# Investigating the Writing Strategies of Fourth Year Libyan University Students of English: Strategy Differences between Good and Poor Writers of English

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## Declaration

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# Abstract

The present study is an investigation of the composing processes and writing strategies of fourth year Libyan university students majoring in English as a foreign language.

The study predominantly adopts a qualitative approach, using a number of research methods, namely think-aloud protocols, semi-structured interviews, and observations. The student participants involved in the investigation belonged to two groups: good writers (N=5), and poor writers (N=6). The teacher informants (N=3) are among those who teach composition classes to students in the English department, and have long experience in teaching in the university stage of education. The composing sessions were audio-taped, transcribed and coded for analysis, along with the drafts and the final written compositions. The think-aloud sessions were followed by semi-structured interviews that were conducted with both students and teachers.

The research was guided by three questions: (1) What strategies do Libyan students of English as a foreign language use while writing in English? (2) Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use? (3) If yes, how and why do they differ?

Analysis of the data collected from think-aloud protocols revealed that the subjects made use of various strategies, and sub-strategies while composing. The good writers' use of strategies differed from the poor writers' in terms of frequency and quality, and there seems to be a variation in recursiveness in subjects' writing process in relation to their writing proficiency and language competence. Moreover, findings showed that implementation of think-aloud instructions varied between the two groups – thinking aloud and writing in English at the same time appeared to be a problematic task for the poor writers and consequently this may have affected their strategy use in terms of frequency and kind. Also, analysis of data gathered from the semi-structured interviews with both students and teachers showed that the subjects' writing development was affected by a number of factors. These factors were connected to the subjects' language proficiency level, their motivation, and their past learning experience. The students' level of language proficiency appeared to affect

their writing behaviour, particularly in their planning, scanning and use of L1 strategies. Subjects' motivation differed between the two groups. The good writers showed more enthusiasm and interest in practising and developing their writing skills influenced by the positive instruction they received in writing during the secondary stage of education and also by their desire to get a job they were interested in after graduation. In contrast, there was a lack of motivation on the part of the poor writers as a consequence of previous learning experience at the secondary stage of education, and also their view about the unimportance of writing for them upon graduation. The other factor was related to the students' past learning experience and their reading habits. The different instructional approaches students were exposed to at the secondary school stage influenced their writing behaviour. The reading habits of subjects in both groups also appeared to affect their writing skills. The good writers who read a lot in secondary school and had continued to do so in college appeared to have less difficulty in expressing their ideas in writing than the other poor writers.

Therefore, one major finding of this work is that the writing process investigated has to be seen in context. Factors such as L2 proficiency, motivation and past learning experience have a significant bearing on writing in L2 and have to be taken into account when studying the composing process as well as the final written product.

A tentative composing process model, based on the students' writing processes and strategies observed, is proposed with respect to the aforementioned factors which appeared to be responsible for the differences in strategy use between the two groups of participants. Suggestions for further research, and implications for EFL, particularly for Libyan university students, are also provided.

# Acknowledgements

# Dedication

To the soul of my dear father

To my beloved mother – your prayers have always been there for me

I also lovingly dedicate this thesis to my wife, who supported me each step of the way.

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# List of Abbreviations

APA    American Psychological Association

BA      Bachelor of Arts

EFL    English as a Foreign Language

ESL    English as a Second Language

ESP    English for Specific Purposes

LTM    Long-term Memory

L1      First Language (Mother Tongue)

L2      Second Language

MA     Master of Arts

MU     Misurata University

NTU    Nottingham Trent University

RQ      Research Question

WM     Working Memory

# Chapter 1:  Introduction

## 1.1    Introduction

Although there is a considerable body of research analysing the way writers compose in the second language setting (e.g., Zamel, 1983; Raimes, 1985, 1987; Cumming, 1989; Silva, 1993), studies on EFL writing are quite scarce (Manchón, 2009). Two decades ago, Valdes et al., (1992:333) attributed such lack of research on EFL writing to the fact that "most FL professionals have taken the position that writing is a 'secondary' or less crucial skill than listening, speaking and reading". Therefore, there has been little care given to the development of learners' EFL writing abilities, and this is especially so in the Arab world.

In fact, writing in a second or foreign language (L2), is much more difficult than writing in one's first language (Bailey, 2003; Schoonen et al., 2003). As for ESL writing, this difficulty may be due to the fact that L2 writers must "adjust to cultural differences, acquire academic proficiency in the target language, and familiarise themselves with the types of texts and tasks associated with academic study in the new country" (Cotterall and Cohen, 2003: 158). On the other hand, many EFL students in general, and Libyan students in particular, often complain about their low level of EFL writing proficiency and usually ask how to improve their English writing effectively. Many factors contribute towards this lack of proficiency, such as insufficient English vocabulary, and lack of English writing practice. However, from the researcher's personal experience as a teacher of English writing to first year undergraduates for two successive academic years (from 2005 to 2007), it is clear that such students do possess a vocabulary that is adequate for expressing complex ideas, and the problem seems to lie in their tendency to pay more attention to grammatical structures rather than to the smooth expression of their ideas. Some such students also show lack of motivation to write while some others also seem unaware of some English writing strategies due to a lack of adequate instruction in writing in previous stages of education.

One of the main aims of researchers in language learning and teaching is to discover variables that account for differences among successful and unsuccessful learners.

Research into foreign language writing is no exception in this respect, and hence, due to the emphasis on the processes and strategies in which learners are involved while writing, there have been several first and second foreign language studies that have attempted to investigate the many strategies employed by learner writers. Among these studies, there have been mixed results, but despite the difference, many researchers (Pianko, 1979; Flower and Hayes, 1980, 1981; Raimes, 1985; Whalen, 1993) agree that strategies and general processes are important in separating successful from unsuccessful writers. Many researchers (e.g., Wenden and Rubin, 1987; Chamot and Kupper, 1989; O'Malley and Chamot, 1990; Angelova, 1999;Victori, 1999; Alhaysony, 2008) maintain that successful learners use appropriate strategies more often than less successful learners do. In addition, it has been suggested that strategies could be explicitly taught to L2 learners (Khaldieh, 2000;Rost, 1993; Mu, 2006; Zamel, 1983).

This issue has led many linguists and researchers to focus on the nature of writing in both L1 and L2 contexts and to try to investigate the writing processes that writers undergo until they produce their final product, and the strategies they employ in the different processes of writing.

## 1.2 The Background to the study

As in many other developing countries, the number of EFL college students in Libya has continuously increased. In spite of this increase, however, instruction in foreign language (L2) writing, either at school or in college, has not received the same amount of attention, either in the curriculum itself or in the comparatively little research attention paid to writing, in comparison with other areas of English as a foreign language (EFL), such as listening, speaking, reading, listening/reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and grammar.

Writing can be very laborious for both native and non-native speakers. It entails cognitive, affective and socio-cultural domains. The writing process can be affected by a number of variables, among which is the writers' proficiency level, which has already been investigated in several studies, and indeed will be a key variable in the current investigation. However, very little research has been conducted on the issue of Libyan students' English writing, and the studies that have been undertaken have

mainly focused on the final product rather than the process, or dealt with issues such as the pedagogical issues associated with writing (e.g., El-Shawish, 2004). Furthermore, the research methods which were employed in those investigations did not include thinking-aloud (apart from El-Aswad's (2002) study which did not include the variable of proficiency level as a key variable). For this reason, empirical research is needed to determine the writing strategies adopted by Libyan students of English as a foreign language, and to establish the actual processes these students pass through. The exact research focus is on the students' writing strategies and processes in evidence at the university education level of EFL in Libya.

## 1.3    Rationale for the study

It is apparent to any teacher of university-level English composition in Libya that writing has always represented a unique challenge for Libyan students of English and Libyan EFL students in general. Indeed, even Arab students themselves admit their shortcomings when it comes to English composition (Fageeh, 2003; Khalil, 1989).

However, researchers are becoming more convinced that students' written products alone tell very little about the invisible efforts undertaken by those students in order to generate ideas and refine them to create a piece of writing, and that consequently, such written work provides only slight evidence of the learners' pedagogical needs. Since early 80's, where process writing research just started,  Zamel (1983:165) observed that "researchers are now exploring writing behaviours, convinced that by studying and understanding the process of composing we can gain insight into how to teach it".

Moreover, despite the existence of a wealth of research on L2 writing, much exploration remains to be done. For example, a gap in L2 writing research arises from the predominant focus in the literature on L2 learners in Western educational settings. And whilst quite a number of studies have involved Arab learners of English studying in Western institutions of higher learning (e.g., Abdul-Rahman, 2011; Alnofal, 2003), few empirical studies published in English and Arab-medium academic journals have examined the writing processes and strategies of Arab (and particularly Libyan) L2 learners in an Arabic or, and especially Libyan context.

Most Arab students make language mistakes and use ineffective ways of expanding their ideas, and consequently they seldom manage to build well-written and coherent texts, even after studying English throughout the period of their formal education. Therefore, questions that call for answers might include: Why does this happen? Is their English-language competence a factor behind these shortcomings in their writing? Is it because they think in their L1 rather than in L2 when they write? Is it may be related to their level of motivation to write? Or is it because they use inappropriate writing strategies? If yes, in what way do those students develop their ideas?

Therefore, taking all these questions in mind, and also considering the research gap, I see that there is a need for an empirical study to enrich the research repertoire of EFL learners with more insights about the writing strategies in a new context.

## 1.4    Aim and objectives of the study

The aim of this research is to examine the writing strategies of Libyan learners of English as a foreign language in a university level context. The main focus is to compare the strategies of 'good' and 'poor' writers of English (as identified by the researcher and two other independent raters – see 3.10.2.2.1.4) among the population of fourth year students of English. This comparison is made in order to determine differences and/ or similarities in writing strategies employed by both groups as well as to provide possible explanations for the findings.

From this overall aim, two specific objectives are formulated as follows:

a) To undertake empirical work with fourth year undergraduate students of English as a foreign language in  Libyan universities to determine the strategies used by successful and less successful students in their written production.

b) To make recommendations regarding the teaching and learning of written English by university students of English as a foreign language, precisely in the Libyan context, but more generally in Arab, and even wider contexts.

## 1.5    The research questions

The above objectives can be achieved by asking the following questions:

1.    What strategies do Libyan students of English as a foreign language use while writing in English?
2.    Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use?
3.    If yes, how and why do they differ?

## 1.6    The context of the study

This study was conducted in the Department of English Language at Misurata University (hereinafter MU), where I am employed as a member of staff. Before I embarked on this research, I used to teach English writing for first-year students in the English Language Department. This made me well aware of the students' writing problems and motivated me to conduct this research.

My teaching post also gave me direct contact with the administration personnel and the other teaching staff who helped me in my research when needed. It was important that my colleagues in the English Language Department allowed me to interview them and collect data about their teaching approaches in writing. It was equally important that my colleagues helped me to contact some of their students directly for the think-aloud protocol and interview data.

It should be noted that all the students participated voluntarily and that even though I knew some of the students who participated in the data-collection tasks, because I was a lecturer in their institution and had taught them, they did not feel intimidated. This is because I explained to them I had been away for the previous three years continuing my postgraduate studies, and they also were assured that this participation would not affect their exam marks. Also students, either poor or good, were not informed about the results of their placement composition, so they did not realise that they had been chosen for whatever reason rather than being fourth-year English majors.

In Libya, English is the only modern foreign language taught as a school subject. It is introduced in the fifth grade of Basic Education (i.e., primary and preparatory

stages), at the age of nine and continues thereafter through the Intermediate Education and Training Cycle (i.e., secondary stage) at the rate of four hours of weekly instruction (El-Shawish, 2004). English is also studied as an intensive programme by students who have enrolled in the English specialisation secondary schools within the field of social sciences (Warayet, 2001). However, it is worth mentioning that students in the current study started English at the age of 12 and not at the age of nine (as mentioned above) because of curriculum changes (i.e., an official decision to start English at the age of nine) that took place later when current research subjects were already at university.

At the secondary stage, the teaching materials presented to those students deal with various aspects of language teaching and learning such as practising the language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, and also introducing other linguistic aspects of English language teaching such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and culture. The type of writing students are required to do according to their teaching materials include report and letter writing, newspaper stories, and factual essays. This type of specialised school prepares students to become first year undergraduates in the English departments both in the Faculty of Arts, and the Faculty of Qualifying Teachers. Graduates of this type of school have learnt English for a total of nine years.

Subjects of the current study are fourth year students majoring in English at the Faculty of Arts in MU, who have succeeded in passing the first, second, and third years of their university study, and have only one academic year left before they graduate. The Faculty of Arts, the institution where the study is undertaken, is a branch of MU which is one of the main Libyan universities that is administratively and financially related to the Ministry of Higher Education in Libya. The focus in the English department at MU is on the study of the language itself (i.e., the four language skills), in addition to learning about the language through its literature, linguistics, and applied linguistics. The courses that fourth year students have already covered in the first, second, and third years include: Spoken English, Reading Comprehension, Grammar, Listening Comprehension, Introduction to Literature, Phonetics, Linguistics, Vocabulary and Spelling, Novel, Poetry, Translation, Research Methods, Short Stories, Writing 1 (first year), Writing 2 (second year), and

Advanced Writing (third year). Students in the third year are taught advanced composition and this consists of two parts. In the first half of the year teachers briefly revise the second year composition course in order to remind their students of their composition knowledge. The second half of the year is devoted to an introduction to research which involves teaching students how to write an outline, the layout of the research paper, and how to gather a bibliography. This introduction to research is quite important to students because it provides them with the necessary information background for their fourth year project (El Mortaji, 2001). Students are taught both where to locate the necessary information and some techniques of research, but the focus is mainly on how to write a research paper: organisation of information, the use of quotes, paraphrasing, summarising, notes, and bibliography.

Moreover, fourth-year students are required to write a project as part of their course. Individual tutorials are arranged whereby each teacher supervises a group of students throughout their project. Students at this level are expected to produce a minimum of 20 pages as monograph on a topic of their own choice, carried out individually. This project should be submitted to the English Department in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (BA) in English. Other courses taken by fourth year students are: Grammatical Structure, Drama, ESP, Teaching Methods, and Academic Writing. The writing in English required in the fourth year includes different types of writing such as expressive, argumentative, and informative writings. The course also focuses on the writing styles, genres, and methods of evidence and reasoning that characterise academic writing. Other topics that students are expected to cover include: content and organisation of a manuscript; expression of ideas, for example, cohesion, smoothness of expression, jargon, and the like; drafting and revising a research paper, using sources; engaging in and understanding critical thinking (distinguishing between summary and synthesis); writing in social sciences and documenting in APA writing style. The number of students in the fourth year class usually ranges from 30 to 40 (males and females).

It is worth noting that English writing classes do not get sufficient time. That is, students are not given enough time to complete their writing and receive feedback. It is also worth mentioning that as a cultural norm, the writing class is usually teacher-centred in which the class and the learning process is controlled by the teacher.

Students are mainly passive, unless they are directly asked by their teachers to take part and communicate in the class.

A final point that needs to be mentioned about students in the English Department is that most of them pursue teaching careers in secondary schools after graduation. Other graduates pursue jobs as translators or in some foreign companies working in Libya. Finally, some graduates are motivated to continue their studies with the aim of becoming lecturers in one of the Libyan universities.

## 1.7    Layout of the thesis

This thesis is comprised of seven chapters. This Introductory Chapter presents the background to the study, the rationale for pursuing it, aim and objectives, and research questions. It also presents the context in which the study is undertaken.

Chapter Two presents a review of the appropriate literature, exploring the theoretical issues associated with this research. It considers the literature related to the strategies and processes of writing and related research in L1 and L2 writing strategies and processes.

Chapter Three addresses the methodology employed to undertake the empirical work. It describes the procedures followed during the pilot study and the main study, and gives information about the research sample, and the materials and processes adopted in collecting the data. It also details the data analysis methods.

Chapter Four reports the results of the analysis. It offers a profile of the strategies used by the research subjects, and provides statistics for the frequency of strategy use by both groups (good vs. poor) of writers.

Chapter Five reports the results of the qualitative analysis. It describes and compares selected think-aloud protocols as well as using interview data to explain in detail, writing strategies and strategic behaviour of four subjects of two different proficiency levels in writing. It also explores how these subjects differ in their strategy use, and explains the possible reasons why these subjects approach their writing differently.

Chapter Six presents a discussion of the findings, and compares the findings of the present study with previous research discussed in Chapter Two. Reflections on the methodology used is discussed, and a tentative writing model of EFL Libyan students explaining the processes and strategies used by subjects in the current study is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter Seven brings the thesis to an end by drawing an overall conclusion from the results. The major findings of the research are restated, the contribution of the study is highlighted, limitations of the study are discussed, and suggestions for further research are presented. Implications for teaching are also included.

## 1.8   Chapter summary

This chapter has introduced the research aims and questions to be investigated. It has also presented the background to the study, rationale for pursuing it, and the context in which it is undertaken.  In the following chapter, a review of the related literature will be provided.

## Chapter 2: Review of Literature

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature pertinent to the L2 writing strategies of Libyan students of English at the undergraduate level. The chapter commences by addressing the theories and research in the area. Sub-processes of L2 writing are presented and discussed next, and then the various definitions and taxonomies of a strategy are reviewed. Studies on the use and effect of L1 on L2 writing are highlighted, and a review of some of the research that has been concerned with writing and writing difficulties encountered by Arab learners and teachers then follows, before a discussion of those studies of proficient and less proficient writers is presented. Finally, factors affecting L2 writing, i.e., language proficiency, effective writing strategies and motivation are also discussed.

### 2.2 Theories/Models of L1 writing

Second language writing investigators have typically interpreted their findings with regard to the assumptions of L1 writing theory (O'Brien, 2004, as cited in Mu, 2006:14). In other words, L1 writing theories or models have formed the basis for most L2 research. Grabe (2001:46) states that "at present there are no specifically L2 theories of writing development". Kroll (2003:5-6) acknowledges the work of Cumming (1998), Grabe (2001), Matsuda (1998), and Silva (1993) on L2 writing theory/model-building, but she states that "regrettably" there is no one theory of L2 writing.

In the past few decades there have been some attempts to build a model of L1 writing, the most important of these being produced by Rohman (1965), Flower and Hayes (1981), and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), which will be examined briefly in the following sub-sections.

### 2.2.1 The Stage Model

Based on his study project on a group of students, Rohman (1965) developed what he called the stage model: prewriting-writing- rewriting

This model comprises three stages as shown above. Prewriting involves any activities, and mainly thinking, that take place prior to writing (i.e., what I call planning). So, there is a creative principle in the structure of thinking that leads to writing. Writing involves translation (i.e., what I call drafting). In this stage, writers translate their thoughts to writing. Rewriting is only concerned with checking spelling and punctuation (i.e., editing). That is to say, revision is only associated with the final stage. What is important about Rohman's model, however, is that it introduces thinking as a necessary feature of writing. Nevertheless, the obvious drawback about this model is that it shows writing as a linear process rather than as a recursive one, and therefore could not explain the complex nature of writing as well as subsequent models.

### 2.2.2 The Flower and Hayes Model

'A cognitive process theory of writing' by Flower and Hayes (1981) is considered as one of the most significant L1 writing theories. It is probably the model of writing most widely accepted by L2 writing teachers (Hyland, 2003:11). Roca de Larios et al (2002:21) state that the Flower and Hayes model is the most widely used theoretical model in L2 process-orientated research. Due to its significance, it is worth discussing in more detail.

Flower and Hayes identified the organisation of writing processes and divided the writing environment into three main parts: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the writing process. The task environment refers "to everything outside the writer's skin that influences the performances of the task" (Hayes and Flower, 1980:12). Thus, it includes the topic, audience, the text, and any factors in the environment relevant to the writer's motivation. The writer's long term memory refers to the knowledge about the topic and the writing of it stored in long-term memory. The writing process consists of various sub-processes presented in Figure 2.1. They are planning, translating, and reviewing.
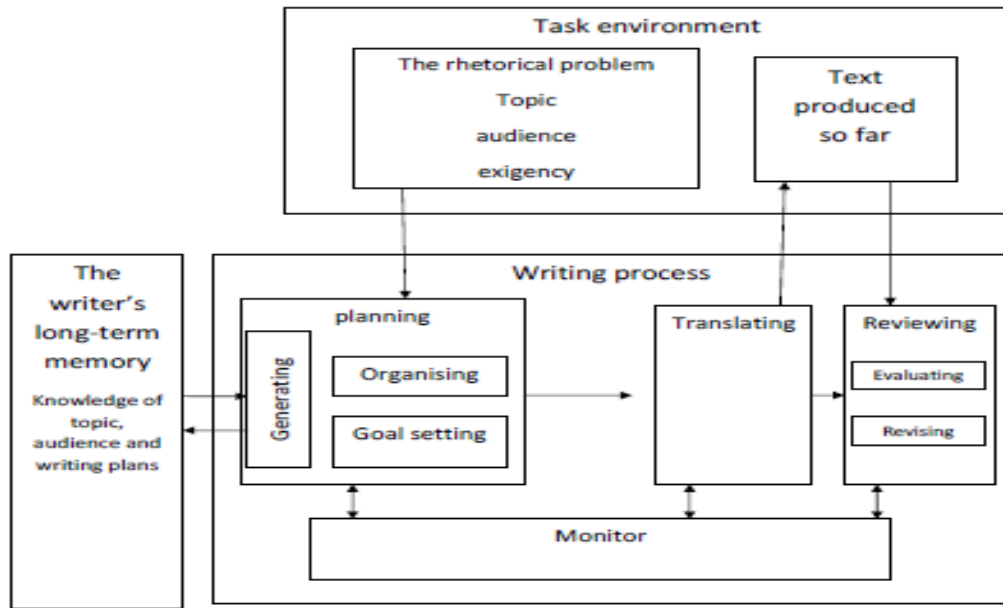
**Figure 2-1: A Cognitive Process Theory of Writing (Flower and Hayes, 1981)**

To research these sub-processes (i.e., planning, translating, and reviewing), protocol analysis was used by Flower and Hayes to describe the cognitive processes that the subject uses while performing the task. It might be worth mentioning here that despite the acknowledged limitations of think-aloud protocols (Zamel, 1983; Cohen, 1998; Hyland, 2002; Sasaki, 2005), they "can provide data on cognitive processes and writers' responses" (Mu, 2006: 90). Additionally, they can sometimes provide access to the reasoning processes underlying sophisticated cognition, response, and decision-making (Pressley and Afferbach, 1995; Roca De Larios et al, 2006). Furthermore, they "allow for the analysis of affective processes of writing in addition to cognitive processes" (Mu, ibid: 91).

Hence, planning involves creating ideas and organizing them, and setting goals to achieve during composition (Kellogg, 1987). Translating deals with converting these plans to written text; and reviewing "includes evaluating text already in place as well as editing errors" (Levy and Ransdell, 1995:768). Flower and Hayes insisted that the reviewing process is a task that writers must perform; however, sometimes this process runs more or less automatically.

Flower and Hayes emphasise that the three thinking processes are anything but linear, that the processes interact recursively, can interrupt or be embedded in any other process and can be simultaneous (Figure 2.1). A significant issue is that "the

writing process is recursive, goal-driven" (Tobin, 2008:66), and problem-solving with a complex inter-relationship between task, audience and writer whose high, mid and low-level goals evolve as they write. As noted by Flower and Hayes (1981:381), "[i]n the act of writing, people regenerate or recreate their own goals in the light of what they learn". As can be seen from Figure 2.1, "plans and text are constantly evaluated in a feedback loop and the whole process is overseen by an executive control called a monitor" (Hyland, 2009:21).

Subsequent researchers of writing have reinforced the argument related to Flower and Hayes' cognitive process model of writing. Their investigation has shown that composing is not merely linear, but rather recursive. Such recursiveness makes composing a process that is constantly developing and refusing ideas which may not be important, thus "making it a dynamic process of composition. Composing involves plans and processes which the writer brings to bear on the writing process" (Abdul-Rahman, 2011: 37).

Although Flower and Hayes have been an enormous influence on L2 writing process research, their model it has been criticised on different occasions. Macaro (2003), for example, argues that this model is, in the first place, for L1 writing and that it does not accord much importance to the role of L1 in the formulating process (if taken as a model that includes L1 and L2 writing). On the other hand, Hyland (2009) criticised cognitive models that rely on 'think-aloud protocols' where writers report whatever comes across their minds as they write, on the grounds that they do not provide sufficient explanation of the complex cognitive processes involved, which in themselves may be unconscious and consequently not reportable. Indeed, this is an issue to which Flower and Hayes (1981) are themselves sensitive. Given such criticisms, in this study, three tools are used as follows: think-aloud protocols, interviews, and observation. This research approach allows for triangulation of the think-aloud data with other data.

Moreover, Scardamalia and Bereiter (1986) note that cognitive models do not represent fully worked-out theories and fail to explain or generate writing behaviour, and later (in 1987) also criticised the Flower and Hayes (1981) model finding flaws in its methodology and its underlying assumptions. Methodologically, the model is argued as being limited by its reliance on only inferred invariance in protocol data;

and in terms of its assumptions, it starts from the premise that there is a single writing process, which is more or less the same for all writers. Hence, according to this model, skilled writers do the same things as unskilled writers (Mu, 2006), and consequently, the model is unable to explain the differences between strong and weak writers. Moreover, North (1987), as cited in Grabe and Kaplan (1996:92) argues that this model "is much too vague to satisfy criteria for formal model building". For example, it does not clarify how texts are constructed; neither does it represent the linguistic constraints that might be forced on the text construction.

El Mortaji (2001) who conducted research on multilingual EFL students, also made several criticisms of the Flower and Hayes model, the first relating to the question of whether it could be used in connection with learners of two or three languages. Secondly, El Mortaji (ibid) observed that the model ignored some important factors which could affect students' composing processes, such as 'affect' and 'communication strategies', and as a third criticism, she indicated the problem of some of the terminology used by Flower and Hayes, particularly the term 'translation' which she believed could create obvious confusion when dealing with bilingual or multilingual writers (ibid: 32). Nonetheless, in spite of all the various criticisms, the influence of the model proposed by Flower and Hayes must be acknowledged, as it created a solid basis for other models to evolve. Moreover, it gave new perspectives and perceptions about the composing process and drew researchers' attention to various factors related to that process (Grabe and Kaplan, 1996). Supporting this view, Roca de Larios et al. (2002) (as cited in O'Brien, 2004) state that the Flower and Hayes (1981) model of L1 writing processes is still the most commonly used, and cited framework by researchers in the L2 composing process.

### 2.2.3   The Bereiter and Scardamalia Model

Using think-aloud analysis, and observation, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) developed a theory of L1 writing comprising 'a knowledge-telling' model (Figure 2.2) for unskilled writers, and 'a knowledge-transformation' model (Figure 2.3) for skilled writers. They claimed that a single processing model is not sufficient to explain the writing processes of different writers, since proficient writers use entirely different processes from poor or young writers. Hence, these researchers suggested

the two different models mentioned above to account for these differing strategies, and both of these are now explained.

