

The Effect of Portfolio assessment on English as a Foreign Language Students' Paragraph Writing at Biskra University

Houda DJOUAMA¹, Saliha CHELLI²

¹University of Mohamed Kheider, Biskra , houda.djouama@univ-biskra.dz

²University of Mohamed Kheider, Biskra, saliha.chelli@univ-biskra.dz

Received: 01/01/2022

Accepted: 19/05/2022

Published:15/12/2022

Abstract

Most EFL learners encounter many problems when writing. This mixed- methods research aimed to investigate the effects of self-assessment through the use of portfolio on developing second-year EFL students' paragraph writing in terms of language use at Biskra University. To achieve this goal, data were collected through a pre-questionnaire, a pre and posttests in addition to a post interview. The results revealed the significant effect of the treatment based on the value of the t-test with a significant value which is less than p-value (0.05). Moreover, the qualitative findings supported the results obtained from the experiment. This strategy proved not only to be successful in developing English as a foreign language (EFL) students' paragraph, but it develops their self-efficacy, cognitive and meta-cognitive skills as well.

Keywords: EFL learners; Portfolio; Self-assessment; Writing

Résumé

La plupart des apprenants EFL rencontrent de nombreux problèmes lorsqu'ils écrivent. Cette recherche à méthode mixtes vise à examiner les effets d'auto-évaluation par portfolio sur le développement de la rédaction de paragraphe des apprenants EFL en fonction de l'usage linguistique à l'Université de Biskra. Pour cela, nous avons fait appel à un pré-questionnaire, pré et post-tests et une post-interview. Les résultats ont montrés qu'un effet significatif du traitement fondé de la valeur du t-test d'une valeur significative laquelle inferieur de p-value (0.05). Les résultats qualitatifs renforcèrent les résultats obtenus. Cette stratégie est effective non seulement pour développer le paragraphe des apprenants EFL ainsi elle développe leurs auto-efficacité, cognitive et compétences métacognitive.

Mots-clés: Auto-évaluation ; Ecriture ; Etudiants d'anglais comme langue étrangère; Portfolio

1. Introduction

Assessment is a crucial practice in the context of teaching and learning because it provides information about students not only to help teachers to make judgments about their students' learning and development but also to be able to evaluate and make decisions about their teaching methods and strategies. However, this data should be relevant and accurate to make good and valid decisions about the curriculum and the learning/ teaching processes as a whole to develop teaching/ learning outcomes in the future.

Although assessment is a key element in the teaching/ learning process, it becomes a challenging issue, specifically the assessment of writing as an integral productive skill in learning and establishing communication. For instance, in the department of English at the University of Biskra, both English as a Foreign Language learners and teachers are always complaining that it is a complex and a challenging task that requires a high level of language proficiency and specific rhetorical features. On the one hand, learners face many problems expressing themselves effectively and appropriately. On the other hand, teachers claim that their learners' achievements in writing are low because of many factors.

In fact, the shift to a new educational paradigm, learner-centeredness, aims to enhance learners' communicative skills; for example, writing as a rhetorical skill requires a high level of linguistic and communicative competences. Thus, researchers and teachers are always seeking to find effective approaches and methods of writing instruction, or its assessment that would promote learners' autonomy, meta-cognition, and improve the quality of their assignments.

Several studies and researches resulted that the traditional assessment of writing was not effective because writing could be better assessed during the learning process. Therefore, self-assessment is considered as an essential mode of formative assessment which assists learners to be involved and responsible on their learning and progress being able to make judgments and decisions about their own work. Furthermore, portfolio is another mode of formative assessment that contributes to develop learners' skills such as writing when they collect their products and diagnose their weaknesses and strengths by themselves being aware of the assessment process which enhances their cognitive ability and autonomy. Hence, learners are engaged and encouraged to learn and build their own knowledge and seek for development as assessment works best when it is applied productively during the learning process.

In this respect, the rationale for this mixed-methods research was to investigate the effects of self-assessment using portfolio on developing EFL students' writing paragraphs in terms of language use, aiming to bring to light remedies that would assist students to develop their writing skills. This present research study aimed to answer a set of questions related to self-assessment and portfolio, and to test the stated hypothesis; to be confirmed or rejected.

1.1. Research Questions

1. What are the factors causing EFL learners' low achievements in writing?
2. Do teachers use portfolio assessment strategy while assessing their students' paragraph writing ?
3. Does self-assessment through the use of portfolio improve learners' paragraph writing?
4. What are students' attitudes after the implementation of portfolio as a self-assessment strategy?

