offered English classes. However, in both schools, the objectives of the curriculum derived from the requirement of the society in which considerable attention was given to Islamic education along with the Arabic language, (Esmaeel, 2001). After that, the first girls' school was founded shortly after the Al Ahmadia School, offering instructions in Arabic, Islamic studies, and home economics.

In the 1930s the modern period of education in Kuwait was ongoing after the pearl-fishing industry, upon which the economy was dependent, collapsed. The economic crisis affected the educational process in Kuwait for a period of five years from 1931-1936, when most of the Kuwaiti merchants who had financially supported schools became bankrupt, (Al-Abdulghafoor, 1978).

Thereupon, in 1935 the Amir agreed that education should be under state funding in order to free education from economic pressures. After the Amir's decree, the first Council of Education in Kuwait was established, (Ministry of Education, 1995). Due to the lack of available educational specialist teachers in Kuwait, it became necessary to use the experience of other Arab countries. Accordingly, the government allowed the bringing of teachers from different Arab countries, which had taken the lead in this field. Moreover, some students were sent abroad to receive an education, and new schools were founded according to the needs of the increased number of students, reaching 600 boys and 140 girls. Accordingly, a national education department was established in 1936 which took responsibility for the total of four schools, three primaries (till fourth grade only) for boys and one for girls. By 1945, there were 17 schools in the country.

Educational development continued until the rapid changes of the 1950s with the founding of the first kindergarten schools, special education facilities, and the opening of the first technical college in 1954. The technical education first appeared when the

Kuwait Oil Company was established with a high demand for trained technicians to service it, (Al Abdulghfoor, 1978).

Kuwaiti students were sent to Iraq to study some special education, such as teacher training, and to Egypt in order to complete their secondary education. The first secondary school for boys was established in Kuwait in 1953, while the first secondary school for girls was established in 1954, (Al Abdulghfoor, 1978). Kuwaiti schools' curricula and the structure of the formal education were designed by Egypt's Ministry of Education and applied in Kuwaiti schools. In 1958 an adult education programme for men began and was followed by similar for women in 1963. By 1960 the Kuwaiti education system had 45,000 enrolled students, 18,000 of which were girls. As a result of the continuous responsibilities, the educational department officially became the Ministry of Education in 1962.

Public Education

The state is seen as holding the responsibility for educating and protecting the Kuwaiti youth, *"The State cares for the young and protects them from exploitation and from moral, physical, and spiritual neglect."* (Ministry of Education, 1966, Kuwaiti Constitution, Article 10, Chapter 2). In addition, the government is committed to provide education, and to promote the arts and science, *"Education is a fundamental requisite for the progress of society, assured and promoted by the state"*, (Ministry of Education, 1966, Kuwaiti Constitution, Article 13, Chapter 2). The constitution continues in Article 14, *"The state shall promote science, letters, and the arts and encouraging scientific research therein"*. Furthermore, in the constitution the right of each Kuwaiti citizen to obtain an education is ensured, in addition to eliminating illiteracy. Education is not just a privilege but a guaranteed constitutional right.

Article 40 of Chapter 3 in the Kuwaiti constitution stipulates that:

1. *Education is a right for Kuwaitis, guaranteed by the state in accordance with law and with the limits of public policy and morals. Education in its preliminary stages is compulsory and free in accordance with law.*
2. *The law lays down the necessary plan to eliminate illiteracy.*
3. *The state devotes particular care to the physical, moral, and mental development of the youth.*

At this stage new kinds of education appeared in Kuwait such as religious education, technical education, commercial studies, and the training of teachers. A great progress had been made by involving Kuwaiti nationals in the educational process, especially in terms of ratio of nationals to expatriate teachers. In 1982 an approximate ratio of 1:3.76 (Kuwaiti to expatriate), the ratio changed to approximately 1.7:1 in 1997-1998. The dependence on foreign professional educators was reduced.

Education is offered to all Kuwaitis free of charge, and is compulsory for ages of 6 - 14. General education in Kuwait comprises elementary, intermediate and secondary. In 1995 there were 861 state and private schools and colleges falling into these three categories, (Ministry of Education, 1995). Beyond the general level of education, college were established, such as Kuwait University in 1966, to be the guide for the development of the intellectual life as well as the heart of scientific research in the country. Kuwait University offers a range of academic majors that provide the country with necessary specialized Kuwaiti professionals in humanities, science, medicine, educational specializations, and specializations in the social sciences.

In addition to Kuwait University, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) colleges and centres were founded in 1982 to lead the vocational education and offer training in the field of technology, education, business, health studies, nursing, communication, surveying, electrical hydro-engineering, and industry.

The Objectives of Education in the State of Kuwait

In 1955 the first general objectives for the educational process were initiated by Kebani and Akrawi's report. However, in 1979 the Ministry of Education of Kuwait issued an accepted document for the objectives of education. This document specified the framework for the educational philosophy in Kuwait together with the areas and contents, maintaining a balance between the cultural, spiritual, mental, social, psychological and physical growth to enable the learners to proceed creatively in the new situations, (Ministry of Education, 1979).

The Ministry of Education Overall Objectives in Kuwait

The overall target of education according to the Ministry Of Education, (1996) in Kuwait, is:

- 'To help individuals to develop mentally, physically, spiritually, socially and psychologically in accordance with their potential and the traditions of Kuwaiti society. Above all, the aim of education is studied with regard to principles of Islam, Arab traditions and contemporary culture so as enable people to fulfil their aims and aspirations in a way that strikes a balance between individual ambition and societal need', (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 21).

- To train and develop Kuwaiti human resources at all levels of education to absorb the necessary scientific methods and their applications in all areas required by society.

- Develop the concept of education and its curricula to catch up with the rapid revolution in the field of science and technical training, while stressing the importance of Arab and Islamic heritage in developing spiritual values in strengthening basic principles and the sense of belonging to the homeland.

- To develop and support religious schools and colleges and adult literacy centres, in keeping with scientific and technical progress.

- To attain a balanced sharing of educational services and activities among the different areas of the country and endeavour to make science and knowledge accessible to every Kuwaiti citizen.

- To dedicate more efforts to training national resources in the field of education, to develop their capabilities and their competence while reducing reliance on foreign elements in this field, without harmfully affecting the education process. Ministry of Education and UNESCO; the national report, (1996).

The Responsibility of the Ministry of Education to Achieve these Objectives:

- 'To establish the necessary educational plans and policies as well as the projects and programs needed for their implementation and follow up, all within the framework of the state's development strategy and general politics.

- To provide the curricula, text books, techniques and means necessary for building the personality of the students, increasing their intellectual capabilities

and priding them with the required knowledge, while defining the specification and levels of the qualified human resources to achieve the above mission.

- To provide the material and human resources and establish the polices liable to attract qualified academic and technical staff, while stressing the importance of the methods needed for training and developing them as well as evaluating their performance in order to benefit from them and to direct them towards serving the system of education and its noble mission.

- To coordinate the education policies at all levels and in all areas in keeping with the country's needs and requirements.

- To activate the education process, encourage scientific research and strengthen the relations between the various department of the Ministry and the different local and foreign scientific colleges so as to benefit from their experience in developing the national education process', (Ministry Of Education and UNESCO; the national report, (1996, p. 8-9).

The objectives of education in Kuwait have been based on putting national resources into the scientific and training fields, to develop aptitude at all levels so that the education necessary in all areas may be provided, as required by society. However, conferences addressing education in GCC countries cite the difference between education and training in their counties with the labour force markets. Little association existed in the first years of the twenty-first century between the real needs of the labour market and the preliminary educational and training programmes of the state. Privatization of schools is an alternative for controlling government bureaucracy.

The Hierarchy of the Public Educational Stages in Kuwait

Kabbani, the former Minister of Education in Egypt, and Akrawi, a former president of Baghdad University in Iraq, suggested in 1955 that the educational system in Kuwait is planned to cover 12 years divided into three stages, as for example, four years for the primary stage, from the age of 6-10, four years for the intermediate stage, from the age of 11-14, and four years for the secondary stage, from the age of 16-18; in addition to two pre-primary years at kindergarten stage. Public education in Kuwait is limited to Kuwaiti citizens and it is free of charge.

The compulsory education covers the kindergarten, primary, and intermediate stages, but is optional for the secondary stage in addition to the university and higher applied educational colleges. Unlike most of the private schools, the Kuwaiti public schools are not coeducational in all their educational stages. However, male and female are given the same right to education in Kuwait.

In 2004/2005 the educational hierarchy ladder was reformed from the three stages to a new stages structure. The new stages system divided the stages as for example, five years for the primary stage from the ages of 6-11, four years for the intermediate stage, from the ages of 12-15, and three years for the secondary (high school) stage, from the ages of 16-18. The kindergarten (pre-primary) kept the same which is two years, from the ages of 4-5. The reasons behind this new structure are to place the students in appropriate environments adapted to their behavioural and psychological needs.

Private Education in Kuwait

Private education is an important component of the educational system in Kuwait. Roughly, one third of the Kuwaiti students from pre-primary, primary, intermediate to secondary levels are enrolled in private schools in Kuwait, (Ministry of Education, General Statistic of Private Schools in Kuwait, 1998/99). Parents who desire to enrol their children in private schools have the alternative to choose from schools that provide different kinds of curricula and languages instruction than the state educational sector, such as a British, American, French, Indian, Pakistani etc. school curriculum. Many expatriates living in Kuwait with their families have the option of placing their children in a school that follows a curriculum much the same as schools in their own countries. Private schools are supervised by the Private Education department at the Ministry of Education, which, for example, sets their fees, supervises their curriculum, inspects the schools and arbitrates cases of complaint. The number of the schools applying British, American, and bilingual curricula are increasing in Kuwait based on the high demands of Kuwaiti parents for these schools, and due to the economic growth in the Arabian Gulf countries. The role of English internationally has grown extensively in business, education, politics, technology, science, medicine, media, etc. Accordingly, high numbers of Kuwaiti parents recognize the importance of English as the language for research,

technology, communication, business, and have decided to enrol their children in American and British curriculum schools. The policy of the British and American schools in Kuwait, except for Arabic and Islamic subjects, and social studies in the bilingual system, is for these schools to use English as the language of teaching and instruction. So far, there are 18 British schools, 8 American schools, and 16 Bilingual schools, mostly populated with Kuwaiti students, (Statistic Department at Ministry of Education, 2009). The aim of these schools is to enable students to be fluent users of English in all contexts, encouraging students to communicate with English inside and outside the school, and improve students' reading and writing in English. Although there is always a hot debate within the press and the members of the Kuwaiti Parliament, as Al Atiqui (2004) describes, the situation of Arabic proficiency among Kuwaiti students is deteriorating. She emphasizes the danger of enrolling Kuwaiti students into English or American private schools. Al Atiqui believes Arabic will soon be neglected by the Kuwaiti community, and as she states, 'our language will soon be abandoned and we will lose our Arabic and Islamic identity', (p.23).

Bilingual schools use both Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) and English as the mediums of instruction. From the first grade until the third, all the subjects are introduced in Arabic, except English. From the fourth grade onwards, all subjects are introduced in English except for Arabic, religious studies, and Social studies, in Arabic. Students of bilingual schools will have the ability to express themselves in both languages in all aspects of life.

English Language learning in Public Education

'The work of language learning provides, learning English as a foreign language with the following:

- An opportunity for achieving mastery of specific language behaviours, positive attitudes and feeling about English and confidence as language users to meet future learning challenges.

- An opportunity for greater mental flexibility on one hand and instrumentalization of language on the other through the use of cross curricula English in the class.

- Greater emphasis for a wider cultural outlook.' (English Language Curriculum Documents in Kuwait, Ministry of Education, 1998, p.2).

The general goals of teaching the English language in public education in Kuwait

'The general goals of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) at the General Educational Stages in Kuwait are based on the philosophy of teaching English as a foreign language in the country. It aims to build up the learners' linguistic competence and develop their performance in order to enable them to use English effectively, fluently and accurately through practicing the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). Teaching English goals in Kuwait complies with the General Goals of Education in the country and emphasizes:

- Pride in Islam, patriotism to Kuwait and appreciation of the Arab culture.

- Correlation to other schools subjects.

- Communicative competence.

- Fluency and accuracy.

- Self-Learning,' (from English Language Curriculum Documents in Kuwait, (Ministry of Education, 1998, p.2).

'The purpose of this is to develop the students' character and expand their achievement to the extent that qualifies them at the end of the secondary school stage to pursue their higher education in a constantly changing world. To achieve this target, the objectives are set to develop the four language skills, taking into account the learners' abilities, needs, interests and tendencies. Therefore, four types of goals are set for the English language learners in Kuwait: Proficiency goals, cognitive goals, affective goals and transfer goals. Proficiency goals include general competency, mastery of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing). Cognitive goals include the mastery of linguistic knowledge as well as of cultural knowledge. Affective goals include achieving positive attitudes and feelings about the target language, achieving confidence as a user of the language, and achieving confidence in oneself as a learner. Transfer goals involve learning, how to learn so that one can call upon learning skills gained in

one situation to meet future learning challenges. These goals must be addressed concretely in the other components of the curriculum; viz the content, implementation procedures and assessment techniques. Moreover, these goals provide a sense of direction and coherent framework for the conceptualization of teaching resources, time scale, teaching methods, personnel recruiting and training', (from English Language Curriculum Documents, Ministry of Education, 1998, p.2).

Proficiency goals of teaching writing skills in public education in Kuwait:

Upon completion of the secondary stage course, the students should be able to:

- Write accurate, meaningful and coherent sentences to compose an organized short essay.

- Elaborate on a short paragraph to generate, stimulate, clarify or extend ideas and justify and explain.

- Grammatically have the ability to interpret and summarize accurately what is heard or read in writing and be able to use formal and informal language appropriately.

- Take notes of presentations, decipher symbolic, tabular forms, fill out different applications and forms and apply metaphoric language in writing.

- Translate sentences or short paragraphs from English to Arabic and vice versa and paraphrase some forms of literature. (Extracts of poems and short lyrics).

- Follow rules of spelling, punctuation correctly and show neatness in handwriting.

- Use different techniques in writing and apply language function. (from English Language Curriculum Document for the Secondary Stage, Ministry of Education, June, 1999, p.3-4).

Teaching and Learning English at the Higher Educational Colleges (university and college level)

The University of Kuwait is the only government university which was established in Kuwait to provide the country with specialist Kuwaiti professionals in different majors.

Advanced levels of proficiency in English are required in order to achieve the courses at the university. This is because courses in the colleges of Medicine, Engineering, and Business studies, Allied Medicine, and Science are taught in English. And English for the students of these colleges is a pre-requisite course. In addition, Kuwaiti undergraduate students have the option to specialize in English language at two different faculties, the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Arts. After the completion of four study-years at each of the English programmes, students earn B.A. and B.Ed. Degrees. The graduated students should be suitably prepared so that they are able to teach the language or use it in their future careers.

Whereas, in colleges where Arabic is the medium of teaching and learning, as in Arts, Law, Education, Social Studies, Shari'a, etc., the aims of teaching general English subject at those colleges is to help students build better a discourse with English for their future careers, enable students to conduct their research and write their papers by using technology, and to communicate with native English speakers. Recently, a few private universities have been established in Kuwait. Some of these universities are affiliated with English speaking countries, such as through American and Australian universities. In these universities, English proficiency is widely required as the medium of teaching and learning in all courses except Arabic lessons. The majority of students who are enrolled in these universities are Kuwaiti. Thus, English is vital for them to pursue their studies with no challenges.

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET) was established in the year 1982, and it is a government authority. The aim of establishing this authority was to boost interest in a selection of types of education due to the continually increasing demand in the work place for the labour force to meet a shortage in employees with technical skills. According to the decree of establishing PAAET, two sectors were covered: the Applied Educational Colleges, and the Training college. In the Applied Educational Colleges, five are included: College of Basic Education, College of Business, College of Technology, College of Health Science, and College of Nursing, all under the umbrella of PAAET. In the Training college, there are eight colleges: Electricity and Water institute, Telecommunication and Navigation Institute, Industrial Training Institute, Nursing Institute, Constructional Training Institute, Vocational Training Institute, Beauty and Fashion Institute, and Institute of Secretary and Librarian.

The English language programme at the College of Basic Education was established in 2001/2002. It aims to graduate teachers for the primary stage in response to a long-standing need for national workforce in the field of teaching English, (Ministry of Education). The main objectives of the programme are to prepare Kuwaiti trainees for the English language teaching profession, as well as to compensate the deficiency of English language teachers in the schools of the Ministry of Education. Candidates for the programme must pass a written proficiency test as well as an interview. The language courses of the programme fall under five major headings: Basic language skills, Linguistics, Literature, Teaching English as a Foreign Language, and Vocational courses. Teaching writing courses fall under the first group heading, where four compulsory courses are taught: Conversation, Reading, Mechanics of Writing, and Advanced Writing, (from 'Tradition vs. Innovation in Teaching English as a Foreign Language 2007/2008', College of Basic Education, English Department). The goal of teaching the two EFL writing courses is to help student-teachers to achieve different objectives. These objectives are listed in detail below:

The objectives of the course of 'Mechanics of Writing' (Basic Level)

1. 'Become familiar with the convention of written English discourse (a text);

2. Reinforce the grammatical structures, idioms, phrasal verbs and vocabulary already taught;

3. Express himself clearly in writing;

4. Become involved with the language; the effort to express ideas and the constant use of eye, hand, and brain is a unique way to reinforce learning;

5. Discover the close relationship between writing and thinking;

6. Discover the real need for finding the right word and the right sentence;

7. Recognize the approaches and techniques of teaching writing;

8. Communicate with a reader and grasp the essential value of writing as a form of communication;

9. Reinforce the basic skills of writing: punctuation, spelling, using linking words and connectives, and composing more complex sentences;

10. Express ideas without the pressure of face-to- face communication;

11. Learn that written language generally demands standard forms of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary, sentence structure, sentence boundaries, stylistic choice;

12. Write coherent and cohesive compositions, (PAAET , the College of Basic Education, English Department, EFL Mechanics Writing Course, p. 20-21)

The Objectives of the Advanced Writing Course (advanced level).

1. 'Recognize the differences between paragraph writing and essay writing;

2. Examine how professional writers shape their works by using the steps of writing;

3. Recognize familiar patterns of writing: News story, news commentary, definition, classification, cause-to-effect…and understand that different types of essays require different rhetorical strategies;

4. Realize the integrity and relationship between essay-writing and other areas of the broader science of linguistics, e.g. morphology (word formation), Syntax (grammar and sentence structure), semantics, (meaning and choice of words);

5. Write a first draft, and then well-supported essays of full length and produce specific types of essays;

6. Write title and subtitle that are capitalized correctly;

7. Formulate a thesis statement;

8. Develop a clear structure (a general thesis paragraph, supporting topic paragraphs, and a rounded-out conclusion);

9. Sustain an appropriate level of diction throughout a piece of writing;

10. Practice proofreading and editing;

11. Learn the proper way of quoting other writers to avoid appropriating the others' words and ideas (Intellectual property);

12. Use computer to compose, revise and refine one's own writing', (PAAET , the College of Basic Education, English Department, EFL Advanced Writing Course, p. 22-23).

Summary

Optimistically, today the Kuwaiti educational system has dramatically changed over the last century, starting from *Katatibs* as a non-academic schooling system, and ending up with a variety of academic specialized educational schools, institutions, colleges, and universities. The Kuwaiti government's unstinting support of education in Kuwait is one of the most influential factors underpinning the progress of education. The role of the Kuwaiti government has always been important as a facilitator and supporter of the development, the expansion and the improvement of education. Realizing the importance of education for the future of the Kuwaiti people and the country was fundamental for enhancing the quality and quantity of education. In addition, internationally, the importance of the English language has greatly increased, and Kuwait as a part of this world realized the importance of this language as the means of communication in the economic, technology, education, politics, social, cultural, and religious spheres in this globalized world, therefore the Ministry of Education implemented great efforts to reform and improve the teaching of the English language to the Kuwaiti people.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of this chapter is on the perceptions of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student-teachers' writing at a higher educational college in Kuwait. The chapter aims to present the theoretical framework and relevant literature review to the study. The review of the literature in this chapter will be divided into four parts. The first section will discuss the theoretical framework for this study. The second section will provide an overview of second language-learning theories. The third section will present an overview of learning theories for writing. And the fourth section is an overview of teaching and learning in second language writing.

Theoretical Framework

This section provides an overview of the theoretical framework that is used for this study. The main purpose of this study is to investigate Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' perceptions of teaching and learning EFL writing. The research questions are:

1- What are the EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions towards their EFL writing?

2- What are the Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' perceptions towards methods of teaching EFL writing in Kuwait?

The purpose of theoretical framework is to make sense of the data, to provide some coherent explanation for why people are doing or saying what they are doing or saying. It is meant to move the research project beyond the realm of the descriptive into the realm of the explanatory. This research will conduct an educational study to understand the perceptions of EFL students in teaching and learning second language writing.

The focus of this study is constructed from the concept that, truth and meaning comes into existence in and out of our interaction with the world we live in and meaning is socially constructed, and 'there is no objective truth waiting for us to discover meaning, meaning is not discover but constructed', (Crotty, 2003, p.8). Social constructivism is the proper approach to investigate the social interaction context. The dynamic of

learning is interacting with the learner, the teacher, the task, and the learning context, (William & Burden, 1997). Social constructivism is different from objectivity as it is defined:

> 'Social constructivism radically questioned the ideas of the "objective fact" and at the same time characterized the discipline and practice of psychology as partial, value-ridden and driven by implicit vested interest'. (Burr, 1998, p. 14)

From a social constructivist perspective, language is always social not individual, (Johns, 1990). Language is the tool that we use to pass meaning between each other, and as we understand that meaning lies in relationships between artefacts, persons, and events, not in the objects themselves, language, as one of many semiotic systems, emerges from semiotic activity through affordances brought forth by active engagement with material, social, and discourse processes, (Vygosky, 1978). What exists in our culture is developed by the use of language. The function of language is to find a way of expressing the internal feeling or condition-like thoughts, desires or preferences to other people. 'Ideas do not exist in a vacuum irrelevant to human activity', (Burr, 1997, p. 3). Without using the language to express certain concepts, these concepts will not exist among people. We use sometimes different forms of language as in writing, talking to a friend, or muttering to ourselves silently, in order to think or to discover what we know. Through language we generate meaning.

In the social constructivists view of writing, as Gergen, & College, (1985, p. 270) state, written texts are, 'constituents of social practices'. Within each community, there are different understandings of texts, as each individual in the community belongs to more than one group and thus holds more than one thought style, (Fleck, 1979). Producing texts needs collaboration and interaction work between the writer (individual) and the readers (social groups). In the learning environment, collaborative work undertaking by pairs, or group work provides an interaction environment between peers themselves as readers and writers who recommend modifications for the written texts, and practise drafting before they finalized the texts for the publication, (Reither and Vipond, 1989). The role of teacher in collaborative writing is to collaborate with students to help them construct their knowledge through interaction with peers rather than through imitation of a teacher's model. Each individual has his/her uniqueness in real life that shapes his/her personality from different experiences. Our oral or written language reflects those differences which came from our social and educational context. Writers from

different social backgrounds carry different knowledge in their heads; therefore, they present their writing differently, as is obvious with L2 writers, as they use their first language writing experiences in L2 writing.

Second Language Learning Theories

The distinction between language acquisition and language learning

One of the most significant distinctions in second language learning theory is that between language acquisition, (the natural, subconscious acquiring of oral communication,) and language learning, (the deliberate and explicit learning of a language). Krashen, (1981, p.6-7) defined language acquisition as,

> 'What theory implies, quite simply, is that language acquisition, first or second, occurs when comprehension of real messages occurs, and when the acquirer is not "on the defensive"... Language acquisition does not require extensive use of conscious grammatical rules, and does not require tedious drill. It does not occur overnight, however. Real language acquisition develops slowly, and speaking skills emerge significantly later than listening skills, even when conditions are perfect. The best methods are therefore those that supply 'comprehensible input' in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students to produce when they are 'ready', recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production.'

According to Krashen, (1981), language acquisition refers to the process of natural adaptation, involving insight and subconscious learning, which is the product of real interactions between people, where the learner is an active participant. It is similar to the way children learn their native tongue, a process that produces functional skill in the spoken language without theoretical knowledge. Language acquisition develops familiarity with the phonetic characteristics of the language as well as its structure and vocabulary, and is responsible for oral understanding, the capability for creative communication and for the identification of cultural values. Teaching and learning are viewed as activities that happen in a personal psychological plane, (Krashen, 1987).

The acquisition approach to second language teaching praises the communicative act and develops self-confidence in the learner. A classic example of language acquisition involves adolescents and young adults who live abroad for a year in an exchange programme, attaining near native fluency, while knowing little about grammatical and

syntactical structure of the language in the majority of cases. They develop good pronunciation without a notion of phonology, do not know what the perfect tense is, what modal or phrasal verbs are, but they intuitively recognize and know how to use all the structures of the language. However, the acquisition-learning distinction hypothesis claims that adults do not lose the aptitude to acquire languages in the manner that children do. Just as research shows that error correction has little impact on children learning a first language, so too error correction has little influence on language acquisition, (Krashen, 1987).

On the other hand, language learning is explicit, conscious and staged. The 'learned system' or 'learning' is the result of formal instruction and it includes a conscious process which results in conscious knowledge about the language, for example, knowledge of grammar rules, (Krashen, 1981). The objective of the 'learning' is to allow the student to understand the structure and rules of the language through the use of intellect and logical deductive interpretation. There is only a limited space for the natural uses of language. The main characteristics of learning are based on theoretical studies of language, rather than practical, communicative uses of language, and teachers place a high value on accuracy and correctness. In the classroom, the teacher is powerful, the arbiter of accuracy, and the learners are mostly passive, frequently undertaking exercises in vocabulary usage or sentence construction, which require them to put grammatical points learned into practice.

Krashen's *acquisition-learning hypothesis* is central to his influential theorization of second language learning. Krashen (1985) acknowledges that there are two independent systems of second language performance: 'the acquired system' and 'the learned system'. The 'acquired system' or 'acquisition' is the result of a subconscious process very similar to the process children experience when they obtain their first language. It involves meaningful communication in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concentrated not on the form of their utterances, but on the communicative act. Native instructors have a clear advantage in supporting language acquisition through a communicative approach, and the presence of the authentic and the culture of the target language is fundamental for language acquisition. The table below highlights the characteristics of acquisition and learning in Krashen's acquisition-learning hypothesis.

Acquisition	Learning
• Implicit, Subconscious	• Explicit, Conscious
• Informal Situation	• Formal Situation
• Uses Grammatical 'Feel'	• Uses Grammatical Rules
• Depends on Attitude	• Depends on Aptitude
• Constant order of Acquisition	• Simple to Complex Order of Learning.

Table (3.1)   The characteristic of Krashen's Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis

Krashen believes that 'learning' is less important than 'acquisition'. Efficient teaching is personalized, based on the personal skills of the facilitator in creating situations of real communication, focusing on the student's interests and taking place in a bicultural environment. Teaching and learning according to Krashen is a technical process. There is a difference between meaningful communication on one hand which can take place in the language classroom and which will generate sub-conscious processes, and the conscious attention to form on the other hand which can also take place in naturalistic settings.

However, Krashen has been criticized for his distinction between conscious and sub-conscious processes, as they are very difficult to test in practice, (Mitchell and Myles, 2004). Krashen has not clarified when the learner is using conscious process and when not. For L2 teachers, this distinction between conscious cognitive processes and unconscious acquisition of language is of vital importance.

Another criticism levelled against Krashen's theory, is that learning cannot turn into acquisition, learned and acquired knowledge cannot be integrated into one, (Mitchell and Myles, 2004). In Krashen's theory, the language that one has subconsciously acquired starts our utterances in a second language and is responsible for our fluency, whereas the language that we have consciously learned acts as an editor in situations where the learner has enough time to edit, is focused on form, and knows the rule, such as on a grammar test in a language classroom or when carefully writing a composition. This conscious editor is called the *Monitor*. Different individuals use their monitors in different ways, with differing degrees of success. The importance of 'Monitor Hypothesis' as describes by Krashen, (1981) is in understanding the relationship between acquisition and learning. The monitoring function is the practical result of the explicitly learned grammar and knowledge about language. Learners do not use their conscious knowledge of grammar in normal conversation, but will use it in writing and

planned speech. 'Optimal Monitor users can therefore use their learned competence as a supplement to their acquired competence', (ibid, p. 20). We can see that Krashen believes the role of the monitor is secondary, being used only to correct deviations from 'normal' speech and to give speech a more refined form or accuracy.

In addition, Krashen believes, the second language learner has enough time to think and correct because he/she knows the L2 rule. For him the role of conscious learning is somewhat limited in second language performance and leads to 'disrupt communication in conversational situation', (p, 2). The grammatical structure of a language can be too complex and abstract to be classified and distinguished by explicit rules (Krashen, 1988). Even if L2 learners are aware of the language structure and grammatical rules, they need to understand how to use the language in a practical functional context in order to become communicatively competent. So, to develop language proficiency, learners need to have a strong instinctive control of the language in its oral form. Timothy, (1999) believes that Krashen is radical in ignoring the importance of learning. Teaching grammar is essential to language acquisition, and may aid people to get through the steps more quickly, although will not modify the order of acquisition, and needs to be introduced at the right time for the learner for it to have impact. Timothy, (1999) criticized Krashen's 'Monitor Hypothesis' as it is stated below:

> 'Krashen does not make much of the fact that there may be considerable variations in the speed of self-correction due to individual differences in temperament … Again, it may be that we become more conscious of our monitoring activities when we find ourselves in the kind of situation that creates anxiety', (p. 5)

Krashen, (1982) coined a term, the 'natural order hypothesis', for any given language; some grammatical structures tend to be acquired early while others late. This order appears to be independent of the learner's age, L1 background, and conditions of exposure. Krashen, (1982) rejects grammatical sequencing when the goal is language acquisition. For him, correcting an error, or giving grammatical instruction will only have an effect if the learner is actually at the stage when that specific piece of information is relevant, and then only if she is receptive to outside help.

The natural order of language acquisition is made possible by language input. The 'Input hypothesis' is Krashen's effort to explain how the learner acquires a second language. In other words, this hypothesis focuses on how second language acquisition

takes place. However, the input hypothesis is only concerned with 'acquisition', not 'learning'. According to this hypothesis, the learner develops and progresses along the 'natural order' when he/she receives second language 'input' that is one step beyond his/her current stage of linguistic competence. Krashen's input hypothesis goes with what Vygotsky, (1987) argues, that 'there is also an upper boundary, that is, we know optimal periods exist for the learning of an intellectual skill. The mother tongue, for example, is best learned [at an] early age, while mathematics should properly be learned considerable later', (p. 336). 'The zone of proximal development, ZPD' according to Vygosky is 'the distance between the learner's actual development determined with the help of independently solved tasks and the level of the potential development of the child, determined with the help of tasks solved by the child under the guidance of adults', (Vygotsky, 1933/ 1935, p. 42).

In other words, how does the learner progress from one stage to another? Or move from stage *i* to *i+1, where i* 'represents current competence' and *i+1* is the next level, (Krashen, 1982). For example, if a learner is at a stage 'i', then acquisition that takes place when he/she is exposed to 'Comprehensible Input' belongs to level 'i + 1'. Comprehensible input is defined as second language input just beyond the learner's present competence, in terms of syntactic complexity. Since not all of the learners can be at the same level of linguistic competence at the same time, Krashen suggests that 'natural communicative input' is the key to designing a syllabus, guaranteeing in this way that each learner will obtain some 'i + 1' input that is proper for his/her present stage of linguistic competence.
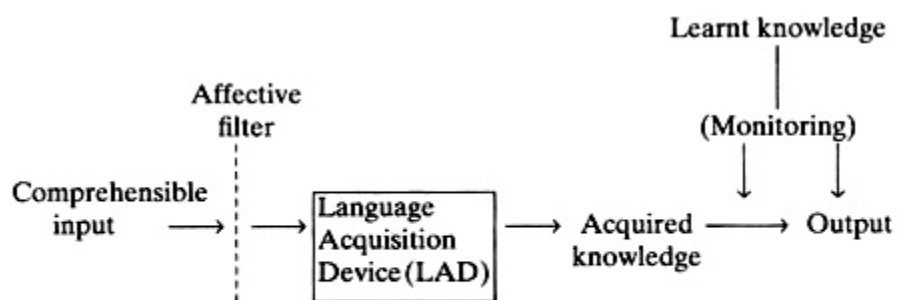
The Input Hypothesis Model of L2 learning and production (adapted from Krashen, 1982, pp. 16 and 32; and Gregg, 1984)

Figure (3. 1) Combined model of acquisition and production

Krashen's Input hypothesis been criticized for being unclear, for example, how can we determine level *i* and level *i+1*. The critics have focused on the concept of 'comprehensible input' itself, and have indicated that Krashen is not overall clear about what he means by this term. Sometimes it shows that it is the language itself that should be comprehensible, and sometimes it is caused to be comprehensible because of external contextual clues, (Timothy, 1999). In contrast, Chomsky's (1959) theory is based on the concept that humans are born with a special biological brain mechanism, called a Language Acquisition Device (LAD). He has claimed that the overall structure of language must be innate, based on his paper-and-pencil examination of the facts of language alone. This theory supposes that the aptitude to learn language is inborn, that nature is more important than nurture and that experience using language is only necessary in order to activate the LAD. However, Krashen's, (1982) theory of acquisition, the 'Comprehensible Input' level *'i+1'* contrasts with Chomsky's (1959) LAD theory. Krashen's theory is based on the importance of the interaction with the foreign language. He believes language learners need to communicate in the language in order to be fluent. By input and output factor, we acquire the foreign language. Whereas, Chomsky believes that we were born with the LAD, and this device needs to be activated by exposing the learner to the language, not by interaction with the language. Jerome Bruner, (1966, 1960) describes the language behaviour of adults when talking to children is specially adapted to support the acquisition process, child-directed speech (CDS). This support is often described as scaffolding for the child's language learning. Language exists for the purpose of communication and can only be learned in the context of interaction with people who want to communicate with you.

The importance of the affective variables in language acquisition is encompassed in Krashen's 'affective filter hypothesis'. Krashen claims that learners with high motivation, self-confidence, a good self-image, and a low level of anxiety are better capable of success in second language acquisition.

However, the main concern about Krashen's theory still remains, in how to test the comprehensive model to have empirical validity, (Mitchell and Myles, 2004). In addition, Ellis (1985a, p.266) points out that 'the Monitor Model poses serious theoretical problems regarding the validity of the acquisition-learning distinction, the operation of monitoring, and the explanation of variability in language-learner

language'. Adults and adolescents do not acquire language in the same way as children, whereas Stephen Krashen thinks that there is a good chance that they do.

Timothy, (1999. p1) rejects the idea that learning cannot help the learner towards fluency. Learning is vital and essential, especially for writing. Writing needs constant efforts and training and cannot be acquired. Vygotsky, (1978, p.105) distinguished between writing and speaking, as he states:

> 'Unlike the teaching of spoken language, into which children grow of their own accord, teaching of written language is based on artificial training. Such training needed a vast amount of attention and effort on the role of teacher and pupil and therefore, becomes something self-reliant, transferring living written language to the background. Instead of being founded on the needs of children as they naturally developed and on their own activity, writing is giving to them from the teacher's hands' .

The nature of written language is different from the nature of spoken language. Children acquire their spoken language naturally and simply by exposure to the language through their social and cultural interactions settings.   Vygotsky, (1978) argues, written language cannot be acquired in the same way as spoken language and the reason for that is, written language consists of a system of signs that designate the sounds and words of spoken language. Gradually this intermediate link, spoken language, disappears, and 'written language is converted into system of signs that directly symbolize the entities and relations between them' (p.106). In addition, to master such a complex sign system cannot be achieved in purely mechanical and external methods; rather it is conclusion of a long process of development of complex behavioural functions in the child. Myles, (2002, p. 1) illustrates, 'The ability to write well is not a naturally acquired skill; it is usually learned or culturally transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments'. Writing skills must be practised and learned through experience. Therefore, we could illustrate that, whether you are an L1 or an L2 writer, learning to write is always a dominantly conscious process, and it 'can be seen as a more standardized system which must be acquired through special instruction', (Grabowski, 1996, p.75). However, first language writers always learn to spek the language before writing; on the other hand, second language writers might be more confident and fluent in L2 writing than speaking because their teaching method has not taught them L2 oral communication.

No matter how much we agree or disagree with Krashen's theory, we cannot deny that Krashen's ideas have been greatly influential in shaping the language researchers' projects, language teachers' agenda, and understanding second language acquisition.

Theories of Writing Development

While research on writing L1 and L2 contexts has developed remarkably over the last 30 years, teaching of writing is only now beginning to gain the benefits of this research. L2 writing demonstrates much less evidence of progress, in spite of the studies that have been conducted to investigate L2 writing difficulties for L2 learners.

Cognitive models of the Writing Process

Until the early eighties, there had been no attempt to conceptualize a cognitive model of the writing process, and understanding of the mental processes that occurred during writing was limited. Hayes and Flower's model (1980) was highly significant in beginning a period of considerable advances in understanding of the writing process, and considerable empirical research into these cognitive processes which continues today.

Hayes and Flower (1980) Model

The Hayes and Flower model was derived from the use of 'think aloud' protocols in which research participants were encouraged to say what they were thinking as they undertook a piece of writing.

Figure (2) is showing the Hayes and Flower (1980) model. The model divides the composing process into three major components: t*he composing processor, the task environment*, and *the writer's long term memory*. Within the composing processor there are three operational processes which help in producing the written text; planning, translating, and reviewing: these three processors are managed by a monitor. The task environment includes social factors as well as physical factors. The writer's long term memory is an internal cognitive process that includes knowledge of topic, audience, and genre.

```
                          Task Environment

         ┌─────────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────┐
         │  Writing Assignment │        │      Text       │
         │                     │        │                 │
         │       Topic         │        │    Produced     │
         │      Audience       │        │                 │
         │                     │        │     So Far      │
         └─────────────────────┘        └─────────────────┘

┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Writer's Long│   │                                                  │
│ Term Memory  │   │ ┌─────────────┐  ┌────────────┐  ┌─────────────┐  │
│              │   │ │ Planning    │  │Translating │  │ Revising/   │  │
│ Knowledge of │   │ │┌─┐ ┌───────┐│  │            │  │ Reviewing   │  │
│  Topics      │   │ ││G│→│Organizin││ │            │  │ ┌─────────┐ │  │
│ Knowledge of │   │ ││e│ └───────┘│  │            │  │ │ Reading │ │  │
│  Audience    │   │ ││n│ ┌───────┐│  │            │  │ └─────────┘ │  │
│ Stored Writing│  │ ││...│Goal   ││  │            │  │      ↓      │  │
│  Plans       │   │ ││g│ │Setting││  │            │  │ │ Editing │ │  │
│ Knowledge of │   │ │└─┘ └───────┘│  │            │  │ └─────────┘ │  │
│ Sources based│   │ └─────────────┘  └────────────┘  └─────────────┘  │
│ on literature│   │        ┌──────────────────────────────┐          │
│ search       │   │        │          Monitor             │          │
└──────────────┘   │        └──────────────────────────────┘          │
                   └──────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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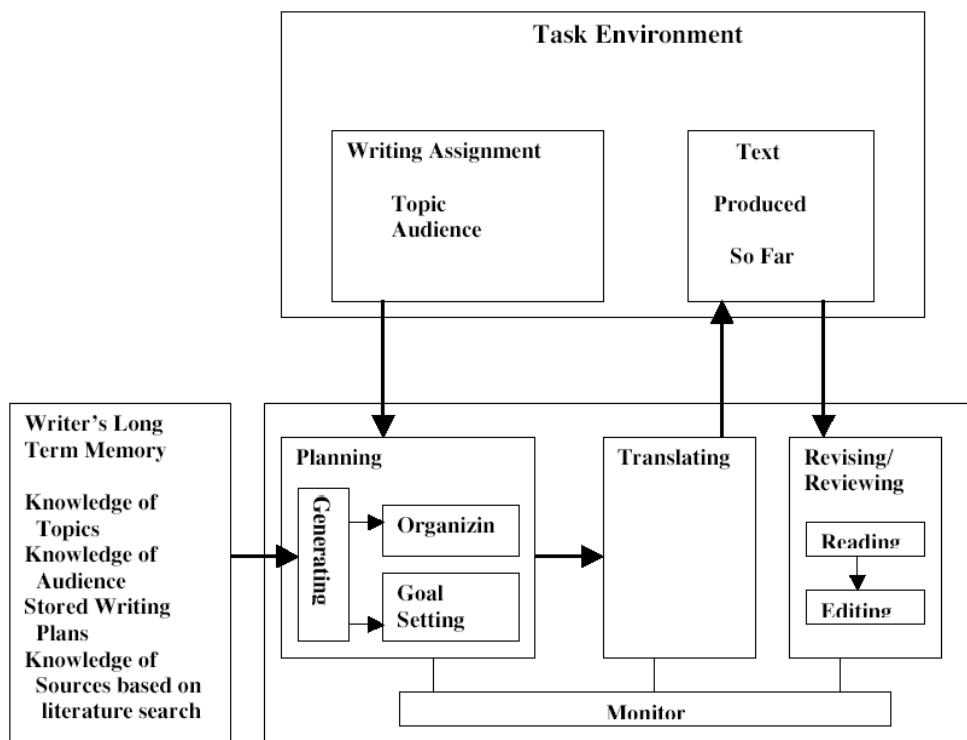
Figure (3.2) The cognitive process model of the composing process. Hayes and Flower, (1981) process model.

Task environment

The task environment includes all those factors influencing the writing task that exist outside of the writer and contribute to shaping the writing process and the performance. Task Environment includes the rhetorical problems, the topic, the communicative target (audience), the motivational factors deriving from the writing situation (motivation cues) and the text that the writer has so far. These factors are represented as an act of communication in a social context. Apparently, in their model, they emphasized the following main ideas:

- Compositing processes are co-operative work, combination, and would-be simultaneous;

- Composing is a goal-directed activity;

- Expert writers compose differently than novice writers.

The Composing Box

Within the composing box, three operational processes generate the written text; planning (deciding what to say and how to say it), translating (called text generation in

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the figure, turning plans into written text), and reviewing (improving existing text); which are then followed by monitoring (process controlling the sub-processes).

Planning

In the planning process, there are three sub-components: generating ideas, organizing information, and setting goals. In the planning process, ideas are translated into language on paper, and are later revised and reviewed. Information which the writer locates in long-term memory is essential in order to work out the plan and then to write the text. Ideas are generated by retrieving relevant information from long-term memory. The role of organizing ideas is to select the most suitable information which was recovered in the previous sub-process, and structure the writing plan and establish goals and sub-goals that set criteria to direct the consciousness of the writing plan. This plan is the guide for the goal and sub-goals of writing the text.

Translating

Translation is the act of expressing the content of the planning in written English. This translating process involves text production. The text production should be grammatically and formally correct. This process involves syntactic, lexical and regular revision and looking back to the original plan. Planning and producing are two activities that happen interactively. Some authors (Read, 1981; Mayer, 1999; Scardamalia, 1981) have brought to light that low-level writing skills use up a lot of cognitive resourses, for example, working the memory to enrich their writing.

Reviewing

Improving what has been written through sub-processes. The reviewing process is divided into two sub-processes: evaluation, which refers to assessment of the text to detect errors, and revision, which refers to making actual changes. Butler, Elaschuk, and Poole, (2000) find that, good writers carry out self-regulated writing, relying on their own knowledge of the task; they use supportive strategies, they are certain of their ability to produce important texts, and they believe that the success of their writing is under their control. However, through the development and study of how cognitive models function, revision has proved to be a highly complex operation which is now seen as a starting point. Revision is a vital activity that initiates discovery, builds skill

levels, and over time, as writers increase in maturity through practice, creates writing expertise.

Monitor

The monitor appears in the Hayes and Flower (1980) model as an important box parallel in status to the three writing processes boxes. Its relation to each process box was symbolized by undirected lines connecting it to the three process boxes (planning, translating, and reviewing). The monitor was viewed as a process controlling the sub-processes. Monitor is the function which allows the writer to move between processes; responding to the needs of the task. Through the monitoring process, significant individual differences are presented in their writing styles. The writing processes can be seen as tools to be 'orchestrated' by the writer. Young writers and presumably second language writers both have limited monitoring capacity as they are less able to switch between processes. Krashen, (1981) believes the role of monitor is not important, being used only to correct differences from 'normal' speech and give speech a more refined form or accuracy. It is to understand the relationship between acquisition and learning. For Krashen the monitor function is the practical result of the explicitly learned grammar and knowledge about the language. Learners do not use that conscious knowledge in their normal conversation but they will use it in writing and planned speech.

The Hayes and Flower (1980) model is criticized as it presents that the cognitive abilities for each writer are uniform, whereas the processing preferences of the writers should be appreciated according to their individual abilities. Hayes and Flower explicitly state that their model is a model of skilled writing. According to language learning theories, individuals differ in their ways of learning techniques and strategies. The variables which might affect the process of writing are varied, such as psychological developmental stage, language proficiency, writing in native or second language, knowledge about audience, maturity in writing, and etc. North (1987) raised another criticism that Hayes and Flower's, (1980) model does not have clear criteria about how text material could be constructed and what are the linguistics constraints. Bizzell (1982) argues that 'what's missing here is the connection to social context afforded by the recognition of the dialectical relationship between thought and

language... we can know nothing but what we have words for, if knowledge is what language makes of experience', (p.22).

Hartly, (1991) pointed out some other limitations to this model. Hartly argues that Hayes and Flower have not accounted in their model for collaborative writing. Kintsch (1987) has criticized Hayes and Flower's model as not considering the writer's creativity, pointing out that creativity is not just information retrieved from long-term memory, it goes further than that. Kemper, (1987) remarks that Hayes and Flower's, (1980) model ignored the writer's goal and motivations and different genres and audiences. Kellogg, (1993, 1994) criticizes the model from a cognitive view, suggesting that some schemas form the writer's knowledge and represent the writer's rhetorical knowledge that may reflect the writer's social or cultural background, which in turn might influence the audiences' attitudes and beliefs. Bandt, (1992) argues, Hayes and Flower have not given any focus to the influence of the social context on the writer's task. Baddeley, (1986) and Kellogg, (1996) both believe that Hayes and Flower did not look at the critical role of short term or working memory in writing. As a result of these criticism, Hayes, (1996) has redesigned a new model to avoid some of these challenges.

How the Hayes and Flower model was developed in (1996).

The main differences between Hayes and Flower's (1980) model and the new model are based on five points: Firstly, the new model focuses on the central role of the working memory in writing. Secondly, it includes visual-spatial alongside linguistic representation. Thirdly, an important emphasis has been given to motivation and effect and 'their central role influences on writing processes', (Hayes, 1996, p. 5). Fourthly, the cognitive process has been made a major focus in the structure of the model. And finally, social environment was included in his new model, to present the importance of writing as an interaction dialogue between the writer and the audience. Revision has been replaced by text interpretation; planning has been listed under the more general group of reflection; translation has been listed under a more general text production process.

The components of the new Hayes 1996 model

In Hayes', (1996) new model there are two major components: the task environment component and the individual component. Under the *task environment* component,

Hayes includes everything outside of the writer which contributes to form the writing process. The 'rhetorical problem' (the writing assignment) is an act of communication, happening in a social context. Under task environment there are two sub-components, firstly, the social component which includes the audience and the collaborators (other text that the writer may read while writing, or social environment influence). Secondly, the physical component, which includes, 'the text that the writer has produced so far and a writing medium such as a word processor', (Hayes, 1996, p. 4).

In the *individual component*; motivation and effect, cognitive processes, working memory and long-term memory were added. As Hayes is a psychologist, he gives an 'individual component' more attention but that does not mean that he does not consider the other components to be important. Hayes believes, 'writing depends on an appropriate combination of cognitive, effective, social, and physical conditions if it is to happen at all… writing is a generative activity requiring motivation, and it is an intellectual activity requiring cognitive processes and memory' (Hayes, 1996, p. 5). Cognitive processes, according to Hayes, (1996), are responsible for text interpretation, reflection, and text production. However, long-term memory in both models is considered important for storing the necessary knowledge for writing.
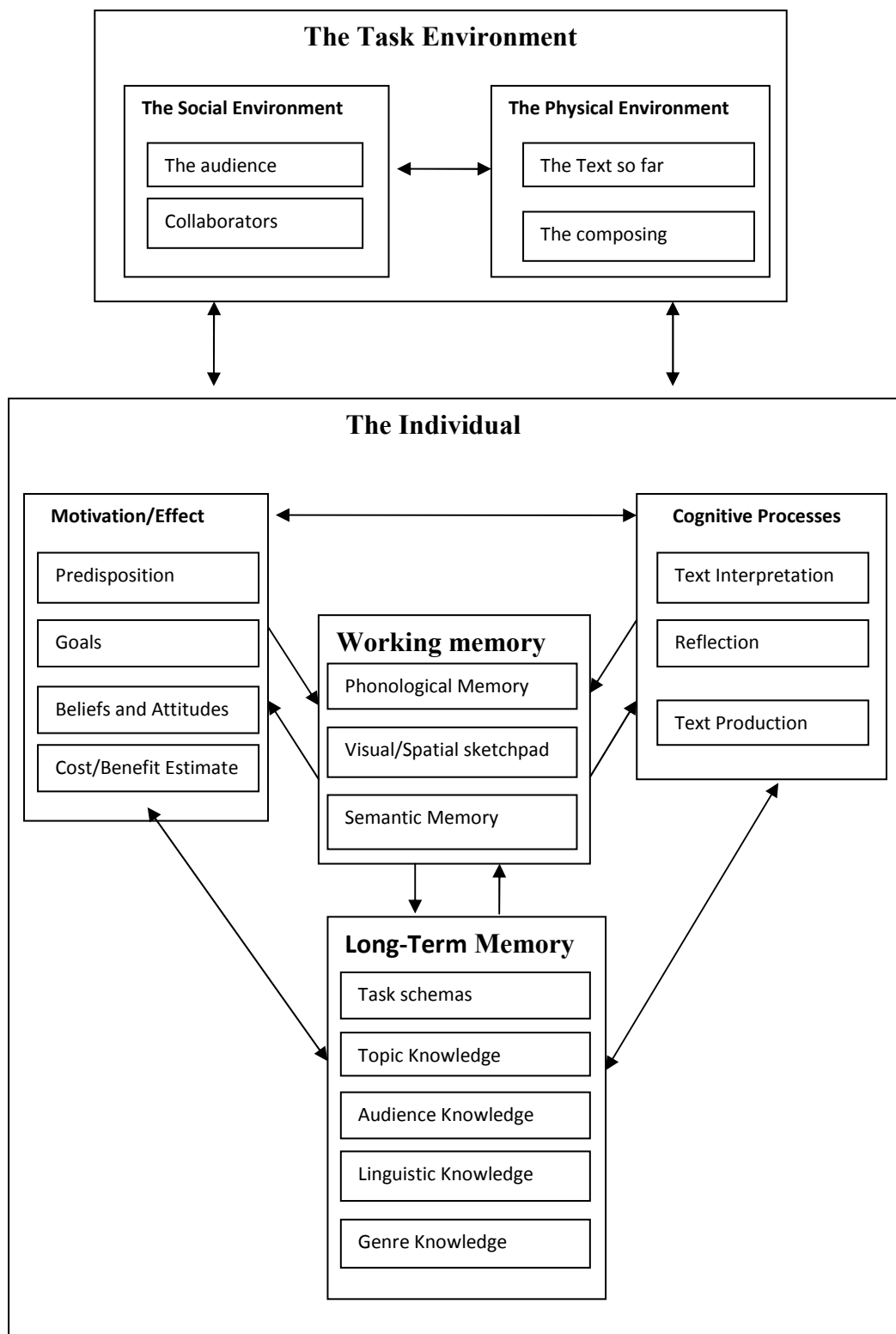
Figure (3.3) The general organization of the new model form, Hayes (1996, p. 4)

Bereiter and Scardamalia, (1987) Theory

The concept of Bereiter and Scardamalia's theory is that the writing process goes through different processing models, according to the developmental stages of writing. Their theory focuses on describing why and how skilled and unskilled writers compose differently. Bereiter and Scardamalia's main questions are:

1. 'How could a processing model distinguish skilled from less-skilled writing?
2. How do audience and genre differences create distinct writing difficulties, and why do some genres appear more difficult to master, and some audiences more difficult to address?
3. Why are some writing tasks easy and others more difficult (not only genre and audience, but also purpose, topic, and language variation)?
4. Why do writing skills in one task or genre not transfer to other writing tasks or genres?
5. Why do some writers have more difficulty than others on some writing tasks yet appear to be at the same general proficiency level?
6. Why do some children find writing easy and natural, yet skilled writers often find it difficult and painful?
7. Why is advanced writing instruction particularly difficult and often ineffective?
8. Why do some writers never seem to develop mature composing skills in spite of much practice and long educational experiences?
9. Why do expert writers revise differently from less-skilled writers?
10. How can the writing process account for the notion of "shaping at the point of utterance" cf (Britton), (1983)', Grabe and Kaplan, (1996, p. 119).

Bereiter and Scardamalia suggest two models for the writing process: the knowledge telling and the knowledge transforming models. They present evidence that skilled and less-skilled writers are composing differently, and the less-skilled put less time into planning when writing their assignments.

The Knowledge Telling Model

The knowledge telling model is mainly used for less-skilled writers such as children, novice writers, L2 learners. Less-skilled writers need to keep their writing task uncomplicated and simple, if they are to be successful. Converting oral language experiences into written form is what knowledge telling basically suggests for less-skilled writers. The problem with knowledge telling is that the writer depends mainly on his/her internal resources to generate useful information.

Bereiter and Scardamalia designed a structured model for the knowledge telling process. In their model the information is produced from the topic, assignment, genre, and lexical items in the assignment (mental representation of assignment). When the writer receives the idea of the topic, the memory starts to retrieve for relevant information from two types of knowledge in long-term memory, and necessary for the writing activities, 'Content knowledge' which helps the writer to manage the text content and 'Discourse knowledge' which manipulates linguistic knowledge such as syntactic, lexical information.

In the 'Knowledge Telling Process' there are seven stages; the first two stages are called 'Located Topic Identifier' and 'Located Genre Identifier'. When the memory identifies the idea, it begins giving information about the topic and the writer starts writing down and searching for more things to write about.

However, the disadvantages of the 'Knowledge Telling Process' is that it does not count for writing tasks that need more complex processing of information ordering, of relative importance of information, of audience expectations, and logical outline of argument that shows the efficiency of the writing, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). The knowledge telling process might not be appropriate for an advanced writer who deals with complex writing tasks. Therefore, Bereiter and Scardamalia designed a second model of the writing process that accounts for the task complexity for the expert writer. They have called it 'Knowledge Transforming'.

Mental Representation of Assignment

KNOWLEDGE –TELLING PROCESS

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

DISCOURSE KNOWLEDGE

LOCATE TOPIC IDENTIFIERS

LOCATE GENRE IDENTIFIER

CONSTRUCT MEMORY PROBES

RETRIEVE CONTENT FROM MEMORY USING PROBES

RUN TEST OF APPROPRIATENESS

WRITE (NOTES, DRAFTS, ETC)

UPDATE MENTAL PRESENTATION OF TEXT
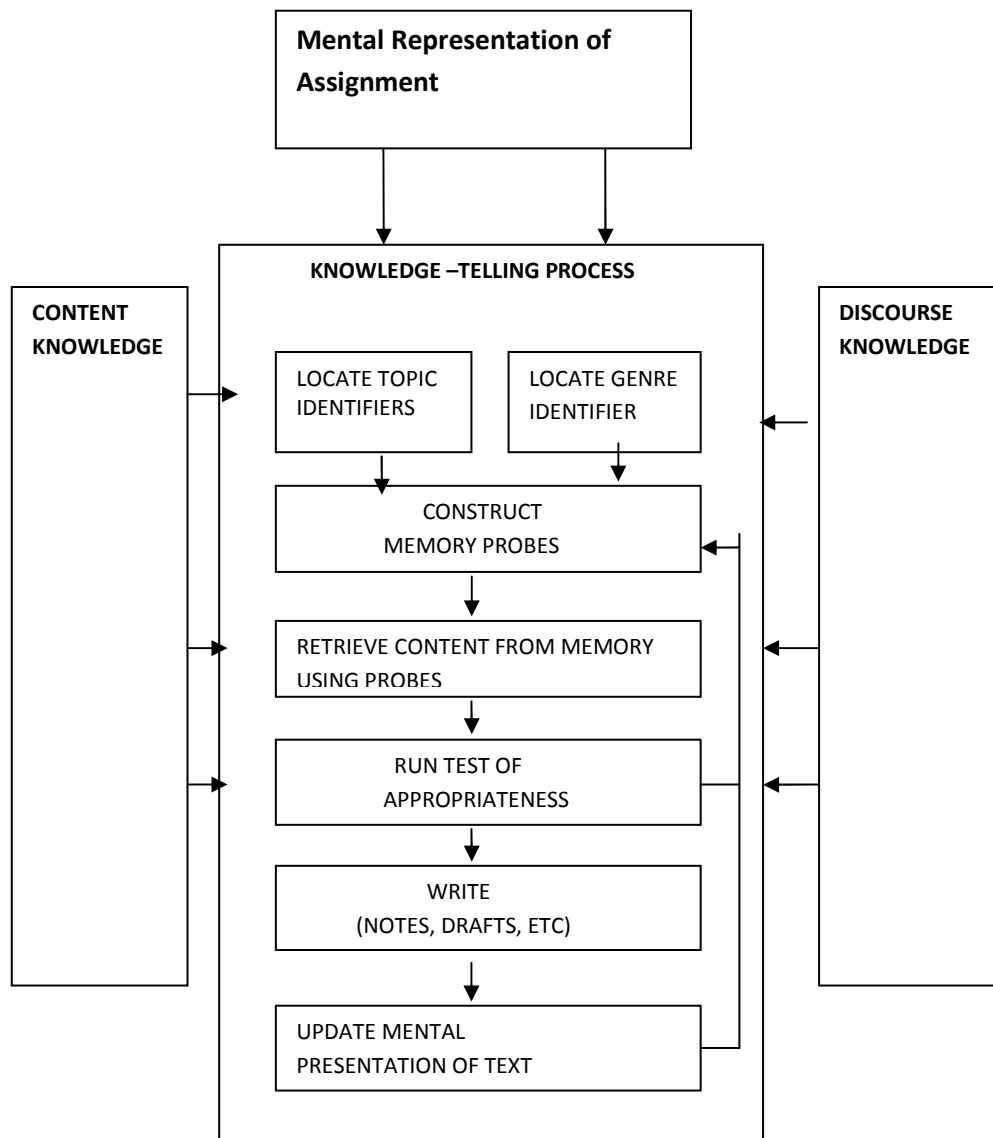
Figure (3.4) Knowledge-Telling Model adapted from Scardamalia and Bereiter, (1987).

Knowledge Transforming Model

The knowledge transforming model is proposed for an expert writer with more complex task and problem-solving processes.   In this model the problems are solved by conscious resolution in both the content problem space and the rhetorical problem space, 'the output of one becomes input of others', (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996, p. 123). In the knowledge transforming model, the writing task leads to problem analysis and goal setting.