The 'knowledge-telling' model is a task-execution model and does not include any complex problem-solving activities. In this model, unskilled writers are usually more likely to simplify the writing task and reduce its difficulty in order to be successful in converting oral language into written form, therefore achieving the writing task.
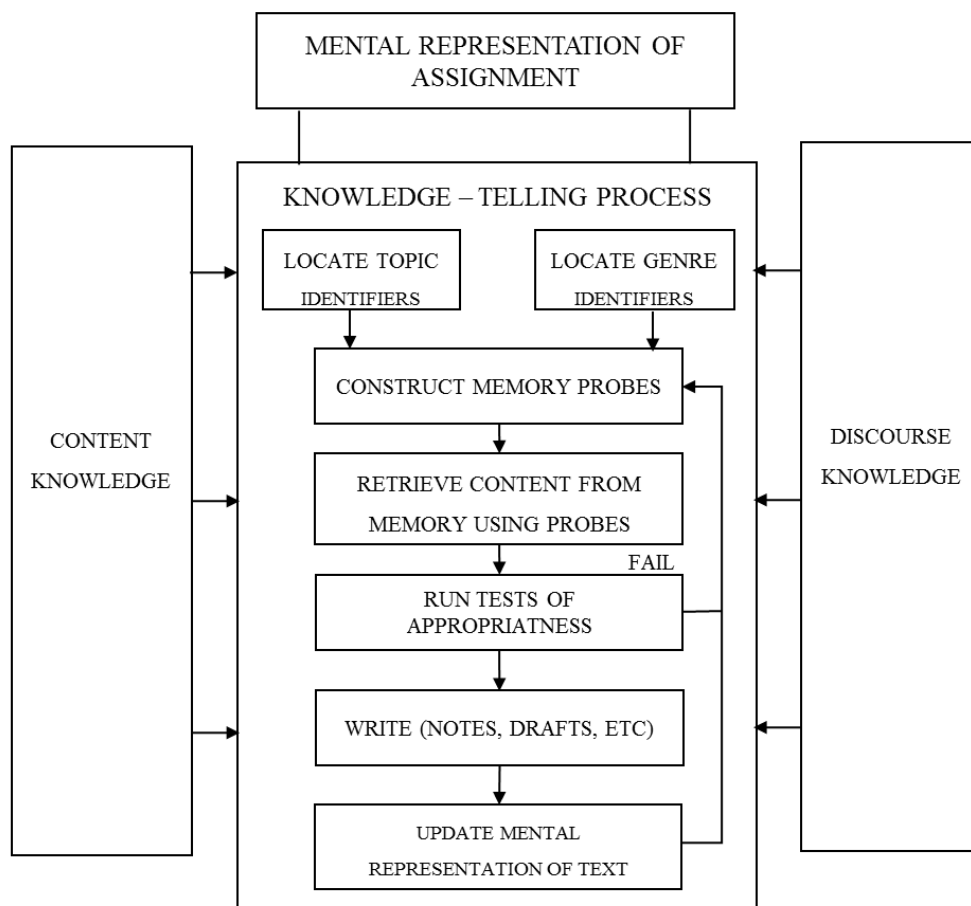


**Figure 2-2: The Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) Model of Knowledge-telling**

According to this model, novice writers plan less than experts, have limited goals and are mainly interested in generating content. Bereiter and Scardamalia (ibid:348) claimed that this model "generates content by topical and structural prompts, without strategic formulation of goals, sub goals, search criteria, and other components of problem-solving".

The second model, i.e., the knowledge-transforming model, as shown in Figure 2.3, represents the writing process of skilled writers. Skilled writers, according to this model, use writing as problem analysis, reflect on the task and set goals to actively rework thoughts to change both their ideas and text (Hyland, 2003:12).

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┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│   MENTAL REPRESENTATION OF THE       │
│            ASSIGNMENT                │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘

┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│   PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND GOAL SETTING  │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘

      CONTENT                    CONTENT
     KNOWLEDGE                  KNOWLEDGE

┌──────────┐                 ┌──────────┐
│ CONTENT  │    PROBLEM      │RHETORICAL│
│ PROBLEM  │   TRANSLATION   │ PROBLEM  │
│  SPACE   │                 │  SPACE   │
│          │    PROBLEM      │          │
│          │   TRANSLATION   │          │
│          │   KNOWLEDGE     │          │
│          │ TELLING PROCESS │          │
└──────────┘                 └──────────┘
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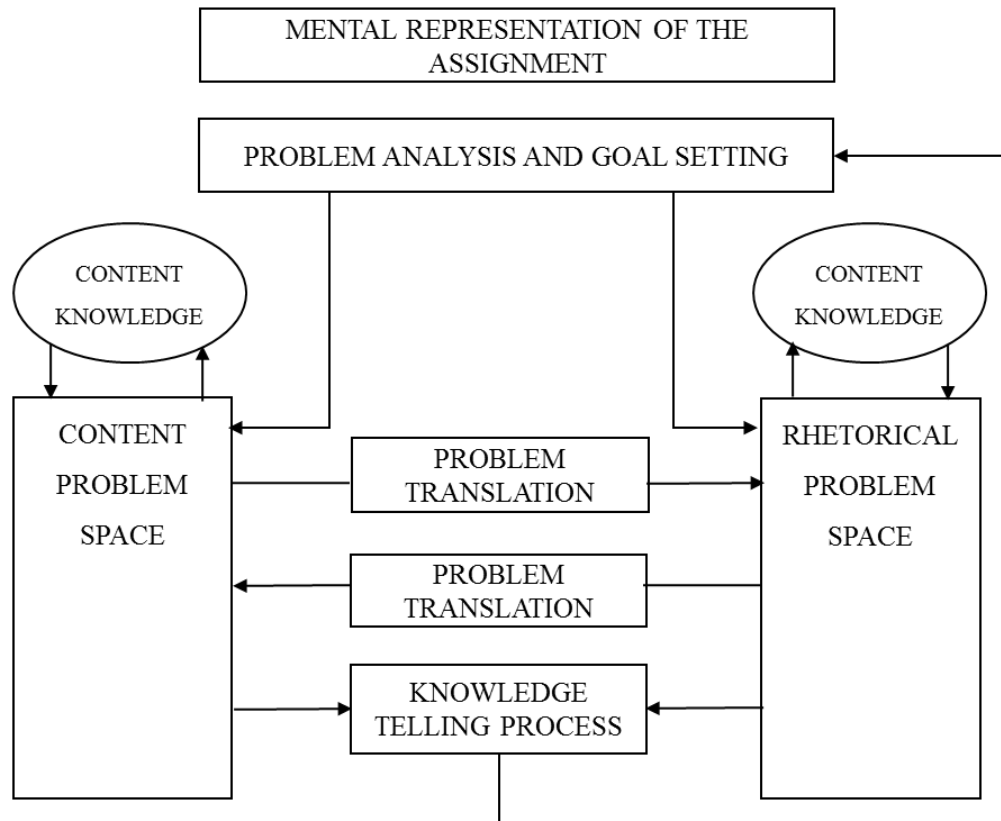
**Figure 2-3: The Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) Model of Knowledge-transforming**

This model seems to explain some very important points: firstly, skilled and unskilled writers' differences in the writing process; secondly, different cognitive demands of different writing tasks; thirdly, writing complexity because of different readers and genre demands; and fourthly, non-transferability of writing skills from one genre to another. However, the 'knowledge-transforming' model also has some drawbacks. Flower (1994) (as cited in Chaaban, 2010) stated that the model is criticized as being purely cognitive and it does not account for the influence of context and social factors on writing. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that these models of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) are still L1 based and, therefore, the earlier criticisms Macaro (2003) makes about the Flower and Hayes model apply equally to the work of Bereiter and Scardamalia.

16

### 2.2.4   Conclusion on L1 models

Rohman's model (1965) is strictly linear and failed to explain the recursive nature of the writing process which is a significant limitation.

Regarding Bereiter and Scardamalia's (1987) models, in our view point both models are concerned with how content/ideas are controlled in writing and there is nothing to say concerning the language problems. Besides, it is purely cognitive and does not give credit to other factors involved in writing.

As for the Flower and Hayes' (1981) model, and in spite of the criticism of this model, it is still widely accepted as the one that gives a new insight of how writing takes place and directs our consideration towards key factors interacting in the process. In short, Flower and Hayes' model created a relatively solid basis for subsequent models to evolve and develop as shall be seen in the next section. Therefore, Flower and Hayes' model will be used as a broad framework for my research.

### 2.3   Towards a theory of L2 writing

In the previous section, it was pointed out that the basis for most L2 research on writing has been formed by L1 writing theories or models. Grabe (2001:46) asserts that "at present there are no specifically L2 theories of writing development". Moreover, Silva (1993:668) observes that "there exists, at least at present, no coherent, comprehensive theory of L2 writing". Jones and Tetroe (1987) moreover, note that no comprehensive and complete theory of ESL/EFL writing has been developed, and that there is still a need for such a theory to distinguish writing in ESL/EFL contexts from writing in English as a native language. Such observations have been repeatedly echoed in the works of other leading researchers and theorists (e.g., Grabe and Kaplan, 1996; Kraples, 1990; Krashen, 1984; Leki, 1992; Raimes, 1991). In this section, some attempts to build a model of ESL/EFL writing will be discussed.

Sasaki (1996) studies the factors that might have an influence on some Japanese university students' expository writing in EFL. From her results, she proposed an explanatory model (see Figure 2.4), that would reflect EFL writing ability. Her

model suggests that there are three explanatory variables: L2 proficiency, L1 writing ability, and L2 meta-knowledge that affect L2 writing production. She claimed writing competence as the main factor influencing L1 and L2 writing ability. She also confirmed that the use of L1 writing ability exhibited itself as a writing strategy for producing L2 texts, although other writing strategies might also affect these texts. She pointed out that combined writing experience in L1 and L2, and L2 writing confidence might also assist the production of L2 writing.
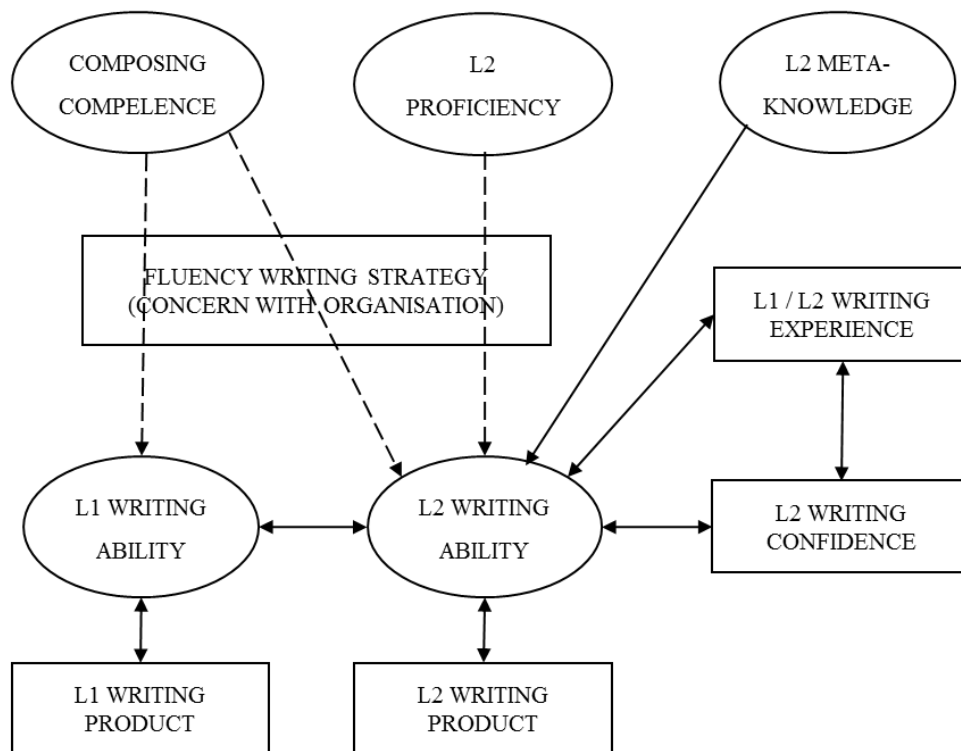


**Figure 2-4: EFL Writing Ability Model (Sasaki, 1996)**

El Mortaji (2001) studied the writing processes and strategies of a group of 18 students majoring in English in an EFL context in Morocco. She used multiple methods: think-aloud protocols, questionnaires and interviews to elicit data. She managed to categorise different strategies in both L1 (Arabic) and L3 (English), in an attempt to propose an L1/ third language (L3) composing model.

The model suggested by El Mortaji (ibid) (see figure 2-5 below) maintains the major elements of the composing process proposed by the Flower and Hayes' (1981) L1 model: the task environment, the writer's LTM and the writing processes, including a monitor which assists and dictates movement among these elements. According to El

Mortaji, two major strategies are featured – Text generation, and Text evaluation. Text generation includes planning, rehearsing, repeating, reading and communication strategies. Text evaluation includes assessing, revising and editing. Additionally, there is an element of formulation which refers to units of composing in L1, L2 and L3. The writer's long-term memory contains knowledge of topic, knowledge of writing conventions, knowledge of audience, knowledge of language and affect. Lastly, in the task environment, key words, focus, purpose, discourse type, and language have been added.

A closer look at both the model by Flower and Hayes, and El Mortaji's model, reveals that the latter includes some important factors. For instance, Flower and Hayes do not include 'affect', and they employ the term 'translation' for the second box of the writing process which might cause confusion when dealing with bilingual writers, a feature that El Mortaji changed, using another term – 'formulating', to avoid such confusion. She also added knowledge of writing conventions, knowledge of languages, and affect (i.e., emotions, motivation, attitudes etc.) on the writing processes in general and writing strategies in particular.

**TASK ENVIRONMENT**

**Task**
Topic, key words, focus, audience, purpose, discourse type, language,

**Text So Far**

---

**WRITER'S LTM
L1, L2, L3**

**Knowledge of topic**

Experienced/ inexperienced, real/partially, real/imagined, easy/difficult, common/uncommon, familiar/unfamiliar, fiction/non-fiction

**Knowledge of writing Conventions**

Discourse related:

Narrative before the events, during the events, after the events, climax, suspense, flashback, denouement, resolution, solution, imaginary, symbolism, setting, characters, ellipse

Expository:

Literary movement/genre; postmodernism, realism

Literary techniques:

Themes:

**Essay writing related:**

Organization: move from general to specific, from less to more, important ideas, chronological order of ideas, time order

Introduction: statement, question

Body: develop main points/ideas, more specific information, two to three paragraphs

Conclusion: insert new idea, question, open for discussion, feelings, general impact of story on writer, summary of ideas developed in the body

**Knowledge of audience**

**Teacher's rules and expectations:**

Paragraphing, sentence structure, topic sentence, punctuations, tenses, grammar, presentations, favorite, words/ expressions, quotations from favorite writer/ novel,

**Literary theory:**

Audience: teacher/assessor/examiner, wider, audience, sharing common cultural assumptions and background with writer, choice of topic/ideas, writer-reader relationship.

**Purpose**: inform, entertain, explain, convince, persuade, instruct.

**Knowledge of languages:
L1, L2, L3**

International vs. unintentional language

Switch, translations, instant, transfer, **coinage of:**

Lexis, proverbs, expressions, clichés, content knowledge (idea), titles of books, literary terms, quotations

**Affect**

Emotions, motivation, attitudes towards: writing, writing in L1, writing in L3, discourse type, reading, teacher's feedback and attitude, topic.

---

**WRITING PROCESSES**

**MONITOR**

Commenting, Metacommenting,

**Text Generation Strategies**

**Planning**
Global:

Audience, purpose, content (vocabulary, ideas, key words …), organization, structure, procedure (start, end, use outline, listing)

Local:

Procedure, text (word).

**Rehearsing**

Develop/ elaborate/ explain:

Ideas, points, details, story, terminology (terms)

Word choice

**Repeating**

Key words in topic, words of sentence in progress, last word of sentence

**Reading**

Topic, outline, notes, text in progress (phrase/ sentence/ idea), paragraph, text so far, essay

**Communication Strategies**
Paraphrase circumlocution generalization,
Tip of the tongue phenomenon, ask for help / appeal for assistance avoidance
Leave a gap
Approximation

**Formulating**

**Units of Composing in L1, L2, L3**

Group of words-
Sentence
Clause
Group of sentences

**Text Evaluation Strategies**

**Assessing**
Global:

Topic, interpretation, notes, outline, plane, procedure , rehearsed ideas, organization, structure, text,

Local:

Word, sentence/ idea in progress.

**Revising**

Addition, deletion Substitution, word order, organization of: word choice (lexicon), connectors, transition verbs, phrase, clause, sentence, group of sentences, paragraph, outline, notes, essay.

**Editing**

Addition, deletion

Substitution of:

Punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, word/ verb form, spelling, preposition, articles.

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**Figure 2-5: A Model of L1/L3 Composing Processes (El Mortaji, 2001)**

Macaro (2003:222-2) briefly outlines a model of L2 writing (Figure 2.6) that addresses his criticisms of Flower and Hayes (1981) by taking into account the role that L1 plays in the formulating process. He seems to accept the 'planning, formulating, reviewing' framework presented by Flower and Hayes, but stresses the role of cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies when monitoring, and notes that in the formulation stage, when evaluation takes place, it is based on the relative effectiveness of the strategies of re-combination, restructuring and generation through translation (ibid).

Macaro (ibid) suggests that with each new word and phrase written by the writer, the written product changes its effect on all the other components, both external and internal. This contributes to the recursive nature of the whole process that can be seen to be working through the six constantly recurring functions proposed in Figure 2.6 below:

1. the elicitation of task requirements;

2. the setting (and re-setting) of communicative goals as a result of the process of matching task requirements to current linguistic knowledge in LTM;

3. the evaluating of retrieved language by WM from LTM both as L1/L2 equivalents and as L2 formulaic language, the processing of that language, its modification and eventual sentence (or part sentence) generation;

4. the monitoring and/ or checking process (4a) or the recourse to resources to assist language generation before text is written;

5. written formulation;

6. monitoring and/ or checking (6a) of on-going written text (cf. Macaro, 2003:222-3).

Whilst the model presented by Macaro may be a positive step in the right direction, it is not presented as a complete package (not all explanations, definitions and evidence are laid out in one place to support the theory).
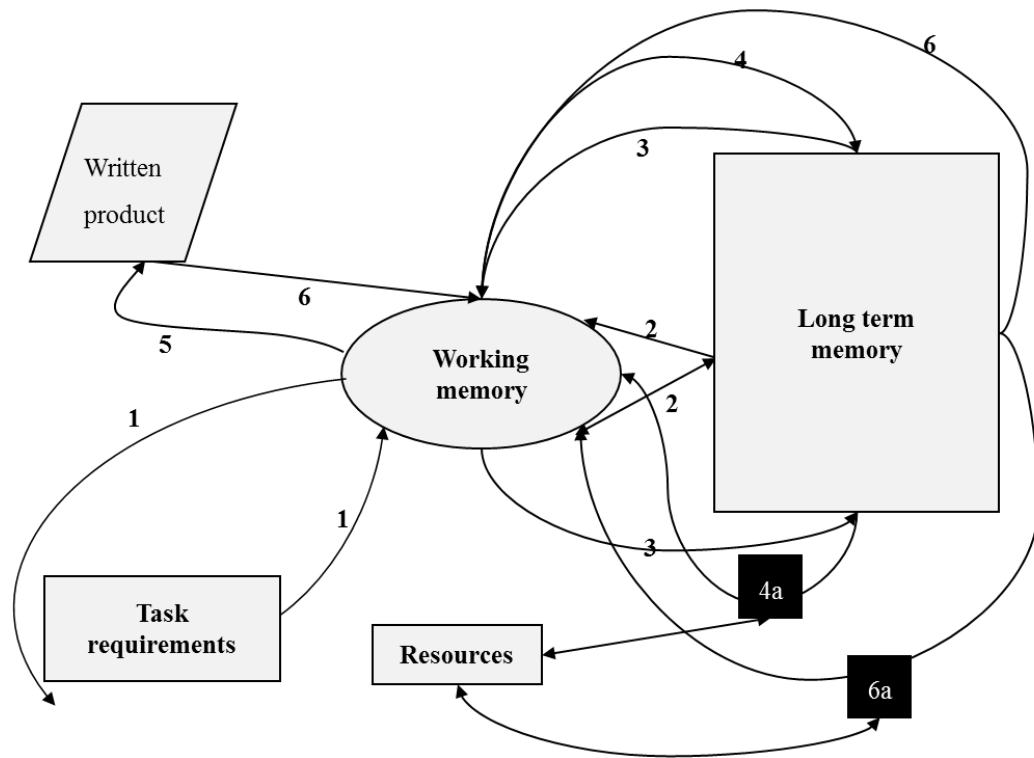
**Figure 2-6: A Model of L2 Writing (Macaro, 2003)**

From the previous discussion, it can be concluded that L2 research on writing is based on L1 writing research. Kroll (2003:5-6) who acknowledges the work of other researchers (e.g., Cumming, 1998; Grabe, 2001; Matsuda, 1998; Silva, 1993) on L2 writing theory/model-building, states that "regrettably" there is no one theory of L2 writing. Cumming (1998:68) moreover states that "we are far from seeing models that adequately explain learning to write in a second language". Therefore, much of the L2 research has followed the lead of L1 writing research. In the next section, a closer look into the 'practical part' within the whole L2 writing process will be considered.

## 2.4  Sub-processes of L2 writing

Since the 1980s, much of the cognitive process research on the L2 writing has become increasingly focused on the sub-processes of L2 writing: planning, drafting, revising as described in the following sub-sections.

### 2.4.1 Planning

Writers employ many strategies to understand the writing task. Before start writing, writers usually spend time thinking about the topic, and also plan and organise the content of their essays.

Some writers do plan all the way during the composing process; others, however, plan prior to starting writing. So, there are two main kinds of planning: global planning and on-line planning according to Ellis (2005). Manchón and colleagues (2007:150) assert that global planning "deals with ideational and / or textual issues and is frequent in the pre-writing stage", While on-line planning "involves taking decisions about paragraphs, sentences and words; it is apparent during the writing phase". Yu-wen (2007:12) states that there are many pre-writing strategies such as "brainstorming, idea mapping, outlining, cubing, listing, free-writing, looping, track switching, classic invention and the reporter's formula".

### 2.4.2 Drafting

Following planning, however, writers start a process that combines "writing, planning, rehearsing phrases, and re-reading source texts" (Manchón et al., 2007:150, as cited in Abdul-Rahman, 2011: 38). While drafting, writers put ideas into language. In this process, writers focus on presenting and supporting their ideas clearly, and begin to connect them. They also check various linguistic aspects such as grammar, lexis, and academic conventions. For some writers, however, the most important thing is to write down vocabulary items, without being concerned much about spelling, grammar, punctuation or usage. The concentration here is on how to prepare a draft, which may have modification in a second draft. Most importantly, is how to put down the ideas that the writer wants to express. That is, they attend to content rather than form.

According to Harris (1993), drafting is where the ideas and plans are translated through a provisional text. Writing down ideas helps the writer to find out what can be written and then link the sentences and paragraphs together. Therefore, it can be said that drafting is a non-linear process, as it overlaps with planning. It allows

writers the flexibility to explore, to make discoveries and to change their ideas (p.46).Moreover, during this phase, the writers re-read and evaluate their writing. According to Plakans, the process is "circular and overlapping" (2008: 117).

### 2.4.3  Reviewing

Before the development and study of how cognitive theories function, revision was viewed as the final stage of the writing process that follows prewriting and drafting. Now, however, revision is considered as an integral part of the composing process. Flower and Hayes (1981: 376) viewed revision as a set of behaviours that can be called into play at any time during the writing act: "…we do not need to define "revision" as a unique stage in composing, but as a thinking process that can occur at any time a writer chooses to evaluate or edit his text or his plans. As an important part of writing it constantly leads to new planning or a "re-vision" of what one wanted to say". More recently, Cabrejas (2008b:110) defines revision saying that it "…refers to any change that the writer makes on a written page. These changes can be of any kind: minor changes, which involve spelling and punctuation, and major changes, those that affect the organization or content of a given text". Moreover, and reinforcing the recursiveness of the composing processes, Cabrejas (ibid) adds that what is important about revision lies in its integration throughout the whole writing process in a recursive operation that involves the writer going back and forth as he/she produces a new written text.

In analysing the types of revisions made by ESL/EFL writers, researchers usually use Faigley and Witte's (1981) taxonomy which is based on L1 research. Faigley and Witte's taxonomy consists of two types of surface revisions, i.e., formal and meaning-preserving changes, which do not change meaning, and two types of text-base revisions, i.e., micro- and macrostructure changes which alter meaning. Formal revisions include changes in spelling, verb tense, number, modality, abbreviation, punctuation, and format. Meaning- preserving changes "'paraphrase' the concepts in the text but do not change them" (1981:403). These changes involve changing one word or phrase for another but they do not affect meaning (see Figure 2.7).

Revision Changes

Surface Changes · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · Text-Base Changes

Formal Changes · · · · Meaning-preserving Changes · · · · Microstructure Changes · · · · Macrostructure Changes

| Spelling | Additions | Additions | Additions |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tense, Number, and Modality | Deletions | Deletions | Deletions |
| Abbreviation | Substitutions | Substitutions | Substitutions |
| Punctuation | Permutations | Permutations | Permutations |
| Format | Distributions | Distributions | Distributions |
| | Consolidations | Consolidations | Consolidations |

**Figure 2-7: Faigely and Witte's (1981) revision taxonomy**

Text-base changes consist of two types: microstructure and macrostructure changes. Microstructure changes involve changes that do not affect the summary of a text: changes in paragraphing, changes produced for the addition, modification, or deletion of a topic or concluding sentence. Macrostructure changes are global in nature and affect the gist or summary of a text.

Faigley and Witte (ibid) investigated the composing processes of six inexperienced student writers, six advanced student writers, and six expert adult writers, with main concentration on revision. They concluded that expert or experienced writers revise differently from inexperienced writers. The inexperienced subjects mainly corrected errors and made meaning-preserving changes at the word level, while the experienced and advanced subjects made further global changes that changed the basic framework of their text in accordance with their proficiencies.

Moreover, Sommers (1980) using a case study approach studied revision strategies of twenty experienced adult writers (editors, academics, and journalists) and another twenty college students (freshmen). Every subject was required to write three essays (explanatory, expressive, persuasive) and rewrote each twice, coming out with nine essays in drafts and final form. The subjects were also interviewed after completing their final drafts. The data revealed "four revision operations: deletion, substitution, addition, and reordering" (Tobin, 2008:46). These operations took place at four levels of change: word, phrase, sentence and theme. In Sommers' L1 research, less

experienced writers (students) considered revision as a rewording activity and did only surface changes at the word or phrase level. Their attention was towards lexicon and teacher- generated rules and hardly modified the ideas already written down. On the other hand, the proficient writers (adults) viewed revision as a process of structuring and shaping their meaning. They outnumbered by six times the revision occurrences done by the college students, and the majority of revisions done by the proficient writers were at the sentence level. They viewed revision globally— they revised the whole chunk and each revision contributed to the development of the entire text.

## 2.5    Definitions and characteristics of a strategy

The notion of strategy as a general term in the field of language learning is one that has not been fully agreed upon (Ellis, 2008). Indeed, there is much debate in the literature about how strategies are defined. Cohen (1998:4), however, makes a key point, defining learning strategies as "learning processes which are consciously selected by the learner. The element of choice is important here because this is what gives a strategy its special character. These are also moves which the learner is at least aware of, even if full attention is not being given to them".

As the current research investigates writing strategies in particular, it is important to clarify such terms at the beginning of the study.

Writing strategies are conscious decisions made by the writers to solve a writing problem (Beck, 2002; Flower, 1993) (cited in Mu, 2006). The emphasis on the word 'conscious' is key in this regard, Cohen (1998:11) pointing out that "[i]f the behaviour is so unconscious that the learners are not able to identify any strategies associated with it, then the behaviour would simply be referred to as a process, not a strategy". It can be clearly understood from Cohen's definition of a strategy that the element of choice is important here because this is what gives a strategy its distinct character.   Arndt (1990) similarly describes writing strategies as a sequence of decisions that writers have to make as they write: how to approach their subjects, how to plan the discourse, how to connect their thoughts, what to include and what to discard, how to present their meaning most efficiently to the reader, how to make meaning clear at both the sentence and propositional level, how to form and keep

overall coherence between topic, audience and communicative intentions, and how and when to finish writing. Another definition by Cornaire and Raymond (1994) (as cited in Beare, 2000), is that a writing strategy is a plan of action or a conscious intervention in dealing with a task for the purpose of problem-solving or reaching a goal. More recently, Kieft et al. (2006) (as cited in Alhaisoni, 2012:145) explain the writing strategy of an individual as the manner in which that person tends to organise cognitive activities such as planning, formulating, and reviewing.