1.2. Research Hypothesis

If students self-assess their paragraph writing through the use of portfolio, they would better develop their writing in terms of language use.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Basic Issues in Writing Assessment

Teaching writing in EFL classes has become a controversial issue as a plethora of researchers have conducted their studies aiming to understand the nature of the writing ability, how it is taught, and how it is assessed. However, the shift towards learner-centeredness and autonomy has changed assessment practices in EFL classrooms. Therefore, researchers, linguists, and educationalists have become motivated to search and provide teachers in the field with effective approaches, methods, and strategies of writing assessment that could achieve improvement and better results in teaching and learning processes.

2.2 Difference between Assessment and Evaluation

Assessment and evaluation are two familiar terms, which have been used in the field of education for the purpose of gathering information about students' learning progress. They are sometimes used interchangeably; however, they are distinct. Hedge (2000, p. 376) explained that assessment is part of the whole educational process of teaching and learning, and it refers to the general process of monitoring or keeping track of the learners' progress. It is a continuous process that teachers always go through as a means for providing data about their own teaching, their learners' understanding, improvement, needs, and even skills they have acquired. Whereas, evaluation is defined as the set of procedures used to determine whether the student meets predetermined criteria; as a result, through evaluation, teachers can make judgments and decisions about their students' qualifications (Mohan, 2016). As a result, we can deduce that assessment is an umbrella term that encompasses evaluation not only to make decisions and judgments about students' learning progress but also to diagnose whether they have achieved the learning goals and to what extent teaching is effective.

2.3 Writing Assessment

Assessing students' writing is very crucial, specifically in EFL learning and teaching. Teachers always assess their students' task assignments aiming to find out whether their writing ability has been improved; subsequently, their learning progress would be developed Reynolds (2010). In accordance with the previous claim, the assessment provides data that help to evaluate course effectiveness, measure students' progress, and whatever the type of assessment is can help students identify their points of weaknesses and strengths in writing to take the appropriate remedial action (Hyland, 2004, Ahmed & Troudi, 2018). Consequently, this latter is the reason of assessment which leads teachers to design activities that enhance the under-developed writing skills. Accordingly, Hamp-Lyons advocated that specialists in EFLT must amend and update their assumptions and procedures of traditional psychometrics (1996, p. 151 as cited in Milanovic & Saville, 1996).

3. Alternative Modes of Writing Assessment

Assessing writing was based on error correction by the teacher without paying attention to content, how learners are writing, or whether they are motivated or not. Then, in terms of motivation, the tasks and tests given to students have to affect their motivation and creativity,

otherwise they will not meet students' needs as the "pen and pencil evaluation" is inadequate (Walvoord and Jhonson, 2010). Because the traditional mode of writing assessment was ineffective, birth was given to new modes of writing assessment which underscored the significant role of assessment. These alternative assessment modes could provide other information about students' learning. For instance, they include mainly; self-assessment and portfolio which are the core of the study at hand.

3.1 Self-assessment

Self-assessment is a part of formative assessment and an alternative mode of writing assessment in the new teaching framework. Boud (1993, p. 5) in his early work proposed that self-assessment is " the involvement of students in identifying standards and/ or criteria to apply to their work and making judgments about the extent to which they have met these criteria and standards". So, self-assessment is based on two key elements; development of knowledge and capacity to make a judgment about their own work. Moreover, McDonald (2007, p. 34) believed that self-assessment assists the whole student to "learn how to learn" and encourages reflection to become the second nature. Hence, students along their learning progress will be more self-monitoring and independent assessing their performance as it is referred to by Baars et al. (2014, p. 92) as a retrospective monitoring of previous performance.

According to the constructivist theory, self-assessment considers the learner an active agent in knowledge acquisition process emphasizing learning outcomes as a result of knowledge construction process not as a stimulus-response phenomenon (Bhatti and Nimehchisalem, 2020). Moreover, to implement self-assessment, teachers often use checklists to guide students assess their own work and learning. A checklist is "a list of factors, properties, aspects, components,... or dimensions, the presence... of which is to be separately considered, in order to perform a certain task" (Scriven, 2000). That is the checklist, a guided practice, consisted of some criteria that students have to consider when using the language in order to attain better results.