```
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │ MENTAL PRESENTATION OF  │
                    │ ASSIGNMENT              │
                    └─────────────────────────┘
                                 │
                                 ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
                    │ PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND    │◄────────┐
                    │ GOAL SETTING            │         │
                    └─────────────────────────┘         │
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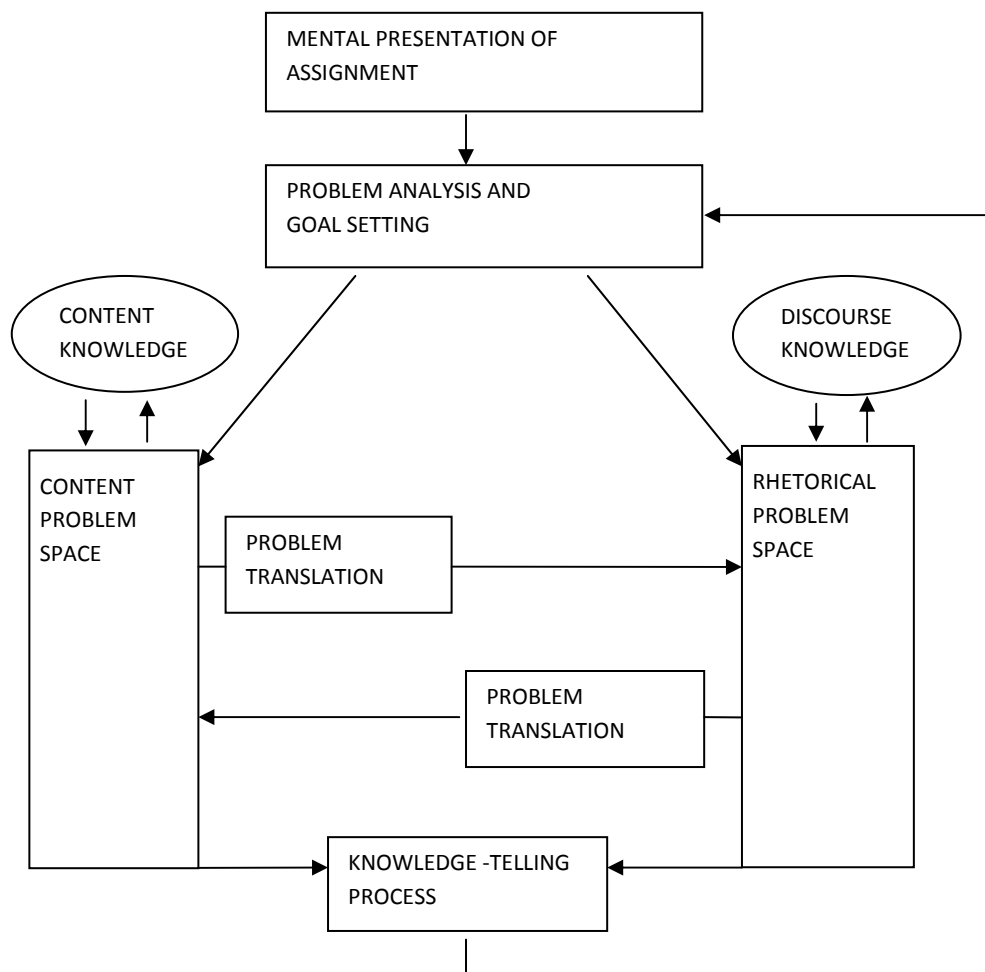
Figure (3.5) The Structure of the knowledge transforming process.

Knowledge telling and knowledge transforming represent two different styles of how writers compose. They provide an explicit account for how L2 learners, children, and skilled writers see writing differently. The background knowledge of the topic is an important factor for determining the complexity of the task.

These two models focus on differences rather than similarities between writers. In addition, the two-process model provides an account of how more complex writing tasks create problems that are beyond the abilities of less-skilled writers but can be handled by skilled writers, (ibid, p. 126).

Criticism of the Bereiter and Scardamalia theory

Bereiter and Scardamalias' theory has a number of challenges which should be addressed here, for example, the ways in which a writer develops a knowledge-transforming model of the writing process is not clear in their theory. From the teaching point of view, Bereiter and Scardamalia, (1987) have not presented how or when a writer makes this cognitive transaction, and whether the writer needs to develop a stage of knowledge–transforming ability. In addition, the more complex writing process is limited or restricted to certain individuals and not equally accessible to anyone who is interested to be an expert writer, (Grab and Kaplan, 1996).

It is noteworthy say that, L2 students may have the ability to write in their first language successfully using the knowledge transforming model; however, they may not be able to write in the second language in the same transfer as the first language, (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1990).

Cognitive models of writing to date have been developed from data drawn from L1 writers, and L2 researchers have tended to assume the models would apply equally to L2 writers, with appropriate modifications. This, however, is not necessarily the case. Grabe (2003, p. 242) notes that 'cultural and language differences create difficulties that are not to be accounted for by L1 research'. Cognitive models of writing tend to position writers as lone individuals struggling mostly with their thoughts through problem-solving. At the same time, the cognitive models acknowledge the significance of prior knowledge in writing, for example, the stored writing plans. If we apply this to L2 writers, L2 prior knowledge is mainly established from the social and cultural background of the first language. So when L2 writers write, they may employ their first language writing knowledge in L2 tasks, because of lack of experience in writing in the L2. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) believe that expert writers approach writing differently from novice writers. If we apply this concept to L2 writers, L2 writers are in some ways both novice and expert writers: they may be novices at writing in the L2 but may be experts at writing in L1.

The Role of Working Memory in writing

Working memory plays an important role in text production, (McCutchen, 1996; Torrance & Jeffery, 1998). Working Memory, or short-term memory, has been defined

by different researchers, but there is no specific definition that has been adopted by all the researchers. James, (1905) and Waugh and Norman, (1965) defined working memory as a permanent secondary memory with a limited capacity for storing, and temporary maintaining of information. Just et al, (1996) considered working memory as specializing in language processes. Furthermore, Cowan, (1995) and Anderson, Reder, & Lebiere, (1996) defined Working Memory as an 'Activated Zone of Long Term Memory'. Baddeley, (1986) and Kellogg, (1988, 1990) have proposed two models of working memory:

Baddeley's (1986) Working Memory

Baddelley, (1986, 1990) gave a definition for Working Memory as a 'Composite System of Modules'. However, Gathercole & Baddeley, (1993) illustrate that we do not know how working memory functions in writing compared with what is known about reading. For example, 'visual and spatial stores of working memory may support the planning of ideas and their relations but not the generation of sentences to express them'. Baddeley (1996) describes working memory as a temporary storing and processing system of information in a limited capacity system. This system consists of three components:

The Central Executive: Responsible for controlling the regulation of the flow of information that is circulating in Working Memory. The role of the central executive is to manage some activities and to inhibit some others to avoid exceeding the limited capacities of the processing system. The Central Executive has two slave systems:

The 'Phonological-Articulatory Loop': It is specialized in the processing of verbal coded information: a 'Phonological Storing System' contains linguistic information, and the process of articulatory rehearsal helps to maintain verbal information by repetition.

Visuo-Spatial Sketchpad: This is the short-term storing of visual and spatially coded information, as well as the elaboration and manipulation of mental images.

Baddeley, (1986) linked the 'Phonological Loop' with the 'inner voice' which assists the writer in retrieving some information from long-term Memory, for example, arithmetic, logical reasoning, and semantic verification. The information in short-term memory easily gets lost, if the learner has not practised rehearsal. As a result, L2 teachers must assign enough time for rehearsal during classroom lessons to allow

students to store the new information into the long-term memory. In addition, the amount of given information should not be too much, otherwise it will be quickly lost.

Kellogg's (1996) Working Memory Model

Kellogg's model distinguishes between three writing components, Formulation, Monitoring, and Execution. Formulation and Monitoring are considered as components of the high-level writing processes and consist of two basic processes: Formulation (with planning and translation), and Monitoring (with reading and editing). The planning process is a unique process in using a storing capacity of the *Visuo-Spatial Sketchpad*. The storing capacity of the *Articulatory Loop* is needed only for translating and reading processes or for linguistic knowledge. The execution of words or characters (with programming and executing) is considered as a low-level of writing processes. Formulation and monitoring and execution processes are affordable and automatized in adults, (Kellogg, 1999; and McCutchen, 1996). However, they are not sufficiently automatised with novice writers as in L2 writers and children. There is a strong relationship between working memory span or capacity and adults or children's writing process efficiency.

The capacity of the working memory is limited and it has two main consequences on writing. Kellogg (1996) argues that although written composition is a highly challenging cognitive activity, multiple processes can be triggered simultaneously as long as sufficient resources are available. Further, Fayol (1999) proposed that automatization of the writing processes is a necessary mechanism because it provides additional resources, and tolerates the synchronized coordination of many writing processes.

Knowledge for Writing

In long-term memory we store our knowledge of language such as vocabulary, grammar, genre, topic and audience. It has a large capacity store. When we receive information (stimuli) by our senses, it goes directly to our mind. Our mind starts working on some of the received information. Slavin illustrates that the pictures that our minds makes from this information are not necessary exactly the same as what we have seen. Our mind interprets the information that we receive according to our previous experiences, knowledge, motivation, interest, and many other factors, (Slavin, 2003).

Therefore, 'perception of stimuli is not as straightforward as reception of stimuli, rather it involves mental interpretation', (Slavin, 2003, p. 174).

In Hayes's (1996) model, he talks about three topics which he thinks are related to long-term memory: *Task schemas* which store the goal of the task, *Knowledge of audience,* and the impact of the *Extended Practice,* as they relate to long-term memory.

Schemas, or schemata as they are sometimes known, have been described as 'cognitive constructs which allow for the organization of information in long-term memory', (Widdowson, 1983). 'Task schemas will include information about the goals of the task, the processes to be used in accomplishing the task, the sequences for those processes, and criteria for evaluating the success of the task', (Hayes, 1996, p. 24). Cook (1989) states, 'the mind, stimulated by key words or phrases in the text or by the context, activates a knowledge schema' (p.69). Widdowson & Cook both argue the cognitive characteristics of schema which allow us to relate incoming information to already known information.

Knowledge of Audience: Writers can draw on a history of personal interaction when writing to someone that they know well. In the opposite situation, if the writers write to unknown audiences, they usually try to write in a way where they can get under the audiences' skin to experience the message that may attract the audiences. Audiences might find it difficult to understand the writer's text. For example, expert writers find it difficult to write to novice readers, (Hayes, et al. 1986). If we relate this issue to the L2 writer, we will understand why native readers do not feel comfortable when they read L2 writers.

The impact of Extensive Practice: Writing experience is essential for developing a high standard of writing skill, (Hayes, 1996). Every individual needs a long period of practice before they can produce notable works of such, art, and poetry, (Hayes, 1985). Practicing writing for a long period of time may help 'attain expert performance in any of the genres of writing', (ibid, p. 26). Thus, L2 writers would not be skilled or good writers, if they had not practiced second language writing regularly and for a long period of time, with different genres of writing.

Sociocultural Theory of Writing

The theoretical thinking about writing and the writer adopts different standpoints. One theoretical stance concerns the writer as a maker whose cognitive processes are the heart of theory and practice, (Hayes and Flower, 1980; Hayes, 1996; Bereiter and Scandamalia, 1987; Johns, 1990). Drawing on cognitive psychological paradigms, the writer is a lone individual acting according to a set of constraints. On the other hand, an alternative perspective places the writer as communicative, as someone who dialogues with the reader, (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf, 2000; Prior, 2006, Street, 1984; 1993; Johns, 1990). This acknowledges the role of the reader or implied reader in shaping the writer's thinking and writing. This is what was called sociocultural theory. It is not a new theory, and was associated with the name of the Soviet developmental psychologist, Lev. S. Vygotsky, (1987).

In Vygotsky's, (1986) socio-cultural theory, he described how human minds develop in relation to their interaction with their culture, which seems to be valid in all societies. The properties of the mind can be discovered by observing mental, physical and linguistic activity because they are naturally related, (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky views consciousness as a process through which people systematize and realize higher mental functions such as voluntary attention, voluntary memory, physical behaviour, intention, and planning. For him consciousness and behaviour occur and exist together, thus they can be observed in the form of human behaviour. Word meaning is involved in the dynamic organization of consciousness. However, Harré and Gillette (1994) argue, it is not the individual words or concepts that build up consciousness, but rather it is the discourse. Vygotsky emphasizes that, the mind is realized in the act of discourse and mental activity and operation of symbolic system are determined by sociocultural history of the person and his/her discourse with the society. Dornyei (2001) states,'language and culture are bound up with each other and interrelated', (p.14). When learning/teaching takes place under different cultural contexts, the physical and the psychological means will certainly be unalike, and it is realistic to predict dissimilar outcomes. Vygotsky believes development depends on the sign systems that individual grow up with. Cultural development occurs on the social level (interpsychological) and on the individual level (interpersonal).

In brief, sociocultural theory holds that the person's written language development depends on a particular social, historical, and cultural setting, (Zebroski, 1994). 'Sociocultural approaches emphasize the interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge', (Steiner and Mahn, 1996, p.1). Sociocultural approaches to writing reject the concept that writing is the material script or act of inscription but see writing as 'chains of short- and long-term production, representation, reception and distribution', writing is a dialogue and collaborative process between the writer and the reader (Prior, 2006, p. 58). Prior argues that text, in the view of the sociocultural theory, is considered as 'an artefact in activity, and the inscription of linguistic signs in some media are part of a stream of mediated, distributed and multimodal activity' (p.59). He adds that language, genres, knowledge, motives, technology of inscription and distribution sociohistorically provide resources for the writer and are extended beyond the moment of transcription. Prior say that classroom learning should be based on interaction and collaboration activities occurring within a group of students. Teaching is needed if the writers are to continually learn new genres and textual practices according to the needs of the social life of the students.

Nevertheless, the socio-cultural approach does not neglect the individual as an influential element in the knowledge constructs, as each learner responds to the context differently, when he/she internalizes it in a distinctive means according to his/her own characteristics, experiences, and existing knowledge. Such an interpretation points out that 'Vygotsky's theory is dialectical; social phenomena (both interpersonal and cultural-historical) and individual characteristics combine to affect development' (Tudge & Scrimsher, 2003, p. 222). Therefore, the role of the writer is to utilize linguistics principles in a communicative way (function).

The perceptions of students towards learning writing, their motives, and the feelings they have of themselves, their aptitudes for the writing, and their attitudes may influence how well they will eventually learn the writing. The learner's experiences vary according to the different circumstances under practice, (Steiner & Mahn, 1996). L2 writers' perception emerges from their culture and that mostly affects their learning processes. Therefore, their learning of L2 writing skills should be described as (Heath, 1982) a result of a long-term process resulting from the interaction of the individuals with different contexts created by home, society or school.

Vygotsky, (1987) argues that through language we can direct others' attention to significant features in the environment, make a plan, or clear the steps that will be taken in solving a problem in what Vygotsky called, the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD). In ZPD teachers needed to plan for activities that fall within the ZPD of the learners. If we apply this for example, to L2 writing teachers, not every L2 writing teachers has the ability to design or plan the needed activities that fall within the ZPD. For the single class teacher with 30 students or more, it is difficult to plan for the individual needs of 30 or more ZPDs. The L2 writing teacher can 'scaffold' L2 students by giving them hints and prompts in their ZPD at different levels. Alijaafreh & Lantolf, (1994) illustrate this in their two case studies conducted with two learners, whose their first language was Korean, with English their second language. In their findings, they confirm that comprehensive teacher's feedback for one of the participants' writing was helpful, as it improved his writing, whereas, for the second participant, it did not. This result could surely just as easily be the result of individual differences in ability to learn from interaction or intervention. The result of Alijaafreh & Lantolf's study is consistent with the Vygotskian sociocultural theory which confirms that knowledge is constructed insocial interactions, and communication through a process of collaboration work. Learners who interact in social settings, as in group and pair work, interact within the ZPD. 'Scaffolding' is a process of helpful intervention discourse which directs the mind of the learner to key features of the environment, and which prompts them through successive steps of a problem, (Vygotsky, 1978). For example, when an L2 writing teacher gives her feedback to students' L2 writing clearly and regularly, she helps them to learn and improve their L2 writing. The role of writing teacher here is not to simplify the task for students, but to give them some prompts verbally or by using written signs. This kind of intervention (scaffolding) shows that writing is a social practice, and texts are socially determined, so writers do not just learn linguistic mastery, but they have to learn about writing in context.

New Literacy conceptual overview

 The New Literacy researchers are also socioculturalists. The studies of the New Literacy group describe the 'social turn' that had taken place in the 1980s and 1990s as researchers had documented literacy practices in the community context, often using ethnography to aid an understanding of these practices; what counts as literacy in everyday settings and to consider ways in which an understanding of literacy is limited

by a focus solely on 'schooled' literacy. Shirley Bryce Heath (1983) published her seminal *Ways with Words* that outlined the literacy practices of three communities in the rural Carolinas: Trackton, Roadville and Maintown. Heath showed how each of these different communities lived, spoke and wrote in different ways. Drawing on ethnographic research methods, she was able to record these ways of speaking and writing and identify that each community carried distinctive ways with words. Street and Street (1991) identified in their 'The Schooling of literacy' paper, the notion of 'schooled' literacy practices as opposed to literacy practice undertaken as part of everyday life. Street is consistent with Vygoskian socioculture theory perspective, when he confirms that approaching literacy in the first language as a social practice, making sense of variations in the uses and meanings of literacy in such contexts is better than depending on unproductive notions of literacy skills, rates, and levels that dominate existing discourse about literacy.

Barton and Hamilton's (1998) study *Local Literacies* was a thorough, continued study that explored and mapped literacy practices across the field where they were used. These studies had a common focus on ethnography as a way in which repeated practices in everyday life could be accessed, understood and interpreted. Pahl and Rowsell, (2005) emphasis the role of literacy as a part of a whole (the whole is the community); literacy teachers should not teaching literacy from the textbooks or skills taxonomy only, but they should realize what learners and 'communities actually do with these texts, old and new, print and multimodal, traditional and radical'. According to *Literacy and Education*, the regular engagement with these everyday texts, discourses and practices is at the spirit of teaching and learning, (ibid, p.6).

Second language writing

The need for second language writing became increasingly apparent as a result of the international expansion of English as the lingua franca of academic and professional communication, (Matsuda, et al, 2009). Second and foreign language writing 'has come to assume a much more central position than it occupied twenty or thirty years ago' and 'writing has become one of the essential skills in a world that is more than ever driven by text and numerical', (Hyland, 2003, p. xiii). It is very important to prepare L2 students with good writing skills to help them communicate their ideas and information efficiently through the global technology network. Teaching and learning writing in

general is different than speaking, it needs an extensive and dedicated training. There are many factors that have a strong influence on learning and teaching L2 writing tasks, as in for example, previous experiences, the background of L1 writing proficiency, teaching and learning practices, and etc. Grab and Kaplan (1996, p. 29) confirm, 'research on L2 writing in contexts other than the USA, Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom (UK) in minimal'. Research in L2 writing should internationally expand and have independent L2 writing theories, dealing with the L2 writer, not L1. There is a serious desire today in new theoretical approaches to the study of written texts and approaches to the teaching of L2 writing to integrate present theory and research results, (Hyland, 2003).

Second language writing research

Theories of L1 writing will not be sufficient for advances in L2 writing. The limitations of L2 research are reflected in a limited view of L2 writing theory. It is necessary to build up a theory of L2 writing, making use of L1 research, and integrating the unique feature of L2 writing. According to Silva (1990) we need to have a model for L2 writing that integrates the following five components: 1) L2 writing theory; 2) research on the nature of L2 writing; 3) research on L2 writing instruction; 4) L2 writing instruction theory; 5) L2 writing practice. In addition, Cohen and Cavalcani (1990) suggest a way of exploring differences between L1 and L2 writing by using ethnographic data to distinguish between different situations in different L2 societies, as each language has its own context. Using a general theory for L2 writing may not be possible or efficient.

Historically, L2 writing research is mainly focused on the applied linguistics. Most of second language writers are still in the process of learning syntactic and lexical competence. Applied linguistics lately has abstracted the work of the cognitive psychologists to study the organization of discourse and text construction processes. Krashen (1984, p. 41) argues, 'studies of second language writing are sadly lacking'. Accordingly, the needs for writing research became important for different reasons; in the last thirty years a high demand for good writing skills has become more essential for preparing L2 writers to be successful in the new globalized economic system and the consistency of migrations across different countries due to the international industrial and technological revolution, (Matsuda, et al, 2009). The nature of written texts and writing processes has been developed in different areas such as composition, genre

theory, and contrastive rhetoric. L2 writers are always looking for help in producing L2 text by allowing editors and reviewers to engage in bringing forth their finished L2 writing product, (Belcher, 2007). The voice of these reviewers influences the quality of the L2 texts. Nowadays, L2 writing is applicable to all teachers from different instructional or disciplinary levels of writing, and the study of written texts as well as methods of teaching L2 writing has been put under scrutiny for present theory and research findings, (Hyland, 2003). Writing research also recognizes the importance of advanced literacy in academic and professional contexts in different areas, (Kroll, 1990). For example, special writing: English for Special Purposes (ESP), and English for Academic Purposes (EAP) are needed by various groups of students. ESP was the best recognized for the progress of discourse analysis and text linguistic. Teaching ESP helps L2 learners who need writing skills for special majors like engineers, doctors, business, etc..), (Swales, 1990; Maher and Rokosz, 1992). However, different majors and cultures need different kinds of writing contexts and expectations for their students. Researchers on 'contrastive rhetoric' have suggested that norms and genres of writing are frequently culturally determined, and L2 writers may face some challenges in trying to meet the prospect of new genres and new audiences, (Matsuda, 1997; Leki, 1997; Kubota, 1998). Therefore, L2 writers may encounter different challenges formed in learning the appropriate form of second language writing and identify the cultural expectations of L2 readers, (Matsuda, et al, 2009).

Background of second language writers

Learning and teaching L2 writing is influenced by different factors, as in for example, the L1 writing proficiency background of the learners, their literacy development, and their history in teaching and learning L2 writing. The country of origin of the L2 writer, length of prior L2 study, 'extent of access' to L2, linguistic typological distance of L1 from L2, social and political attitudes towards L2, L2 teachers experience, 'extent of L1 literacy training, social practices and expectations of L1 literacy', field of study, and 'cultural expectations for learning', are important factors that may influence L2 contexts, (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). However, L2 writing researchers distinguish between L2 writers who live in the country where English is spoken and they communicate with the language in their everyday life (resident), and L2 writers who work and live in a country where English is a foreign language and they are not exposed to the target language on a daily base (international), (Matsuda, et al 2009; Grabe &

Kaplan, 1996). Obviously, there are differences between the ways in which resident and international L2 writers have acquired English language, (Matsuda, at el. 2009). L2 resident writers are more interested to learn English, more fluent in L2 oral language as they need it in their daily life instructions, conversation, and they may feel comfortable with the dominant culture, (Reid, 1998; Mutsuda, 2003; Mutsuda, at el. 2009). However, L2 writing fluency for the residents is evaluated as a low writing competency compared to their L1 peers. They are prevented from admitting into a higher level of writing course in their academic college and prevented from exposure to more advanced levels of writing experiences, which influences their L2 writing product, (Villalva, 2006a). In contrast, international L2 learners carry different teaching and learning experiences than resident students, as they learn L2 writing in a formal setting in their native countries and their L2 learning approaches were mainly focused on memorizing grammatical rules in their academic background. They may have had limited practice with L2 writing and limited experience to the target culture. Not only that, but they might have had some negative school experiences with writing in their L1 and L2, (Matsuda, at el. 2009). Their rigorous school experiences make them less capable of writing long L2 texts efficiently, or complex texts, as their L2 writing instruction is limited. Their text usually is simple as they plan less for their writing, they have difficulty in setting suitable goals, and it takes them longer to produce their text and locating appropriate words for their writing task.

Second language writing text

Second language writer texts vary from one writer to another according, for example, to their L2 language proficiency level, their L1 writing experience, and their quality of writing genre and context. There are importance differences between the way that L2 writers approach an L2 writing text and their L1language writing. Authors (Matsuda, et al. 2009; Hyland, 2004; Kroll, 2003; Reid, 1993; Grabe & Kaplan; 1996; Prior, 2006) argue that when L2 writers are compositing, they face more challenges in playing with L2 text than they do with their L1 texts. Usually, they have more grammatical errors, difficulties with the structure of the sentence, proposition use, articles and idiomatic expressions. It takes them more time to write in L2 than in their L1. In general, their L2 text includes more errors and may use some unfamiliar organization and structure to native English readers. Mostly, second language texts were seen by native English

readers as less efficient, less proficient, and simpler. L2 writing research referred the cause of this problem to be L2 writers teaching and learning L2 writing, as they may be exposed intensively to the grammar, but writing simple English sentences, or they have not had enough experience in writing long texts in the target language, (Ferris, 2003). In addition, L2 writers do not have the proper strategies to diagnose their errors as their L2 writing teachers have not trained them how to recognize their L2 writing errors through self-editing. Understanding second language culture is one of the challenges that prevent L2 writers from creating a text that meets the expectations of the native readers and of the target culture. 'Research on contrastive rhetoric has suggested the norm and the genres of writing [to be] often culturally determined, and second language writers may encounter some challenges in trying to meet the expectations of new genres and new reader expectations', (Matsuda, et al., 2009, p. 462).

Methods of teaching writing in a second language

The teaching of L2 writing in the mid-twentieth century was motivated essentially by pedagogical concerns. The argument about L2 writing instruction was basically about whether teaching should be emphasized on fluency or accuracy, (Briere, 1966; Erazmus, 1960; Pincas, 1962). The debate ended with different views. Some researchers argued against 'free composition'; which represents the students' own texts with errors, and supported the 'controlled composition' which is based on practice exercises, descriptive grammar, and error analysis by the teacher. Although pedagogical practice assisted L2 writers to produce a set of grammatical sentences, it did not qualify learners to produce a longer comprehensible and efficient text. Thus, another approach was supported by some L2 writing researchers, called 'current-traditional'. Current-traditional approach encourages the combination of the syntactic rules with the content, as in the 'contrastive rhetoric' method, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). Whereas some others support the approach of 'writing-process', that basically encourages generating ideas, planning, drafting, revising, and editing, (Zamel, 1983, Flower & Hayes, 1981; Raimes, 1983a). Each of these approaches is explained in some detail below:

Controlled approach: In the 1960s and 1970s, this method grew out of the 'audio-lingual method' (ALM) based on the behaviourist psychologist B. F. Skinner's model encouraging and rewarding the correct behaviour. Language is presented in a spoken form before L2 learners see it in written (structural linguistics) and learning is a habit,

(Silva, 1990). Skinner's model basically focuses on teaching students small steps that allow each student to succeed by responding correctly and to receive positive reinforcement. The role of the teacher is to use an oral language model with the learners 'who would then repeat the pattern until the language structure became a language habit', (Reid, 1993, p.22). In other words, teaching L2 learners 'grammatical sentence structures that supported the grammar class', (Reid, 1993, p. 23). The Controlled method is seen as a secondary concern and written exercises mainly focus on 'fill in the blanks' or make isolated changes to the sentence. Errors are prevented and fluency is expected to come within acceptable structure and it ensures that L2 learners work correctly with adequate practice. In the critique level, controlled-approach ignores the audience role, the purpose of writing, students' desire to practice free writing, and constricts them with too much mechanical work that has no meaning to them.

Although the controlled writing approach for L2 learners might have some opposition, for L2 learners, it gives them some self-confidence in progressing their writing by not making errors, strengthening their ability, and their motivation to write, (Wiltse, 2005). Therefore, in many L2 writing classes and curricula, the controlled-writing approach is still in practice.

Current-Traditional approach: Building grammatical sentences was not sufficient for L2 writing. L2 learners should be aware of the difference between their L1 and L2 linguistics, in what is called the theory of 'contrastive rhetoric', (Kaplan, 1967. p.4). Teaching L2 writing moved from controlled to guided composition which was less structured and allowed students to produce a series of sentences. The focus of the current-traditional approach was on the 'topic sentence, support sentences, concluding sentences, and transitions'. It covers 'essay development', and 'paragraph principles to larger stretches of discourse', (Silva, 1990, p. 14). L2 students focus on the composing product rather than composing process, and then their learning L2 writing started to be internalized. However, this approach was not enough to help L2 writers to improve their L2 writing, it focuses on the form of the language, and therefore, by the 1980s, process-writing began dominating over the traditional theories of writing, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996).

The Writing-Process approach was 'motivated by dissatisfaction with controlled and current-traditional approaches', (Silva, 1990, p.15). The writing-process approach was seen as a 'non-linear exploratory and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning', (Zamel, 1983a, p.165). Writing should have a purpose; we compose in order to express ideas, and transmit meaning. In the writing-process approach, L2 students are trained to generate ideas for writing, think of the purpose and audience, and write multiple drafts in order to present written products that communicate their own ideas. During the writing process, students engage in pre-writing, planning, drafting, and post-writing activities. The writing process approach illustrated 'the view of writing as a process of developing organization as well as meaning', (Matsuda, 2003, p. 21).

This approach calls for collaborative work presented in peer or group works where they share and discover interesting ideas in a non-threatening environment. The role of the L2 writing teacher is to help L2 students find topics, generate ideas, plan structure, draft and revise their grammar and rearrange their ideas, and translate them onto the page, (Silva, 1990). However, in writing-process, syntactical and lexical features were encouraged by some L2 writing teachers to a certain degree, (Reid, 1993). Flower and Hayes (1981) believe, teaching writers the process of planning, generating ideas, revising, editing, and audience awareness, will assist them improve the other proficiencies they need over time. Johns (2002) indicates, teaching grammar and writing style is not essential for L2 writers who come from a different language and culture.

Writing research and practice historically has followed the writing-process approach through four stages: the expressive stage, the cognitive process, the genre approach and the social process.

The *Expressive approach* to writing: this approach was encouraged by L1 research but it was also used by L2 teachers. In this approach, the writer has the opportunity to freely write what he/she thinks, and be creative. Students were encouraged to discover themselves through free writing, (Elbow, 1990a; Faigley, 1986). The Free writing school was firstly made known by Peter Elbow (1973) in '*Writing Without Teachers'*. He was addressing L1 writers who have a higher degree of writing fluency. Elbow

encourages L1 students to write down on page their ideas without revision for sentence structure or vocabularies, and without any interruption for their thoughts. Teachers could follow up students' writing through conferences outside their class at each stage of the writing process.

The *Cognitive approach:* Cognitivists in the 1970s were interested to know how the writing process is related to cognitive psychology and to psycholinguistics. They studied how writers approach tasks by problem solving, in areas such as readership, goal setting, and the writing situation, (Flower and Hayes, 1980; Young, Becker & Pike, 1970, Britton et al, 1975). Supporters of the cognitive approach believe that composing processes are interactive between the writer and the reader, composing is a goal-directed activity and skilled writers compose differently than unskilled, (Bereiter, and Scardamalia, 1987). They focus on idea generation, organization of the ideas, planning, pre-writing strategies, editing and revising, (Hayes and Flower, 1980). Cognitive approach is 'a shifted combination of *process* and the *product',* (Reid, 1993, p.7). This approach been criticized, as a product of single individual and ignored the influence of the social context in writing.

In general, criticism for the writing-process approach has come from *English for Special Purposes* (ESP) supporters. They believe writing should be understood in different professional and technical contexts (work-related purposes, scientific research or academic writing) outside the school to realize the importance of the connection between writing in school and in the real world context, and how much the relationship between the two contexts is productive and efficient. ESP supporters believe the process approach does not effectively address some of these vital issues for L2 writing, as it ignores variation in writing processes due to individual differences, knowledge development for the academic discourse, language efficiency, and the writing task, (Silva, 1990). In addition, Swales (1990) suggests, ESP instruction in academic contexts should be presented in advanced training that involves specialized writing instruction after the L2 writers have been introduced to second language skills. Further, in advanced writing, students should be trained in the genre's structure. The process approach does not focus on certain types of essential academic writing tasks such as writing essays for exams, it does not give a clear indication to L2 students in how for example, the university writing will be evaluated and it over-focuses on the individual's

psychological functioning and ignores the socio-cultural context which is presented in the academic environment, (Howeritz, 1986b).

'Contrastive rhetoric' was widely common in the 1980s and 1990s. 'This approach drew on discourse analysis and textlinguistic research to explore how student writing could be analyzed at the discourse level as a way to understand the varying patterns of organizational preferences in student writing work', (Grab and Kaplan, 1996, p. 28). Because L2 writing is different for native English readers, Kaplan's (1966) pedagogical approach moved the focus of the writing research from the sentence production to a discourse level. Different cultural and social backgrounds and linguistic differences influence L2 writing texts. Each culture has its own image of how to organize writing. The cultural image of the first language might have a great influence on L2 writing, and L2 teachers should be aware of this. 'Writers from one culture who write for readers in another culture often have problems with the identification of audience expectations… differences among rhetorical patterns do not represent differences in cognitive ability but differences in cognitive style', (Reid, 1993, p. 62). Learning to write is part of becoming socialized to the academic community. Accordingly, a genre writing approach was raised, as Howeritz (1986b) illustrates, that an academic discourse on genres will assist learners to socialize into the academic contexts more efficiently than the writing-process approach. Responding to these criticisms, L2 researchers have started more recently to focus on the development of genre knowledge among L2 writers, (Tardy, 2005).

The *Genre approach* to teaching L2 writing has attracted considerable attention since the 1980s. This approach is providing L2 students with plenty of opportunities to become aware of the different purposes of written communication, and methods of organizing information in written texts. It is based on offering students the chance to learn explicitly about the characteristics of different genres, particularly their grammatical and discoursed features, as 'systemic functional linguistics that is concerned with the relationship between language and its social settings', (Hyon, 1996, p. 696). Thus, 'the discourse of a particular genre or disciplinary writing comes with its own grammar and vocabulary and its own community of reader/writer', (Canagarajah & Jerskey 2009, p. 480). It is an interaction process, L2 writers use it with both grammar and discourse together in writing; for example, in using modelling, the student links

between the formal and functional properties of a language in order to recognize how and why linguistic principles are employed for particular rhetorical properties. This approach helps L2 writers use L2 writing in their real-world communication because it links between classroom and home writing.

In a critique for the genre approach, Canagarajah & Jerskey (2009, p.279) argue, 'it is troubling how much we have to generalize in order to come up with monolithic descriptions and definitions' for genres in academic settings. They also enquire, can all texts be generalized in a stereotypical form? Or 'do they look similar?' (p. 480). In teaching different types of writing, where is the voice and creativity of the writer? The debate about genre comes up from different researchers. Some researchers believe that L2 learners should master grammar and syntax before they are introduced to the genre writing, (Ferris, 2002). Others believe that both grammar and discourse must work together, and cannot be separated, (Knapp and Watkins, 1994; Silva, 1993). In the debate of whether teaching grammar and syntax should be taught prior to genre writing, or teaching discourse and grammar together, another approach brought up by some Australian researchers is called *systemic functional linguistics*.

The *Systemic Functional Linguistics* approach provides L2 teachers with strategies to recognize and teach the related linguistics features of particular genres of texts, and shows them how grammar alternatives work within those genres, (Halliday, 1994; Eggins, 2004). Halliday (1978) emphasizes that language is learned and used as a social semiotic for the real world. Thus, meaning-making is the focus of teaching L2 writing, as Canagarajah and Jerskey (2009, p. 480) describe: 'The meaning-making role of language goes beyond traditional grammatical categories, and participates in the construction of effectively written text'. Systemic functional linguistics came up with four rhetorical claims that assist teachers to emphasise the use of L2 language in the social lives of the learners. These are as Eggines (2004, p. 3) describes:

- 'That language use is functional,
- its function is to make meanings and that meaning is influenced by the cultural
- social context in which they are exchanged
- that the process of using language is a semiotic process, a process of making meaning by choosing' .

The term 'text' is defined by Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 1): 'The word text is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole'. The text should have a coherence, which means the text's relationship to its context (social and cultural context). The way the text is unified is called cohesion. The outcome of the interaction between both coherence and cohesion is called language. The linguistics knowledge of this language is used appropriately to form social meaning. 'Although a text is physically made up of grammatical units (clause, phrase, words), text is more than just any collection of these units in sequence', (Eggins, 2004, p. 54). The contextual coherence of the text is called genre. Thus, genre represents the cultural and social purpose of the text. In the use of the genre in the systemic functional linguistics way as Martin (1984, p. 25) defines it, 'a genre is a staged, goal-oriented, purposeful activity in which speakers engage as members of our culture', or 'genres are how things get done, when language is used to accomplish them'. There are many genres recognized as social activity types, for example, literary genres, educational genres, non-fiction genres, fiction genres, (Eggins, 2004). Eggins adds that there are many different genres which we use in our daily life, for example, making appointments, going to interviews, chatting with friends, buying and selling, telling stories, and exchanging opinions. Briefly, systemic functional linguistics is viewing language as a strategic, meaning-making resource, (Halliday & Webster, 2003a, 2003b, 2002a, 2002b; Halliday, 2004; Martin & Rose, 2003). Thus, the text is never isolated from its social and cultural context.

A Social-Context approach to the writing process: This is basically seeing writing in a social context, (Vygosky, 1987; Donato, 2000; Prior, 2006; Lantlolf, 2000; Kramsch, 2000). Writing is much like speaking: it must take place in social contexts. The social and cultural experiences of each culture involving meaning-making are varied. These differences have a strong influence on writing, as Copper describes: 'Writing depends on social activities, depends on social structures', (Copper and Greenbaum, 1986, p. 336). Writing is not just content, it is the beliefs, experiences, perceptions, and values of people of that culture which are historically inherited. Thus, each culture presents their writing differently according to their unique experiences. L2 writers carry different 'identities, understanding, and habits of meaning-making to their learning', (Hyland, 2007, p. 150). They write differently from native writers. Reither (1985, p. 621) argues that writing cannot be separated from its 'social rhetorical situation in which writing

gets done'. Within the social approach there are many different perspectives for writing, for example, in educational ethnography (observing writers in their actual development without any interfering), sociological linguistics (studying the match between literacy at home and at school, classroom interactions), and sociology of science (writing is a creation of social context). Matsuda (2003, p.15) confirms that, without an understanding of the history of L2 writers, 'we may continue to use pedagogical strategies that are no longer appropriate'. Accordingly, teaching L2 writing needs to be related to the social contexts of L2 students, as that might help them go 'beyond syntactic, structure, vocabulary, and composing writing', (Hyland, 2007, p. 151). Thus, the supporters of the 'writing process' approach need to review their concept about considering students as a homogenous group, and appreciate the differences. Students' social and cultural backgrounds play an essential role in the way each culture expresses its reality in writing, (Lantlolf, 2000). Thus, 'writing is best taught as a social practice', (Canagarajah and Jerskey, 2009, p. 481). Collaborative practices in the L2 writing classroom help students to construct their texts by interacting their writing with their peers and teachers, (Bruffee, 1983). Authentic writing such as genres practising also helps students link between classroom and home writing and develop writing as a social act, (Hyland, 2007). Finally, in the internet age, Canagarajah and Jerskey (2009, p. 482) argue, 'there is much more happening within the bounds of a text than a single register, homogeneous genre conventions, or unitary cultural values'.

The relationship between L1 and L2 writing

'Traditionally, ESL teachers have emphasized the need for ESL writers to think and write as completely as possible in English', as this will control L2 writers from translating L1 structure and vocabulary in an incorrect way, (Silva, 1990, p. 109). Research into second language studies tells us that L2 writers approach their L2 writing tasks differently from first language writers, (Silva, 1990; Hyland, 2004; Weigle, 2002; Raimes, 1985). They have more problems when composing in L2 than their native-speaking peers, (Matsuda et al, 2009). Some researchers believe the transfer of L1 writing to L2 writing tasks influences the quality of L2 text, (Cumming, 1987; Edelsky, 1982), while some others believe that L1 may interfere with learning L2 in general. L2 writers become more successful when they write about topics of their choice, of which they have previous experience. They might have what Smith (1982) calls, a 'writing

block'; it happens when L2 writers, for example, forget what ideas they wanted to write about because too many potentials confront them, or when the writers refuse to write down their ideas because they are afraid of giving their opinions, or they do not want to disappoint their imaginary readers who exist in their minds, or are scared of being criticized by others.

Writing in L2 is more difficult for L2 writers than writing in L1, as they plan less, use less goal setting, and less review, (Silva, 1990). The weakness of L2 writers might be caused by the distractions that they face during their writing processes, as they need to focus on how to coordinate between the form of the second language and the work's structure, besides the spelling and vocabulary, (Grabe and Kaplan 1996). Mostly, they pay more attention to the micro-errors of L2 (grammar and structure) than the macro-errors (the content). They also have some difficulty in keeping their text short, and fluent with fewer errors, (Matsuda, et al. 2009). Their limited knowledge of L2 vocabulary forces them to switch to L1 writing knowledge. It is mostly noticeable that L1 writing knowledge is likely to arise when L2 writers write topics about their first language culture. For example, Arab L2 writers have a problem with the rhetorical structure of the L2 writing; they believe that the L2 writing rhetorical structure is similar to their L1. Accordingly they transfer their first language rhetorical structure to second language writing, so for example, they use repetition and elements of coordination, and prefer using coordination to subordination, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996).

Recently, researchers have shifted from that traditional concept which considers L1 transfer is problematic, to a more realistic situation. They started to see the differences between L1 and L2 as positive pedagogical tools. Researchers (Edelsky, 1982; Silva, 1990; Prior, 2006; Canagarajah and Jerskey, 2009) found that writing knowledge could be transferred across languages, and writers could use their L1 writing strategies and knowledge to support their second language writing. L1 writing experiences could also be used as a resource for L2 writing. On the other hand, some might say, transfer across languages may cause some interference with second language learning in general. Prior (2006) believes transfer between L1 and L2 may enrich L2 writing, as the writing knowledge of L1 can aid L2 writing. Students who have not built up good strategies in their L1 writing will not be able to transfer any strategies into L2 writing, (Kroll, 1990; Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). Less skilled writers fail to use writing strategies because they have not acquired them from their first language. In contrast, Silva (1990) believes that

L2 writers retrieve knowledge about L2 topics from their first language background memory. Translating from L1 to L2 knowledge could overload the short-term memory and then cause an interference process between the two languages' background knowledge. Yunqun (2009) found in his study that L1 use during writing in L2 has no significant correlation with the occurrences of transfer errors. Yunqun adds, teachers should not prevent students from thinking in their L1, as thinking in their first language may help their writing. Through translation, lower proficiency L2 writers try to write their topic with better content and organization prior to their writing in L2, (Arndt, 1987; Cohen and Brooks-Carson, 2001; Cumming, 1989; Jones and Tetroe, 1987; Raimes, 1985; Uzawa and Cumming, 1989). The majority of errors at the lexical level resulted from a mental word-for-word translation, and teaching a second language should not be emphasized on grasping L2 word by word but as 'larger chunks gradually getting beyond the words', (Yunqun, 2009, p.13). Therefore, it is better for lower proficiency writers to use a compensation strategy that reduces the cognitive load. In this strategy the writing task is broken down into smaller chunks at a time. However, this strategy is not the only alternative strategy that teachers should use in their classrooms, but they should also look for more strategies to suit each individual's preferences and writing style, (Wolfersberger, 2003).

Moreover, Yunqun emphasizes that the amount of L1 thinking decreases with the development of L2 proficiency because low syntactic and lexical errors transfer will be reduced; as Yunqun (2009) states:

> 'In terms of the frequency of transfer errors, syntactic errors are more frequent, while lexical errors are relatively infrequent. Learners at a higher proficiency level exhibit a decrease in the occurrences of transfer errors, yet the extent of decrease varies with different categories, with the tendency of decrease stronger in syntactic errors. Two reasons may account for the difference in the extent of decrease. One is that owing to the relative infrequency of lexical errors, they have little room to decrease. The other is that the improvement of the learners' English proficiency in different aspects is not synchronic, with the development at syntactic level outpacing lexical', (p. 12).

Canagarajah & Jerskey (2009) studied L1 and L2 writing from its coherence to its social and cultural contexts. They found that the first language writing background and its cultural values should not be treated as a problematic issue but a resource for L2 writing. Silva (1990) suggests that teachers need to persuade L2 writers to think about the information of a topic and construct a written plan in their native language and then translate into L2. This process will help L2 writers to plan, organize their ideas more

effectively, and write better L2 texts. This process also could be used as a pedagogical tool.

Although many similarities have been discovered between L1 and L2 writers, there are also many differences that exist between the two writing systems which could cause some challenges to L2 writers. Their challenges might be in the process of planning, reviewing and translating, including the accuracy, proficiency, fluency, structure and quality of the L2 text, (Raimes, 1985; Hyland, 2004).

The Challenges EFL Kuwaiti learners have in EFL writing

As mentioned before in Chapter One, it has become apparent that Kuwaiti students who are at the higher educational level graduated from secondary school with a low writing competency, and are not well-prepared to manage in a highly technical EFL writing learning classroom. The gap between their EFL writing proficiency at secondary school and the expectation for their EFL writing competency in the higher educational colleges is big. The cause of their challenges comes from their teaching and learning experiences, their EFL writing teachers, and their EFL writing fluency in general. In most Arabic EFL writing classrooms the Arabic language is used as the medium of instruction, (Al-Mutawa, 1997).

Many researchers found that Arab EFL learners, including Kuwaitis as a part of the larger Arabic world, have difficulties in EFL speaking and writing, especially when applying accurate grammatical rules, and word structure such as the proper tenses, spelling, vocabulary, vowels, gerunds, articles, quantifiers 'much' and 'more', adjectives, and relative clauses, (El Samaty, 2006; Bahloul, 2007; Hayes-Harb, 2006; Diab, 1997; Abi Samra, 2003). EFL Arabic learners should be exposed to the English language in appropriate cultural and social contexts to help them improve their EFL speaking and writing proficiency, (Al-Mutawa, 1997). The priority for improving L2 writing among EFL Arab students must be to start from developing their socio-cultural acceptable resources and design special pedagogy for their specific needs, (Syed, 2003). Moreover, their L1 writing challenges should be seriously investigated, to resolve the conflict that exists between the spoken and written Arabic language, *Al Fusha* and *Al Ameeyiah*.

Summary

This chapter investigates the important and most significant ideas presented in literature related to the case of this research. The complexity of teaching and learning writing practices was always a serious concern for most of the researchers. This concern was firstly studied by native English speakers and started with the cognitive process theory (e.g. Hayes and Flower, 1980; Young et al, 1970; Britton et al, 1975). This process was focused on the teaching of writing through different processes, as in planning, translating and reviewing. However, this theory was 'too narrow in its understanding on context', (Prior, 2006, p. 54). Since then writing research 'has increasingly turned to socio-cultural theories and methods emerging from psychology, anthropology, sociology, linguistics and semiotics' (Prior, 2006, p. 54). Research in L2 writing has started to grow since the globalization of economy and politics, (Matsuda et al, 2009). L2 writing research was neglected before the 1960s 'because of the dominance of the audiolingual approach', (Matsuda, 2005, p.35). There have been ongoing challenges and discussion about L2 writing research.

The research of writing has three principle areas: the qualities of students' texts, students' composing processes, and the sociocultural contexts of the students' writing. This research will study the perceptions of Kuwaiti EFL participants of EFL writing and of methods of teaching EFL writing in their classroom from the sociocultural view. Socioculturalists believe that writing is a social act that occurs in concerted interactions, (Prior, 2006). The individual's values, beliefs, and experiences are taken up by other people and rooted in cultural resources, (Prior, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978; Lantlolf, 2000). Socio-culturalists therefore believe writing is both a short and long-term production that involves dialogue processes between people; that text is an artefact in activity, and that linguistic signs are mediated activity.

In short, sociocultural theory shows the importance of L2 social interactions in writing, as these interactions precede and drive the development of cognitive ability of the L2 writers. The role of L2 writing teachers is to link what is taught in their classroom with the social needs of L2 students. Therefore, understanding the social and the cultural experiences of the students who come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds is a very influential factor in teaching and learning L2 writing. Wider goals may also be attained, as it has been argued that cultural understanding and harmony will

emerge through the common efforts of teachers and learners to understand each other's academic culture, culture of communication and culture of learning, (Cortazzi & Jin, 1997).

The review of literature highlighted some of the factors that influence teaching and learning EFL writing, and how those factors affect Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' writing proficiency. It therefore provides a proper context for interpreting this research.

A significant problem with the currently influential theories of writing is that although they were mostly designed for L1 writers, most L2 researchers and teachers depend on those theories in their research and classroom L2 writing practices. However, the literature review suggests that what we learn and how we learn it and make sense of it depends on where and when we are learning it. This is what is current study is trying to explore.

The next chapter will discuss a theoretical framework used in order to direct the research methodology by a socio-constructivism approach to understanding the perceptions of the Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers towards their methods of teaching and learning EFL writing, and how they perceive themselves as EFL writers. Are they confident enough to write in EFL, are they motivated to improve their EFL writing, and what do they think of their teaching and learning EFL writing practices.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents an overview of the theoretical perspective and methodology used in order to achieve the study aim: to answer the research questions. The aim of this study is to understand the perceptions of EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers towards teaching and learning foreign language writing at a higher educational college in Kuwait.

Research Questions

The specific research questions were first based on the overall purpose of the study, and then on extensive reading in second language learning theories, theories of writing, and teaching and learning second language writing. This followed a preliminary reading into the educational background of second language learning in general and writing in particular. The two research questions for the study are as follow:

1. What are Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' perceptions of their EFL writing?

2. What are Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' perceptions of methods of teaching EFL writing?

The initial decision to approach the understanding from the perspective of social constructivism, within the interpretive paradigm, is helpful in defining the focus of the study, and then the research questions. This perspective acknowledges that there is more than one reality and therefore the researcher should not attempt to give one objective reality but to present multiple interpretations of reality. This study uses a phenomenological approach that focuses on using an initial structured questionnaire to develop a semi-structured interview schedule. It focuses on the inductive collection of a large amount of data that is 'capable of producing thick descriptions of people's experiences or perspectives within their natural setting', Gray, (2004, p.28). This approach is good for this study because it emphasises:

- Inductive logic.

- Search for individuals' opinions, experiences, cultural and historical background, and academic environment which will have an influence on people's conceptualisations of teaching and learning.

- Based on quantitative and qualitative analysis of information.

- 'It is not so much concerned with generalizations to larger populations, but with contextual description and analysis', Gray, (2004, p.28).

The Theoretical Framework for the study

A theoretical perspective is a way of looking at the world and making sense of it (Crotty, 2003, p. 8). The reality that we try to understand is divided into two theoretical perspectives: the social and the natural. Pring (2000, p. 33) points out, there are distinctions between ' the objective world of physical things and the subjective world of 'meanings', between the public world of outer reality and the private world of inner thoughts, between a quantitative method based on a scientific model and the qualitative method based on a kind of phenomenological exposure'. In ancient philosophy this was called the 'ancient dualism' between mind and body.

The outline of the philosophical basis for the choice of the interpretive paradigm is presented as this choice determines the methodology and the specific methods to be employed. Educational research is part of the field of social enquiry; it has different shared world-views or paradigms within which researchers operate, (Kuhn,1970). Researchers share an ontology (or view of the nature of reality) within a paradigm, an epistemology (or view of what makes knowledge about the reality), and a methodology, or view of how one should approach investigating that reality. Working within a paradigm ensures that any theoretical knowledge produced will be consistent with the view of reality that the paradigm supports.

A scientific or positivism paradigm supports the view of reality as an objective physical world external to the human mind. Knowledge is considered to be gained through observable and measurable facts. The nature of such knowledge is claimed to be 'objective' in that it is free from the bias of the observers. It is impossible to distinguish

between the language of observation and of theory. Research in this paradigm seeks to predict or influence a situation by dependence on causal explanations derived from analysis and mathematical or statistical relationship between variables. The validity for these studies rests on whether the method measures what it aims to measure. In addition, reliability needs to be considered seriously, to ensure whether the study could be repeated at different times and in other locations and give similar results. The major disadvantage of the scientific paradigm in educational research is that it does not identify the special and unpredictable nature of humans, and that humans create events, rather than just react to them. Furthermore, it does not account for the fact that meaning is created through complex social interactions and it is essential for human activity.

This study is based within an educational setting, and as Radnor, (2002, p. 17) illustrates, 'in the social world people have their intentions, their feelings and emotions impacted by each other as well as by the context in which they live'. To understand some of this complex dynamic interaction from the point of view of its participants, an interpretive approach is the most appropriate one for this research. The researcher searches for knowledge of subjective meanings. Interpretivism was defined by Crotty (2003, p. 67) as an approach which 'understands human and social reality'; the concept of the interpretive paradigm is that 'meaning is not discovered but constructed by human beings: as they engage with the world, they interpret and transmit this meaning to a social context' (ibid. p. 43). Knowledge is perceived to be created in interaction between the parties involved. The emphasis in the methodology following the interpreting approach is on developing a subjective understanding of specific situations. I view the social world as a world of meaning and interpretation. The mental functioning for each individual is intrinsically positioned in social interaction, historical, collegial and cultural contexts. To investigate any human mental thinking and behaviour we must examine the context and the setting in which that mental thinking and behaviour takes place and interacts. This study looked at context as a dynamic whole involving individual and social background (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996). It can be considered as a study of mind rather than tools and approaches, which gives a great distinction between the objectivist perspectives that views context as apart from the learner. According to the nature of study, the 'state of mind' is characterised by the concept that learning is based on the nature of the problem, the perception of the problem, the educational setting, the activities they are engaged in, their motivation,

cultural and social background of the participants, and their previous knowledge. All these aspects are equally transformed and should be considered as an inductive process rather than experimental, measuring human behaviour and describing such explanation by scientific instruments. In order to understand the real situations of the participants of this study, I need to interact with the situation where I can share understanding and individual constructions. The interpretive paradigm which focuses on understanding rather than predicting or controlling phenomena is thus considered the best paradigm to deal with the issues of this study.

Interpretive Paradigm

In the interpretive paradigm, researchers view situations through a value-laden lens, (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). Interpretive research gives the opportunity to look into the learners' perceptions in-depth and make an insightful analysis of the data obtained (Robson, 1993). The interpretive knowledge represents facts and values, and there is no value without a fact and different values lead to different facts (Green, 2000). Interpretivism depends on an epistemology of constructivism which maintains that 'reality is socially constructed', (Robson, 2002, p. 27). Constructivism is also commonly called 'interpretive' or 'naturalistic' (Guba and Lincoln 1994). The realities explored in this study are socially constructed.

The researcher in the interpretive paradigm is the research instrument and is actively involved in self-analysis or active reflexivity (Radnor, 2000). There is no such thing as a 'neutral observer'. Bias, assumptions and prior understandings cannot be removed from the researcher's interpretation of the data. The researcher of this study cannot be apart from the research as I share with the participants their educational and socio-cultural background, and am involved in transactions with the participants in their natural settings in addition to my previous experiences. Therefore, I cannot be distant from the process of the research or take an objective approach in viewing the reality of the participants. However, it is important to the researcher to build understanding in order to say what the participants actually feel.

Qualitative research is based on the ontological assumption that realities are multiple, subjective, and individually constructed. These constructs of reality are time and context-bound and cannot be value-free, (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Reality, according to many interpretive researchers, presented from a constructivism viewpoint, is

perceived through our senses and interpreted according to our knowledge and experience, as Robson states:

> 'They consider that the task of the researcher is to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge. Hence they tend to use research methods such as interviews and observation that allow them to acquire multiple perspectives. The research participants are viewed as helping to construct the "reality" with the researchers. And, because there are multiple realities, the researcher questions cannot be fully established in advance of this process', (Robson, 2002, p. 27).