The above definitions highlight the characteristics of a strategy, from which it can be seen that the first characteristic is problematicity, relating to the fact that strategies are used as problem-solving activities in communication. The second characteristic is intentionality, implying that strategies are chosen consciously by the writer; and the third characteristic is that strategies are goal directed, hence being employed to achieve a particular objective ( Chaaban, 2010).

In the current study, writing strategies are defined as decisions, actions and techniques used by the writer behaviourally or mentally, from the time he/she starts thinking about the writing task, throughout the actual writing time, and including time spent making revisions. These strategic tools are chosen consciously and purposely as tools that are believed to facilitate the task of conveying a message through writing.

It can be understood from the discussion that the concept of strategy has proved hard to define, and this in itself has an influence upon attempts to construct a comprehensive and consistent taxonomy. Hence, categorising strategies is another problem facing any researcher who is interested in exploring the issue of writing strategies.

## 2.6  Categorisation of writing strategies

O'Malley and Chamot (1990:44-5) classify learning strategies into three categories - cognitive, metacognitive and social/affective strategies. Cognitive strategies operate directly on incoming information, manipulating it to enhance learning, for example by, rehearsal, organisation and elaboration. Metacognitive strategies are executive skills such as planning, organising and evaluating. And social and affective strategies

are often treated as a broad grouping involving interaction with other people or being about controlling one's feelings about language learning.

Perl (1975-1978) categorised the behaviours of her subjects (five English native-speaking unskilled college writers) showing the writing strategies they used while composing aloud on four topics. She tape recorded whatever they said while they were composing so that she could explore how her subjects were thinking and writing, and hence document the sequence and the flow of their writing. Perl concentrated on what took place while writing and how her subjects made sense of what they were doing. She collected three types of data from her subjects: their think-aloud protocols, their responses to the interview, and their written products, and subsequently developed a scheme to code her subjects' think-aloud protocols.

The taxonomy below is produced by Perl (1979) who classifies the following strategies:

Table 2-1: Perl's taxonomy of writing strategies

| Strategy | Definition |
|---|---|
| **(1) General planning [PL]** | organising one's thoughts for writing, discussing how one will proceed |
| **(2) Local planning [PLL]** | talking out what ideas will come next |
| **(3) Global planning [PLG]** | discussing changes in drafts |
| **(4) Rehearsing [RH]** | voicing ideas on the topic with a view to developing both language and content of the text |
| **(5) Commenting [C]** | sighing, making a comment or judgement about the topic |
| **(6) Interpretation [I]** | rehearsing the topic to get a 'handle' on it |
| **(7) Revising [RV]** | making changes which affect meaning |
| **(8) Assessing [A (+); A (-)]** | making a judgement about one's writing; maybe positive or negative |
| **(9) Questioning [Q]** | asking a question |
| **(10) Talking leading to writing [T--W]** | voicing ideas on the topic, tentatively finding one's way, but not necessarily being committed to or using all one is saying |
| **(11) Talking and writing at the same time [TW]** | composing aloud in such a way that what one is saying is actually being written at the same time |

| | |
|---|---|
| **(12)Repeating [re]** | repeating written or unwritten phrases a number of times |
| **(13) Reading related to the topic** | |
| *(a) Reading the directions [RD]* | |
| *(b) Reading the question [RQ]* | |
| *(c) Reading the statement [RS]* | |
| **(14) Reading related to one's own written products** | |
| *(a) Reading one sentence or few words [Ra]* | |
| *(b) Reading a number of sentences together [Ra-b]* | |
| *(c) Reading the entire draft through [R wI]* | |
| **(15) Writing silently [W]** | |
| **(16) Writing aloud [TW]** | |
| **(17) Editing [E]** | |
| *(a) Adding syntactic markers, words, phrases, or clauses [Eadd]* | |
| *(b) Deleting syntactic markers, words, phrases, or clauses [EDl]* | |
| *(c) Indicating concern for grammatical rule [Egr]* | |
| *(d) Adding deleting or considering the use of punctuation [Epunc]* | |
| *(e) Considering or changing spelling [Esp]* | |
| *(f) Changing the sentence structure through embedding, coordination or subordination [Ess]* | |
| *(g) Indicating concern for appropriate vocabulary (word choice) [Ewc]* | |
| *(h) Considering or changing verb form [Evc]* | |
| **(18) Periods of silence** | |

However, Perl's coding scheme can be criticised according to the following points:

**1**. It contains strategic and non-strategic behaviour (e.g., planning and silence). Writing as an activity is, naturally, performed silently by most writers. Therefore, the strategic behaviour in item 15 (writing silently) could be unjustifiable.

**2**. Some items are overlapping and not clearly defined to the extent that it is hard to see clear differences. For instance, there is no obvious difference between talking and writing at the same time [TW] and writing aloud [TW] as strategies. This might be true when 'talking and writing' could mean talking about something other than verbalising the words that are being written which is not the case in Perl's

explanation of the strategy. This mixture of strategies can also be seen between some types of 'planning' and 'rehearsing'.

**3**. Some items which are somehow related like for example revising and editing were listed apart. So it can be said that it is not organised 'logically' (Alhaysony, 2008).

However, in a more recent edition of her coding scheme, Perl (1984) states that it had been devised "to assist in answering the question 'How do writers compose?' It is a "process measure", a way of depicting what writers do as they write moment by moment. In this way, it is descriptive; it is a method for representing composing strategies as they materialize in sequence" (p.3). Additionally, she defined the coding system as a scheme that

> "allows us to observe the composing process as it unfolds. It allows us to record exactly what is going on while it is occurring and then to return to the data for analysis. It provides writers who think they "don't know how to write" with an opportunity to see that they do have a process all their own. It offers writers who think they know a lot about their own process an opportunity to check their perceptions about themselves. Often the results are surprising" (p.4).

Perl states that her coding scheme "can be replicated and applied to data from a range of different cases" (p.1). She concludes that her scheme can be changed which means a chance for adding new categories is possible.

Perl's investigations (1978, 1980,) revealed that writing is a recursive process through which the writer moves back and forth between the different elements of text already produced in order to be able to produce more text. By using think-aloud protocol analysis technique, Perl was able to observe that the occurrence of recursive parts, which are not always easily identifiable, varies from writer to writer and from one topic to another. She identified three types of recursive elements which are commonly shared by all writers. The first is 're-reading' which is the most visible recurring behaviour through which the writer goes back to the written discourse to make sure that the vocabulary used and the discourse in general are in keeping with the meaning intended. "The unit reread is a semantic rather than a syntactic one, and it occurs at the level of phrases, sentences, and chunks of discourse." (El-Mortaji, 2001:25). The second recursive element is 'focusing' where the writer moves to

some key words in the topic, particularly when the writer is stuck, to get going again and to feel that he/she is going in the right direction. The third recursive behaviour is when the writer moves back to a less tangible element called 'felt sense', which Perl believes, is "the internal criterion writers seem to use to guide them when they are planning, drafting, and revising" (p. 102).

Perl's study is relevant to the current investigation in two ways. First, both of us conducted the studies on college students, and second we adopted the same instruments which are think-aloud, interview, and the subjects' written products.

A number of writing strategies are identified by Leki (1995), who then categorises them under ten headings: clarifying strategies, focusing strategies, relying on past writing experience, taking advantage of first language/culture, using current experience or feedback, looking for models, using current or past ESP training, accommodating the teacher's demands, and lastly, managing competing demands. This set of strategies as Leki (ibid:237) asserts, naturally emerges "in the course of the participants' normal engagements with real assignments as a part of their regular course work in classes across the curriculum". These comments related to students who were studying different disciplines. The context of this investigation is different from that of Perl's as the participants in Leki's research were non-native speakers of English.

Arndt (1987) classified ESL writing strategies based on an investigation of six Chinese postgraduate EFL students' writing strategies while producing academic texts. Eight categories were adopted as follows: Planning - finding a focus, deciding what to write about; Global Planning – deciding how to organise the text as a whole; Rehearsing – trying out ideas and the language in which to express them; Repeating – of key words and phrases; Re-reading – of what had already been written down; Questioning – as a means of classifying ideas, or evaluating what had been written; Revising – making changes to the written text in order to clarify meaning; Editing – making changes to the written text to correct syntax or spelling.

Wenden's (1991) classifications of the writing strategies of eight ESL learners is based on cognitive and metacognitive strategy use. Wenden's metacognitive strategies are Planning, Evaluating and Monitoring, whereas, the cognitive strategies

are (1) Clarification: self-questioning, hypothesising, defining terms and comparing, (2) Retrieval: re-reading aloud or silently what had been written, writing in a lead-in word or expression, re-reading the assigned question, self-questioning, writing until the idea would come, summarising what had just been written, thinking in one's native language, (3) Resourcing: ask researcher, refer to dictionary, (4) Deferral, (5) Avoidance, (6) Verification.

Victori (1995), on the other hand, identified seven kinds of writing strategies based on the think-aloud protocol and interview analyses. The strategies identified were: *planning, monitoring, evaluating, resourcing, repeating, reduction* and *use of L1* strategies. According to Victori (ibid), planning strategies refer to the strategies by which the writer plans what ideas will come next, and they overtly state the writer's objectives in terms of organisation and procedures. Monitoring strategies are strategies used by the writer in order to check and verify his/her progress in the composing process and to identify oncoming problems. Evaluating strategies are strategies used when reassessing the written text, early goals, planned thoughts, and any changes made to the text. Resourcing strategies are strategies of using available external reference sources of information such as using dictionaries to look up or confirm doubts about lexicon, grammatical, semantic or spelling doubts, or to look for synonyms. Repeating strategies represent repeating chunks of language, either when reviewing the text or when transcribing novice ideas. Reduction strategies are strategies used to deal with a particular problem in writing, either by removing it from the text, giving up any attempt to solve it, or paraphrasing in order to avoid a difficulty or problem. L1 strategies are those related to the use of the mother tongue to generate new ideas, evaluate and make sense of the ideas drafted in the target language or to transcribe the right idea/word in the mother tongue.

Riazi (1997) used a naturalistic qualitative approach, making use of questionnaires, written documents, process logs, and interviews. He explored how non-native speakers of English obtained domain-specific literacy in his study of four Iranian students learning to write in the field of education. He found that the strategies adopted by the participants while carrying out their tasks fell into four categories: cognitive, meta-cognitive, social, and search strategies, suggesting that achieving disciplinary literacy in a foreign language was fundamentally an interactive social-

cognitive process, and that text production needed extensive interaction between an individual's cognitive processes and social/contextual factors in different ways.

In a study of four advanced L2 writers at the University of Hong, Wong (2005) explored the composing strategies used in a writing task. Incorporating think-aloud protocols, Wong found his subjects shared a common repertoire of composing strategies including meta-cognitive strategies such as questioning, re-reading, goal setting; cognitive strategies such as drafting and revising; and affective strategies as, for example, self-assessments.

Sasaki (2000) studied EFL learners' writing processes using a Japanese L1 research scheme (see Table 2.2 below), finding differences between the expert and novice writers in her sample. Sasaki's categorisation of ESL writing strategies along with their definitions is illustrated in the following table.

Table 2-2: Sasaki's Japanese ESL students' writing strategies

| Writing Strategies | Definitions |
|---|---|
| **Planning** | |
| Global planning | Detailed planning of overall organization |
| Thematic planning | Less detailed planning of overall organization |
| Local planning | Planning what to write next |
| Organizing | Organizing the generated ideas |
| Conclusion planning | Planning of the conclusion |
| **Retrieving** | |
| Plan retrieving | Retrieving the already constructed plan |
| Information retrieving | Retrieving appropriate information from long-term memory |
| **Generating ideas** | |
| Naturally generated | Generating an idea without any stimulus |
| Description generated | Generating an idea related to the previous description |
| **Verbalizing** | |
| Verbalizing a proposition | Verbalizing the content the writer intends to write |
| Rhetorical refining | Refining the rhetorical aspect(s) of an expression |
| Mechanical refining | Refining the mechanical or(L1/ESL) grammatical aspect(s) of an expression |
| Sense of readers | Adjusting expression(s)to the readers |
| **Translating** | Translating the generated idea into ESL |
| **Re-reading** | Re-reading the already produced sentence |
| **Evaluating** | |

| ESL proficiency evaluation | Evaluating one's own ESL proficiency |
|---|---|
| Local text evaluation | Evaluating part of the generated text |
| General text evaluation | Evaluating the generated text in general |
| **Others** | |
| Resting | Resting |
| Questioning | Asking the researcher a question |
| Impossible to categorize | Impossible to categorize |

After reviewing the categorisations of writing strategies identified by other researchers and considering the call by Hsiao and Oxford (2002) for further research on the classification of writing strategies, I made a classification for the writing strategies used by EFL student writers to contribute to both the theoretical and the practical study of EFL writing (see Table 4-6 in Chapter Four).

## 2.7   Studies on the use of L1 and its effect on L2 writing

Another key issue which has been highlighted in the research literature is the use of L1 and its effect upon EFL writing processes and this forms the basis for discussion in this section.

According to Krapels, using the L1 is "a fairly common strategy among L2 writers" (1990:49). Van Weijen et al (2009) investigated their subject writers' use of L1 when engaged in writing in the L2. The number of subjects in their study were twenty students who each wrote four short argumentative essays in the L1 (Dutch) and another four essays in their L2 (English) under think-aloud conditions. Results showed that all subjects used their L1 when writing in their L2 to some extent, although this varied among conceptual activities. Moreover, L2 proficiency was directly related to L2 text quality but was not related to the occurrence of conceptual activities either in L1 or L2. General writing proficiency, however, has a negative influence on L1 use during L2 writing and a positive effect on L2 use during L2 writing. L1 use during L2 writing is negatively related to L2 text quality, at least for metacomments. Finally, L2 use appears to be positively related to L2 text quality for goal setting, generating ideas, and structuring, but negatively for self-instructions and metacomments.

Likewise, many studies have shown that L2 learners use their L1 and L2 interactively for various strategic purposes while composing in L2 (Arndt, 1987; Bosher, 1998; Cumming, 1990; Raimes, 1987; Sasaki, 2000; Uzawa, 1996; Wang and Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002; Zamel, 1983).

In the domain of L2 writing, one consistent and salient characteristic is that L2 writers, whether described as proficient or less proficient, switch back and forth between their L1 and L2 in order to overcome an issue they are facing while writing in the L2. [Nevertheless, this is not the case in the present research, as among the good writers those who either never or rarely resort to their L1 while composing as we shall see in the later chapters of this study].

As several studies have reported with respect to the functions of L1 use in L2 composing, L2 writers use their L1 to plan their writing for text generation (Cumming, 1990), transfer their L1 knowledge to L2 writing contexts and develop ideas and produce text content and organisation (Lay, 1982), conduct heuristic searches and make evaluations of their texts (Cumming, 1990). Moreover, these investigators have pointed out that L2 proficiency may exert effects on different aspects of writers' writing processes and the quality of L2 writing (ibid), such that it is a determining factor distinguishing strong from poor writers. For instance, Jones and Tetroe (1987) found that L2 proficiency constrained the amount of writers' planning while writing in the L2 (see 2.10).

Wang and Wen (2002) indicated that writers in L2 "were more likely to rely on L1 when they were managing their writing processes, generating and organizing ideas, but more likely to rely on L2 when undertaking task-examining and text-generating activities" (p.225).Wang and Wen also reported that writers of lower English proficiency were more likely to translate from their L1 into L2 when writing, while the more proficient writers tended to employ the L1 strategically to generate ideas, and for monitoring and lexical-searching purposes, but they still depended more on their L2. Their results explained that L2 proficiency determined the focus of concerns of strategy use in L2 writing. Woodall (2002) also confirmed that L2 writers used less and less L1 for text-generating purposes as their proficiency in L2 increased, and "that more difficult tasks increased the duration of L1 use in L2 writing" (p.7).

Krapels (1990:49-50) reported that "the composing processes of L2 writers are somewhat different to L1 writers (e.g. Raimes, 1985, 1987; Arndt, 1987)" and summarised the main differences as follows:

- L1 use varies as a strategy among L2 writers.
- Using L1 when writing frequently focuses on vocabulary and enables the L2 writer to continue the composing process.
- L1 use is often an inventional, sometimes organisational, and occasionally a stylistic strategy.

Uzawa (1996) states that L2 writers use translation to compensate for their lack of vocabulary (Cumming, 1989; Uzawa and Cumming, 1989). Friedlander, as cited in Macaro (2003:231) investigated the effects of L1 on L2 writing of Chinese students of English at an American university. The researcher concluded that for advanced writers "translation does not appear to hinder writers in their text production" (Friedlander, 1990:118).

Another study by Kobayashi and Rinnert (1992) which is similar to the previous one, compared the L2 writing of 48 Japanese university students of English when writing directly in L1 and then translating to L2, and when writing directly in L2. It was found that when writing in L1, then translating to L2, students wrote texts of "greater syntactic complexity and with more sophisticated vocabulary", than when writing directly in L2. However, if translated, a greater number of errors were made, perhaps explaining why the students themselves reported that it was easier to write directly in L2.

Cohen and Brooks-Carson (2001), however, found contradictory results. By investigating how the strategy of translation from the L1 affect essays written in the L2 (French) by 39 university students of French, the researchers found that 75% of the student subjects did better in the essay written directly in L2, rather than the translated task, concluding that "the findings suggest that direct writing may be the most effective choice for some learners when under time pressure" (p.169).

However, Macaro (2003) argues that regardless of the proficiency of the L2 writer, some translation from L1 is involved when generating new language. He also states

that "even advanced L2 writers use L1 to assist the transition from idea to the written phase" (p. 250).

Choei and Lee (2006), using think-aloud and retrospective interview, studied the use of L1 in the L2 writing process in an attempt to investigate the impact of L2 writing proficiency and writing task difficulty on the use of L1. The informants were ten Korean college students (one male, nine female), and were divided into two groups, (high vs. low), according to the scores they received on their writing which were evaluated holistically concentrating on four dimensions: content, organisation, language use, and fluency. They were engaged on two writing activities (letter and argumentative). The amount of each language type, and the frequency of language used (L1 or L2) were counted by the number of words in English and that of word clusters in Korean. The results revealed that most of the subjects used a significant amount of L1 in their L2 writing process. The researchers found that the less proficient writers depended on L1 more than their more-proficient counterparts. Moreover, results also showed that the low group used L1 for searching suitable vocabulary or grammatical structures and for translating, while, the high-level group used L1 dominantly for idea generating and meta-comments. The investigation by Choei and Lee has similarities with the present study as both focus on university students, and they both use the think-aloud method, but in the present study, an additional instrument (interviews) is adopted as a means of triangulating data.

To sum up, from the above studies it is clear that using L1 while writing in L2 is a common strategy among EFL/ESL writers. Moreover, it was found that using L1 in the L2 writing process enables the L2 writers to maintain the writing process (i.e., Arndt, 1987; Alam, 1993), and facilitate writing in English (i.e., Rashid, 1996; El-Aswad, 2002). Additionally, the writing proficiency determines to what extent L1 is used in L2 writing. In other words, L1 use in L2 writing differs among L2 writers according to their language proficiency. The writer who is higher in proficiency uses his/her L1 less than his/her less proficient counterpart (Rashid, 1996; Sasaki and Hirose, 1996). In short, and as the above studies show, L1 plays an important role in L2 writing, L2 writers switch to L1 frequently for strategic purposes in the process of writing. In the following section, the researcher will highlight research done on EFL writing of Arab learners.

## 2.8    Research into EFL writing of Arab learners

There has been much research in the Arab world concerning different problems facing Arab learners of English as a foreign language. However, there has been very little discussion regarding the difficulties of developing those learners' strategic competence, i.e., the use of communication strategies to solve communication issues, particularly in writing. This section is devoted to a review of previous studies on Arab learners of EFL concerned with writing and writing difficulties encountered by Arab students and teachers.

In investigating the problems encountered by Arab ESP writers when writing in English, Halimah (1991) used tests and questionnaires to elicit information from Arab ESP teachers and students at three different Kuwaiti Tertiary Educational Institutes. In this respect, he analysed the answers to a proficiency test taken by one hundred students who belonged to these three institutes. The students were also given a questionnaire to probe their attitudes to different aspects of writing in English and Arabic. Moreover, many teachers instructing ESP courses at different places participated in the study by responding to a different questionnaire about teaching writing and about the writing of their students.  Halimah's study revealed that Arab ESP students were considered as poor writers because of educational, linguistic, rhetorical, procedural and also psychological factors.

Kharma (1985) explored some of the difficulties encountered by Arab learners of English at the sentential (discoursal) level. Data were gathered from a variety of written tasks performed by Arab University students and the effect of Arabic on the students' writing in English was discussed. Kharma (1985) stated that the reasons behind any problem were: lack of motivation, limited exposure to authentic English, inadequate command of English, teachers' tolerance of students' mistakes, and differences between Arabic and English rhetoric.  Although no detailed procedures for analysing these data were given, Kharma (ibid:23) concluded that "all the types of irregularities or mistakes found in students' writing are either totally or partially due to negative transfer from Arabic".

In another study, Kharma (1987) made a comprehensive investigation of the difficulties encountered by Arab students in the formation of relative clauses in

written English in which he investigated the errors in the free-essay compositions of secondary and university students, as well as in written translations by Arabic students into English.  He found that Arabic students could solve writing problems within short English sentences but could not do that when it came to longer sentences. He concluded that almost half of the errors committed by Arab students in forming relative clauses continue until the end of their careers due to teaching practice issues.

Another area of concern in the teaching of English writing to Arab EFL students is the giving of feedback, and error correction. Teachers' practices may influence what students pay attention to when they write, and therefore the strategies that they use and the quality of their writing. Teachers of English focus on writing as a final product and concern themselves with the linguistic features of the students' compositions. However, research into the feedback from Arab EFL teachers is scarce; the only two studies that could be considered relevant to this area have dealt with feedback in terms of the subject matter, setting, and the participating subjects, as is now discussed.

Doushaq and Al-Makhzoomy (1989) studied the methods adopted by 95 Arab EFL Secondary School teachers to evaluate their students' writing, using a questionnaire comprised of 21 questions about the techniques the teachers employed to correct their students' compositions. The researchers observed the methods used by the teachers when evaluating the compositions, in addition to the marks given to each composition. The methods used by the teachers included supplying the correct form or indicating the types and classification of errors into linguistic, stylistic, or content errors. It was concluded by Doushaq and Al-Makhzoomy (1989) that there is a gap between what teachers know and what they actually do. They also propose that there is no common criterion for evaluating the students' writing among the teachers and that the majority of their Arab EFL teacher subjects need adequate training in teaching and evaluating methods.

One more issue that has attracted researchers concerned with Arab EFL students is the likelihood that EFL teachers probably view themselves as judges of the students'

final products (El-Aswad, 2002). This perception been investigated by Kharma and Hajjaj (1989, cited in El-Aswad, 2002:53) who maintain that:

> "in writing compositions, Arab students are often restricted to the ideas suggested by the teacher and therefore do not feel free to express themselves the way they like or have any special motivation for writing about the topic ... in teaching writing 'Arab EFL' teachers keep in mind an order of priority to which they implicitly adhere. This order reflects those teachers' interest in teaching first things first in order of importance. The following are normally the areas that dominate the teachers' thinking in both teaching and correcting students' written work: the mechanics of writing, handwriting, spelling, capitalisation, and punctuation; grammatical mistakes and topic development" (p. 187).

This indicates that the topics of written tasks are usually imposed on the students without considering their own interests, priorities, and ambitions, which consequently, results in a lack of interaction between the students and their teachers, and more importantly, between the students and the topics they are writing on. Thus, any type of motivation seems lacking and students appear more inhibited in creating ideas or expressing thoughts and beliefs about which they are enthusiastic.

El Mortaji (2001) studied the writing processes and strategies of a group of 18 Moroccan university students of English, using think-aloud protocols, interviews and questionnaires to investigate processes and strategies employed by her subjects. She also analysed her data quantitatively and qualitatively. Specifically, El Mortaji (ibid) investigated the effects of her subjects' writing proficiency in Arabic and English, discourse types, language, and gender on the frequency of occurrences of composing strategies. She found that those learners' frequent strategies were reading, rehearsing, revising, and planning. Additionally, she observed significant differences between skilled and unskilled writers in English. Her qualitative analysis showed that the more successful and less successful subjects differed in their strategy use in terms of quality (see also 2.9). Moreover, the data also showed that the poor writers did even more planning than the good writers who demonstrated more flexibility in accommodating to the teachers' rules and expectations. El Mortaji's findings also revealed that discourse mode had an influence on the writing process and strategy use. Finally, gender differences in strategy use were also noted in the use of language

switch. That is, the female group made use of language switching more frequently than the males.

In a study of twelve third year Libyan university students majoring in English, El-Aswad (2002) investigated the writing processes and strategies in L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English). The researcher used multiple data collection tools: observation, interviews, think-aloud protocols, questionnaires, and written products in order to collect data in a triangulated case study. The think-aloud protocol data in both the L1 and L2 revealed some interesting findings. For example, it emerged that most subjects had a purpose in mind while engaged in writing their essays, but had little concern for audience. El-Aswad (ibid) also found that each one of his subjects displayed a unitary composing style across languages, and composed similarly in both languages, with some differences in specific aspects. As a whole group, however, the participants' writing process differences were clear in planning content; reviewing in L1 focused on organisation and content, but on form, grammar and vocabulary in L2. The researcher concluded that students were similar in mental planning and in reliance on internal resources as they alternated between writing, repeating and rehearsing. From the analysis of the protocols and interviews, El-Aswad concluded that the writing knowledge and strategies of L1 could potentially be transferred into L2 writing, and that the participants made use of various similar strategies considered necessary for writing in both languages. He also clarified that unskilled writers tend to use L1 more frequently when writing in L2 than skilled writers.

A similar study to El-Aswad's was conducted by Alhaysony (2008) who investigated the L1 (Arabic) and L2 (English) composition processes and strategies of Saudi third year English female university students. Alhaysony (ibid) involved only female subjects in her study in an attempt to pay particular attention to gender, which scarcely features in the literature. Her study focused on discovering cross-subject and cross-language features in two perspectives: similarities in writing processes between L1 and L2, and the writing strategies that good and poor writers used. Alhaysony (ibid) used a mixed methods approach to provide a clearer description; hence, questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and think-aloud protocols were adopted, but the main source of data was the questionnaire exercise. The results revealed that

the writing processes of her subjects were recursive in nature which was in line with many other studies in the field. There were also striking similarities in writing strategies between Arabic and English. Simultaneously, she found that her participants made use of more writing strategies when writing in L2. No differences in the set of writing strategies used by both good and poor writers were found, but there were variations in the frequency with which they used them. Poor writers used their L1 more frequently than their relatively better counterparts in order to facilitate their L2 writing. The L1 was used to create plans either mentally or in writing, and also in questioning for planning or for vocabulary or spelling. Her poorer subjects went even further and created part or sometimes the whole text in Arabic and then translated it into English. She concluded that the L2 writing seemed to be a bilingual event.

In a recent study, Chaaban (2010) investigated the composing processes and writing strategies of 11, male and female, Syrian university students of English and literature. Her study also included the investigation of the socio-cultural factors that might influence the skills and development of their writing. Chaaban (ibid) used qualitative methods, namely: classroom observation, concurrent verbal protocols, stimulated recall interviews, and semi-structured general interviews. Her subjects were of two groups: 6 teachers, and 11 students, from two different academic levels, i.e., second and fourth years of their degree. The results of her investigation showed that the subjects (students) used eight main strategies and 28 sub-strategies while writing their texts. Students' composing behaviour was shown to be affected by three factors: the learners' writing proficiency, the discourse mode, and the context in which the writing took place. She (ibid) also discovered that socio-cultural factors such as the participants' learning experiences, their approach to learning, and the lack of suitable writing instruction and feedback during their pre-tertiary educational stages, all affected their composing skills development. Other similar factors such as their learning experiences at the time of the investigation, for example, the large class sizes, and the non-homogeneous groups in terms of proficiency, having different teachers for every class, all proved to affect the pedagogical process. With regard to the writing process, Chaaban found that the L1 (Arabic) had an influence on the way participants compose in English, and that participants lacked the necessary

motivation to practise and master the skill of writing as a result of certain teaching practices.