Besides, self-assessment is the source trigger of intrinsic motivation and autonomous learning. (McDonald, 2007). Hence, helping students to be involved in the assessment of their own work highly contributes to the development of their competence and reflection. Varier et al. (2021) recently added that engagement in self-assessment improves students' self-efficacy through personal accomplishment experiences. In other words, students' beliefs, behaviour, and motivation to write will be enhanced.

Moreover, much recent empirical research has concluded that self-assessment was very effective in different fields of study such as writing and mathematics (Andrade and Valtcheva, 2009). For instance, using rubric-referenced self-assessment on elementary school students' by Andrade et al. (2008) was highly effective on their scores in writing. Furthermore, Andrade (2020) has adopted an action research which revealed that the application of scaffolding strategies with an emphasis on business vocabulary and structure helped students improve their business writing. Moreover, students' positive perspectives towards scaffolding strategies affirmed that self-assessment using a writing rubric helped them improve their writing skills and learning autonomy.

3.2 Portfolio

Portfolio has also been considered as an alternative mode of writing assessment. Portfolio is the collection of students' work. However, in writing, Hamp-Lyons (2006, p. 140) defines it as "Portfolio is a collection of the writer's work over a period of time". The portfolio, then, "can include finished products only, or earlier drafts of finished products" Weigle (2002, p. 199). In addition to conferencing which is referred to as "meetings to discuss student's work" (Routman, 2005). For instance, it makes students better writers improving their habit and revising skill, and it increases students' high-order and critical thinking being independent writers (Bayraktar, 2012, p. 709).

Because authenticity is the main feature in portfolio assessment, Burke (2009, p. 40) corroborated that "a portfolio is not just a collection of randomly organized materials stuck in a folder; however, it has a purpose and a focus". Thus, portfolios are designed to focus more on students' cognitive and meta-cognitive abilities and communicative and functional language use.

To explore more benefits and uses of portfolio, a bulk of studies have been conducted in the field. In this respect, an experimental study conducted by Sulistyono et al. (2020), showed that the implementation of portfolio assessment increased the students' writing ability. Not only increased it the local issues (grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics), but also students' knowledge of global issues (content and organization) have been significantly increased. This is relevant to Setiawan and Mulyadi (2021) study about portfolio assessment which concluded that this learning activity could increase students' learning motivation and also give them a sense of autonomous learning. As a result, they suggested that the portfolio assessment should be implemented in the teaching-learning process especially in English writing since it could give regular feedback, and help the students in monitoring their writing progress.

4. Methodology

The overarching objective of this piece of work is to probe the effects of self-assessment through the use of portfolios on developing EFL students' paragraph writing, a quasi-experimental design has been adopted. In addition to a pre-questionnaire devoted to teachers of written expression at Biskra University and a post-interview to EFL students at the same university to supplement the experimental results. Therefore, this study combines qualitative and quantitative data. A pre-test and a post-test were used in order firstly, to make sure that all the participants of both groups (control and experimental) have the same level in writing before the treatment, while the post-test was used to assess students' improvement after the treatment. Finally, a post-interview was conducted to corroborate the results obtained from the experiment.

4.1 Participants

The participants of this experiment were two groups among second-year students of English; a control group (n= 15) and an experimental group (n= 15) at the Department of English at Biskra University in 2020/2021 out of a population of 335 students of second-year students. Moreover, 11 teachers of written expression were participants in the pre-questionnaire, and 15 students of the same experimental group were selected to be used in the post-interview questions.

4.2 Data Gathering Tools

In this research, data were collected through the use of a pre-semi-structured questionnaire, a pre-test, a treatment, a post-test, and a post-semi-structured interview. The pre-questionnaire was

administered before the treatment to diagnose the prime factors that hinder students' achievements in writing. Dörnyei (2003, p. 6) defined questionnaires as "Questionnaires are research instruments for measurement purposes to collect reliable and valid data". Both of the pre-test and post-test were paragraph writing tests. Students of both groups, experimental and control were asked to write an argumentative paragraph as it is a part of their syllabus in the second-year. Then, a post-semi-structured interview was devoted to the experimental group students to supplement the quantitative results.

4.3 Procedure of the Experiment

At the beginning of this research work, students were taught how to write an argumentative paragraph. Moreover, they were provided with instructions about how to create their portfolios, how to choose and reflect on their paragraphs applying Hamp Lyons' (2000) procedures. This first phase lasted for four weeks. After that, they were provided with a checklist which helped them to self-assess their paragraphs highlighting on what to focus in order to be aware of their weaknesses and develop them. Then, in the last phase after four other weeks, conferencing with participants took place to discuss their productions and how they have self-assessed their paragraphs in terms of language use based on Jacob et al. (1981) English as a Second Language Composition Profile. Furthermore, students received feedback about their portfolios.