Social constructivism provides a useful insight into the psychological and cultural processes that shape people's individual interpretation, within their socio-cultural environment. Each of us has a unique perspective on the world, while we all populate the same world as everyone else, as Robson states. The social setting of the individuals is important for studying their perceptions (Ernest, 1994). The world view of 'social constructivism' is combined with interpretivism (Mertens, 1998), which is based on individuals seeking to understand the world in which they live and work. According to Creswell:

> 'Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences - meanings directed towards certain objects or things, these meaning are varied and multiple, leading the researcher to look for the complexity of views rather than narrow the meaning into few categories or ideas. The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views of the situation. Often these subjective meanings are negotiated socially and historically.' (Creswell, 2007, p. 20-21)

The subjective meanings are not embossed on individuals but are shaped through interaction with others through historical and cultural influences which function in individuals' lives. Constructivist researchers mostly focus on the 'process' of interaction among individuals and their working and living context in order to understand their historical and cultural setting, (Creswell, 2007). The participants' interpretations of this study give a theoretical as well as practical framework. Although they inhabit the same social environment of the school, and the same teaching and learning foreign language writing experience, their individual perceptions and experiences differ. These refer to a wide range of personal interpretations within any socio-cultural setting, 'different people construct different meanings', (Crotty 2003, p. 67). A social-constructivist viewpoint helps to increase some understanding of the dynamic relationship between individual learners and a range of wider sociocultural influences on the structure of the

learners' perceptions and attitudes. Reality is subjective and open to individual interpretation. Hence, the knower cannot be separated from the known as they are linked (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). My background shapes my interpretation and positions me in the research to acknowledge how my interpretation flows from my own personal, historical and cultural experiences. Thus, the researcher is trying to make sense of the meaning others have about the world. 'This is why qualitative research is often called "interpretive" research', (Creswell, 2007, p. 21). However, I must make my position explicit and report all the information of the research faithfully.

The methodological assumptions are an important element of the chosen paradigm and make the researcher an essential part of the research, as the person who will be involved in gathering and interpreting the data. Crotty, (2003, p. 6-7) defines research methodology in general as a strategy for conducting the investigation and the rationale for choosing to design that particular plan of action. In the case of interpretive paradigm a research design is essential, (Fouche, 2002). The research design of this study entails what has been described as a 'mixed methods' approach. This refers to the mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The rationale for using mixed methods for this study is described in the following:

Triangulation

Cohen et al, (2006, p. 112) states 'Triangulation in the social sciences attempt to explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint'. Denzin (1970) emphasized that triangulation can exist in several forms, such as triangulation across time, space, different levels, theories, and the investigator. Triangulation can also be characterized as a multi-methods approach in terms of 'methodological triangulation' and it is that aspect of triangulation that I have adopted by combining quantitative and qualitative data in my research. Qualitative and quantitative methods can be side by side in an inquiry, (Wellington, 2000). There is no real conflict between the purposes and the capacities of qualitative and quantitative methods. They can be used as a complement to each other's data. Wellington (2000) also argues both qualitative and quantitative approaches could complement each other since background statistics can set the scene for an in-depth qualitative research. Exclusive dependence on one method, therefore, may bias or deform the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality she is investigating. The more methods contrast

with each other, 'the greater the researcher's confidence', (Cohen et al, 2006, p. 112). For example, if the outcomes of the questionnaire survey correspond to those of students interviewed on the same subject, the more the researcher will be confident about the findings.

Mixed methods in this study involve a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods for the purpose of collecting data to meet research needs. The privilege of using different kinds of research methods is that each method can be used for its own strength, any weakness associated with one method may be compensated for by the strength of another, and significantly decrease bias and give the study more feasibility. This is what is been referred to as 'triangulation'. Denzin, (1970) defines triangulation as the usage of various research methods or resources of data to examine the same problem. Triangulation, according to Stake (1995), can guarantee accuracy and different explanations so that it is a vital means of validating interpretive research. In this study, two different instruments will be used for the data collection for triangulation, the semi-structured interviews and the questionnaire. The use of the questionnaire will present a statistical description background relating to the same context, and will help shape the interview schedule.

Mixed Methods

Qualitative research is an inquiry process that gives the opportunity to understand and explore a social and human problem. Under qualitative research, a holistic picture is built, analyzing detailed views of informants, and it is conducted in a natural setting, (Creswell, 1998). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) defined qualitative research as follows:

> 'Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memo to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.3)

Qualitative research will be conducted in this study to 'empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between the researcher and the participants in the study' (Creswell, 2007, p. 40). The methodology approach of this study reflects the theoretical underpinning of qualitative research, and the specific research questions. The research will be conducted within the natural setting of students who are central to answering the research questions, and it seeks to understand the problem in its context.

Much of this research information will be gained through a process of semi-structured interviews. Interviews in qualitative research often employ less structured, free flowing formats, (Goodwin and Goodwin, 1996). The goal of interviewing is to better understand the participants or to better understand phenomena from the perspective of the participants (Fontana and Frey, 1994). Meanwhile, interview is considered as one of the most popular and most powerful methods that can be used to understand people (Fontana and Frey, 2005).

The task of analysing and presenting descriptive data is to stay trustworthy to the participants' explanations. This means that the researcher in a qualitative enquiry has to be aware of the probable implicit meaning related to a particular socio-cultural environment. Thus, in a qualitative approach the participants might be questioned again in order to clarify their meaning. The key questions in this study relate to a mixture of influences that may contribute to students' perceptions of learning and teaching foreign language writing, as perceived and expressed by students themselves. Therefore, the answers to the research questions are based on personal experiences and on interpretations of social reality, within a particular cultural background, from the subjective perspective of the participants. A qualitative study underpinning an interpretivism paradigm implies a flexible, open-ended design, where various components and themes are allowed to emerge and are integrated as part of the whole.

Quantitative data will be also employed in this study by using a questionnaire method. Although a statistical method will be conducted in this study, it will not be in a positivist, inferential way, but rather as an additional tool in gaining understanding of the socio-cultural factors of the participants' learning and teaching EFL writing. The study findings will be restricted to the particular sample of this study, within a given context, and enough description will be given to that context to enable people to

thoughtfully transfer findings to their own situation. Also the researcher of this study will try to theorise (with the intention that the theory, if not the detailed findings, will be transferable).

Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness

It is important for researchers to persuade a wider research community with their findings. They need to prove that the processes they followed measure up to accepted criteria in academic research. The following are some of the issues of validity and reliability in qualitative research.

In qualitative research, validity refers to the amount of credibility that the researcher accomplished in a particular social situation based on available evidence. Validity, reliability, and generalisability are considered seriously in quantitative research. Within the interpretive paradigm the objectivity, validity and reliability of positivism are replaced with concepts such as 'conformability', 'authenticity', and 'dependability' or 'trustworthiness', (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Dependability may be achieved by the use of multiple methods or, in some cases, through the collaboration of many researchers. Within the interpretive paradigm 'transferability' of findings is limited to similar samples, or to other situations through connection to a larger theory. Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that issues of validity and reliability are best addressed as the trustworthiness of a research report. Merriam (1998, p.198) describes trustworthiness as 'a standard to measure the quality of research and to ensure its validity'. Robson (2002, p. 108) confirms that, 'validity and generalisability are properly the central elements in establishing the value and trustworthiness of a fixed design enquiry'.

Reliability as a concept mainly derives from the positivist or scientific research paradigm, but it is important for qualitative research. The notion of reliability refers to the accuracy and suitability of the research instruments for the purpose of an inquiry, (Robson, 2002). The same results should be obtained by other researchers in similar conditions using the same data collection methods. This notion does not work with the qualitative research; reliability in qualitative research is thus understood as 'consistency' or 'dependability', (Lincolin and Guba, 1985). The results in qualitative research are consistent with the collected data; however, in the quantitative research the results are the same in the consequent studies. If the measurement is reliable it does not mean that it is valid: reliability does not ensure validity, (Robson, 2002). There are

several accepted ways of strengthening reliability, such as triangulation of methods, a colleague test and a research register in which recording and explaining the important methodological observations takes place. A colleague test could be done by asking another researcher to double-check the evidence of your categories and concepts from the raw data. If both interpretations are closely matched, then reliability has an acceptable level. Robson (2002) states that reliability is a quality control issue.

Generalisability or external validity refers to 'the degree to which "the findings of the inquiry are more generally applicable, for example in other contexts, situations or times", or to individuals who have not been directly involved with the research', (Robson, 2002, p. 100). Generalisability might not be the goal of the qualitative research; however, the findings may highlight some similarities in another context. For example, each college is unique in its internal culture, but there are some other colleges in Kuwait that follow the same EFL writing teaching and learning experiences.

The Research Setting

The data was collected from the participants during the actual teaching timeframe of the college at spring semester, while student-teachers were involved in two EFL writing courses for the period of half a semester (see the details about these two EFL writing courses and the English Department at this college in Chapter Two under the section of Teaching and Learning English at the Higher Educational Colleges). The researcher decided to collect the data for both the quantitative and qualitative parts of the project in the middle of the courses, to give the participants the time to experience the two courses. The quantitative data were collected from the participants first, and then qualitative data were collected after the analysis of the questionnaire to help the researcher design and shape the questions of the semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire and the interview were given to students who were enrolled in the two EFL writing courses.

The participants of this study

One of the first methodological decisions that a researcher has to make is determining the participants and site for the study. The sample of this study will be chosen by the researcher in order to represent the population. The participation selection for this study will be performed through a convenience sampling as it was what the researcher could

access. Although this convenience sample would be problematic in a study seeking statistical generalisation of findings, it still allows me to construct a rich description of the views of this group of participants from which thoughtful transfer of findings can be made.

As this study aims to investigate the perceptions of students to teaching and learning EFL writing, the sample was chosen from the two different EFL writing courses taught by different EFL writing teachers, (the total number of teachers who were teaching the two EFL writing courses in this college was six) to help the researcher gather data that reflect a wide range of different experiences in teaching and learning EFL writing practices in this college. More details about the sample selection are outlined below.

Gender and age of the sample

The sample of this research was only females because of the nature of the population of this higher educational college which was exclusively female. The participants' ages ranged from 18, (their age when they graduated from high school and started their higher educational study) to 30 years (with a wider age range, transferred students from other universities will be allowed to enrol in this study).

The sample size for the questionnaire was 112 participants: this was limited by the availability of the students who were taking the two EFL writing courses during the data collection time and the interest of the participants to share their EFL writing experiences. The total number of students on these EFL writing courses was 122 altogether. These participants represent students from different years of study.

Ten female participants were chosen for the interviews from different EFL writing courses, EFL writing teachers and year of study, and they all finished their high school from government schools; according to Patton, 'In-depth information from a small number of people can be very valuable, if the cases are information-rich' (Patton, 1990, p. 184). Also, validity, meaning, and insights generated from qualitative inquiry are based on the 'information-richness of the cases selected ... rather than with sample size' (Patton, 1990, p. 185).

Since this study is investigating the perceptions of EFL students of EFL writing methods, the sample was selected from different classes taught by different female and male teachers, to represent different teaching and learning practices from different study years. The following table illustrates how the sample provides broad representation of students and teachers engaged in EFL writing at this college.

Teachers	Number of EFL Writing classes that each participant was enrolled in or had finished			Total Number of participants in each EFL writing course	Number of participants in each Year of study			
	Taking Basic EFL writing course	Taking Advanced EFL writing course	Finished both advanced and basic writing courses		Yr.1	Yr.2	Yr.3	Y.4
A Y	2	1	-	3	2	1		
B L	-	1	2	3			1	2
C K	2	-	-	2	2			
D M	-	1	-	1			1	
E N	1		-	1		1		

Table (4.1) The criteria that was used to select the sample of participants for the interviews

Further information about the sample, drawn from the questionnaire data, is offered below.

Type of High School that participants had attended

All of the participants in the sample had graduated from the public/government schools system. In public/government schools, English is taught as a subject and Arabic is the medium for teaching and learning all the other subjects.

Number of years participants had studied the subject English at school

The sample of this study represents students who studied English for either eight or 12 years at public/government high school. In the old Kuwaiti EFL educational system, all public/government schools used to teach English as a subject from Year 5 at secondary school, however, in 1993/1994, this system was changed to a new system, which allows students to study English from Year 1 at the primary school, until they graduate from Year 12 at the high school, (see Chapter Two, EFL educational system in Kuwait). Since the age of the sample will be open, the sample might include participants from both old and new systems (studied for eight or 12 years).

Numbers of EFL writing courses taken by participants

In this higher educational college, two EFL writing courses (Basic and Advanced) were offered for students who were majoring in English. The majority of the participants would enrol in both EFL writing courses, as a core requirement for their major. Accordingly, the sample will be taken from both EFL writing courses.

Number of EFL writing lessons participants take per week.

The length of the English major programme for pre-service English teachers in this higher educational college takes four years. According to the policy of this higher college's Registration Office, and to the English Department, EFL students who were majoring in English should take two EFL writing courses (basic as a prerequisite and advanced), and each of these courses is taught for three hours per week divided into two or three teaching lessons per week. If it was three lessons, students would take one hour every other day for each lesson; and, if it was two lessons, each lesson would be one hour and a half twice a week.

Research methods and instruments

Qualitative research is traditionally associated with specific methods; for example, for this study, semi-structured interviews, and open-ended written elements of the questionnaire were conducted. It is appropriate to combine two or more methods of the research instrument in order to gain deeper understanding of social and human problems, (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). Questionnaire and interview were used in this study, and their data were essential parts in my undertaking of interpretation, with reference to the specific related setting of each individual. Semi-structured interviews were used to help in understanding students' views in depth related to focused issues. Interviews enable interviewees 'to speak and express their minds', Denscombe (1998, p. 113). However, as explored before, I think neither method on its own was adequate to serve this study; therefore, the combination of these two instruments was the most suitable choice for the present study. Each instrument contributes a valuable insight into the study and adds richness to the data.

The Questionnaire

The benefit of using a questionnaire, according to Wilson and Maclean (1994, pp. 8-9), is that it helps the researcher to illuminate the research problem, to clarify the relevant concepts or constructs, then to identify kinds of measures. It is important to note that qualitative interviewing has limitations, because it relies on verbal interaction between the researcher and the interviewee. Thus, the questionnaire offers more objectives and anonymous responses. The questions of the questionnaire are closed, with a pre-determined scale for answers, do not take much time to be answered, and can be analysed as a large sample. From my own experience, the participants of this study might not be willing to give detailed information if they needed to write it down. Thus, I thought, it is better to give them closed questions with a pre-determined scale for answers, with some short answer statements such as 'complete'.

The language of the questionnaire

I decided to write the questionnaire in English, rather than in Arabic, for two reasons: the respondents of this study are majoring in English, and they are confident in EFL reading comprehension. To be accepted as an English major, candidates must pass language tests which include EFL reading comprehension. More importantly, however, it would be easier for the participants to understand the technical terms that were used in the questionnaire, related to the research strands and literature review for EFL writing. In their classroom practices they use and interact with these terms in English, not in Arabic, so they are more familiar with the English terms than Arabic: for example, drafting, portfolio, outlining, genre writing, text types, comments etc.

Thus, the items of the questionnaire were written in English with simple and clear wording; as Sudman and Bradbum (1982) emphasize, the phrasing of the question is very important as it can determine the type of response that is given. So the language used to construct the items of the questionnaire was simple and clear, bearing in mind that English is not the first language for the respondents. Also, each item of the questionnaire was designed to ensure that it asked only about one issue.

The questionnaire was constructed broadly on the basis of deeper reading into the literature of theories of teaching and learning L2 in general, and writing in particular,

and their development, and the second language writing history. Thus, the ideas of the questionnaire were based on investigating the teaching and learning of EFL writing methods and their impact on the student-teachers, looking at this from the socio-cultural view of writing as a communicative activity. In addition, the questionnaire sought to explore the student-teachers' motivations and perceptions towards learning EFL writing and how much they valued EFL writing in their real life. A well-structured questionnaire with clear objectives, purpose, and instructions was designed for Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers. The number of participants who answered the questionnaire was 112. The researcher took all the responsibility of distributing the questionnaire to the participants in addition to the administrative work of getting the EFL writing teachers' consent to go to their normal classes and collect data from their students. The researcher physically handed out and collected the questionnaire to/from each respondent in their normal EFL writing classroom and explained to them the purpose of the study and all the responsibilities involved.

An informed consent form was attached to the beginning of each copy of the questionnaire. In addition to the consent form, the researcher explained to the participants verbally all the necessary information about the structure and the purpose of the questionnaire, assured anonymity and confidentiality of their personal information, and offered them the option to withdraw with no penalty.

The questionnaire was distributed to the participants and preliminary analysis conducted in three weeks, prior to undertaking the interviews. The statistical analysis, using SPSS, was completed before the interviews were conducted. The open response questions were read thoroughly before the interviews, although the full analysis was completed later. This allowed for the interview schedule to raise issues generated by the questionnaire, in addition to the constructs already planned for investigation. (All the details about the formation of the questions for the final interview on page 153).

The Interview

Interview is one of the research methods most commonly associated with qualitative research. The reason behind choosing this method was to obtain large amounts of rich and complex data from the participants. The interview was used as the main data collection method and complementary to the questionnaire, (Jarvinen, 2000). In qualitative research, the interview often employs less structured, free flowing formats,

(Goodwin and Goodwin, 1996). The goal of interviewing is to better understand the participants or to better understand phenomena from the perspective of the participants, (Fontana and Frey, 2005). Interviews give the researcher the opportunity to modify the line of inquiry; the interviewer and interviewee interact and in this way it assists the researcher to investigate underlying meaning. This advantage is not applicable to the questionnaire. The information obtained from interviewees is much deeper than that obtained from questionnaires. A semi-structured interviewed was conducted with ten EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers who were majoring in English and will be English teachers in their future careers. The questionnaire provided me with some outlining information about a large sample of the students. The interview gave me the opportunity to follow the questionnaire's outlining information in depth with a smaller sample and investigate the questionnaire's findings in depth. The questionnaire findings gave me an indication of how transferable the interview results might be.

Semi-structured interview

There are different forms of interviews, (Patton, 2002). Along with the different kinds of interview styles, semi-structured interviews have the benefit that the interviewer is allowed to introduce new material into the course of the interview, which has not been considered earlier, but develops during the discussion of the interview, (Hitchcock and Hughes, 1989). Since this study seeks to understand student perceptions of learning EFL writing, to accomplish this research aim, the semi-structured interview was adopted as a main method for data collection.

Purpose of the interview

Three purposes were behind using the semi-structured interviews: firstly, to provide a depth of understanding to build on the data collected by the questionnaire. Concerns and issues were raised from the questionnaire findings, and these served as a basis for development of the interview structure. Secondly, the main purpose of using semi-structured interviews was to give the participants the opportunity to express themselves in a deeper way. Moreover, the goal was that the enquiries contained within the research questions related to the students' perceptions should be reflected through the interviews. 'Both qualitative and quantitative researchers tend to rely on the interview as the basic method of data gathering whether the purpose is to obtain a rich, in-depth experiential account of an event or episode in the life of the respondent or to garner a simple point

on a scale of 2 to 10 dimensions', (Fontana and Frey, 2005, p. 698). Thirdly, a conversational interview is considered as a source of information with the belief that interviewing results in a true and accurate picture of the respondents' identity and lives. In interpretive research, the researcher typically engages with and interprets the situation, through for example face-to–face interviews. It gives the researcher the opportunity to participate in a real interaction with the participants and to learn specific aspects of their life or experience in relation to perceptions of EFL writing.

Meaning and understanding are created in an interactional dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee. In this way the role of the researcher is important as a research instrument. The interviewer is the responsive listener and a partner in a conversation, trying to listen more than to speak.

Interview Schedule

As the study aimed to investigate what are the student-teachers' perceptions of EFL writing and of methods of teaching EFL writing, the constructs probed in the interview were constructed from the literature review of L2 writing and the results of the questionnaire. The literature indicates that teaching and learning L2 writing methods have a strong impact on the students' writing fluency and attainment. The literature also highlights that pedagogical approaches vary, with some emphasising the writing product whilst others give more attention to the writing process, developing teaching which addresses planning, creating text and revision. Other pedagogical approaches provide learners with explicit teaching about genres. Research also signals the importance of confidence and self-efficacy in writing, as well as motivation. In addition, the statistical results of the questionnaire should give ideas about the methods of teaching EFL writing in the student-teachers' writing programme and their impact on their communication in the real world, their attitude to writing in general and EFL writing in particular, and their self-confidence and motivation in learning and improving EFL writing.

The Pilot Study

Feasibility, clarity, and usability should be considered before using any research method, (Wallen and Fraenkel, 2001). Accordingly, a pilot study was carried out before collecting data for the main study, to trial the research design. The questionnaire was

piloted with 12 participants and the interview with three participants. The researcher designed the questionnaire with clear words and phrases and unambiguous items. Moreover, the interview schedule, as Teece suggests, avoided leading questions and making unrealistic assumptions about the background information of the participants (Teece, 2009). Question wording should not influence the answers of the participants, so general questions should be asked firstly, and then specific ones come later. Thus, three pilot interviews were conducted on the campus. The feedback on the interview and the questionnaire was evaluated by the researcher to guarantee that it served the aim of the piloting.

Piloted Questionnaire

The questionnaire was written in simple, clear and suitable English language for the participants, since they were majoring in English and capable of reading and the language. According to the English programme's admission requirements at this higher college, these student-teachers should have earned 70% or higher in English in their secondary school. The participants were invited to answer the piloted questionnaire and give their comments at the end. The student-teachers' feedback which was collected from the questionnaire provided useful information for the interview schedule.

Their comments were very informative in assisting with revising the format of the final questionnaire. The pilot participants did not raise any concerns about the language of the questionnaire. They were happy with the language and it was clear and understandable for them. Two participants indicated that one question was repeated in the first section, for item numbers 17 & 20. Actually, the two participants were mostly correct, as the two items were presented in different forms for almost the same responses. Some pilot participants had difficulty understanding the meaning of the words 'teacher's feedback'. Thus, the synonymous word for 'teacher's feedback' was given to them as 'teacher's comments' during the data collection of the main study. The seriousness of possible misinterpretation highlights one of the key limitations of this study instrument, which is trying to measure participants' feeling and attitude to methods of teaching and learning EFL writing, as this could have a significant impact on the reliability of the result. Three participants raised an issue about the 'Yes/No' table, as they had difficulty understanding how to use that table. They felt they needed more verbal instructions, although written instructions were clear in the questionnaire.

In fact this was the most interesting comment, as the researcher thought the instructions for the 'Yes/No' table were clearly written at the top of this table, and two answered examples were given, and it was clearly designed. However, because the researcher was familiar with the nature of the participants of this study (they usually do not read the instructions of their exams carefully, and they depend on their teacher to explain to them the instructions of the exam) verbal instructions were given clearly by the researcher to the participants during the actual data collection time of the main study, to ensure that every participant knew how to answer all the table questions correctly. Cohen and Manion (1980) call for clear and unambiguous statements of the research's objectives so respondents understand them and their implications. Interestingly, there were no comments or questions about the informant consent letter that was attached to the questionnaire.

The pilot participants as well as the real study's participants were both, interestingly, happy to participate in this study because, as they confirmed, the questionnaire and the interviews gave them the opportunity to express their EFL writing experiences and feelings in depth. They affirmed to the researcher that they had many issues in EFL writing, and they were waiting for this opportunity to express their feelings, and pass their issues to the people who were in charge of teaching and learning EFL writing in Kuwait. Their positive reaction made me more confident about the importance of this research, as to my knowledge the voice of these students had never been heard by any researcher before, especially when it comes to their teaching and learning EFL writing experiences.

Piloted Interview

In interpretive research the method of the interview produces a necessary process through which knowledge about the social world is constructed in lived human interaction, (Lewis and Ritchie, 2003). Interviews offer the opportunity to focus on the experiences of the individuals. This research method best matches up with the purpose of this investigation, thus the interview was very important in building this method and could be most effectively used.

In the pilot interview, purposive sampling was used to select from a number of participants who were taking EFL writing courses with different teachers and in

different study years. Three participants were selected: one from Year 1 who was taking the advanced EFL writing course, the second participant was from Year 3 who had finished two EFL writing courses, and the third participant was from Year 2 who had finished basic EFL writing course and was taking the advanced. These participants were excluded from the main study. Interestingly, they were very excited to conduct the interviews and share their knowledge. At the beginning of the interview, I explained to the interviewees the confidentiality of their information, the importance of their role in making this study successful, the objectives of the study and their right to withdraw from the interview at anytime they feel they would like to. The interview schedule was explained carefully to them, as for example, there will be two sections, the first section will talk about their teaching and learning experiences in EFL writing practices only, and in the second section they will talk about their perceptions about EFL writing. Informed consent for recording their voice was taken from each participant individually.

It was not surprising for the researcher to see how much the participants were excited to share their EFL writing experiences as I believe that they had never been asked to express their opinions of EFL writing before. This reaction put more responsibility on my shoulders, I felt these participants needed someone to listen carefully to their opinions and that was exactly what happened during the piloted interviews; as a result the interviews took more time than had been planned for. The feedback on the piloted interviews was evaluated by the researcher to ensure it served the objectives of the piloting. It was obvious that the pilot interviews schedule was sensible and feasible in general. After each piloted interview, each participant was happy about the questions of the interview. They felt they were in the spotlight and reflecting exactly what they had wanted to say for a long time.

The data of the piloted interview were analysed by using comparing methods, contrasting, triangulating them with data from the questionnaire, and coding techniques, in order to see the main categories, concepts, phrases, and words for the main interviews. The conclusion from the piloted interviews was very important as: it confirmed that the questions were feasible and respondents were capable of answering the questions of the interview; the answers of the respondents were important and contributing to address the research questions; the audio recorder was helpful for the

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analysis of the collected information; and the interview schedule was convenient and provided important answers for the research.

Conducting the questionnaire for the real study

The questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in the middle of their second semester in a face-to-face situation. The number of participants who decided to answer the questionnaire was 112 participants from different EFL writing classrooms who were taking EFL writing with different EFL writing teachers. The researcher reinforced verbally the purpose of the research and the questionnaire, and gave the participants the opportunity to ask questions before they started answering the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher in a paper format in the real EFL writing classrooms of the participants, after getting the consent of their teachers.

Conducting the interviews of the real study

The interviews were conducted with the respondents at the campus in their free time and according to their time-table preference. The participants who signed the informed consent for the interviews were contacted individually by phone. The content of the interview was briefly given on the phone to the participants and also the ethical issues relating to the interview were clarified. At the beginning of the interview, a clear explanation was given about the timing, the schedule of the interview, the kinds of questions, and their right to withdraw from the interview or if they changed their mind. Each interview took one hour. The use of both audio recorder and notes for collecting the interview data can improve accuracy and quality of information (Wellington, 2000). Thus, the interviews were recorded and notes were taken by the interviewer.

Fortunately, all of the respondents finished the interview in almost one hour except for one participant; she changed her mind and decided not to continue with the interview because of the presence of the audio recorder. This participant had signed the informed consent of the interview, and the confidentiality of her information was clearly explained to her. However, she decided not to continue the interview. The researcher respectfully accepted her decision and replaced her with another participant.

Data analysis

As many qualitative researchers point out, analysis needs a great deal of focus and concentration, good knowledge of the material and intellectual efforts for all of the stages in the analysis, (Radnor, 2002; Robson, 2002; Fetterman, 1989). Fetterman (1989) argues, 'The analysis is as much a test of the inquirer as it is a test of the data, a test of the ability to think, to process information in a meaningful and useful manner' (p.88). 'Data analysis is necessary... data in their raw form do not speak for themselves: the messages stay hidden and need careful teasing out', (Robson, 1993, p. 305).

'The researcher typically needs to see a reduced set of data as a basis for thinking about its meanings', (Huberman and Miles, 1994, p. 429). Richard and Richard (1994, p. 158) argue that 'developing categorization and indexing of the material are not merely tools for the data analysis but should be seen as an image of the researcher's thinking about the project and as a tool for developing theory'. Coding or indexing is viewed as a means process in categorizing the notes, transcripts or documents that have been gathered, and represents the first phase in the conceptualization of the data. Codes are in general correlated to research questions, concepts and themes. 'Qualitative analysis remains much closer to codified common sense than the complexities of statistical analysis of quantitative data', (Robson 2002, p. 459).

Humans as 'natural analysts' bring many deficiencies and biased messages to the problems that they have. Some of these deficiencies involve, for example, data overlapping, information availability, positive instances, internal consistency, uneven reliability, missing information, confidence in judgment, and first impressions (Robson, 2002). Qualitative research requires a specific attention to the interpretation. Pring (2000) argues that interpretations given by qualitative researchers consider the meanings of words and actions of people in the distinctive social circumstances recorded in the course of a research development.

Therefore, there are some ways of adopting a more systematic approach that will assist the researcher to minimize these human deficiencies and reduce the task to a defined formula. Miles and Huberman (1994) give a chronological list for the data analysis in qualitative research. These analysis steps are giving codes to the first set of material obtained from the interviews and questionnaire; going through the materials and trying to classify the groups, sub-groups, themes, and relationships, and trying to compare these themes, etc. with the field of the study to help in creating a new group of data

collection; gradually involving a small set of generalizations that cover the constancies you separate in the data; and connecting these generalizations to the body of knowledge that shapes constructs or theories.

Questionnaire data analysis

In analysing data from the questionnaire I used both quantitative and qualitative methods. For the quantitative data analysis, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), was used to generate descriptive statistics. Seventy-three variables were entered in SPSS format. To analyse the open responses on the questionnaire, I assigned preliminary codes deductively, and subsequently analysed these codes further inductively.

Interview data analysis

The interviews for the ten participants were recorded in Arabic and translated into English and transcribed by the researcher. The possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say is very high. Thus, the researcher systematically listened to the words of the respondents from the recorder, and double checked the translation, as the researcher does not want to lose the meaning of the data in translating. The work of translating here means interpreting the Arabic spoken language into written English transcripts. Each of the ten recorded interviews was transcribed and saved on my computer as an individual document. When each interview was transcribed a number was given to each question asked by the researcher (R) and each answer from the participant (S) as for example,

R1. Tell me about your group work?
S1: We do not work in group.

The interview transcripts were read carefully many times in order to immerse myself in the data. While reading the transcript of each participant, I highlighted the key elements, like sentences, words, phrases and quotes which might relate to understanding the topic and addressing the research questions. The first stage of analysis involved giving meaningful codes to each phrase or statement. In order to organize them effectively, each code was given a letter (see Appendix 4) and marked with a reference to the number of the statement in the transcript from which the code came. This method enabled me easily to find statements that I wanted to check in each individual transcript

and identify the source of the statements. The coding from each individual transcript was transferred to a master grid and grouped with the coding from other interviews.

The next stage of the analysis was to cluster and organize the open codes into broader themes which described the data, for example, *Planning* incorporated the sub-codes of *Generating Ideas*, *Using Own Experiences, Prior Knowledge, Vocabulary,* and *Visualizing and Imaging*. I then refined the initial categories by joining or removing some of them, and tried to find links or connections between the categories. The final stage involved the identification of more major themes; so, for example, the code of *Planning* was categorised under the theme of *Writing Processes*, along with *Translating* and *Revising*. Seven main themes were finally identified (See Appendix 5) and each theme is made up of a series of concepts that related to the focus of the two research questions. A table of themes and sub-categories was created, which indicated the number of respondents' statements and the number of times such statement was raised within the interview. I checked the identified themes and sub-categories carefully to make sure of their accuracy.

The following shows a sample from one of the transcribed interviews. In this example, you will see in brackets some letters and numbers. These letters referred to the open coding and the numbers referred to the reference of the statement in the transcript.

> S 4: We added words like e.g. 'is, on', like this, to change the meaning, or the meaning was wrong and by changing a word we corrected the meaning. (G.4)
>
> R 5: What was on those papers?
>
> S 5: Independent sentences (G.5), however, the teacher gave us a paragraph (G.5), it was about punctuation and spelling; like this.
>
> R 6: Was there anything else besides punctuations and spelling?
>
> S 6: [Pause for few seconds]…. Not much grammar, there was not much grammar. If there was a grammar, it was mostly like a quick note. But not the whole work was about grammar, because the exercises were grammatically correct and we were working on the punctuations only, (G.6), In the exam…

This table represents the main themes, coding and sub-coding. The major themes that were identified and made up from a wide range of coding have been grouped together into sub-themes which exist within the overall theme.

Research question One:			What are Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of EFL writing?
Themes	Coding	Sub-coding	Participant's quotations
Internal factors	Difficulties		S4: Writing in English is difficult, in English major, I do not know what English teachers wanted us to be like, I am not sure what exactly they would like us to do… some students changed their English major, because they did not know what to do to be better in English writing…(D.4)
	Self-efficacy		S57: Confident? …[laughing]…I know how to write, but I do not think that I am confident because I always make mistakes… my teacher told us, 'The way you use Arabic first then translated to English is not proper, you should use English only' (Q. 57).
			S4: .. but I am not satisfied with my writing level. (Q. 4)
	Interest like/dislike		S 90: I do not know, I like to write in English for two reasons, firstly, I like the way of writing English (cursive). Secondly, I cannot write formal Arabic so L2 is my alternative. In Arabic we used to write informal Arabic which is not acceptable. (II .90)
			S4: I have not decided yet what to do, I love English, and I do not wish to change my major.(II.4)
Writing Processes	Planning	Generating ideas	S8: I will think first and then choose the topic. I will write about this topic, (F.8) 'I am sitting with a researcher who is doing a survey in methods of teaching writing', I usually start with a small paragraph (F.8) then I stop… as I told you before, the beginning is difficult. This difficulty makes me write more. (F.8)
		Organizing ideas	S 10: It is difficult for me to write my ideas on paper… I write one idea here, and another idea there, until I reach the conclusion. When I finished the conclusion I usually find out that I need to write more about this idea and that idea. That what makes me write everything all over again. I have the ideas in my mind, but I do not know how to organize them in writing. (W10).

Table (4.2) The themes, coding and their sub-coding in addition to the participants' quotations

Limitations of the study

The sample of this study will be taken from one female-only college in Kuwait; however, the results that will be gained from this study may be applicable to some extent for other colleges in Kuwait. According to the interpretive approach, interpretation of the data is not value-free and the results that will be gained from this study are not free from subjectivity. Therefore, the results of this study may be generalisable for other colleges in Kuwait to a certain degree.

The main purpose of this study primarily focuses on the voice of the students as expressions of the different influences on their perceptions of learning and teaching second language writing. One limitation of the study, therefore, is that the view of the teachers and parents will be absent from this study. However, interviewing the parents could provide valuable insights into the formation of the students' perceptions within their socio-cultural environment. Moreover, interviewing teachers could provide more input to the study. All these members are significant players in the formation of social, educational and cultural influences on the students' perceptions of learning and teaching EFL writing. An analysis of students' EFL writing would also provide valuable information about their EFL writing quality and fluency. It could help in understanding more about their writing weaknesses and strengths, and competency.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical aspect in qualitative research concerns the moral issues, such as values of the researcher, as well as the real conduct of the study, and the consequent planning of the written report for scrutiny by the wider community. Social research is conducted from a certain value position. Every individual holds certain kinds of values which are part of his/her socio-cultural environment and individual personality. Gray (2004) illustrates, 'The ethics of the researcher concern the appropriateness of the researcher's behaviour in relation to the subjects of the research or those who are affected by it'. It is essential for the researcher to be aware of what personal values are reflected in the decision made in the course of his/her practice from the beginning of the research design to the interpretation and recommendations for application, (May, 1997). Research ethics are therefore vital and provide the researcher with a set of guidelines on how to carry out study in a morally acceptable way. Some ethical issues are clear and common sense but others are less obvious, (Gray, 2004). The researcher should explain to the participants: the aim of the research, who will enrol in this research, who will be the respondents, how much time is required, who will have the right to access the data, the anonymity of the respondents, informed consent of the participants, and what kind of knowledge is being sought.

The data that was gathered from the questionnaire and the interview was stored on the personal laptop of the researcher and secured with a password. The data of the questionnaire was analysed by the researcher herself by using the descriptive Statistical

Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS program, and the data for the interview also translated and analysed by the researcher only. No one has been allowed to access the information of the participants.

The voice of the researcher should be separated in the way of the research context, and the findings made accessible to the wider audience. Language as a medium of communication is imperfect; the subjectivity in the interpretation may not give us the description of the physical or social world. Therefore, given the relativistic nature of the findings in qualitative research, the results might need to be reviewed with further arguments and evidence (Atkinson, 1992). In addition, for some political reasons, parts of the research could be taken selectively to support opposing views (Pring, 2000). Therefore, when reporting, I will outline the limitations of my study and will present my findings as uncertain.

When this study is finished, I will submit a copy from the findings and the recommendations of this study to the higher college to be kept in their library, in order to provide the participants and people who are in charge of teaching and learning EFL writing an opportunity to remark on and discuss any possible practical use of the study. My voice as a researcher and the respondents' opinions will be clearly distinguished throughout the presentation of the study. All the opinions presented in this research represent the opinions of the individuals who participated in the study only, and their opinions do not necessarily reflect the real situation of teaching EFL writing practices and learning in this college. The findings of this study will be introduced to the people who are in charge of teaching and learning EFL writing in this higher college, to the decision-makers, EFL writing curricula in Kuwait, and administrators, in order to facilitate all the means to improve the academic environment of teaching and learning EFL writing.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE QUESTIONNAIRE DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter provides a presentation of the data and findings from the questionnaire. The questionnaire was carefully designed, based on the knowledge gained from the literature review, to ensure that data gathered were clearly related to the research questions. The questionnaire was divided into seven sections with different tables:

Section one	*Teaching and learning EFL Writing practices.*
Section two	*How are participants taught to communicate in EFL writing?*
Section three	*Attitudes to writing in general and foreign language in particular.*
Section four	*Foreign language-writing approaches.*
Section five	*Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of foreign language writing*
Section six	*How much are participants motivated to write in the foreign language?*
Section seven	*Personal backgrounds of the participants*

Table (5.1) The seven sections of the questionnaire investigating students' perceptions of EFL writing and methods of teaching it.

In each section there were statements with which the participants were invited to agree or disagree. All the statement were positively phrased, as it is culturally more acceptable to make positive statements such as: 'The teaching method/s that helped me most to improve my EFL writing was/were…'; or 'At home my parents support my EFL writing by…'. The statements were related to the key strands of the research questions. There were also some open-ended statements, which participants were invited to complete.

Based on my familiarity with the nature of the participants, I decided to locate the personal background information at the end of the questionnaire. As they were not familiar with the type of questions used in this survey, I felt this would enable me to get the participants' to direct their best efforts to the more intellectually demanding items.

The questionnaire consisted of two different type of tables; the first one, I will call a 'Yes/ No' table (see a copy of the questionnaire in the appendix of this thesis). This type of table was designed to have six response columns. In the first of these, the participants should tick 'No', if their EFL writing teacher never did it, or 'Yes', if their teacher did it (even if only rarely). If a participant ticked 'No', she should go to the next item. But if she ticked 'Yes', she should put a tick in one of the five boxes that best corresponded to

her views on how helpful this form of teacher action was. There were no correct or incorrect responses, only her opinion. For each statement, five response options were used to show the degree to which the participants agreed with the statement: *Very helpful, helpful, uncertain, unhelpful, and very unhelpful.* Two ticked examples were presented for the participants, as Cohen et al (2006) suggests, to ensure that they knew how to enter a response to each question.

For this 'Yes/ No' table type, an example is presented at the top of the first table to help the participants complete the table in the proper way. Please see the example below:

	Section 1: Tell me about your second language classroom learning and teaching writing practices.			Very Helpful	Helpful	Uncertain	Unhelpful	Very unhelpful
E.g.	My EFL writing teacher uses a whiteboard (If your teacher does this and you find it helpful tick 'Yes' and 'Helpful').	Yes	✓		✓			
		No						
E.g.	My EFL writing teacher uses PowerPoint slides (if your teacher does not do this, simply tick 'No')	Yes						
		No	✓					

Table (5.2) Two ticked examples that were presented for the participants as an example of responses recorded in the Yes/No type table in the questionnaire.

In the Likert-type items, participants were asked to read each statement carefully and tick the box that best corresponded to their view of it. There were no correct or in correct responses, only their opinion.

One hundred and twelve questionnaires were distributed to the participants from different years of study, and different EFL writing courses. All the questionnaires were returned directly to the researcher.

During the description of the findings for the 'Yes/No' table in this chapter, the response categories *'Very Helpful'* & *'Helpful'* will usually be joined together*,* to give one percentage number to represent a positive opinion. In a similar way the categories *'Unhelpful'* & *'Very Unhelpful'* will be combined and reported as a single percentage to represent a negative opinion. The same practice will be followed for the Likert-type item table, where the *'Strongly Agree'* & *'Agree'* or *'Disagree'* & *'Strongly Disagree'* will also be joined together. This strategy was used because, from my knowledge of the students involved, the difference between, for example, 'strongly agree' and 'agree' will

not usually be a significant one: they tend to use these categories simply to reflect a positive opinion. This is supported by the fact that similar percentages of students give 'strongly agree' and 'agree' response to most questions. However, in those few questions where a high percentage used, for example, the 'strongly agree' response and only a few said 'agree', the results for each response are reported separately.

Section One: Teaching and Learning Approaches to Foreign Language Writing

The first section of the questionnaire includes 14 items, where each of these items was designed to present different methods of teaching and learning EFL writing; for example, items were concerned with teachers' feedback and evaluation, pre-writing techniques (discussing ideas, questioning techniques, and outlining ideas), revising processes, topic choice, and journal writing. Results from this section are reported in Table (5.3) below:

	Section 1: Tell me about your EFL classroom learning and teaching writing practices.	Y/N	N	%	N Very Helpful	% 1. Very Helpful	N Helpful	% 2. Helpful	N Uncertain	% 3. Uncertain	N Unhelpful	% 4. Unhelpful	N Very Unhelpful	% 5. Very unhelpful	No. of respondents
1.	My EFL writing teacher gives me her feedback for my draft several times.	Yes	77	68.7	35	45.7	35	45.7	6	7.9	1	.7	0	0	77
		No	34	31.3											
2.	My EFL writing teacher helps me to outline my main ideas, before I write them on paper.	Yes	80	72.3	36	45.0	41	51.2	1	1.3	2	2.5	0	0	80
		No	31	27.7											
3.	My EFL writing teacher discusses the new EFL topic with the whole class first.	Yes	87	78.2	35	40.3	45	51.7	6	6.9	1	1.1	0	0	87
		No	24	21.8											
4.	My EFL writing teacher encourages me to review my EFL written text many times before I finalize it.	Yes	78	70.0	35	44.9	31	39.7	8	10.3	3	3.8	1	1.3	78
		No	33	30.0											
5.	My EFL writing teacher uses questioning techniques to help us generate more ideas about the EFL topic.	Yes	71	61.8	27	38.5	32	45.1	8	11.3	3	4.2	1	.9	71
		No	41	38.2											
6.	My EFL writing teacher gives me the chance to choose the topic that I like.	Yes	87	76.8	40	46.0	34	39.1	10	11.5	2	2.3	1	1.1	87
		No	25	23.2											
7.	My EFL writing teacher discusses my EFL writing individually (one to one).	Yes	46	41.7	19	41.3	14	30.4	5	10.9	6	13.1	2	4.3	46
		No	63	58.3											
8.	My EFL writing teacher encourages me to compare my EFL writing with a high quality model text.	Yes	41	36.4	9	22.0	22	53.7	8	19.5	1	2.4	1	2.4	41
		No	70	63.6											
9.	My EFL writing teacher asks us to write regular journals.	Yes	46	41.1	15	32.6	19	41.4	10	21.7	0	0	2	4.3	46
		No	66	58.9											
10.	My EFL writing teacher keeps a portfolio for each student's written work	Yes	52	46.4	24	46.2	20	38.5	6	11.5	2	3.8	0	0	52
		No	58	52.7											
11.	My EFL writing teacher welcomes any imaginative (unusual) topics.	Yes	80	70.9	35	43.8	31	38.7	11	13.7	3	3.8	0	0	80
		No	32	29.1											
12.	My EFL writing teacher encourages me to revise, relying on my own knowledge and strategies.	Yes	70	64.2	22	31.4	32	45.7	11	15.7	5	7.1	0	0	70
		No	38	35.8											
13	Writing a topic using correct grammar is the main focus of my EFL writing teacher.	Yes	81	72.3	42	51.9	23	28.4	12	14.8	3	3.7	1	1.2	81
		No	31	27.7											
14	My EFL writing teacher regularly gives us her feedback on our writing assignments.	Yes	77	70.9	47	58.7	24	33.8	4	5.0	2	2.5	0	0	77
		No	32	29.1											

Table (5.3) Teaching and learning EFL writing practices. Note: (N) = number of participants for each specific item: Y/N = Yes or No: (0) = none and (%) = the percentage of the total number of students with each response.

If we take an overall view of the results in this table, most of the findings were positive, in the sense that most respondents reported that most of these practices happened, and when they did happen, respondents reported that they were useful. For example, a high number of the participants (77) said that, they received regular feedback from their teachers on their drafts, (item 1); another high number (78) of them showed that they also claimed that they received teacher's feedback on their writing assignments regularly, item (14); and a high percentage (92.0%) of them noted that their teacher's feedback was helpful.

In literature teacher's feedback should be clear, readable, accurate, and should not focus only on grammar and mechanics, (Cohen and Cavalcanti, 1990). The participants indecated, most of their EFL writing teachers used to focus on grammatical errors in their feedback, and respondents thought it was helpful for their EFL writing. In literature, the role of writing is not just the utilization of linguistics rules but it is a form of communication with others, (Vygosky, 1978). Accordingly, this opinion reflected an important issue about the quality of feedback that participants used to receive from their EFL writing teachers. Apparently, their teachers believed teaching and learning EFL writing should be presented as a form of grammar lesson; whereas, in the literature the purpose of teaching and learning EFL writing is basically based on social communication. Obviously, this concept seems not to be clear to the students, as they think that writing means grammar.

Out of this result, it seems there were some contradictions in the participants' responses, for example they believed that their teachers practiced pre-writing activities with them to help them generate ideas (Items 2, 3, 5, & 12) and at the same time they indicated that their teachers' feedback was mostly focused on grammar and structure. Efficient feedback and pre-writing activities in literature depend on content-focus not form-focus. As a result, more investigation needed to be done in the interviews to understand the nature of the participants' pre-writing activities and their teachers' feedback.

In addition, the findings also revealed that most participants have not been exposed to different types of writing or models, item (8). Their teachers seemed to ignore teaching EFL writing as a social act and considered it as a school subject instead by teaching grammar. Therefore, in the interviews, more investigation will be also conducted to

understand how much they have the ability to communicate with EFL writing in their real world.

For the revising process most participants claimed their teachers relied on their previous knowledge for their revision, item (4). In literature, students' previous knowledge varies from individual to individual based on their teaching and learning experiences. The role of writing teachers is to provide learners with clear revising criteria to help them improve their writing. The participants seem to have had different experiences from what is in the literature, as they used to depend on their own knowledge in their revision. This result will be investigated in the interviews in order to get to know more about the usefulness of their revision, and what influence it had on their EFL writing; also, what was the role of their teachers during their revision.

Another finding that came up from the data showed that most participants felt their EFL writing teachers did not use many alternatives to evaluate their EFL writing progress, items (7) and (10), and they reported the evaluation alternatives they had were insufficient. They said that their teachers gave them the opportunity to choose unusual topics, nevertheless they thought that they also would have liked to have had the opportunity to compare their own writing with some high quality writing models, see item (8). This finding raised a very important question about evaluation criteria that EFL writing teachers in this college used to apply to their students' EFL writing, as it seems students of this study were having difficulty assessing their EFL writing progress level. Thus, this issue will be addressed in the interviews in order to understand what participants think of themselves as EFL writers, what they see as their weaknesses and strengths in their EFL writing; and what evaluation criteria their EFL writing teachers use for their writing.

Section Two: How were participants taught to communicate in EFL writing?

Writing has a purpose; we write to communicate with others. In this section, the items mainly focused on the purpose of teaching and learning EFL writing for Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers, and the importance of EFL writing for their communication outside the educational environment.

#	Section 2: Tell me about how you are taught to communicate in EFL writing?	Y/N	N	%	Very Helpful N	1. Very Helpful %	Helpful N	2. Helpful %	Uncertain N	3. Uncertain %	Unhelpful N	4. Unhelpful %	Very Unhelpful N	5. Very unhelpful %	Total number of respondents
15	My EFL writing teacher encourages us to discuss our writing in groups and in pairs.	Yes	78	69.4	32	41.0	31	39.7	11	14.3	2	2.5	2	2.5	78
		No	34	30.6											
16	My EFL writing teacher encourages us to exchange our texts.	Yes	56	51.4	16	28.8	25	44.2	7	12.6	4	7.2	4	7.2	56
		No	55	48.6											
17	My EFL writing teacher encourages me to write EFL texts to real life readers.	Yes	36	32.8	12	33.4	15	41.7	7	19.4	2	5.5	0	0	36
		No	73	68.2											
18	My EFL writing teacher teaches us to write different kinds of text, such as academic essays, diaries, biography, story-telling, different types of letters, journals etc…	Yes	59	51.8	30	50.8	22	37.5	5	8.5	1	1.6	1	1.6	59
		No	54	48.2											
19	My EFL writing teacher encourages us to write to different audiences.	Yes	32	29.1	13	40.6	13	40.6	5	15.7	1	3.1	0	0	32
		No	78	70.9											
20	In my EFL writing classroom, my EFL writing teacher encourages us to criticize each others' texts.	Yes	60	55.5	21	35.1	26	43.3	10	16.6	0	0	3	5.0	60
		No	49	44.5											
21	My EFL writing teacher is the only reader who reads my EFL writing	Yes	72	67.3	14	19.4	11	15.3	22	30.6	17	23.6	8	11.1	72
		No	36	32.7											
22	My EFL writing teacher encourages us to criticize our EFL writing assignments in group work.	Yes	46	42.0	15	32.7	19	41.3	10	21.7	2	4.3	0	0	46
		No	65	58.0											
23	My EFL writing teacher encourages us to focus on the meaning of the topic.	Yes	91	81.3	44	48.6	37	40.7	7	7.6	2	2.1	1	1.0	91
		No	20	18.7											
24	My EFL writing teacher asks us to read to native writers.	Yes	41	36.0	15	36.5	23	56.2	3	7.3	0	0	0	0	41
		No	71	64.0											
25	My EFL writing teacher encourages me to write to different readers, such as people outside the classroom	Yes	24	20.7	11	45.8	8	33.5	2	8.3	2	8.3	1	4.1	24
		No	88	79.3											
26	My EFL writing teacher encourages us to read about second language culture.	Yes	37	33.3	20	52.7	12	31.6	4	10.5	2	5.2	0	0	37
		No	74	66.7											

Table (5.4) Students' methods of teaching communicative EFL writing: Note: (N) = number of participants for each specific item: Y/N = yes or No: (0) = none and (%) = the percentage of the total number of students with each response.

Obviously <u>group work</u> was practiced in the participants' EFL writing classrooms, as the findings of this table showed: 80.7% of the participants indicated they worked in groups, item (15); and 73.2% of them indicated that they exchanged their texts with their peers. The majority of the participants claimed group work was helpful. In the review of literature, it was suggested that collaborative writing (groups or pairs) works better when it is well-planned by the teachers. The findings presented in this table showed also that the participants' teachers used to give them specific instructions to help them in their EFL writing, as a high percentage of them believed the content of their writing was important to their teachers; this included practising different types of writing, as in for example, writing for academic essays, diaries, biography, story-telling, different types of letters, journals. Furthermore it was helpful for them to do this, items (23) & (18).

Although working in a group and writing with peers could be considered as writing to different readers, this was seen differently by the participants in this study. They emphasised their EFL writing teachers did not encourage them to write to people in the real world, item (25); or to different audiences, item (19), and their EFL writing teacher was the only reader who used to read their writing, (item 21). Apparently this finding needs more investigation, as participants seem to be having difficulty realizing the importance of working in groups. They reflected that group work was helpful and at the same time, they claimed that they have not been taught to write to different readers. Participants did not consider their peers to be real audiences. Maybe, they did not trust their peers' EFL writing competency. Whatever the reason, teachers of EFL writing need to be aware of this tendency for students to disregard peers as real audiences for their writing. This may mean that students fail to benefit from the opportunity to write for a range of others when teachers should find opportunities for students to write for a wider range of readers and not rely solely on readership within the peer group.

The quality of the group or pair work needs to be investigated by means of an interview, to understand the nature of their collaborative work; how much EFL writing was practiced in those groups? What was the role of their teachers while they were working in groups? What was the influence of this collaborative works on the participants' EFL writing accuracy? And how much was it related to their real life?

Section Three: Attitudes to writing in general and foreign language in particular.

The items in this section mainly focused on how EFL Kuwaiti students-teachers perceive writing in general and EFL writing in particular. Likert-type response categories were used in this section, as well as in some other sections of this questionnaire.

	Section 3: Attitudes to writing in general and EFL in particular.	N Strongly agree	1. Strongly agree %	N Agree	2. Agree %	N Uncertain	3. Uncertain %	N Disagree	4. Disagree %	N Strongly disagree	5. Strongly disagree %	Number of respondents
27	Writing is an important tool by means of which, we record, for example, our thoughts, history, culture, tradition, language, etc…	91	81.3	18	16.1	2	1.8	1	.9	0	0	112
28	Writing in general gives me the power to express my thoughts.	75	67.0	28	25.0	7	6.3	2	1.8	0	0	112
29	I believe writing is basically a means of social communication which we need in our real life.	35	31.3	58	51.8	17	15.2	2	1.8	0	0	112
30	I like writing in general.	34	30.4	49	43.8	18	16.1	7	6.3	4	3.6	112
31	I think writing is interesting.	34	29.7	48	43.2	17	15.3	8	7.2	5	4.5	111
32	I think EFL writing is the most difficult skill in the process of learning a second language	37	33.0	25	22.3	15	13.4	29	25.9	6	5.4	112
33	I believe learning a second language helps us in learning more about our global world.	67	60.9	32	29.1	8	7.3	3	2.7	0	0	110
34	I believe learning second language writing is affecting the accuracy of my first language writing.	14	12.5	22	19.6	28	25.0	33	29.5	15	13.4	112
35	I feel that learning to write in my first language is more important than learning to write in a second language. .	15	13.4	26	23.2	26	23.2	31	27.7	14	12.5	112

Table (5. 5) Students' attitude to writing in general and EFL in particular. Note: (N) = number of participants for each specific item; (0) = none and (%) = the total percentage of the participants with each response.

The importance of writing in general and EFL writing in particular was indicated by various items in this table. Most of the respondents (74.2%) liked EFL writing, (item 30) and 72.9% of them felt that EFL writing is interesting. However, 55.5% of them stated that writing was the most difficult skill in the process of learning a second language, (item 32). A high percentage of the participants noted writing was important for them; for example, they claimed writing was used for the purposes of expressing their thoughts, and recording their history, culture, and traditions (item 27). They also saw it as a means of social communication which helps them learn more about our global world, (item 29). On the other hand, there was a small proportion (16.1%, item 30) of the participants who were uncertain about their preference for writing in general, in addition to the 11.7% (item 31) of them who believed writing was not interesting, and 15.3% of them who were uncertain.

A substantial minority of the participants (36.6%) said their L1 writing was more important than EFL writing (item 35), and 32.1% of them illustrated that learning EFL writing would affect their L1 writing accuracy, (item 34). In addition to this a comparable percentage indicated that there was also a good number of them (40.2%) who felt that learning EFL writing is more important than leaning L1; this should be compared to the 36.6% of them who said the opposite, whereas 23.2% of them were uncertain. This result contradicts what is stated in the literature; Hyland (2003) has argued that writers prefer writing in their native language as they are more fluent and have fewer difficulties in expressing themselves than in a second language. Although these participants were Arab EFL learners and their L1 writing should have been easier and more important for them than EFL writing, especially for learning and teaching Quran, the result showed the opposite; they felt that EFL writing is more important. This could be due to the fact that, as I mentioned in Chapter Two, they use two different forms of L1 language, Al Fusha for reading and writing and Al Amyiah for speaking, or it may be for other reasons; these need to be explored by means of follow-up interviews in order to understand: What factors made participants prefer EFL writing to L1? What is the influence of L1 writing accuracy on learning and teaching EFL writing? Especially when we see that a good number of the participants (42.9%) noted learning EFL writing would not affect L1 writing accuracy, whereas another reasonable percentage (25.0%) of them were uncertain about the influence of learning EFL writing on L1 writing.

Section Four: Foreign language writing approaches.

This section basically focuses on EFL writing strategies that were used by the participants for their EFL writing processes, for example, how they planned for their EFL writing texts. Did they ask for any assistance when difficulties arose? And did they use their first language writing techniques in EFL writing.