## 2.9    Research on proficient and less proficient writers

Of the many areas of L2 writing research, the one that is most related to the present study is research that has compared the writing behaviours of good and poor writers. In this section, the various studies that have considered different groups of EFL/ ESL writers and the strategies they use with connection to their writing proficiency, are discussed.

Zamel (1983) found that skilled ESL writers appeared to revise more and spent more time working on their papers. These writers also did not distract themselves by focusing on lexical and syntactic corrections like their unskilled peers. On the other hand, the unskilled writers were more concerned with mechanical matters such as changing words or phrases, but did not show interest in making changes that affected meaning. Moreover, unskilled writers spent most of their time on composing the first draft and mainly copied this draft as they prepared it for completion.

Victori (1995) in a study of four EFL writers (two good and two poor writers) relate to differences in their writing skills. She concluded that,

> "what separated good writers from poor ones was the more interactive approach and investment of effort which led to a larger number of meta-cognitive strategies displayed by the good writers; particularly, of strategies for planning, organising, evaluating and revising content as well as other cognitive strategies which entailed dealing with the lexicon and transmitting the message accurately" (p. 163).

Angelova (1999) used quantitative and qualitative methods to investigate the writing strategies college students used while writing in L1 and L2. She asked her subjects (120 Bulgarian college students) to write an argumentative essay which was rated in order to divide them into two groups (good vs. poor writers), a method that is similar to the present study. A questionnaire was used in order to collect data on the strategies employed during the writing process, and qualitative data was also collected and analysed, having been obtained from stimulated recall interviews with

five subjects (two good and three poor writers). Angelova (ibid) found that her good and poor writer subjects used different writing strategies; essentially, the good writers made use of more types of strategy than the poorer ones. Moreover, good writers and poor writers differ in the way they use these strategies; for example, prior to writing, the good writers spend more time planning and have a global plan in their mind. In addition, their main concerns are: content, organisation and vocabulary, and they revise more both during and when they finish writing. On the contrary, the poor writers do not spend much time prior to writing and they start directly after the prompt is given. They also use only local planning while writing, and they are more concerned with the surface features.

In another study conducted on 18 Moroccan EFL learners, El-Mortaji (2001) found that good writers and poor writers differed markedly in their frequency of use of the main strategies and in the variety of types and kinds of these strategies. For example, she found that the good writers used the strategy of planning at both a local and global level of the writing process, whereas the poor writers used this strategy only at a local level, and only concerned themselves with planning what to write in each sentence without considering organisation and ideas.

Junju (2004) conducted a study with 18 EFL Chinese students (8 male, 10 female) representing different levels of writing proficiency, and classified them into three groups (the least-skilled, the mediate-skilled, and the most-skilled) in order to explore the writing processes they experienced, the writing strategies they employed, and the influence of the L1 on their processes of English writing. The researcher used multiple instruments: questionnaires, think-aloud reports, observations, stimulated recall, and written documents analysis. Junju found that the subjects made use of a broad range of strategies. She reported that the least-skilled group used the largest numbers of strategies in total, and the strategies they used were the highest in terms of frequency. In addition, she found that the most frequently used strategies for the whole sample were rehearsing, repetition, speaking the words while writing them, and code-switching. Self-assessment, postponing, awareness, and blank-leaving, in contrast, were the strategies they used least. The researcher also reported that the participants approached recursive writing activities at different intervals. Moreover,

she found little overall perception of the target audience in the subjects' English writing process.

Xiu and Xiao (2004) used think aloud protocol to determine the relationship between Chinese EFL writers' strategies and their writing scores on an English proficiency test. They reported that the skilled writers and unskilled writers differed in the use of two writing strategies namely: organizing ideas and formulating. Moreover, Yang (2002) observed differences between skilled and unskilled L2 writers in planning globally, generating ideas, and revising.

Roca de Larios et al. (2008) conducted a study on three different L2 (English) proficiency groups of Spanish students. The researchers employed thinking-aloud to explore if the writer's proficiency level influences the total processing time dedicated to composing processes and compared the differential distribution of the time allocated by the groups of different proficiency to different writing processes at each phase by dividing the writing session into three different phases. The findings emerged were as follows. First, formulation took up the largest percentage of composition time for all groups. Second, writing processes are differentially distributed across the three periods depending on the writer's proficiency level. Another finding was that the ability of L2 writers to make their composition processes interact increases along with their command of the L2. The researchers' data indicate that "as proficiency increases, writers appear to be able to strategically decide *what* attentional resources to allocate to *which* writing activities at *which* stages of the writing process" (p. 43). Finally, regarding the recursiveness of writing, the researchers' data indicate that composition processes were not equally likely to be activated at any time in the writing process, a finding which contradicted some previous research findings (e.g., Flower and Hayes, 1981; Witte, 1985) which view writing as a purely recursive process. Data also showed that recursiveness in L2 composing is mediated by proficiency.

Audience awareness in writing is an important feature that has to be considered in making any distinction between novice and expert writing. Audience awareness, according to Ede and Lunsford (1984) "involves both understanding (or trying to) the 'experience, expectations and beliefs' of the addressed audience – those a writer

imagines or knows will read one's text" (p.165). Flower and Hayes (1980) studied experienced writers and college freshmen, finding that the former group fleshed out a mental image of their readers while the latter were topic-bound, that is, could not think beyond the content of their essays. In Cheng's (2005) case study, the more proficient writer was more capable of analysing and making inferences concerning the assigned audience than the less proficient writer. However, the researcher indicated that both participants were unable to analyse and infer audience in great detail. It might be argued that audience awareness is only possible when learners reach a certain stage of cognitive development (cf. Carvalho, 2002; Wong, 2005).

Another issue that interests some L2 writing researchers is how proficient and less proficient L2 writers use the dictionary in their L2 written production, and whether dictionary use strategy is influenced by their proficiency. It has been found that the use of a dictionary by EFL learners decreases as their language proficiency increases (Tomaszczyk, 1979), and that dictionaries are used more competently by the most linguistically proficient users (Tono, 1991; Garcia, 2007). However, in another study, Christianson (1997) found that proficiency does not seem to play a role in the sophistication of strategy use. He suggests that the success of this strategy depends on other factors such as the writing context and the given word or phrase being looked up.

According to Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), and Flower and Hayes (1981), 'skilled' writers bring to the writing task a more global awareness of all that writing entails. They perceive the topic with more depth and dimension, and they possess a highly developed sense of the audience which they bring to bear on the handling of the topic as well as on the way in which they organise their writing. Also, they establish goals and they develop strategies which will enable them to accomplish these goals. As they work, skilled writers assess the degree to which their texts meet their goals, and if necessary they amend their goals and strategies. Flexibility is a characteristic which is associated with skilled writers. In Plakans' own words (2008: 114):

> [S]tudies show that both skilled L1 and L2 writers plan more before
> beginning to write and plan more globally, while less skilled writers
> plan less initially and stop more often for local planning.

Skilled/expert L2 writers have been found to spend more time on generating ideas, planning, and revising beyond the local level. On the other hand, less skilled writers spend less time planning and more time revising words and phrases rather than larger discourse revisions. In addition to these findings across writers' characteristics of L2 proficiency and writing skill/expertise, studies also emphasize that individual differences in process are evident, and other factors, such as culture, educational background, and task affect process.

Concerning novice writers, moreover, many researchers have noted that they seem to be solving a different problem from skilled writers. Their perceptions of the task are less complex; they concentrate on low-level issues that obscures the task as a whole. They fail to attend to audience concerns (Flower and Hayes 1980). They have rigid and limited conceptions about the rules of writing and about the form their writing can take (Perl, 1980). They plan less, prewrite and write less (Sasaki, 2000; Yang, 2002; Chaaban, 2010). Moreover, they plan less effectively than skilled writers (Yang, 2002; Chaaban, 2010). They also read less and revise less (Yang, 2002). Their initial drafts resemble their final drafts due to the fact that in revising they usually concentrate on surface issues like mechanics, spelling, and word choice (Perl, 1979; Faigley and Witte, 1981). They tend to use L1 to facilitate their writing in L2. They create plans either mental or written in L1, questioning either for planning or for vocabulary or spelling (Alhaysony, 2008). They tend to directly translate from L1 into L2 throughout their L2 composing processes (Wang and Wen, 2002; Alhaysony, 2008). Unskilled writers appear to be more concerned with surface-level issues and with error detection and correction that often they are distracted from their main points and often become blocked in the production of subsequent prose. Moreover, they sometimes show laziness and lack of commitment to the writing task (Victori, 1999). Therefore, for the novice writers, composing is usually a bottom-up process that yields a product lacking concept and organisation (El Mortaji, 2001).

The different conclusions we have seen in the studies mentioned above might be due to utilising different criteria, on the part of the researchers, to categorise writers as skilled or unskilled. For example, some researchers designated their subjects as good or poor writers according to holistic assessment of compositions written by them on tests or in class (Zamel, 1983; Raimes, 1987; Cumming, 1989). Others differentiated their students in a different way. Sasaki (2000) for example, used writing experience

in addition to holistic assessment of the subjects' written products as criteria. Xiu and Xiao (2004) determined their skilled and unskilled writers by their scores on a national English proficiency exam. While Yang's (2002) subjects were classified as good or poor writers on the basis of their scores on two preceding writing exams and a questionnaire. For this reason, Raimes (1985) cautioned that the validity of the criteria which set apart skilled writers from unskilled writers should be focused in research design. In the current inquiry, therefore, the researcher has chosen different criteria in order to determine good and poor writers. That is, the subjects' recent academic performance records during the last three years of their tertiary education prior to conducting the present research were checked, as well as a writing test (a placement composition) was conducted and evaluated (see sub-sections 3.10.2.1.1.2, and 3.10.2.2.1 in Chapter Three).

## 2.10 Factors affecting L2 writing

Angelova (1999) classified factors affecting the process and product of ESL writing as language proficiency, L1 writing competence, use of cohesive devices, metacognitive knowledge about the writing task, writing strategies, and writers' personal characteristics. In the next sub-sections, I shall highlight three factors which are relevant to the present research in terms of their possible effect on the subjects' writing process.

### 2.10.1 Language proficiency

The importance of the following research to our current study is the fact that it considers the relationship between linguistic competence, writing strategy use and quality of L2 text. Although our subjects share a similar educational background, and they are in the same level of education (fourth year university English majors) they still differ in their level of language proficiency (see 5.2.1). This variation of linguistic competence is highlighted in the current study to see the possible effect it may have on the effectiveness of writing strategy use and quality of writing by fourth year students of English at MU.

Research on EFL/ESL writers shows that language proficiency is a factor in writing (Berman, 1994; Cumming, 1989; Roca de Larios, Murphy & Martin, 2002; Sasaki, 2002; Beare & Bourdages, 2007). Beare & Bourdages (2007) assert that high language proficiency has a positive effect on the writing product— when students' language proficiency improves they produce better texts. However, investigating this factor has yielded mixed conclusions.

Different studies, for instance, reported that learners' writing did not seem to be influenced by their L2 linguistic proficiency (e.g., Raimes, 1985; Zamel, 1982). The findings in these studies revealed that some students wrote well and some did not, regardless of their L2 proficiency. Because the L2 skilled writers appeared to have special writing strategies/ behaviours, these researchers have maintained that the determining factor of L2 writing quality is the composing competence and not the linguistic competence of the learners (Hirose and Sasaki, 1994).

On the other hand, other investigations suggested that L2 proficiency is one of the explanatory factors for L2 writing products (e.g., Cumming, 1989; Pennington and So, 1993). Cumming (1989) (as cited in Sasaki and Hirose, 1996), for instance, investigating 23 Francophone students' English L2 compositions found that L2 proficiency was an additive factor which influenced the quality of L2 writing; whereas, Pennington and So concluded that students' L2 proficiency was the only factor that distinguished good from weak writers.

Moreover, Friedlander (1990) investigated 28 Chinese university students to determine the effects of the L1 on writing in English as an L2. The results of the study show that language may constrain writers in a particular way during the writing process, "if the writers use the language in which they acquired the topic or the subject, their writing is enhanced. Generating strategies would be affected by this finding, as generating or idea creation in bilinguals may be using both languages to retrieve content, when in difficulty." (p. 153).

Silva (1993) studied undergraduate students who had advanced levels of proficiency in English as a second language. The subjects displayed a wide range of levels in writing ability. They, for example, performed less re-reading and reflecting in writing texts in their L2. Also, Matsumoto (1995) interviewed four Japanese

university professors to explore their processes and strategies when writing a research paper in English. Matsumoto found that these advanced writers use strategies similar to those used by native English speakers.

Beare and Bourdages (2007) studied eight skilled bilingual writers (English/ Spanish). They were recommended by professional contacts as bilingual individuals with a high level of proficiency. Part of their study's concern was to see if writers reveal more language switching strategies when generating in L2 than when generating in L1. Beare and Bourdages' results indicate that language switching is not that frequent among highly proficient bilingual writers, and only three out of the eight participants switched to L1 during generating content in L2. Among those three were Cathy who frequently used her L1 in L2 content generation and Beare and Bourdages clarified that the possible explanation for that was because the L2 proficiency of one of their writers might be lower than that of the others. As for the other participants in this study, their high level of proficiency in their L2, " that was very close to native speakers" (ibid: 158), explained the fact that they did not need to revert to L1 in their composing process.

However, Raimes (1987) compared the composing processes of eight L2 writers, four college level, and four remedial. The data were examined in relation to course placement, holistic evaluation of the students' writing, and scores on a language proficiency test. Data showed little correspondence between language proficiency, judgements of writing ability for purposes of placement, and the students' composing strategies. For example, the student with the lowest demonstrated language proficiency score 'Rene' showed most similarities in composing strategies to another student 'Rose' who had a high score. But interestingly, Raimes' subject with the low level of language proficiency (Giovanna), and who was particularly low in the vocabulary section of the test subjects were required to take, rehearsed a great deal. Raimes justified this strategic behaviour (i.e., rehearsing a lot) as a way to compensate for the lack of vocabulary. Raimes' study also revealed that a specified purpose and audience had almost no observable effect on composing strategies (ibid).

## 2.10.2 Effective writing strategies

Effective writing strategies can be defined as those steps and techniques in writing followed by an individual writer performing a particular writing task and that might lead to a successful written outcome. A number of researchers (e.g., Oxford, 1990; Patric & Czarl, 2003; Wenden and Rubin, 1987) defined writing strategies as specific techniques and actions that writers take as an attempt to produce a more efficient and effective written text. However, the question is whether all writing strategies are effective, and whether it is necessary for an effective given piece of writing to be considered a result of employing effective writing strategies? Arndt (1987) argues that, " Whereas problems of poor L2 writers have been found to stem from inefficient writing strategies, successes of proficient L2 writers result from effective strategies of evaluation and text generation, although, naturally, language proficiency is a factor in the efficacy of the total process" (p.258). Moreover, many researchers (e.g., Perl, 1978; Flower and Hayes, 1980, 1981; Raimes, 1985; Whalen, 1993; Victori, 1999) agree that strategies writers employ and general writing processes are factors that can separate good writers from poor writers.

It might be misleading at some point to say that a particular writing strategy, by name, is an effective one as the issue is not related to what strategy to be used in a particular case, but rather how it is used. Revision, for instance, can be used effectively or ineffectively depending on how it contributes to fulfil the intended goal behind its use as, for example, to improve the textual meaning, or to correct a grammatical or morphological error. Also, the time when a strategy is implemented (e.g., during the writing of the first draft, or between-draft revision) may also account for its effectiveness. Manchón (2001), in this respect, summarised an important result stating that both successful and unsuccessful writers employ a wide variety of strategies, but the differences between them lies not so much in the number and types of strategies being used but in the quality and appropriateness with which they are employed.

Concerning planning in writing, for instance, writers have been classified into two groups: those who plan in advance, and others who resort to mental planning (i.e., planning as they go along) (Cumming, 1989), and an effective planning is generally

not associated to a particular stage or period in the writing process (Stallard, 1974), but writers may vary as when to plan throughout the process depending on their own approach and preference. In many studies (e.g., Zamel, 1982; Raimes, 1985; Victori, 1999), findings suggest that successful writers discover and improvise new ideas as they develop the text and plan accordingly.

Moreover, in the writing process, most writers usually revise their texts as an attempt to change them for the better either at the content level or surface level or both. However, good writers in many studies (e.g., Stallard, 1974; Victori, 1999; El-Mortaji, 2001; Cabrejas, 2008b) were found to make use of this strategy more often and more thoroughly. In spite of the fact that writers are usually concerned with linguistic accuracy, for some of them revision may involve alteration of focus or meaning. Therefore, good writers "add, delete, substitute, and reorganize whole paragraphs if necessary, considering how those changes affect the entire text. They use appropriate connectors and establish clear transitions from paragraph to paragraph" (Victori, 1995: 56).

In terms of how choice of strategy could affect the quality of written products, Torrance et al. (2000), in L1 study, investigated the writing strategies using a longitudinal sample of 48 undergraduate students as they produced essays as part of their writing course requirements using a questionnaire; in addition, strategy data from cross-sectional sample (one of 77 first-year students and one of 75 third-year students) was also used. The researchers also collected strategy questionnaires from other 122 students from the same course but not included in other samples, providing information on strategies used in writing by a total of 322 students producing 715 essays. Analysis of the questionnaire responses revealed four distinct patterns of writing behaviour namely: a minimal-drafting strategy that typically involved the production of one or at most two drafts; an outline-and-develop strategy that entailed content development both before and while drafting; a detailed-planning strategy which involved the use of content development methods and outlining, and a 'think-then-do' strategy which did not involve the production of a written outline. The researchers found that the minimal-drafting and outline-and-develop strategies produced the poorest results, with the latter as being more time consuming, while the detailed-planning and 'think-then-do' strategies resulted in better quality essays.

Torrance and colleagues also attributed writing strategy choice and essay quality to factors such as the learners' understanding of the relevant content, their motivation, the time available to them, and their perception of how important to obtain a good grade for that particular writing task.

### 2.10.3 Motivation

Many researchers believe that motivation can be an important factor in students' language learning (Dornyei, 2001, 2005; Masgoret and Gardner, 2003; Oxford & Shearin, 1994). Some of the relevant literature on learners' motivation need to be discussed here because I believe that my subjects' writing behaviour was partially influenced by their motivation to learn and develop this skill, as shall be discussed later in this research.

Motivation as defined by Guay et al. (2010:712) refers to "the reasons underlying behaviour". Deci et al. (1999) distinguish between two types of motivation, namely intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. The former refers to the learning process that is associated with enjoyment, interest and pleasure; whereas, the latter refers to the learning process that is governed by an extrinsic reward as, for example, good grades, or to avoid punishment. Masgoret and Gardner (2003:173) assert that:

> "The motivated individual expends effort, is persistent and attentive to the task at hand, has goals, desires, and aspirations, enjoys the activity, experiences reinforcement from success and disappointment from failure, makes attributions concerning success and/ or failure, is aroused, and makes use of strategies to aid in achieving goals. That is, the motivated individual exhibits many behaviors, feelings, cognitions, etc., that the individual who is unmotivated does not."

Some of the studies which had findings related to motivation in connection to writing are presented.

Victori (1999) conducted a study in order to investigate how differences in the beliefs or metacognitive knowledge held about writing relate to differences in English as a foreign language writing skills. Her four subjects (two good writers and two poor writers) were all EFL university students. Victori used a case-study approach in her research, and she interviewed her subjects and they were also

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required to think aloud. Her findings suggested that her poor writers encountered certain problems while composing such as lack of the necessary knowledge and resources to compose. However, results also showed that the poor writers lacked the commitment to the writing task that resulted in their not always performing in the best way. She concluded that the poor writers' poor writing approach was attributed to their admitted laziness and lack of commitment to the writing task, which consequently influenced their choice of strategy such as the strategy of avoidance.

Lipstein and Renninger (2007) studied the relation between learners' interest for writing and the conceptual competence, goals, and strategies and also to investigating the link between learners' interest in writing and their perceptions of their effort, self-efficacy, and feedback preferences on their writing. Using questionnaires answered by 179 students and conducting 72 interviews, the researchers found that conditions surrounding the writing experience can influence the writers' interest. Findings suggest that such influence is affected by the learners' experiences with generating text, their discussions with peers, the assignments, support, and the teachers' feedback. Moreover, this investigation revealed that learners' interest in writing and the chances they get to develop a deeper perception of writing contribute positively to their capabilities to write. In addition, the findings also indicate that teachers can play a significant role in shaping the conditions surrounding the learners' commitment to writing.

More recently, a study conducted by Chaaban (2010) investigating two groups of EFL writers at two different university levels (second year vs. fourth year students) in order to see what composing processes and strategies they use and also study the socio-cultural factors that might influence their writing. She found that the aspect of motivation was among the factors that appeared to influence her subjects' writing processes. For example, the motivation that her subjects expressed for writing was linked to grades, i.e., they wrote only when they were told "and in order to obtain more marks or to avoid losing them" (pp. 267-68). She stated that this type of motivation, and according to the self-determination theory of motivation, was called extrinsic motivation as suggested by Deci and Ryan (1985), and Dornyei, (1994).

## 2.11 Chapter summary

In this chapter a number of studies from different areas of writing research have been reviewed. The most influential models of L1 writing have been reviewed and highlighted. The chapter showed how the early model of L1 writing by Rohman (1965) focused more on a linear process of writing and for that reason could not explain the complex nature of writing, while successive researchers in the field such as Flower and Hayes (1981), and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) have considered writing as a recursive process rather than a linear one. The review showed that Flower and Hayes' (1981) model is a landmark that provoked new research in the field and it is used as a broad framework for this research. Furthermore, the chapter featured an extended discussion of the definitions of strategies and strategy taxonomy in the literature. The chapter also featured a discussion of key studies in the field of L1, EFL, and ESL writing strategies and research into EFL writing of Arab learners is also discussed. It was also reported that learners used their L1 during their writing performance in L2. Moreover, research on proficient and less proficient writers is highlighted, and a number of research findings from this area are presented. The studies reviewed showed that skilled writers used writing strategies more frequently, and both groups showed different writing behaviour. Finally, factors that might affect L2 writing i.e., language proficiency, effective writing strategies, and motivation are discussed. The conclusion that one can draw from studies in this regard is that the writers' proficiency level and their motivation to write may influence their composing process, as well as their degree of knowledge about writing strategies.

In spite of the promising findings in the field of ESL studies, the literature review showed that there is a scarcity of research regarding the writing strategies of Arab EFL learners in general and to the Libyan context in particular. Most of the research done in this regard is restricted to investigating the problems encountered by Arab writers when writing in English, and the effect of L1 on students' L2 writing. They almost all have their own shortcomings in terms of the context or the methodology used. Very few studies, if any, focused on issues related to writing strategy use differences and factors that might contribute to these differences among the EFL Arab writers at the tertiary level. Thus, such a research gap is worthy of more

investigation, given the increased numbers of students studying English in the Libyan context and the Arab world. The next chapter will present the methodology adopted in the current research.

# Chapter 3:  Methodology

## 3.1    Introduction

Having reviewed the literature concerning writing strategies for L2 learners, the thesis now moves to present the methodology that will be adopted to pursue the empirical investigation of the L2 writing strategies in use in the Misurata University in Libya.

In doing so, this chapter is divided into two main parts. The first part discusses issues related to the methodology adopted (i.e., a case-study and a triangulated approach). It considers the qualitative paradigm and presents a brief summary of its strengths. It then focuses on the techniques employed to gain data – think-aloud protocols, semi-structured interviews, and observation – and addresses the advantages and disadvantages associated with each. The second part presents the researcher's procedures for conducting the pilot and main studies and gathering the data, as well as the process of analysis.

## 3.2    The methodological approach

As the present project is concerned with a comprehensive study of the writing processes and strategies of a group of learners of English as a foreign language, a case-study methodology and a triangulated approach are adopted as a methodological orientation for conducting the research. Within this, a combination of techniques are used to produce a mixed methods approach in which the balance is towards qualitative rather than quantitative processes.

Simply put, qualitative research highlights the meanings of, and processes within, a phenomenon and how it is socially built in its natural situations; whereas quantitative research tends to study the frequencies, intensity and/or quantity of a phenomenon. According to Berg (2004), qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things, while quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things.

As indicated, in the present study, both qualitative and quantitative methods are used in an integrated manner, as they are in fact interrelated; they complement each other and cannot be separated. It is anticipated that by employing these methods, the research questions stated in Chapter One can be answered, and a clearer picture about the writing of English in the Libyan context can be secured.

### 3.2.1 Case-study methodology

Given that this study is concerned with a comprehensive, in-depth interpretation of L2 writing processes and strategies of a group of students majoring in English as a foreign language, the researcher believes that a case study methodology and a triangulated approach are applicable.

Although there are a number of limitations associated with the case study design as shall be discussed below, this approach was chosen by the present researcher because of the many merits it has. However, I will start with the limitations first, which are as follows: (1) Case studies may or may not have generalisability (Stake, 1988). However, the generalisability is possible if the case study's findings are supported by other findings from other similar studies or in other contexts (El-Aswad, 2002). (2) Case studies cannot answer a large number of relevant and appropriate research questions. (3) Case study data is time-consuming to collect, and also more time-consuming to analyse. (4) Ethical issues may arise when it proves difficult to disguise the identity of the studied organisation and/or individuals (ibid).

However, a case study is a qualitative method of gathering data, which is widely employed in many academic disciplines, such as medicine, law, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and education. It is an in-depth study of one person, a small group of subjects, or a single phenomenon. Merriam (1988:16) defined a case study as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit". He added that "[c]ase studies are particularistic, descriptive, and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources" (ibid: 16). As noted by Ary et al. (1990:453), an exhaustive case-study approach can yield insights into "basic aspects of human behaviour".

Berg (2004:251) defines case studies as methods that "involve systematically gathering enough information about a particular person, social setting, event, or group to permit the researcher to effectively understand how the subject operates or functions". Some researchers (Hamel et al., 1993; Merriam, 2001; Yin, 1998) go further in their definitions when they classify a case study as a methodological approach that incorporates a number of data-gathering measures rather than merely a single data-gathering technique. Referring to second language writing, Duff (2008:89) states that it is "one of the subdisciplines of applied linguistics in which perhaps the most case studies are currently being conducted".

Case studies do, therefore, seem to be popular in social science research, and particularly in second language writing research, but it must be appreciated that to conduct a case study effectively requires certain skills and abilities of the researcher in charge. In this respect, Yin (1998) numbers five researcher skills associated with conducting good case studies. The first, is an inquiring mind, i.e., being ready to ask questions before, during and after data are collected. The second is the ability of the researcher to listen and to include observation and sensing in general. The third is adaptability and flexibility to deal with unexpected events and the readiness to change any data-collection strategies when they prove to be not functioning effectively. Fourth is a thorough understanding of the issues being investigated and not only the ability to record data, but also to be able to interpret these data as they are collected. The fifth, and final requirements is to be capable of unbiased interpretation of the data.

Considering the various definitions discussed, and the characteristics required of any individual wanting to conduct this kind of research, it can be seen that a case study can be operationally defined as a method to deepen researchers' understanding of a complex real-life event, using multiple sources of evidence and analysing data within a conceptual framework.

As already mentioned, the participants in case studies differ in number from one case to another. However, due to the complexity of data collection and analysis, researchers generally limit their informants to fewer than 20 where in-depth interviewing and/or observation is involved (Humes, 1983).   Such a statement

rationalises the choice of the informants' sample size in this study, which is a small group of 11 participants, selected from the whole cohort of students commencing in the fourth year (El-Aswad, 2002), and divided into two groups of good and poor writers, categorised as so with the help of a writing test. Then, in an attempt to probe deeper, four subjects (two from each group) are selected to be studied more extensively to discover what strategies they use while writing, and if it emerges that differences in strategy use between those four subjects exist, to determine why.