5. Results and Discussion

In this section, the researcher will report the results obtained from the pre-questionnaire, the experiment pre-test and post-test, and the results of the post-interview. In addition to how self-assessment through portfolio has improved students' writing in English.

5.1 Descriptive Statistics

In this section, the test results are analyzed quantitatively via descriptive statistics before and after the treatment by a comparative evaluation of the calculated mean and standard deviation as will be shown in the Tables below.

5.1.1 The Pre-test

Table 1. Pre-test Scores of Language Use of the Control Group and the Experimental Group

		Pre-test	
		Statistics in Language Use	
Group		Control Group	Experimental Group
N	Valid	15	15
	Missing	0	0
Mean		4.6	4.6
Standard deviation		1.0556	1.24212
Standard error		0.27255	0.32071
Minimum		3	2
Maximum		6	6

Table 1. shows the results of the pre-test, which reveal that both the control group and the experimental group have an inadequate level of writing in English before the treatment. When comparing the two means (M= 4.6), we found that there is no significant difference in the participants' level of performance in writing in terms of language use with a minimum score (= 3-2) and a maximum score (=6-6) for both groups respectively. Therefore, most students have a

poor level in writing in English in terms of language use because they show major problems in sentence constructions, use of tenses, subject and verb agreement, and struggle to avoid fragments and run-ons, which will hinder meaning.

5.1.2 The Post-test

Table 2. Post-test Scores of Language Use of the Control Group and the Experimental Group

		Post-test	
		Statistics in Language Use	
Group		Control Group	Experimental Group
N	Valid	15	15
	Missing	0	0
Mean		4.3	6.3
Standard deviation		0.99642	1.11484
Standard error		0.25728	0.28785
Minimum		3	4
Maximum		6	8

As the post-test has been undertaken to reveal whether students progress and to probe the effects of self-assessment through the use of portfolio on developing students' paragraph writing, table 2. shows that there is a noticeable difference in the participants' means (M CG= 4.3) and (M EG= 6.3), so their level of performance in writing in terms of language use has been developed with an increase in the minimum score (= 3-4) and a maximum score (=6-8) for both groups respectively. Moreover, the post-test results reveal that students of the experimental group errors decreased remarkably because they show fewer errors in tenses, subject and verb concord, and other errors such as sentence construction, fragments and run-ons, which will influence meaning and will make the reader get confused.

5.1.3 Comparing Mean Difference after the Treatment

Table 3. Experimental and Control group Mean's Difference after the treatment

Group	Pre-test Mean	Post-test Mean	Mean difference
Experimental group	4.6	6.3	1.7
Control group	4.6	4.3	0.3

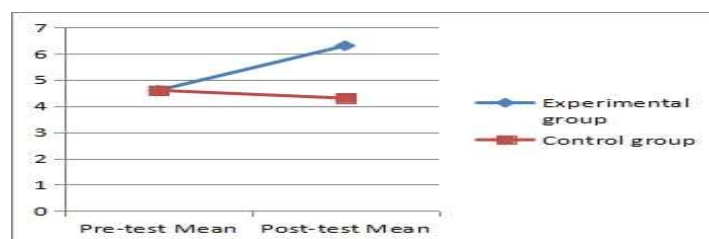


Fig. 1. Experimental and Control group Mean's Difference after the Treatment

Based on table 3. and figure 1, the comparison of the results of both groups after the treatment reveals a significant improvement in the experimental group as the participants increase their mean from 4.6 to 6.3 with a significant difference (1.7). However, the control group results showed a slight decrease in their mean from 4.6 to 4.3 with a difference of (0.3).

5.2 Evaluation of Inter-rater Reliability of Post-test Paragraph Writing Scores of

the Experimental Group in Language Use

Table 4. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) between the Raters’ Scores of the Post-test of the Experimental Group in Language Use

		Sum of the squares	df	Mean squared	F	Sig	p-value
Language use	Between groups	1.900	2	0.950	0.46	0.635	0.05
	Within groups	86.800	42	2.067			
	Total	88.700	44				

To test the reliability of the scores, three raters; the researcher and two others from the same department of English had evaluated the experiment group’s post-test paragraphs applying the same scoring rubrics.