	Section 4: Tell me about your approaches to EFL writing.	Y/N	N	%	% Very Helpful	N 1. Very helpful	% Helpful	N 2. Helpful	% Uncertain	N 3. Uncertain	% Unhelpful	N 4. Unhelpful	% Very unhelpful	N 5. Very Helpful	Number of respondents
36	I plan for a short EFL text to avoid errors.	Yes	86	77.0	52.3	45	40.7	35	4.8	4	1.1	1	1.1	1	86
		No	23	23.0											
37	When I fail to write a good EFL text I ask my teacher for help.	Yes	76	68.4	57.9	44	32.9	25	6.6	5	1.3	1	1.3	1	76
		No	36	31.6											
38	I read text written by native writers.	Yes	74	65.6	51.3	38	39.4	29	6.7	5	1.3	1	1.3	1	74
		No	39	34.4											
39	I ask my friends for help with my vocabulary problems.	Yes	83	73.2	45.8	38	45.8	38	6.0	5	2.4	2	0	0	83
		No	30	26.8											
40	When I plan to write in a second language, I use simple sentences.	Yes	87	78.0	31.0	28	42.0	35	17.0	15	8.0	7	2.0	2	87
		No	26	22.0											
41	I ask my peers for help, if I cannot distinguish between the new L 2 knowledge and what I already know from my knowledge of my first language.	Yes	74	64.6	50.1	38	38.1	29	9.2	5	1.3	1	1.3	1	74
		No	37	35.4											
42	I use Frst Language writing planning techniques when writing EFL text.	Yes	50	45.0	22.0	11	46.0	23	20.0	10	4.0	2	8.0	4	50
		No	62	55.0											

Table (5.6) Students' approaches to EFL writing. Note: (N) = number of participants for each specific item; Y/N= yes or No, (0) = none and (%) = the percentage of the total number of students with each response.

The items contained in this section basically focused on the <u>text planning</u> processes. The findings showed that most of the participants preferred planning for short EFL texts, (item 36), and for simple EFL sentences, to avoid errors, (item 40). A very high percentage of them refelected that planning for a short text and for simple sentences was helpful. However, there were 15 participants who were uncertain about the usefulness of writing simple sentences, and 23 who felt that they did not plan for a short text, (items 36, 40).

Apparently, the participants illustrated that they did not have enough <u>confidence</u> to plan for a long text, and they prefer writing simple EFL sentences to avoid making errors. On the other hand they were confident enough to ask their peers, friends and teachers for help when difficulties arose when writing in EFL. A review of the literature shows that EFL writers are usually considered to be novice writers as they plan less than expert writers, (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). Feeling confident enough to ask their peers or teachers when difficulties arise, does not mean that participants were confident. They feel confident enough to ask others because, as they stated before in Table number Two, they believed that these people were not real audiences and were part of their teaching and learning environment. Thus, this table raised very important issues for the interviews, as more investigation will be conducted to explore how confident participants are when writing in EFL and the influence of their self-confidence on their EFL writing competency.

Moreover, it was also obvious from the findings of the personal background section in this questionnaire that items numbered 69 & 70 show that most participants (62) claimed they did not use L1 writing techniques when planning for EFL writing tasks, (item 42) although their L1 writing accuracy was good. This finding seems to contradict what the literature avers, namely that, L1 writing competency enriches EFL writing, (Prior, 2006). Thus, the influence of L1 writing techniques and strategies on EFL writing will be investigated in further interviews; these will explore how do participants feel about the importance of L1 planning techniques and strategies in EFL writing? The differences and the similarities between L1 and EFL writing, how much do participants translate from L1 to EFL writing? And, whether L1 helps EFL writing in any way?

Section Five: Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of foreign language writing

In this section all items were designed to focus on the perceptions of the participants towards EFL writing or on how they felt about EFL writing.

	Section 5: Tell me how you feel about EFL writing.	% Strongly Agree	1. Strongly Agree N	% Agree	2. Agree N	% Uncertain	3. Uncertain N	% Disagree	4. Disagree N	% Strongly Disagree	5. Strongly Disagree N	Number of respondents
43	I think that my knowledge of the topic I am writing about in EFL, makes EFL writing easier.	71.8	79	24.5	29	2.7	3	.9	1	0	0	110
44	I believe I need to use EFL writing with people outside the classroom.	45.9	51	28.8	32	15.3	17	9.0	10	.9	1	111
45	I think that I need to improve my EFL writing.	67.9	79	27.7	31	2.7	3	1.8	2	0	0	112
46	I believe that I need to be exposed to EFL native writers' styles.	51.8	57	35.5	39	10.9	12	1.8	2	0	0	110
47	I think that I experience difficulties writing about issues relating to EFL culture.	25.1	28	28.6	32	33.9	38	8.0	9	4.5	5	112
48	I have the strategies which enable me to recognize my errors during my revision.	18.8	21	51.8	58	23.2	26	2.7	3	3.6	4	112
49	I need to know how to easily express what I really want to say in EFL writing.	48.2	53	44.5	49	5.5	6	1.8	2	0	0	110
50	I think that I can write to different readers easily.	6.3	7	17.1	19	40.5	45	27.0	30	9.0	10	111
51	I am confident enough to show my writing to my peers.	28.2	31	39.1	43	16.4	18	11.8	13	4.5	5	110
52	I am confident enough to receive any criticism of my writing from my readers.	30.4	34	41.1	46	17.0	19	8.9	10	2.7	3	112

Table (5.7) The perception of EFL students of EFL writing: Note: (N) = number of participants for each specific item; (0) = none, and (%) = the percentages of the total responses of each item.

The items in this table mostly focused on the perceptions of the participants with respect to EFL writing, as for example, their EFL writing weaknesses and their strong points, what they think of themselves as EFL writers, the importance of becoming confident EFL writers, and whether or not they were confident enough to write to native readers or readers other than their EFL writing teacher.

Most participants had sufficient confidence: to show their peers their EFL writing, (item 51); to recognize their writing errors during their revision, (item 48); to show

their EFL writing to different readers other than their peers, (item 52); and to receive any criticism for their EFL writing from different readers, (item 52). However, this confidence did not encourage them to write to people outside the classroom. Only 23.4% of them were confident enough to communicate in EFL writing with people outside their academic environment and 40% percent of them were uncertain about writing easily in EFL to people outside the classroom. This result gives a negative impression of how participants felt about themselves as EFL writers, (item 50). Not only that, but there was a very high number of them who also indicated that their EFL writing was not good enough and they needed help. In addition, they did not have the ability to write about EFL culture, (items 47 & 49). According to the literature, writing about EFL culture helps L2 writers to understand the rhetorical, social, and cultural background of that culture, (Matsuda at el, 2009).

From the result recorded in this table, it is obvious that there is a contradiction between the opinions of the participants. In some cases participants felt sufficiently confident to write to different readers in EFL, and to receive criticism about their EFL writing from others; at the same time they felt that they needed help when writing in EFL, and they were uncertain about writing to people outside the classroom. This contradiction will be explored in the interviews to find out how important it is for the participants to be confident in EFL writing. And, how they see themselves as EFL writers, and the relationship between their self-confidence and teaching and learning EFL writing.

Section Six: How motivated participants were to write in a foreign language

The relationship between motivation and the process of teaching and learning language in general, and writing in particular, is very strong. A motivated individual 'is one who wants to achieve a particular goal, devotes considerable effort to achieve this goal, and experiences satisfaction in the activities associated with achieving this goal', (Gardner and MacIntyre, 1993, p.2). The following table presents the findings of the items that were mainly focused on the motivation of Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' in teaching and learning EFL writing.

	Section 6: Are you motivated to write in EFL language?	Strongly Agree %	1. Strongly Agree N	Agree %	2. Agree N	Uncertain %	3. Uncertain N	Disagree %	4. Disagree N	Strongly disagree %	5. Strongly Disagree N	Total number of respondents
53	I write in EFL because I need it in my daily life.	24.1	27	49.1	55	14.3	16	11.6	13	0.9	1	112
54	When I write, my purpose is to give my audience a good impression about myself.	20.5	23	54.5	61	20.5	23	4.5	5	0	0	112
55	I only write to my EFL writing teacher.	18.0	20	24.3	27	9.9	11	42.2	48	4.5	5	111
56	I practice writing regularly because I want to be a good EFL writer.	18.0	20	36.9	41	24.3	27	19.8	22	.9	1	111
57	I have to be a good EFL writer for my future career.	76.6	85	17.2	19	2.7	3	1.8	2	1.8	2	111
58	My L1 and EFL readers' positive feedback encourages me to write.	27.7	31	42.9	48	17.9	20	7.1	8	4.5	5	112
59	Writing is the best method that I use to express my feeling on paper.	36.6	41	29.5	33	18.8	21	13.4	15	1.8	2	112
60	I write because I believe that EFL writing accuracy will help me to be a more professional person at work.	49.1	55	38.4	43	10.7	12	1.8	2	0	0	112
61	My negative previous learning experiences will not stop me from improving my EFL writing.	45.5	51	35.7	40	16.1	18	1.8	2	0.9	1	112
62	I write only to satisfy the teacher.	7.1	8	20.5	23	12.5	14	38.4	43	21.4	24	112
63	I write only to pass the course.	8.2	9	20.9	23	5.5	6	39.2	42	27.3	30	110
64	My ability to write well in my first language makes me love writing in EFL.	23.2	26	21.4	24	26.8	30	24.1	27	4.5	5	112

Table (5. 8) The participants' motivation to write in EFL: (N) = number of participants for each specific item. (0) = none and (%) = the percentage of the total number of participants with each response.

Most of the participants said that <u>writing was important</u> for them. They illustrated that through writing they could express their feelings on paper, (item 59). The participants were divided in their views about whether the purpose of practising writing was to go beyond simply satisfying their teachers, (item 55) or passing the course (item 63). Many saw it as relevant to their future careers, (items 57 & 60) and daily life needs (item 53).

Most of them claimed that fluency in EFL writing is important for them; if they write well, they will give a better impression of themselves to their readers. Obviously, the main purpose of writing is to communicate with others, and the finding recorded by item 54 showed that most of the participants were aware of the importance of their audiences.

Most of them were also encouraged to practice EFL writing despite their negative teaching and learning experiences, (item 61). Positive feedback seems to influence the participants' EFL writing, as most of them had received positive feedback in both languages L1 and EFL, and this had encouraged them to practice EFL writing, (item 58 & 61). Further investigation will be conducted in the interview to explore the exact reality about their teachers' feedback, as a good number of them believed their teachers' feedback had a positive impact on their motivation to write.

The question of the influence of L1 writing accuracy on EFL writing was presented in two different tables, 4 and 6, in two different ways. In both tables it seems that participants' views were divided, as less than fifty percent (44.6%) of the participants in table 6, claimed that their good background in L1 writing made them enjoy EFL writing, (item 64); whereas 28.6% of them disagreed with this, and 26.8% were uncertain about it. In table 4, 62 participants out of 112 said that L1 writing planning techniques did not have any influence on their EFL writing, and only 49 participants emphasised that they did. According to the literature, students who are competent in L1 writing might be competent in L2 writing, as they can draw on L1 writing that is similar to L2, and there is positive strategy transfer to the L2 context, (Prior, 2006, Grabe and Kaplan, 1996, Zamel, 1997). The relationship between L1 writing competency and L2 writing is important; L1 could be used as a recourse for L2 writing. The findings of the two tables reflected that participants were not sufficiently aware of the role of L1 writing accuracy in learning EFL writing. In their opinion, they had been uncertain about using their L1 writing techniques, strategies, and planning in EFL writing. Having been a teacher for many years in this field, I always had the feeling that our students were having difficulty admitting that they use L1 writing techniques or planning in their EFL writing. Their responses to this questionnaire reminded me of this. I believe that we need to conduct a deeper investigation to understand what caused this division of opinion, and made the participants in this study uncertain about the importance of L1 writing accuracy in EFL writing to understand how they see the

relationship between L1 and EFL writing, and how much they transfer skills from L1 to EFL. Which are the L1 writing strategies that they transfer to EFL writing? And, how much does L1 writing competency support EFL writing?

Section Seven: Personal backgrounds of the participants

There were nine different items in the background section, these mostly focused on the personal backgrounds of the participants: How often do participants write in EFL? What is their year of study? How often do they take EFL writing classes? Which high schools had they attended? What was their L1 and EFL writing competency? How many years have they studied English? What majors did they study? And what EFL writing courses have they taken?

How often do they write in EFL?

This table showed that around a quarter of the respondents of this research did not do any EFL writing each week; at the opposite extreme was almost the same percentage who were practising EFL writing every other day. However, a third of them practised EFL writing twice a week, and only 20% of them once a week. Although this result can be regarded as a positive finding regarding the number of times that most participants practiced EFL writing per week, interestingly, around a quarter of them did not practice any EFL writing at all. In the interview the researcher will investigate this issue carefully to find out how true the reported findings were concerning some participants who did not practice any EFL writing.

	Once a week	Twice a week	Every other day	No regular weekly writing	N
65. I usually write in English	20.0%	30.9%	24.5%	24.4%	110

Table (5.9) How often students do write in EFL? Note: (N) = total number of participants

Year-study of the participants

Obviously, most of the participants who have taken this questionnaire were from Year One (freshmen), and the next highest number was from Year Three. There were roughly the same number of participants from Years Four and Two.

	First year	Second year	Third year	Fourth year	N
66. What year of study are you in now?	38.4%	18.8%	22.3%	20.5%	112

Table (5.10) Year ofstudy of the participants. Note: (N) = total number of the participants

Numbers of EFL writing lessons participants undertake per week

The findings showed that less than half of the participants of this study used to take EFL writing lessons three to four times a week, and 30% of them take one to two lessons per week. According to the policy of the college's Registration Office, which is coordinated with the English Department, EFL students who were majoring in English should take two EFL writing courses (basic and advanced), and each of these courses should be taught for three hours per week, divided into two or three lessons. If it was three lessons, students should take one hour each other day for each lesson; and, if it was two lessons, each lesson should be one and a half hours twice a week. Thus, all the respondents of this research were obligated to choose from one of these two timetables.

	English writing classes once every other day	One to two English writing classes	Three to four English writing classes	Daily	N
67. Every week I take…	14.5%	30%	47.3%	8.2%	110

Table. 5. 11. Numbers of EFL writing lessons participants undertake per week. Note: (N) = total number of the participants.

The type of High School participants went to

The majority of the participants of this study went to public/government schools, and a small number went to private Arabic schools. In these two systems, English is taught as a subject, and Arabic is the medium for teaching and learning of all subjects. However, a very low percentage of the participants went to Private English/American high schools in which English is used as the medium for teaching and learning all subjects except for Arabic and religion, which are taught as subjects. In bilingual schools English and Arabic are used as the medium for teaching and learning.

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	A Private English/American High School	Government /Public High School	Private Arabic High School	Other type of High School	N
68. I went to…	7.1%	70.5%	21.4%	.9%	112

Table (5.12) Students' high school type. Note: (N) = total number of the participants

First Language writing competency of the participants

The findings reported in this section showed that most of the participants of this research believed that their L1 writing accuracy was high, and only a very low percentage of them believed that their L1 writing competency was poor. However, if we look carefully at this result, it seems that most of the participants here were confident of their L1 writing accuracy. In the literature, the question of the possible positive influence of strategy transfer from the L1 to the EFL context is raised; this can significantly facilitate the learners' writing development, (Hyland, 2003; Zamil, 1997). This finding will be investigated in the interview, in order to gain an understanding of the influence of the participants' L1 accuracy on EFL writing.

	Excellent to Very Good	Good to Average	Fair to Poor	Very Poor	N
69. How do you evaluate your first language (Arabic) writing competency	33.9%	47.3%	12.5%	6.3%	112

Table (5.13) Students' first language writing competency. Note: (N) = total number of the participants.

English writing proficiency of the participants

The findings showed that a very high percent of the participants of this study believed that their English writing proficiency was ranked at the 'intermediate' level. Among the participants there were a number of participants (7.1%) who graduated from private English/American high schools, and these participants might be the ones who were ranked as 'High' ; however, these will be excluded from the interview. The reason is that their EFL writing background is totally different from that of the rest of the sample, as they were fluent in EFL in general. However, according to the undergraduate admissions policy for this higher college, candidates who were interested to study English major, should earn 70% or above in their high school grade points average. Accordingly, their English language proficiency was assumed to be well above average.

(Admission requirements for the English major 2009, the College of Basic Education, Admission's Office, 2009).

	High	Intermediate	Low	N
70. Evaluate your English writing proficiency.	7.1%	78.6%	14.3%	112

Table (5.14) English writing proficiency of the participants. Note: (N) = total number of the participants.

Number of years participants have studied English as a subject at school

The results showed that most of the participants of this study studied English as a subject at government schools for 12 years; they started in their primary school at Year One, continuing until they graduated in Year Twelve; and 25% of them studied English as a subject for eight years, starting from Year Five, until they graduated in Year Twelve. In the old Kuwaiti EFL educational system, all public/government schools used to teach English as a subject from Year Five at the secondary school, however, in 1993, this system was changed. The new system allows students to learn EFL from Year One in the primary school, and to continue until they graduate in Year Twelve at high school, (see Chapter Two, EFL educational system in Kuwait). Accordingly, it is obvious that most of the participants in this questionnaire had learned EFL writing for twelve years before being admitted to this higher education college.

	8 years	12 years	N
71. I have studied English as a subject in school (before the college level) for…	25%	75%	112

Table (5.15) Number of year participants has studied English as a subject at school. Note: (N) = total number of the participants.

Academic fields of the participants

This finding showed that a significant number of the participants of this study were studying English major, and that most of them will be EFL teachers in the public/government schools. There was a small percentage (7.1%) of the participants who were majoring in both English and French.

	English	English and French	N
72. My academic field (major) is…	92.9%	7.1%	112

Table (5.16) Students' academic fields. Note: (N) = total number of the participants.

Numbers of EFL writing courses participants have taken

In this higher college, two EFL writing courses (Basic and Advanced) were offered for the students who were majoring in English. The findings showed that most of the participants of this study had already finished both of these EFL writing courses, another 30% of them were taking the 'Basic' EFL writing course during the data collection time, and 15.5% had already finished the Basic' EFL writing course and were taking 'Advanced' course during the data collection period. There wasa very low percentage of the students (2.7%) who were studying advanced writing only.

	I am taking the basic EFL writing course	I am taking the advanced EFL writing course	I have finished the basic EFL writing, course and am taking the advanced writing course	I have finished both EFL writing courses, basic and advanced.	N
73. Choose the most appropriate answer for your status…	30%	2.7%	15.5%	51.8%	110

Table (5. 17) Numbers of EFL writing courses participants enrolled in this college. Note: (N) = total number of the participants.

Analysis of the qualitative data of the questionnaire

Eight open-ended statements were introduced to the participants in the questionnaire to provide them with the freedom to describe some of their views and experiences; as can be seen these headings provided appropriate guidance, they were as follows: The students' perceptions of helpful teaching practices for EFL writing; Students' perceptions of how teaching EFL writing could be improved; The use of EFL writing outside the educational environment; Their parents' support; The factors that influenced participants EFL writing negatively or positively; Participants' perceptions of EFL writing; Participants' perceptions of writing extended texts in EFL; and finally, the Reasons that made participants decided to study English major. These statements were related to the key strands of the research questions. Participants were invited to respond to each of the eight items. Analysis of the data for the open-ended statements was undertaken by firstly using deductive coding, taking the headings from the question; this was then followed by inductive coding of the responses, collated within that category. Inductive coding allows for a rich interpretation of the data: rather than imposing pre-determined coding categories on the data, it looks to reflect the richness and the nuances of the responses.

A table of nine columns was designed for the purpose of analyzing the open-ended statements, and each statement was written at the top of a column. The first iteration of the coding collated comments of the participants for each statement in the column where it belonged. One of the nine columns was used for listing the participants' identification number, as their names were not mentioned on the questionnaire, but instead a number was given to each participant; this ensured their anonymity. The following table gives an example of how participants' open-ended statements were gathered prior to an analysis being undertaken:

Students Number	A- Best Teaching method/s that helped me most to improve my EFL writing was/were …	B- If I were an EFL writing teacher, I would change or improve the following...	C- Usually in my social life (outside the class-room), I write the following in EFL...	D- At home my parents support my EFL writing by…	E- My EFL writing was influenced (either negatively or positively) by the following factors…	F- When I start writing in a second language, I feel…	G- Writing a long EFL text is…	H- The reason/s for studying this major is/are...
1	Giving us more examples and demonstration	Vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar	*Empty*	They don't offer me any support	Teacher, media, reading English books and magazines	Hesitant, unconfident, confused	Difficult	Because I like English language
2	Modelling, show us more writing models.	I would use different teaching methods than the one we have now.	I don't use EFL writing outside the classroom	Advising me to read and study	By our bad teaching methods employed by my teachers. They had a negative influence on my writing..	That EFL writing is too difficult	Really needs a lot of effort	It opens up the big world to me.
3	I don't know. I read a lot	Let the student read more books, or whatever, because I believe a good reader is a good writer and she writes more	I want to tell people about my opinion tell them about my life and myself.	They don't Support it	My life/myself/ my point-of -view/ my friends.	Happy/ doing something worthwhile	Helpful	I like English in general. I want to improve my English/ learning English is an important language nowadays.
4	Working in groups	I would improve the methods of teaching and make them more useful for the students.	Diary	Giving me their opinions about my writing.	My knowledge	Happy and scared at the same time	Not easy	I want to improve my language, because I believe that it is very important.
5	Using PowerPoint ive us more quizzes every week.	The way that teachers use in their teaching.	Writing emails, chatting, and poems.	Tell me to watch English movies, and ask me to speak to them in English.	We're not allowed to give our opinions	Happy and interested	Difficult	To know about another language and to study outside this country.

Table (5. 18) Sample from the data of the eight open-ended statements of the participants.

The second iteration of the coding process elicited a broad range of codes by looking for similar issues down each column; these illustrated participants' views about their perceptions of EFL writing teaching methods, and their perceptions of their own EFL writing, as they were presented in each of the eight open-ended statements. These items

were then analyzed further and categorized into the themes into which they were grouped, and the most frequent comments were reported; this leads to a smaller table. To check this coding, each statement has been reviewed many times, this serves to double check against similar issues across each coding. These coding are described in the analysis of each statement as seen below:

A. The students' perceptions of helpful teaching practices for EFL writing.

The following table shows, the findings of the participants' comments about their perceptions of *helpful teaching practices for EFL writing.* The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category 'helpful teaching strategies' is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the nine sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

They can be seen in the following table:

Categories	Sub-Categories
Helpful teaching strategies	- Giving different types of writing
	- Planning
	- Drafting
	- Reading
	- Revising
	- Topic choice
	-Teacher's feedback
	-Intensive writing (Assignments)
	-Group work

Table (5. 19) The category and sub-categories of the helpful teaching strategies for EFL writing.

Perhaps the most significant feedback from this item of the questionnaire centred on the comments made by some respondents, as they emphasized the importance of using different kinds of EFL writing teaching methods, as in for example, 'writing letters;', some participants described it thus: *'In my secondary school we have learnt how to write a letter to a friend living abroad., which was really interesting, and I learnt it easily',* and another participant states, *'My teacher taught me how to write a letter in school and that helped me improving my EFL writing'.* Planning is another teaching method, they claimed it helped them improve their EFL writing, as they pointed out, *'Brainstorming, questioning, writing ideas about the new topic we want to write about',* and another participant described, 'T*he best method, when I was in my Primary School,*

we learnt how to make a web for our ideas before we started writing our essay'. Drafting, as some participants here believed, helped their EFL writing; they argued, *'When my EFL writing teacher corrects my drafts and tells me to review them several times before submitting my papers',* moreover, *'rewriting our writing many times, and in the class when we work with our classmates to correct our writing mistakes'*, and, *'Writing more than one draft about the same topic'.* Reading, different books was one of the most effective teaching strategies impacting the EFL writing methods that influenced, in this study, some of the participants' EFL writing, as a number of them stated:*' Reading books in English improved my vocabulary and encouraged me to write more and be more confident;* another participant also noted, *'My secondary school teacher encouraged us to read stories, I mean different kinds of stories, this helped me to improve my writing skills'.* Moreover, revising was another method that respondents indicated that it helped their EFL writing positively, as was stated by some of them,

- *'When I start correcting my errors I learn more and more';*

- *'When my EFL writing teacher corrects my drafts and tells me to review them several times before submitting my papers';*

- *'Revising what I write in my essay helps me to improve my EFL writing'.*

The next method used for teaching EFL writing was topic choice; some of the participants in this study remarked, *'Writing about any topic I want and about myself',* and another respondent stated, *'Writing about a wide range of open topics'.* Furthermore, the provision of teachers' feedback was one of the important methods of teaching EFL writing, as some participants stated, *'I have really benefited from my teacher's correction of my EFL writing, as when I write something wrong, and she corrects it for me and explains it, I strengthen my EFL writing skills'.* Another respondent emphasized, *'To correct my mistakes with my teacher helps me avoid making the same mistakes again',* in addition, *'Discussing my EFL writing individually, and giving me examples',* and some participants claimed revising several times was helpful, as one of them described, *'When my EFL writing teacher corrected my drafts and told me to review them several times, it was helpful'.* Giving enough EFL writing assignments was important for some participants, as one of them stated, *'Assignments requiring me to write anything about myself, life, interests, the freedom to choose the topic, encouraging writing, not to stop writing',* Further, some other respondents

illustrated, as one of them stated, *'Giving me as many EFL writing assignments as possible';* in addition, a good number of the participants believed that they were helped by*, 'Writing assignments every week'.* According to one specific participant, working in groups or a collaborative learning experience, which seems to be rarely practised in her classroom as she was the only participant who stated*, 'no working in groups'.* This statement emphasized the importance of using more than one data collection method, as this could help the researcher to check the accuracy of the data. For example, the findings recorded in item 15 in the quantitative data table that 77% of the participants of this research confirmed that their EFL writing teachers encouraged them to work in groups, whereas, one student felt she did not work in groups, in addition to the rest of the students who did not mention anything about group works in their response. Obviously, this finding needs more investigation in order to understand what the real situation of the participants is with regard to the collaborative work, as this type of work is important for EFL writing classroom. In addition, using the white board and power point, and following this up with students' home work and journal writing, were raised by only three participants.

It seems from the findings of the students' perceptions of helpful teaching strategies for EFL writing, that participants had some positive experiences from their schooling (secondary, and primary), as they indicated that in their schools they learnt how to plan, and how to focus on reading. However, in this college they claimed they needed their teachers to focus more on planning and reading issues. Drafting and revising were another pair of influential factors that students would like to have more practice with and be supervised by their EFL writing teachers. They would like their teachers to help them correct their errors to improve their writing. It seems also, from the analysis, respondents noted that topic choice was also an important factor that teachers needed to be aware of, as a good number of the participants believed that their EFL writing could be improved if they had the opportunity to write about their interests, feelings, and their life experiences. In addition, they emphasised that their EFL writing teachers need to give them more writing assignments, participants insist that they would like their teachers to allocate them, as they called it, 'non-stop writing', or intensive writing. In addition to that, teacher's feedback was mentioned by different participants in this study, as they felt that they needed their teachers to help them to identify their EFL writing errors by meeting them individually.

At the opposite extreme were a few participants in this study who said that they had not had any specific teaching and learning of EFL writing methods that had helped them improve their EFL writing. They stated that: *'There is no method I remember having helped me to improve my EFL writing'*, and *'I don't have one'*. Furthermore, three participants showed that they did not learn to write in EFL in this college, as one of them stated, *'My experience with the advanced writing course, it was very basic and I did not learn any new knowledge, but the best method was in my Primary school',* and another participant claimed*, 'So far I have been doing basic writing for four weeks and the teacher hasn't taught us anything important; he doesn't help us in our writing or teach us how to write, the course is almost finished and we still haven't learnt anything. I like English and I am trying to help myself improve my English through reading English magazines, and watching a lot of movies'.* The third participant described, *'Our EFL writing teaching methods were not based on good grammar and good teaching methods, we don't know how to write correct sentences for academic writing or how to join our sentences together'.* Obviously the participants were motivated to learn EFL writing, however they claimed their teachers should put more effort into giving them more teaching and learning practice to help them to become more fluent in EFL writing; this should include: practising planning, drafting, reading, revising; and they should be given the opportunity to choose their topics. In addition to practising intensive writing there should be constructive teacher's feedback and efficient group work. Accordingly, more investigation is going to be conducted through further interviews to understand more about strategies of teaching and learning EFL writing in this college, and how often participants receive feedback for their EFL writing; How collaborative work is practiced in their classroom; And, how often they practise EFL writing.

B. Students' perceptions of how teaching EFL writing could be improved

The following table shows the findings of the participants' comments about their perceptions of *How participants' teaching and learning EFL writing methods could be improved*. The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category 'How teaching EFL writing could be improved' is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the ten sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

Category	Sub- Categories
How teaching EFL writing could be improved	Teaching more grammar
	Choose their topic
	Speaking EFL language
	Correct their grammar
	Following up their writing assignment
	Teachers' assessment criteria
	Behavioural and psychological factors
	Change EFL curriculum in Kuwait
	Change EFL teachers
	Expose participants to EFL native writers

Table (5.20) How teaching EFL writing could be improved.

It seems that participants believed teaching grammar and vocabularies were essential for their EFL writing fluency. Teaching grammar seemed to be one of the most dominant teaching EFL writing practices in Kuwait, as most of the students feel more secure if their teachers keep teaching them grammar. This might be referred to their teaching and learning EFL writing experiences. However, theoretically, this might not be what many EFL writing researchers hold to be true. The views of the participants who will be EFL teachers in the future are shown in the following quotations:

- *'I will teach vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar'.*

- *'I will improve my students' vocabulary and grammar, because it is very important to avoid embarrassment'.*

- *'I will help my students learning vocabulary and grammar'.*

Participants also said they would like to give their students the choice to choose their topics, as they confirmed in the following quotations:

- *'Give them more freedom to choose their topics and the type of texts, encouraging creativity writing'.*

- *'Make topics more interesting and in line with their interests'.*

- *'I will let my students choose their topics'.*

It was obvious that participants noted they feel more inclined to write in EFL, if they have had the opportunity to choose their topics. That might reflect their prior knowledge, as they illustrated without that knowledge they might struggle with EFL writing. So teachers should give students more opportunity to choose their topics.

Interestingly, 13 participants believed in this study that speaking was strongly influencing their EFL writing. They stated: *'Conversation'*, *'Listening to correct English conversation in order to write correctly'*; and another participant stated that she would like her students, *'to communicate with each other in English'*. Free writing was important for some participants, as one of them argued, *'In the beginning I will make my students write and express their thoughts without paying attention to writing accuracy and the grammar'*. It seemed these participants claimed that they did not want their teachers to focus on their accuracy when writing but on the meaning of what they write. This result contradicted what most participants of this study stated before, as a high percentage of them reflected that teaching intensive grammar would improve their EFL writing fluency, as for example these participants stated, *'I will improve the students' vocabulary and grammar, because it is very important to avoid embarrassment'*, and another student highlighted, *'I will teach them spelling, grammar and give them the synonyms of the words'*.

Some participants indicated that teaching EFL writing should have a purpose, so they would like to teach their students how to use their EFL writing in their real world. A few of them stated: *'I would teach my students how to write to different audiences'*, further, *'I will lay emphasis on writing as a life skill, not a skill which is limited to the classroom'*. Other participants showed that feedback and evaluation criteria were factors influencing progress in EFL writing; as they stated; *'I would arrange appointments with the weak students to help them improve their skills'*, and *'Keep a portfolio for students' work to see their progress throughout the course'*. Some behavioural and psychological factors were also been raised by some participants in this study, as they noted their teacher should change the way he/she talked to them, dealt with them, and communicated with them, as some of them confirmed:

- *'I will be easy with them and give them advice'*.
- *'I will change the teaching methods, I will talk with my students in a good way, and I will encourage them.'*
- *'I will change the way I communicate with my students'*.

There was an interesting finding; some participants claimed that sweeping changes were called for, in: *'The English Language Curriculum in Kuwait, and the whole system of teaching English in every department in the Ministry of Education'*, and *'I would*

change my teacher, because he doesn't help us, he sits on the chair and doesn't do anything. I'm tired of that and the only thing he does is to encourage us to read more'. Two participants claimed that, as they emphasized, *'I will bring native speakers into the classroom, and encourage my students to communicate with them orally and through writing them emails',* and, *'Let my students practice English more and be exposed to native writers' styles'.* It seems individual differences were an important factor for one participant, as she indicated*, 'I would bear individual differences in mind'.*

In general, most participants of this research said that there were many negative teaching and learning EFL writing factors which needed to be changed in order to improve their EFL writing competency. They would like their EFL writing teachers, for example, to give them more grammar and vocabulary, give them the freedom to choose their topics, place more emphasis on EFL speaking, practise free writing more often, write to different real life readers, and be exposed to EFL writers' styles. Participants also illustrated their teacher should be well-versed in feedback and evaluation procedures, and the criteria should be made known to their student-teachers. This would lay a sound basis for one-to-one meetings, and they should make a portfolio for each student. In addition there were psychological factors, as they would like their teachers to be flexible with them and give them a hand when they felt they needed help, talk to them politely and open more channels to help them communicate better, and encourage them. EFL curriculum and teaching methods in Kuwait should be changed for some participants. Obviously, the results collected for this statement did provide a useful framework for the interviews, which were designed to investigate the present teaching and learning EFL writing practices in the participants' classrooms.

C. The use of EFL writing outside the educational environment

The following table shows the findings of the participants' comments about their *'use of EFL writing outside the educational environment'*. The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category *'Using EFL writing outside the educational environment'* is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the seven sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

Category	Sub-Categories
Using EFL writing outside the educational environment	Online Chatting
	Emails
	Text messages
	Expressing their feelings
	Writing poems
	Writing different stories
	Writing only for the course purposes

Table (5. 21) EFL writing outside the educational environment category and its sub-categories.

A high number of the participants said that they used EFL writing mostly for their online chatting, writing their emails, and text messages, as most of them noted,

- *'When I text my friend on the phone'.*

- *'Writing text messages and emails'.*

- *'I write emails and chat with native speakers in English'.*

- *'I usually email my brother and sister in EFL, especially those of them who study abroad'*

- *'I also email my bank in EFL, or when I have some enquiries regarding some shopping websites'.*

There were nine participants who indicated that they used EFL writing when they wanted to express their feelings, as some of them described, *'Sometimes I write diaries, or I express my thoughts on paper',* and*, 'I write about my everyday life, events, and experiences',* further, *'Sometimes, I write my dairies about what I usually do during my day, express my thoughts and feelings'.* Interestingly, a reasonable number of participants (17) showed that they practise different kinds of EFL writing, as they emphasized in the following quotes,

- *'I only write poems in English'.*

- *'Writing poems or sometimes quotes in English'.*

- *'I usually write stories in EFL'.*

- *'I write stories for children'.*

- *'I write stories and short novels'.*

It is understandable that students might be talented enough to write poems in their L1 language, however, it is not common that they will write a poem in their second language. This finding will be investigated further through the interviews to understand how they have become interested in poems and stories in EFL.

Writing for the purpose of course work was mentioned by 10 participants in this study as they remarked, *'The only time I write in EFL is when the teacher asks us to write an assignment or when I have to give presentations',* also, *'Because I study all the subjects in English I am used to writing everything in English',* and *'What the teacher asks me to do or for my presentations, that is the only time that I write in English'.*

Conversely, there were 28 participants in this study who claimed that they did not need EFL writing for their real life, as they stated, *'I don't use EFL outside the classroom',* and, *'Actually, I don't use it at all'*, because, *'I don't use EFL in my social life because I'm the only one who is good at English language in my family'.* Recently, writing in Roman letters with Arabic words has spread widely among Arab speakers, especially among the young generation; this new phenomenon was mentioned by one of the participants when she stated, *'I write using English letters but Arabic words'.*

The findings for this statement showed that most participants of this study noted that they used EFL writing on different occasions outside their classrooms, as for example, in online chatting, writing emails, and messages. They claimed that writing poems and stories were included in their course work. There were also a good number of participants (28) who emphasised EFL writing was not important because they said they did not need it in their daily life; in addition there were eight participants who did not respond to this statement at all. From the findings of this statement, it is obvious that technology has a strong influence on participants' EFL writing, as it encourages them to practise EFL writing more often. Using Roman letters with Arabic words could be due

to a lack of EFL writing fluency and that might influence their EFL writing competency in the future, as students might depend on this type of new writing system more than correct English writing. All these findings need to be investigated seriously in the interviews to understand how much it is important for the participants of this study to be fluent in EFL writing.

D. Parents' support for learning EFL writing

The following table shows the findings of the participants' comments about their *Parents' support for learning EFL writing.* The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category '*Parents' support'* is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the four sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

Categories	Sub-categories
Parents' support	- Encourage them to read
	- Buying them books
	- Encourage them to write intensively
	- Give them their feedback for their EFL writing

Table (5. 22) Parents' support category and its sub-categories.

More than a third of the respondents of this study (42/112) noted they did not have any support at all from their parents for their EFL writing, as many of them described: *'I study by myself, but the important thing for them is my success',* further, *'No, they don't care about my EFL writing because they don't need it',* and *'Actually, my parents don't support me in my EFL writing in any way '.* However, one participant showed that her sister helps her instead of her parents, as she reflected, *'They don't, but my sister supports me by giving me ideas for my topics and corrects my grammatical errors'.* The fact some participants here claimed is that their parents trusted their decision to ask for assistance from their siblings and cousins for their EFL writing. Some of them pointed out: *'Giving me the huge responsibility of checking my cousin's assignments',* and,*' Asking me to write some paragraphs for my brother or sister for school'.* Not only that, some respondents indicated that their parents used to ask them to help them write their own emails or letters in English, as some participants claimed, *'My parents are asking me to write their letters or emails in English',* and they are*, 'Asking me to help them with English vocabulary or meanings'.*

Furthermore there were a good number of participants (29) in this study who indicated that their parents used to <u>encourage them to read</u> books in EFL; they used to buy them

books to help them improve their EFL writing and reading, as some of them pointed out:

- *'Buying me English stories and books, reading my poems, talking to me 'sometimes' in English '.*

- *'They tell me to read more and go with me to the bookshops to buy me more books'.*

- *'Encourage me to read to improve my vocabulary'.*

- *'Encourage me to buy English books and stories'.*

 On the other hand, 16 participants in this study pointed that their parents used to <u>ask them to practice different kinds of writing</u> in English, they described this: *'Asking me to write passages in English about different things',* or *'Write more about anything I think of ',* and *'They ask me to write on any topic and show them my writing'.* One specific participant claimed that, *'My parents encourage me to be an author in the future'.* Eleven participants emphasized, *'My parents read my EFL writing and give me their feedback',* and *'They also used to help me in my earlier writing stages'*; this included, *'Reading and correcting my mistakes',* and *'Giving me examples, and new ideas'.* Therefore, the general result of this statement seems to be positive by showing that most respondents claimed that their parents were supporting them to help them improve their EFL writing by different means. This include asking them, for example, to read EFL books, buying them books, and asking them to write in EFL; and giving them feedback on their writing. There were, however, those who fell into the opposite camp, as a good number of them felt their parents did not give them any support, but instead they drew on their own expertise.

E. The factors that influenced participants' EFL writing

The following table shows, the findings of the participants' comments about *Factors that influenced participants' EFL writing.* The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category 'Factors that influenced participants' EFL writing' is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the six sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

Theme	Sub-Categories

Factors that influenced participants' EFL writing	*Positive factors*	*Negative Factors*
	- Reading	- EFL writing teachers
	- Watching and listening to EFL media	- Different teaching methods
	- EFL writing teachers	- No writing practice

Table (5. 23) The positive and the negative factors that influenced participants' EFL writing.

This statement was basically exploring the negative and positive factors that influenced participants' EFL writing competency in general. A good number (22) of participants in this study believed reading in EFL influenced their EFL writing positively, as they highlighted: *'It was influenced positively by reading texts and books in EFL',* in addition*, 'Reading fiction, poems and novels'*, and *'reading E-books and magazines'.* The next positive factor, as they reflected, was *'Watching English programmes',* and *'Watching English movies, and listening to English songs'*, in addition to*, 'Using English on the internet;,* further, *'Communicating with natives online', and* finally, *'Writing for online forums'.* Four participants said that their EFL writing teachers had had a good influence on their EFL writing competency, as they remarked: *'Positively because my advanced writing teacher taught me how to write well: she taught me the basics of writing, planning and revision',* another respondent also stated, '*Positively, my advanced writing teacher helped me',* and, *'My professor was very helpful and she cares about developing our EFL writing'.*

By contrast, a high number of participants (29) pointed to some negative factors that influenced their EFL writing competency, as they argued: *'My writing teacher was not a good example as a teacher and because of that I didn't like the English writing class',* moreover*, 'Maybe we used to write simple texts at the public schools in which we studied, and they taught us unconsciously to transfer from L1 to EFL and this affected my EFL writing negatively',* another respondent claimed, *'Negatively because we didn't write anything during the whole writing course, we only answered questions'.*

Apparently, a good number of the participants claimed reading, watching English programmes and listening to the English media, including using the internet, had a positive influence on their EFL writing competency. Whereas there were only four participants out of 112 who reflected that their teachers were a positive influence on their EFL writing, compared to the 29 of them who stated that their EFL writing teachers were a negative influence on their EFL writing competency. They illustrated

that their teaching and learning EFL writing practices had little positive influence on their EFL writing fluency. This finding emphasized the need for further interviews to investigate how participants of this research feel about their teaching and learning EFL writing practices; it was evident that a good number of them felt that they needed more practice in EFL writing.

F. Participants' perceptions of EFL writing

The following table shows, the findings of the participants' comments about *Factors that influenced their confidence in EFL writing*. The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category 'Factors that influenced their EFL writing' is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the nine sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

Category	Sub-categories	
Factors influenced their self-confidence	*High self-efficacy factors*	*Low self-efficacy factors*
	- Have the ability to express themselves comfortably.	- They are scared to make errors
	- Feel happy and capable to write in EFL.	- EFL writing was too difficult and challenging for them.
	- Feel that they are a creative writer	- They need help in grammar and vocabulary.
	- Have a good knowledge of EFL culture.	- Their High school teaching practices.
	- Proud of themselves.	
	- Confident in EFL writing.	
	- Interested in EFL writing.	

Table (5. 24) Factors that influenced students' self-efficacy.

There were a high number (49) of participants who claimed lacking in confidence in their EFL writing, their comments presented different reasons underlying their low level of confidence. For example, some participants were <u>scared to make errors, and EFL writing was too difficult and challenging</u> for them. They related that:

- *'I feel hesitant, lack confidence, confused when writing in EFL'.*
- *'Worried that I might make grammatical mistakes'.*
- *'Difficult because I have to write in good English'.*
- *'Confused because I'm not sure how to start EFL writing'.*
- *'Stressed and uncertain'.*
- *'Depressed, because it is too difficult'.*

- *'I do not have confidence in my EFL writing, I do not know if I write well or not'.*
- *'Afraid because I didn't know how to write in EFL'.*

Some participants noted that their main worry was they were *'Afraid to think in Arabic and write in English',* further *'I want to express myself better, but I can't express my thought in EFL appropriately because I transfer from L1 to EFL'* and *'I cannot express my good ideas using appropriate EFL vocabulary'.* Some respondents of this study claimed that they rarely used EFL writing in their normal life, as some of them indicated, *'I feel it is very hard because I never use it in my daily life',* and *'In the EFL writing classroom, we must write, but I rarely write outside the classroom',* accordingly, one of the respondents emphasized*, 'I really need help from our teachers especially in grammar and to guide us in a better way'.*

Based on the findings, some participants of this research showed that there was a big difference between their high school methods of teaching EFL writing and those used in this higher college, as one of them observed, *'My EFL writing teaching in the government school (secondary) was completely different from the teaching level in this college'.* Another participant, as she claimed, *'I used to feel confident because all our high school teachers used to encourage us and I used to feel relaxed about EFL writing, but the doctors here don't care about us, only one doctor supports us and the rest don't'.* In spite of all the negative factors that were indicated by the participants of this study, many of them claimed they still have the motivation to improve their EFL writing, as some of them stated, *'I need to improve my EFL writing',* and *'I love EFL writing but I only need a good highly qualified teacher'.*

On the contrary, there were a good number of participants (40) who felt confident about their EFL writing, for different reasons, as they reflected,

- *'That I can* express myself freely and comfortably *with everything I write in EFL'.*
- *'It is not a difficult thing to do and I can do it'.*
- *'I feel happy that I am capable of tackling EFL topics'.*
- *'I can express my feelings in a second language'.*

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- *'I feel comfortable and creative'.*
- *'I feel happy that I have information about another language and, I know the language of another culture'.*
- *'I am very proud of myself'.*
- *'I am confident as regards my writing skills'.*
- *'Happy and interested'.*

Surprisingly, one respondent showed that her interest in EFL writing stemmed from the fact that she loved drawing Roman letters, *'Happy, because I love to draw the English letters'.* In general, the comments of the participants of this research suggested that the majority of respondents claimed they did not have confidence in their EFL writing competency and ability; on the other hand, however, a good number of them did. However, self-confidence is very important for students as it helps them work hard and achieve better, and the findings regarding this statement demonstrated that a small number of participants were confident of their EFL writing ability and competency. This result will be explored in depth in the interviews which will seek to understand what factors were behind the participants' low self-confidence in EFL writing, and how these factors could be improved from the point of view of the participants.

G. Participants' perceptions of writing extended texts in EFL

The following table shows the findings of the participants' comments about their perceptions of *Writing a long text.* The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category 'Writing a long text' is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the ten sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

Categories	Sub-Categories	
Writing a long text...	*I like writing a long text because...*	*I dislike writing a long text because...*
	-It gives me more space.	-It needs a lot of effort.
	-I express myself more.	- It is boring
	-The topic is interesting.	- It is a disaster.
		- It influences my grades negatively.
		- It is hard and needs a lot of planning.
		- It is very difficult and makes me feel very bad.
		- I make more errors

Table (5. 25) The categories and sub-categories of the participants who like or dislike writing a long text.

The comments of the participants of this study regarding this statement showed that only nine out of 112 participants felt comfortable writing long EFL texts, whereas the majority of them prefer not to write a long EFL text for various reasons, as recorded below:

- *'Really need a lot of effort'.*
- *'Hard and difficult'.*
- *'Boring',*
- *'A disaster'.*
- *'This could cost me all my marks because the more I write the more I make mistakes'.*
- *'Hard, and needs a lot of planning and time'.*
- *'Very difficult and makes me feel very bad because I will make more mistakes'.*

The participants who felt comfortable writing long EFL texts gave a variety of reasons why, as some of them claimed, they were positive about writing longer pieces of text. These were some of the reasons they gave: *'Easier for me than writing shorter texts, because I have more space to write about my topic, and because I have difficulty keeping my essays short'*, and another participant stated that it was *'Wonderful, it let me express more through in my writing',* and, *'Very helpful to express all of my thoughts'.* In literature, it is hard sometimes for EFL writers to write a short text because of their

low linguistic competency, (Hyland, 2003; Weigle, 2002; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In the findings of this research also some participants emphasised that they would like to choose their writing topics as that could help them to improve their writing, as this student stated, *'It is interesting to write about a topic from my choice although it is hard for me to keep the coherence and the unity of my text, it needs to be well planned for'*, moreover,*' It might be interesting if I like the topic'*. The relationship between the topic choice and EFL writing competency seems to be important, as most of the participants of this study believed their EFL writing could be improved if they had the opportunity to write on topics of their own choice. This finding will be investigated in further interviews in order to understand the nature of this relationship, and its influence on participants' EFL writing competency.

H. The reason/s that made participants decide to study English major

The following table shows, the findings of the participants' comments about their *Reasons why they decided to study English major.* The following coding analyses were structured from the comments of the participants. The category 'Reasons why participants decided to study English major' is a deductive code from the questionnaire; the eleven sub-categories are inductive codes arising from the analysis.

Categories	Sub-Categories
Reasons why participants decided to study English Major.	- Love English language
	- Like learning new languages
	- It is a wonderful language
	- It is important for their future careers
	- International language
	- Introduces them to different sciences.
	- Interested to know about other cultures
	- Interested in making some changes to teaching and learning English in Kuwait.
	- To watch EFL media and programmes.
	- EFL grammar is easier than L1 grammar.
	- Positive experience in learning and teaching EFL.

Table (5. 26) The category and the sub-categories of the participants' reasons to choose English major.

The comments of the participants regarding this statement perhaps showed a need for further investigations in order to clarify the reasons why the participants choose English major, as it appears that while the findings showed that most of the participants said they lacked of confidence when engaged in EFL writing, yet, for different reasons, the

majority (106) of them love the English language. This is demonstrated by the following quotes:

- '*Because I like English language'.*
- *'Because I love to learn new languages, I enjoy learning English and I love it a lot'.*
- *'It is a wonderful language'.*

They considered that studying English was important, indeed essential, for their future careers: *'It is the best for me and for my career',* and one participant of this study intimated: *'I want to be a translator and a linguist';,* however, most of the participants will be English teachers in the future, as they stated, ' *I would like to be an English teacher to help other people love the language',* and, *'I Love English and I want to teach it well so that my students will not hate the language'.* Another participant, as she stated, *'I need to develop my English to obtain a good job in the future and to express myself correctly',* other participants noted that English is the language of the world, they concluded, *'To be opened to the big world',* by *'learning English'* as *'it is an important thing to do nowadays',* because, *'it is an international language',* and *'this language is universal and important in our life'.* Few respondents here claimed that learning English will introduce them to different kinds of science, but they were convinced that *'It's the only language that will help me to be an educated person through studying and reading books that are written in English'.* Some others were interested in learning about other cultures, '*I love English, and American cultures and their way of life;,* further, some participants wished, ' *to learn about other cultures through their languages',* and they said, *'English helps'* them '*to know other cultures better',* and it introduced them *'to different cultures'.* On the other hand, some participants, as they stated *'Want to make changes to this language in our country, because most Kuwaitis don't know how to speak or communicate in English very well',* or*, 'to understand it for watching movies and reading magazines',* further, they ' *Find English'* to be *'the best mean to express'* their *'culture to western countries'.* Interestingly, one participant of this study made an interesting observation*, ' I really like English because the grammar is easier than in Arabic and I find myself attached to English more than to Arabic'.* Two other participants claimed they chose this major because of their previous positive experience

with teaching and learning English language, they explained, *'That I like to learn this second language because I used to get full marks in English'*, and *'Because I loved my old English teacher (8 years ago) because she made me like this language'*.

Although most respondents of this research claimed they liked the English language in general; they would like to improve their EFL writing competency to be more professional and up-to-date in their future careers. The reasons for learning EFL writing will be further investigated by means of interviews in order to gain an understanding of how important it is for the participants to be confident when writing in a second language, and why participants' self-confidence has not improved when engaged in EFL writing. Both the answers to the questionnaires, and the open ended responses in this study, showed that participants have the interest and the desire to learn and improve their EFL writing.

The formulation of the questions for the final interviews

The final form of the interviews' questions were mainly based on the findings of the literature review as well as the results of the students' questionnaires. The findings of this questionnaire revealed that there was a wide range of positive and negative responses about the participants' teaching and learning EFL writing methods, and about the perceptions of the participants of themselves as EFL writers. Some participants of this study believed that planning, drafting, and revising were practiced in their classrooms, and some others did not practice any of these activities. In the literature Hayes and Flower, (1980) state that teaching and learning writing goes through three essential writing processes: planning, drafting (translating), and revising. This finding provided a useful framework for the interviews designed to investigate **how participants were taught** to write in EFL and what they found helpful, and more helpful, for their EFL writing competency.

The differences between expert and novice writers can be seen in the way they develop their writing processes in knowledge telling and knowledge transferring, (Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987). The participants in this study believed that **prior knowledge** is important for them as they felt writing about topics that they have knowledge about could help them generate more ideas and write better in EFL. This finding will be investigated in the interviews in order to explore the nature of the relationship between

the participants' prior knowledge and their EFL writing fluency, and the influence of the topic choice on the participants' EFL writing competency.

Teachers' evaluation criteria will also be investigated in the interview, as most of the participants claimed that their EFL writing teachers did not use different alternative evaluation criteria to help them identify their EFL writing errors and progress, for example, one-to-one meetings or a portfolio. This finding did however provide a good framework for enabling the person conducting the interview to understand which evaluation criteria were being used by EFL writing teachers in this higher college, and the nature of teachers' feedback on students' writing.

The comments' of the participants about their confidence in EFL writing obviously suggested that the majority of the respondents claimed they were **unconfident** in their EFL writing ability, while there were a good number of them who were confident in their L1 writing. Self-confidence is considered to be one of the most influential factors that help writers to be more creative. The result of this finding needs to be explored through interviews in order to understand how important it is for the participants to be confident when writing in EFL. How much does their L1 writing competency support their EFL writing, and is there a relationship between L1 and EFL writing fluency.

Writing in general is learnt for the purpose of **communication.** Although, in this study, the participants' comments showed that most of them used EFL writing outside their classrooms for different purposes, a good number of them believed that EFL writing was not important because they had not had the opportunity to use it in their normal life; however the majority of them were majoring in English and will be English teachers in the future. The purpose of teaching and learning EFL writing will be explored in the interviews to understand how important it is for the participants of this study to become confident EFL writers, and how important they perceive the value of EFL writing to be.

Teaching and learning EFL writing methods will be explored in depth in the interviews, to determine how participants were taught to write in EFL and what they find helpful, and more helpful, for their EFL writing competency; also what they think of themselves as EFL writers, their own writing accuracy, and the process of writing, and how important it is for them to be confident EFL writers.

The questionnaire findings had highlighted a number of key issues both positive as well as negative. The open responses on the questionnaire were valuable in informing the design of the interview schedule, as the findings showed that more investigations should be conducted through interviews, to understand the perceptions of the participants of EFL writing teaching methods, and how they think of themselves as EFL writers. The suggested areas to be examined in the interviews were based on the questionnaire findings:

Section 1: Students' perceptions of teaching and learning EFL writing practices. This is recorded on the pages numbered 105, 108, 114, 115, 120,126, 136, 139, and 142.

The first section of the interview is exploring how participants of this research are taught to write in EFL and what they find helpful or less helpful. The following prompts will be used:

1. Teaching strategies to support pre-writing activities (planning).

2. Teaching strategies to support translation.

3. Teaching strategies to support revision.

4. The influence of social behaviour in writing.

- How does the EFL writing teacher make the participants' writing relevant to their own life and writing experiences?

5. Evaluation
- What criteria do EFL writing teachers use to assess their students' EFL writing?

Section 2: Students' Perceptions of EFL writing. This appears on pages numbered 111, 119, 122, 126, 129, 137, 139, 140 and 142.

1. What do participants think of their EFL writing?
- What are their strengths and weaknesses in EFL writing, for example:
     How much they are confident to use planning strategies?
     What happens while writing?
     How much they are confident to use revision strategies?

2. The Evaluation of writing.
   - How do participants judge how good their writing is?

3. Relationship between L1 and EFL writing.
   - What do participants see as the differences and similarities in the way they write in L1 and EFL?
   - How much does L1 writing fluency affect EFL writing competency?

4. Motivation to write in EFL.
   - How important to participants is it that they become a confident EFL writer?

By retaining the structure of the vital research questions the interview questions would be divided into two categories. These categories were formed from the analysis of the questionnaire's items for the quantitative and qualitative data. The two categories are listed below:

Section one: *Students' perceptions of EFL writing teaching methods.*

Section two: *Students' perceptions of themselves as EFL writers.*

Although the number of questions would be kept to the minimum in each section, prompts could be used to guarantee that all the areas were discussed. It is significant to be aware that the interview process is not mainly about measuring opinion, it is about looking for ways forward through the types of 'reflection advocated by so many educationalists, reflection which can help teachers to move forward positively by highlighting possible solutions, not just problems'. (Teece, 2009, p. 124)

CHAPTER SIX

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

For

Kuwaiti Student-Teachers' Perceptions of EFL Writing

This chapter presents the findings from the data analysis of the semi-structured interviews, and will be used to address the first research question: What are EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers perceptions of their EFL writing? Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with ten EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers at one of the higher educational college in Kuwait. These participants were selected to represent students from different study-years who were majoring in English and will be English teachers in the future.

A full description of the processes of data collection and analysis has been provided in Chapter Four. The first iteration of the coding process elicited a broad range of codes which illustrated student-teachers' perceptions of EFL writing. These codes were then analyzed further and categorized into four broader conceptual themes in which the codes were grouped. These four conceptual themes were:

- *Internal factors:* This theme relates to issues personal to the student and related to their sense of confidence and competence in EFL.

- *Writing processes:* This theme relates to the sequence of changing a task situation from planning, translating to reviewing.

- *Relationship between the first language (L1) and the foreign language (EFL):* This theme relates to the influence of L1 writing in EFL writing, in terms of the similarities and the differences between the two languages' writing processes.

- *Communicative purposes:* This theme relates to the purposes of learning EFL writing.

In this chapter, I will discuss each of these conceptual themes in turn, describing each of the codes which constituted that theme and discuss what each theme reveals about Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of EFL writing.

Internal factors

The concept of *internal factors* was derived from comments concerned with issues personal to the student and related to their sense of confidence and competence in EFL writing. The theme of *Internal Factors* was created inductively from grouping the sub-themes. They are: challenges; self-efficacy; and interest. A brief definition is given to each theme and coding based on students' comments for this particular study:

Theme	Sub-themes	Definition
Internal Factors		
	Challenges	This refers to comments about general difficulties students face when writing in EFL.
	Self-efficacy	This refers to comments about Students' beliefs about their EFL writing capabilities to apply efficiently the knowledge and skills they already have into their EFL writing text.
	Interest	This refers to comments about students' interest in and willingness to learn EFL writing.

Table (6.1) The definition of each code within the conceptual theme of Internal Factors

Internal Factors: Sub-themes	Number of comments	Number of students represented
Challenges	26	9
Self-efficacy	34	9
Interest	13	5

Table (6.2) The frequency of references to each code and the number of students represented in that code

Challenges

The sub-theme of challenges refers to students' perceptions of the difficulties they face in writing in English as a foreign language. These challenges are principally academic challenges concerned with learning and applying EFL writing linguistic rules, managing English grammar appropriately, and having sufficient vocabulary for the writing task, including their fear of making errors and possessing adequate topic knowledge to tackle the writing task. The challenges also included the problem of shifting from spoken to written form, the problems created for them as EFL writers by the EFL conflicting teaching methods, and lack of explanation for EFL writing tasks.