Examples of studies that investigate limited numbers of subjects (less than 20) using a case-study approach include: Emig, 1971; Stallard, 1974; Flower and Hayes, 1981b; Arndt, 1987; Victori, 1999; El-Mortaji, 2001; El-Aswad, 2002; Junju, 2004, and Chaaban, 2010. For example, Emig (1971), a well-known pioneer of the laboratory case studies of the writing processes, investigated the composing processes of a limited number of students (8 high school seniors) designated by their tutors as good writers. She observed her subjects while writing, made notes and recorded their oral composing, and she interviewed her participants afterwards. Following Emig's model, and also in line with procedures used in much recent writing research (e.g., El Mortaji, 2001; El-Aswad, 2002; Junju, 2004; Wong, 2005; Choei and Lee, 2006; Alhaysony, 2008; Xiao Lei, 2009, and Chaaban, 2010), it was decided to adopt a case-study approach with the 11 senior students of English already mentioned, who compose individually using the technique of thinking aloud, in spite of the various reservations which have been stated about its validity and reliability as a procedure to investigate composing processes (Arndt, 1987) (see 3.7.2.1.1). Subjects of the current study met four times with the researcher and were required to think aloud while composing. They were also observed during their writing sessions enabling the researcher to write notes about their composing and strategic behaviour. All of the 11 subjects were interviewed immediately after they finished their think-aloud composing sessions.

Moreover, choosing this design is due to its ability to answer 'how' and 'why' queries, which are the questions behind the main theme of this project: to seek answers to the question of how good and poor writers are similar or different, and why these similarities and/or differences happen to affect the writing process strategies, if they do. This is in keeping with Yin (1998), who argues that a case

study is an ideal method when 'how' and 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a phenomenon within some real-life context.

## 3.3   Triangulation

Triangulation means using different methods of data collection in order to gather information about human behaviours with the aim of fully explaining the complexity of such behaviour by studying it from different viewpoints (El-Aswad, 2002).

In order to obtain a high level of reliability in the current research, the researcher decided to use the three methods of data collection mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, i.e., think-aloud protocols, semi-structured interviews, and observations. For example, in respect of the participants' use of strategies, the researcher triangulated data gathered from the think-aloud protocols, the semi-structured interviews that took place immediately after the writing sessions (and in which the participants were asked about particular composing actions that the researcher observed during the writing sessions), general interviews where the participants were asked about their general composing habits, and interviews with teachers in which the researcher asked about the composing habits of their students.

This study is guided by three research questions.

## 3.4   Research questions

As indicated in Chapter One (section 1.4), the aim of this research is to examine the writing strategies of Libyan learners of English as a foreign language in a university level context. From the objectives emanating from this overall aim, three research questions were formulated as shown in section 1.5, and these are repeated below for ease of reference in this particular chapter:

1. What strategies do Libyan students of English as a foreign language use while writing in English?
2. Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use?
3. If yes, how and why do they differ?

## 3.5 Qualitative and quantitative research— a mixed methods approach

In order to examine the differences and similarities of writing strategies between good and poor senior student writers majoring in English at MU, a mixed methods approach was taken, although the balance was heavily towards qualitative research, with quantitative methods being used as an additional means to show how the writing strategies identified take place.

Researchers use the qualitative method to inquire in many different academic disciplines, but mainly in the social sciences including applied linguistics (Heigham and Croker, 2009). In this type of research, different approaches in the collection of data may be taken by researchers, for example, storytelling, ethnography, grounded theory, case study, action research, and phenomenology.

Qualitative research can be differentiated from quantitative research in a number of ways, but Stake (1995:35) has identified three main differences. Firstly, qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon, whereas quantitative work seeks to explain it. Secondly, the role of the researcher differs with him/her taking a personal role in a qualitative approach and an impersonal role in a quantitative design. And thirdly, the qualitative research seeks to construct knowledge whilst the quantitative researcher seeks to discover knowledge.

Moreover, the nature of the data obtained is different, since qualitative data is usually "in the form of words rather than numbers…with qualitative data one can preserve chronological flow" (Miles and Huberman, 1994:1), whereas quantitative data is in the form of numbers upon which statistical testing can be performed. According to Miles and Huberman (ibid: 6-7), in a qualitative design:

a) The research is conducted through an intense and/or prolonged contact with a field or life situation.

b) The researcher's role is to gain a holistic overview.

c) Most analysis is done with words (words are based on observation, interviews, or documents).

d) The researcher is essentially the main 'measurement device' in the study. Relatively little standardised instrumentation is used.

e) Many interpretations of the material are possible.

f) Data are not immediately accessible for analysis but have to be encoded.

Strauss and Corbin (1990:17) define qualitative research as "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures…some of the data may be quantified as with census data but the analysis itself is a qualitative one". On the issue of whether it is possible to combine qualitative and quantitative methods, Strauss and Corbin (ibid: 18) point out that a researcher "might use qualitative to illustrate or clarify quantitatively derived findings" or alternatively "use some form of quantitative data to partially validate one's qualitative analysis" (p.19).

In this study, the collection of data has come from semi-structured interviews, think-aloud protocols, the researcher's observations during writing sessions, and his reading and assessment of students' written drafts and final papers. This type of data is not immediately accessible for analysis and, therefore, has to be encoded.

Another important characteristic of this study is its exploratory focus. According to Vogt (1993), exploratory studies are concerned with finding patterns and emerging ideas, rather than testing hypotheses. The data gathered during interviews, think-aloud protocols, and written products are then analysed in an attempt to identify patterns, phenomena, or hypotheses. This overall approach is in line with the case study method discussed already, since it represents a means of "gathering and analysing data about an individual example as a way of studying a broader phenomenon" (ibid:30).

## 3.6    Justifying the use of the methods

The methods used in the current research are in line with the characteristics of qualitative research. The researcher's goal is to investigate the writing processes and strategies of senior Libyan university students and to draw a clear picture of their behaviours while composing in English. Another aim was to see the differences and/ or similarities of strategy use between good and poor writers while composing. Therefore, qualitative approach is the most appropriate to achieve the intended goals, allowing for an in-depth, complex picture to arise.

As writers mainly compose silently, which makes it hard for researchers to discover the complex cognitive process that accompanies the writing process, it was necessary to use a tool that helps uncover the mental process and explore the strategies that the subjects used in their writing tasks. Hence, involving think-aloud was a good choice as this method stems from the "belief that the process of writing requires conscious attention and that at least some of the thought process involved can be recovered" (Hyland, 2003:256). Using, for example, questionnaires or interviews to deduce cognitive processes may not be successful in attempting to bring about the same results. Raimes (1985:234) argues for the use of think-aloud in investigating writing strategies, describing it as "too good a tool not to be used".

By using these methods the researcher wished to answer the three research questions to be addressed, and to obtain a strong picture about writing in the research context. Each method will now be discussed and explained in more detail.

## 3.7 Verbal reports

### 3.7.1 Definition of verbal reports

As noted by Ericsson and Simon (1984, 1993), verbal report protocols have been extensively used in the field of cognitive psychology as a research methodology to achieve information about a learner's cognitive processes. They are used as an attempt to uncover various cognitive processes that lie behind the voicing. Verbal report methods are often thought of as a type of qualitative research as "standard statistical procedures cannot be directly applied to the verbal report data" (Green, 1998:2). Nevertheless, in some circumstances, data collected by this technique can be used quantitatively. For instance, in order to know the frequencies of the occurrence of a particular behaviour or strategy, such data could be used quantitatively. In this case, however, the data needs to be "transformed through coding of individual segments prior to analysis" (ibid: 2).

### 3.7.2 Classifications of verbal reports

There are two forms of verbal report according to Ericsson and Simon: concurrent verbal reports, in which people verbalise the thoughts that come in their mind as they are completing a task, and retrospective reports, in which people report thoughts regarding a task immediately after it has been completed. Claims are made that both of these two forms are direct verbalisations of cognitive processes. Another categorisation is given by Hayes and Flower (1983) who split concurrent verbal reports into think-aloud protocols and directed reports. As the direct reports were not used in the current study; therefore, our discussion on verbal reports will be limited to the think-aloud protocols.

### 3.7.2.1 Think-aloud protocols

Think-aloud protocols are a type of verbal reporting in which subjects verbalise their thoughts as they are completing a task or solving a problem. A number of studies in the field of writing (e.g., Raimes, 1985, 1987; El Mortaji, 2001; Wang and Wen, 2002), have indicated that the think-aloud protocol is considered to be a valuable research tool in trying to access mental processes. However, similar to other techniques, thinking-aloud has its own advantages and drawbacks as will be discussed in the next sub-section.

### 3.7.2.1.1 Advantages and disadvantages of think-aloud protocols

The literature on research methods confirms that all techniques have advantages and disadvantages, and think-aloud as a research tool is no exception.

Many researchers have argued that thinking aloud as a technique is a valuable research tool to access mental processes, and this has been asserted in many disciplines. As far as writing is concerned, researchers such as Raimes (1985, 1987), Khongpun (1992), Wang and Wen (2002), and Chaaban (2010) have adopted the think-aloud protocol method in their studies and verified its usefulness. That said, there have been others (e.g., Perl, 1979; Cooper and Holzman, 1983; Abdul-Rahman, 2011) who have criticised the approach, and questions have been raised about whether the process of composing aloud is actually different from the process of

composing silently, and whether mental processes even have the capacity to be accurately reflected by verbalisation.

Among the most supporters of the method, Ericson and Simon (1993), believed that think-aloud protocols could offer the best way to observe and record the writing process, since without such verbalisation, the cognitive and mental activities would remain unseen and unobservable, and hence, very difficult to access. Raimes (1985:234), moreover, noticed that:

> "when it became apparent what the resulting protocols would yield about both speech and writing, and how much more they revealed about the students as writers than mere analysis of products or observations of the writing process, I decided that think-aloud composing was simply too good a tool not to be used".

However, Raimes (ibid) insisted on not asking the participants to analyse or explain what they were doing as this could be too intrusive and might change "the subject's focus by imposing an additional task" (Swarts et al., 1984:55, cited in Raimes, 1985:234). Furthermore, according to Faerch and Kasper (1987), this technique might be able to yield information about how writers approach the task, the kind of decisions made during the writing process, and what may govern these decisions.

Additionally, Flower and Hayes (1980:368) argue that "thinking-aloud protocols capture a detailed record of what is going on the writer's mind during the act of composing itself". They believe that the think-aloud protocol enables researchers to obtain a more direct view of the mental processes while the writers were engaged in writing by means of asking subjects to say out loud whatever went through their minds.

In spite of the advantages of think-aloud protocols, there was some doubt about the extent to which saying aloud one's thoughts while composing could distract the writer's train of thoughts. Perl (1980:19), one of the pioneers in the use of think-aloud protocols with her subjects, admitted that "it is conceivable that asking students to compose aloud changes the process substantially, that composing aloud is not the same as silent composing". Some researchers also doubt the validity of this technique. Zamel (1983:169), for instance, argues that "there is some doubt about the

extent to which verbalising aloud one's thoughts while writing simulates the real composing situation". Moreover, Faigley and Witte (1981:412) emphasised this view, stating that:

> "Verbal protocols require writers to do two things at once – they must write and they must attempt to verbalize what they are thinking as they pause. Perhaps some subjects can be trained to do both tasks with facility, but many writers find that analysing orally what they are doing as they write interferes with their normal composing processes, interrupting their trains of thought."

This was also confirmed by Nunan (1993) who argued that the act of spelling out thoughts might well change and deform the processes themselves. Moreover, Sasaki (2005:81) emphasises that the "think aloud method may not be the best method for collecting writing process data when participants are not accustomed to verbalizing their thinking process".

However, and despite even other acknowledged limitations for think-aloud protocols (Cohen, 1998; Hyland, 2002), they can provide data on cognitive processes and writers' responses. Additionally, they can provide access to the reasoning processes underlying sophisticated cognition, response, and decision-making (Pressley and Afferbach, 1995; Roca de Larios, Manchón and Murphy, 2006). And furthermore, they allow for the analysis of affective processes of writing in addition to cognitive processes. Hedge (2000:304) explains: "[i]n this method the researcher instructs writers to report on anything they are thinking while performing the task, usually in line with a set of simple guidelines and often with encouragement from an observer in the early stages".

It can be concluded that the advantages of think-aloud protocols outweigh their drawbacks. When a learner is engaged in a problem-solving task such as writing, this method is considered as promising and superior to other techniques to study cognitive processes. Hence, despite the drawbacks, the above mentioned advantages of this method encouraged the present researcher to implement it to enable him to gather first-hand data that helps in his understanding of what is transpiring inside the learner's mind, and in his assessment of how the subjects address their writing strategies in L2. Ericsson and Simon (1980) state that the think-aloud protocol is a

valuable source of information when dealing with cognitive processes, and they argue that the data obtained is especially important due to the fact that the information which is verbalised reflects "direct articulation of information stored in language code" (p.227). Moreover, this method expands existing knowledge about the hidden processes that exist behind writing and how students think about writing. For this reason, this technique is used in this study to achieve direct data from students when composing aloud an argumentative essay in English.

## 3.8 Interviews

According to Berg (2001:66), interviewing is defined as "a conversation with purpose". Cohen et al., (2007) point out that the researcher and informants can pursue topics of interest which may not have been foreseen when the questions were originally drawn up. Hyland (2003) argues in favour of this technique, especially in L2 writing research, saying that what makes interviews very common is the 'flexibility' and 'responsiveness' associated with them. Moreover, Cohen et al., (2007) maintain that interviews have great advantages over other techniques like questionnaires, in that they permit the investigator to follow information at deeper levels.

El-Aswad (2002) stated that there are three purposes of an interview: firstly, it may be used as the principal means of gathering information having direct relevance to the researcher's objectives. Secondly, it can be used to check hypotheses or discover new ones if necessary. Thirdly, it can be used in combination with other techniques, as is the case in the present research.

Interviews can be divided into three types: a) structured interviews, which have their content and procedures organised prior to the actual work; b) the semi-structured interview (the one that is used in the present research), which is known by its flexibility and freedom as well as being controlled and guided by the researcher to lead the subjects to where he wants them to go; and c) the unstructured interview, in which the interviewer practises no control at all and provides minimal guidance. In the following section, the advantages and shortcomings related to interviewing are presented.

### 3.8.1 Advantages and disadvantages of interviews

There is no doubt that interview, as one of the most important and well-known techniques for collecting data, has a number of advantages. One is that they allow for greater depth than is the case with other methods (Cohen et al., 2007); another is that they typically have a relatively high return rate in the sense that a large number of those who agree to participate in an interview actually do complete it, and consequently, the interviewer might not have to deal with many unanswered questions, or incomplete answers, as often happens with a questionnaire. Interviews also allow more control of the environment in which the questions are answered, especially if they are conducted in an office or classroom. This can help in avoiding noise and other distractions while the interviewee is answering the questions. Moreover, the interviewer has control over the order in which the questions are answered, and can ensure that the interviewee is guided logically from one issue to another. Interviews also allow more flexibility than other research methods, for example, the interviewer can explore and probe for more information after a question is answered (Brown, 2001).

On the other hand, and like most other research methods, interviews have their own shortcomings. For example, they are susceptible to the subjectivity of the interviewer (Cohen et al., 2007) on two dimensions, since there are possibilities that an interviewer might instantly like an interviewee and conduct the exercise in a more congenial manner, and even where there does not happen, the interviewer may interpret a response in a way that the interviewee did not intend. Furthermore, there is the potential shortcoming of the 'halo effect', discussed by Mackay and Gass (2005), in which interviewees pick up hints from the interviewer which lead them to give the answers they believe the interviewer wants to hear, therefore, infecting the data being gathered. Moreover, interviews can never be anonymous, which is off-putting to many people. In addition, they are time-consuming, expensive, and cannot be undertaken on a large scale.

In this research, and despite the disadvantages of interviews, the present researcher decided to use the semi-structured type of interview in order to enable him to elicit the participants' perception of various sub-processes of their writing and to assess

their audience awareness when writing. Additionally, it was believed that this type of interview would facilitate a better understanding of the participants' writing strategies as well as the difficulties they exhibited and experienced during the writing session. The interview questions(see Appendix 3) were designed on the basis of Raimes' (1985), and Victori's (1999) guidelines. More questions were added by the researcher when that was seen relevant and may retrieve more information on the subjects' strategy use. Each individual interview was tape-recorded and then transcribed. Moreover, all the interviews with the lecturers were tape-recorded, transcribed and analysed qualitatively to identify themes regarding their beliefs and practices.

## 3.9    Observations

Observation is a technique that involves the presence of a researcher in a research setting in order to gather first-hand data on particular behaviours or processes being studied. In addition to taking notes that include the researcher's impressions, the observational data can also be gathered by using different technological tools such as tape recorders, laptop computers, cameras or video cameras which can make the collection of field notes more efficient and the notes themselves more comprehensive. Foster (2006:58) says that, as part of research "observation can be used for a variety of purposes. It may be employed in the preliminary stages of a research project to explore an area which can then be studied more fully utilizing other methods, or it can be used towards the end of a project to supplement or provide a check on data collected in interviews or surveys".

Moreover, Hyland (2003:259) states that observations are supportive tools in the field of writing research, because they "attempt to bridge the gap by systematic documentation and reflection of participants engaged in writing and learning to write".

Nattress (1986:13-14), on the other hand, classifies observations into two categories: observation without intervention and observation with researcher intervention. In the first approach, the researcher either sits beside the subject and watches what he/she does, or videos that behaviour. Nattress (ibid) explained that this method has the

advantage of only minimal interference; however, it provides no data on the writer's mental processes other than that which can be inferred from a study of the written products or reconstructed in a retrospective interview. On the other hand, researchers in the other approach (i.e., observation with researcher intervention) usually interrupt and question the subject writer while composing, as an attempt to infer some information on the mental processes that lie behind the creation of the subject writer's text. However, Nattress (ibid) argues that this approach might raise the question of the extent to which the interruptions distract the writer and thus, interfere with or distort the writing process.

Observations in the current research took place while subjects were performing their tasks  to see how they behaved, what they did in order to ease difficulties they encountered while writing and what strategies they used to solve their writing problems; for example, where they paused, scanned, re-read, rehearsed, corrected mistakes and errors or checked their dictionaries.

### 3.9.1   Advantages and disadvantages of observations

Observations have the following advantages: (1) they provide direct information about the behaviour of individuals and groups, (2) they allow the evaluator to enter into and understand the situation/context, (3) they provide good opportunities for identifying unanticipated outcomes, (4) they exist in natural, unstructured, and flexible settings, and (5) they are less reactive than other data-collection tools. However, there are also limitations to observation as a research method. The disadvantages that are associated with observation as a research method are as follows: (1) they are expensive and time-consuming, (2) they need well-qualified, highly trained observers, (3) subjects may, consciously or unconsciously, change the way they behave because they are being observed, (4) selective perception of the observer may distort data, (5) the investigator has little control over the situation, and finally (6) bias on the part of the observer can be a problem.

## 3.10  The design of the study

In the previous sections, detailed discussions of the techniques used in this study, as well as a justification for the methods chosen, were presented. This part addresses the methods applied and the procedures managed to collect the data for the study. It includes two divisions. In division one I report the pilot study whereby I assessed the data collection methods. In division two (the main study), details of the general procedures and instrumentation for data collection, including the subjects, the assigned topics, identifying good and poor writers, the think-aloud protocols, the methods used in transcribing and coding the data, are presented.

The pilot study was carried out in March 2009, while the main study was conducted between February and March 2010, a period of 7 weeks. The following table summarises the procedures the researcher used when conducting the main study.

Table 3-1: Timescale for data collection

| Week no. | Activity | Venue |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | -The researcher met with the subjects and explained the purpose of the study to them and asked the whole group to take part in the research. | MU— Faculty Lecture Halls |
| | -Students' writing competence test (a placement composition) was carried out. | MU— Faculty Auditorium |
| | -Students' writing competence test was scored. | MU |
| 2 | -Students' language proficiency level was assessed. | MU |
| | -Instructions on how to think aloud were given, and students were trained on how to think aloud. | MU— The English Language Lab |
| | -Students started to write essays in English using think-aloud technique. | MU— The English Language Lab |
| 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 | -Students continued with writing essays in English using think-aloud technique. | MU— The English Language Lab |
| | -Observation of students while performing their writing tasks was carried out. | MU— The English Language Lab |
| | -The students were interviewed. | MU— The English Language Lab |
| | -Students' written products were marked and evaluated. | MU— The English Language Lab |
| | - The think-aloud protocols were transcribed. | Both at MU & NTU |
| 7 | -Teachers were interviewed. | MU— The English Language Lab |
| | -Teachers and students' interviews were analysed. | Both at MU & NTU |

### 3.10.1 Brief report on the pilot study

To ensure that the instruments could function well in the target (main) study, a pilot study was conducted with four participants prior to conducting the main study.

The pilot had two purposes: (1) to try out and gather feedback on the research instruments and the analytical approach; (2) to offer preliminary answers to the research questions (see 1.5), and to evaluate their feasibility for a research study. With all the feedback and input from the pilot study, the research instruments and analytical framework were refined for the main study as will be elaborated later in this section.

### 3.10.1.1 The pilot subjects

The four pilot subjects were full-time third year undergraduates majoring in English, and who had a background of learning English that is typical of Libyan students. In other words, students who had no special education either in writing or in English in general and who had attended only public schools rather than private schools. It should be made clear that this type of student is the most common in Libya. They were two males and two females between the age of twenty and twenty-one years. The selection of these pilot subjects was based on the fact that they were from the same group of students (Fourth Year Undergraduate English Majors) to be targeted in the main study. All participants involved in the pilot study were bilingual Libyans, educated in Libya, and were enrolled in the Department of English in the same university, hence having the same classes, lecturers, and receiving the same instruction. The researcher could confirm that their ability in EFL composition was adequate to produce complete essays.

### 3.10.1.2 Analysis

Four essays and four tapes were recorded in the pilot study. The tapes were transcribed by the researcher, and the resulting think-aloud protocols were coded for writing strategies. Using Perl's (1979) L1 (English) coding system, the present researcher identified a number of strategies. Nevertheless, a few new main writing

strategies emerged such as use of L1 (Arabic) which Perl did not need because her system was designed for first language writing, and some other types of behaviour like use of external resources (i.e., dictionary), and audience awareness.

### 3.10.1.3 Implications for the main study

Regarding the warm-up exercises for the verbal protocol, they presented no difficulty nor did the instructions for the written and verbal tasks. Moreover, as a result of the pilot, it was confirmed that the think-aloud protocol analysis would be used in the main study because it gives insights into the writing process which might not be available in any other way. This will be triangulated with other methods: interview, observation, and analysis of written products. Another technique– teachers' interview, is to be added in order to obtain their views on the students' writing in the different writing stages.

Another adjustment included a decision to conduct the students' interviews immediately after finishing the think-aloud session instead of before (cf. Victori, 1995: 209). Additionally, some more questions about writing strategies were added, some overlapping questions were amended, and other confusing or unclear questions were replaced by simpler ones.

One of the limitations identified from the pilot study was the disagreement of the female subjects to be video-taped due to religious, social and cultural principles. Therefore, audio-recording was utilised instead, and consequently, it was accepted that this would be the strategy for the main study (see 3.11).

Another procedural problem encountered during the pilot study was that of the interference of conversations in the next room and a few interruptions caused by people entering the room where the study was carried out, since it was an office shared by the secretary of the English postgraduate department. Clearly, these distractions had an adverse effect upon the concentration of the subjects as they were engaged in writing. Consequently, arrangements were made to use a more convenient place for the main study.

### 3.10.2 The main study

The main study involved two groups of informants: students and lecturers.

### 3.10.2.1 Procedure

The researcher first met with the Head of the English Department to obtain official permission to conduct the study (i.e., an informed consent form to be signed) (see Appendix 1). The Head of Department demonstrated a willingness to help and explained that he would provide whatever support and facilities might be needed in order for the research to be successful. In addition, some lecturers were also seen with a view to asking them for help to directly contact their students and find volunteers. The search for participants was also undertaken by the researcher himself by visiting lecture halls and approaching students to invite them to participate in the study. Many students were keen to be involved, but some were hesitant or not interested at all. This was not unexpected, since students are not generally aware about research.

When the expected number (30) of students was available, the researcher met with them and gave them a general idea about the research aim, together with more specific information concerning the number of sessions the students would have to be available, and the amount of time that they would have to devote to the writing tasks and the interview. The researcher explained to the subjects that they would be required to sign a consent form (see Appendix 2) before they would be allowed to participate. The researcher arranged a second meeting and the subjects were assigned an argumentative essay in English of two hours in order to determine their writing proficiency (see 3.10.2.2.1).

After identifying the writing proficiency of writers, subjects were trained on how to think aloud – how to verbalise whatever comes to their mind while writing their essays in English. As the researcher believed that the selected subjects were ready for their next individual session, subjects were asked to write an essay in English which was the beginning of the data collection using the think-aloud technique, protocols being required from each subject.

Each subject was tape-recorded as they were writing their essays. The tape recorder was switched on as soon as the subjects sat with their pens and papers ready to write. At the same time, the researcher continued to observe the subjects from a near distance to capture their writing behaviour. No time limit was set for the writing task; however, the maximum time spent in writing was 128.9 minutes.

As they finished, and after a short break, each subject discussed what he/she had written in his/her essay with the researcher. In this encounter, the subjects were asked questions related to their writing: how, why, and what.

Each subject and the researcher then listened to the subject's tape-recorded essay and the researcher asked questions about their writing and the tape recorded responses. Questions the researcher asked were: how subjects used their notes, which parts of the essay were the easiest or most difficult and why, and why they chose a certain word instead of the other. Moreover, their notes, drafts, and the main copy of their essays were used in the analytical phase of the study.

The last session was for meeting subjects individually again for the interview which covered a range of points with regard to the subjects' writing experience, perceptions and feelings to help further illuminate the think-aloud protocols.

### 3.10.2.1.1 Subjects: Sampling and background

### 3.10.2.1.1.1 Selection of the subjects

The reason for choosing fourth year students is that working with first or second year students would have meant that they had had only a limited exposure to university English writing instructions, and the data obtained from their protocols and interviews may have said more about their secondary rather than their university learning, which is the context for the enquiry. The reason for not involving third year students was due to the difficulties experienced by the researcher during the pilot study to convince many of them to take part, as they explained that their weekly time table was full of many demanding subjects, a justification most of the fourth year students did not give. For all these reasons, the researcher decided to work with fourth year rather than first, second, and third year students. In addition, working with fourth year students meant that, in theory at least, subjects would be able to

draw on all the teaching of writing they had received in their all previous years in the English department.

Initially, 30 students (nearly the whole cohort of fourth year students of English at MU) were selected, subject to willingness to participate in the present study. All the 30 students participated in the writing competence measurement. However, for various reasons (but many because of workload), some of the students came to the researcher's desk and asked to withdraw from the study. Hence, the number of students who agreed to take part in the study was 23. However, after scoring the students' writing competence test and collecting and transcribing the protocols, the present researcher found it necessary to discard 12 students. The first reason behind that was because some of those students obtained a total score between 51 and 64 in the writing competence test which means they were classed as average (i.e., neither good nor poor writers) by the researcher (see 3.10.2.2.1.4). The second reason was that some protocols taken from students did not confirm with validity requirements. In those protocols, subjects were frequently silent despite the training they received on how to think aloud as well as the continuous instruction "to keep verbalising and never remain silent". The period of silence continued throughout the task without producing any verbalisation accounting for these silent periods. In this respect, Green (1998) asserts that protocols that contain unaccounted-for periods of silence are likely to be incomplete because during periods of silence relevant thoughts might be activated in the writer's mind yet they are not being verbalised. For this reason, Green (1998) recommends that such protocols are to be discarded. Therefore, the researcher and after consulting his supervisors, decided to exclude those subjects from the investigation. Therefore, the number of students actually participating in the study was 11. They were aged between 21 and 22 years, and included both males and females.