The one-way ANOVA between the three raters reveals that the three raters mean scores are approximately the same in both aspects “between and within the groups” because as shown in table 4, F value equals 0.460 with a probability value of 0.635 which is greater than p-value = 0.05. Therefore, this indicates that the three raters have a positive attitude towards the use of portfolio as a self-assessment tool, and they agree that it is effective on developing EFL students’ paragraph writing in terms of language use at Biskra University.

6. Inferential Statistics: Hypothesis Testing

To test the research hypothesis, that states “If students self-assess their paragraph writing through the use of a portfolio, they would better develop their writing in terms of language use”, an independent t-test was used to examine whether the difference between the two groups’ results is salient. Whether or not this difference is significant, it is determined by the probability degree if compared to the p-value, which equals 0.05. Therefore, the independent sampled-test helps to reject the null hypothesis or to confirm the alternative hypothesis if the probability degree is less than (< 0.05) i.e. only 5% of the results are due to chance which leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis in favour the alternative hypothesis has to be confirmed, so 95% of the results are due to the experiment.

6.1. T test

Table 5. T test

Independent T test for equality of Means						
Rubric	N	T	Df	Sig (1tailed)	P-value	
Language use	15	5.180	28	0.000	0.05	

The results of the t-test in table 5 show that there is a significant difference between the experimental and control group (t=5.180) with a significant value (0.000) which is less than the p-value (0.05) where the degree of freedom is *df*= 28 for this study. Therefore, only 5% of the results are due to chance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis confirmed.

7. Discussion of the Results

The findings obtained from the questionnaire analysis showed that students encounter serious difficulties in writing in English. Teachers admitted that there are many factors which not only cause students' low achievements in writing in EFL classrooms, but also have an impact on their potential and willingness to write as well. For instance, teachers determined that linguistic and personal related factors are the main causes of students' weak performance in writing in English, in addition to teacher-related ones and as well as psychological ones. Students' undeveloped linguistic competence and critical thinking, lack of training and reading, lack of teacher's assessment and feedback have a strong effect on learners' performance while composing in English.

The qualitative results also revealed that to achieve autonomy, the use of a portfolio is suggested as a successful assessment strategy, formative assessment, which is considered as a powerful pedagogical strategy that takes place during learners' learning stages which allows them to progress and to self-regulate (Mastracci, 2017, p. 1). Teachers advocate to apply the portfolio strategy and to teach students how to assess their own writing. As much as learners are independent and aware about their own learning progress and weaknesses, in particular their writing, their meta-cognition will be developed and they will be able to achieve effective communication in English. However, this strategy's success is limited to some constraints such as university educational system, students' motivation and self-esteem level which teachers are always advocating to be raised and promoted for better teaching/ learning results and skill development. Furthermore, corrective feedback has been considered very crucial in any formative assessment while teaching. Cizek (2010) considered providing feedback, helping students to self-monitor and self-assess their learning progress, in addition to promote their meta-cognitive skills essential goals which teachers should attain throughout their formative assessment procedures.

The findings obtained from the experiment show that most of students display approximately a good level in writing in English in terms of language use which indicates that there is a salient improvement in the experimental group in the post-test after the treatment. Therefore, using self-assessment through portfolio strategy has been effective as students overcome their weaknesses and difficulties in writing, and they become able to communicate and convey meaning. For instance, they were able to write effective constructions with few errors of fragments run-ons, and tenses, and can express themselves conveying their intended meaning effectively. To support this, Sulistyo et al. (2020) concluded in their experimental study that portfolio assessment increased the students' writing ability in all aspects, grammar, vocabulary, mechanics, content and organization, too. Moreover, Setiawan and Mulyadi (2021) added that this learning activity could increase students' learning motivation and also give them a sense of autonomous learning.

Furthermore, the distinction between the means of the two groups would help us to confirm the hypothesis that if students self-assess their writing paragraphs using a portfolio, they would better improve their writing in terms of language use besides answering the research questions. Linguistic features, L1 interference, lack of vocabulary, lack of knowledge about the topic are among students' main difficulties in writing before the treatment. Then Students became more aware of sentence constructions, use of tenses, meaning, and many other aspects of the language

after the treatment. Moreover, self-assessment through portfolio strategy was more effective than the traditional assessment method to develop EFL students' writing skills. Hence, helping students to be involved in assessing their own work highly contributes to the development of their competence and reflection as the shift in higher education aims to develop students' active participation and autonomy in their learning process; therefore, they will be able to continuously develop and reflect on their competence as well as their performance in real-life contexts.