Grammar and lexical knowledge are important for EFL writing. They assist students to build up efficient paragraphs through the creation of topic sentences, supporting sentences, revisions, and develop different types of paragraphs. To look at EFL writing as a coherent arrangement of words, sentences, rules, and structures only will encourage the writer to focus on the formal text or the grammatical features of the text and ignore the purpose of writing and meaning-making. The challenge of using correct **grammar** was mentioned by five participants (Amal, Donyia, Sarah, Maha, and Abeer) as they said it used to influence their EFL writing accuracy and stop them from writing. For example, Donyia, as she illustrated*,' My grammatical problem does not make me write, it makes me struggle in my writing and makes me afraid to write or stops me from writing'.* This problem made Donyia feel disappointed about her EFL writing fluency. She noted, no matter what she would do, that she will continue making grammatical errors, as she remarked below:

> *'Sometimes I feel I do not want to write especially if the assignment deadline is on Sunday, I do not write anything during Thursday and Friday, I start my writing on Saturday... I told myself, 'no matter what l do, I will make grammatical mistakes, so why do I need to ruin my weekend, and I will start my writing on Saturday'.* (The weekend in Kuwait is on Friday and Saturday, and Sunday is the beginning of the week.)

Donyia also claimed, despite the continuous criticism from her EFL writing teacher for her grammatical errors, she still makes errors and she felt disappointed about it, as she illustrated, *'Our teacher keeps saying grammar… grammar….grammar… they always criticize our grammar … it seems there is no solution for this problem'.* Maha and Amal said that they have problems with their EFL at sentence level, as Maha described, *'I have problems with English sentences, that is why my sentences are usually too long, and I do not use punctuation'.* The reason that made Maha not use punctuation, as she stated, *'I have never learned how to use punctuation in my English writing'.* Overall, five participants felt their grammar was a challenge for them, and they felt unconfident to write accurate EFL sentences. Their EFL writing teachers should acknowledge that their students felt disappointed about their grammar accuracy and they claimed this challenge prevents them from being fluent in EFL writing, and at the same time stops

them from practising any EFL writing. Form-focused teaching in EFL writing seemed to be ineffective in improving their EFL writing competency.

'*Vocabulary* is a basic part of expanding students' repertoire group of resources for writing', (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996, p.275). It provides reasons for cooperative works; learners can negotiate their meaning with others. Weigle (2002, p.16) emphasizes that learning EFL vocabulary is important because 'written texts tend to contain a wider variety of words'. Thus, learning vocabulary supports EFL reading and writing, and creates a foundation for further learning. In this research, these students for example, Sarah, Onood, Maha, Abeer, Ayah and Noha believed that EFL vocabulary was difficult for them and influenced negatively their writing fluency. They had difficulty in finding the appropriate vocabulary for their EFL writing. As, for example, Ayah argued,' *If I had a topic and I needed to write it in English… especially if the topic was about politics… the vocabularies would be a challenge for me … even if I have the vocabularies, I do not know how to use them in the right context … this is why, in my English writing usually I do not give the right meaning'.* Learning to write involves much more than simply learning the grammar and vocabulary of the language. We write to communicate and interact with each other, as for example when we write different genres for different contexts such as academic, business, or personal writing. Onood was another participant who for instance indicated that she had difficulty to express her feelings to her mother in EFL writing because of the vocabulary problem, as she indicated, '*If the topic is about emotional issues like writing a letter for example to my mom, I find it difficult to use the proper and the effective words to express my feeling'.* It can be seen that, the participants who had challenges in EFL vocabulary, they said they used different kinds of writing strategies to sort their problem, as in for example, using simple English, using different types of dictionaries, avoiding difficult vocabulary, rephrasing, or writing long sentences to give the right meaning. As Onood indicated, '*I use simple English in writing any topic'.*

Maha was another participant who claimed, as she stated, '*I did not learn enough English vocabularies during my learning English writing journey'* and that was why, as she pointed out*, 'I have a problem in English vocabularies'.* However, Maha said she tried to sort her problem by using different strategies, as she illustrated*, 'When I face this problem, I try to write it in a **phrase** in order to give the same meaning in case I did*

not have the proper word', or as she described, '*I try to keep myself **away from the difficult words** in English'*. Sarah reflected that she used a different strategy than Maha, as she noted, '*I use the **synonyms** of the difficult words'*. She thought, as she indicated, '*If our teacher keeps repeating the difficult words more often, I think I will be able to memorize them and use them in my English writing'* or otherwise, as she stated, '*I will keep myself away from them'*. Writing a long sentence is another strategy, that was used by Noha, as she emphasized, '*If I had difficulty to find the right words, I keep writing and writing until I find the proper meaning and that is why my sentence is usually too long'*, or as she stated, '*I try to find other alternative words for my writing instead'*. To sum up briefly, most participants of this research felt that their EFL vocabulary was a problem for them that strongly influenced their writing fluency. They said they did not have the ability to express their ideas properly because of the shortage of their EFL vocabulary. Thus, they emphasised that they used other alternatives to compensate for the lack of vocabulary, like for example, rephrasing, providing synonymous words, they keep themselves away from the difficult words or in some occasions they keep themselves away from practising some types of writing, and by writing long sentences.

Finding the proper knowledge *(content)* of the topic was a major problem for some participants of this study, for example, Noha, Onood Amal, Abeer and Maha. It seemed it was difficult, for example for Onood to start her EFL writing text, as she observed, '*the beginning is always the hardest; when I start typing on my keyboard, I find the beginning of the paragraph is always hard'*. The reason was, as she claimed, '*I have to find the proper ideas, and I do not know how to get them* [from] *out of my mind'*. This problem made Onood claimed that she was disappointed about her EFL writing fluency, as she stated, '*I do not like it'*. Amal also claimed it was difficult for her to find the proper knowledge, as she pointed out, '*I do not know how to express myself in EFL writing'*, she used to feel, as she illustrated, '*tired of thinking how to write a sentence'*. Noha indecated she also was struggling to generate ideas for her topic, as she confirmed, '*I have a problem writing down my ideas on the page'*. Maha illustrated that she could write better if she had the opportunity to choose the topic, as she argued, '*I prefer to write about things that I like, for instance, my lifestyle… I would choose to write about negative experiences in my life'*. Abeer said she was not sure how to generate ideas for her writing, therefore, as she described, '*I start writing with*

questions, I am not sure if it is correct to start my writing like that'. EFL Students may find it difficult to generate ideas, develop their text, and organize their ideas on the page if they have not been taught properly how to plan for their writing. Pre-writing activities therefore are very important for L2 writers. Pre-writing techniques provide L2 students with the opportunity to set goals for their writing and generate and organize their ideas for better communicative writing. Without pre-writing techniques L2 students will seriously struggle to find the proper knowledge for their text. Apparently, the students of this study felt unconfident to generate ideas for their EFL writing and that might be referred back to their inefficient classroom pre-writing activities.

Spoken language was raised by one participant, as she said that she used spoken language in her EFL writing. Although written and spoken discourses are based on the same linguistic resources, and can be used for the same communicative purposes, there are differences between them, as for example, 'writers generally have more time to plan, review and revise their words before they finalize it, while speakers must plan, formulate, and deliver their utterances within a few moments if they are to maintain a conversation, (Weigle, 2002). Socially and culturally, the written form is more correct and formal than the spoken form and it has a wider variety of vocabularies than spoken. Abeer for example, as she stated, '*My English writing is more likely informal writing, I do not use formal English when I write'.* The reason for using EFL spoken language in her writing was caused by her low EFL writing competency, as she noted, '*When I write in English, I usually write what I speak, my problem is my English writing'.* Although Abeer claimed that she was confident in her EFL spoken language, as she stated, '*I think my strength is in my English speaking',* she believed, as she claimed*, 'my weakness is in my EFL writing'.*

Lack of explanation was a real challenge for the EFL writing of three participants in this study, Noha, Nouryis and Asmah, as for example Noha argued, '*I am not sure what exactly EFL writing teachers would like us to do'* and consequently, she claimed that, '*some students changed their English major',* because, '*they did not know what to do to be better in English writing'.* Interestingly, this student loved English, as she stated, '*I love English'* but she was '*not satisfied'* with her '*English writing level',* and she was hesitant about her English major because of her teachers, as she indicated, '*I have not decided yet what to do, I do not want to change my major because of some teachers'.* It

seemed that, these participants claimed they were disappointed by their EFL writing teachers because they were not sure what their teachers wanted them to do to improve their EFL writing, and they faced the dilemma because of that lack of explanation.

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1986, p.391) as 'people's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances'. Self-efficacy in writing, in this study refers to participants' confidence in their ability to successfully complete specific writing challenges. Most of the participants of this study demonstrated negative perceptions to their EFL writing. Bandura (1997) illustrates that individuals with low self-efficacy would tend to avoid a given task. To apply this concept to the findings of the participants of this research, some participants used to give their texts to an expert or a second person, for example, to their parents, EFL writing teachers, peers or siblings to evaluate their EFL writing. Anood, Ayah, Noha, Amal, Maha, and Abeer for instance, all noted that they were not confident in their EFL writing, as Maha claimed, *'I cannot tell by myself, how good my English writing is',* and for her, as she emphasized, *'It will be more helpful for me, when someone better than me reads my EFL writing and evaluates it'.* For Onood, as she indicated*, 'I usually depend on my teacher's feedback; and that is the only evaluation I have for my English writing'.* On the other hand Onood, as she confirmed, '*I have no time to ask my English teachers about all my EFL writing tasks'.* As a result, she claimed her EFL writing was not improving, as she argued, '*I think my writing became worse…, or it's still in the same level as I used to be in the high school'.* Encouragingly, most participants' low confidence in EFL writing did not stop them from improving their EFL writing competency, as Abeer for example claimed*, 'I am not satisfied with my writing competency, but I would like to improve my EFL writing, and why not!'* The participants claimed also that their low self-efficacy in EFL writing was caused by different reasons: these are, their fear of making errors, shortage of vocabulary, lack of EFL writing practising, negative teachers' feedback, writing to authentic audiences, and using L1 knowledge in EFL writing:

The fear of making errors raises the levels of writing apprehension and reduces the self-confidence of the writers. Daly (1977) found that writers with a high level of apprehension tend to be poor compared to writers with moderate or low levels. In this

study, nine participants felt unconfident in their EFL writing. For example, Donyia, as she stated, *'Confident…I know how to write, but I do not think that I am confident'*, because, as she highlighted*, 'I always make mistakes … there are always errors in my English writing'*. Translating from L1 to EFL was another factor that Donyia said influenced negatively her self-confidence in EFL writing, as she described, *'Translating from Arabic to English is not a right thing to do, I should use English only',* Donyia confirmed, as she stated*, 'I am not confident because I think I am not fluent enough in English, and that is referred to the lack of my powerful vocabularies or maybe I do not read enough'*. Following on, Sarah was another participant who also claimed that she was unconfident in her EFL writing, as she noted, '*I like English writing'* but, as she stated, *'Confident?! I am not confident in my EFL writing'*. Writing in EFL for Sarah, as she stated, '*When I write in English, I feel it is a burden, because I am afraid to make errors*', therefore she would feel, as she indicated, '*worried to write wrong English*', because, as she argued, '*I must write correctly'* otherwise*, 'I will be punished by my teacher if my writing is wrong'*. Noha also noted that she did not have self-confidence in her EFL writing, as she illustrated,' *I am hesitating… not confident in my EFL writing'*. She used to, as she claimed, '*make lots of messy writing'* and felt *'confused'*. Amal felt the same as Noha, unconfident in her EFL writing, as she illustrated, *'I am not confident with what I write in English',* the reason for that was, as she argued, *'I make many errors; sometimes I do not give the proper meaning when I write'*. Amal claimed this problem stopped her from showing her EFL writing to others, as she described, '*This is why I do not like anyone to read my writing… just my teacher'*. From the comments of the participants it was clear that the majority of them repoted they were unconfident in their ability to write in EFL. They felt scared, hesitant, worried, tired, headachy and the pain of making errors because their teachers used to emphasise their errors, which turned them into anxious writers. They said their anxiety used to stop them from practising any EFL writing. The increase of students' self-efficacy results in increasing their interest in learning, (Bandura, 1989; Renninger, 2003). Anxious writers choose not to interact with others by writing, or choose simpler tasks in order to stay away from failure and negative results, (Kurman, 2001).

In contrast, **making errors** for some participants was not a problem, as was raised by two participants, Maha and Onood. They said they were less apprehensive about using EFL writing compared to their peers. Maha for example, said, *'I do not feel my English*

is OK'. However, she claimed that she did not feel shame when she made errors in EFL writing, as she argued, '*I write even if I know it will be wrong, to express myself, it is not shameful to make errors'* and she said making errors was a part of her learning process, as she indicated, '*I am learning and it is fine to make errors'*. Maha, as she argued, '*It is not a matter of right or wrong, but I write what I know or what I have been taught'*. Obviously, Maha observed that she was aware of the purpose of learning EFL writing when she emphasized the role of the audiences, as she described, '*If my readers said your writing is wrong, I will learn from that experience and their feedback, and I will not repeat my errors again'*. Not only that, but she also said that she was interested in improving her EFL writing competency, as she claimed, '*At home I try to improve my English by listening and writing any difficult English words that I read or hear from the media… I write the words down with my own spelling and then I get their meaning from the dictionary'*. It seemed as she confirmed that she was confident in her ability to learn and improve her EFL writing although she was not a good writer, as she pointed out, '*This is a good way of improving my English'*. This is a positive example of the existence of some EFL students who were confident about their ability to learn, improve their EFL writing, and be fluent.

Lack of EFL writing practice *was* mentioned by two participants in this study. Maha for example stated, '*I am not qualified enough to write in English'*, because*, as she described, '*in my high school, we did not practice enough EFL writing',* and accordingly she felt that*, 'I am not confident to write in EFL'*. Not only that, but she also believed, '*I did not use to practice enough EFL writing as, for example, in the basic writing course, we did not use to write'*. Maha claimed, as she argued, '*I think, students must know how to write'*. The influence of teaching and learning EFL writing practices was clear on the students' self-efficacy in this study. Many respondents said a lack of EFL writing practice led them to be unconfident in their EFL writing abilities.

Teacher's feedback was an important factor for EFL writers; Hyland (2003) states that teacher's feedback should not be only for the purpose of evaluation but it 'contributes enormously to the learning of individual students and to the development of an effective and responsive writing course' (p. 212). Positive **feedback** helps EFL students to progress better and increase their self-confidence in developing their EFL writing competency. Some participants observed that their teachers provided them with some

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negative feedback, either verbally or written. Noha was one of the participants who claimed she had negative experiences about her EFL writing teacher's feedback: '*The teacher told me "You are nothing, all the knowledge you learned about English writing from your previous school was wrong, you know nothing"'.* Noha emphasised that her teacher's comments hurt her feelings, as she described, '*That experience was disappointing for me',* because, as she explained, '*Our teacher keeps giving me very low grades and bad feedback, and she used to make me feel as if I was useless'.* She stated that kind of feedback was not encouraging her to revise or improve her writing but made her unmotivated to write, as Noha confirmed, '*Of course, her feedback will not make me confident to practice any English writing',* and as she believed, '*Yes, I make errors when I write in English, but that does not give my teacher the right to give me bad feedback',* especially, as she continued, '*I did not use to get any assistance from any of our English writing teachers'.* Positively, Noha noted, '*I would like to learn from my mistakes to improve my English writing',* and, '*it will be nice if one day I start writing about something good and I like it and know it'.* Maha was another student who felt, as she stated, '*We are always afraid of our teacher, she used to say errors means zero and make us worried and scared of her'.* Nouryia would like to have more support from her teacher and she believed her teachers should appreciate that, as she affirmed, '*If students are aware of their mistakes, why do you think they make them?'* Asmah also claimed that she was disappointed about her teacher's feedback, as she described, '*My teacher is a type of person who likes to disappoint people'.* Asmah said when she decided to talk to her teacher about her work, the result was, '*I got shocked, and I decided to change my major right away because of her, she disappointed me'.* It seemed Asmah's peers went through the same negative experience with their teacher because, as she illustrated, '*My peers blamed me, they said "We told you not to go and see her, she does not know how to encourage her students"'.* Because of that Asmah decided, as she stated, '*to change my major'.*

To conclude, some participants stated that their EFL writing teachers' negative feedback was not motivating and encouraging them to revise or improve their writing, but the opposite - it made them disappointed, unmotivated to work and some of them decided to keep themselves away from practising any EFL writing by dropping the course of writing. Teachers need to realize that negative feedback does not help students' progress. Positive feedback increases students' self-efficacy, (Bandura, 1986).

This example presents to us the importance of positive feedback on the student's self-efficacy. Asmah reported her interaction with some native English speakers through **online chatting helped her,** as she described, *'With online chatting groups, I chat with some native English speakers… at the beginning, I was shy and hesitant … to answer their questions, I did not use to respond to them…but by the time I started to argue with them when they said something wrong* [she means against her opinion] *gradually, I became more enthusiastic to write to them'.* Since then, Asmah feels that her self-confidence has improved and she has become more motivated to communicate with others by EFL writing, as she stated, *'After that, I opened my own online chatting group to improve my English speaking and writing'.* Asmah indicated that the positive feedback that she used to receive from her online audiences made her more confident in her ability to speak and write in EFL and also motivated her to improve her EFL writing competency. Gradually, she felt her EFL writing and speaking had improved and become more fluent, as she pointed out, *'Everyone jointed my chatting group, s/he thinks that I am an American girl* [native English speaker]*… before this experience, I used to struggle in my English writing and speaking but now I rarely make any mistakes… I am better in English writing now'.* Positive feedback increases EFL students' self-confidence and motivation towards learning. This finding illustrates the importance of praising EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers' work to help them improve their writing. Motivation is mostly influenced by the person's self-efficacy; positive beliefs about their aptitude and ability for some types of skills help students to complete successfully their particular tasks, (Bandura, 1986).

Writing an authentic text in the EFL writing classroom is essential for communication in the students' real world. It raises the reality of the importance of the audience, and emphasizes the definition of writing as a social behaviour. According to Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (1997, p.8) writing, 'takes place within a context, that achieves a particular purpose, and that is appropriately shaped for its proposed reader'. In this study some participants, such as Noha, Onood, Nouryia, Abeer, Ayha, Asmah, Sarah and Maha said, as Noha for example stated, *'I have never trained to write in EFL for any specific person outside our classroom in my real life'.* She believed that she used to practise limited types of writing, as she claimed, *'I learned from my advanced writing teacher (…) how to practise for example, describing, narrating etc… only'*, whereas, as she stated, *'I do not have the confidence to write in English'.* Maha reflected, *'I do not think*

my teacher linked between classroom English writing and our daily life', and she added, *'I do not think there is any link between kinds of topics we have written in the classroom with our writing needs in our daily life... we have not taken topics that we use in our normal life',* therefore, Maha claimed that she was unconfident and she would like, as she argued, *'to be more confident in L2 writing because I love this major'.* Onood stated that what they learned in EFL writing was not enough for their real world needs, as she emphasized, *'What we learned in our classroom formed only 10% or 20% of what we actually need for EFL writing in our normal life'.* However, Abeer said, *'I did not learn any useful EFL writing for my daily life'.* Sarah felt her writing was not good enough to be used in her communication, as she remarked, *'I do not think my L2 writing is fine when I write to my teachers or others'.* Briefly saying, most participants of this research indicated that their EFL classroom writing was not efficient for their real world needs because they did not have the confidence to communicate with different audiences in EFL writing. They claimed their teachers did not link between their classroom and real-world writing needs.

Using L1 in EFL writing was used by nine participants, except for one called Asmah. For example, Amal claimed that she did not have enough confidence in her EFL writing, as she pointed out, '*Writing in English makes me tired of thinking about how to write a correct English sentence ...I think a lot'.* She felt, as she argued, *'I think in Arabic first... I think about the meaning of the sentence in Arabic',* because as she stated, *'I do not know how to express myself correctly in English writing'.* Abeer, also, noted: '*When I write in English I use Arabic writing style. For example, how to use the comma... However, sometimes when I write in L2, I forget myself, and I use Arabic writing rules'.* Onood said she also used to translate from L1 to EFL, as she described, '*Sometimes I find it difficult to write certain type of sentences in English...so I translate them from L1... it is not proper but we do it'.* Onood, as she emphasized, *'If you are not good in L1 writing, you will not be good in EFL writing'.* For her, *'to be good in L1 is giving you a good hope to be good in English writing'.* Using L1 in L2 for Nouryia, as she indicated, *'Of course, regardless how much we think in English, we will not be able to keep ourselves away from L1, I do use L1 in L2 writing; for example, if I had any problem in English writing such as looking for the meaning of some vocabulary, I write it firstly in Arabic then I translate it into English'.* To summarize the findings, it seems most participants confirmed that they used L1 in their EFL writing because they did not

have confidence in their ability to produce a text in EFL without relying on their L1 writing resources.

Interest in foreign language writing

Interest refers to students' interest in learning EFL writing. The findings of this research showed that most of the participants of this study indicated that they loved EFL writing and were motivated to learn and improve their writing fluency, as for example, Noha argued*: 'I love English, and I do not wish to change my major'.* Noha ed, *'I am not satisfied with my English writing level',* and she added*, 'I would like to improve my English writing by practising it more often'.* Some other participants preferred to write in EFL more than L1 as they believed that EFL writing was easier for them than L1. As Abeer described, *'I like to write in English for two reasons, firstly, I like the way of writing English (cursive). Secondly, Arabic writing is difficult, and this is why we use informal Arabic writing although we know it is not the acceptable thing to do'.* In Arabic, there are two forms of the Arabic language that are used in the wider Arab world; the first form is called 'Al Ameeyiah' which is the colloquial language and it is only used for speaking and is not allowed to be used for writing. Secondly, 'Al Fusha', which is the standard form of Arabic (see Chapter One) and is used for writing and reading. Abeer felt her 'Al Fusha' was not good enough, as she pointed out, *'I do not know how to use it, I write, but not very well, I did not use to take a full mark in Arabic writing',* and as a result, she felt, EFL writing was the only alternative she had although she did not feel confident in EFL writing, as she confirmed*, 'I would like to be more confident in my EFL writing'.* This result raises an important question about the L1 writing fluency of Arab students and its influence in learning any second or foreign languages. As it is known, highly competent writers in L1 become good writers in L2 because L1 is used as a recourse for L2 writing, (Prior, 2006).

In contrast, some participants did not like to write in EFL, as Onood for example described, '*The beginning of English writing is difficult because I have to write about something that I do not like'.* Onood said the reason she did not like writing in EFL, as she confirmed, was *'because I am not used to get a pen and write in EFL, it is not a normal thing for me to do'.* Obviously, Onood claimed that she was unconfident to write fluently in EFL and accordingly she decided to keep herself away from practising it. Students' self-confidence has a great impact on their motivation to practise EFL

writing. It was clear from the findings that nine participants claimed they had the interest to learn EFL writing because they loved the language. They thought EFL writing was easier than writing in their L1. However, they kept themselves way from practising EFL writing because they did not have the confidence in their ability to produce fluent EFL text.

Writing Processes

Writing 'is a non-linear, exploratory, and generative process whereby writers discover and reformulate their ideas as they attempt to approximate meaning', (Zamel, 1983, p. 165). Planning, drafting, revising and editing do not happen in a tidy sequence, but can be recursive, interactive, and probably instantaneous, and all work can be reviewed, evaluated, and revised even before any text has been produced at all, (Hyland, 2003). In the findings of this research, the writing process theme is made up of series of codes and these codes were grouped into sub-themes. They are: planning; translating; and reviewing. And two sub-codes were identified within the code of planning. They are: generating ideas and organizing information. A brief definition will be given to each theme, coding, and sub-coding based on participants' comments for this particular study:

Themes, and sub-themes of the writing processes	The Definitions
Planning	This refers to comments about preparatory activities that the participant uses, including written plans and pausing to think about the writing before starting to write.
• Generating ideas	This refers to comments about activities the EFL participant employs to produce ideas for her text.
• Organizing information	This refers to comments about behavioural activities that the participant uses to write her ideas down on the page.
Translating	This refers to comments about expressing the content of planning in written English.
Revising	This refers to comments about evaluating what has been written on paper.

Table (6.3) The definition of the code and sub-coding with the conceptual themes of writing processes.

Themes and sub-themes of the writing-process	Number of participants	Number of participants' comments
Planning		
• Generating ideas	10	12
• Organizing information	8	10
Translating	8	16
Revising	13	13

Table (6.4) The frequencies of references to each code and the number of participants represented in that code.

Planning

The open codes were organized into broader themes which described the data of *planning* incorporating the two sub-codes. They are: generating ideas and organizing ideas.

Generating ideas tends to involve planning activities that help EFL writers generate more information for their topic. The feature of generating ideas also involves dropping the less important ideas and developing the most important ideas of the text. The writing intention of the writers shapes and furnishes their ideas according to their targeted audience. The spatial plan, the influence of prior knowledge, the influence of the vocabulary, goal formation, the coherence of the text, evaluation, and the influence of L1 in EFL writing are all factors that follow the generation of ideas.

Prior knowledge is important for the content of the text. Hayes and Flower (1980), describe the prior knowledge of the writer in terms of stored writing plans, a mental map of different types of writing which the writer can draw upon when embarking upon a written task. Hedge (1988) suggests that some EFL writers who go through the experience of reading (revising), may develop schemata for their writing. In this study, most of the participants believed that prior knowledge was important for their writing fluency. Maha for example described, '*I would rather write about things I like, such as writing about my lifestyle… I prefer to write about faults that I committed in my life and how I feel sorry about them, such as when I decided to study at the university of Kuwait, I lost six years from my life at the university for nothing… I feel sorry for myself and my father'.* Maha claimed her prior knowledge increases her self-efficacy when she writes, as she described, *'I feel I am very confident when I write about myself",* because, as Maha confirmed, *'I want to express something inside me'.*

Nouryia was another participant who said that prior knowledge was essential for her writing, as she illustrated, *'Writing depends on my prior knowledge, if I did not have that knowledge, I would not be able to write anything'*. Onood also indicated that it was important for her to choose the topic, as she argued, *'Yes, it makes the difference, if the idea of the topic was from my choice, I would have previous knowledge about my writing'*. However, the knowledge of the topic according to Onood would vary from one writer to another, as she described, *'The content of the topic depends on each individual's efforts and on her educational background level, for example, depends on the amount of reading... I believe, it is an independent work'*. Prior knowledge for Sarah was also an important factor, as she pointed out, *'When I write I use my previous high school experience and knowledge',* but she said she followed a certain strategy to compensate for her limited knowledge, as she argued, *'If I did not have the proper knowledge about the topic, I would try to choose any other alternative ideas'*. Abeer confirmed she preferred to write about topics, as she described, *'to people of my age'*.

Obviously, background knowledge is a problematic factor for the participants of this study. The inability to move the EFL writer from thinking about the linguistic forms, to the global forms (semantic) is challenging. In practice, some participants illustrated that they have a strategy to sort this problem, as Sarah mentioned before. But the real question is, how much should classroom teaching practices attempt to compensate for EFL writers' limited prior knowledge, in order to approach EFL writing fluency? It was obvious in this study that most participants' self-efficacy was low and they felt they could be better writers if they had the opportunity to write about knowledge of their choice. They wanted to choose their own topics or ideas for their writing.

Organizing ideas*:* The role of organizing ideas is to select the most suitable information which was recovered by the previous sub-processes, and structure the writing plan, and establish goals and sub-goals that set criteria to direct the consciousness of the writing plan. The activity of the organizing process plays an essential role in achieving a strong textual coherence within the text content by establishing links between idea units, (Hayes & Flower, 1980). EFL writers do less planning and have more trouble in organizing material, (Silva, 1990).

Eight participants noted that they usually organize their ideas according to their topic sentences. Nouryia for example indicated she organized her ideas from top to bottom, from the most important ideas to the least important, as she explained, *'I write a topic sentence first, and then I write three to four major ideas; under each of those major ideas I write a paragraph, then under each paragraph I write the related sentences'.* In addition, Noha also observed the same, as she stated, *'I will choose the* [main] *topic sentence first, and then the related ideas to that topic sentence, for example, if the topic was about "Coffee", I might write about different kinds of coffee...and then I will give each idea enough explanation or clarification, not just jumping from one idea to another',* and *'I will put my sentences in paragraphs that mainly focus on two main ideas only and then I will explain about each idea in more depth, and I will try to find a good conclusion for my topic'.* Although, theoretically Noha claimed she has a clear vision about how to organize her ideas, in practice she was seriously struggling to do so, as she explained in the following quote:

> *I have problem with putting down my ideas on the page... I write one idea here, and another idea there, and when I reach to the conclusion, I usually find myself lost and need to add more ideas here and there... therefore, I used to re-write everything back again'.*

This finding seems to support what Grabe and Kaplan (1996) illustrate, that L2 writers face difficulties in finding ways to organize their text. Donyia for example said she organized her ideas by, as she stated: 'W*hen I write, I live the situation of my writing, I think about it, I use my imagination, then I organize the events of the topic to make them logical'.* However, the most important purpose of writing in EFL for Donyia, as she argued, is to '*make it meaningful for my teacher'.* From the comments of the participants, it was obvious that most of them reflected that they were struggling to organize their ideas and that might be related to the lack of efficient planning practices which help them generate ideas for their text, as Noha stated, *'Usually, I have the ideas in my mind, but I do not know how to put them down on the page nicely'.*

Translating

'Translating' in Hayes and Flower's (1980) model, refers to the process of generating written text: it is the process of text production. But 'translating' also has a linguistic meaning – the process of converting messages from one language into another. The

comments of the participants reflected that the participants talked about translating, in the linguistic sense, as the first part of the process of enabling them to 'translate', to generate written text in line with Hayes and Flower's model of translation. Noha, for example claimed she had difficulty in translating her ideas onto the page, as she argued, *'I have problem to write down my ideas on the page'.* For her, as she pointed out, *'I need more time to re-write more ideas here and there'.* The problem Noha believed that she faced was caused by the absence of efficient pre-writing techniques which usually help L2 writers to translate their ideas smoothly onto the page, as Noha stated, *'I do not know how to translate my ideas from my mind onto the page in English'.* And she said that the problem made her feel confused, as she claimed, *'I used to re-write everything all over again'.* This finding supports what Hayes and Flower (1980, p.15) argue about the function of translation, as they state, 'The function of the translating process is to take material from long-term memory under the guidance of the writing plan and to transform it into acceptable written English sentences'. Obviously, the participants of this study confirmed that they did not practise good pre-writing techniques that help them organize and translate their ideas efficiently onto the page.

 Revising

In this study, revision is defined as the process of improving what has been written, through sub-processes. It is the process of refining, clarifying, cutting, and re-ordering the words and the ideas of the first draft. The revising process consists of two sub-processes, 'Reading and Editing', (Hayes and Flower, 1980). The reading sub-process allows the writer to delete errors and to evaluate the correctness of the written text in relation to the communicative goal founded during the planning process. 'The Editing sub-process appears as a system of production rules to solve problems', (Alamargot and Chanquoy, 2001). Writers in general engage in some aspects of discovery, arrangement, finding ideas, looking for the right words, and considering possible methods of organizing, all at the same time. Writing and revision occur simultaneously, for example, the writer may discover ideas that had not occurred to her before. So revision is not something one does only after the writing is finished, but it is a non-stop process that happens during the two other writing stages, planning and translating. It may involve extensive addition, deletion, and re-ordering what one wants to communicate to one's reader. Editing is the last stage after doing all the revision; the writer should polish her grammar, structure, punctuation, and spelling.

The comments of the participants showed that seven participants said they revised their EFL writing in different stages. Some of them claimed they revise their writing after they have finished it, and some others would revise their EFL writing during the writing process. In addition, they indicated that their revision was focused mainly on EFL linguistic (local errors). Hayes and Flower (1980) proposed that revision has to be approached by two sub-processes, internal and external revision. Internal revision takes place during the early stages of writing, for example, during the planning or translating processes, while the external revision (might be regarding for example, spelling), concerns the apparent correctness for the already written text. Chanquoy (1997) states that revision during the writing process led to more local modification, while revision made after the production of the text involved more content (semantic modification).

Revision occurs after writing process is finished: In this study, some participants, for example, Nouryia and Donyia, said they revised their EFL writing after they had finished writing their text, as Donyia described, '*I put my pen down, I take a break then I come back and revise it'*. For Nouryia, as she stated, '*I read my text after I've finished it, in order to check my writing errors'*. Although revising, as Alamargot and Chanquoy (2001, p. 118)*,* illustrate, after the production of the text, 'is not more constraining, but conversely, it lightens the cognitive work and incites writers to a more attentive re-reading of their text and perhaps even to more elaborate reflection'. However, the two participants mentioned claimed they used to focus during their revision on their local errors and ignored the content.

Revision for some participants occurs during their continuous EFL writing process and in a simultaneous way, as for example, Maha described, '*When I have finished half of my writing, I go back and re-read it to correct my errors, and then continue my writing step by step, not* [all at] *once'*. In addition, Amal pointed out, '*I revise during my EFL writing'*. EFL writers usually revise during their writing for their syntactical and lexical errors, as was obvious with Maha, as she stated*, 'I revise for the structure and the sentence, the grammar, the style of the paragraph'*. Moreover, Onood also described, '*I revise for the grammatical mistakes, e.g. which one is correct, 'is or are', and check if I need to delete words, or if I can find better words'*. EFL writers spend a short amount of time in revision, as they mainly make surface changes to their text, as in spelling,

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grammar, and punctuation. This finding seemed to support what Silva (1990) describes, that the EFL writer's intention may be caused by the marriage of structural linguistics and the behavioural learning methods of second language teaching that was dominant in EFL classrooms. The respondents of this research pointed that their EFL teachers regard teaching and learning EFL writing as an extension of grammar and language patterns and they tend to revise students' local (sentence-level) errors, and avoid the global errors (content and organization), as Abeer for example described, *'My teacher used to focus during the course mostly on spelling errors, and punctuation'*.

The Relationship between L1 and EFL writing

Language exists within different cultural and social systems. The study of language should not be described without a context. Each written language is distributed differently and serves different purposes from one culture to another. These differences usually produce different meaning, logic and discourse behaviour, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). In literature, EFL writing tends to be less complex than L1 writing; EFL composing is more difficult and the product is therefore less effective, (Silva, 1990; Hyland, 2003; Kroll, 1990). A student who is fluent in L1 writing will be helped in her learning of better EFL writing, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). The relationship between L1 and EFL in this study refers to the use by the participants of their L1 writing background during their EFL writing; the influence of the similarities and differences between L1 and EFL writing on EFL students' writing fluency.

The theme of *'The Relationship between L1 and EFL writing'* was created inductively from grouping the sub-themes. They are: the differences and similarities between L1 and EFL writing; translating from L1 to EFL writing; and the influence of L1 writing competency on EFL writing. A brief definition is given to each theme and coding based on participants' comments for this particular study:

Sub-themes	Definition
The differences and similarities between L1 and EFL writing	This refers to comments about differences and similarities in general between the first and the second language writing.
Translating from L1 to EFL writing	This refers to comments about translating L1 knowledge and rhetorical strategies to EFL writing.
The influence of L1 writing competency on EFL writing	This refers to comments about the influence of L1 writing competency, fluency and strategies' background into EFL writing.

Table (6.5) The definition of each code within the conceptual theme of the L1 and EFL writing relationship.

Sub-themes	Number of students	Number of comments
The Differences and similarities between L1 and EFL	10	35
Translating from L1 to EFL writing	8	25
The influence of L1 writing competency on EFL writing	9	19

Table (6.6) The frequency of references to each code and the number of participants represent in that code.

The differences and similarities between L1 and EFL writing: 'L2 writing is strategically, rhetorically and linguistically different in important ways from L1 writing'; the differences are in 'various cognitive, social, cultural and linguistic factors', (Silva 1993, p.669). The differences between L1 and L2 are in the following points, as they were described by Hyland (2003, p. 31):

- Different linguistic proficiency and intuitions about language
- Different learning experiences and classroom expectations
- Different sense of audience and writer
- Different preferences for ways of organizing texts
- Different writing processes
- Different understandings of text uses and the social value of different text types.

All participants of this study said their first language writing was different from EFL writing, as for example Amal stated, '*L1 is different than English... there are no similarities*'. Amal confirmed, '*The rules of L1 are different than writing rules of EFL*'. For Ayah as, she described, '*I do not see any similarities… the style of each language is*

different and no similarities'. Ayah said when she wrote in EFL her focus was mostly on, as she pointed out, '*…the rules and steps of the writing because in English I need to use the rule of narrowing down the topic and many other things, however, in L1, I just write and write and then, I put a full stop, that's all'*. For her, L1 is easier than EFL, as she stated*, 'I have more alternatives words in L1 than EFL'*. Donyia also observed the same, as she illustrated, '*L1 is easier, I was raised with L1… L1 is my first language, I was born with it'*, however*, 'I need to put more efforts to learn EFL'*. Donyia believed as she emphasized, '*I feel EFL is a poor language, Arabic is more rich than English, English does not have enough words like Arabic to express our feeling…Arabic is more expressive language'*. She also emphasized that*, 'there are no similarities between the two languages, alphabetically they are different'*. Abeer also claimed that the two languages are different, as she argued, '*Everything is different…the grammar is different… I feel the one who had learnt Arabic grammar will not be able to use it in English writing…because it will make both languages overlapping'*. This finding seems to support what Hyland (2003, p.34) illustrates, that, 'EFL writers often carry the burden of learning to write and learning English at the same time'. Most participants find the two languages are widely different and they prefer writing in L1 because their L1 background is stronger.

In addition, Onood said*, 'English topics are very practical'*. She indicated that she had a strategy for EFL writing different from her writing strategy in L1. She described, '*English people are more practical and determined in their writing, they write a direct meaning to the point… for them the more you write, the more errors you make'*. Accordingly, Onood decided, as she described, '*I use simple English, to be practical in my writing'*. However, as she confirmed, '*In Arabic the more you write, better grades you get, however, in English, more you write, less grades you get'*. She believed, '*Writing in L1 is the most beautiful thing'*, because*, 'in L1 we have the ability to write about any topic'*, and '*we have lots of stored vocabulary in our mind…I can choose whatever I like for my writing.* She claimed it to be the opposite, in English*: 'I do not have enough stored vocabularies'*, therefore, '*I write simple English, I choose simple vocabulary, sometimes I repeat the same words in the same paragraph to avoid making mistakes'*. In addition*, 'In L1 I can present my personality and reflect it as a writer to my readers more than EFL; in English, I cannot do that'*. Onood stated*, 'When I write in English, I feel as if I were more likely programmed to do the work, and I need to be*

*simple and limited with the sentences that I use, to avoid errors'. M*oreover, '*The ideas of EFL topics are not presented in the same way as they are in L1'.* Onood also raised an important factor that she claimed influences her EFL writing, it was the impact of her culture, as she pointed out, '*Even L1 culture is different from EFL culture, the way of writing is different; for example, when an Arab writer writes, she uses L1 culture in EFL writing, because the values of both cultures are different'.* On the other hand, Onood said there was one similarity between L1 and EFL, as she observed, '*Both are used for the same purpose which is communication or interacting knowledge and messages with others'.* Sarah was another participant who described*,* that '*each language has its own grammatical rules, these rules are not necessarily similar in both languages'.* She added*,* '*The structure of the sentence in both languages is similar, for example both are having subject, verb and object…and both of the languages have the same structure'.* However, Maha claimed, as she argued*,* '*I cannot live without Arabic writing e.g. on my mobile I use Arabic language, yes, I study English, but I did not change the language of my mobile to English because I do not want to lose my Arabic, especially, nowadays everything I deal with in the college is in English. I like to separate between the two languages, Arabic is our first language, if I keep myself away from it, I will not be able to read Quran or even speak the language properly'.* She said, as she pointed out, '*Of course both languages are important, but Arabic is my native language and the second language is just for extra education'.* For Asmah both languages, as she explained, '*are different, the sentence in English starts from backward, the sentence in Arabic starts with subject and verb… the way of writing sentences in Arabic and English are different'.* Moreover, Asmah noted*,* '*It is easier to write in Arabic but I prefer English writing because it is smoother, I can express myself in English better',* because, '*I feel Arabic language is difficult… and this is how I see it'.*

In brief, it seemed that all participants confirmed that L1 writing was different from EFL writing in terms of structure, grammar, vocabularies, cultural background, direction of writing, and in their writing style. Although most of the participants liked both languages, they felt L1 was unique for them because it was their first language and the language of the Quran. However, two participants felt L1 writing was difficult and few of them felt, despite the differences between the two languages, that there were some similarities between them; however, those similarities did not help their EFL writing competency. To summarize the findings, most participants reflected that the

difference between the two languages to be very big and that the difference did not support their EFL writing fluency.

Translating from L1 to EFL writing: The differences of the rhetorical rules, linguistic knowledge, historical and cultural background, and meaning between the first and the second language writing do not always transfer successfully and may interfere with writing in the EFL. In this study, nine of the participants would translate from their first language to their EFL writing. Some participants claimed that translation caused them some problems, as Maha indicated, '*Sometimes when I literally translate from L1 to EFL, the meaning becomes wrong*'. Also, Nouryia said translating from L1 to EFL was, '*not helpful, regardless how much you try to translate your idea from Arabic to English, at the end the meaning became Arabic, for example, the literal translation for "*wardath almanzeel*" from L1 to English gives this meaning, 'the flower of the house'; or also when I translate this L1 expression "*alom kalb almanzeel*" in English, it sounds strange because they do not say 'mother is the heart of the house'.* Therefore, Nouryia affirmed, '*If I had enough vocabularies in English, I would be able to write my ideas right away on the page, however, translating from Arabic to English makes me forget some of my ideas, and makes my English writing more difficult*'. Nouryia described, '*Of course, regardless how much we think in English, we will not be able to keep ourselves away from our L1, I use L1 in my English writing, for example, if I had a problem writing English sentence, such as looking for the meaning of some vocabularies, I write them first in Arabic and then translate them into English*'.

Abeer is another participant who believes, as she pointed out, '*Sometimes when I write in English, I forget myself, and I use Arabic writing rules unconsciously*', however, '*I know, I should not use L1 punctuation in EFL writing, not in the same way...because both languages are different*'. For Sarah, translation was a problem, as she described, '*Sometimes I translate from L1 to English... but it did not work properly or it did not give the same meaning, this is why, I make more errors*'. Amal said translation sometimes provides her with the wrong meaning, as she argued, '*If I translate a sentence from L1 to English the meaning mostly will be wrong...I tried once to translate this sentence from Arabic to English, 'A man gets one week value in a year of work',* Amal continued, '*I asked one of my American friend about this sentence, and she did not understand the meaning, she said, 'What do you mean?'* Amal observed her native friend did not understand the sentence because, as she claimed, '*They* (English native

speakers) *think differently'*. This result seems to confirm what Grabe and Kaplan state, EFL Arabic writers were systematically different from native English writers.

Ayah confirmed, *'When I decided to translate what I read in English to L1, it was difficult'*. She claimed, as she stated, *'I feel I am not confident to do this job',* however, *'for me it is easier to translate from English to L1 than translating from L1 to EFL',* and the reason, as she described, *'Grammar in Arabic in general is more complicated than English grammar'.* Thus, she illustrated, *'it is not helpful to translate from Arabic to English… because most translation will be wrong'.*

Amal was another participant who indicated that she did not have the ability to express herself in EFL directly, as she said, *'I do not know how to express myself in EFL writing'.* Therefore, she used to think in L1 first and then translate it into EFL, as she described, *'I think in Arabic about the meaning in Arabic first'.* Obviously, Amal claimed that *'Writing in EFL makes me tired of thinking how to write each single sentence accurately, yes, I think a lot '.*

In the opposite situation, four participants in this study believed that translating from L1 to EFL was helpful in some circumstances, as in Noha's case for example, she said that, *'most of the time, translation helps, it is good, I do not write English text literally from L1, but I just think about the main ideas in L1 to help me give the proper meaning to EFL text',* however, *'it does not help my writing process itself, but it helps me organize my ideas better'.* Translation for Onood was, as she stated, *'Helpful'.* She believed, *'I used to think firstly in English but sometimes I find some challenges to write certain types of English sentences…so I translate them from L1'.* On the whole, it seemed that most participants of this study claimed lacking in confidence in their EFL writing, and therefore, they would translate from their L1 when they face challenges in vocabulary, grammar, and on the whole sentence level. They also felt that translation was not efficient for their EFL writing competency, because of the differences between the two languages. EFL students frequently transfer their L1 rhetorical patterns, knowledge and the conventions into EFL writing, which in some occasions could cause problems for them, (Hinkel, 1999). In translation, 'students obviously bring to EFL writing different writing experience, different aptitudes and levels of motivation', (Hyland, 2003, p. 32).

The influence of L1 writing competency on EFL writing: Eight participants in this research claimed that L1 writing competency has a positive influence on learning EFL writing. For example Onood, as she pointed out, *'If you are not good in L1 writing, you will not be able to write in English'.* She also added, *'You should be good in your L1 to be good in EFL',* because, *'being good in L1 is giving you a hope to be good in EFL'.* In addition, Nouryia argued, *'If the student was fluent in L1 writing, she will have a good writing style in English writing… some people are good in Arabic writing, once they try to write in English, you can see their EFL writing English style become beautiful, because they have the ability to manage their writing'.* Ayah stated, *'As long as I came from a rich language, this will help my vocabularies, my L1 fluency will help EFL writing a lots… yes, it helps very much'.* This finding seems to support what Kroll (1990) argues, that there is a positive relationship between the competency of L1 writing and EFL writing accuracy. L1 writing competency is an importance and influential factor for learning EFL writing.

Of the opposite opinion, Abeer argued, *'It does not matter L1 or EFL, if I am good in L1 writing it does not mean I will be good in English writing'.* Also, Maha said in the same thing, as she indicated, *'L1 does not support English writing, except for using the dictionary to give the meaning of the vocabularies from English to L1 definition'.* According to Maha, *'not every word in L1 gives the same meaning in EFL writing'.* Thus, Maha noted there was a limitation to using L1 in EFL. In addition, Nouryia raised a very important question about the Arabic language writing competency among Arabic students, as I mentioned in Chapter One, that Arab learners face challenges in their L1 writing competency and that was obvious in Nouryia's statement, as she stated, *'Arabs do not like writing, we've never been encouraged to write in L1. L1 writing was not important for our Arabic teachers, they never focused on L1 writing and that is why our English teachers did the same with EFL writing'.*

This finding supports what Connor (1996) emphasizes: for EFL students who are highly literate in their native language, their lack of EFL linguistic, rhetorical, and cultural knowledge can stand in the way of their academic success. Most of the participants confirmed unaware of the influence of their L1 writing competency in both the teaching and learning of EFL writing, and that might be transferred to their teaching practices and learning experiences in EFL writing. They claimed their Arabic writing teachers did

not use to focus on the importance of L1 writing competency, and that might also be transferred to negative experiences in teaching and learning L1 writing. In any case, that experience had reflected negatively into the progress of EFL writing of the participants of this study.

The Communicative Competence

Writing is not a product of an individual, but a social and cultural act. We write to communicate with others. In the data analysis of this study, the theme of *'Communicative competence'* was created inductively from grouping the sub-themes. They are: applying EFL writing in your normal life; and the value of learning EFL writing. A brief definition is given to each theme and coding based on participants' comments for this particular study:

Sub-theme	Definition
Applying EFL writing in their daily life	This refers to comments about how participants use EFL writing in their normal life, outside their classroom.
The Importance of EFL writing.	This refers to the comments about the importance of learning EFL writing in general.

Table (6.7) The definition of each code with the conceptual theme of the communicative competency

Sub-theme	Number of participants	Number of comments
Applying EFL writing in your normal life	8	30
The value of learning EFL writing	10	39

Table (6.8) The frequencies of references to each code and the number of participants represented in that code

Applying EFL writing in the participants' real world: Eight participants of this study, for example, Noha, Sarah, Abeer, Amal, Donyia, Ayha, Asmah and Nouryia, claimed they used different types of EFL writing outside their classroom in their normal life, for example, Sarah said, *'I use English writing a lot, when I sit in my room, I write in English… I write my diary in English, and when I use online chatting'*. Asmah also used EFL writing, as she stated, *'When I feel stressful, when I sit alone waiting for my teacher before the lesson starts'*. Abeer noted she used EFL to express her feelings, as she pointed out, '*sometimes when I got upset, I express myself in English writing'*. Sarah and Noha said they used EFL writing for texting massages to their friends, and interestingly, they indicated they were confident and did not feel afraid of making any

errors, as Noha stated, *'I write text messages to my friends in English … we love writing text messages in English although we have lots of errors but we make fun of our errors and we never stop writing in English because we love it'*. In addition, Sarah believed, as she illustrated, *'I do not think my English writing is fine, but I use EFL writing with my friends'*. However, Sarah argued, *'I do not write formal, or standard and even professional English writing outside my classroom, I use simple language that allow my friends to understand my messages and they usually do not care about my English writing accuracy'*. Practising writing for Maha was different than her peers. She said she used to practise writing poems in English, as she indicated, *'I express my feelings and my point of view in poems writing'*.

Whereas Onood claimed that EFL writing is not important for her, as she stated, *'I do not think I need it'*, and, *'No, why should I, I do not need it'*. Apparently, most of the participants illustrated that EFL writing was important for their real life especially for online chatting, or text messages. However, they said they did not like to use an accurate form of EFL writing but simple, informal and understandable writing.

The importance of learning EFL writing: In general, writing serves different purposes, as in for example, helping us to transfer knowledge to others or communicate with people from different cultures. English is an international language that is used everywhere in this world especially for the research work, technology, and business, education and to interact with people from different countries. In this study, in almost all the participants believed EFL writing was important for them. For example, Ayha argued, *'It is a very important language … everywhere we go they need English, for examples, in the Ministries of the government, private sectors or companies, shopping, airports, and most careers, they need English… also when I travel I need it'*. Maha illustrated, *'Nowadays we use EFL everywhere we go, not only in the college, we watch English movies, are reading English magazines, watching English programmes on TV, …we are exposed to English language everywhere we go, and this is why, I should be good in EFL writing'*. Amal noted EFL writing is, as she stated, *'Very important, how did all these knowledge came to us? By writing, we transmit our knowledge by writing'*. Both Amal and Donyia claimed, as Amal for example described, *'EFL writing is important, same as L1 writing'*, however, *'I do not like writing in both languages neither in L1 nor in English… but because I am going to be an English teacher, I should be good in English writing for my future career'*. Donyia emphasized, *'As long as we*

learn English, we should learn how to write English…same as when we learned Arabic, we learned its writing'. It seems that all participants felt learning EFL writing was important for their future careers especially that, they all study English major and will be EFL teachers in the future, as for example, Sarah pointed out, *'Writing is important for my career as an English teacher in the future',* and Abeer stated:*' It means a lot to be good in EFL writing for my future career… I do not want to teach students wrong English language'.*

Abeer and Maha said they had the same interest, as Abeer for example indicated, *'I want to continue my study and got a scholarship, I do not want to be a PhD holder with a bad English writing',* and, Maha emphasized, *'I need it to communicate with people in England that if I decided to continue my study in the future'.* For Noha, as she confirmed, *'I should be ready for any job, I should know how to write well and be qualified in my future work'.* As a result, it was clear that most participants claimed EFL writing was important mostly for their future careers, or to be professional in their work.

Summary

The findings highlighted that the student-teachers of this research felt unconfident about their EFL writing skills and they claimed they needed help in EFL grammar and vocabulary. They said they used to ask for help from experts, and did not have the confidence to show their writing to different readers other than their teachers. They believed their challenges were caused by lack of efficient teaching practices. They loved learning EFL in general because it is important for their future careers but they noted their teachers' inefficient feedback, lack of explanation, including lack of communication with authentic readers other than their teachers, fear of making errors, and using L1 in EFL writing: all these factors prevented them from improving their writing.

CHAPTER SEVEN
QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

For

Kuwaiti Student-Teachers' Perceptions of EFL Writing Teaching Methods

This chapter presents the findings from the data analysis of the semi-structured interviews, and will be used to address the second research question: What are EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers perceptions of their EFL writing teaching methods? This question was concerned with understanding the way in which EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers see EFL writing teaching methods in one of the higher educational colleges. Participants of this study were invited from that college to reflect on their EFL writing teaching methods. 'Teachers are a key factor in the success of a teaching program', (Hyland, 2003, P.65). 'Writing is unlike speaking, reading, and listening, it has an exclusive characteristic of requiring more formal language training', (White and Arndt, 1991, p.12). Writing entails the skill to sequence suitably grammatical and lexical structures in written form. It is also requires cognitive problem-solving ability so as to be able to evaluate and generate understandable ideas. The needs, background, learning styles and writing strategies of L2 writers differ significantly from those of native English writers. Therefore, teachers need to be well-prepared to work with L2 students, because as Reid illustrates 'most L2 teachers [are] untrained as writers or as writing teachers', (Reid, 1993, P. 22). 'The lack of experience and knowledge about teaching L2 writing among teachers is affecting negatively L2 writing fluency', (Reid, 1993). Accordingly, second language writing research has 'focused on improving the practices and strategies of teachers working with L2 writers' (Matsuda, el at, 2009). Furthermore, four types of pedagogical matters were highlighted by research into writing: the development of efficient writing tasks and curriculum, teacher and peers' feedback, the treatment of errors, and assessment. The findings in this chapter reveal some of these pedagogical issues such as writing processes, peers' feedback, and teacher's feedback.

Semi-structured interviews were undertaken with ten EFL Kuwaiti student-teacher participants at one of the higher educational colleges in Kuwait. These participants were majoring in English and most of them will be English teachers in the future. They were selected from different study-years. A full description of the processes of data analysis has been provided in Chapter Four. The first iteration of the coding process elicited a broad range of codes which illustrated student-teachers' perceptions of EFL writing

teaching methods. These codes were then analyzed further and categorized into three broader conceptual themes into which the codes were grouped. These three conceptual themes were:

Writing processes: This theme relates to the sequence of changing task situations from planning, translating to reviewing.

Peers' feedback: This refers to comments about collaborative peers reviewing of each other's work.

Teacher's feedback: This refers to comments about teacher's responses to students' written drafts.

In this chapter, I will discuss each of these conceptual themes in turn, describing each of the codes which constitutes that theme and discussing what each theme reveals about Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of EFL writing teaching methods.

Writing Processes

Teaching writing processes focuses mainly on the role of the writer as an independent producer of texts, and the teacher as a mediator or enabler who helps L2 learners perform L2 writing tasks. Teaching writing processes, in this research, is defined as the processes involved in responding to the text-developing and for detecting and diagnosing problems, and then developing strategies for resolving the identified problems. In the collected data of this research, the *writing process* theme was made up from series of coding from the participants' statements and these coding were grouped to form three sub-themes. They are: planning; translating; and reviewing. Under each of these three codes, sub-codes were elicited. For example, under planning five sub-codes were revealed. They are: generating ideas, prior knowledge, using own experience, vocabulary, and visualizing and imagining. Under the translating code, two sub-codes were revealed. They are: topic choice and writing type. Finally, under the revising code, one sub-code was elicited. It is: proof-reading and editing. A brief definition is given to each theme and coding based on students' comments in this particular study:

Research Q.2: Theme of *writing process* and sub-themes	Definition
Planning	This refers to comments about preparatory activities for writing in the classroom, including written plans and pausing to think about the writing before beginning their writing.
• Generating Ideas	This refers to comments about the source of ideas for writing.
• Using own experiences	This refers to comments about students relying on their own problem-solving and decision-making skills to manage their writing task.
• Prior knowledge	This refers to comments about existing knowledge of topics and types of texts.
• Vocabulary	This refers to comments about teaching activities which focused on vocabulary-development for writing.
• Visualizing and imagining	This refers to comments about activities to help students createa text from their own imagination by using drawing.
Translating	This refers to comments about the act of writing on the page.
• Topic choice	This refers to comments about types of content students were required to write about.
• Writing type	This refers to comments about using language patterns and structure to achieve a coherent, purposeful writing style e.g. descriptive, narrative, academic writing etc.
Revising	This refers to comments about the process of re-reading to identify the errors in the piece of writing.
• Proof-reading and editing	This refers to comments about re-reading and correcting the written piece.