The second group of informants were three members of staff (two hold PhD degrees and one holds an MA). All these informants were experienced in teaching English composition and were teaching either English writing or composition classes at the time of conducting the investigation.

### 3.10.2.1.1.2 Subjects' language proficiency level (the recent academic performance record)

The linguistic competence of the subjects was assessed in terms of the scores derived from the results the subjects obtained during the past three years of their study at the English department prior to conducting this research. The six language modules considered in order to determine the subjects' language proficiency were: vocabulary, grammar, listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as the aggregate score on them (see Appendix 17).

As also common in other fields of education, current subjects' language proficiency as full-time students of English varied according to the scores they received in these language skill courses which they were required to undertake. It was believed that the achievement those subjects attained in the above mentioned modules would determine their overall language proficiency level as students of English who had studied English for 10 years, seven out of which were as specialised English majors (i.e., four years at the secondary stage plus three years at university). Table 3-2 below illustrates the subjects' language proficiency level by showing the overall mean of the scores those subjects obtained in the modules mentioned above, and also the total percentage and their grades for these modules during the past three years prior to conducting the research. The students' classification into grades was based on English Department evaluation system in Libya. This means that those who obtained scores of zero to 49 are rated 'poor'; 50 to 64 rated as a 'pass'; 65 to 74 is 'good'; 75 to 84 is 'very good' and 85 to 100 is rated as 'excellent'.

Table 3-2: Subjects' language proficiency level

| Subject | *Writing proficiency | Gender | **Overall mean of modules scores | Language proficiency (Percentage) | Grade |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S1 | Poor | Female | 382.9 | 63.8% | Pass |
| S2 | Poor | Female | 368.8 | 61.4% | Pass |
| S3 | Poor | Female | 383.5 | 63.9% | Pass |
| S4 | Good | Male | 513.8 | 85.63% | Excellent |
| S5 | Good | Female | 460.33 | 76.7% | Very Good |
| S6 | Good | Female | 522.3 | 87.05% | Excellent |
| S7 | Poor | Male | 378.6 | 63.1% | Pass |
| S8 | Poor | Male | 315.2 | 63.04% | Pass |
| S9 | Good | Male | 521.4 | 86.9% | Excellent |
| S10 | Good | Male | 436.9 | 72.8% | Good |
| S11 | Poor | Female | 419.6 | 69.93% | Good |

* For information on writers' proficiency in L2 writing, see 3.10.2.2.1, and Table 3-3.
** For details of individual scores of these modules for each subject see Appendix 17.

According to the information shown in the table above, one can see that there is a correlation between language proficiency level and subjects' writing proficiency. All of the subjects who scored quite high grades in their language proficiency were also reported as good writers, and those who scored rather lower grades (e.g., *Pass*) (except S11) in their language proficiency were considered as poor writers.

### 3.10.2.2 Research instruments

One of the shortcomings of thinking aloud as a technique is that some of the subjects might not be able to produce loudly all their thoughts and decisions while engaged in their writing sessions especially when the cognitive demand is so great at some particular points. For this reason and to compensate for any possible incompleteness of thinking aloud as a technique, other sources of data i.e., interviews, and observations have been employed. Further, a measure of writing proficiency, has also

been used. That is, a writing test of appropriate length and difficulty, with a range of criteria in order to determine which students are good or poor at English writing. Multiple raters (other markers) are also used in order to get more objectivity.

### 3.10.2.2.1 Subjects' writing proficiency (a placement composition)

Many researchers (e.g., Emig, 1971; Heuring, 1985; Raimes, 1985; Stallard, 1974; Zamel, 1982, 1983) classified their subjects as skilled and unskilled writers according to the quality of written products.

Before joining in think-aloud writing sessions, students were asked to take part in the proficiency measure of writing, and they were given the right to withdraw if they did not want to continue. For this purpose, the ESL composition profile formulated by Jacobs et al. (1981) was administered.

### 3.10.2.2.1.1 Choice of topic

In order to distinguish between good and poor writers, an argumentative type of essay was chosen. The reason behind this choice was due to the fact that this mode of discourse (i.e., argumentative) demands a higher cognitive capacity on the part of the writer (Freedman and Pringle, 1984; Andrews, 1995). Moreover, it is considered as academic, challenging and potentially more difficult than narrative, expository or descriptive writing, and might consequently be the best judge of the subjects' writing capability.

It was intended to give the students a uniform topic to write about (Flower and Hayes, 1981b; Gould, 1980), since presenting them with a choice may have resulted in students involving themselves in varying degrees of difficulty (they may have followed their interests, or selected a topic which they found easy to write about). This might not allow them to accurately reflect their writing proficiency; moreover it would be difficult to score in a uniform manner. Indeed Jacob et al (1981:16) observed that "there is no completely reliable basis for comparison of scores on a test unless all of the students have performed the same writing task(s)". Additionally, the topic for the essay was carefully chosen to reveal the students' cultural background.

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Specifically, the researcher chose a topic in which he believed all subjects would have an interest, but one about which they had not written before. This was established by the researcher checking with the members of staff. The students were given the statement: 'Money can buy happiness. Discuss', and asked to write about it. This topic and title were adapted from El Mortaji (2001) who assigned it to subjects in her research. The researcher felt that this topic was appropriate in terms of content, since students are required to put forward a personal viewpoint.

### 3.10.2.2.1.2 Procedure

The researcher administered this writing task in the faculty's main lecture theatre (i.e., the auditorium) (see Table 3-1) under typical examination conditions, the aim being to use the output as a means of placing the subjects into two groups (good and poor writers) according to the writing proficiency demonstrated. The students were asked to produce in handwriting, an argumentative essay in English and were given two hours to do this. They were not allowed to talk to their peers, or ask the researcher questions about the topic. Dictionaries and grammar books were not permitted throughout the writing session.

### 3.10.2.2.1.3 Scoring

All essays were collected and scored using a 5-point scale developed by Jacobs et al. (1981). The reason for adopting this instrument was for its reliability and because other researchers who have conducted similar studies (e.g., El-Mortaji, 2001; Alhaysony, 2008; Chaaban, 2010) have used it successfully. Jacobs et al. (1981:28) recommended certain steps be followed in order to secure a reliable and valid evaluation, saying that the researcher should

> "adopt a holistic evaluation approach, establish criteria to focus readers' attention on significant aspects of the composition, set a common standard for judging the quality of the writing, select readers from the same background, train readers until they can achieve close agreement in their assessments of the same papers, obtain at least two independent readers of each composition, monitor the readers periodically during the evaluation to check their consistency in applying the standards and criteria of the evaluation".

According to the Jacobs et al. profile, compositions are evaluated according to a holistic rating scale measuring: Content (30 points); Organisation (20 points); Vocabulary (20 points); Language Use (25 points); Mechanics (5 points). The total scored marks can range from 100 (maximum) to 34 (minimum). Moreover, the individual scales and the overall summed scale are additionally broken down by Jacobs et al. into numerical ranges which correspond to four mastery levels: excellent to very good (83-100 points), good to average (63-82 points), fair to poor (52-62 points), and very poor (34-51 points) (see Appendix 10).

### 3.10.2.2.1.4 Identifying good and poor writers

The researcher made contact with some members of staff at the English department at MU who teach composition for those students in order to rate their argumentative essays. Each essay was assessed by three different raters (the researcher and two other independent raters). Together with the essays, the researcher provided the evaluators with Jacobs et al.'s (1981) ESL writing profile guide (see Appendix 10), with its criteria for evaluation so that they could read and highlight any unclear points and discuss these with the researcher. Afterwards, the researcher met with each rater individually to explain about the marking criteria to be applied, and also to answer any questions that might be raised by them. Participants were granted anonymity by substituting their names with code numbers (see 3.11). In the case where more than 10-points difference in the total marks of the three raters occurred, the essays were to be evaluated by a fourth rater and the final score of the essay would be based on the average of the three closest scores. However, there was no need for a fourth rater in the current study as the scores allocated by the raters were always within ten marks of each other (see Table 3-3). On the basis of the results from the placement composition a list of 'good' and 'poor' writers was elaborated. I arranged to have meetings with these subjects' previous lecturers in order to obtain more independent feedback on recent EFL performance and to confirm the tendency to high performance or underachievement described in the placement composition. Based on the information provided in these interviews, and the placement composition grades (see Appendix 9), a final list of 11 'good' and 'poor' EFL writers was drawn up for the study (good=5, poor=6).

For the purpose of the study, it was necessary to classify the subjects into two categories (good and poor) rather than four as in Jacobs' composition profile (see previous sub-section). Hence, the researcher discussed this issue with his supervisors and according to their remarks decided to consider those with total scores of 65-100 as good writers, and those with total scores of 34-50 as poor writers. It was jointly agreed that there should be a gap between the good and the poor writers in terms of their scores, and students who had a total score between 51 and 64 should be considered as average and excluded from the research. When the subjects were placed into two groups according to their writing proficiency, they were ready for the think-aloud and interview sessions in the main data analysis. The results of the placement compositions were as follows:

Table 3-3: Writing test scores

| Subject | Scores | | | Total score | Group |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|-------------|-------|
|         | Rater 1 | Rater 2 | Rater 3 | | |
| S1 | 46 | 50 | 54 | 50 | Poor |
| S2 | 49 | 41 | 48 | 46 | Poor |
| S3 | 42 | 45 | 52 | 46.3 | Poor |
| S4 | 79 | 73 | 81 | 77.6 | Good |
| S5 | 81 | 77 | 79 | 79 | Good |
| S6 | 82 | 88 | 83 | 84.3 | Good |
| S7 | 46 | 46 | 49 | 47 | Poor |
| S8 | 47 | 52 | 49 | 49.3 | Poor |
| S9 | 83 | 80 | 75 | 79.3 | Good |
| S10 | 82 | 76 | 79 | 79 | Good |
| S11 | 41 | 50 | 49 | 46.6 | Poor |

### 3.10.2.2.2 The writing task for the think-aloud protocol session

In the think-aloud session, all subjects were required to write an essay on a topic that was selected by the researcher. The researcher was concerned to assign a topic about which the subjects would know something, in the belief that familiar topics would maximise the writers' involvement in the process (Friedlander, 1990; Manchón et al., 2005), taking into consideration that topics relating to the students' current interest

(education) and to their social life and educational background, would motivate them to be deeply involved in writing and to communicate their ideas to the reader. Moreover, the reason behind choosing a single (uniform) topic for all subjects to write about was the researcher's wish to avoid discrepancy in the writers' perception of different topics, considering that all targeted subjects were in the same academic year (i.e., fourth year English majors), and should be at a similar level. Hence, there was no need to assign them two or more different topics in consideration of a potential variation in their level of competence. Furthermore, the researcher was intending to use this particular mode of discourse (i.e., argumentative) in order to investigate the processes and strategies used in producing this type of writing in a foreign language.

The topic assigned was:

"Success in education is influenced more by students' home-life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme. Discuss." (Taken from Raimes, 1987).

It was important to confirm that students had not written about this topic already. Therefore, the researcher checked with their teachers in order to preclude the possibility that students might be able to write on this subject from memory. Additionally, the topic was given to the subjects on the spot, so that they did not have any chance to think about it beforehand, and had no option but to act as naturally and spontaneously as possible.

### 3.10.2.2.3 Think-aloud protocols

Think-aloud protocols were used in this research in order to explore what was going on in the minds of the students as they were writing, and to investigate the actual writing processes and strategies that Libyan fourth year English majors employ while composing in English.

### 3.10.2.2.3.1 Procedure

Each student had a think-aloud session individually, and each session began with an explanation of the think-aloud procedure. Actual writing did not start until each

subject felt relaxed with the procedure and expressed his/her willingness to start. The researcher adapted the warm-up instructions provided by Ericsson and Simon (1993) (see Appendix 7), in order to obtain valid think-aloud protocols. The following are the instructions the researcher gave to the subjects:

*As you write your essay, I want you to think-aloud as soon as you start thinking about the topic. In other words, from the moment you look at the assigned topic throughout your writing, I want you to verbalise your thoughts and, therefore, say everything that goes through your mind loudly. As you verbalise your thoughts I want you to follow these guidelines:*

1. *Work on the task as you normally would: think about it, take notes, use outline, or just write.*

2. *Try to say aloud everything that crosses your mind, even fragments and stray thoughts. Say what you are thinking, reading, and writing, just as you did in the warm-up exercises. You do not need to explain or justify what you are doing.*

3. *Please think aloud throughout the writing session from beginning to end. Speak audibly and as continuously as possible. If you stop speaking (10 seconds) I will remind you to think aloud.*

4. *As you write, if you change your mind please do not erase text that you do not intend to use. Simply cross once through anything you do not need.*

5. *Before we start I will give you two practices before we move to writing the essay.*

6. *Can you please multiply 24 x 36 and tell me what you are thinking while you do the calculation.*

7. *Now I will give you an anagram, which means a number of letters that you need to put in a particular order to form a word. I need you to tell me what you are thinking about while you perform this task.*

*(R,F,T,E,P,E,C= PERFECT)*

The think aloud writing sessions were performed in a quiet place and the subjects conducted the writing tasks individually according to a schedule the researcher prepared with regard to the availability of the subjects and their free time.

The timetable prepared by the researcher provided a clear guideline for managing the writing sessions in terms of indicating which subject would turn up next, on which day and at what time. This helped the researcher to avoid time-wasting.

In each new think-aloud session, the researcher explained what to do to the student, and reminded him/her of the importance of continuing to verbalise as much as possible throughout the writing session. The researcher also read the instructions and the assigned topic together with the subject. Usually, he sat opposite to the student in order to be in a good position to observe him/her closely and write down comments about his/her behaviour. However, the researcher always asked the subjects beforehand whether sitting in front of them might cause them any discomfort, and if they said yes, the researcher then moved into a different position that was a little further away, but still being able to observe the subject and control the session.

### 3.10.2.2.3.2 Transcription of think-aloud reports

Eleven think-aloud reports were collected, and each audio-taped composing session was transcribed by the researcher. The reports were transcribed in the language in which they were produced. In respect of the transcription conventions employed in the current study, the researcher intended to employ a straightforward and fairly simple approach, which began with an attempt being made to distinguish between what was written and what was oral. This was done by the researcher using techniques to distinguish the writers' different activities while writing. In this connection, double underlined words indicate words that were being written down as they were verbalised. Single underlined words indicate written text being read by the students, whether part of the assigned topic, key words or phrases within the topic, directions, or previously written text, for example the title, part of the essay, or the whole essay. The underlined and italicised are the subjects' think-aloud voicing. Non-underlined, but italicised words represent the subject's silently written text. Finally, the words written in capital letters, and parenthesised, represent the researcher's remarks on the student's writing. Use of L1 by the subjects was presented in brackets and the researcher's translation was presented in italics and parenthesised next to the L1 text.

**3.10.2.2.3.3 Coding the composing behaviour**

By listening to the tapes of the composing sessions and simultaneously following the essays created by the subjects, it was possible to identify the specific functions of the different strategies in the composing process. When this was achieved for all composing sessions, the researcher made another complete coding of the data in which he compared his categories with others appearing in the literature. Consequently, some categories identified by other researchers (e.g., Perl, 1979; Sasaki, 2000; El Mortaji, 2001; Chaaban, 2010) were borrowed by the researcher.

**3.10.2.2.3.4 Reliability of the coding scheme**

In order to check the reliability of the coding in this study, Scholfield's (1997) formula was employed, and intra-judge reliability was calculated to determine how much agreement was reached.  In the procedure, five (about 45%) randomly chosen protocols were coded for strategies by the researcher himself, and then put aside for five weeks without looking at them. The researcher then coded those same five protocols once more, as though they were being seen for the first time. A comparison was then made of the two codings to establish how similar the classifications were. A classification was scored as agreeing if the two codings matched. In the first coding, 205 writing strategy units were counted for the first subject, and in the second coding, 192 units of strategies were classified as similar to those units in the first coding for the same subject. This indicates that 192 units of the strategies in the second coding completely matched 192 units in the first categorisation. Exactly the same procedures were conducted with the other four subjects. In the first coding, the researcher found a total of 759 units of writing strategies for all five subjects, and in the second coding, 702 units of strategies were found. Those 702 units were categorised the same as in the first coding. Scholfield's formula was applied in the current investigation to obtain the intra-judge reliability coefficient:

Number of strategies coded the same by researcher in the 1st and 2nd coding

---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------$\times 100$

Number of strategies coded by the researcher in the 1st coding

The overall agreement, accordingly is $(702 \div 759) \times 100 = 92.49\%$

Hence, the intra-judge reliability check reveals a good percentage agreement.

Moreover, and in order to ensure the reliability of the coding of L2 writing strategies, the five samples of the protocols were encoded by another person, an Arabic speaking PhD holder who teaches English writing at the English department at MU. Along with the five protocols, this person was given a list of instructions adopted from Mushait, 2003, with modifications done by the researcher to fit the procedure applied in the present research in coding strategies and behaviours (see Appendix 19). The researcher met with this person to discuss in details the list of strategies coded by the researcher and to answer any questions raised. The independent coder identified a total of 732 strategy units employed by the five writers. The strategies that were coded the same as the researcher's were 689.Using Scholfield's formula, interrater reliability was 91%:

Number of strategies placed in the same category by both judges

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------- $\times 100$

Number of strategies coded by the researcher

Hence, the overall agreement is$(689 \div 759) \times 100 = 91\%$.

In addition, however, the researcher's supervisors suggested worthwhile points in relation to strategy coding as they read throughout the thesis and their comments were discussed together and some strategies were re-coded accordingly. This happened, for example, with the strategies of avoidance and postponements, and rehearsing.

## 3.11 Ethics of the present study

The subjects selected for the study were all relaxed and motivated to do the work. They were granted anonymity by substituting their names with code numbers, and they were promised that I would keep any piece of information they provided as confidential. Moreover, subjects were not video-taped for religious, social and cultural constraints. Therefore, audio-recording was performed by the researcher and welcomed by the subjects for the study. The subjects were polite, cooperative and enthusiastic to participate in the project.

## 3.12 Chapter summary

This chapter has described the methods used to investigate the writing strategies employed by the Libyan students. Various methods have been used to explore the aims of the research: think-aloud protocols, interviews, observations, and written samples. In addition, the chapter provided a detailed account of the process of data collection, the participants, the methods of data analysis, and the analytical framework of the study. Ethical issues of the present study have also been considered to avoid any effect that might cause problems for the subjects. The next chapter will include a detailed description of the data analysis.

# Chapter 4: Data Analysis: Students' Writing Strategies and Strategic Behaviour

## 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will be dedicated to presenting the study results using information obtained from various data collection methods about writing in English by good and poor L2 writers. In the following sections I will describe the strategies and behaviours that the analysis has shown, using data from the think-aloud protocols, interviews, observations, and the written documents, as well as from the literature on writing strategies. In addition, though the current research is mainly qualitative in nature, it also gives quantitative summaries of strategy use, as this provides a clearer picture about the strategic behaviour of the participants in this study. In short, this chapter is intended to answer the following research questions:

1. What strategies do Libyan students of English as a foreign language use while writing in English?

2. Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use?

The answer to question one will be presented in the next two main sections. All of the instruments mentioned above were used to analyse the data for research question one. In the following section, 4.2, I attempt to look at the phases of composing as produced by subjects in the present study. Section 4.3 explains the strategies and sub-strategies used by the subjects, and also discusses whether there are any differences and/or similarities in the composing strategies used among Libyan university students with different writing proficiency, for which purpose question two above is addressed. Now I attempt to look at each of the composing phases in detail as produced by subjects in L2.

## 4.2 Phases of composing

I intend to highlight the three different phases of composing as performed by subjects in the current study because I realised that subjects had been involved in different behaviours and strategies throughout these phases.

When writers begin writing, they normally proceed through the process of writing and start formulating their ideas into meaningful sentences and coherent paragraphs. Then they may also edit, revise or proof-read what they write. However, in the course of writing, they might return to a certain point, or sometimes to the very beginning once they realise that there is a gap or a new idea needs to be added. This in fact what characterises the writing process approach which emphasises the recursive nature of writing. Therefore, writers may revisit (back and/or forth) any of the writing sub-processes in the course of their writing till they feel that time has come to stop writing and hand in their papers.

In some cases, however, it is clear enough to realise when a subject shifts from one sub-process of writing into another with the help of their think-aloud protocols, written documents and observation: *OK let me start* (S9) (indicates a subject who is about to start drafting); *full stop, that's it, I'll just proof-read it* (S4) (indicates a subject who finishes drafting and decides to proof-read). This certainly does not mean that those subjects are following a strict linear procedure in their writing (cf. Roca de Larios et al., 2008), as we shall see in the following sub-sections.

### 4.2.1 Pre-drafting (Planning)

The first phase in the composing process is pre-drafting. It is the period of time between receiving the assignment and getting involved in actual writing tasks. I intend to call the period of time spent before any actual writing performed by a writer as a phase, even though writing is recursive, for there is simply no real writing occurs at this particular time of the composing process. It is a time to mentally prepare for their writing. Moreover, some subjects in the current study behaved differently before they started writing; therefore, I see that there is a need to explain these differences of behaviour on part of the writers prior to start writing.

Hayes and Flower (1980:12) explain that during planning, writers "set goals and establish a plan to guide the production of a text that will meet these goals". Manchón et al. (2007:150) state that the first phase in writing is fairly linear as writers move "step-by-step through planning. After planning, writers begin a phase that combines writing, planning, rehearsing phrases, and rereading source texts".

Writers use different strategies to understand the writing task they are set, and very often re-read the task. In this phase, writers usually prepare themselves for the task by getting warmed up, and decide for an audience and a purpose. They also start generating ideas and putting them down in a form of a note or an outline.

Raimes (1985:241) defined pre-drafting as all the activities (such as reading the topic, rehearsing, planning, trying out beginnings, making notes) that students engaged in before they wrote what was the first sentence of their first draft.

Observing the subjects while engaged in the first phase, pre-drafting or planning, of their writing process, it was clear that individual subjects had employed particular procedures for approaching their writing. Now, how subjects in each group dealt with this phase of L2 composing while writing their essays will be explained, starting with the good writers first.

The good writers (with the exception of S10), generated and rehearsed information, and developed an overall plan for their essays. Subjects used different strategies to understand the writing task. They devoted some time to planning the content and organising their essays before they started drafting. However, S10 did not have a planning phase as such, starting to draft the essay immediately after having read the topic which took him half a minute (see Table 4-1 below).

Table 4-1 : Time* spent on each phase by the good writers

| Subject | Pre-drafting | Drafting | Post drafting | Total |
|---------|-------------|----------|---------------|-------|
| S4 | 7.65 | 56 | 5.0 | 68.65 |
| S5 | 4.96 | 85.79 | 4.40 | 95.15 |
| S6 | 2.05 | 63.53 | 37.12 | 103.16 |
| S9 | 3.35 | 54.89 | 00 | 58.24 |
| S10 | 0.30 | 77.74 | 51.16 | 128.9 |

*Time in minutes

Table 4-2: Time* spent on each phase by the poor writers

| Subject | Pre-drafting | Drafting | Post drafting | Total |
|---------|--------------|----------|---------------|-------|
| S1 | 14 | 82.53 | 17.79 | 114.32 |
| S2 | 6.17 | 36.99 | 6.30 | 49.46 |
| S3 | 3.44 | 18.42 | 18.55 | 40.41 |
| S7 | 13.62 | 52 | 22 | 87.62 |
| S8 | 1.76 | 45.81 | 3.98 | 51.55 |
| S11 | 2.17 | 32.76 | 18.65 | 53.58 |

*Time in minutes

The quantitative data on Table 4-1 also show that the good writers spent different amounts of time during the pre-drafting phase. The maximum time was spent by S4 (7.65 minutes), but none of the other subjects exceeded five minutes in planning and generating their ideas before they became involved in actual writing.

Some relation between time spent planning and essay length might be expected. However, spending more time planning (i.e., before start writing) did not necessarily mean producing longer essays. For example, S5 spent 4.96 minutes before started the actual writing and produced an essay of 576 words; whereas S10 spent only 0.30 minutes, yet produced a longer (in fact the longest ) essay of 603 words (see Table 4-4 below).  Otherwise, there is some correlation concerning the other subjects' (S4, S6 and S9) writing. In the two cases of S4 and S9, for example, though they spent pre-drafting time that varied to certain extent (7.65 minutes and 3.35 minutes respectively) they came up with essays that were almost identical in terms of the number of words written (398 words and 399 words respectively) (see Table 4-4 below). Another correlation exists, however, with S6's case— she spent the least (with the exception of S10) time before she started writing (2.05 minutes), and she also produced the shortest essay (339 words).

Furthermore, it seems that the time those subjects spent during the pre-drafting phase correlates somehow with the time (if any) they spent in the post drafting phase. We can see in Table 4-1 above that subjects who spent more time before they commenced drafting were those who either never spent  any time in the post drafting

phase (S9), or those who spent the least time (4.40 minutes and 5 minutes) in the post drafting phase (S5 and S4 respectively).

Moreover, there emerged to be three steps within the phase of pre-drafting, most of which were shared by all good writers (see Table 4-3). These steps are explained as follows.

**a. Preliminary reaction to the question**

As the writers read the question, they waited to sense the reaction it suggested to them. This reaction to the topic turned to be the focus of their approach and was later developed into their theme.

**b. Analysis of the question**

After reading the question, the writers analysed the demands of the question. After identifying its elements, they advanced to make notes of ideas for each of the categories identified. After brainstorming ideas on the topic, the subjects revisited the question to refocus on what it required and to reconsider the information created so far. They then, additionally, elaborated on their approach and/ or organisation of ideas within the essay while at the same time strengthening and developing these ideas.

**C. Rehearsing the essay**

The good writers rehearsed their essay attending to both the organisation and presentation of content. As they rehearsed, the subjects systematically talked their way through their notes. Their rehearsals, though they lasted for only a few minutes, appeared to be a practice to test the planned approach, organisation and content of their essay, in addition to the way in which they would convey their ideas.

Table 4-3: Steps within the good writers' pre-drafting phase

| Subject | Preliminary reaction to the question | Analysis of the question | Rehearsing the essay |
|---------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| S4 | / | / | / |
| S5 | / | / | / |
| S6 | / | / | / |
| S9 | / | / | / |
| S10 | / | / | - |

On the other hand, half the number of the poor writers spent little time planning and seemed to begin writing with little more in the way of plans than an overall concept of how their essays should be structured. However, there were cases when poor writers, such as S1, S2, and S7, had spent a considerable time (more than 6 minutes) (see Table 4-2 above) preparing themselves for the task by, for example, re-reading or writing down the assigned topic (S2 and S3), rehearsing (S1, S2 ,S3, and S7), rephrasing the topic (S3), writing down outlines and notes (S1,and S11), globally planning (S2, S3 and S11) asking questions about the topic using the L1 (S3). Also poor writers demonstrated certain strategies and behaviours at the onset of their writing tasks as I shall explain later in more details in section 4.3. However, other poor writers such as S8 did not have a planning stage as such, beginning to write the essay at once after having read the question three times.