The participants demonstrated positive attitudes after the implementation of the portfolio as a self-assessment strategy. They were satisfied when they used the portfolio in writing assessment and confirmed that it was effective. Hence, this supports the results obtained from the experiment and the confirmed hypothesis. In addition, the concept of self-assessment itself created an authentic learning and assessment environment where students are responsible for their own learning progress by the use of the checklist. However, few called for more training using portfolios and suggested if students choose the topics of the paragraphs by themselves, it will be better and more effective assuming that learners' differences, preferences and interests highly affect students' performance in writing. Therefore, most of the interviewees advocated that portfolio was an effective strategy and affected positively their writing ability. As a result, this strategy proved to be successful in developing EFL students' paragraph writing in terms of language use, and it could develop their self-efficacy, cognitive and meta-cognitive skills.

8. Conclusion

In fact, the results show that writing was not only a complex task, but also its assessment was hard to apply. This research was carried out to identify the factors causing EFL students' low achievements in writing and to highlight the effects of self-assessment through the use of portfolio on developing EFL students' paragraph writing. The linguistic factor is the main cause of their low achievement. Thus, though teachers' feedback is crucial, they recommend providing their students with the opportunity to more training and writing practice, and to develop their linguistic competence. The findings of the experiment led to the confirmation of the alternative hypothesis. This revealed that portfolio was an effective strategy for writing assessment, specifically paragraph writing in terms of language use. Students will have not only the opportunity for self-development, but also their teachers have to raise their awareness about the audience and the purpose of their writing besides criteria for good writing. Furthermore, they advocate adopting portfolio as an effective strategy for formative assessment. This strategy is considered advantageous as students can take an active part in their own learning process developing their meta-cognition, reflection, and autonomy. Thus, for quality teaching, teachers should be vigilant enough and select more effective strategies for both teaching and assessment.

9. Bibliography list

- Ahmed, A., & Troudi, S. (2018). Exploring EFL writing assessment in an Egyptian University context: teachers and students' perspectives. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 9(6), 1229-1242.
- Andrade, H., & Cizek, G. J. (2010). An introduction to formative assessment: History, characteristics, and challenges. In *Handbook of formative assessment* (pp. 15-29). Routledge.
- Andrade, H. G., & Boulay, B. A. (2003). Role of rubric-referenced self-assessment

in learning to write. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 97(1), 21-30.

- Andrade, H., & Valtcheva, A. (2009). Promoting learning and achievement through self-assessment. *Theory into practice*, 48(1), 12-19.
- Baars, M., Vink, S., van Gog, T., de Bruin, A., & Paas, F. (2014). Effects of training self-assessment and using assessment standards on retrospective and prospective monitoring of problem solving. *Elsevier. Learning and Instruction*, 33, 92-107.
- Bayraktar, A. (2012). Teaching writing through teacher-student writing conferences. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 51, 709-713.
- Bhatti, N., & Nimehchisalem, V. (2020). A review of research on student self-assessment in second/foreign language writing. *Indonesian JELT: Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching*, 15(2), 125-151.
- Boud, D. (1993). Experience as the base for learning. *Higher education research and development*, 12(1), 33-44.
- Burke, K. (2009). *How to assess authentic learning 5TH EDN*. Corwin. Corwin Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2003). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, Administration and Processing*. London, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
- Hamp-Lyons, L. (2006). "Feedback in portfolio-based writing course" in F. Hyland, F. & K. Hyland, K. (2006). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues*. New York: Cambridge University Press. 140-161.
- Hamp-Lyons, L., & Condon, W. (2000). *Assessing the portfolio : Principles for practice, theory, and research*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hyland, K. (2004). *Genre and Second language writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mastracci, A. (2017). Formative assessment: Assessment for Learning. *Pédagogie collégiale*, (30)4, 1-5. Core. ac.uk
- McDonald, B. (2007). "Self-assessment for understanding". *Mentoring Issues: Major Themes*. *The Journal of Education*, 188(1), 25-40. Sage Publications.
Inc. www.jstor.org/stable/42744121
- Mera Andrade, L. G. (2020). *Self-Assessment and Scaffolding Strategies to Improve Writing in High School Students* (Magistère dissertation, Universidad Casa Grande. Departamento de Posgrado). <http://200.31.31.137:8080/bitstream/ucasagrande/2314/1/Tesis2486MERs.pdf>
- Mohan, R. (2016). *Measurement, evaluation and assessment in education*. PHI Learning Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi
- Nimehchisalem, V., Chye, D. Y. S., & Jaswant Singh, S. K. A. (2014). Self-assessment Checklist for Undergraduate Students' Argumentative Writing. *Advances in Language and Literary Studies*, 5(1), 65-80. Australia
- Oshima, A., & Hogue, A. (2007). *Introduction to academic writing 3rd EDN*. Pearson Education. Longman.