Table (7. 1) The definition of each code within the conceptual theme of writing processes

Writing Processes sub-themes	Number of Comments	Number of Students' Responses
Planning		
• Generating ideas	8	4
• Using own experiences	6	4
• Prior knowledge	7	4
• Vocabulary	7	4
• Visualizing &imagining	6	5
Translating		
• Topic choice	12	8
• Writing type	36	9
Revising		
• Proof-reading and editing	16	8

Table (7.2) The frequency of references to each code and the number of students represented in that code

Planning

This refers to comments about preparatory classroom activities that EFL writing teachers of this study use to help participants, including written plans and pausing to think about the writing before beginning their writing. 'Planning is important for the writing process; the writers will be well advised to spend more time on abstract planning and less on other processes', (Hayes, 1996, p. 54). In this study, the question in Section One of the interview schedule was concerned about the way in which EFL writing teachers prepare their students to plan for their texts. In the findings of this research, five sub-codes were identified within the code of planning. They are: generating ideas, using their own experiences, prior knowledge, vocabulary, and visualizing and imaging. I will give some details about each of these sub-codes as following:

Generating ideas tends to be planning activities that help L2 writers to generate ideas for their written plan (topic). The features of generating ideas are described by dropping the less important ideas in favour of the most important ideas of the text. The writing intention of the writers shape and furnish their ideas according to their targeted audience. From the data that was gathered from the participants of this study, the majority of the students felt they did not practise sufficient pre-writing activities to help them generate ideas. Mostly, it was missing from their EFL writing classrooms, as Noha, Amal, Abeer, Ayha, Donyia and Sarah confirmed. They claimed that they did not have the opportunity to practise any planning in their classroom, as for example Sarah stated, *'no planning for our EFL writing',* and Noha emphasized *'planning was missing in our writing lesson'.* Amal claimed her teacher did not use to make any plan to help them generate ideas for their EFL topics. They used to plan by themselves, as she indicated, '*Nothing, our teacher used to give us a topic to write about and she used to tell us, "This is the topic, go ahead and write it by yourself"'.* Amal continued*, 'When we finished our writing assignment, she did not use to discuss it with us in the classroom ... she used to say, "Write...just go ahead and write"'.* It seems the findings of this study support what Alamargot & Chanquoy (2001, p.41) confirm, that 'writing activity inevitably needs domain knowledge stored in long-term memory. However, frequently L2 writers do not have all the necessary domain knowledge; and therefore

they need to create or to elaborate new knowledge units during the process of writing activity', as was the real case for most of the participants.

On the other hand, three participants Asmah, Noha, and Nouryia indicated that their EFL writing teachers were helping them to generate ideas for their EFL texts. For example, Asmah, as she describes, *'We used to practise brainstorming with our teacher and how to put our ideas in order'*. Her teacher, as she stated, *' used to choose one topic from our text book'*, and then ask her students to generate ideas about that topic, as she indicated, *'I used to think about the main ideas of my topic before I write them down on page ... and then, I put those ideas in sentences and I try to link between those sentences'*. Apparently, Asmah stated that she never practised any efficient pre-writing techniques because she was not aware of the processes of efficient pre-writing techniques. She thought what her teacher was doing was planning. In fact, what Asmah's teacher used to practise was not planning that helped her students generate ideas for their topics but she depended on them to write about a topic that was chosen by her and from their own knowledge, as was clear in this conversation:

> *R18: When your teacher asked you to write about the 'Myself' topic, did you have any idea what to write?*
>
> *S18: Mmmmmm… kind of.*
>
> *R19: Did your teacher tell you what to write?*
>
> *S19: Yes, surely, she said write anything about you.*
>
> *R20: Tell me about the discussion between you and your teacher before you started writing the 'Myself'' topic.*
>
> *S20: She did not say anything in specific; she just said "Write things that happened to you".*

Noha seemed to have the same experience as Asmah, she thought her teacher was helping them to plan for their writing, as she explained, *'Once, our teacher asked us to write a story, she wrote down the beginning of the story for example, the first sentence of the story, and then she asked each student in the class to write her own sentence in order to continue the story'*. From that practice it was obvious that her teacher was focusing on teaching them how to write accurately by focusing on grammar more than writing fluently, as she highlighted, *'Our teacher told us to read our sentences and*

correct them as if it was your draft… we used to correct each other's sentences by reading them'

Apparently, pre-writing techniques were not practised sufficiently in this study as most of the participants emphasised that their teachers used to depend on the students to write their topics without helping them generate ideas. In addition, teachers used also to focus on the form of the language and ignore the content. As a result, when the students of this research wrote in EFL their concern was mainly on how to write accurately and meaning was ignored.

Using their previous experiences to plan for their EFL writing was raised by six participants. For example, Noha, as she described, '*I wrote my topic according to my previous knowledge at the high school'*. Also, Amal emphasized her teacher, '*gave us a descriptive writing* [task] *but she did not give us any examples about what to write… we wrote the topic from our previous experience only…our teacher only said narrative is like telling a story, she said this in a very simple way with no explanation'*. Sarah said she went through an experience similar to her peers, as she stated, '*There was no planning for our writing… when I write I use my previous high school experience and knowledge…each student has done her homework according to her own previous knowledge from the high school'*. On the other hand, these participants noted their EFL writing experiences were not efficient enough to be used in their writing at this college, as Onood described*, 'The problem was that my high school writing knowledge was not efficient for EFL writing in this college, and my teacher believes that our writing standard is too low'*.

As well as Onood, Abeer also claimed her negative experiences in teaching and learning EFL writing caused her problems. Abeer said since she came to this place she found out that there was a conflict between methods of teaching EFL writing in her high school and this college. That conflict caused her challenges in tackling EFL writing: indeed, she describes this as living '*the conflict between now and the past'*. The conflict between the two methods of teaching writing made this student hesitant to what method she should pursue to improve her EFL writing. In fact, for her, choosing between writing a long text or a short text was a matter of choosing between higher or lower grades, rather than choosing between lower or higher competency level, as Abeer said,

'I used to write a lot and long writing texts when I was in the high school but my friends used to get higher grades than me. When I asked my teacher, about the reason...she told me, "Stop writing a long text, if you keep writing a long text, you will lose more grades"'. Therefore, Abeer decided, as she claimed in the following:

> *'Since then, I learned to write short text with simple and short sentences. But when I came to this college, my EFL writing teacher asked us to write long texts, not to make our writing short. ... They asked us to be more imaginative and open our mind for more ideas, and this is conflicting with what I have learned in my high school as I got used to writing short sentences and topics with simple words... It is difficult for me now to change my high school writing strategy and style. That was one of my reasons why I decided to drop the advanced writing course'.*

There was no doubt that most of the participants said that they had not been helped by their teachers to improve their writing fluency. They claimed most of their teachers used to depend on their students' prior EFL writing knowledge, and they did not help them practise any planning techniques to generate ideas for their topics or to determine their audiences. Not only that, the respondents illustrated that, most of their teachers did not appreciate that their students had difficulty to cope with their new teaching practices. Some students in this research lived the conflict between what they had been taught about EFL writing in their high school and this college's practices. They noted, they did not have enough support from their teachers to cope with the new teaching methods.

Prior Knowledge as Hayes and Flower (1980) describe it in terms of stored writing plans, necessary information, it is the mental map of different kinds of writing that the writer can recall when embarking on written tasks. In this study four participants emphasised that they usually write from their prior knowledge with no assistance from their teacher. For example Nouryia, as she stated, *'Writing any topic depends on my own prior knowledge, if I did not have that proper knowledge, I will not be able to write anything'.* In addition, Sarah as she confirmed that she has a strategy used to compensate for any missing knowledge for her topic, as she illustrated, *'If I did not have prior knowledge about the topic, I try to choose alternative ideas for my topic'.* Abeer said she could be more productive in EFL writing if she had the opportunity to write

about something she had knowledge about, as she stated, '*Mostly, when I write on any topic, I choose to write to people in my age, something we share and live together with, for example, as I told you before about a "friendship" topic. I do not like to write about an ideal world or positive issues only, but also about my negative experience in life…I like to write about unusual topics, no one expects them'*. Apparently, the lack of efficient teaching practices for pre-writing techniques forced most students to depend on their prior EFL writing knowledge, as Abeer highlighted, *'I got the ideas of those types of writing from my prior knowledge'*.

Moreover, the majority of the participants claimed they were looking for topic choice as their topics were mostly chosen by their teachers and that stopped them from practising writing in EFL. They desired for ownership writing or to write about knowledge they had or they liked, as for example Asmah stated, '*At the end of the term, she asked us to write about a free topic from our choice* [student is laughing]*, I was very excited, because I was waiting for this opportunity, I wanted to write about my hobby… knitting!'*. This finding seems to support what Edwards and Westgate (1994, p.6) point out, the learner constructs knowledge through 'interaction between what is already known and new experience'.

Vocabulary is another important factor that influences writing competency. In this study, most of the participants believed that learning vocabulary was important for them, and their EFL writing teachers used to practise some activities for EFL vocabularies. For example, Asmah said her EFL writing teacher, as she stated, '*explained to us how to write the poem by giving us two lines of words, seven words in the upper line and seven words in the lower line… and we should use words from both lines to construct our poems'*. Asmah added, *'Our teacher wrote the two groups of words on the board, the first group consisted of some words from nature and the second group of words was about family members such as father, mother, brother, uncle, grandfather, aunty, niece, nephews … and then, our teacher asked us to write a poem from those words, for example: as I wrote, 'I like my mother… afternoon like a moon…'*. However, Asmah stated*, 'our teacher did not explain to us clearly what we should do with that vocabulary, for example, how to coordinate between the two groups of words in order to write a poem'*. For Asmah writing a poem in EFL*, as she said, 'was my first experience'*. Sarah is another participant who practised also some vocabulary exercises in her writing classroom, as she pointed out, *'Our teacher asked us to write a*

summary about something we had already read at home… and then, he asked us to pick some challenging vocabularies from that story and bring them to our classroom', and in their classroom their teacher asked them to write a topic from the new words, as she indicated, *'Our teacher asked us to use the challenging vocabularies in writing a new paragraph, for example, writing about "Fashion", the fashion topic was chosen from the kinds of vocabularies that we worked out together in the classroom'.* However, that type of activity was difficult for Onood, as she described*, 'It was difficult for me to put those new vocabularies in a context of my own'.* Therefore*,* using a dictionary was the only alternative for Onood and Donyia, as Onood described, *'I used to use dictionary, my teacher asked us to use more professional words, not just simple words'.* Donyia indecated using a dictionary, as she observed*, 'was helpful'.* It seemed that their teachers used to focus on teaching vocabulary through isolating exercises out of their whole context.

Visualizing and Imagining is a kind of pre-writing activity that helps students generate ideas for their writing and make meaning. Graphs, tables, or pictures are essential for understanding the message of the text. If we want to understand many of the texts, it is important to understand their visual and spatial features, (Hayes, 1996). In the findings of this study, only two participants felt that their EFL writing teachers encouraged them to use drawing sketches to produce meaning to their text. For example, Maha described, '*Our teacher asked us to draw a house in the middle of a paper and then draw a sun, two birds in the sky, and water fountain… we should use our imagination and live the situation, as if we were in that place… and then, she asked us to start describing it clearly on the page for our readers, to make them feel as if they were in the place'.* Donyia was another participant, who was encouraged by her teacher to use her imagination when describing a meal, as she explained: *'When our teacher taught us a descriptive writing, she asked us to imagine, for example, if the meal was hot or cold'.* Her teacher wanted them to write, as she stated*, 'accurate descriptive sentences, for example, how the meal was eaten'.*

To summarize, it was obvious that most of the participants had not practised efficient pre-writing techniques in their classroom. Their teachers used to ask them to write different types of writing but at the same time they did not help them plan well to generate ideas for their writing or how to structure different types of writing. The students of this study did not know how to construct each type of writing. Therefore,

they used to rely on their poor prior EFL writing experiences and knowledge to produce EFL texts. For most of them, that experience was negative because they felt their prior knowledge was not supportive and efficient for the level of writing at this college. They also indecated that teaching isolated words or grammar through some exercises taken out of their whole contexts was not helpful for their writing fluency, as they would seriously struggle to produce any EFL writing because it was always difficult for most of them to function those vocabularies and structural rules into a meaningful, coherent and communicative EFL text. Another finding showed that participants claimed their teachers should provide their students with the opportunity to write about topics they choose, as most students were not happy about the topics they used to write about and they desired for ownership in order to write better.

Translating

Translation refers to the act of writing down the ideas into well-formed language that transmits meaning to others. Translation is a communicative tool that occurs between the writer (inner speech) and the public, (Kellogg, 1994). In the findings of this research, the translation theme was made up from different codings that were grouped together into two sub-codings. They are: topic choice, and writing type. I will write about each of these codes in some detail.

Topic choice primarily is used to communicate different kinds of information between one or more readers. In topic choice, as Grabe and Kaplan highlight, 'students develop a sense of the shaping role of genres in writing, and how language structure and genre form constrain the ways in which language communicates information', (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 260). The topic choice was mentioned by eight participants in this study. For example, Sarah's EFL writing teacher asked them to write, as she pointed out, *'about fashion'.* The topic had been chosen from the difficult vocabularies that they brought to their classroom discussion from their free reading assignment, as Sarah stated, *'The vocabularies we used in a topic called "Fashion" came up from our classroom discussion after reading some texts from our choice…we put those vocabularies in isolated sentences until we ended up with a topic called fashion'.* However, Sarah said she was disappointed, as she claimed, *'My teacher said, "I will correct your written topic", but he has not returned it back to us yet (already one month and a half has gone).'* Ayah and Asmah also claimed they did not use to choose their

writing topic, as Ayah indicated, *'My teacher used to choose a topic from our text book… we used to depend mainly on our text book… as there used to be five topics, e.g. shopping at the mall, going to the beach, or how was our summer holiday and etc… we were asked to choose one topic out of that list'.* In addition, *'Our teacher chose a topic called 'Myself' and she asked us to write about it for the whole term… in the Myself topic, for example, we needed to write in the first week about "my personality", in the second week, we wrote about "my hobby"… some students decided to write about the meaning of their names'.* Topic choice for Donyia was also chosen by her teacher, as she described, *'My teacher asked us to write about travelling during spring or summer holidays'.* Donyia reported that her teacher limited their writing, as she argued, *'Our teacher told us not to give her the details of how we get on the plane or how we prepare ourselves for the trips'.*

Interestingly, four participants said they did not practise any type of EFL writing, as Noha confirmed, *'What was missing in our classroom, we have just written one topic called Myself in our first writing lesson during the whole term'.* The scenario for Nouryia was worse, as she stated, *'With the teacher of the basic writing we did not write any topic at all, we used to do those sheets of exercises only'.*

To conclude, it seems that most students of this research desired for topic choice or writing ownership. They claimed they could write better if they have the choice to choose their topics. This finding seems to support what Hyland, (2003, p.18) emphasizes, 'We do not just write', but 'we write something to achieve some purpose'. The purpose of providing the students with the opportunity to write about topics from their choice is to help them generate knowledge, improve their writing, and encourage them to write. Teachers are mediators and their role is to ensure that their 'students are able to understand and reproduce the typical rhetorical patterns they need to express their meaning' (p.19), so teachers of this research should not regard teaching types of writing (genres) as a set of isolated rules but as meaning-making that is appropriate for different social contexts.

Writing types is another factor to emerge under the translating code. Teaching writing types helps learners towards learning a conscious understanding of how different texts are arranged in terms of their purpose, readership, and meaning. Writing instruction begins with the purpose of communication, and then moves to the stages of text, which

can express these purposes. In the findings of this study, writing types was mentioned by nine participants. These participants claimed they were asked by their EFL writing teachers to write different types of EFL writing, for example, descriptive, storytelling, poem, narrative, and comparison. They reported that they struggled with writing different genres because they did not know how to differentiate between the types of writing in EFL as they have not been taught how to write to different audiences. For example, Noha and Asmah indicated that their writing teachers asked them to write a story, as Noha pointed out, *'Once, our teacher* [name of the teacher] *asked us to write a story'*, and both agreed that writing a story was difficult for them, as for example Asmah emphasized, '*Writing a story for me was not simple, I should make up a story from my mind, my teacher kept saying, "It is simple to write a story", however, it was not simple for me because my teacher did not show us how to write a story'*.

In addition four participants said they went through a negative experience about genres writing. They had not practised any type of writing models, as Noha described, *'The course was about writing process, however, we did not practise any actual writing, our teacher did not teach us how to write, or what are the basic rules of writing a paragraph'*. Moreover, Onood added, *'My teacher told us, if you want to be good EFL writers, it is your job to do it, you do it by yourself at home…I feel sorry that he did not asked us to write anything…however, he advised us to read and read and he said, "You will get your way to writing through reading"'*. Onood was not aware about the types of writing, as she described, *'I do not know if there are types of writing'*. However, Abeer believes, as she pointed out, '*I did not practise any useful writing for my daily life in this course'*.

In brief, it seemed the genre's theory was not clear or comprehended by most of the EFL writing teachers of this study. They were not aware of the importance of this theory and how to teach it to their students or how it works. They seemed to be also unaware of the importance of teaching their students how to structure different types of writing and use it appropriately in different social contexts. The participants of this research were seriously struggling to differentiate between writing types and how to communicate with different audiences in EFL writing.

Revising

Reviewing involves reading the developing text, evaluating the text, and editing errors. In reviewing the writer tries to adopt the potential reader's point of view, (Kellogg, 1994, p. 28). According to Kroll (1990, p. 132, 134) teaching L2 writing should be based on topical structural analysis as a revision tool for L2 students to improve their L2 writing 'in terms of the coherence of their writing, and force evaluate the function of each sentence in light of the main discourse topic' by using the drafting method. In this study, the revising theme was identified from coding grouped together into two sub-codes. They were: proof-reading and editing. I will write about each of them in some detail:

Proof-reading and editing are two different sub-processes: Proof-reading is an internal process and the editing is an external process done by correcting the errors of the text. Proof-reading and editing simply mean that the writer re-reads, checks, and corrects the written text, (Hayes and Flower, 1980). Editing might occur at any time during the writing process, and done properly it needs a highly cognitive resource to identify and diagnose errors. Noticeably, L2 writers focus in their revision on the local errors of their text, as in grammar, spelling and structure, and less attention is given to the ideas and the organization of the text, (Hyland, 2003). This refers to their accumulative experiences in learning and teaching L2 writing.

In the findings of this study, Abeer, Donyia, Amal, Nouryia, Ayah, Maha, Asmah, and Onood all claimed they were focusing in their revision on the local errors as in grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Abeer for example, pointed out, *'I mostly focus on spelling and punctuation, and the most important issue that our teacher used to focus on was the punctuation'.* Nouryia said she used to revise, as she observed, *'spelling, and grammar'.* Nouryia reported that she was doing exactly what her teachers asked her to do, as she emphasized, *'I used to do exactly what my advanced writing teacher told me, and advised me to do'.* She used to be very worried when she revised her EFL writing because, as she described, *'mistakes means"zero" to my teacher'.*

Donyia and Maha claimed in their revision they would compare their writing with the list of criteria that they got from their teacher, as for example Donyia described, *'My teacher gave us a list of ten writing points that we should use when we revise, e.g. coherence, cohesion, unity, font, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, punctuation and etc…*

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our teacher talked about these criteria in our classroom'. Apparently, Donyia said she used to focus in her revision on the local errors and ignore the global issues, as for example she described, *'In my revision I add 'the', full stop, or comma or how much my topic sentence was correct, not every sentence should be used as a topic sentence, and I should know how to use a conclusion, how to use proper sentences for the topic sentences and for the conclusion'.* In their classroom they noted that they used to focus on the syntactic and lexical issues, as Donyia claimed, *'We worked out some exercises about the unity of the paragraph, we have taken two kinds of paragraphs, one was unified and the second one was not'.*

In contrast, Asmah said her EFL writing teacher did not explain to them how to use each of the ten writing criteria clearly, as she claimed, *'My teacher explained the meaning of each criteria by giving us the definition only'.* Asmah added, *'She did not practise with us how to use each criteria in our writing,... no serious teaching and training...it was a quick explanation'.* Asmah confirmed*, 'I do not know how to use the cohesion for example... I did not know what cohesion is'.* Asmah claimed that her teacher wanted them to do the work without providing them with the proper assistance, as she indicated, *'Our teacher wanted us to do our own research in order to know everything by ourselves through using the internet'.* She also believed, *'that way of teaching was not right and caused our problem in writing'.* She also stated that teachers, *'must help us to revise better'* because, as she pointed out, *'the way of teaching was negatively influencing our grades'.* It was clear that their teachers' emphasis was on grading more than developing their students' writing fluency.

To conclude, apparently most students in this research claimed they used to revise for their local (syntactic and lexical) errors, because their teachers used to play the role of error detectors and ignored meaning-making. They said when most participants revised, their concern was mostly focused on the accuracy of their writing because their teachers' emphasized writing with no errors and getting high grades more than writing fluently.

Peers' feedback

Teaching and learning EFL writing significantly depends on the use of writing as a social behaviour. In the academic setting, peers' feedback helps L2 students interact with others in writing and be exposed to different readers. Peers' feedback creates social

interaction for the students in their classroom and increases their readers' understanding of good writing, offering an additional framework to develop writing skills and accuracy and improve their L2 writing first drafts.

From the findings of this study, the code *Peers' feedback* was created from the two sub-codes: assessment feedback, and collaborative writing. A brief definition is given to the peers' feedback theme and coding based on students' comments for this particular study:

Peers' feedback: Sub-coding	Definition
Peers' feedback	This refers to comments about collaborative peers' reviewing of each others' work.
• Assessment feedback	This refers to comments about the evaluating feedback that peers give to each others' work.
• Collaborative writing	This refers to comments about sharing writing in group work.

Table (7. 3) The definition of each code within the conceptual theme of Internal Factors

Peers' feedback: Sub- themes	Number of comments	Number of students represented
• Assessment Feedback	30	6
• Collaborative Learning	33	10

Table (7. 4) The frequency of references to each code and the number of students represented in that code

I will discuss each of these conceptual themes in turn, describing each of the codes which constituted that theme and discuss what each theme reveals about Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of L2 writing.

Assessment feedback: Peers' feedback takes a number of different forms and occurs 'at various stages in the writing process', and in groups of two, three or more. Peers' assessment happens when students exchange their 'first drafts and give their comments to each others' work before they revise them', (Hyland, 2003, p. 200).

In the finding of this study, six participants indicated that they work with their peers and they provided feedback to their work in their EFL writing classroom activities. They reported their feedback was focused on local errors as for example, on the sentence level, as in choosing appropriate vocabulary, structure, and grammar. Ayha for example said she worked with her peers, as she described, '*I had the chance to see my peers' writing quality, their writing experience, their style, grammar, and capital letters… I gave them my feedback according to my knowledge that I learned in my high and*

secondary schools'.   Noha is another participant who pointed out that, '*my peers corrected my writing and I corrected their writing… and I learned new vocabularies that I did not know before, and also grammar. The good thing about that experience, I was introduced to my peers' writing standard'*. She said working with peers helped her in distinguishing styles of writing, as she describes, '*it was helpful to distinguish between the style of writing a story and other writing types'*. Noha used to ask her EFL writing teacher for her assistance, as she stated, '*If we did not know anything we used to ask our teacher… it was helpful to discuss things with our teacher and take her feedback and discuss our writing with each other'*. For her, '*that experience was very helpful'*, because, as she argued, '*we used to discuss the work together and learn from each other before we started writing our topic'*. Noha claimed providing their peers and teachers' feedback was a positive experience for her, as she indicated*, 'it was lovely, and I have been waiting for this similar experience to happen again'*. Interestingly, Noha noted that she also used to work with her peers not only inside her classroom but they used to share their feedback outside the classroom, as she indicated, '*one of my peers in Year 4 used to read my work and give me her feedback and sometimes I explain to my peers some issues that they did not understand from our teacher, for example, I helped them to write a story about 8-year old girl, I added some events to their story, I corrected their grammar, and sentences… and I showed them how to finish the story'*.

The participants of this study believed that peers' feedback was used to provide their peers with their evaluation of their writing accuracy. For example, Abeer indecated she used to evaluate her peers' work, as she claimed, '*students' paragraphs were weak, and not suitable'*. Not only that, but she also suggested, '*If I were the teacher, I would choose the best paragraphs only for our classroom discussion'*. Ayha also, as she stated, '*We correct each others' errors, or discuss what was wrong with my peers' writing…even if my peers' errors were simple, it will influence their final writing piece negatively'*. But Noha said, '*It was difficult for me to realize what was wrong with my peers' writing'*. However, Noha preferred her teachers' feedback, as she described, '*my peers' feedback to my writing was not similar to my teacher's feedback'*. She used to feel more comfortable to ask some of her trustful (expert) peers only, as she indicated, '*Some of my peers who were in my class, used to live abroad and went to American schools, so I used to ask them about my errors, and they used to help me'*. This finding seems to support what Villamil and de Guerrero (1996) illustrate: in peers' discussion,

students' interactions mostly take on a role of authoritative reviewers, they evaluate and prescribe each others' work. Conner and Asenavage (1994) confirm that peers' feedback has a limited influence on L2 writers' work for different reasons: L2 writers tend to focus mostly on the surface changes in their revision practices. Students of this research claimed themselves are not convinced about the quality of their peers' feedback due to their poor proficiency and they prefer feedback from their writing teachers. Thus, L2 writing teachers should provide L2 learners with a sheet of indirect instructions to assist them to review each others' work and to keep learners' focus on certain aspects of writing track and genre plans, (Hyland, 2003).

In the other hand, peers' feedback was relaxing for some participants of this research. They used to feel more comfortable to ask their peers than their teachers. For example, Asmah, as she stated, '*I did not like to ask my writing teacher… I do not know why… she sometimes used to give me a negative impression'*. Noha also reported, as she described, '*I ask my peers first, because I feel sometimes hesitating to hand in my writing assignment directly to my teacher'*. Students are able to learn while receiving feedback from their peers actively in a non-threatening situation, (Medonca and Johnson, 1994)

However, Amal, Donyia, Nouryia and Sarah claimed they never received any feedback from their peers as their teachers did not encourage them to work together. As Amal, for example, describes, '*We did not work with our peers, my teacher did not want us to talk to each other in the classroom, even if I wanted to ask one of my peers, my teacher did not allow me to talk… she used to say, "Do not talk to each other"' *. Amal added, '*even if I wanted to use my dictionary… she said, "Do not use the dictionary, you are wasting your time"'*. However, Amal said her teacher could not stop her from asking her peers, as Amal claimed,*' But I did not listen to my teacher, I used to ask my peers, for example, I used to ask them about the meaning of any difficult vocabulary'*. The reason Amal insisted to ask her peers was, as she indicated*, 'They help me a lot, it is very helpful, sometimes if I need to know the meaning of some difficult words, they help me'*. Mendonca and Johnson (1994) point out, ESL writers make some use of their peers' feedback in their revision. Therefore, their interactions and suggestions are important aspects for their revision.

To summarize the findings of peers' feedback, the majority of the students of this study claimed they used to exchange their work with each other and provided their feedback. In their feedback they said they used to focus on the accuracy of the language, such as syntactical and lexical issues, more than focusing on the fluency and the meaning of their peers' writing. It seemed their teachers played a major role in encouraging their students to write accurately more than fluently. They reported their teachers would play the role of error detector more than facilitator. Thus, the majority of the students here claimed they were struggling to write and communicate in EFL. A few participants indecated their peers' feedback was helpful because they had the opportunity to see each others' errors, writing style and learning some new vocabulary. On the contrary, the majority of the participants said their peers' feedback was not helpful because they did not have the confidence in their peers' EFL writing knowledge, and they trusted their teachers' feedback.

Collaborative writing in EFL classrooms is formed in group or pair works. Writing involves more than just linguistic characteristics, it is social and cognitive processes. In collaborative writing, learners develop communicative skills in a non-threatening environment. Writing in groups or pairs in the L2 writing classroom contexts creates a social interaction environment for the L2 students. Collaborative writing provides the opportunity for L2 writers to organize their ideas appropriately and set a clear goal for their texts. Thus, collaborative writing encourages L2 learners to produce successful writing texts, better than learning grammar and vocabulary, (Reid, 1993).

The students in this research, for example, Nouryia, Sarah, Donyia, Amal, Abeer and Onood said they had a negative experience about their group works. Nouryia for example, claimed, *'We used to discuss some exercises in our groups'*. Her EFL writing teacher, as she pointed out, *'used to say, "You have five minutes to work out these exercises"'*. However, she noted, she has practised just once writing a paragraph, as Nouryia illustrated, *'We had once a paragraph, and we worked together in groups to fill in the gaps of the paragraph with the appropriate punctuations'*. Nouryia felt sorry about her experiences in the EFL writing classroom because, as she described, *'We practised just punctuation, we never did any actual writing in group'*. Onood emphasised that group work was useless, as she described, *'In the groups we do not feel that we actually work as a group... it was called a group work, but actually, no group work, each student did her own work individually'*. Because they used to, as Onood

confirmed, *'work out some exercises for ten minutes… fill in the gaps, that kinds of exercises, as in joining words for example, 'therefore', 'at the beginning', and 'firstly'.* Sometimes they had been asked by their teacher to read a paragraph and answer its questions, as she claimed, *'We read and comprehend the content of the paragraph… and usually one or two students used to answer the comprehensive questions of the paragraph'.* Onood was disappointed about their group work, as she stated, *'In the group work we did not do any useful work'.*

Some participants of this research did practise group work, for example, Maha, Asmah, Noha, Ayha; and Maha described, *'We work together, our teacher used to divide us into groups, each group has four students, and in our group we used to share and discuss our work… for example, our teacher used to give us a topic sentence and ask us to write the supportive sentences for that topic sentence… each student should produce a sentence of her own, and the content of her sentence should go well with the topic sentence'.* Asmah also, as she illustrated, *'I remember in one group work, we have been asked by our teacher to write a brochure for the new coming students, our teacher wanted us to write some guidelines to help those students to adapt easily in this college… for example, giving them some advice, what do we think they should do and they should not?… we divided the work between us,… we altogether designed the brochure, for example, one student draw the logo, another student designed it and then a third student typed it, finally we gave it to our teacher for her feedback'.*

In each group there used to be a leader, as Asmah for example pointed out, *'My teacher used to choose a leader for each group… she used to choose the good students to lead their groups… she also used to ask the leaders in some occasion to choose her group members'.* The job of the leader was, as Maha said, *'to choose the best supportive sentences and write them down into a paragraph with the group members'.* Students used to share their writing, as Maha emphasized, *'Each student used to share the writing paragraph, by giving her own supportive sentence…and we used to discuss our work until we all agreed what ideas we shall write in our paragraph, also, we used to correct each other's work during our discussion'.* This supports what Reid (1993) illustrates, that it is helpful for each learner to have a role and contribution in the group work. The role of their teacher was, as Maha stated, *'Our teacher used to select the best supportive sentences, and ask us to write a paragraph about it'*, and, *'Our teacher used to walk around the class to see each student's work… sometimes she used to ask if*

anyone would like to ask or share her work with the whole class'. During group works, the role of L2 writing teachers is to mediate and facilitate their students' learning processes by assisting them to generate ideas and set goals for their communicative EFL writing.

The advantages of group work, as Maha pointed out, is: *'From my experience, I think working in groups is helpful ... there is no time-consuming* [wasting], *the time is used wisely for learning'.* Noha claimed group work was also helpful, as she illustrated, *'Yes, it was helpful, especially when we used to do it before our final draft before grading'.*

The findings of the collaborative writing factor of this research indicated that most participants claimed they did not practise efficient group work. They reported they used to practise some grammatical or vocabulary exercises in their groups, but out of their whole written contexts. Group work for most of the participants was not helpful because they believed they had not practised any real writing. On the other hand, the participants who said that they practiced group work and believed it was helpful, in fact were also mostly practising some isolated exercises rather than writing meaningful and communicative writing. They used to practise, for example, how to write accurately a topic sentence or supportive sentences. Their group practices therefore were not efficient and it was form-focused rather than content-focused. Students need to be taught how to initiate, negotiate, and generate ideas for their EFL text.

To conclude, there was no efficient group or pair working in the participants' writing classrooms to help students interact and negotiate their meaning with others in EFL writing contexts. They claimed most of their teachers used to focus on practising isolated exercises for grammar or vocabulary and that meaning-making was ignored. The lack of efficient collaborative writing practices in EFL classrooms impacts negatively on the writing fluency of the students and their motivation to revise and improve their writing in general, as Savova et al (1991, p. 13) state, 'The feeling of positively contributing to the successful achievement of a task, typical for group work, increases students' motivation to learn, fosters learners' allegiance to each other, and stresses the value of every learner's contribution to the learning process… Their need to teach others causes them to seek assistance that results in peer-teaching and problem-solving strategies'.

Teacher's Feedback

Teacher's feedback is an interactive process that occurs between the teacher (transmitter of message) and the student (the receiver's response to the message). Teacher's feedback on a first draft provides an opportunity for the writer to see how others respond to his/her work and learn from their comments. Teacher's efficient feedback is 'encouraging the development of the students' writing', (Hyland, 2003, p.177). It is encouraging the process of writing and re-writing; where the text is not seen as self-controlled but directed forward to other tasks students will write. In the finding of this study, the code *Teachers' feedback* was created to cover the four sub-codes, encouraging and motivating students to revise, teacher's oral feedback, teacher's feedback for the task problem, and teacher's feedback for the purpose of assessing students' EFL writing. A brief definition is given to each theme and coding based on students' comments for this particular study:

Teacher's Feedback: Theme and sub-themes	Definition
Teacher's Feedback	This refers to comments about teacher's response to students' written drafts.
• Encouraging and Motivating students to revise	This refers to comments about the clarity and the effectiveness of teacher's feedback on students drafts.
• Teacher's Oral feedback for common errors of students' writing.	This refers to comments about teacher's discussing students' EFL writing common errors in the classroom.
• Task Problem feedback	This refers to comments about types of errors the teacher usually focuses on in students' written tasks.
• Writing Assessment	This refers to comments about evaluative criteria used by the writing teacher to assess students' writing.

Table (7.5) The definition of each code within the conceptual theme of teacher's feedback

Teacher's Feedback: Codes	Number of Comments	Number of students represented
• Encouraging and Motivating students to revise	53	6
• Teacher's Oral feedback for common errors of students' writing	12	6
• Task Problem feedback	31	8
• Writing Assessment	24	6

Table (7.6) The frequency of references to each code and the number of students represented in that code

I will discuss the teacher's feedback conceptual theme, and describe each of the codes which constituted that theme and discuss what this theme reveals about Kuwaiti student-teachers' perceptions of methods of teaching EFL writing.

Encouraging and motivating students to revise*:* Effective teacher's feedback improves students' writing and motivation. Writing teachers must ensure that the student receives the message clearly and accurately from their feedback. It is important for the writing teacher to choose appropriate words to increase the accuracy of transmission feedback, and to produce the desired changes in the student's behaviour in the style the teacher intended. Seven participants of this research described their teachers' feedback differently. Four participants, for instance, confirmed their teacher's feedback was not helpful, and vague, and did not encourage them to revise their writing. As for example, in Asmah, Nouryia, Ayah and Maha's case, they claimed that they did not receive clear and accurate feedback from their teachers for their EFL writing. Ayha for example, stated *'My teacher used to give us her feedback… but it was not helpful',* and Asmah illustrated that her EFL writing teacher, '*Used to underline or circle my mistakes*', and *'sometimes, she puts just "wrong" without saying why it was wrong, and other times she did not write any comments, thus, we should go and ask her to find out what was wrong with our writing'.* Asmah was, as she described, *'not sure, what was the problem with my writing, was it me or my teacher, I could not understanding the comments well because her feedback was not clear to me'.* Her teacher's feedback, as Asmah described, *'will be helpful, if the student asked the teacher about those underlined and circled comments',* however*, 'if the student was not interested to ask her teacher, she will not be able to know what was wrong with her writing'.* Asmah said that their teachers used to depend on the students themselves to realize what was wrong with their writing, as she argued, *'It was mostly based on self-learning strategy'.* Interestingly, Asmah illustrated that her teacher was not helpful and she did not feel comfortable to ask her teacher about her ambiguous comments, as she said, *'If I decided to ask my teacher, I wished I did not ask her… she was a good teacher but at the same time, she makes you feel that she does not like you, so I was always hesitating to ask her'.* As a result, Asmah confirmed, *'I did not learn anything from her comments'.* Not only that, but Asmah was not motivated to revise her drafts, as she described, *'I used to look at it only'.*

Donyia is another participant who claimed she received different kinds of feedback from her teacher, as she claimed, *'For grammar, unity, font, vocabulary'*. She indicated that her teacher's feedback was *'helpful'*, because *'it opened my eyes to things I did not know before'*. She said her teacher's feedback, as she highlighted, *'was good not only for my grades but also to know my errors'*. Obviously, from her comments it was clear that she noted, feedback that emphasised error detection and getting high grades helped with improving EFL writing fluency.

In contrast, Abeer and Noha reported they have not received any feedback from their writing teacher, as Abeer for example stated, *'No written comments, I did not know what was wrong with my sentences'*, because as she claimed, *'my teacher took our assignment's papers and he did not return them back to us…still with him since last term'*. Abeer said her teacher's behaviour was, as she pointed out, *'not helpful… I wanted to know my errors… I have not seen them yet'*. Abeer specifically, *'wanted to know how to narrow down my topic'*. She claimed her teacher was not helpful but making fun of her when she tried to realize what was wrong with her writing, as she claimed, *'When we went to his office, he looked down to us and kept saying "right… right… it was not your fault… it was the Ministry of Education's fault"'*. Abeer and her peers confirmed their teacher's reaction to their right to learn prevented them to go to his office and ask for help or for their assignment' papers, as Abeer claimed, *'If we went and ask him, he would repeat the same words to us again and again'*.

Briefly saying, the teachers' feedback of this study was mostly unclear, ambiguous, form-focused, not motivating students to revise, and did not help them improve their EFL writing fluency. Their teachers' feedback turned most of the students to feel disappointed and worried about their EFL writing future. In the classroom, it seemed they used to practise what their teachers asked them to focus on; the form of the language and meaning was ignored. However, from the comments of most participants, they felt seriously struggling in EFL writing. This is strongly suggestive that their teachers' feedback was not efficient and helpful for their writing fluency. Most of the students did not respond or revise their writing because they did not know what to do, and this is supporting what Wlodkowski (1999) illustrates about the influence of effective teacher's feedback on students' writing progress. Effective feedback should be immediate, frequent and positive and increase students' motivation to write because

they can assess their progress, correct their errors efficiently, attain encouragement from teachers, self-assess their work, and continue their efforts toward practical goals.

***Oral Feedback*:** Teachers' oral feedback for students' common errors was raised by six participants of this study. For example, Abeer said she has not received any written comments for her EFL writing assignment in her basic writing course but she did receive some oral feedback from her teacher at the advanced writing level. She believed her teacher's feedback was basically focused on errors, as she pointed out, *'Our teacher for the advanced writing course used to give us the chance to ask her in the classroom about our assignment's errors'.* Abeer claimed that experience, *'was useful',* because it helped her *'to see her peers' errors'.* Apparently, she used to play the role of evaluator, as she highlighted*, 'However, their paragraphs were weak'.* Noha also confirmed that, *'Our teacher used to discuss our common mistakes in our classroom'.* It seemed their teacher's feedback was basically focused on correcting their errors more than writing fluency and meaning-making, as she described, *'Each of us used to know what was wrong with her sentences'.* Noha stated, *'Our teacher explained to us how to correct our mistakes',* and *'She used to read our paragraphs in the classroom, and she used to write our sentences on the board'.* For her that experience was positive, because her teacher, as she argued, *'came to me in the classroom to see my writing, she was trying to help me'.* Noha was happy about that experience, as she states, *'It was lovely, because our teacher worked with me individually, and corrected my supportive sentences that I had a problem with… she was trying to help me to improve my writing'.* Noha added, *'When I handed in that specific topic to my teacher, I got the highest grade in the class'.* However, Noha said she felt disappointed about her teacher because, as she indicated, '*my teacher has not repeated that experience again during the rest of the course'.* Ayah also agreed with what most of the participants believed about improving EFL writing through errors corrections, as she explained, *'My teacher used to choose from our written texts some common errors and write them on the board, and then she used to ask us to find out what was wrong with those paragraphs or she used to discuss our errors together'.* For Ayah, *'Even if my peers' errors were simple, I think, it will influence negatively their final writing piece'.* Thus, Ayha reported, her teacher's oral feedback, *'got my attention to my mistakes, especially grammatical errors, because we have a big problem with grammar'.* In addition, Asmah claimed her writing teacher also used to provide them with oral comments, as she described, *'One time my teacher*

returned our "Myself" topics except for four students. She kept their writing in order to read them for us, because their writing styles were good and beautiful'.

To conclude, there was no doubt that most of the teachers of this study according to their students' comments used to play the role of error detector in their written and oral feedback. They focused on the form of the language and ignored the content. Furthermore, writing EFL fluency for most of the teachers seemed to be pursued through getting high grades and correcting errors. Therefore, the students inherited what their teachers passed to them.

***Task problem feedback*:** Teachers' written feedback is highly valued by second language writers, (F. Hyland, 2000). The nature of the task-problem feedback can be varied according to the writing teachers' preferences as well as the kind of writing text they have intended, and the influence they wish to make. There are a variety of feedback techniques that are used by writing teachers. But since errors of grammar are an obvious problem for L2 writers, it is not strange that L2 writing teachers may feel they should respond to the form of the language. Teachers respond to L2 students' writing as if they are language teachers rather than writing teachers, (Zamel, 1985).

In the finding of this study, Maha, Nouryia, Sarah, Abeer, Noha, and Ayah indicated that their writing teachers' feedback was mostly focused on the form of the language rather than on the content. For example, Maha said her teacher mainly used to focus in her feedback on, as she states, *'Vocabulary, not to repeat the same word again and again, she wanted us to use varieties of words for example, amazing instead of beautiful..etc'*, and on*, 'Grammar, how to write correct sentences , also, if I wanted to talk about yesterday, I should use the past tense… and in addition to spelling… she also would like to see my topic sentence in my paragraph… for example, when I described my last meal, I should have used a topic sentence and a conclusion'.*

Abeer used to receive oral feedback because her teacher used not to return her written text, as she mentioned before. Her teacher's oral feedbacks were mostly, as she illustrates, *'My teacher used to focus on the punctuation, spelling, but mostly punctuation'.* However, Sarah was another participant who claimed that her writing teacher, as she claimed, *'Used to focus on unnecessary issues'.* Sarah did not feel happy with the changes her writing teacher used to make to her writing, as she explained, *'My teacher crossed out one of my sentences and he told me, "This is*

wrong", and he re-wrote it in the board in his way'. She felt, as she indicated, *'The changes he made to my sentence were not necessary at all… they did not make any difference to the meaning of the sentence, for example, I wrote the word, 'strange', he changed it to 'weird' … I think his change did not add anything new to my sentence'*. The reason made Sarah not convinced about her teacher's comments because, as she illustrated, *'my writing was acceptable'*. Therefore, she claimed her teacher, as she described*, 'used to make things more difficult… he used to ask us to work out some issues* [but] *he never showed us how to do them…for example, if one of the paragraphs was not important, he would like us to use dash before and dash after the sentence… for us, it was new thing to know , and we did not know anything about using dash before and dash after the sentence'*. Furthermore, Onood supported what Sarah pointed out, as she indicated, *'Sometimes my teacher used to change some words and replace them with others with no real need for that'*. Most of the teachers' feedback on the students' writing assignment seemed to be inefficient from the point of views of the participants. Their teachers used to focus on some un-influential and isolated grammatical and vocabulary issues that did not help their students' writing fluency.

Assessment feedback: L2 writing teachers' feedback for assessment purposes refers to L2 writing teachers' responses to L2 students' written texts, for the purpose of evaluation. According to Grabe and Kaplan, (1996, p. 396) writing assessment occurs in two contexts: 'Classroom context, and standardized testing context'. The classroom context focuses on the product of the text, as in the organization and the ideas of the text. Standardized testing tests students' writing proficiency (the form of the L2 language) as in grammar, vocabulary, and structure. Grading is the most common technique for writing evaluation. Whereas evaluation for writing does not necessarily need grading, there are different kinds of assessment technique, as in writing portfolios, drafting, long project report, and essays, (Hyland, 2003).

The findings of this study showed that most of the participants (Ayah, Maha, Abeer, Onood, Noha, Asmah) admitted that their EFL writing teachers used to evaluate their EFL writing by grading. Ayah for example, indicated, *'My teacher used to take the grade of the final draft'*, and also, Maha, described, *'Our teacher used to take our assignments with her and return them back with her grades and comments… she usually takes the highest grade out of the five assignments.'* Maha said her writing teacher was, as she claimed*, 'Not fair enough, she is very tough. .. very… very… tough',* and *'we are*

always afraid of her, she makes us worried and scared of her, she used to scare us a lot by keep saying, "Remember my words, you will get zero automatically, if I see any mistakes"'. Maha added*, 'Mistake means to her: zero'.* Her teacher's words made Maha and her peers revise their writing many times, as she described, '*We keep revising our writing many times, 1, 2, and 3 times'* because she was scared to make errors and get low grades because grading was the only method they had for their writing assessment. They reported their writing teacher used to grade their EFL writing against a list of criteria that was given to each student and should be attached to each assignment, as she confirmed*, 'There is no one-to-one discussion, or portfolio, but, with each writing assignment we must attach a sheet with specific criteria that our teacher used to grade our writing against'.*

Noha also supported what Maha described about her EFL writing teacher's evaluation, as she pointed out, *'My teacher graded our assignments according to the midterm and final exams… the grading system of our teacher* [name of the teacher] *was tough … she wanted us to be perfect from the first assignment… that was very difficult for me'.* Noha added, *'Our teacher did not use to talk to any student in one-to-one meeting to tell her what was wrong with her writing'.* Abeer said the assessment that was used by her teacher was confusing and not valid, as she claimed, *'Our teacher asked us to write on a topic… before the mid-term exam, we were not sure what to revise, or what the exam will be about'.* Accordingly, most of the students decided, as Abeer illustrated, *'They* [students] *memorized the only introduction that our teacher discussed in the classroom, and then they copied it in their exam'.* Whereas it can be argued that Abeer claimed the memorizing strategy helped them get some grades, which was better than nothing, as she argued, *'All the students would have just a quarter mark, not a full mark'.* She felt that her teacher was not fair because, as she emphasized, '*our teacher did not practise this type of writing with us before'.*

Overall, the comments of the participants of this study reflected that all their EFL writing teachers used to assess their students' writing through grading and exams. Interestingly, some participants claimed their teachers used to assess their writing by asking them to write in their exams, whereas in their EFL writing classroom, they never practised any actual writing. Their teachers never helped them or showed them how to write. The participants said they were unhappy about the methods of evaluating their writing in general and they would like to see more alternatives. Hyland (2003, p. 212)

emphasizes, 'Writing assessment is not simply a matter of setting exams and giving grades. Scores and evaluative feedback contribute enormously to the learning of individual students and to the development of an effective and responsive writing course… understanding of assessment procedures is necessary to ensure that teaching is having the desired impact and that students are being judged fairly'.

Summary

Student-teachers in this study highlighted that pre-writing activities were not practised in their classroom. They claimed their teachers did not practice efficient planning activities to help them to generate information for their writing. They reported they used to depend on their prior knowledge for their EFL writing. They said they needed to practise meaning-making and improve their EFL vocabulary and grammar. In addition, they reported they needed their teachers to provide them with the opportunity to choose their topics and write about topics from their interests, or that would be useful for their future careers and social life. The participants claimed their teachers did not link between the classroom and writing at home. They indecated also that their teachers used to encourage error correction in their feedback and ignore meaning-making. For them, their teachers' feedback was not clear or efficient. They would struggle to understand what their teachers wanted them to do. Thus, they used to ignore them and would not respond to their comments. Furthermore, the student claimed some of their teachers used some negative oral feedback that did not motivate them to improve their writing but the opposite; prevented them from writing and turned them into anxious writers. Most students of this study stated that they did not practise any efficient collaborative writing as they said their teachers used to ask them to work out some isolated syntactical and lexical exercises. In their group work the students' role was to correct each others' errors.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Conclusion and Implications for Policy, Practice and Research

The findings of the interviews with ten EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers who were majoring in English at one of the higher educational colleges in Kuwait highlighted a number of issues about how EFL student-teachers look at themselves as EFL writers, and how they perceive teaching EFL writing in their college. While the respondents of this research were happy to major in English as they loved the language, they discussed the factors that they believed affected their teaching and learning EFL writing and their perceptions of EFL writing. The impacts of teaching and learning EFL writing practices were discussed at length as well as the influence of those practices on their perceptions of EFL writing competency. As all the participants of this research believed EFL writing was important for them, they were interested to improve their writing competency. The findings showed that most of the participants of this study had a strong belief in the value of EFL writing; however, their self-efficacy was low in EFL writing because of their classroom teaching and learning EFL writing practices. They did not have confidence in their EFL writing abilities, and they believed they were poor writers. This low self-efficacy led to them to being anxious writers. They used to ask for help from experts in EFL writing, to translate from L1 to L2, and they did not have confidence to show their writing to anyone other than their teachers. In addition, they had difficulty interacting in EFL writing with different audiences in their real life. They felt teaching and learning EFL writing practices were not efficient and did not help them improve their writing quality. However, they decided to continue their major in English while expressing frustrations over what they saw as inefficient teaching and learning practices and a lack of trust and faith in their ability to be fluent.

It is understandable that as no two student-teachers are the same, no two student-teachers' teaching and learning EFL writing experiences will be exactly the same, and therefore it is to some level impossible to generalize students' perceptions about themselves. This research highlighted the significance of not endeavouring to create one objective reality but to recognize the value of an individual's perception of that reality, what Cohen et al (2006, p.3) state, 'How we view our world(s), what we take understanding to be, and what we see as the purpose of understanding'. The aim of this

study is to understand the perceptions of the EFL Kuwaiti student-teachers to teaching and learning EFL writing practices and how they look at themselves as EFL writers.

There were some important challenges which all participants in this research experienced and thus were able to discuss. The student-teachers of this study were seriously lacking in confidence in writing in EFL; EFL teaching practices for writing need to address more explicitly the writing process; and the role of the EFL writing teachers needed to be re-conceptualised.

1. The Significance of Writing Anxiety

> *Anxious individuals think about their own reaction to a task in addition to the demands of the task itself. The content of their thoughts is negative and centred on self-degradation….If anxious students could focus on positive experiences in the second language, rather than on negative ones, the debilitating effects of language anxiety could be reduced.* (McIntyre and Gardner, 1991, p. 297).

One leading theme that persists in the interviews with the student-teachers in this study is that they did not have confidence in their EFL writing and they felt scared, worried, confused, tired, unsatisfied, and hesitant when they started writing in EFL. Typical comments which reflect this include: *'I am not satisfied with my writing', 'I usually feel hesitant, not confident', 'I feel confused', 'I do not have the confidence to write',' I feel that I have got a headache', 'Writing in EFL makes me tired', 'It is difficult for me', 'I feel it is a burden',* and *'I am afraid to make any errors'.* From their responses it was clear that most of the student-teachers feel anxious about EFL writing. The data suggests that student perceptions of their low self-efficacy in writing may be strongly linked to these feelings of anxiety. A summary of these issues is outlined below:

- They claimed they were not effective EFL writers because they did not have the ability to express themselves in EFL writing.
- They claimed they were poor writers because of their low competency in grammar and vocabulary.
- They reported they were hesitant to show their writing to anyone other than their teachers.
- They said they were not satisfied with their EFL writing competency.
- They noted they would ask for help from an expert in EFL writing.
- They would feel scared and worried of making mistakes.

- They would feel that writing is difficult and a burden for them.
- They claimed that, since they moved to this college they had become pessimistic about their EFL writing future.

Writing self-efficacy is defined by McCarthy, Meier & Rinderer (1985) as students' evaluation of their own writing skills. In addition, Pajares (1996) and Zimmerman (2000a) defined self-efficacy as a cognitive construct that reflects students' beliefs and self-judgments about their ability to achieve at a certain level and influences their opinion of activities, effort, and performance. Writing is a very difficult skill to be acquired and is feared by EFL students, (Gupta, 1998). Apparently most of the participants here have low self-efficacy in terms of their EFL writing abilities. Although the majority of them had been learning EFL writing for more than twelve years, they felt they still did not have the ability and the confidence to write accurately and fluently in EFL. Their low self-efficacy prevented most of them from practising writing in EFL. There is a strong relationship between high self-efficacy and writing competency, (McCarthy, Meier, & Rinderer 1985). Research suggests that if students feel anxious about writing, their self-efficacy reports tend to be negative (Daly & Wilson, 1983; Onwuegbuzie, 1998).

Interestingly, the low self-efficacy of the student-teachers here did not influence their decision to continue their study in English major, or enrol in a programme which required writing; all of the participants were motivated to carry on with the English major in spite of all the difficulties they faced. They loved the language, as some of them highlighted, *'I love English, and I do not wish to change my major, but I am not satisfied with my writing level',* and another student confirmed*, 'I love the language, and I like teaching it'.* Interest is one of the motivational factors that has an influential positive result on students' cognitive performance and successful experience (Hidi, Renninger, & Krapp, 2004; Schiefele, 1998, 2001). However, 'research has been equivocal on how interest can best be utilized to improve writing performance', (Hidi & Boscolo & 2006, p. 146). In fact, the desire of the participants to continue their English major in spite of their low self-efficacy in EFL writing is contradicting what Daly and Miller (1975) found in their study, that anxious students failed to attend class when writing tasks were due and they did not enrol in courses where writing was required. The motivation of the participants to continue their major in a programme which involved EFL writing courses might be referred to different motives, for example, the

importance of EFL writing for their future careers and social life, the low L1 writing fluency of some students, planning to continue their higher studies, find more professional work alternatives, or a desire to teach EFL.

The student-teachers here attributed their low self-efficacy in EFL writing to the classroom teaching and learning practices. They claimed most of their EFL writing teachers used to teach them isolated and out of context grammatical and vocabulary exercises in pre-writing activities because the teachers believed that writing is learned through teaching grammar and structure. They gave more emphasis to students' local errors (grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation) and ignored the global errors (content and meaning) of their texts. This method of teaching caused most of the participants to feel anxious when they write because they were scared of making grammatical or structural errors, as one of them pointed out: *'I feel it is a burden, I must write correctly because if my writing is wrong, I will be punished. I am afraid to make any errors, and feel worried that my writing will be wrong'.* According to the relevant literature students with high anxiety feel writing is unrewarding or punishing and that feeling is reflected negatively in their perceptions towards writing fluency, (Daly & Shamo, 1978)

Another student noted, *'Our teachers criticize all the time our grammar and it seems there is no solution for this problem, I feel it is difficult for me to be fluent'.* Selfe (1985) found that writers with high anxiety focus more on their mechanical errors than the meaning of their writing. The writing of highly-anxious students tends to be less focused, lower in quality, and less competent in syntactic structure (Daly, 1977, 1978). For these students, the teachers' focus on grammatical accuracy is likely to be contributing to their sense of low self-efficacy and writing anxiety.

Most of the participants said that their EFL writing teachers were often dictatorial, authoritarian, providing negative written and verbal feedback, encouraging high grades rather than learning writing fluency, and that they did not help them improve their EFL writing fluency, but turned them into more anxious EFL writers. Furthermore, they were error correctors more than learning facilitators. They focused on working out some syntactical and lexical exercises rather than generating meaningful tasks. Daly, Vangelisti & Witte, (1988) conducted two studies investigating the impact of teachers'

own writing anxiety on their classroom teaching practices. They found that teachers' writing anxiety had a negative influence on the students' written tasks. Highly anxious teachers seemed to be more bound by grammatical rules and mechanical structure. However, low anxiety teachers appeared to be less bound by strict rules and would stress creative expression and be more relaxed about mechanical structure. Anxious L2 writing teachers teach L2 writing through practising syntactical and lexical exercises and activities in their writing classroom which negatively influence their students' writing fluency. The reported behaviour of the teachers in this study suggests that they themselves may have writing anxiety.

The role of the writing teacher is very important in enlightening students' understanding and attitude toward writing, (Palmquist and Young, 1992). The role of L2 teachers in engaging students in learning is highly complex as the students' learning does not depend only on what the teacher does in the classroom, but on how the classroom communication is utilized. What teachers learn in their previous educational experiences is transformed greatly and subconsciously into their beliefs about 'how L2 are learnt and how they should or should not be taught', (Kubanyiova, 2006, p. 6). Atay & Kurt, (2006) found that most of prospective L2 writing teachers had high and average levels of anxiety because of their low proficiency in generating and organizing ideas for their L2 writing task, in addition to their negative teaching and learning experiences in L2 writing. This argument agrees with research in Kuwait which found that the linguistic standard of the EFL teachers in Kuwait and their quality of teaching is poor, Al-Mutawa (1997, 1992, 1994). Kuwaiti students' low EFL fluency in general is inherited from their negative EFL language-learning experiences, (Osman, 1996; Al-Mutawa, 1997; Al Edwani, 2005,). Therefore, EFL writing teachers of this study seemed to have writing anxiety because of their own low proficiency in EFL writing. Teachers' writing anxiety affects their practices, perspective and attitudes towards teaching L2 writing. Their students inherited their anxiety about EFL writing from their classroom teaching and learning practices.

In this research, there was another factor that influenced negatively the student-teachers' self-efficacy. The majority of the respondents said their low self-efficacy was caused by their teachers' negative feedback on the quality of their writing. For example, Noha stated:

'Because our teacher keeps giving me very low grades and bad feedback, and that makes me disappointed, of course, I will not be confident to write… Yes! I make errors when I write in English, but that does not give my teacher the right to give me a disappointing feedback. When my teacher told me "You are nothing, all you know from your previous schools is wrong, you know nothing", it was disappointing…I would like to learn from my errors to improve my writing, but not in that way… my teacher should help me reach my goal … it is nice, if I write something I know it and love it'.

Daly (1977) confirms that poor writers mostly have a history of receiving negative feedback from their teachers to their writing. Negative feedback does not seem to improve students' EFL writing abilities, but does seem to increase their level of writing apprehension. On the other hand, one of the participants in this study said she was confident in her EFL writing because of her positive experience with one of her previous teachers at one of the private universities in Kuwait, as she explained, *'My teacher used to ask me to delete the repeated or unimportant ideas from the text, I learned this when I was at the Australian University in Kuwait…I used to study Business Administration… My Irish teacher was a good English teacher, she was teaching me also another subject, and she used to give me her useful feedback on my writing and help me improve my writing quality'.* This participant did not experience writing anxiety because she claimed making errors was absolutely normal behaviour for learners. She saw making errors as part of the learning process: *'I write even if I know it will be wrong, to express myself, it is not shameful to make errors, I am learning and that's fine to have errors'.* However, she did feel that the way writing was taught in her current programme was less constructive, even though she felt teachers did not give helpful feedback or praise students' work.