### 4.2.1.1   Teachers' views on pre-drafting phase

Some of the teachers' responses to the interview question, '*What type of strategies do your students use before they start writing?*'(see Appendix 4) were informative in terms of their roles as teachers . That is, some of their responses regarding the pre-drafting stage of their students' writing reflected some important educational and methodological explanations. However, they do not provide much about the behaviour their students exhibited before they started writing.  For example, the first teacher, T1, emphasised the idea of brainstorming and outlining on the part of the students "*first they read the topic. Then they first understand who the audience is*

*going to be. Then they brainstorm for ideas, and then they make the outlines. After that they start their writing process*". What this teacher said about the strategies her students use before they start composing in class seemed fine; however, she then mentioned that the time allotted for the writing classes was not enough, and that might affect the planning activity for students' writing. The second teacher, T2 spoke about how she mainly approached the lesson of writing before her students wrote. This is what she said:

> "*Once I give my students a topic to write about, I started to discuss the topic with them, you know, their knowledge about it, what do they know about it, what does it mean to them. I usually give, you know, like key words you can say in order for them to use them, you know, and put them on the board. OK, and then make them discuss. I usually, you know, make them discuss the topic before starting writing. But mainly I need them to write in groups not individual writing, and there must be in each group one good student in order to, you know, to facilitate the whole thing.*"

Then she added: "*Sometimes I ask them to plan their writing, you know*". Then she quickly changes her words: "*Not sometimes, it's to plan it, it should be planned, you know, they should plan it. This is my way with my students. I make them plan for their writing. It is really important for them to plan in order to organise their writing*". The third teacher, T3, started by talking in general about planning, saying: "*well, I always suggest to them that they should have, and they do it, OK, ehhh, planning, planning is the most important thing.*" Then he spoke more on how he usually instructed his students during the writing class rather than what his students actually do in the pre-drafting phase: "*So I always said to them just go to planning, you understand, and from there you develop your writing according to your plan. So once they planned they have to see the connectivity, they have to see the unity, the introduction, development and conclusion.*"

As we have seen, most of what those teachers said was about their role as teachers of writing rather than their students' actual behaviour during the class of writing prior to start composing. However, as explained by teacher 1, students are engaged with some relevant strategies such as reading the assigned topic, choosing their audience, generating ideas and outlining.

## 4.2.2   Drafting

Drafting takes place when writers put their ideas into sentences and paragraphs (El-Aswad, 2002: 200). While drafting, writers transform ideas into language. They also question linguistic aspects like grammar, lexis, and academic conventions. In the course of this phase, the writers re-read and evaluate their writing. Plakans (2008:117) asserts that this process is "circular and overlapping".

### 4.2.2.1   Subjects' writing fluency

As shown in Table 4-4 below, there is a definite correlation between subjects' level of writing proficiency and the length of the essays produced, number of the paragraphs written, as well as the average sentence length. For example, the average of the number of words written by the good writers in their essays is (463) words, while the average of the number of words written by the poor writers is (251) words. The same also can be seen in the number of paragraphs written, as the average of the number of paragraphs written by the good writers is (6.8), while it is (4.6) with the poor writers. The number of sentences written by each group of writers in their essays and the number of words per each sentence were also different. For instance, the average number of sentences written by the good writers is (22.4), while it is (13) sentences for the essays written by the poor writers. As for the number of words written in each sentence by the two groups, we can see that the average for the good writers is (21.6) words per sentence, whereas it is (19.1) for the poor writers. From this simple calculation, it can be noticed that good writers wrote longer essays; moreover, although long sentences are not always associated with good writers, a greater words per sentence count is generally identified as typical of good writers. Moreover, the good writers spent a mean time of (90.82) minutes writing their papers, compared to (66.15) minutes for the poor writers.  As said before, the mean number of words written by the good writers was (463) words, while it was (251) words for the poor writers. This means the rate of writing was (5.09) words per minute for the good writers compared to (3.79) words per minute for the poor writers (see Table 4-5).

Table 4-4: Essay length

| Category | Good Writers | | | | | Poor Writers | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | S4 | S5 | S6 | S9 | S10 | S1 | S2 | S3 | S7 | S8 | S11 |
| **Paragraphs written** | 5 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 5 |
| **Sentences written** | 29 | 24 | 21 | 21 | 17 | 14 | 9 | 11 | 11 | 15 | 15 |
| **Words written** | 398 | 576 | 339 | 399 | 603 | 256 | 159 | 278 | 216 | 359 | 238 |
| **Words per sentence** | 13.7 | 24 | 16.1 | 19 | 35.4 | 18.2 | 17.6 | 25.2 | 19.6 | 23.9 | 15.8 |
| **Drafts produced** | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 |

Table 4-5: Writing fluency for each group

| Category | Good Writers | Poor Writers |
|---|---|---|
| **Mean total time of writing** | 90.82 | 66.15 |
| **Mean total number of words written** | 463 | 251 |
| **Mean number of words written per minute** | 5.09 | 3.79 |

To conclude, the good writers wrote more words in their essays than the poor writers, produced more sentences and more paragraphs, and the sentences they produced were longer; moreover, they spent more time writing their tasks.

### 4.2.2.2 Essay development

EFL learner writers, regardless of their writing proficiency level, sometimes lack the range of language that native speakers of English have. This may lead them to restrict themselves only to the structures and vocabulary that they are familiar with and, therefore, they rarely want to take the risk of adding varieties to their writing. Now, I will explain how both groups performed while drafting, and I will start with the good writers.

Although all subjects shared a similar level of instruction and background in L2, the good writers' command of language production was comparatively significant. Most of them recognized that the task required more than just a summary of the information. Their understanding of the argumentative mode of discourse and their clearly defined rhetorical problem guided the development of their essay.

For the good writers, drafting was a very recursive process. That is, when writing sentences or paragraphs they would stop to scan, plan, rehearse and revise their texts

before carrying on, or in other times to find ways to move on. S6, for example, planned her essay by establishing goals, transcribing her thoughts, monitoring her progress and evaluating her writing. The same was also with S9. He planned, rehearsed quite a lot (mainly in a questioning tone), did several attempts of revision while writing, but never had a second draft nor did he proof-read his essay upon completion (see section 5.3.2.2 in Chapter Five, for more details).

The poor writers' drafting process, on the other hand, seemed to be less recursive than that of the good writers. To put it differently, there was much less backward and forward movement within the text. This can be seen in the use of the sub-strategies of scanning, such as re-reading part or whole of their writing, and re-reading of the assigned topic which were mainly performed while drafting. For example, the quantitative data reveals that the average number of times the poor writers re-read part or whole of their writing was much fewer than that of the good writers (i.e., 6.6 times for the poor writers vs. 21.2 times for the good writers), (refer to Tables 4-11 and 4-12). As for re-reading the assigned topic, the average number of times the poor writers used this sub-strategy of scanning was 2.3 times; whereas it was 3.4 times with the good writers.

In an apparent contrast to the good writers' case, the poor writers' developing texts did not seem to either make opportunities or entail constraints. In S3's drafting process, for instance, she drafted what looked essentially her first draft, but her writing process was still less recursive. Although the data (see Table 4-12) reveal that she did visit the assigned topic and re-read part of it twice at some points, and that she re-read part or whole of her writing also twice while drafting, she did not go back to re-read the directions, nor did she re-read an outline for she simply did not produce one (see Table 4-8). Moreover, it appeared to be a difficult and frustrating experience for her. This was, for example, evident from the question she asked, in Arabic, while she was drafting (*how long is the essay? I mean the number of words required*), followed by the comment she made about writing *I don't like writing too much*. This comment confused the researcher as to whether she meant writing as an activity in general, or that she did not like producing long essays. This, however, became clear in the interview where she asserted that it was writing as an activity that she did not like (see section 5.3.1 in Chapter Five for more details). For S1 and

S11, however, the case looked different as they both, comparatively, were more frequently re-reading part or whole of their writing (10 times and 11 times respectively), and they both did go back to re-read the outlines (3 times each) and to re-read part or whole of the directions (2 times and 3 times respectively) (see Table 4-12).

### 4.2.2.3   Teachers' views on students' drafting

The teachers' answers to the questions regarding the students' writing explained how students behave while composing. When teacher 1 (T1) was asked '*What type of strategies do your students use while composing?*', she said:

> "*I usually divide my students into groups working together as teams. They interact with each other and even the ones lagging behind can learn from this experience. They have a discussion with each other. Some of them consult their dictionaries for certain words for their meaning or spelling, and others don't use dictionaries. Some of them use Arabic while discussing, but I stop them and encourage them to speak in English. But in general their confidence increases when they write together.*"

This teacher's answer did not give clear explanation for her students' strategies while composing. She seemed that she had misinterpreted the question. When this teacher (T1) was asked again '*What are the difficulties that your students encounter when they compose in English?*' she said "*the biggest problem for them is how to write the ideas they generated into good English. Also they sometimes face the problem of mixing up tenses. For example, they might use the present tense while talking about the past. Some students also have problems with using the right vocabulary and collocations.*" Regarding the question '*How do students solve their writing problems?*' teacher 1 said,

> " *Some students are usually lazy, but we make them work in groups. They might share ideas together and discuss them especially when there is a good student in the group who can help. They also read to each other what they have written to check unity and grammar, and some students intend to ask their teachers or use their dictionaries, but I think they prefer to use their dictionaries than asking the teacher because they are shy and don't want to expose their mistakes in front of others especially the weak students*"

When teacher 1 was asked if her students use the L1 in their writing in English, she replied "*Yes, some of them do, but I always try to explain to them not to rely on their L1 while writing in English.*" As for the question, ' *To what extent do you think that your students are influenced by the L1?*' her answer was negative and said " *I think L1 doesn't help much in L2 writing because both languages are different. I always discourage them. I say look, once you start writing in English, you must forget about Arabic. If you started thinking in Arabic, and then you translated it, you are losing your time and you will never be able to do it in time.*" This teacher complained about the short time allotted for the writing classes saying " *Many students can't finish their assignments on time. So sometimes they need to take their assignments back home to complete them.*"

The second teacher's (T2) answer to the first question was as follows, "*Some students ask about the translation of certain Arabic words into English, or how to express a particular idea. Others you know just keep writing in silence, and some students use dictionaries to check spelling or find a synonym.*" Regarding the question '*What are the difficulties that your students encounter when they compose in English?*' she said

> "*As writing is a time-consuming activity, I think time pressure is a problem for them you know. They work against time which might affect their focus on writing. Some students also face difficulties with finding suitable words and expressions due to their poor language competence and they try to find equivalent words in Arabic which they need to translate again into English using their dictionaries which is you know also another time-consuming activity for most of them.*"

When this teacher was asked '*How do students solve their writing problems?*' she replied "*They usually resort to us as teachers or ask one of their peers if they face a problem in writing. But some of them consult their dictionaries and some were seen looking into their course materials. The problem is that some of them are too shy to ask anybody. They feel embarrassed if they ask for help which is not good you know.*" When asked if her students used the L1 in their writing, her answer was

> "*Yes, but mostly by the weak students. They sometimes write whole sentences in Arabic on a separate piece of paper, and when they finish writing the essay, they try to translate what they have written into*

*English with the help of their dictionaries. Some of them also think in Arabic when writing in English and this is clear you know from the way they write and the vocabulary and prepositions they use."*

Answering the question '*To what extent do you think that your students are influenced by the L1?'* she said *"I think that the L1 is affecting the students' vocabulary choice, their grammatical rules, and also punctuation marks. You know that the two languages are quite different in these aspects of language. These are the main problems and we keep telling them to avoid thinking in Arabic when writing in English."* As for the time allotted to the writing classes, this teacher affirmed that she, and also her other colleagues involved in teaching writing, considered it as insufficient and because of that students were missing much of the classroom practice in writing.

Teacher 3 answered the first question '*What type of strategies do your students use while composing?'* in a different way from his other colleagues. He reported that,

> *"Students' behaviours when writing differ from one student to another. The good students in the class write with more self-confidence and not just for the sake of getting good marks. Of course they want us to be happy with their performance, but they also write because they love writing. The good writers usually write and then read back every chunk they finished with an idea. They don't care much about spelling or mechanics at the beginning. They want to make sure that their ideas are clear and that there is a message in what they write. The weak writers are concerned more about sentence structure, and vocabulary and looking frequently for words in their dictionaries."*

Concerning the question regarding the difficulties that students encounter when they compose in English, teacher 3 said that the majority of the students are reluctant to practise writing, "unless *they are obliged to, as for example homework or exams. I think they are not motivated a lot to practise or develop this skill. I don't think they take it seriously."* As for the question '*How do students solve their writing problems?'* teacher 3 repeated nearly the same answer his colleagues gave " *Many of them ask for help especially if they don't understand the topic, but the problem is that some of them are shy and they don't want to show their errors. Other students may solve their problems by asking their peers or sometimes consult their electronic*

*dictionaries.*" When asked if his students used the L1, and if yes, to what extent did it influence the students' L2 writing, he said "*The L1 is used by many students, even the good students sometimes use it for example to retrieve words or to check the suitability of some expressions, but I don't think that it is of much help in writing in L2 because the two languages are quite different*". When asked if the time given to students to write was enough, he said "*The time given to the fourth year students is not enough. The first and second year students have two classes a week, while the fourth year students have only one class which is definitely not enough.*"

### 4.2.3   Post drafting

Post drafting here means the types of activities a writer might be engaged in at the end of writing, i.e.,  the period of time which might entail certain activities associated with end of writing such as re-drafting (e.g., producing a second draft), proof-reading, revising and/or editing of a written task before submission. Therefore, I might  need to give a brief account on the concept of reviewing (see also 2.4.3 in Chapter Two) as a process that normally interact throughout the composing process and distinguish it from post drafting as a group of activities performed on the part of a writer at the end of his/her composing.

Hence, decades ago, revision was viewed as a simple task of reviewing which took place last in the composing process. However, through the development and study of how cognitive models function, revision has proved to be a highly complex operation (Abdul-Rahman, 2011) (see 2.5.3). While revising, writers get a mental representation of their texts and also they attempt to solve the possible dissention between their own intentions and their linguistic expressions (Manchón et al, 2007). Moreover, revising improves the quality of writing. In this respect, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1986) assert that it is a basic and important aspect of the writing process. Nevertheless, Scardamalia (1981) and Hull (1987) state that many writers revise little. They only act as proof-readers rather than reviewers whose role is to have the document edited to suit a known audience (Witte, 1985).

The kind of activity during this phase differed considerably between subjects and in some instances appeared to be considerably affected by the time they had spent

composing as some of them showed signs of tiredness and fatigue as their writing session approached to an end. This was in fact noticed with subjects from both groups (S3, S4, S10 and S11).

Looking at Tables 4-1 and 4-2 above, we could see that there was a correlation between the time spent on drafting and post drafting. The good writers spent more time drafting and post drafting (if we take the whole time the good writers spent post drafting as an average) in comparison with the poor writers. For example, all good writers spent 356.26 minutes in total in writing (i.e., in both pre-drafting and drafting), while they spent 97.68 minutes in post drafting. This means that the average time they spent in writing was 71.25 minutes  (356.26 ÷ 5 = 71.25) and the average time they spent post drafting was 19.5 minutes (97.68 ÷ 5 = 19.5). As for the poor writers, on the other hand, Table 4-2 shows that the total time they spent in writing was 309.67 minutes, and the total time they spent post drafting was 87.27 minutes. This informs us that the average time they spent in writing was 51.61 minutes (309.67 ÷ 6 = 51.61), while the average time they spent in post drafting was 14.54 minutes (87.27 ÷ 6 = 14.54). From this it can be inferred that there was a correlation between how long they spent writing and the time they spent post drafting. In other words, the good writers in comparison with the poor writers, spent more time writing (71.25 minutes in average for the good writers, but 51.61 minutes in average for the poor writers), and also good writers spent more time post drafting (19.5 minutes in average for the good writers, and 14.54 minutes in average for the poor writers) (see Tables 4-1 and 4-2). However, by looking at the data as individual subjects rather than as a whole group, it could be found that the average time the good writers spent post drafting is rather misleading. That is, Table 4-1 shows us that two of the good writers (S6 and S10) spent a considerable amount of time post drafting, while two other subjects (S5 and S4) spent only little time, whereas S9 spent none. This means that the average time of post drafting for the good writers may hide a wide variation. In the following, I will explain how both groups approach the post drafting phase in their writing.

For the good writers S4, S6, and S10, this stage was to review the whole essay, yet particularly for checking issues of style like sentence structure, vocabulary and checking for editing errors. Three of the good writers S5, S6 and S10 made a second

draft of their essays. This was in fact evident in the time S6 and S10 spent post drafting. As for S5, she spent 4.40 minutes in redrafting her essay without making any changes. Table 4-1 above, shows that S6 spent 37.12 minutes; whereas, S10 spent 51.16 minutes. During the post drafting phase those two subjects made a number of editing changes. S9, on the other hand, made his revising and editing corrections as he was producing the first (and only) draft; whereas S4 did a final editing on his first and only draft after he finished writing the essay spending five minutes on that (see Table 4-1).

As for the poor writers, only one writer (S8) did not produce a second draft. The rest of the subjects in the group (S1, S2, S3, S7 and S11) redrafted their essays. It was clear that subject S8 had dedicated most of the writing time to the first, and only draft which seemed so involving and exhausting to the extent that producing a new draft was not possible. S8, in fact, only looked at what he had written at the time and made some surface corrections. His attention was devoted to form correction, particularly at grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation levels. He paused frequently when he was drafting and these pauses seemed likely to indicate a kind of internal revisions which ended up in some corrections. The other subjects S1, S2, S3, S7, and S11 however, spent some time as a post drafting phase, and all of them produced a new draft. The time they spent varied, but the most time was spent by S7 who took 22 minutes writing his second draft and revising. The other three subjects (S1, S3 and S11) spent nearly a similar time which ranges from 17.79 minutes to 18.65 minutes, whereas S2 spent 6.30 minutes. S8, the only one who did not produce a second draft spent the least time (3.98 minutes), and the only thing this subject did when he finished writing his essay was that he started reading the whole text but silently and without attempting to make any changes. This in fact highlights a correlation between post drafting as a phase and redrafting. Data show that those subjects in both groups who redrafted, spent a relatively longer time in the post drafting phase, while those who did not produce a new draft spent a shorter time, or even in some cases they spent no time at all, as with the good writer (S9). So it could be argued that post drafting for those subjects could mean redrafting, because the subjects S4 and S8 who spent little time (from 3.98 minutes to 5 minutes) or the subject S9 who spent no time at all are the ones who did not produce a new draft, while others who spent more time (ranges from 6.30 minutes to 51.16 minutes) in the

post drafting phase were the ones who redrafted their essays. The only exception case was S5— she produced a second draft though she spent relatively short time (4.40) in the post drafting phase.

### 4.2.3.1  Teachers' views on post drafting phase

The teachers' responses to the interview question '*What type of strategies do your students use after composing?*' varied. Teacher 1, for example, said "*some of them revise but some of them don't. The ones who revise, they usually check their errors, like, for example, spelling errors, grammatical errors and punctuations. They also re-read their texts and check for unity and cohesion, but this usually done by the good students only.  If they have time they rewrite their text and produced a polished draft.*" When asked if there was enough time for the students to make their revision, she said "*Time is usually enough for the good students, because they know the good strategies like planning and outlining their essay and they have good vocabulary and don't need to translate words from Arabic. But for the weak students, I think they have a problem with time so they just check the mechanics of writing if they have time and then hand in their essays.*"

Teacher 2 confirmed that she always encouraged her students to revise their texts and try to produce more than one draft, "*I always tell them the more you rewrite your essay the more errors you may find.*" But then she realized the time factor "*but the problem you know is the time is not enough for that, and I wish if they could complete their essays in class rather than taking them home.*" At this point she realized that she had deviated from answering the main question about the strategies students use in the post drafting phase, so she explained "*Most of the students concentrate on two aspects when revising, spelling and vocabulary. They check their dictionaries for spelling and for vocabulary usage. Some of them re-read the essay from the beginning and make corrections and afterwards they rewrite the essay, but some of them they just you know hand in their essays as they finish without making any revision upon completing them.*"

Teacher 3's answer responding to the question of what his students do as they finish their essays was different from his colleagues.  He confirmed that most of his students revise, and that he made them revise in groups so that they could share the experience and the weak writers could benefit from their better peers within the

group. He said *"They revise in groups and usually there is one good student at least in each group. I give them instructions to start revising together. The good students usually revise by re-reading the essay and check if there is unity and the meaning is Ok. Then they check the mechanics and punctuation. The weak writers usually focus more on mechanical errors than on meaning and ideas."*

Now I shall move to the third section in this chapter which will present the writing strategies employed by the 11 subjects.

## 4.3    Writers' strategies and sub-strategies

In the previous section (4.2), I looked at the different phases of composing tasks as produced by the subjects. In the current section, however, I shall see what the data has revealed in order to answer the first research question: What strategies do Libyan students of English as a foreign language use while writing in English?, and (partially) the second research question: Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use?

### 4.3.1    Findings

The analysis of the think-aloud protocols revealed sets of strategies and sub-strategies. The main functional strategies identified, however not necessarily shared by all subjects, were planning, rehearsing, scanning, avoidance and postponement, questioning, revising, editing, use of L1, audience awareness, and use of dictionary. The definitions of these strategies and sub-strategies are shown in the following Table 4-6.

Table 4-6: Strategies and sub-strategies adopted by students in the current study and their definitions

| No. | Strategies and Sub-strategies | Definition |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | **Planning** | concerned with the activities of selecting and organising ideas for content, general shape of the essay or language. Planning activities can be mental, written, or both. |
| a. | Global planning | refers to detailed planning of overall organisation |
| b. | Outlining | Relates to a written form of  planning put by the subjects |
| c. | Local planning | concerned with what to write next, especially at the level of words, phrases or sentences. |
| 2. | **Rehearsing** | refers to activities of trying out ideas, or completing ideas, both when writing sentences and between writing sentences. |
| a. | Rehearsing leading to writing | refers to rehearsing for a while which leads subjects either to start or continue composing. |
| b. | Rehearsing and questioning | refers to rehearsing incidents in a questioning tone |
| 3. | **Scanning** | refers to the re-reading of the assigned topic, a part of a sentence or all of the sentence or sentences that the subjects have written, a part or whole of the outline, a part or whole of the directions. Often to reorient themselves to what they have written in order to decide what to write next, or for reviewing. |
| a. | Reading the assigned topic | |
| b. | Repeating words or phrases | |
| c. | Reading part or whole of their writing | |
| d. | Reading part or whole of the outline | |
| e. | Reading part or whole of the directions | |
| 4. | **Avoidance and postponement** | refer to cases when avoiding to deal with an encountered problem while writing, or to postpone dealing with a particular problem |
| 5. | **Questioning** | refers to the questions asked by the subjects as a means of clarifying ideas, or evaluating what had been written. |
| 6. | **Revision** | refers to the changes made to the written text in order to clarify meaning, or to correct the syntax or spelling. |
| | revising | changes made by the writer on the content level |
| | editing | Changes made by the writer on the surface level |
| 7. | **Use of L1** | refers to cases when Arabic is used while composing in English. |
| a. | L1 used for vocabulary retrieval | |
| b. | L1 used for creating mental plans and generating ideas. | |
| c. | L1 used for verifying produced language and content items. | |
| 8. | **Audience awareness** | relates to the awareness of the audience shown by the writer. |
| 9. | **Use of Dictionary** | Refers to a non-writing behaviour where subjects pause to consult a dictionary or a thesaurus in order to overcome a writing difficulty e.g., check spelling, meaning or usage. |

The writing strategies used by the subjects under study are presented and discussed in detail in accordance with the think-aloud and observation results. In addition, the

interview responses are used where relevant taking into consideration the advantage of them being taken immediately after the think-aloud sessions while the information in the subjects' minds was still fresh. Therefore, the main focus will be on the subjects' think-aloud protocols, interview responses, besides information gained through observations.

In this chapter and also in the next chapter (5), and for ease of reference, extracts from protocols are presented and subjects' interview responses are given as quotations to emphasise the students' writing strategies in relation to the writing task. Double underlined words mean that they were being written down as they were verbalised. Single underlined words indicate written text being read by the students, whether they are the assigned topic, key words or phrase in the topic, directions, or previously written text, for example the title, part of the essay, or the whole essay. The underlined and italicised words are the subjects' think-aloud voicing. The non-underlined, but italicised are the subject's silently written text. The quoted and italicised texts are the subjects' verbal responses to the interview questions. The italicised and parenthesised words are used for translations of L1 speech, while the words which are written in capital letters, and parenthesised, represent the researcher's remarks on the student's writing. Finally, the dotted lines represent redrafting of a text while producing the final draft. I will now explain the composing strategies used by the subjects starting with planning.

### 4.3.1.1 Planning

Planning can be described as a state where writers manage a process of thinking and deciding about the activities required to accomplish their task. This may include the method they will use in order to proceed and the way they will organise their thoughts. " Planning is a thinking process in which writers form a mental representation of the knowledge that they are going to use in their composition and of how they are going to go about the business of composing" (Manchón et al., 2007). As Raimes (1985:241) puts it "The mapping out of strategies for writing", and the attempts how to proceed, whether for what to write in the whole essay or what to put as the next sentence, were coded as planning. In other words, writers may involve in different kinds of planning. For instance, planning may include global planning – dealing with "ideational and/ or textual issues and is frequent in the pre-writing stage" (Manchón et al., 2007: 150),

local planning – dealing with what to write next ( El-Aswad, 2002), outlining- dealing with the ideas subjects put on a paper ( Chaaban, 2010), usually briefly but concisely; thinking, talking to others, and gathering information. Within research on composing processes, planning has had more results available than on any other composing subprocess. The research focuses on different aspects of planning including the elements of planning, the time spent, the types of planning which occurred before and during composing, and the differences between good and poor writers' planning activities (Humes, 1983:206). Moreover, researchers (e.g., Berkenkotter, 1981; Gould, 1980) suggest that planning needs more time on the part of the writer than any other subprocess (e.g., translating, reviewing, and revising) and that planning may consume as much as 65 percent (Gould, ibid) to 85 percent (Berkenkotter, ibid) of total composing time. These studies have high totals for the planning time because they have counted not just the time spent in planning during the pre-drafting phase, but also the time of planning as composing progresses (cf. Humes, 1983: 207).

The sub-categories of planning that the protocols revealed in this study are global planning, outlining and local planning. Outlining is different from global planning and local planning in that in outlining, subjects put their ideas on paper. It is a written form of planning.

The subjects were found to plan both before starting to write and while drafting. Before embarking to explain each sub-category of planning in detail, it might be worth noting that the use of planning as a strategy by those subjects is considered as one of the areas where variations were discovered between the two groups (i.e., good writers vs. poor writers) under study as well as within each group. The protocols showed some variations in the incidence of planning strategies between subjects. These variations will be explained in more details within each sub-category. The following quantitative tables illustrate these variations.

Table 4-7: Incidence of planning strategies used by the good writers

| Subjects | Global Planning | Outlining | Local planning |
|---|---|---|---|
| S 4 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| S 5 | 1 | 1 | 6 |
| S 6 | 5 | 1 | 18 |
| S 9 | 4 | 1 | 16 |
| S 10 | 1 | 0 | 10 |

Table 4-8: Incidence of planning strategies used by the poor writers

| Subjects | Global Planning | Outlining | Local Planning |
|---|---|---|---|
| S 1 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| S 2 | 2 | 0 | 6 |
| S 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 |
| S 7 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| S 8 | 0 | 0 | 7 |
| S 11 | 1 | 1 | 3 |

#### 4.3.1.1.1 Planning in the pre-drafting phase

As explained in sub-section 4.3.1.1 above, the planning behaviour of the subjects was by no means restricted to the pre-drafting phase, albeit this was a time for key planning decisions. Now I will discuss the sub-categories of planning i.e., global planning, outlining and local planning respectively, that the good writers and poor writers used.

#### 4.3.1.1.1.1 Global planning

Global planning is planning detailed, overall organisation of the composition (Sasaki, 2000). It includes decisions regarding the overall approach, organisation, or writing process. This kind of planning does not necessarily cover the whole essay in detail, but rather verbally states the main themes that will direct the essay; unlike outlining which

is only a written form of planning. However, in many cases, global planning was similar to outlining, in the sense that it could take the form of single words, phrases or complete sentences. The only difference between these two types of planning is that outlining is done in written form, while global planning is done orally.