- Panadero, E., Jonsson, A., & Strijbos, J.W.(2016).Scaffolding self-regulated learning through self-assessment and peer assessment: Guidelines for classroom implementation. In Assessment for learning: Meeting the challenge of implementation (pp. 311-326). Springer, Cham.
- Reynolds, D. W. (2010). Assessing writing, assessing learning: A practical guide to evaluating and reporting on writing instruction programs. University of Michigan Press.
- Routman, R. (2005). Writing essentials: Raising expectations and results while simplifying teaching. Pearson Education Canada.
- Setiawan, A., & Mulyadi, D. (2021). The portfolio assessment to teach writing of opinion essay. Language Circle: Journal of Language and Literature, 15(2), 329-336.
- Scriven, M. (2000). Evaluation ideologies. In Evaluation models (pp. 249-278). Kluwer Academic Publisher. Boston. <http://journal.unnes.ac.id>
- Sulistyono, T., Eltris, K. P. N., Mafulah, S., Budianto, S., Saiful, S., & Heriyawati, D. F. (2020). Portfolio assessment: Learning outcomes and students' attitudes. Studies in English Language and Education, 7(1), 141-153. <https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v7i1.15169>
- Varier, D., Kitsantas, A., Zhang, X., & Saroughi, M. (2021). Self-efficacy for self-assessment: Development and validation of the SEESA-AW scale for argumentative writing. International Journal of Educational Research, 110, 101885.
- Walvoord, B. E., & Anderson, V. J. (2010). Effective grading: A tool for learning and assessment in college 2nd EDN. John Wiley & Sons.
- Weigle, S. C., (2002). Assessing writing. Cambridge University Press.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 : Teachers' Pre-Questionnaire about the Main Factors Causing Difficulties to Students in writing in English

1.Which degree do you hold?

a) MAGISTERE

b) PhD

2.How long have you been teaching English?

3.How long have you been teaching writing to second year students?

a) In your opinion, why is writing important when learning a foreign language?

b) do you think writing is :

a. A gift

b. A skill that can be developed through practice.

4.Which approach do you think is appropriate to teach writing?

a) The product approach

b) The process approach

c) The genre approach

d) The process-genre approach

e) If others, specify

f) - Would you explain why?

5.In your opinion, good writing is: (You can choose more than one answer).

a) Purpose, Cohesion, and coherence

- b) Correct grammar
- c) Good spelling and punctuation
- d) Appropriate vocabulary
- e) Good ideas
- f) All of them
- g) If others, specify

6. Is the syllabus of written expression of second year adequate and helps students to acquire this skill?

- a) Yes b) No

7. Do you think the time allocated to written expression module is:

- a) Very adequate b) Sufficient c) Insufficient

8. Do you give your students assignment activities to train them to write?

- a) Yes b) No

- How often?

9. What kind of assignment do you give your students?

- a) Paragraph writing
- b) Essay writing
- c) Summarizing

10. Do you provide your students with reading activities while teaching the writing skill?

- a) Yes b) No

- If No, explain why?

11. Do you think the level of your students in writing is :

- a) Excellent b) Good c) Average d) Weak

12. Do your learners face difficulties while writing?

- a) Yes b) No

13. Are these difficulties because of: (You can choose more than one answer).

A. Linguistic factors

- a. Poor grammar
- b. Lack of vocabulary
- c. L1 interference
- d. Lack of reading
- e. Lack of knowledge about the target topic
- f. The students are not aware of the audience and purpose of their writing

If others, specify

B. Personal Factors

- a) Learners' strategies and styles of learning
- b) Learners' differences
- c) Learners' conceptions towards the writing skill
- d) Learners' lack of writing practice
- e) Learners' background knowledge in English about the topic

others,

C. Psychological Factors

- a) Lack of motivation to write
- b) Low self-esteem
- c) Anxiety
- d) Undeveloped cognitive skills and critical thinking

If others, specify

D. teacher's Related Factors

- a. Unappropriate approach for teaching writing
- b. Lack of teacher's assessment and feedback

14. Which of the following factors affect your students' performance in writing most?

- a) Linguistic factors
- b) Personal Factors
- c) Psychological Factors
- d) Teacher's Related Factors

Explain

15. Do you provide your learners with corrective feedback?

- a)Yes
- b) No

16. Which kind of assessment do you use?

- a) Formative
- b) Summative
- c)Self-assessment
- d)All of them

If others, specify

17. Do you think the type of assessment you use can affect students' ability/ performance in writing? a)Yes b) No

Explain?