Another participant in this research noted a good experience of positive feedback. She used to interact with some native speakers online. At the beginning she was scared to write or even speak with them for fear of making mistakes and that they might say that *'something was not correct'.* Interestingly, she received positive and encouraging feedback from her audience about her writing and speaking fluency. She stated that

they thought she was American. Since then, that positive experience had made this student-teacher confident to communicate more in EFL writing and speaking. She said her EFL writing had improved a lot since her audience praised her writing and speaking. Thus, she started to practise EFL writing and speaking more confidently.

 One strong finding in this study, therefore, is students' desire for positive feedback. All student-teachers, with no exceptions, wanted teachers to praise their work, instead of using negative feedback such as, *'You are bad writers', 'You do not know how to write at all',* or *'You write like children'.* Wiltse emphasizes that writing teachers 'may find ways to provide more useful comments to students that will result in improving their subsequent drafts'. Wilts adds that teachers 'might find that certain feedback can motivate low self-efficacy students to work harder towards improving. Or, they may reduce other types of comments to lower the apprehension some students may feel towards writing', (Wiltse, 2002, p.6). Formative assessment processes which give students more constructive feedback on what they have achieved and how they could improve their writing might support these learners in developing a stronger sense of self-efficacy.

The nature of the classroom writing task was another factor that influenced negatively many of the students' self-efficacy. Many reported they did not have the confidence to communicate with different audiences outside their classroom or to show their writing to anyone other than their teachers. They indicated their classroom tasks did not make any links between teaching and learning EFL writing and their real world experiences. Students who lack confidence in themselves or in their L2 writing ability may experience a fear of using writing for communication, (Tsui, 1996). Hassan (2001, p. 29) suggests that greater exploitation of the opportunities afforded by communication technology might generate greater confidence in authentic written communication. He recommends that 'students should be involved in more communicative writing tasks such as email exchange projects and other related CALL activities; there should be a greater availability of and access to Internet lab facilities'. However, the students in this study claimed their classroom writing tasks were exercises for the teacher and not purposeful written texts; this perception was strengthened by the fact that their teachers' feedback tended to focus on correction, not communication. This contrasts, of course, with the experience of the student of this study, noted earlier, who had used online

writing out-of-school and found that writing to authentic audiences was positive and motivating.

Collaborative learning might increase the student-teachers' self-confidence in EFL writing. Collaboration enhances many social, communication, negotiation, verbal, suggestion, and criticism skills, (Topping, 2000). Topping found that peer feedback has a positive impact on students' motivation through the sense of individual accountability and improving self-confidence. In group work students not only compose their own written texts but read and criticize texts written by their peers, and interact with each other to elaborate better text. 'Peer feedback also leads to a reduction in writer apprehension and an increase in writer confidence', (Kurt & Atay, 2007, p. 15). Kurt & Atay also found that 'the peer feedback group experienced significantly less writing anxiety than the teacher feedback group', (p.20). To conclude here, student-teachers of this research need to have more time on-task with communicative writing to build their confidence as writers.

2. Teaching practices need to more explicitly address the writing process

Writing processes

One dominant theme that persists in the interviews with the student-teachers that teaching practices tend to ignore the process of writing and focus more directly on grammar, vocabulary and written accuracy of the written product. The majority of the student-teachers believed their classroom teaching practices ignored the content of their writing and gave more emphasis to the form of their writing. Their teachers practised traditional EFL writing methods that mainly focused on the product rather than on how they were written. One participant in this study claimed, 'O*ur teacher gave us an exercise about classroom description',* whilst another student pointed out, *'We worked out two kinds of paragraphs, both were about unity',* and *'our teacher grouped us and asked us to discuss those words by using a thesaurus'.* Furthermore, *'our teacher taught us how to use the comma, when to use the question mark, semi-colon* [and such] *like that, not important things like actual writing'.*

 Form-focused or product-based methods basically emphasize teaching isolated syntactical and lexical exercises out of context. The role of the teachers in the product

approach is as Richard and Rodgers (2001) indicate, to control, monitor and correct their students' written products. There has been considerable debate about whether error feedback helps L2 student writers. The research in this field is inconclusive (Ferris, 2002; Ferris, 2003; Ferris & Roberts, 2001) because 'the previous studies on error correction are fundamentally incomparable because of inconsistencies in design; and existing research *predicts* (but certainly does not conclusively *prove*) positive effects for written error correction', (Ferris, 2004, p. 49). Truscott, (1996, 1999, 2004) took a strong position against error correction or grammar correction and he believes error correction is ineffective in assisting enhancement in students' writing and should be eliminated. Truscott (1996) encourages teachers of writing not to treat every linguistic category such as lexicon, morphology, and syntax equally because each of these categories needs different learning domains, learned through different writing processes. On the other hand, Ferris, (2004) argues that error correction feedback will 'help students and not distract or discourage' them if their teachers consider their 'needs, goals of their writing course and task'. In the present study there was strong evidence that teaching writing through grammar, syntax and vocabulary was not efficient for EFL students' writing because most of the participants strongly struggle when they write. The result confirmed that the role of the student-teachers was mainly focused on how to ensure that their writing product handled accurately the previously learned grammar and structure. For example Maha observed: *'Our teacher used to give us another paragraph with many errors, and we used to correct those errors with her, or she used to ask us to write a similar paragraph at home work'.* Thus, the student-teachers of this study's main concern was focused on formal linguistic accuracy (product) not on the content (meaning-making). They were more worried and scared about making local errors rather than focusing on how to generate and organize their information or how their texts were written. The reason behind the students' worries about making errors reflected their teaching methods. Their teachers used to grade their work at the end on the basis of how accurate their work was; the fewer errors they made, the better the grades they got. Their teachers used to spot their language errors and ignored the content and meaning of their writing. In this respect the role of the student-teachers here basically was more focused on how to respond to those stimuli and how to react to their teacher's request or feedback rather than how to create their own writing by planning their ideas and setting their goals. The finding confirmed Truscott's (1996, 1999, 2004) argument that teaching grammar was not helpful for the student-teachers' writing fluency, as they felt not only

they did not have the confidence to write fluently in EFL, but also they did not have the ability to produce correct sentences or paragraphs. This type of teaching method made them more pessimistic towards improving their writing fluency, and prevented them from being creative or taking initiative; as one participant reflected: *'There is no use of learning EFL, they keep criticizing and saying your grammar… grammar always, it seems this problem will not be solved at all'.*

When the researcher asked the participants in the interviews about how they would approach a writing task, most of the participants confirmed that they had no knowledge about the terms and procedures of the 'writing process'. Some of the participants wanted the researcher to tell them what subject they needed to write about, some others chose subjects that they had already written about it previously in their writing courses. In addition, the majority of them did not stop and think about their ideas or make any outline as a part of pre-writing process 'planning'. They just started right away talking about the grammatical and the structural form of the first sentence by speaking in their first language and translated it into EFL. Typical comments from participants are outlined below:

- *'Have you noticed that I started in Arabic, when I wanted to start writing in English, I started by looking for the proper words in English e.g. "Tassawaqe means shopping" … see, this is how I write in L2, I often start in Arabic, I write the sentence in Arabic, then I translate it word by word to English and then link between words to make the sentence. Using translating from Arabic to English is used by all students'.*

- *'I can write but not much, I do not know what are the writing rules. I have a problem with grammar… I do not like challenging words.'*

- *'I will write a topic sentence first then I will read it two or three times to ensure it is correct before I move to a new point. When I finished half of my writing, I go back and re-read it for errors deduction and then continue my writing step by step, not* [all at] *once.'*

- *'I have problem with putting down my ideas on paper… I write one idea here, and then another idea there, when I reached the conclusion, usually I found out that I need to re-write more about this idea and that idea… therefore, I mostly*

re-write everything all over again… the problem is I have the ideas in my mind, but I do not know how to organize them.'

- *'Firstly, I will think about how to write a topic sentence and how to differentiate it from the topic itself, what kinds of introduction I should use, there are three or five kinds… my basic writing teacher did not tell us about them. Then I need to link between the introduction, the body, and the conclusion.'*

The responses of the participants here showed strong evidence that most of them were not tutored in their basic and advanced writing courses to practise writing processes that emphasise generating and organizing ideas for their writing. They did not have any knowledge about the stages of the writing processes which start from pre-writing activities such as how to plan for meaning-making, how to draft their text, and how to diagnose their writing problems by revising and correcting for both the content and the form of the language.

The significance of pre-writing activities

As has been illustrated above, the emphasis on the form of the language in the teaching of writing means that students' concerns with what to write, the content, were often ignored. As a result, students were strongly struggling with the content and believed they lacked topic knowledge.

The pre-writing stage is the stage of meaning-making through generating ideas and getting started. It is the stage of defining the subject of the topic, generating information by note-taking and outlining, and connecting between the writing topic and other knowledge or experiences. It is an essential stage in the writing process, (Seow, 2002). The findings revealed that the participants claimed their pre-writing activities were inefficient. They confirmed their pre-writing practices were mostly focused on how to write accurately and not how to generate ideas for their topic by brainstorming and outlining. They reported these methods of teaching did not encourage them to use writing as a communicative means, due, as Zamel (1985) criticizes, to the fact that very often L2 writing teachers focus on language form because they consider themselves more as language teachers. Most of the participants' EFL writing teachers seemed to believe that writing is learned by mastering the grammar and structure of the second language. Accordingly, their students illustrated that the content in their pre-writing

activities was ignored by most of their teachers either because they underestimate the importance of preparation or because they basically do not know how to plan for writing. The way students of this study had been taught EFL writing had a negative impact on their writing competency. They indicated that they feel scared, worried, lost, and confused when they started writing because of the fear of making errors. They said their teachers would play the role of error detectors more than giving them the proper techniques of how to prepare for their writing. The participants claimed their teachers did not offer them any varieties of pre-writing techniques that meet their needs or assist them to be more organized in their ideas and fluent in writing. Students must have something to write about, purpose for writing, and setting goals for their readers, and knowledge that supports the topic. Pre-writing techniques help students to discover those elements and to link between their own knowledge and experiences and those of other writers, (Klatt, 1995).

Brainstorming, outlining, looping, cubing, and clustering; all of these are kinds of pre-writing techniques that teachers may use in their writing classrooms to enable their students to generate and organize ideas for their topic, including setting goals for their audiences. When teachers carefully explain pre-writing activities and how these techniques are strongly applied in their students' writing assignments, this might lead towards improving writing, (Eman, 2003). Interestingly, the finding of this study showed that all the participants strongly realized the importance of learning EFL writing for the local and international level including the importance of being fluent. However, they believed their teaching practices were far away from their needs for EFL writing in their real life. They reported they strongly had the desire to improve their EFL writing for their future careers and in their social communication, as they indicated, with emails and text messages. They claimed they have not been helped to be creative and independent writers inside and outside their classroom. Their methods of teaching were focused at the level of the sentence and meaning was ignored and their teachers should, as Hancock (2009, p. 201) suggests 'routinely value at the level of the whole text'. In L2 writing research, writing is not seen as an independent form of language but it is viewed as 'deeply context sensitive'. The form of the grammar and structure is shaped and constrained by the functions it serves including the social communication, (Langacker, 2008). Thus, it would be more helpful to give the participants the opportunity to choose their topics. They presented a strong desire for choosing their

writing topics (ownership). They emphasised that they were poor writers and they were struggling to pursue their writing because of the lack of topic knowledge. They would rather write about subjects they were knowledgeable about, from their own choice. On many occasions, they reflected, they used to stop writing because they did not know what to write. 'Writing processes should be mediated by the teacher at the level of the type of task and students' expectations as to the nature of the students', (Parks et al, 2005, p.255). The participants here were looking to learn writing that helps them in their social life, as Weijen argues, 'More content-oriented activities such as Goal setting, Structuring, and Generating appear to be positively related to L2 text quality when writers carry them out in their L2', (Weijen et al, 2009, p.248).

To summarize, the purpose of writing is not just practising explicitness and accuracy but it is always a response to a specific communicative situation, (Hyland, 2003). There is an interactive relationship between text plan and text content. Writers retrieve knowledge for their topics from the stored information in their long-term memory throughout the process of text planning. The generation of content during planning is interactively correlated with the content generation during translating. Thus, content-focusing is the process of transforming the conceptual thoughts into linguistic structure in a form of writing. Therefore, efficient planning can greatly reduce the cost of carrying out an action and help teachers think of their students, their needs, interest, and challenges and provide them with a framework for evaluation of successes and failures, (Richards & Lockhart, 1994). Successful writers are the one who were 'making more elaborate plans and spending more time' on-task, (Spivey and King, 1987, p.22). Resulting from this, practising efficient planning techniques that focused on content might help EFL writers to write better communicative texts for their real-world need.

Genre Writing Approach

The EFL writing curriculum in this Kuwaiti educational college was unclear about genres. Teachers do ask students to write different types of writing but the conceptual thinking underpinning genre theory is absent. Genre writing is 'socially recognised ways of using language', (Hyland, 2007, p.149). Genre theory offers helpful resources for L2 writing teachers to assist their students to write efficient and meaningful L2 text. The student-teachers of this study felt it was always difficult for them to write and identify the types of writing in EFL. They reported their teachers used to ask them to

work out some grammatical, vocabulary, and structural exercises and ignore the content of writing genres. 'It is necessary to identify the ways writing is used to create knowledge in potentially different ways in different disciplines', (Hyland, 2003, p.191). They would be worried about making errors more than thinking about generating ideas and setting goals to their audiences, as they revealed. Weigle (2002) emphasizes that students need to learn how to work effectively with the language medium to the learning task and informational content because writing is not just a product of the individual but it is a social and cultural act. Therefore, learning grammatical rules should come slowly through teaching and exploring the conventions of the writing genre.

Students' knowledge affects writing quality and influences how well they can organize their written assignments, (Applebee, 1986). Prior knowledge before writing means that the teacher's instructional decision should be reflected by what the students bring to the task: an effort to help students generate new knowledge before writing may be important or not, depending on how knowledgeable they are about the topic in hand, (Newell, 2006). Newell illustrates that if students' prior knowledge about the topic in hand is well-organized, 'they may be able to complete more complex tasks than required', (p.238). In this study, most students said not well-organized about EFL writing genres. They claimed they have difficulties to know the structure of different genres because they noted that their teaching practices had not emphasized EFL genres' writing structures and the conventions. Teaching 'genre must be taught, understood, and critiqued in terms of potential they provide for working with informational content and learning context', (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 137). Hyland suggests there is 'an urgent need for more theoretically robust, linguistically informed and research-grounded text descriptions to bridge the gap between home and school writing', (Hyland, 2007, p.149). For Hyland, the classroom and real world of the students' writing need to be linked and taught together, as he explains; writing genre 'is largely a response to changing views of discourse and of learning to write which incorporate better understandings of how language is structured to achieve social purposes in particular contexts of use' (Hyland, 2007, p.148). In addition, Cope & Kalantzis, (1993) and Christie, (1990) argue that teaching L2 writing through cognitive psychology, composition theory, or even traditional grammar is unable to address the language and the writing needs of the learners. Therefore, teaching EFL linguistic characteristics

should be taught in a form of social meaning that has a particular context. Hamp-Lyons and Kroll (1997) describe that teaching genre takes place within a context for a specific purpose and tailored for particular readers. The concept of explicit learning of EFL writing should be based on helping students to generate information for their writing; as Kellogg (1994) highlights, the use of the conceptual and discourse knowledge needs the knowledge to be available in the memory of the writer as a result of previous learning experiences, accessible when it is needed in the writing process, applied creatively to rhetorical and content problems caused by the social need, and motivating for the writer to engage in the writing with full effort. It was obvious that the participants had not been taught how to shape information for writing different genres in EFL.

The student-teachers of this study therefore claimed they lacked confidence in understanding how to write different genres. They said they would feel anxious, worried, and hesitant when they started writing any type of writing assignment because they were not well-prepared to structure those types of writing. Their teachers' teaching practices were underpinning their genres' writing problems as most of them were unaware of the importance of providing their students with the conventions of writing genres. In this globalized world writing has become more complex and classroom learning is culturally, socially and linguistically varied as learners bring to their classrooms their identities, understandings, learning experiences and 'habits of meaning-making to their learning', (Hyland, 2007, p.149). Because language and learning, according to Hallidayan functional linguistics, (Halliday, 1994) and socio-cultural theories of learning (Vygotsky, 1978) is a social behaviour, thus, it should be utilized through meaning-making. The role of EFL writing teachers is essential for EFL students, as teachers should be training their students how to prepare well in order to generate different knowledge for their tasks. Although, in this study, the participants claimed that they had been asked by most of their teachers to write different types of writing, for example descriptive, narrative, poem, and storytelling, their teachers did not provide them with the necessary knowledge of how to craft information for those types of writing. They did not know the proper conventions of each of the genres' writing. Therefore, they confirmed that their teachers left them with no options other than using their poor prior knowledge in EFL writing in general, as was obvious in some of the participants' comments:

- *'Our teacher asked us to write a descriptive topic but she did not give us any examples for how to write it , thus, we wrote it from our experience only...she only said narrative is like writing a story in very simple words, with no explanation what did she mean by writing a story'.*
- *'Yes, but my high school knowledge will not be convenient for my English writing level at this college especially when my teacher said that our writing competency is too low... and that is the problem'.*
- *'There was no planning for our writing... when I write I use my previous high school experience and knowledge... that was the only choice I have'.*

Not only that, but it seemed some participants here claimed they had not been asked to write in any genre, as some of them described: 'O*ur teacher never taught us how to write any topic, a topic called "Friendship" came in our final exam, we were asked to write a few lines about that topic, although we never been taught how to write a topic, so I wondered why it came in our final exam. With this teacher of basic writing course we did not write at all, we used to do those exercises only'.* Another participant affirmed, *'The course was about writing process, however, we did not practice any actual writing because our teacher did not teach us how to write, or what are the basic rules for writing a paragraph'.*

The comments of the participants indicated that most students who practised EFL writing had no confidence in their prior knowledge as they believed their prior knowledge was not efficient for this higher level of EFL writing. In literature, teachers of L2 writing cannot presume that learners' previous L2 writing experiences 'will provide them with the appropriate writing schemata for their study', (Hyland, 2007, p. 149). Schemata have a major role in understanding students' perceptions, reading comprehension, learning, remembering, and reasoning, (Rumelhart, 1980). Schemata as defined by Bartlett (1932) 'refers to an active organization of past reactions, or of past experiences, which must always be supposed to be operating in any well-adapted organic response' (p.201). Apparently, most participants reported their previous learning EFL writing genre experiences were inefficient to enable them to produce different writing types. The individual symbols associated with a schema are shaped by the way we learn it, (Kellogg, 1994). Schema is an unconscious procedure for generating the personal symbols of mental activity such as remembering and thinking,

and also generating the consensual symbols of communication such as writing and speaking. Because writing is a mental process, meaning-making activity depends on the procedures of collecting knowledge through pre-writing activities for ideas, translating ideas into text, and reviewing ideas and text, thus, interaction and explicit learning is important for L2 students. It provides them with the necessary knowledge or schema to be used in their topics. There was no doubt that the schema of the participants of this study about writing EFL genres was very limited because of their previous teaching and learning experiences. The students of this research claimed their classroom teaching practices encouraged a form-focus, and content-focus was ignored, thus their prior knowledge was mainly focused on how to write accurately rather than how to generate information about their text, as for example some participants described:

'Our teacher wrote two groups of words on the board, the first group consisted of some words from nature and the second group was about family members such as father, mother, brother, uncle, grandfather, aunty, niece, nephews ...our teacher asked us to write a poem by using those words and make a rhythm, for example: I like my mother... afternoon like a moon... I cannot remember the rest...and then she asked us, if any of us would like to give it a try in the classroom. Our teacher tried to show us how to write a poem by joining two lines of words, seven words in the upper line and seven words in the lower line... and we should join them together to write the poem'.

'Once, our teacher asked us to write a story, she wrote down the first sentence of the story and she asked each student in the class to add her own sentence to continue the story... we used to correct each others' errors by reading each others' sentences ...our teacher told us, "Read the sentences and correct them as if they were your own draft, read everything from the beginning"'.

'In genre teaching grammar is integrated into exploration of texts and contexts rather than taught as a discrete component', (Hyland, 2007, p. 153). Classroom teaching practices need to assist students to see how EFL grammar and vocabulary can create meanings to their texts, and how language forms themselves could be functioned in terms of acquiring meaning to their texts. For example, asking the participants to write a poem out of its context was not helpful for the students' writing because they joined

individual words from two different lines of vocabulary to form an accurate EFL sentence. It was not an appropriate way of teaching communicative writing but more likely forming a correct sentence out of context. Faigley (1986, p. 535) holds the view that 'human language (including writing) can be understood only from the perspective of a social rather than a single individual'. Moreover, 'writing should be seen as a tool for negotiating social meaning, for constructing identities, and new ways of communicating with the world', (Kostouli, 2009, p. 106). Therefore, teaching genre goes beyond teaching the form of the language. Teaching EFL linguistic features should qualify students to use these features in their meaningful and social writing form. EFL writing teachers of this research should improve their students' abilities to write effectively in the classroom contexts, and direct their knowledge to socially structured forms, as for example, writing business letters or an invitation.

In one instance in this study, however, students' social engagement with a writing genre had enabled them to approach the writing of this genre more positively. Most participants of this research reported they had practised writing a business letter when they were in their secondary school and they claimed that experience was very helpful. The advantage of genre writing helps 'incorporate discourse and contextual aspects of language that may be neglected when attending to structure, function, or processes alone', (Hyland, 2003, p. 18). Functionally the students of this study learned from that experience how to apply EFL grammatical knowledge in a meaningful context. They created a task with meaning, purpose, audience and usefulness for the real world. It increased their confidence in their ability to successfully complete a specific EFL task. L2 students mostly feel more comfortable to follow a model of L2 writing as it provides them with the opportunity to produce risk-free sentences, (Hyland, 2003). Writing a business letter motivated the students of this study to work better towards improving their EFL writing and their expectancy outcome increased because they value the importance of EFL writing in their social life. This result confirms what some authors (Flower and Hayes, 1981; Halliday, 1994; Martin, 1985) argue, that writing is a goal-directed process.

In many L1 writing classrooms, learning about genres is undertaken by drawing attention to the linguistic characteristics of different genres. This approach combines form with function. Teaching genre should go beyond teaching the form of the

language. For instance, the curriculum of teaching genres in the United Kingdom has a clear vision about the importance of teaching students the purpose of writing and increasing the sense of their audiences. Teachers draw their students' attention to the linguistic characteristics of different genres only in terms of making meaning. Writing teachers in the United Kingdom (UK) introduce different types of writing, through teaching sets of conventions for these types which help students create meaning in their writing. Teachers get their students' attention to the purpose of each type of writing, placing emphasis on the text level, the sentence level and the word level. They explain to their students each type of writing within its own conventions at word, sentence and the whole text-level. Moreover, they explain the nature of these conventions by using examples and these examples serve the students' purpose well, and tailor to the needs of their audiences. They try to make these conventions not a rigid framework but hybrids of different genres. The idea of text types is a convenient and useful way of grouping and understanding the features of texts and how they work. Teaching genres gets students to do the thinking work and to articulate the layout, sequence and organization in meaningful tasks. Teachers show their students how the other types of writing could be linked with the annotated examples, for future use and reference. In the classroom, students learn through collaborative work as they work in pairs and groups to analyse text types, plan and produce their communicative tasks. The UK method of teaching genre helps students to communicate through writing and have the ability in the future to apply these conventions in different types of writing.

In comparison, in this study, teaching genre writing to the participants had ignored form-focus and content-focus. Teachers emphasised the grammatical rules out of context. In the classroom, students' said their teachers used to work with them on grammatical exercises, isolated from their whole context. They indicated that, they used to memorize those grammatical rules without realizing how to use them properly in their writing. The focus on form only to address grammatical correctness misses an opportunity to develop students' explicit understanding of how the different genres are constructed.

It is likely that the teachers of this study themselves do not know about genre theory and would find it difficult to provide such explicit teaching. To compare between teaching genres in the UK, for example, and the classroom practices of the participants of this

study, firstly, I will give some details about the descriptions and the objectives of the two EFL writing courses in this college. Students who study English major at this college would enrol in two compulsory EFL writing courses: one was called *Mechanics of Writing* for the basic level and the other one was called *Advanced Writing* for the advanced level.

In the description outlines of the basic writing course (BWC) number 133 of this college, teaching communicative writing was the main focus of the course. BWC was also reinforcing EFL grammatical structure, idioms and vocabulary features. The detailed objectives of the basic writing are for the student to:

1. 'Become familiar with the convention of written English discourse (a text);

2. Reinforce the grammatical structures, idioms, phrasal verbs and vocabulary already taught;

3. Express himself clearly in writing;

4. Become involved with the language; the effort to express ideas and the constant use of eye, hand, and brain is a unique way to reinforce learning;

5. Discover the close relationship between writing and thinking;

6. Discover the real need for finding the right word and the right sentence;

7. Recognize the approaches and techniques of teaching writing;

8. Communicate with a reader and grasp the essential value of writing as a form of communication;

9. Reinforce the basic skills of writing: Punctuation, spelling, using linking words and connectives, and composing more complex sentences;

10. Express ideas without the pressure of face-to- face communication;

11. Learn that written language generally demands standard forms of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary, sentence structure, sentence boundaries, stylistic choice;

12. Write coherent and cohesive compositions,'

(PAAET, English Department, the Objectives of the Mechanics of Writing Course, pp. 20-21).

Furthermore, in the description of the advanced writing course (AWC) of this college the focus of the course was on the higher thinking skills of the students and how they can create different types of writing. Students should use their intellectual abilities to

create a meaningful text with purpose and have a sense of their audiences. The following are the objectives of teaching the Advanced Writing Course in detail:

1. 'Recognize the differences between paragraph writing and essay writing;

2. Examine how professional writers shape their works by using the steps of writing;

3. Recognize familiar patterns of writing: News story, news commentary, definition, classification, cause-to-effect…and understand that different types of essays required different rhetorical strategies;

4. Realize the integrity and relationship between essay-writing and other areas of the broader science of linguistics, e.g. morphology (word formation), syntax (grammar and sentence structure), semantics, (meaning and choice of words);

5. Write a first draft, and then well-supported essays of full length and produce specific types of essays;

6. Write title and subtitle that are capitalized correctly;

7. Formulate a thesis statement;

8. Develop a clear structure (a general thesis paragraph, supporting topic paragraphs, and a rounded-out conclusion);

9. Sustain an appropriate level of diction throughout a piece of writing;

10. Practise proofreading and editing;

11. Learn the proper way of quoting other writers to avoid appropriating the others' words and ideas (Intellectual property);

12. Use the computer to compose, revise and refine one's own writing',

(PAAET, English Department, Objectives of the Advanced Writing Course, pp. 22-23).

It is clear that the descriptions and the objectives of the two EFL writing courses of the participants emphasise teaching EFL grammatical characteristics. The role of the teacher was to facilitate students to apply different EFL writing provisions in genres writing. The written objects of the two EFL writing courses of this research were efficient and should have helped students of this study to improve their writing fluency and be able to communicate with others; however most participants were strongly struggling to write fluently or communicate with others in EFL writing. Surprisingly, they were also struggling to write accurately even though they had learnt EFL linguistic rules for many years. In general, they were unable to link between their classroom writing contexts and their real-world writing needs.

To conclude, theoretically and away from the reality of the participants of this research, the objectives of the two EFL writing courses seemed to be proficient and the role of their writing teachers was clear, including facilitating their students' learning process in terms of teaching them EFL writing as a social act. However, the reality of the participants of this study reflected a different result from what was listed in the objectives of the two writing courses. The theory of teaching genre writing seemed to be unclear for most of EFL writing teachers in this college. They claimed they did not understand the conceptual meaning underpinning this theory and they themselves did not know how to apply genre theory in their EFL writing classrooms. Teachers need to realize that writing is socially constructed and they need to enable their students to communicate through their writing. Obviously, the negative educational experiences of the EFL writing teachers of this study had a strong influence on their classroom teaching practices. Most of them were applying what they had acquired and inherited as learners and their students in turn acquired from them their negative experiences in teaching and learning EFL writing, and they will in turn pass it on to their future students.

3. Re-conceptualizing the role of the EFL teacher

Another dominant theme emerging from the voices of the participants of this research was a desire to see their teachers playing a different role in leading their learning, particularly in terms of choice and ownership, and the nature of teachers' feedback. They reflected the role of their teachers was more likely to be dictator and controller rather than facilitator and enabler. The dictatorial role of the teachers led most students of this study to a desire for formulaic ways to write in order to get high grades, through memorizing some sentences as their teachers' emphasise how to get high grades. Memorizing does not help students be creative writers and it prevents them from using their intellectual abilities. Teachers in this study therefore need to get their students' attention to the importance of being creative and initiative writers rather than memorizers.

Teachers' feedback

The role of EFL writing teachers in this study needs to be re-conceptualized in terms of the nature of feedback provided on students' writing assignments. Their students said

they provided feedback to correct errors, but did not inform students about how they could develop their writing. In essence, it signifies the teacher as judge and arbiter of writing achievement, not as someone concerned to help learning and improving.

The student-teachers here indicated their teachers' handwritten comments tended to be directed to form rather than content, as in for example, Ayha stated, '*My teacher used to choose from our written texts some errors and write them on the board, then ask us to find out what was wrong with them',* Nouryiah confirmed, '*Grammar, the way I wrote my sentences, she told me how to write it correctly and rewrite it back again',* and Noha noted, '*She discussed our common mistakes in our classroom… she* [her teacher] *read the paragraph in the class and wrote the sentences on the board… each of us knew what was wrong with her sentence… our teacher explained to the students how to correct their mistakes'.* Most of the teachers in this research used to play the role of error detectors in their feedback. The students claimed their teachers' feedback was mostly focused on mechanical problems such as wording, sentence-structure and correctness. They were providing their students with de-contextualized and isolated feedback. That type of feedback forced students to focus on the accuracy of their writing rather than on the content or the ideas development and organization. Students need to focus on the meaning they make, the organization and the process of writing, (Truscott, 1996, 2004). Thus, most students of this study reported they used to feel worried and anxious about making errors when they write which prevented them from practising EFL writing and kept them away from revising or responding to their teachers' feedback. Teachers become frustrated when students ignore their comments. However, teachers need to understand that students usually ignore their teachers' feedback because they do not know how to deal with it. The process of providing teacher's feedback and the student responding to that feedback can lead to dialogue in which the teacher and the student negotiate the meaning of the written text. It seemed in this study that teachers did not take the time required to improve their written feedback so that it was efficient. Their students therefore were overloaded with correcting their mechanical errors.

In a multiple-draft approach, it becomes more important to consider carefully the effects of teachers' feedback on students' writing before asking students to revise their paper, (Ferris, 2003). The debate of providing efficient feedback to L2 writing texts discusses different views. Some of these views believe that efficient feedback should focus on L2 students' writing content, organization, grammar, and style 'at different stages of the

writing cycle', (Ferris, 2003, p. 123). Others believe it is more effective when feedback is given at the intermediate stage of the writing process when L2 students can respond to consequent revisions and then be more motivated to respond to their teachers' comments, (Ferris, 1995; Krashen, 1984). However, Zamil (1985), and Freeman, (1987) both argue that teachers' feedback should be provided only on content and organizational issues in early drafts, saving sentence-level for the end of writing. In contrast, others believe that L2 writers have the ability to focus effectively with more than one type of feedback on the same draft, (Fathman & Whalley, 1990; Ferris, 1997). Socio-cultural theorists oppose the form-focused approach and encourage the meaning-making process in writing because they are influenced by the 'process of writing' approach which supports drafting and meaning-making. They view writing as a social behaviour and teachers cannot isolate it from the other aspects of the language; as Smith illustrates, 'writing is a reflection of the mind in all its power, and mystery has to be approached', (Smith, 1985, p. 4). Thus, efficient feedback for the socio-cultural theorists should be provided in the form of suggestions and questions to assist students to generate and organize their ideas and include particular audiences for their writing.

The student-teachers of this study also revealed that their teachers' feedback was unclear, of poor quality, overemphasized their negative points, and was inconsistent. They said they had serious struggles to understand what their teachers wanted them to do. For them the feedback was not crucial to be taken into account. Flower & Hayes (1981) describe that teacher's feedback affects the process of writing. It can help define or clarify the writing task or problem so the students can resolve it. Efficient feedback may provide prompts that allow the writer to retrieve helpful information from long-term memory, such as grammatical knowledge. Feedback can cause the writer's schemata to grow and change because writing is a goal-directed process. Sommers (1982) illustrates that teachers' comments create the motive for learners to revise their next draft towards improving their writing. The students claimed they used to be confused and did not know how to respond to their teachers' comments to improve their writing, as the feedback did not provide them with any clear strategy for revision, as for example Asmah confirmed: *Sometimes, she puts just "wrong" but she did not say why it was wrong, and sometimes she did not write any comments',* and, Onood: *'I did not know, she said, ''Mistakes, and there were mistakes only" it was not clear what*

mistakes she was talking about', and Maha: *'My teachers' feedback was not helpful, it is hard for me to realize what was wrong with my writing or what to do'.*

The quality of teachers' feedback has a strong impact on L2 students' reactions to their writing. L2 writers appreciate clear, concerted, specific and efficient feedback, (Cavalcanti & Cohen, 1990; Straub, 1997; Ferris, 1995). For example Ferris, (2003, p. 124) suggests some helpful criteria teachers need to use in their feedback, such as focusing on the 'ideas, organization, grammar, mechanics, vocabulary, and style, depending upon the needs of the individual student, the developmental stage of the text, and on the specifications of the writing course'. On the other hand, Hyland, (2003) argues that teachers' feedback should not be 'excessively focused on eradicating errors, they should also be careful to avoid emphasizing ideas to the neglect of form'. Teachers need to respond to all aspects of students' writing texts, but not necessarily on every draft at every stage of the teaching. Sentence-level errors for example, can be delayed to later drafts. Providing efficient feedback 'reinforce the patterns which were taught when modelling the genres,' (Hyland, 2003, p.185). Thus, efficient feedback that is presented in a form of asking questions and providing suggestions helps students negotiate their meaning and ideas with their teachers. Teachers should avoid providing broad conceptual feedback. Poor writers may concentrate more on spelling or other mechanical tasks than on the content of their writing.

In this study the student-teachers revealed that the ambiguity of their teachers' feedback therefore led most of them to ignore their teachers' comments. Hyland (2003) confirms that if students did not understand their teachers' comments they 'simply ignore it' or delete the draft from their revision, as was clear for example, in this interview,

> *R23: What happened next, to your 'Myself' topic?*
> *S23: I used to give her* [her teacher] *my draft, she used to correct it and return it back to us… she used to put her comments.*
> *R24: Describe to me your teacher's comments on your paper.*
> *S24: She used to underline my mistakes.*
> *R25: You said, underline?*
> *S25: Or circled*
> *R26: How did you know what was wrong with the circled or underlined issues?*
> *S26: Sometimes, she used to write her comments, some other times she did not, however, we should go and ask her to find out what was wrong with our writing.*
> *R27: What if you did not go and ask her?*
> *S27: She did not used to write on our papers, what was wrong.*

R28: So, from your point of view, why did she underline and circle your writing?
S28: She used to say watch your writing.
R32: You said before, sometimes she used to write her comments, and sometimes she did not.
S32: Sometimes, she put just "wrong" but she did not say why it was wrong, and sometimes she did not write any comments.
R33: How much did you learn from your teacher's comments?
S33: In the Basic writing course, I did not learn anything from her comments.
R34: What makes you think that you did not learn anything?
S34: I was not sure, who was the problem, was it me or her, I was not understanding the real situation well… her feedback was not clear for me… If I decided to ask her, I feel sorry for asking her… she was a good teacher but at the same time, she makes you feel that she does not like you, so I was hesitating to ask her.
…………
R62: You told me, sometimes she used to underline or circle your mistakes with no comments, how much do you think that kind of feedback was helpful?
S62: It was helpful, if the student asked her, but if the student was not interested to ask her, she will not understand what was wrong with her writing.
……………
R74: What did you use to do with your drafts after your teachers comments?
S74: I keep them with me.
R75: Did you use to review your teacher's comments?
S75: No, not for my 'Myself' topic I used to look at them only.

In general, L2 students prefer clear feedback on both their ideas and on the form of the language, (Straub, 1997). Teachers of this study should not be authoritative and the controller of their students' writing. They need to be more careful about adding or crossing out words or sentences without negotiating that with their students, to encourage them to respond to their comments efficiently, (Sommers, 1982; Zamel, 1985; Krashen, 1984). Direct comments on students' writing might make students frustrated, de-motivated to respond to their teachers' comments. In addition, students might feel their teachers' writing priorities are more important than their own ideas and words in their own text, (Ferris, 2003). Thus, teachers of this research should avoid any negative or harsh language in their feedback because that might cause their students to delete or ignore their comments. Although Masters (1995) claimed there is no direct connection between teachers' correction and learning writing development, Hillocks (1986) found that focused feedback has a positive effect on some features of students' writing. As a result, providing clear, efficient, and concerted feedback is very important for L2 students' writing development.

There is no doubt that positive feedback is more motivating for EFL writers and those students usually give more attention to that type of feedback. Positive feedback should

be given to students' writing with care; however, lack of positive feedback may influence negatively students' perception towards L2 writing and teachers' comments. In addition to the unclear written feedback, the findings of this research also revealed that some teachers provided some negative feedback which seriously influenced their students' perceptions of EFL writing, as for example some participants of this study reported, 'You are bad writers', or 'You write worse than little children'. Bandura (1986) illustrates that motivation is largely influenced by an individual's self-efficacy: belief in his/her ability to successfully perform certain skills and in the ability to successfully complete specific tasks. Bandura suggests that modelling feedback can increase self-efficacy of the writers.

A non-democratic environment raised the level of anxiety among the students of this research. Daly (1977) found that poor writers mostly have a history of getting negative feedback on their writing. Students who get unhelpful feedback are likely to write less often and had an extensively more unenthusiastic attitude toward writing than students who were praised by their teachers, (Gee, 1972). Students work better with praise than with criticism, (Straub, 1997). Therefore, students who expect to be praised or rewarded by their teachers for their efforts will try to work harder.

To conclude, all student-teachers of this study claimed they were enthusiastic and motivated to learn EFL writing, however they felt the quality of their teachers' feedback was not encouraging them to do so. This is seriously stating that teachers of this study need to review the quality of their feedback and appreciate that they must provide students with readable, understandable, clear, motivating and efficient comments that encourage their students to negotiate their meaning and develop their writing proficiency. In addition, teachers of this research need to understand the influence of negative feedback on their students' self-efficacy. McLeod (1987) found that teachers' feedback can have a powerful effect on students' feelings, especially on their writing anxiety, motivation and their beliefs about writing and their skills. McCarthy, Meier and Rinderer (1985) found a strong relationship between high self-efficacy, beliefs in one's writing abilities and writing performance. Self-efficacy is partly a result of feedback that students have received about the quality of their writing.

Topic choice

The participants said the role of their EFL writing teachers needs to be re-conceptualized in terms of providing students with the opportunity to choose their topics. Teachers of this study need to relinquish control and give students a bigger stake in the process. The participants claimed that they needed more freedom to choose their topics because their teacher used to control their choices, as some of them described, '*She used, for example, to choose a topic from the text book, ... there used to be five topics in the text book'*, and another student stated*, 'It was not free writing, she asked us to write a story'*, moreover, '*I was forced to choose one topic from the list of the text book ...and at the end of the course she asked us to write a story, she was very tough about it'*.

All students of this research reported they desired ownership. They wanted to write about their previous experiences, express their feelings and hobbies, as these students for example pointed out, '*I do not like to write topics about facts... but about my own opinions and my own feelings',* and, '*I like writing about my knitting hobby'*. Although they had been asked to write about a topic called 'Myself', they believed they did not have the opportunity to express their feelings freely because the topic was mostly controlled by their teachers. They claimed their teachers decided what to write and what not to write. The role of their teacher was more like controller, not facilitator. They said the priority of the ideas was for their teachers and not for the students. They illustrated that they struggled to express their ideas which led to increasing their writing anxiety. The participants revealed the lack of prior knowledge about the topics that were chosen and controlled by their teachers did not motivate them to practise writing. 'Teachers should consider what the students bring to the task: An effort to help students generate new information before writing may be significant or wasted depending on how well-informed they are about the topic at hand', (Newell, 2006, p. 238). A constructivist approach sees learning occur in context, and knowledge of writing develops within particular contexts. In addition, the knowledge of writing in the classroom should be familiar to the students and related to their real-world needs. The participants said they preferred to write about topics they had knowledge about and that were close to their social life, as for example, friendship, pollution, hobbies, and their experiences. Prior knowledge provides the students with the opportunity to participate more in their ideas, (Hyland, 2003; Halliday, 1994). It enables them to see what they can do, builds their

self-confidence and helps them make meaning as well as apply L2 linguistics knowledge. This student, for example, was very excited when her teacher asked them to write about their hobbies, as she affirmed, '*At the end of the term, there was a free writing topic, although we did choose the topic but it was about "Your hobby"...* [laughing….] *I was very excited, because I wanted to write about my knitting hobby'.* 'Knowledge usage is the key to understand the skill level of a writer as opposed to the way the processes of writing unfold', (Kellogg, (1994. p. 68). Teachers need to assist their students to obtain 'knowledge of topics and vocabulary they will need to create an effective text', (Hyland, 2003, p.15). Hyland suggests that, 'L2 writing teachers base their writing courses on topics students select themselves', (ibid. p.15). Teachers of this study need to improve their teaching and learning practices by supporting their writing content, developing EFL vocabulary and avoiding isolated exercises. Kellogg (1994) illustrates, 'The use of conceptual, discourse, and meta-cognitive knowledge requires four conditions: (1) knowledge must be available as a result of past learning, (2) accessible at the time it is needed in the writing process, (3) applied inventively to the rhetorical and content problem posed by the task environment, and (4) motivational', (p. 68). Students' prior knowledge could be improved by intensive reading in EFL. Intensive reading has a strong influence on writing competency; it supports L2 writing skills, (Krashen, 1993). It allow students to engage in a limited meaning through the function of complex cognitive and linguistics processes that represent problem-solving skills and the creation of accessible knowledge of both structure and content, (Grabe, 2001). Apparently, the only reading participants of this study said they used to do was their emails, text messages and classrooms assignments. 'What you write is influenced by your knowledge and experience and by what you read and learn as you prepare to write, (Raimes and Jerskey, 2010, p. 3). It is important to mention here that a good number of Arab people are not good readers, for different reasons. This research is not entitled to study this, but the influence of a lack of reading was obvious on the students' prior knowledge as they would strongly struggle to produce information for their writing. A better writer reads more and better readers write in a more syntactically mature writing style, (Stotsky, 1993).

To conclude, the teachers of the participants seemed to be bounded and controlled by their previous educational, social and cultural inherited experiences. They were unconsciously practising the role of the judge and the controller more than the role of

the facilitator to help their students cooperate and develop their writing fluency. They said they used to choose the topics for their students without appreciating the students' desire to write about knowledge of their choice. Thus, their teachers need to be aware of the importance of providing their students with the freedom and writing ownership. The more they practise writing, the better writers they become, (Hayes, 1996).

The tension between learning and memorizing

Assessing participants' EFL writing mainly through grading was used by all the teachers of this study. The findings of this study signal that teachers' emphasis was on what they need in order for their students to get high grades rather than learning EFL writing, as for example Abeer described, '*The teacher gave us an introduction to be memorized for the final exam... we did not practise any actual writing, our teacher did not ask us to write at all'.* All participants here with no exception claimed they had a strong desire to learn and improve their EFL writing fluency for their future careers or to continue their advanced studies, travelling, communicating with other cultures or for use in their daily life. However, they felt their teachers' teaching practices were not supportive to achieving these goals. Student-teachers reported they were more likely to be encouraged in getting high grades and memorizing some sentences for that purpose, as for example this participant highlighted, '*I was eager to learn but our teacher disappointed me by saying "I will not repeat anything that you have taken in your high school, whatever you do not know, you will be the same you do not know"',* and another student stated*, 'I did not believe that I was accepted in this college for this major… I was very enthusiastic to learn and work hard'.* Surprisingly, the participants claimed that experience did not bother most of them and they were excited to memorize some sentences as long as it would help them get high grades, as for example Ayah stated, '*Frankly saying, because there was no good learning with our basic writing teacher course, I memorized by ear what was on those sheets of paper to put them down in my exam for the purpose of getting high grades',* and another student argued, '*I wanted to raise my grades only'.* Not only that but most students said they used to attend their lessons to ensure getting the 20 marks that was assigned by their teachers for the attendance only, as this students indicated, '*Yes, because there was a 20 mark for the attendance'.* Interestingly, some of them claimed they were very excited to repeat both EFL writing courses with the same teachers who used to emphasize getting high grades and memorization.

Without doubt the finding of this study shows there was a tension between the students' desire for learning and improving their EFL writing fluency and their desire for formulaic ways to write. The participants indicated that learning EFL writing fluently was important for their future careers and at the same time they did not mind memorizing some sentences for the purpose of getting high grades. This tension was caused by the teaching practices as it seemed that their teachers currently play into encouraging the formulaic and memorizing. They said their teachers used to emphasise what they needed for their students to get high grades. Socio-constructivists view learning as a process of interaction and communication with others. Writing is a means of communication between people. In contrast memorizing opposes the concept of interaction or communication. What teachers of this study were practising confirms what Spivey (1997, p. 20) describes, 'Because society, an entity above individuals, compels (in a psychological, not physical, sense) its members to think, believe, and act in its particular ways, which are their ways too'. Apparently, EFL writing teachers of this study passed their previous experiences on to their EFL students. They encouraged them to memorize the knowledge of EFL writing for the purpose of getting high grades rather than using their high level of intellectual abilities to improve their writing or help them be creative EFL writers. Teachers here would practise their own heritage as learners. The impact of their heritage on teaching EFL writing through memorizing did not support the objectives of teaching and learning EFL writing as a communicative means. Thus, this finding contrasts with what Al-Mutawa, (1992) and Al Shalabi, (1988) found in their studies: they suggested that EFL Kuwaiti students prefer to use memorization because of the absence of self-learning strategies. They attributed the cause of memorization use to students, whereas the findings of this study suggest that EFL writing teachers were behind this habit.

To link between memorizing and getting high grades, from my own experience of being an EFL teacher for a long time in that community, grading was always important for most if not all of the teachers because of our historical, social, and cultural experiences. In the mind of people of that society, students with high grades deserve to get all the privileges from school, home and their society. Teachers, parents, and other people respect students with high grades more than their peers with lower grades. They consider them more intelligent individuals and they offer them all the priorities.

The habit of memorizing sentences for the participants of this study had been practised since they had started their primary school. If the teachers' aim is to teach enough EFL language issues to pass an examination, then this will have a major implication for the methods by which they teach, (Williams and Burden, 1997). Culturally, most Islamic countries use memorization for learning the Quran. Every individual Muslim needs to memorize some Quranic verses during his/her schooling and social life because the Quran is considered as the main constitution for people's life in general. Education in Islam is abstracted from the Quran and it means the development of the complete human character, with all its physical, spiritual, mental, moral and social dimensions, (Abbud & Abdul, 1990). Muslims need to learn and memorize what is in the Quran to develop their thoughts and regulation of their behaviour and deeds on the basis of Islam. Thus, memorizing the Quran is part of Islamic education and this education should 'achieve a balance between the development of the individual and of society', (Buouyan, 1999, p. 44). Memorizing any sentences without understanding what they mean is not part of Islamic education because it does not encourage individuals to develop their complete human character by using their high level of intellectual abilities of thinking and creation.

Teachers of this study need to realize that memorizing might help when learning the Quran but it might not develop the intellectual abilities of their students. Writing is not only social but also a cognitive process, as Kellogg (1994, p.3) argues: during writing the 'writer engages in a special form of thinking'. Thus, 'the act of writing a text involves retrieving information from memory, generate new ideas based on partial information in memory, organizing ideational and linguistic structures, reading source materials and the evolving text', (ibid. p. 10). Rubin (1975) found that memorizing and focusing on the form and patterns of the language is mostly used by good L2 learners because of language anxiety and their desire to be accurate in their communication. On the other hand, Rubin believes, motivated learners tended to use different strategies more than less motivated learners. In this research, the participants used to memorize sentences in EFL not because they felt they were good EFL learners and wanted to avoid errors but because their teachers placed a heavy emphasis on getting high grades from memorizing sentences. Applebee (1996) explains that learning through memorizing is like learning any knowledge out of its context. Thus, 'knowledge in action shapes our expectations about the future as well as our interpretations of the

past', (Applebee, 1996, p. 16-17). Through memorization students will not be able to interact with EFL writing in different contexts.

Lack of respect by teachers for students

Lack of respect by teachers of this study for their students was of serious concern to all the participants of this research. All participants reported they were seeking respect and better relationships with their teachers. They believed their teachers were authoritarian and looking down on them. They strongly struggled to communicate with their teachers in cases of need. They said they would hear negative comments if they were to ask for help, as for example, this participant described that her teacher used to tell them, *'You are lazy and you do not use your brain well',* or *'You are bad writers';* and *'When we go to our teacher's office, our teachers used to look down to us and keep saying negative words like "My son is nine years old and he writes better English than you who are 18 years old". His son is going to English school not like us'.* Students who believe they are 'poor writers are likely to experience writing anxiety', (Hayes, 1996, p.11). It seemed their teachers believed that through negative feedback, their students would be more motivated to work. However, the reality reflected the opposite: most of their students lost their self-confidence in their ability to write fluently. Bandura (1986) argues that motivation is strongly influenced by a person's self-confidence in their aptitude. Nine student-teachers in this study said they were unconfident about their EFL writing competency and they believed they were bad writers. Schriver (1995) confirms that students who keep blaming themselves become incompetent. The role of teacher in general is to respect their students' personality, feelings, and help them master L2 writing skills to improve their writing competency. They need to understand that teachers and students are partners in the classroom and students should be involved in decisions about their teaching and learning practices. Teachers should be able to work with their students in a democratic environment and respect their right as partners to help them be more creative, rather than making them worried, scared, anxious and disappointed. They need to stop making fun of their errors and encourage them to ask questions for help. One of the respondents for example stated, *'My teacher makes me feel very bad when I talk to her outside the classroom'.* Teachers of this research need to realize that their negative behaviour does not help their students to work better but it makes them feel unconfident with high levels of writing anxiety. Teachers are highly influenced by their beliefs, values, educational experiences, and social and cultural

background, (Pajares, 1992). The teachers' own heritage as learners seemed to be more dominant in the way they behave with their students. Their educational, social and cultural experiences had a negative influence on their students' self-efficacy.

Although the relationship between older and younger people in Islam is based on respect from both sides, it seemed in this research that participants claimed their teachers did not give their students respect. Religion for all Muslims is the source of discipline in life in general, as for example: young people must respect in all ways people who are older in age, for example their parents and teachers, because they have more experience in life. At the same time, older people should treat younger people with kindness and love. They both should help and support each other in case of need. However, this kind of relationship seemed to be absent here between the teachers and their students. Students indicated their relationship was full of tension, non-democratic, and limited. Teachers' perceptions about what is explicit or implicit in learning are affecting everything that they do in their classrooms. For example, if students are viewed as bad and unmotivated learners, that will force the teachers to involve kinds of teaching methods based on pressure or obligation rather than seeking ways of helping them, (Williams and Burden, 1997). Teachers should understand the seriousness of lack of respect for their students and its impact on their learning. Obviously, participants' low self-efficacy, low motivation, and high level of anxiety was an indication about the nature of the relationship between teachers and their students. Authoritative relationships and loss of respect is widening the gap between teachers and their students.

To summarize, all participants of this research without exception wanted to be respected by their teachers. They would like to have a democratic relationship with their teachers. They also wanted to have more freedom to negotiate, discuss, and have what they say be listened to carefully. 'Motivational factors can traditionally influence action by influencing strategy selection', (Hayes, 1996, p. 10). Thus, the role of their teachers is to realize that negative feedback will not make their students more motivated, but the opposite. Praising students' work and providing them with positive feedback will make them more motivated to learn and might improve their writing fluency.

Summary of the discussion

The analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data of the participants in this study answered the two research questions:

- What are the perceptions of the student-teachers towards teaching and learning EFL writing methods?
- What are the participants' perceptions towards EFL writing?

The study indicates that, despite being motivated to learn to write in English, many students in this research had very low self-efficacy. They claimed they were poor EFL writers, and did not trust their abilities to write better, which led them to feel worried, scared, hesitant, and unconfident. The study also shows that the participants perceive the teaching they receive in EFL writing to be negative and unsupportive. Their teachers play the role of error detectors, focusing on their weaknesses and providing them with inefficient feedback on their drafts: there are few attempts to offer praise or constructive advice. Equally, their teachers' focus on accuracy was accompanied by an absence of response to the content of the writing, the meaning-making aspect of writing. The students in this research claimed they did not feel that their teachers were facilitating their learning process. This study highlights the inter-relationship between students' sense of self-efficacy and the teaching practices they experience. In particular, the study draws attention to the importance of the role of the teacher in establishing a learning environment for writing which is built upon clear and explicit teaching within a supportive classroom framework, in order to allow students to develop confidence in their ability to write. Central to this is mutual respect between teachers and learners, where mistakes are seen as part of the learning process, not as a source of humiliation, and where teachers encourage discussion, questioning and dialogue around the writing process and written texts.

The study also signals how teaching practices need to be reviewed. Pre-writing activities also needed to be seriously reviewed. Teachers of this study need to help their students to generate ideas for their EFL texts. They should stop emphasising the focus on form and instead encourage the focus on content. In addition, they need to respect their students' desire for ownership in their writing.

Teachers need to realize the importance of working in a friendly academic environment. They need to praise their students' work, providing them with positive feedback and giving them hope in their future EFL writing competency. They need to narrow the gap between themselves and their students to build better and efficient relationships. The students would like to see their teachers have more understanding when they need help and to stop making fun of their errors. Teachers in this research should understand the danger of being authoritative, unhelpful, and negative in their behaviour with their students. Teaching practices should help students be more relaxed, enthusiastic, and motivated to learn.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Research in L2 writing remains less developed that the body of research on L1 writing, in spite of the research that been conducted to understand L2 writing difficulties for L2 learners. The literature of L2 writing to date still offers no strong theories about teaching and learning L2 writing. Historically, L2 writing studies have been developed from data drawn from L1 writing theories and L2 researchers have tended to presume that models of L1 writing theories would apply equally to L2 writers with appropriate alterations. The lack of L2 writing theories and models opened the door for the researchers to debate and discuss the most efficient teaching and learning L2 writing practices and pedagogies. In general, the major focus for these discussions is mainly based on three main points of view: the focus on form perspective; the writing process perspective; and the genre perspective.

The form-focused group view L2 writing as principally concerned with teaching grammar and vocabulary, and this remains a dominant paradigm in many L2 writing classrooms, (Reid, 1996; Hyland, 2003). The role of L2 writing teachers in this paradigm is to be error detectors who focus on the accuracy of the students' writing and ignore meaning. Thus, their feedback mostly is form-focused not meaning-focused.

This study suggests that teaching EFL writing through a focus on form did not make participants more confident in EFL writing, but the opposite; they still seriously struggle to write fluently. In fact, teaching L2 writing through form-focused approaches seemed to make the students in this research anxious writers: it stopped them on many occasions from practising L2 writing because they always felt worried and scared to make errors as their teachers demand error-free writing. In fact, their teachers were

playing the role of error controller and detectors not facilitators. Form-focused method also did not help the participants of this study to communicate in EFL writing fluently in their social life. They struggled to interact with different audiences. Thus, this research rejects the idea that teaching and learning L2 writing fluency is learned through a form-focused method. The purpose of writing in general is not to memorize grammatical rules or isolated vocabulary, but to communicate with writing and readers in the real world. The role of L2 writing teachers is to facilitate writing development by providing formative feedback and contrastive comments on L2 students' writing.

The second perspective on L2 writing advocates the use of 'writing process' approaches. Proponents believe that writing is a meaning-making process and that teaching should focus less on the product of writing and more on the process which generates it. For L2 learners pre-writing activities are very important as they help students to generate ideas for their writing. Writing process supporters believe that explicit learning about planning, translating and revising is essential for writing because it provides learners with the necessary knowledge for their L2 writing (Hayes and Flower, 1980; Bereiter and Scardamalia, 1987). Writing process approaches also acknowledge the role of prior knowledge.   Even more importantly, the writing process approach sees writing as an act of making meaning, drawing on prior knowledge of texts and the world, and demanding attention to the needs of the audience and purpose of the writing.

The results of this study reinforce the idea that meaning-making is important for EFL writing as all the participants of this study were looking to communicate with others by using meaningful writing in the real world. In addition, the participants also felt a strong desire to make their own choice of topic as they believed they would practise more writing if they had the opportunity to choose the content of their writing. Although this research supports the concept of writing process as meaning-making, it rejects the idea that writing is an individual act, but encourages the idea that writing is a social act and should be practised efficiently in the real world of L2 learners. Therefore, this study strongly emphasises the role of the cultural and social differences between L1 and L2 writers, and L2 writing teachers need to be aware of these differences.

Finally, other researchers advocate the use of 'genre approaches' to writing. For them teaching and learning L2 writing is learned through teaching the conventions of

different types of L2 writing to achieve different social contexts of use. L2 writing teachers using the genre approach would show writers how to structure each genre and would highlight the linguistic characteristics appropriate for different social contexts. Thus, explicit learning for L2 writers is important for genres writing: and it is opposes Krashen's (1987) theory which supports language acquisition and believes that L2 language fluency does not come through explicit learning. To respond to Krashen's theory, the nature of written language is different from the nature of spoken language. Children acquire their spoken language naturally, simply by being exposed to the language through their social and cultural communication settings; whereas written language cannot be acquired in the same way as oral language because written language has a system of signs which have to be learned as designating the sound and words of spoken language (Vygotsky, 1978). Mastering these signs and becoming fluent in L2 writing is not a naturally acquired skill but it is learned or 'transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional setting', (Mylea, 2002, P. 1). Learning to write is always a conscious skill whether you are an L1 or L2 writer. It needs intensive efforts, practice and explicit learning. Therefore, explicit learning is important for L2 writers as they need to know how to structure the textual forms in meaningful writing.

This study found that teaching genres writing or different types of writing for different social contexts was not practised efficiently in the student-teachers' classrooms. Theoretically, the objectives of the two EFL writing courses in this college seemed to be well-designed to address the writing of different genres; however, in practice teachers did not know how to apply these objectives efficiently in their classrooms. Teachers need to realize the importance of teaching their students communicative writing, which student-teachers could interact with in their real life. The findings proved that students struggle to communicate with different audiences in writing and to adapt their writing for different genres. The teachers of this study seemed to be unaware of these alternative approaches to the teaching of L2 writing. This might be related to an insufficient or inappropriate in-service professional developmental programme and their pre-service training. Thus, there is a need for a shift in teacher training programmes to develop more awareness of, and confidence in using, process approaches and in giving attention to the demands of different genres. Hyland suggests that 'genre pedagogies promise very real benefits for learners as they pull together language, content, and contexts, while offering teachers a means of presenting students with explicit and

systematic explanations of the ways writing works to communicate, (Hyland, 2007, p. 150). Therefore, the results of this investigation suggest that the EFL pre-service student-teachers and their teachers at this higher educational level in Kuwait need improved training and professional development to improve the teaching and learning practices in the EFL writing programme. Their EFL writing classroom practices showed that there was a big gap between theory and practices of the EFL writing curriculum as their teachers focused on teaching the form of the language, and the writing product, but meaning-making and the writing process were given little attention.

The study results also suggest encouraging teachers of this study to be active writers and readers themselves so that they develop greater understanding of the writing process. Teachers need to be aware of the influence of reading on writing fluency. The pre-service programme of teaching EFL writing in this college ignored the role of reading in the knowledge of writing. Thus, teachers in this research need to encourage their student-teachers to read and follow-up their reading comprehension to ensure they learn and improve their EFL writing knowledge.

Another aspect that both in-service and pre-service training might address in more depth is the assessment and evaluation of writing. In this study, the teachers' reliance on playing the role of error detector in evaluating and focusing on the weaknesses in students' writing is affecting students' confidence and motivation to write. Teachers here need to be well-trained in how to motivate their students to work better and improve their writing competency through effective feedback. They need to be positive in their feedback and praise students' successes, as well as highlighting ways in which the writing could be improved. An implication of this is that teachers would benefit from an increase in the range of evaluation strategies in their repertoire to assist their students to improve their writing progress. They might, for example, use the one-to-one conference to explore and revise writing with their students. Research suggests that the one-to-one conference is an efficient way to explore students' drafts and provide contrastive feedback. Thus, this research suggests that teachers should consider the value of the one-to-one conference. Students need to feel more relaxed about making errors, thus in the conference, teachers need to reinforce the idea that no-one writes perfectly from the first draft.

This study also indicates the importance of the student-teacher relationship and of re-framing the role of the teacher in a more supportive and less authoritarian mode. Teachers in this research need to be flexible and democratic with their students, as this study proved that some teachers' negative behaviour caused fear and low self-efficacy for the majority of students. Students of this study claimed they were unconfident, worried, anxious, and hesitant about their ability to write fluently and to communicate with their teachers effectively. Teachers in this study need to stop threatening their students by using their grades to motivate them to work better. The findings here indicated that this type of practice did not motivate their students to work better, but instead achieved the opposite and made them anxious writers and worried about their grades. That type of behaviour turned students' attention from learning fluent EFL writing to memorizing in order to get high grades. The results suggests that teachers of this research need to develop a closer relationship with their students to help them be more relaxed, confident and full of self-belief to work in a healthy academic environment. They need to vary their teaching practices to meet the individual differences. They must get away, as Teece describes, 'from the image of seeing themselves as superior or untouchable, an image which in the past, has been suggested', (Teece, 2009, p. 267) to someone who is more humanistic and understanding.

Implications for Future Research

A few key areas were highlighted by EFL student-teachers in this research through which they believed their teaching and learning practices need to be improved. These areas may benefit from future research:

- From the investigation of EFL students' perceptions of the influence of L1 writing fluency on L2 writing, some participants in this study said their L1 writing fluency was not good because writing in Arabic was a difficult for them. In the literature, it is argued that fluency in L1 writing has a positive impact on learning EFL/ESL writing, (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996; Prior, 2006). However, these Kuwaiti students were not confident writing in Arabic and this may be affecting their confidence for writing in English. This result confirms the assessment report of the UNESCO (2000) report on education for all Arab states. In that report, UNESCO attributed the cause of Arab students' challenges in their L1 writing to the existence of two different forms of Arabic language: *Al*

Fusha for reading and writing and *Al Amyiah* for speaking (see Chapter One). The present study suggests more investigation should be conducted to understand how to resolve this persistent problem in Kuwait and the rest of the Arab world.

- Investigating the influence of cultural aspects of writing within the framework of Islamic values. It was obvious from the participants of this research that they had been using memorization strategies for learning EFL writing since they had started school. They used to memorize EFL sentences to get high grades. Although Islam encourages creative learning through the use of all the intellectual abilities, teachers in this college seemed to encourage memorizing. In Islamic culture, memorizing the Quran is very important for all Muslims whereas memorizing sentences in learning EFL writing is not helpful for communicative writing fluency. I believe more research needs to be conducted to understand more about teachers' educational and cultural conceptualisations of teaching writing within Islamic values. Is there any link between memorizing the Quran and memorizing sentences in teaching and learning EFL writing? What causes teachers' emphasis on memorizing in their teaching and learning EFL writing?

- Investigating the nature of the relationship between the teachers of this study and their students. The results of this research proved that teachers play the role of controller and authority figure more than facilitator of their students' learning. This has a negative impact on student learning and motivation. There is no doubt that the role of the teacher from the past to the present has fundamentally changed. In the past, teachers used to be one of the major resources of knowledge for the students. However, at the present, with the technology revolution or through internet search engines the whole world has become a global village. Information is easily available for everyone at anytime, anywhere in this world. The teacher's role therefore is not like it used to be, as the only resource of knowledge for the students. Thus, the question here is how do teachers in this academic environment perceive their role? What has made teachers in Kuwait be more like a controller than a facilitator in the EFL classroom? Do they still believe they are the major resource of knowledge? How do they perceive the use of technology in their classroom? Do teachers

know about the students' perceptions of their teachers' behaviour? What can people who are in charge of teaching and learning EFL in general in Kuwait do to improve the relationship between teachers and their students?

- Investigating how teaching and learning EFL writing at this higher educational level could make use of modern global communication and technology in EFL classrooms, for example, using Facebook, Twitter, etc. to improve students' EFL writing fluency. The results of the research showed that the use of EFL writing in online chatting had a positive impact on one of the student's EFL writing. She practised online EFL chatting and writing with some native English speakers and she felt her EFL writing and speaking fluency had subsequently improved. She became more confident of her EFL writing ability and her motivation to practise writing was increased. Intervention studies which explore the impact of these technologies on both writing quality and student motivation would be of value.

- Investigating the effectiveness of the Kuwaiti EFL writing curriculum in all levels of governmental schools, universities and colleges. The present study considered one higher educational college only and it is important to establish if these findings are typical of broader patterns in Kuwait, not only in other higher education colleges, but crucially also in schools. This might include investigating how many EFL Kuwaiti teachers are qualified to teach EFL writing? What might be the future prospects of teaching EFL writing in Kuwait? How much are the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Education aware of the teaching and learning of L1 and L2 writing issues in Kuwait, and how might policy adapt to reflect new understandings?

- Investigating and understanding the gap between the high school EFL writing curriculum and that of the colleges and universities, comparing the curricula to see if Kuwaiti high school EFL students are well-prepared to engage in college EFL writing courses. This research found that all the students felt that there was a significant gap between the curriculum of teaching EFL writing at their high school and that of EFL writing at this college. Understanding the difference between the two levels of education would help in understanding what EFL

writing teachers in Kuwait do and what changes to curricula could do to bridge the gap.

- Investigating the development of a wider range of assessment and evaluation strategies on EFL Kuwaiti students' progress in writing. This might include intensive training of a group of teachers in formative assessment, the use of conferencing, and the provision of positive focused feedback, prior to their use in the classroom. Combined qualitative and quantitative studies which provide statistical data on learning progress and explanatory data on how the assessment was used would benefit the development of more effective assessment practices in the teaching of EFL writing.

Finally, it is worth noting that the student-teachers in this study were very excited and willing to share their EFL writing experiences with the researcher because it was the first time that anyone had sought to hear their views and opinions. Being involved in the research gave them a voice. Future curriculum development and research might constructively be shaped around collaborative principles where policy-makers, researchers, teachers, and students work together to investigate and develop new research-evidenced pedagogies for the teaching of EFL writing. In this way, the teaching of EFL writing would be attentive to the needs of Kuwaiti students and teachers in the real world, and the research would enrich EFL writing theory, and help improve Kuwait's international educational position to make the country more competitive.

Reflections on the limitations of the study.

The use of a mixed methods approach proved valuable in addressing the aims of this research. It showed how different methods can be combined to gain an understanding of a phenomenon. The use of the questionnaire was useful to capture descriptive information related to participants' educational experiences and thoughts towards EFL writing. By using the descriptive statistics, it helped to understand better the context being investigated. The use of semi-structured interviews were successful in obtaining rich information to understand the situation and clarify the issues that had been addressed by the questionnaire.

The data obtained from the questionnaire and the interviews all enlarge the data set and gained explicit understanding of the points of view of the participants of this research. Using different research instruments triangulated the data, reduced the bias and increased the feasibility of the research but demands time and efforts for managing, transcribing, and analysing the data. The limitation of using the data of the questionnaire in this study was obvious from the nature of some responses of the participants. The result of the questionnaire reflected positive responses for some items, whereas in the interviews, the responses for those items were negative. For example, the result for item number 14 of the questionnaire, *'My EFL writing teacher regularly gives us her feedback on our writing assignment'*, was positive, whereas, in the interviews a few participants suggested that the feedback was not efficient and helpful. They believed their teachers' feedback did not help them improve their EFL writing fluency because the comments were form-focused, unclear, ambiguous and difficult to understand. Another similar example for the item number 6, *'My EFL writing teacher gives me the chance to choose the topic that I like'*. A good number of the participants answered positively to this item whereas, in the interviews, the participants strongly desired ownership in writing. They believed their EFL writing teachers did not provide them with the opportunity to write about topics that they liked, because their teachers either chose the topics for them or they needed to choose one topic from a list in the text book consisted of four to six limited topics which they felt were not interesting for them. This result of the questionnaire and the interviews emphasised the importance of using different methods in this research. Because the items of the questionnaire were structured, determined and asked about one issue at a time, there are limitations on the quality of data it elicited: it was the interviews for this research which were most helpful in understanding the breadth and complexity of students' perceptions about EFL writing experiences.

Appendices

Appendix one – Student Questionnaire

Dear Participants

My name is Intissar Kamil. I am a doctoral candidate majoring in English Language at the University of Exeter/ UK. The objective of this study is to investigate an in-depth analysis of the perceptions of Kuwaiti student-teachers' towards learning and teaching writing English as a foreign language (EFL) at the higher educational college in Kuwait.

Please fill out the attached questionnaire carefully. Your responses are very important for the success of this study. Please note that, your responses will be kept confidential and will be used for this research purpose only. In addition to the research questionnaire, with your written permission, I would like to make an interview with you for the same study.

Thank you for your participants in filling out the questionnaire. If you have any questions or interest regarding this study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Regards

Intissar Al Kamil

Email: islam.peace.isk@gmail.com

The Questionnaire

Dear Participants

Your cooperation means a great deal to this study. Please take your time to answer this questionnaire carefully. The information you provide here will remain confidential.

Please read each statement and tick 'No' if your teacher never does this or 'Yes' if they do this (even if only rarely). If you tick 'No' go on to the next question; if you tick 'Yes' please put a tick in the box that best corresponds to your vies of how helpful this form of teacher action is. There are no correct and more correct responses, only your opinion. For each statement, use the following scale to share the degree to which you agree with.

Scale:
1. **Very Helpful**
2. **Helpful**
3. **Uncertain**
4. **Unhelpful**
5. **Very unhelpful**

	Section 1: Tell me about your second language classroom learning and teaching writing practices.			1. Very Helpful	2. Helpful	3. Uncertain	4. Unhelpful	5. Very unhelpful
E.g.	My L2 writing teacher uses a whiteboard (If your teacher does this and you find it helpful tick 'yes' and 'helpful').	Yes	✓		✓			
		No						
E.g.	My L2 writing teacher uses PowerPoint slides (if your teacher does not do this, simply tick 'no')	Yes						
		No	✓					
1.	My L2 writing teacher gives me her feedback for my draft several times.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
2.	My L2 writing teacher helps me in outlining my main ideas before writing them on paper.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
3.	My L2 writing teacher discuss the new L2 topic with the whole classroom first.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
4.	My L2 writing teacher encourages me to review my L2 written text many times before I finalize it.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
5.	My L2 writing teacher uses questioning techniques to help us generate more ideas about the L2 topic.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
6.	My L2 writing teacher gives me the chance to choose the topic that I like.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
7.	My L2 writing teacher discusses my L2 writing individually (one to one meeting).	Yes	⇨					
		No						
8.	My L2 writing teacher encourages me to compare my L2 writing with a valuable model text.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
9.	My L2 writing teacher asks us to write regular journals.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
10.	My L2 writing teacher keeps a portfolio for each student's writing work	Yes	⇨					
		No						
11.	My L2 writing teacher welcomes any imaginative (unusual) topics.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
12.	My L2 writing teacher encourages me to revise relying on my own knowledge and strategies.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
13	Writing a topic with correct grammar is the main focus of my L2 writing teacher.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
14	My L2 writing teacher regularly gives us her feedback on our writing assignments.	Yes	⇨					
		No						

	Section 2: Tell me, about how you are taught to communicate with L2 writing?			1. Very Helpful	2. Helpful	3. Uncertain	4. Unhelpful	5. Very unhelpful
15	My L2 writing teacher encourages us to discuss our writing in group and pair work.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
16	My L2 writing teacher encourages us to exchange our texts.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
17	My L2 writing teacher encourages me to write L2 texts to real readers in my real life.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
18	My L2 writing teacher teaches us to write different kinds of text, such as academic essays, diaries, biography, story-telling, different types of letters, journals etc…	Yes	⇨					
		No						
19	My L2 writing teacher usually discusses my writing assignments with me.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
20	My L2 writing teacher encourages us to write to different audiences.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
21	In L2 writing classroom, my L2 writing teacher encourages us to criticize each others' texts.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
22	My L2 writing teacher is the only reader who reads my L2 writing.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
23	My L2 writing teacher encourages us to criticize our L2 writing assignments in group work.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
24	My L2 writing teacher encourages us to focus on the meaning of the topic.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
25	My L2 writing teacher asks us to read to native writers.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
26	My L2 writing teacher encourages me to write to different readers, such as people outside the classroom	Yes	⇨					
		No						
27	My L2 writing teacher encourages us to read about second language culture.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
28	My L2 writing teacher asks us to work in group and pair in the classroom.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
29	My L2 writing teacher focuses only on the content of the topic that I write.	Yes	⇨					
		No						

For the questions that follow, please read each statement and tick the box that best corresponds to your view about it. There are no correct and more correct responses, only your opinion. For each statement, use the following scale to share the degree to which you agree with.

Scale:

1. **Strongly agree**
2. **Agree**
3. **Uncertain**
4. **Disagree**
5. **Strongly disagree**

	Section 3: Attitudes to writing in general and second language in particular.	1. Strongly agree	2. Agree	3. Uncertain	4. Disagree	5. Strongly disagree
30	Writing is an important tool in which, we save for example our thought, history, culture, tradition, language, etc…					
31	Writing in general gives me the power to express my thoughts.					
32	I believe writing is basically a social communicative means which we need in our real life.					
33	I like writing in general.					
34	I think writing is interesting.					
35	I think L2 writing is the most difficult skill in the process of learning a second language					
36	I believe learning a second language helps us in learning more about our global world.					
37	I believe learning second language writing is affecting the accuracy of my first language writing.					
38	I feel, learning first language writing is more important than learning second language writing.					

Complete: The best teaching method/s that helped me improving my L2 writing was/were:---

----

Complete: If I were L2 writing teacher, I would change or improve the following---------

----

Complete: Usually in my social life (outside the classroom), I write the following in L2 :------------

----

Complete: At home my parents supports my L2 writing by---

Complete: My L2 writing was influenced (either negatively or positively) by the following factors: ---

----

Complete: When I start writing in second language, I feel-------------------------------------

----

Complete: Writing L2 long text is---

Please complete: The reason/s for studying this major is/are ---------------------------------

----

For the questions that follow, please read each statement and tick 'No' if you never do this or 'Yes' if you do this (even if only rarely). If you tick 'No' go on to the next question; if you tick 'Yes' please put a tick in the box that best corresponds to your view of how helpful this strategy is. There are no correct and more correct responses, only your opinion. For each statement, use the following scale to share the degree to which you agree with.

Scale:
  1. **Very Helpful**
  2. **Helpful**
  3. **Uncertain**
  4. **Not Helpful**
  5. **Very Not Helpful**

	Section 4: Tell my about your approaches to writing second language.			1. Very Helpful	2. Helpful	3. Uncertain	4. Unhelpful	5. Very unhelpful
39	I plan for a short L2 text to avoid errors.	Yes						
		No						
40	When I fail to write a good L2 text, I ask my teacher for help.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
41	I read text written by native writers.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
42	I ask my friends for help with my vocabulary problems.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
43	When I plan to write in second language, I use simple sentences.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
44	I ask my peers for help, if I could not distinguish between the new L 2 knowledge with what already known knowledge in my first language.	Yes	⇨					
		No						
45	I use first Language writing planning techniques when writing L2 text.	Yes	⇨					
		No						

For the questions that follow, please read each statement and tick the box that best corresponds to your views about it. There are no correct and more correct responses, only your opinion. For each statement, use the following scale to share the degree to which you agree with.

Scale:
1. **Strongly agree**
2. **Agree**
3. **Uncertain**
4. **Disagree**
5. **Strongly disagree**

	Section 5: Tell me, how you feel about second language writing.	1. Strongly agree	2. Agree	3. Uncertain	4. Disagree	5. Strongly disagree
46	I think knowing the knowledge of the topic I am writing about in L2, makes L2 writing easier.					
47	I believe, I need to use L2 writing with people outside the classroom.					
48	I think, I need to improve my L2 writing.					
49	I believe I need to be exposed to L2 native writers' styles.					
50	I think, I experience difficulties writing issues about L2 culture.					
51	I have the strategy to recognize my errors during my revision.					
53	I need to know how to express what I really want to say easily in L2 writing.					
54	I think, I can write to different readers easily.					
55	I have confidence to show my writing to my peers.					
56	I am confident to receive any criticism for my writing from my readers.					

	Section 6: Are you motivated to write in second language?	1. Strongly agree	2. Agree	3. Uncertain	4. Disagree	5. Strongly disagree
57	I write in L2 because I need it in my daily life.					
58	When I write, my purpose is to give my audience good impression about myself.					
59	I only write to my L2 writing teacher.					
60	I practice writing regularly, because I want to be a good L2 writer.					
61	I have to be a good L2 writer for my future career.					
62	My L1 and L2 readers' positive feedback encourages me to write.					
63	Writing is my best method that I use to express my feeling on paper.					
64	I write because i believe that, L2 writing accuracy will help me to be a professional person at work.					
65	My negative previous learning experience will not stop me from improving my L2 writing.					
66	My good writing in my first language makes me love writing in L2.					

Section 7:   Personal Background

The information you will provide here will remain confidential. Please put a mark wherever appropriate.

1. I usually write English

a.	Once a week	1.	☐
b.	Twice a week	2.	☐
c.	Every other day	3.	☐
d.	none a week	4.	☐

2. In what year study are you in now?

a. First year	1.	☐
b. Second year	2.	☐
c. Third year	3.	☐
d. Fourth year	4.	☐

3. Every week I take ...

a.	I take writing classes once every other week.	1.	☐
b.	one to two English writing classes.	2.	☐
c.	three to four English writing classes.	3.	☐
d.	In everyday basis.	4.	☐

4- I went to …..

a. private English/ American high school.	1.	☐
b. government/ public high school.	2.	☐
c. private Arabic high school.	3.	☐
d. other type of high school.	4.	☐

5- How do you evaluate your first language (Arabic) writing competence?

a- Excellent to very good   1. ☐

b- Good to average   2. ☐

c- Fair to poor   3. ☐

d- Very poor   4. ☐

6 - Evaluate your English writing proficiency.

a.   High   1. ☐

b.   Intermediate   2. ☐

c.   Low   3. ☐

7- I have studied English as a subject in school (before the college level) for…..

a.   8 years.   1. ☐

b.   12 years.   2. . ☐

8 - My academic field (major) is…..

a.   English.   1. ☐

b.   English and French.   2. ☐

9. Choose the most appropriate answer for you status……

a.   I am taking Basic writing this course (Writing Mechanism -one).   1. ☐

b.   I am taking advanced writing this course (Writing Mechanism- two)   2. ☐

c.   I finished basic Writing, and taking advanced writing this course.   3. ☐

d.   I finished both courses, basic and advanced writing.   4. ☐

Are you willing to be interviewed to discuss these issues in greater details? If so, Please fill in the following information so the researcher can contact you.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Tel. or Mobile Number: _____

I appreciate your co-operation very much.

Thank you.

Appendix Two

Interview Schedule

Section 1: Students' Perceptions of EFL writing <u>Teaching and learning practices.</u>

1. Please describe a recent writing lesson you have participated in.

Probe for:

- The usefulness of the teaching strategies mentioned

- Aspects in this lesson that were challenging.

- Anything the teacher could have altered to make the lesson more helpful

2. Teaching Strategies to support **Planning**

How does your teacher help you to generate ideas for writing?

How does your teacher help you plan the structure and shape of your text?

Probe for:

- The helpfulness of content generation strategies

- The use of strategies which support structuring text

3. Teaching Strategies to support writing the text (**Translation)**

How does your teacher help you to write your text?

Probe for:

- The helpfulness of the use of models

- The use of collaborative writing (???)

4. Teaching Strategies to support **Revision**

How does your teacher help you revise and improve your first draft?

Probe for:

- The use of peer feedback

- The helpfulness of teacher feedback on assignments

- The nature of the comments made by peers or teacher

5. **Social Processes** in writing

How does your teacher make the writing you do relevant to your own life and writing experiences?

Probe for:

- Teaching different genres/types of writing, not just composition
- Creating authentic purposes for writing
- Specifying an audience for writing
- Encouraging writing in L2 outside the classroom

6. What criteria does your teacher use to assess your writing? (**Evaluation)**

Section 2: Students' Perceptions of <u>themselves as EFL writers</u>

.

1. Tell me about yourself as an L2 writer - your strengths, what you find difficult, what you like and dislike writing etc.

Probe for:

- Perceptions of difficulty
- Perceptions of their self-efficacy (how confident they are about writing)

2. The **Writing Process**

If I were to set you a writing task now, talk me through how you would go about it.

Probe for:

- Planning strategies
- What happens while writing (re-reading; revision during writing; vocabulary searches etc)
- Revision strategies

3. The **Evaluation** of writing.

How do you judge how good your writing is?

4. Relationship between **L1 and L2 writing**.

Tell me what you see as the differences and similarities in the way you write in L1 and EFL.

Probe for:

- Confidence
- Differences in writing process (especially in the translation stage where ideas are converted into written text)
- Whether L1 writing helps EFL writing in any way

5. **Motivation** to write in EFL.

How important is becoming a confident EFL writer to you?

Probe for:

- Use of EFL writing in daily life.
- Perceived value of EFL writing.

Appendix Three: Sample Transcript Interview

Section one: What are students' perceptions to teaching and learning EFL writing in Kuwait?

R: Reviewer

S: Student-teacher

Privations used in the interviews: Advanced writing course (AWC) and Basic writing course (BWC)

As I mentioned before the purpose of this study is to gain information about your perceptions to teaching and learning EFL writing practices and to yourself as EFL writer? I would like to remind you that all the information in this interview will be confidential, anonymous, and you have the right to withdraw any time you feel unhappy to continue the interview. This interview is divided into two sections, the first section will be about your teaching and learning EFL writing practices and the second section you will talk about yourself as EFL writer, or how you perceive yourself as EFL writer? Let us start now...

This section is about classroom teaching and learning EFL writing practices.

R 1: Please describe me one of your EFL writing lessons.
S 1: Our BWC teacher used to give us sheets of paper (A1), our teacher asked us to buy a text book for the course. We bought the book but we did not use it at all for the whole term. We kept it at home.
R 2: You mean, you have not used any text book at all for the whole term?
S 2: Yes, for the whole term. Our teacher did not even use anything from that book. I bought the book for 6 dinar. I am not sure why we bought it, our teacher asked us to buy it. However, when I took my second writing course the Advanced level (AWC) this term, our AWC teacher asked us to buy the same book. I found out that, we should have used that book in our Basic Writing Course (BWC), but I am not sure why we bought it and we did not use it at.. (A2). our BW teacher used to give us exercises from some sheets of copied papers (A2), (GG2). Our teacher used to use an orange book a different one... that we did not have. He used to ask us to work out the exercises on those papers at home and most of our answers were wrong because each of us worked individually at home(A2). We used to discuss our homework together in the classroom and our teacher used to make fun of our answers(Z2) (H2). Our teacher used to say " my son is nine years old and he writes better English than you 18 years old"... his son goes to English private school not like us.(Z2) (H2)

R 3: Could you please describe me what was on those papers?

S 3: There were some sentences with no sense or meaning, and our teacher asked us to add or change some words to make them meaningful.(A3)

R 4: What type of words you needed to add or change?

S 4: We added words like e.g. 'is, on, firstly', like this, to give meaning to the sentences, or in another words the meaning was wrong and by changing a word we corrected the meaning. (A4)

R 5: What else?

S 5: They were independent sentences, however, our teacher gave us a paragraph and it was about how to use punctuation and correct spelling; like that....(A5) (GG5)

R 6: Was there anything else besides punctuations and spelling?

S 6: [Pause for few seconds] Not much grammar, there was not much grammar. If there was a grammar, it was mostly like taking a quick note. But not the whole work was about grammar, because those exercises were grammatically correct and we were only working on the punctuations, In the exam…(A6) (GG6)

R 7: Before we talk about the exam, I would like to know more about your lesson. You said, your teacher used to give you sheets of paper. Please tell me, what else your teacher used to do besides giving you those sheets of papers.

S 7: That was all, our teacher gave us at the end of the term an extra assignment… and that was our suggestion because we did not have enough grades. Our grades were divided for: 20 mark for the attendance, 30 mark for the Midterm exam, and 50 mark for the final exam. ..(L7). So we asked our teacher to give us extra homework to help us increase our low grades. But not all students have done that extra homework, very few of them did because it was difficult for them to write. (K7)

R 8: Tell me about any other activities that you used to do in your EFL Writing lesson.

S 8: That what we used to do in our classroom?

R 9 : You mean answering those sheets of papers only?.

S 9: Yes

R 10: Any other work besides that?

S 10: Nothing.

R 11: What happened next after you finished those exercises?

S 11: Usually we write them on the board.

R 12: How many sentences you used to write on the board?

S 12: Around six, we picked them from that sheet of papers(A12) (F12)

R 13: Did your teacher used to write all the sentences on the board?

S 13: No, mostly two in each lesson.

R 14: Do you help each other in the classroom?

S 14: Yes, every two students used to work together (F14).

R 15: Did your teacher ask you to work together?

S 15: Yes, we used to discuss our paired work with our teacher (F15).

R 16: Discussing those exercises....

S 16: Yes, until the end of the lesson .

R 17: What you usually do in your new lesson?

S17: Sometimes, our teacher used to repeat the same sentences. I am saying sometimes, it did not happen so often. Sometimes our teacher does not give us anything.(A17)

R 18: You mean, your teacher repeated the same exercises again.

S 18: Yes

R 19: Anything new.

S 19: Nothing… nothing new, we have not learned anything new in this classroom; it was same as our high school classroom.(AA19) (B19)

R 20: Tell me about your third lesson.

S 20: We used to work out same exercises in those sheets of paper for the whole week, nothing new (A20).

R 21: You spent the whole week working out the same type of exercises?

S 21: Yes, we used to discuss the same issues again and again for the whole week.

R 22: Anything else?

S 22: Sometimes our teacher used to give us new sheets of paper with new sentences and he used to ask us to do the same work again and again.(A21)

R 23: How often you used to write a topic?

S 23: That was our suggestion to our teacher, we asked him to give us the opportunity to write an extra work e.g. writing a topic or a paragraph in order to get high grades … some students had chosen to write a topic.(U23) (K23)

R 24: A Topic based on what?

S 24: A Topic from our own choice, each student choice her own topic.(K24)

R 25: Tell me, what was your classroom discussion before you have written that topic?

S 25: Nothing, our teacher just told us verbally to use the dictionary, and to be careful about the coherence and cohesion besides the punctuations.(A25)

R 26: Have you discussed with your teacher in your classroom anything about coherence and cohesion for your writing?

S 26: No, I asked my mother, what is coherence and cohesion.(AA26)

R 27: Well, did your teacher explain to you in the classroom anything about coherence and cohesion?(A27)

S 27: ….. No.

R 28: I would like to know, what was your classroom discussion before you started writing that paragraph?

S 29: He did not say anything,(A29)

R 29: Did you choose the topic?

S 29: Yes, each student chose her own topic.(I29)

R 30: what was the length of your topic?

S 30: Our teacher did not say.

R 31: Tell me more about your writing lesson.

S 31: One student used to talk verbally about her topic assignment to the students in the classroom. While that student was talking, our teacher used to read her assignment to ensure that she was the one who has done the assignment. (F31)

R 32: What was your topic about?

S 32: My topic was about 'friendship', I talked about the positive side of the friendship which has many positives that people do not usually see them.(I32)

R 33: What else?

S 33: Our teacher asked me, why did I write about this topic, I got the idea of this topic from my own experience. My mom used to feel there was something wrong with my friendship… I did not listen to her because I was a teenager on that time, you know what I mean…(I33)

R 34: Yes, I am a mother and I know what you mean... would you tell me , what happened next after you read the topic to your classroom.

S 34: I did not read it, I have just said it verbally.

R 35: Sorry, what was next…

S 35: Our teacher told me "your topic was good and had coherence and cohesion but you have got some mistakes".(H35)

R 36: What type of mistakes?.

S 36: Only mistakes, our teacher said 'you have some mistakes'.(H36)

R 37: Did your teacher tell you what type of mistakes?

S 37: My mistakes were mostly in grammar.(H37) (GG37)

R 38: Tell me, how did you know that you had grammatical errors?

S 38: My teacher told me, you had grammatical errors.(H38) (GG38)

R 39: Did your teacher give you any examples about your grammatical mistakes?

S 39: No, just grammar mistakes.(H39) (GG39)

R 40: Tell me, what happened to your topic?

S 40: Nothing, our teacher took it with him.

R 41: Did you receive any feedback from your teacher?

S 41: Nothing, they still with him since last term.(G41)

R 42: You mean you have not got them back yet.

S 42: No, he has not returned them back to us…he has not yet. .(H42)

R 43: What happened to your writing assignment then?

S 43: What happened!!! Nothing, but our teacher asked us to summarize that topic in our final exam. (L43)

R 44: You mean to summarize "the friendship" topic.

S 44: Yes, If any student did not prepare that topic at home on that day, it means she will not be able to write anything in her final exam and she will not get any grade for it. (L44) In fact…We got shocked, when we saw the question in the final exam.(A44)

R 45: Why?

S 45: Because our teacher never taught us how to summarize any topic so why he asked us to summarize that topic in our final exam. Anyway, I summarized my 'friendship' topic in few lines. (A45) (K45)

R 46: Have you written any other topic besides your "friendship" topic?

S 46: In the first lesson of this term, our teacher asked us to write a paragraph about "Myself".(I46)

R 47: You said in your first lesson.

S 47: Yes,

R 48: Was it a topic or just one paragraph?(A48)

S 48: A Paragraph, just a normal paragraph with full of mistakes, everything in that paragraph was mostly wrong (A48)… we came from a poor EFL writing background we did not have good knowledge about the basic rules of writing (B. 48) (AA48). Our teacher spent the whole month just discussing with us the errors students made in their 'Myself' paragraphs... their writing was very weak and full of errors. (GG48) (A48) (H48)

R 49: What was your discussion about 'Friendship' topic?

S 49: Our teacher used to choose one student to write her topic on the board, our teacher used to discuss that paragraph with us and tell us what was wrong with that writing for example he used to say ..this was wrong.. that was correct. I think most of students' paragraphs were full of mistakes, their writing was very weak… their writing was not suitable to be used in the classroom.(GG49) (A49) (H49)

R 50: Did you have the opportunity to review your writing assignment with your teacher?

S 50: No, We were around 20 students and our teacher used to choose one student to write her paragraph on the board in each lesson.

R 51: You mean writing the whole paragraph on the board.

S 51: Yes, each student used to take good time writing on the board. it used to take a good time to write the whole paragraph on the board. (A51)

R 52: What else, go ahead please..

S 52: We used to discuss some students' assignments or paragraphs on the board , for example, we used to correct her grammar if it was very week, we change her punctuation like adding a full stop or comma to her writing. (A52) (A52) (H52)

R 53: Did you have enough time to discuss everything in each paragraph?

S 53: Just one student per a lesson, as i told you before, each students' paragraph was very weak and wrong, very..very… weak not even suitable for a primary level.

R 54: What happened in your new lesson?

S 54: Another student wrote her paragraph on the board… doing the same thing as the previous student, all her paragraph was wrong. (GG54)

R 55: What else.

S 55: Same as the previous lesson, we corrected a new student's paragraph. (A55)

R 56: Tell me how much did you learn from that type of practice?

S 56: It was useful to see students' mistakes, their paragraphs were weak, but those types of paragraphs were not suitable to be used for teaching writing for the college students. If I were my teacher, I would have chosen the best paragraphs only and I would ensure that the quality of those paragraphs is suitable for the students... help them improve their writing and use the time of their lesson wisely.(GG56) (H56) (A56)

R 57: Did you cover all your paragraphs in the classroom?

S 57: No.

R 58: How many paragraphs were covered?

S 58: I am not sure, but not all the students have the chance to read and review their paragraphs.(GG58)

R 59: You told me few minutes ago that your writing teacher asked you in your first lesson to write a topic about "myself". I would like to know more about that writing.

S 59: We wrote that paragraph in the classroom, and it was full of mistakes because it was written in a very short time...quickly.(GG59) (A59) (H59)

R 60: Have you discussed with your teacher 'myself' writing?

S 60: Yes

R 61: Tell me about it.

S 61: On the board.

R 62: What was the main focus of your teacher's discussion?

S 62: Punctuation.(A62)

R 63: what else??

S 63: Spelling, but mostly punctuation, because that what our teacher used to focus on during the course.(A63) (GG63) I memorized everything we have taken on those exercises for the exams. (Z63) (L63)

R 64: How much did you learn from that teaching practice?

S 64: I feel that I did not learn that much from my classroom teaching, but I used to ask my peers in case I need help (F64) or I used to make some individual efforts like summarizing some English writing outside my classroom activities. (U64)

R 65: What peers did you use to ask?.

S 65: My peers who were with me in my writing classroom, I used to ask them about the punctuation e.g. about the comma and how to use it.(GG65) (F65)

R 66: Have you been asked by your teacher to submit your assignment to him?

S 66: Yes, our teacher took them from us but our teacher did not return them back to us. (H66)

R 67: Have you practiced any more writing?

S 67: No. (K67)

R 68: Tell me about the rest of the term, how did you finish the rest of the term?

S 68: With the same sheets of papers.(A68)

R 69: You mean the same papers that you used before.

S 69: Yes.

R 70: Tell me, what was in your new sheets of papers?

S 70: The same thing, punctuation, and adding and changing words for some sentences to make them sensible.(A70)

R 71: What do you mean by sensible?

S 71: I mean, for example, there was a sentence talking about a fireman we have been asked to write him a regard for setting the fire on. That sentence was not sensible, so we should change the meaning of the sentence and make it meaningful and sensible, for example, we should thank that fireman for putting the fire off not setting the fire on. (A71)

R 72: Please correct me if I were not accurate. So far, You have told me that you practiced two writing topics during the whole term, one was written at home and it was paragraph from your choice, and the second writing was "myself" and you wrote it in the classroom.

S 72: Yes, and " Myself" topic was repeated in my second writing course with (name of the teacher). I did not learn from my previous Basic writing teacher that much except how to use comma and full stop (A72) but in AWC our teacher asked us not to write in 'Myself' topic anything about our names, college, age, major, or I like English, and I am a student ... no not like that but our teacher asked us to write something different.(I72) I agree with her. We should write about something more advanced than just writing and talking like children.

R 73: How much did you learn from your basic and advanced writing courses?

S 73: Frankly saying, with my BW teacher (name of the teacher) I noticed there was no learning; I memorized what was in those sheets of paper by heart to put them down on the exam's paper to get high grades.(Z73) (L73)

R 74: Tell me what was in your exam?

S 74: There were some sentences from the exercises that we had on those papers. I put down in the exam's paper the sentences that I have memorized. Our teacher asked us to memorize them if we wanted to get high grades.(L74)

R 75: How many classes you used to take per a week?

S 75: Three

R 76: Did you attend all the classes?

S 76: Yes, because there was a 20 mark for the attendance.(L76) (U76)

R 77: What about your peers, did they use to attend regularly?

S 77: Yes.

R78: Please correct me if I were wrong, You told me before in every lesson you practiced some individual exercises, am I write?

S 78: Yes, but if our teacher did not give us any exercises or papers in that day, we usually spent the whole lesson arguing with our teacher. Our teacher used to tell us " You do not know how to write" or " you are bad writers " and our teacher thinks that he knows better …and he used to make fun of us as if we carry the same degree a PhD like him. (H78) (AA78) We told him "we came here to learn", but he kept saying in a funny way "it is not your fault, but the Ministry of Education's

fault, they did not teach you well" (H78)… What really shocked me that, I was a freshman student and I did not believe that I was accepted in this college for this major… I was very excited and enthusiastic to learn and work hard,(U78) but our BW teacher told us in his first lesson that "I will not repeat for you things that you have taken in your high school" (H78) because we did not learn that much writing in our High school… I was eager to improve my learning in this college (H78) however, our teacher here disappointed me by saying (AA78) (U78) "I will not repeat anything from what you have taken in your high school, so if you dot not know anything, you will be the same, you do not know anything" (H78). You know what is happening to us in this college; it looks like as if you built something on the top of very weak foundation. We did not have a strong background in English writing when we came from our high school (B78), and in this college teachers did not want to help us to improve our writing (AA78) (H78) (U78), so i wonder how could we improve our writing, if they did not want to help us?!! Our BW teacher decided to put something on nothing.(AA78)

R 79: Have you received any feedback for your writing from your BW teacher?

S 79: The only feedback that we received was for "Myself" topic the one we have written in the classroom.

R 80: You mean, your teacher put some comments on your writing.

S 80: Yes.

R 81: Describe me what was written on your paper?

S 81: All wrong… he underlined and circulated some words in red, I did not understand what was wrong with my writing.(H81) (GG81)

R 82: Tell me more about your teachers' comments.

S 82: No written comments, I did not know, what was wrong with my sentences.(H82) (GG82)

R 83: How much do you think these kinds of comments were helpful?

S 83: Not helpful. I wanted to know my mistakes, but our teacher did not tell me anything about my errors. I did not know them.(GG83) (H83)

R 84: Have you talked with your teacher about his comments?

S 84: You know when we go to our teacher's office, our teacher used to look down to us and keep saying "right… right… it was not your fault… it was the Ministry of Education's fault". When i go to our teacher's office to ask him about my errors, our teacher used to repeat the same words again and again like for examples." your writing is good , you do not have any problem ".That what our teacher used to say to me he used to make us confused.(H84) Some students could not make the course and they failed the BW course and now they are taking it with the same teacher and they are going through the same headache. He is not supportive and he keeps saying "why did you repeat the course, you have no problem you are good" (the interviewee is laughing...) . We felt there was no use of talk to this teacher about our writing problems.(H84)

R 85: Tell me about other types of writing that you practiced in your classroom.

S 85: Nothing, no actual writing.(A85) (K85)

R86: How much you think teaching EFL writing practices in your classroom helped you communicate in EFL writing with different readers in your social life? (JJ86)

S 86: I learned that from our conversation class with another teacher.

R 87: I am sorry, I mean with EFL writing teachers.

S 87: Writing!! I did not learn any useful thing for my daily life.(JJ87)

R 88: How much you use EFL writing in your real life outside the classroom.

S 88: sometimes.(JJ88)

R 89: Like what?

S 89: Sometimes when I get upset, I express myself in English.(JJ89)

R 90: Why in English not in your first language, Arabic?

S 90: I do not know, I like to write in English for two reasons, firstly, I like the way of writing English (cursive). Secondly, in Arabic we got use to write informal form of Arabic writing which is not proper way of writing and not correct way of writing, because of that, I prefer to write in English. (N90)

R 91: Why do not you try using Arabic writing?

S 91: I am not good enough in Arabic writing; I do not know how to write formally. (N91)

R 92: Going back to your writing lessons, have you practiced different types of writing to different readers?

S 92: We feel sorry that we attended those lessons. (K92)

R 93: In the other word, did your teacher encourage you to practice different kinds of writing or writing to different readers.

S 93: Yes.

R 94: Please, tell me about it.

S 94: Our teacher told us "you need to write always in order to be good in your writing ", he said that verbally only.(K94)

R 95: Tell me about some writing that you practiced for different readers.

S 95: Nothing. (K95)

R 96: Did your teacher ask you to submit your writing for his feedback?

S 96: I think, if I asked him so…

R 97: I am sorry, I would like you to tell me what was happing in your classroom.

S 97: Actual writing outside the classroom did not happen, the only writing we did was 'Myself'.(I97)

R 98: Tell me, how your writing teacher used to evaluate your writing?

S 98: I do not know, you mean the grades. (L98)

R 99: Whatever?

S 99: I got C

R 100: Why "C"?

S 100: In the midterm, I got 14 out of 30. (L100)

R 101: what else.

S 101: 30 marks for the Midterm exam, 20 for the attendance and 50 for the final exam.

R 102: Tell me about your Midterm exam.(L101)

S 102: Our teacher asked us to write a topic… we came to the exam with no idea about the content of that exam or what will come in the exam…and that why everyone got a very bad grade. (L102)

R 103: Tell me more about it.

S 103: The questions of the midterm exam came from those exercises we use to work them out in our classroom.(L103)

R 104: So you mean the midterm exam was about working out some exercises.

S 104: Yes, there was 30 marks for the midterm.(L104)

R 105: How did your teacher evaluate your writing besides your exam?

S 105: Five marks for each question and I think there was one question for 10 mark.

R 106: Tell me about the question with the 10 marks.(L105)

S 106: There was a small paragraph about writing an 'introduction', and we were asked to write some sentences about that paragraph,(K106) the total words of the paragraph should not be more than 82 word. I have seen that type of writing on those sheets of papers, but our teacher did not practice them with us.(A106)

R 107: Tell me about your classroom discussion for writing the introduction.

S 107: Our teacher gave us a paper about how to write an introduction but he did not practice it with us or how to write that introduction, he did not ask us to write it down. (A107)

R 108: Did he ask you to write any other introduction?

S 108: Yes.

R 109: Tell me about it.

S 110: Our teacher gave us an assignment about writing an 'introduction' and asked us to do it at home, and when we came to our new lesson our teacher found out that some students did not do their homework so because of those students, he decided to punish the whole class and cut down our grades. (K110) (L110)

R 111: Did he discuss it with you in the classroom before you had taken it home.

S 111: No.

R 112: Have you taken any more introductions?

S 112: No, not at all.

R 113: You mean no more writing.

S 113: No.

R 114: You said that your teacher has given you an introduction assignment for your mid-term exam. Tell me what did you write in your exam?

S 114: They (students) memorized that' introduction' and they copied it in their exam paper. That why all of us got a quarter mark only. (Z114)

R 115: Tell me do you practice any group works or any kind of collaborative activities?

S 115: Yes, group works.(F115)

R 116: Tell me about your group works.

S 116: In our group works, we used to work out those exercises. We used to correct some sentences and use the right punctuation for them.(F116) (A116) (GG116)

R 117: What was your teacher's role?

S 117: Frankly saying, our teacher used to answer our questions and correct our mistakes while we were working on those papers. (H117)

R 118: How often you used to work in group?

S 118: Just if our teacher wanted to work seriously on that day.

R 119: How many times you practiced group works?

S 119: I do not know.

R 120: Do you want to tell me anything that I have not asked you about?

S 120: Can I talk about my Advance writing teacher the (name of the teacher), which I have recently dropped her class… I will take my Advanced writing course with the same teacher of my basic writing because I noticed with AW teacher that she treated us as if we were expert in writing, and had a good background. Our Advanced writing teacher used to say, why you did not write well… use your brain…why you did not do it…why ..why..why.. and then teacher (the name of the teacher) gave us some assignments and she expected us to write fluently about some academic writing right away from the beginning without any practice (A120) (H120). I felt it was difficult for me to work with that teacher (U120) (AA120) despite that I got the highest grade in the class 8 out of 10 but I felt it was difficult, (AA120) (L120) for example, difficult to narrow down my topic in the same way that my teacher expected us to do it.(A120)

R 121: Tell me about 'narrowing down', did your AW teacher show you how to narrow down your writing?

S121: Yes, we have done one assignment about it at home and another one in the classroom.

R 122: Ok...

S 122: She said, 'we did not know how to think properly or how to narrow down our topic'.(A122) (A122)

R 123: After you have narrowed down your writing at home, what was her feedback to your writing?

S 123: She gave the whole class zero in our assignment's paper.(L123)

R 124: Do you know how to narrow down your topic?

S 124: Specifically, I did not know what my problem was and I did not know how to narrow down my topic. (H124) In the classroom we practiced narrowing down with our teacher. She used to talk about students' common errors for their assignments and (GG124) she used to criticize our writing by saying "your writing is not good for academic level". (H124)

R 125: Did you drop the course because you got zero on you assignment, I would like to know why did you drop the course?

S 125: No, not because I got zero, but I dropped the course because I did not want to drop my GPA (grade point average) down. (U 125) In addition, I did not like her way of teaching, she used to make things more difficult… she believed by using that way of teaching, she will push her students to study hard or work better. That kind of practice did not work with me. (H125) (A125) I did not want to put too much effort to challenge the task.

R 126: Tell me about your experience in the two writing courses?

S 126: You mean did we write or not?.

R 127: Well, what are the differences or similarities between the teaching practices of the two courses?

S 127: Ok..When we used to finish our writing assignment in the AWC, our teacher used to correct our topics and return them back to us, (H127) not like BW teacher. AW teacher gave us the chance to ask her about our errors in the classroom.(H127) I knew some of my errors, our teacher discussed with us our common mistakes in the classroom and I learned from that experience.(GG127) (H127)

R 128: Was it helpful?

S 128: Yes, it was, I learned how to use writing rules step by step… so if I decided to write now I will not write in the same way that I used to do in my BWC, I know how to organize my writing and narrowing down my topic…(A128) (GG128)

R 129: So, how much it was helpful for your writing fluency?

S 129: It was helpful.

R 130: Why did you then drop the course?

S 130: Because she used to correct every single error in a boring way and she wanted us to write accurately (H130) (L130)… because we were not well prepared to be evaluated like that… I was worried about my grades (U 130) (AA130). However our BW teacher did not use to evaluate our writing like her. With BW teacher, it was easier to get high grades as he wanted us just to attend and take his exams… in order to keep my GPA high (L130) I dropped the course.

R131: We finished this section and now we will go to the second section of this interview. We will talk about you as EFL writer. I would like you to tell me about yourself as EFL writer.

Section Two: student's perceptions to EFL writing

R 1: Tell me about yourself as EFL writer, what do you feel when you write in EFL?

S 1: When I write in English, I usually write what I speak, so my writing is more likely informal writing, not formal writing. That is my problem (AA1) … I think my strength is in speaking, but my weakness is in writing (AA1).

R 2: Do you like English writing?

S 2: Yes.

R 3: Why?

S 3: Because it was the first language that I used when I was in England for six years..

R 4: How old were you on that time?.

S 4: One year old.

R 5: So, You lived in England for six years.

S 5: Yes, We used to speak English at home and at school most of our time.

R 6: Tell me more about yourself, when you write in EFL.

S 6: I noticed myself, when I start writing in English; I start my writing with questions. I am not sure if I should start my writing with questions or not, but that how i start my writing.. (AA6)

R 7: How much you think you are able to write in EFL?

S 7: Honestly, when I write, I write everything that I know about the topic, I put a lot into my writing… but I got surprised when my teacher gave me a high grade (L7). I do not feel that I write well…(AA7) I am not confident in my English writing…(AA7) but my AW teacher gave me a good grade 8 out of ten.

R 8: Tell me about your grades in your high school?

S 8: I used to get the highest grades.

R 9: what if I asked you now to write something from your choice, tell me please what are you going to do? Go ahead.

S 9: I do not like to write topics about facts…(I9) but I prefer to write topics about my own experience and my own feeling, so I usually choose topics from my own experience, or giving some advices, about issues that I went through in my life. Even my teachers used to like my topics.(I9) So i start my writing by asking myself some questions about the topic…because I live with people, and I see things around me differently. I try to compare my view with others. (K9) (I9)

R 10: Go ahead please.

S 10: I used to write a lot and long writing when I was in my high school but my friends used to get better grades than me. When I asked my teacher about the reason, she told me, ''stop writing a long text, if you keep writing a long text, you will lose more and more grades''. 'Since then, I learned to write short text with simple and short sentences. But when I came to this college, my EFL writing teacher asked us to write a long text, and we should stop making our writing short. They asked us to use our imagination when we write and open our minds for more ideas. I see the conflict between teaching practices now in this college and in the past. I have been asked in my high school to write short sentences and short topics with simple words and it is difficult for me now to change my way of writing. That is why I decided to drop my advanced writing course'.(U10) (A10) (AA10)

R 11: Please continue..

S 11: Then, after the questions, i organize my ideas so e.g. if I wanted to talk about any problem, I will write first of all the name of that problem, and underneath that name I will write some sentences about the cause of that problem, what is the solution, what is my opinion, my experience like that and then I will try to organize my ideas. Mostly, when I talk about any topic,(A11) (K11) I choose to talk about people in my age, about something we share together and live with (I11), for

example, as I told you before when we talked about a 'Friendship' topic. I do not like to write only about the ideal life or positive issues, but i like to write about the negative side of our world. I like to write about unusual topics no one expect them. (I11)

R 12: What usually happens when you finished writing down your ideas?

S 12: I revise my punctuation and correct my errors for example to see my spelling or I delete any unnecessary sentences and replace them with proper sentences, and I try to correct my sentences at the end. (GG12)

R 13: How do you evaluate, how good your writing is?

S 13: My teacher evaluates my writing, I take her opinion. (AA13)

R 14: Ok, what else

S 14: I compare my writing with my peers writing for example,(F14) I check whether using ' I have' or 'I has', I check my spelling, some of my peers use very simple sentences.(GG14) Usually, I give my writing to my mother, she is a doctor and she knows lots of vocabulary.(AA14)

R 15: Tell me about the differences and the similarities between L1 and L2 writing?

S 15: Everything between these two languages are different. Arabic language is rich in vocabulary, so when you write in Arabic, we feel it is rich, because it has more vocabulary and space for our description, for example, English is a simple language and does not have many synonymous or vocabulary like Arabic language. That was one of the things I learned in my BWC. Our BW teacher asked us not to use repetition in English writing like we do in Arabic…English writing is short and direct, their writing is direct to the point and they moving easily from sentence to another sentence but in Arabic we write longer sentences … I noticed it is not helpful to translate from Arabic to English… most translation is wrong (M15). The second difference is the grammar, I feel the one who learned Arabic grammar first will not be able to use it in her English writing because translation makes both languages mixed together and conflicting each other. (HH15)

R 16: How do you see your Arabic writing?

S 16: I write, but not very good, I did not use to take a full mark in L1. (N16) (AA16)

R 17: How much do you think L1 writing fluency affects EFL writing?

S 17: Not much, it depends on the way of teaching each writing … it does not matter L1 or L2 writing, so if I were a good writer in L1 it does not mean , I will be good writer in English. (M17)

R 18: Do you think L1 writing competency influences EFL writing?

S 18: No, I see no influence between L1 and English. (M18)

R 19: Do you use L1 when you write in EFL?

S 19: Yes, sometimes to find out the meaning of some vocabulary or to use the proper words for my writing. (M19) (AA19)

R20: Anything else.

S20: Nothing, because the way we write our sentence in Arabic is different than English, for example, we use different punctuation and ideas.(HH20)

R 21: What is the influence of these differences on your EFL writing?

S 21: Sometimes I write in English and I use the Arabic way of writing for example, sometimes I forget myself and I use comma in my English writing in the same way i use it in Arabic writing …as I said before both languages are different. (M21)

R 22: Is this a problem for you?

S 22: Yes .

R23: Tell me what are the common things between the two languages and if they support each other. (HH23)

S 23: Just the meaning of the vocabulary is similar, nothing else.(HH23)

R 24: Any other similarities between L1 and EFL writing.

S 24: Nothing at all , I try not to think in Arabic when I write in English. (HH24)

R 25: How much is it important for you to be fluent in EFL writing?

S 25: Very important, it means a lot to be good English writer, I need English writing for my future career… I do not want to teach students wrong EF language , or I do not want to be a PhD holder with a bad English writing. I want to continue my study and get a scholarship that is why I am concerned about my grades.(U25)

R 26: How much EFL writing is important for your real life?

S 26: It is important for my future career, but not for my daily life, normally I do not use it, not much. (U26)

R 27: Anything you would like to add, and you think I did not ask you about.

S 27: I want to ask, why most Kuwaiti students are not good in English writing? What is the reason? Why all these challenges..? I think firstly, as I mentioned before, the problem is in the way they teach us writing, for example, when I was in my high school I have been asked to write a short text and when I came here our teachers asked us to write a long text, so why all these conflicts. (AA27)

R28: Anything else?

S28: I would like to be more confident in my English writing. (AA28)

R29: Thank you for your time.

Appendix Four: Glossary Coding for the Interviews

Letter	Codes
L	Evaluation and assessment/ grading
F	Classroom Collaborative work/ peers' feedback/ local errors.
A	Pre-writing activities (Planning)/ Form-focused
I	Topic choice/ desire for ownership.
K	Genre Writing/ Writing models
GG	Revising/ Local errors
B	Prior Knowledge
C	Teacher's feedback/ error detector
JJ	How much you interact with EFL writing in your real world?
AA	Self-confidence in EFL writing/ difficulties
HH	L1 and EFL writing differences and similarities
N	L1 writing competency
M	Using L1 writing knowledge in EFL writing
U	Motivation to learn EFL writing/ future careers, study, etc.
Z	Self-learning strategy / memorizing some sentences.
H	Teacher's feedback/ error detector and form-focused

Appendix Five: Two tables for the major themes and coding of the interviews that answering the two research questions.

Research question : What are Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' perceptions towards methods of teaching EFL writing?		
Themes	**Codes**	**Sub- Codes**
Writing Processing	planning	Generating ideas
		Using own experience
		Prior knowledge
		vocabulary
		Visualizing and Imagining
	Translating	Topic choice = the content of the writing e. g fashion; myself
		Writing type = narrative; descriptive; academic writing etc.
	Revising	Proof-reading and editing
Peers' Feedback	Assessment feedback	
	Collaborative writing	
Teacher's Feedback	• Motivating students to revise	
	• Teacher's Oral feedback for the common errors of students' writing.	
	• Writing Assessing	

Research question : What are Kuwaiti EFL student-teachers' perceptions of EFL writing?		
Theme	Codes	Sub-codes
Internal factors	Difficulties	
	Self-efficacy	
	Interest	
Writing processes	planning	Generating ideas
		organizing information/ideas
	Translating	Topic Choice
		Writing models
	Revising	Local errors
Relation between L1 and L2 writing	Differences and similarities between L1 and EFL.	
	Translating from L1 to EFL writing	
	The influence of L1 writing competency on EFL writing.	
The Communicative Competence	Applying EFL writing in your daily life.	
	The importance of learning EFL writing	

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