18. How do you help your students to overcome difficulties facing them when writing in English?

- a) Through practice
- b) By giving positive feedback
- c) Through self-assessment
- d) Through Peer assesment
- e) All of them
- f) None of them

If others, specify.

19. To what extent do you think that self-assessment through Portfolio is an effective strategy to help students improve their writing in English.

- a) Very effective
- b) Effective
- c) Not effective at all

Explain

.20How Can we help students get rid of these difficulties that face them in writing? Please feel free to suggest any suggestions?

Appendix 2: Pre-test

MK University of Biskra Second Year LMD Students Written Expression Course Teacher: Mrs. Houda DJOUAMA Full Name: _____ Group N°: _____	Department of English
Pre-test in Written Expression	
<u>Exercise 01: Write an argumentative paragraph discussing the following topic (No more than 10 sentences with a good handwriting).</u>	
Topic: Could e-learning be an alternative to classroom instruction?	

Appendix 3: Post-test

MK University of Biskra Second Year LMD Students Written Expression Course Teacher: Mrs. Houda DJOUAMA Full Name: _____ Group N°: _____	Department of English
Post-test in Written Expression	
<u>Exercise 01: Write an argumentative paragraph discussing the following topic.</u>	
Topic: To guarantee the teaching and learning process in the midst of Covid -19 crisis, universities have opted for blended learning strategy that is called “distance learning” applying the health precautions. Does this strategy create an effective environment for students (you) to study and achieve better results?	

Appendix 4: Checklist: Self-assessment Checklist (after writing) for an argumentative paragraph

MK University of Biskra

Department of English

Second Year LMD Students

Written Expression Course: Argumentative Paragraph Writing

Teacher : Mrs. DJOUAMA

Student's Name :

Rubric	Self-assessment checklist	Yes	No
Paper Format	Is the format correct?		
	Does it look like the model that has been studied at class?		
	Did I write the topic sentence?		
	Did I include the controlling idea?		
	Did I state my opinion (my point of view) about the topic (for or against the idea)?		
	Did I write facts to support my opinion?		

Paragraph Organization and Content	Did I write sufficient arguments, reasons, and details (3-5 supporting sentences) which help the reader to understand why I hold this belief and to be convinced?
	Did I write my arguments using order of importance (from most important to the least important, or from the least important to the most important)?
	Did I mention the counterargument which increases the credibility of your writing?
	Did I write a concluding sentence?
Coherence	Did I use transition signals effectively where they are needed?
Unity	Did I write any irrelevant sentences?
Sentence Structure	Did I write any unclear sentences?
	Did I write different types of sentences?
Lexical Choice	Did I write any fragments?
	Did I write any comma splice?
	Did I write any choppy sentences?
	Did I write any run on sentences?
	Did I use appropriate vocabulary?
	Did I use formal words?
	Did I use a variety of vocabulary?
Grammar and Mechanics	Did I use correct word order?
	Did I use verb tense and aspect correctly?
	Did I use correct subject-verb agreement?
	Did I spell the words correctly?
	Did I use correct capitalization?
	Did I use correct punctuation?

Design inspired from Oshima & Hogue (1999, p98), and Nimehchisalem et al (2014, p 73-74).

4: Students' Post Interview

Q1 : What do you think of self-assessment?

Q2: What is your attitude towards using portfolio in writing assessment?

Q3: Do you think that self-assessment through portfolio is an effective strategy that helps you to improve your writing performance? Can you explain why?

Q4: Did self-assessment help you to discover your strength and weaknesses?

Q5: Can you explain how did self-assessment help you?

Q6: Did the use of checklist was helpful and useful to self-assess your writing? Can you explain how?: Do you think that your writing has been improved? Can you explain how?

Q8: Do you consider conferencing with your teacher was interesting?

Q9: Can you suggest any comments about writing assessment through portfolio?