The good writers made use of global planning to organise their essays. To show how global planning was used by subjects, I present some examples. S6 confirmed using this kind of planning by making her decision at the very beginning after she finished reading the topic aloud and before she started writing when she said: _First I need to decide what to write in the thesis statement. So I'll choose to write about all factors all together— student's home, the quality of teaching, the student himself_. Then she became more precise when she verbally planned her essay starting with what to say in the introduction and then what to cover later, as shown in the following example as an extract taken from her protocol: _First, I'll start with the introduction, talking about success in education in general. Then try to mention my three points as the thesis statement._

S6, in answering the semi-structured interview question 'Do you plan each paragraph and the whole essay?' said, "_Each paragraph. For example, I think about the thesis statement, choose different topics to write about then when I go on to explain the thesis statement I think about each one separately then move on to the next one._"

As for the other good writer, S4, the protocols revealed that he was engaged in global planning behaviour prior to starting writing, and the following example illustrates this function of planning:

> _The first thing is I shall plan myself first. The first point will be, did everyone succeed in their life? I should talk about it in general. The age of all students,_
>
> شن ثاني؟(_what else?_) _Do teachers help everyone? What shall I write? What shall I write? Are the teachers good enough, or is it just because we don't listen? How many points shall I write, 8 or 7?_
>
> انزيدوا ثلاثة ( _we shall add three more_).

S4, as we have seen in the excerpt above, tried to cover as many points as possible to talk about in his essay and he did so before he started writing as to create a general

frame of ideas. Moreover, in answering the same interview question 'Do you plan each paragraph and the whole essay?', he gave the following answer:

> *"Yes, I planned what I'm gonna write. Yes, I planned what I'm gonna say. How many paragraphs? And I should include a conclusion and an introduction. Yes certain paragraphs in fact. The first one is an introduction.  I planned what I'm gonna write about the parents and the students at home, and the second one I'm gonna write about the teachers and how the students behave at school."*

As Tables 4-7 and 4-8 indicate, there was a  difference between the amount and kind of planning done by the good writers in comparison to the poor writers both prior to and while drafting their essays. Hence, the use of global planning was not restricted to the group of good writers. The protocols contained evidence of both groups using this sub-category in their composing sessions.

When coding the planning behaviour of the poor writers at the pre-drafting phase the distinction was made between global and local planning. The global planning behaviour of the poor writers in the pre-drafting phase is discussed below.

For example, S11's planning was not restricted to her next moves only, but rather a series of steps trying to achieve her aim. The following extract shows that she globally planned her essay before she started writing.

> *First of all I will divide the essay into three paragraphs, three, three, three or four,*4 paragraphes , *because really I don't like the long essays*. *I don't know why, but I don't like. One is introduction, and the fourth is conclusion, the second will be example, example, example, explain, explain*, 2-explanation of the topic, topic. *The third will be two examples of both cases*, 3- an examples of both cases: *the student who encouraged by his family*, encou by family, *and the other who doesn't care about family*, doesn't care about family.

S3, another poor writer, also used global planning as a strategy before she started writing, but it was unlike her peer S11. That is, she did not use global planning, for example, to decide on the whole structure of her essay or to involve organisation of the essay, but she concerned herself with planning what to write in the first paragraph which she did not decide whether it was the introduction or not, without considering organisation and ideas and paragraphs in relation to each other. The following extract is presented for illustration:

نحن نتكلم عن التشايلد (child) أكثر حاجة،منذ الطفولة نبدوا فيها بإعتبارها المرحلة ألاولى

*(we need to talk about 'the child' most, we need to start talking about childhood, as it is the first stage)*(use of L1) (global planning)

Moreover, S1 used global planning. As soon as she finished reading aloud the assigned topic, she verbalised her intention to write down some notes for the first draft: *OK, I will write notes for the first draft*, and started immediately putting down some notes as can be illustrated in the following sub-section, outlining. She also used global planning before started writing when she decided what to include in her first paragraph: *First, I'll talk about the role of the family*, as can also be demonstrated in the next sub-section.

In sum, as suggested by the protocols and confirmed by the students' responses in the interview, global planning was used by both groups (good writers and poor writers) at the onset of the writing task. When subjects verbally organised their ideas within the paragraphs, decided on the overall structure of their essays, or only decided what to include in a certain paragraph that then was counted as a global planning; however, when those plans were written down instead of only being verbalised, then outlining was the sub-strategy.

**4.3.1.1.1.2 Outlining**

This sub-category refers to the organising of the ideas generated by the subjects into outline forms. It is simply the only written form of planning. However, not all subjects made outlines in their writing sessions, though the majority did as shown in Tables (4-7, 4-8) above. The think aloud protocols revealed that this strategy took place early during the pre-writing time after reading the assigned topic, and these outlines stated the main ideas the subjects wanted their essays to cover. The subjects exhibited different approaches in writing their outlines. For example, the good writer S9 did not show detailed outlines on his paper, but he precisely wrote down some sentences mainly in the form of a question. This subject started with reading the topic question aloud, and then decided to write it down before he started his actual writing. What he did after reading the topic aloud and writing it down was to divide the topic into two main points: *student and education at home*, and *students and education at school*. Then he wrote some sub-ideas in an interrogative mode representing a number of issues that need to have an answer by the writer. This is apparent in the

following extract taken from the think-aloud session at the onset of the composing process:

> *I am trying to, like split the essay into basically more, not as complex as this really, emmm, like students at home, how they study at home? And what they do at home, and how effective is that to students? And then talk about students at school or college or whatever they go to, and finally just summarise all of that*(global planning). *OK, let me write it down*(local planning): Student and education at home, emmm, *let me state the minor ideas* (local planning) :Who teaches them at home? How long do they study for? *What else*? (rehearsing and questioning) *Let's go to students at school* (local planning) Students and school. How effective is the teacher? Or how effective can the teacher be? How much influence do the students have on each other's' learning?*, what else* (rehearsing and questioning), emmm, ya, The material used by the teacher and whether, no, whether it's available to use, no (CROSSED OUT '*TO USE*') to be used at home. (outlining) *OK let me start*(local planning)

Writing these outlines by this subject (S9), took him about 2.30 minutes. Afterwards he began writing his first words in his essay which were a repetition of the topic's first words *Success in education.*

During the semi-structured interview session and when this subject was asked the question: Do you plan ahead each time you write?, he gave the following answer which was considered as contrary to what he had done in this particular session: "*No, no. My ideas just pop in, you know what I mean! They are just there all the time. As soon as I start writing, the flow starts going. Once I stop, I find it hard to start again, as the beginning bit is the hardest bit for me.*"

However, this subject realised the importance of planning before starting to write. When he was asked again if he thought that planning was important in writing and why he had planned in this particular task then, he commented on that by saying: "*professionals do it, so it must be useful.*" He also added "*the topic this time is a bit complicated and needed some sort of planning really, and I needed to divide the task into more simplified ideas.*"

In S4's point of view, writing should involve writing down outlines first. Interestingly, the outlines this subject made were in the forms of questions, e.g., *Did everyone succeed in their life? Do the teachers help everyone or just individuals? Are*

*teachers good enough or is it just because we don't listen? Are your parents strict? Do they make you revise all the time, or they don't care?* As he stated in the semi-structured interview, he used an outline to guide his writing. However, he disagreed with following the original outline firmly. To put it another way, he often adjusted his outlines in the process of writing. The following extract taken from the semi-structured interview with the subject clarified this as he was asked if he had stuck to the initial plans he had before he started writing: "*No, I don't. Because sometimes as I said, the ideas just come and at the time I was planning I don't have that idea.*"

Unlike his good writer peers (S4, S5, S6, and S9), S10's pre-writing activities did not include planning, spending only about 30 seconds before he started drafting. S10 is a good example of a writer who does not plan before he writes. He knew right away what he was going to say and just wrote it down. That is to say, S10 did not produce any written outlines for the topic.  He indicated that he had depended exclusively on mental planning. He reported that he planned and developed the content of his essay as he wrote. However, he also admitted that he sometimes had to use written planning.  S10 justified this behaviour as that outlining, for him, depended on the nature of the topic itself as evident in the following interview extract:

> "*For me, it is not necessary to plan in a written form, just in my mind. It depends on the topic actually. If the topic is scientific, or has to do with something related to theories or things like that, I should think about what I am gonna write and the way I am gonna write in. But when it is just about a daily routine or the habits I have, I just start writing immediately.*"

As for the poor writers, the majority did not apply outlining (see Table 4-8 above) before they started writing their essays. S2, S3, S7, and S8 who did not outline, explained during the interview that they did not need to outline because the ideas were present in their minds.

Yet, S1 started by reading aloud the topic question, paused for few seconds, and then started writing an outline in the form of an introduction to the ideas that she eventually chose to write about. This behaviour is illustrated in the following excerpt taken from her protocol:

> Success in education is influenced more by students' home-life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme. Discuss *OK, I will write notes for the first draft, emmm*
>
> I think that the family has a big influence on the child's education I think that the family has a big influence on the child's education and at the same time the educational programme and , *no no* and at the same time the way of teaching way of teaching and the environment of the school effected on the child.

As this subject finished writing the first line of her notes, she started encountering difficulty with writing and that was clear as she resorted to the strategy of re-reading the previously written text (as shown in the example above) in order to help her carry on with writing. That was also followed by the strategy of avoidance, as she avoided talking about the educational programme, and therefore she omitted the '*educational programme*' phrase in her note and replaced it by another one: '*the way of teaching',* which can be considered as a strategy of avoidance. This is followed by writing down an outline for each individual paragraph she intended to include in her essay, and gave them the following headings respectively: *the role of the family, the role of the school* and *the role of the environment*. In the following example, we will see how she made the outline for her first paragraph which talks about the role of the family:

> *First I'll talk about the role of the family*, *and we can say that*, ehhh, the role of the family, emmm, *we can say*1) provide the good environment, 2) guide the child be, *no* to be good student, 3) the family should be, *no* (OMITTED *be*)should give an example, should give an example to, *no* (OMITTED *to*)for for the importance of education

It took S1 (14) minutes before she could make a start with writing her first draft. In the post writing interview and when she was asked the question: Do you plan ahead each time you write? She answered with '*No*' and justified her decision in that outlining depended on the nature of the assigned topic: "*I usually make outlines if the topic is demanding and complicated, but just start writing normally if the topic is simple*". This strategy is referred to by Victori (1999) as a 'conditional strategy', i.e., as an option she might apply in case she had to, depending on how she perceived the assigned topic. In the interview again and when she was asked about the reason that made her produce this lengthy outline, she gave the following answer: "*I put a plan for the whole essay, and whatever comes to my mind I just write it down and added*

*more points to it. I usually put the important points at the beginning, then I arrange the paragraphs according to their importance. This usually takes me long time to finish.*"

On the other hand, the other poor writer S11 wrote her outlines as she was globally planning her essay. That is, as she was verbalising her thoughts on how to globally plan her essay, she was also copying down outlines indicating the number of paragraphs planned, the sequence of these paragraphs and what did they roughly entail. For ease of reference, I will repeat the same excerpt showed above as I discussed the strategy of global planning.

> *I will write an introduction first*. <u>1- intro</u>, *and first of all I will divide the essay into three paragraphs, three, three, three or four,*<u>4 paragraphes</u> , *because really I don't like the long essays. I don't know why, but I don't like. One is introduction, and the fourth is conclusion, the second will be example, example, example, explain, explain*, <u>2- explanation of the topic</u>, <u>topic</u>. *The third will be two examples of both cases*, <u>3- an examples of both cases:</u> *the student who encouraged by his family,* <u>encou by family,</u> *and the other who doesn't care about family,* <u>doesn't care about family</u>. *Here he will, the students who focus on teaching process* <u>teaching proce</u> (SHE WRITES THIS BENEATH THE NOTE: 'doesn't care about family), *and here* <u>he will not </u>( SHE WRITES THIS BENEATH THE NOTE: 'encou by family)

That is how S11's outline looks like, and she tried to draw lines where she could illustrate more about her plan. However, we can see that the outline she produced contained only one element coinciding with the topic question which is the learner's family or home life. She, for example, did not include anything in her outlines about the other elements, such as the quality of teaching or the effectiveness of the educational programmes that were also included in the topic question. This happened in spite of the fact that the participant read the topic question and the directions, and she also spent some time trying to explain about the topic to the present researcher. The consequence of this in fact led this subject to focus more in her writing on the family aspect and neglected the other issues which might also need equal attention in her writing. This was evident in the essay she produced.  In the post think-aloud interview, however, she answered positively the question: Do you plan ahead each time you write? "*The whole, the whole, but it depends on the topic. Sometimes I should plan each paragraph. If the topic is complex or is new for me, I should plan every paragraph alone.*"

**4.3.1.1.1.3 Local planning**

The second sub-category of planning is local planning. This strategy refers to the act of planning what to write next in terms of content, especially at the level of words, phrases or sentences. Most of the subjects adopted the local planning sub-strategy.

The good writers were found to plan both before beginning to write and during the actual writing process. According to the participants' answers obtained from the semi-structured interviews, all of them said that they paid much attention to planning, and they thought that a good plan could facilitate composing. The local planning that was revealed by the protocols included different areas of the subjects' essay. Some subjects adopted local planning in order to help them produce the introductory paragraph of their essay. This kind of planning can be shown in the following examples as extracts taken from protocols of S4, and S9 respectively: *Let me start with the first one* . *Let's go to students at school*.

Both of these local planning categories took place before those writers began writing, and they were mainly used to express what writers were planning to do next. S4 in the excerpt above, decided to start with the first idea in his outline, which was '*Did everyone succeed in their life?*' to begin his first paragraph. As for S9, the example above showed that he used local planning to indicate moving from one point to another while he was writing down his outlines prior to start writing.

Concerning the poor writers, we can see an example of the category of local planning in S11's protocols in the prewriting phase. She took care over the opening sentence of her introduction by planning to write a statement for it. The following extract highlights this example: *I'll choose a statement for the introduction*. Success or fail in education. This was the sentence this subject silently wrote as a start for her introduction: '*Success or fail in education is influenced by students' homelife.*'

In the next sub-section, however, we shall see how subjects made use of local planning during writing.

**4.3.1.1.2  Planning while writing**

**4.3.1.1.2.1  Local planning**

I intended to discuss local planning while writing first because it was more prevalent than global planning in terms of occurrences in this phase. Students used local planning to overcome difficulties they encountered while they are engaged in writing. In other words, they applied this strategy to plan what to write next. As can be shown in the examples below, local planning applied by the subjects as they moved from one phase to another, usually using the word 'now'. This word (now) usually indicates that the subjects moved from an already finished idea to planning and writing a new one. The following extracts taken from protocols by the good writers S6, S4, and S10, respectively, show examples of local planning applications.

- *So now I am going to move on to the body*(PLANNING TO START WRITING THE FIRST PARAGRAPH IN THE BODY) *and start writing about the student's home. I'll start with a topic sentence about student's home*;

- *OK, so that's the introduction. Ahhhh, parents? No. Let's talk about students and their home*;

-*Now a new paragraph*

In all of the three examples above, we have seen that those subjects made a decision about the step they need to take as soon as they finished writing the introduction in their essays. It can be noticed that the examples above explain the process of writing moving from one stage to another by mostly using the word 'now' as far as content is concerned.

The group of poor writers also used local planning as they were engaged in writing their essays. What differentiates this group from the group of good writers regarding local planning application (apart from S10) was the use of L1 while applying this sub-strategy. In other words, they all verbalised in Arabic instead of English when they planned what to write next. The extracts below are taken from protocols by S11, S7 and S2 respectively.

توا هنا(*now here) an example of both cases.* نبي كلمة نبدي بيها(*I need a word to start with*);

- توا لازم نبدأ نتكلم عن أهمية المدرسة) *(now I should start and talk about the importance of school)*;

- توا البارغراف الثاني)لازم نكتب على مزايا المنزل *I should (now, the second paragraph) write about the advantages of the home*).

### 4.3.1.1.2.2 Global planning

Apart from global planning used at the onset of the protocols when subjects planned the main ideas and general content of their essays and outlining the essay, global planning was also used by all of the good writers while writing their essays. S9, for example, used it in two cases in the writing process of his actual essay. He, for instance, used it at the stage of writing his conclusion as can be illustrated in the following excerpt taken from his protocol: *I think, I think that's everything. Let's put conclusion now really* (PLANNING TO END THE ESSAY). *I will give my final thoughts. I will explain how good teaching is really important, yeahh. And what if teaching is not successful, yeahh, OK* .

The excerpt above shows that when the writer finished writing his paragraphs within the body of his essay, and needed to write his conclusion, he did some global planning about what to include in the conclusion. Another example of global planning done by another good writer while writing his essay can also be shown as follows: *Finish this paragraph and start a new one. Let's talk about teachers this time and the school . The idea to be developed in this paragraph is about how teachers and schools are important in one's life*.

As S4 finished a paragraph in the body of his essay he voiced his plans to start a new one. In the example above, the writer used global planning to plan the main idea to be developed in the next paragraph. In fact, this example of global planning was followed by the strategy of rehearsing to develop ideas for his sentences.

Regarding the poor writers and whether they used global planning while writing, one case was observed in the protocol of S3 when she voiced her thought declaring that she had finished the first stage in her writing and now ready to move to the next:

تميت المرحلة الأولى وبعدين نبدى في دور التعليم والمدرسة) *I have finished the first stage, and after this I'll start with the role of education and school)*

This was in fact the only case of global planning used by the poor writers while writing, the other cases of planning took place during writing were all concerned with local planning.

To conclude, planning as a strategy was used by all subjects in this study. The most frequently used category was local planning representing 75.2% of the total number of occurrences of the strategy of planning (113). Next came the category of global planning representing 19.5%, and finally the category of outlining representing 5.3%. The good writers outnumbered the poor writers in using all categories of local planning, global planning, and outlining. Local planning occurrences performed by good writers accounted for 67% of the total occurrences (85); while the occurrences performed by the poor writers constituted 33%. As for the global planning, the good writers' use of this category constituted 59%, while it was 41% for the poor writers. There was also much variability between both groups in the use of the category of outlining, with good writers representing 66.6%, and poor writers representing 33.4% of the total number of occurrences (6).

In sum, the good writers made more use of planning strategies, and they began the process with apparent understanding of the task requirement. Some of the utterances illustrated this understanding, and the points they needed to develop: '*The first thing will be I should plan myself. The first point will be, did everyone succeed in their life?*' (S4); '*Success in education, that's the main point you know*.' (S10); '*First I need to decide what to write in the thesis statement. So I'll choose to write about all the factors all together— student's home, the quality of teaching, the student himself*' (S6). While engaged in the composing process, however, the good writers' think-aloud protocols demonstrated a recursive understanding of composing and dealing with writing as a problem-solving activity. They, for example, showed planning activities that supported this position: '*Let's see what we have written*' (S4); '*I need to see the topic again and look around to find an idea*' (S9); '*I think I need to change the beginning*' (S6). The poor writers' planning, on the other hand, was mainly matching with what to say next. The think-aloud protocols showed limited use of planning strategies, and they did not execute strategies that enabled them to develop goals or generate ideas. Only two of them, which accounted for 33.4% of the whole group, used the category of outlining, and we have seen that S11's outlines were

incomplete as they did not reflect all main elements of the topic. S1 was the only poor writer that had a clear understanding of how to organise her essay as evidenced in the outlines she produced at the onset of the protocol.

### 4.3.1.2   Rehearsing

The strategy of rehearsing is used to find a focus, find a new idea or clarify an old one, try out a new idea or to elaborate on a new one. This strategy was reported by many subjects in other research (e.g., Perl, 1979; Zamel, 1983;  Sasaki, 2000, and El-Aswad, 2002). The strategy of rehearsing was used frequently by subjects in this investigation to produce an idea, or to complete another, particularly when some words of a sentence had already been written, or to develop other ideas that occurred when students were engaged in the writing process. Therefore, in the present study, rehearsing by subjects usually leads to writing (Perl, 1979).  However, in other cases when rehearsing, writers are often exploring different ideas or trying to establish their stance on an issue and therefore are not necessarily committed to using all of what they are saying. The analysis of the protocols showed that rehearsing leading to writing was frequently used by subjects on their writing task to complete an idea. The following tables show the occurrences of the rehearsing strategies used by the subjects in the current study:

Table 4-9: Use of rehearsing strategies by the good writers

| *Subject* | **S4** | **S5** | **S6** | **S9** | **S10** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Occurrences of rehearsing* | 43 | 6 | 16 | 33 | 20 |

Table 4-10: Use of rehearsing strategies by the poor writers

| *Subject* | **S1** | **S2** | **S3** | **S7** | **S8** | **S11** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Occurrences of rehearsing* | 6 | 15 | 9 | 9 | 10 | 6 |

For the good writers, some cases of rehearsal took place before students started their actual writing; however, students frequently continued with this strategy while writing as well, as a means of completing an idea particularly when some words of a sentence had been written down. S4, for example, began a sentence with: " Some people don't like to study ..." and then rehearsed many possible endings for his

sentence considering having other opportunities such as getting jobs instead because they are uneducated [sic], until he finally repeated the first part of his sentence that he had already written and then wrote what seemed to be the completion of his sentence: "Some people don't like to study yet they get big jobs such as working in big factories". Afterwards, he tried to develop this point with some of the ideas that had emerged in his previous rehearsing (the relationship between being uneducated and seeking jobs) and produced another sentence that served as a progression to the previous one. S4 was the subject who used rehearsing most in the whole group (see Table 4-9 above).

On another occasion, S4 again used the strategy of rehearsing in order to complete an idea he had started by orally responding to what he had written in a way that led him to continue writing and complete the sentence he intended to produce. The following excerpt illustrates this strategy: Young people don't like studying, *it's not because they are lazy*, young people don't like studying because they would rather play and do something better than revising

On the other hand, others voiced their ideas in L1 (rehearsing in Arabic) (see sub-section 4.3.1.7), then they wrote down what they had rehearsed in English. An example of this was carried out by S10:

> *this means* (يعني أي حاجة يتعلمها وهو صغير.... العلم في الصغر كالنقش على الحجر *anything he learns as a child...learn young learn fare*), home in childhood, the environment in his / her home in childhood, *errrr*, because anything he learns, anything he learns in, in his, anything he learn كتبناها امرة *childhood*(*childhood.. we wrote it before*)anything he learnwhile he is a child , while he is a child, would
>
> ود والا ويل هنا(*shall we use will or would here?*)would go with him in his mind until, until, *double LL!!?*until he finishes his education.

S10 rehearsed a great deal. Interestingly, what distinguished this subject from his peers was that most of what he rehearsed was done in his L1 (Arabic). In the case above, his rehearsal in Arabic was followed by repeating chunks of what he had written, then writing down something '*anything he learns*', which was a kind of translation to a part of what he had rehearsed in Arabic 'أي حاجة يتعلمها'.

S9, a good writer, also rehearsed quite often and his rehearsals were mainly in a questioning tone. Rehearsing by S9 was usually followed by other strategies such as re-reading or planning and in most cases rehearsing led to writing. S9's use of rehearsing represented the second highest number of occurrences in the group (see Table 4-9).

Tables 4-9 and 4-10 above show that, for both groups, students frequently rehearsed for the aforementioned purposes. The group of the poor writers were also concerned with this type of strategy as Table 4-10 above can tell. The main purpose for using this strategy was for the subjects to find ways to start a new sentence, or a new paragraph, or maybe to try possible endings for a sentence the writer had already started. S7, for example, rehearsed many possible starts for a sentence before he could finally write it down as a whole. The following excerpt taken from his think-aloud protocol shows this example of rehearsal.

> *if the person don't revise at home, no…, if the child don't, ehhhh, if people, if the child, if the child don't revise, if the child don't, don't, the children have to, have to, not the children have to, the children, the children, the child don't like to, the child, ehhhh, I don't know, no idea* , *if the child don't revise at home, they would not remember, yeahhh, if the child don't go through their work at home, they won't be, than they won't be able to remind anything in the exams. OK. So*, <u>if the child don't</u> (THE SUBJECT CROSSED OUT THE WORD 'CHILD' HERE AND WROTE 'CHILDREN' INSTEAD), <u>children</u>, <u>if the children don't go through their school work at home</u>, <u>at home</u>, *comma* (SUBJECT VERBALISED THE WORD 'COMMA' AND THEN WROTE IT DOWN), <u>than they</u>, <u>they would not remember</u>, <u>remember</u>, <u>anything in the exams</u>, <u>the exams</u>.

We have seen in the example above how S7 rehearsed in order to begin a sentence. It took him a while, but the rehearsal of a particular idea did eventually lead him to write his sentence. This type of rehearsal is prevalent among the poor writers in this study. S2, for example, took some time rehearsing before writing her first sentence in the essay, and the same also happened with S3. For instance, the rehearsal S2 did at the beginning was in the L1 (Arabic), and afterwards she translated her idea and put it down in English. What she did can be illustrated in the following extract taken from her think-aloud protocol.

أني بنقول أن جميع الأماكن في المجتمع تؤثر في التعلم و لكن كيف نجيبوها هذه؟

الأماكن في المجتمع

(*I want to say that every place in society has an influence on education, but how can we say this in English?*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), (*places in the society*) (use of L1)(rehearsing)*every place in society, in the society has influence on education, on education, on the success in education.* اوكي خليني انبدي (*Ok, let me start*) (use of L1) (local planning) , Every place, every place(repetition) in the society has influence on the success in education, success in education (repetition).

بعتالي أهم مكانين هما البيت و المدرسة

(*then the most two important places are the home and the school*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), *the most, maybe the most important place, places is the home and schools* (rehearsing). Ahha, Maybe the most important places is the home and schools.

As shown above, S2 rehearsed phrases in her L1 and then translated them into English, then repeated them again as she wrote them. As she explained in her interview, hearing the words before she put them down on paper helped her check them for grammar and logic.

S1, after she finished writing down her outline and reading the topic question aloud once, started rehearsing for her first paragraph which was, as she planned in her outline, about the role of the family in child's education. The following excerpt exemplifies this:

*I can talk about the role of the family... how family affect on the child's at home, the child's success at home... first we can say that the family has a big influence on the child's education and at the same time through their teacher..., ammm, OK.* The family has a big influence on the child's success in the school. So the family should provide good environment, that the child can study in.

S1 rehearsed in order to re-emphasise the idea she already had in her mind after she had included it in her outline, and also tried to produce ideas of what to include in the paragraph and to find a way to start her first sentence. Thus, this strategy seems to serve different purposes for the subjects under study, i.e., it helped to produce ideas of what to include in a paragraph such as the one we have seen above in S1's case, and

in developing and completing inchoate ideas that occurred as they continue to write as in S4's first example above (cf., Raimes, 1987:455).

On the other hand, S11, spent more than two minutes rehearsing before she started writing anything about the topic. Part of what she rehearsed can be presented below as an example:

> *Ahhh, I say it's parallel. They have the same effect. Sometimes I say the home is inside and the school is outside…. Don't make the home interfere anymore. I mean the social problems in the family and at home, leave them at home and try to do your best at school or at the university, I mean when it has an effect on the students* [sic].

What this subject did was a kind of explanation for the topic in a way to make herself prepared for this kind of tasks. In this way she tried to generate ideas on the topic and even to train herself on the kind of vocabulary that she might need to use later in writing the essay. She used this verbal rehearsal much more frequently than others in her group. Moreover, when she was asked in the interview if she used this kind of verbal rehearsal in her writing in general, she replied:

> "*I use it in my writing, especially if I have another one, another colleague or another student with me. We try to explain for each other the topic, and sometimes I use this strategy when I imagine even my little brother or little sister they are one of my colleagues and try to explain to them the topic even if they don't understand anything, but the physical appearance in front of me help me to explain.*"

This social aspect of composing presented by S11 reflected the understanding of writing as a problem-solving activity.

To conclude, rehearsing was used by all subjects regardless of their writing proficiency, but subjects varied in the frequency of use. The good writers used more rehearsing occurrences than their poorer counterparts. The good writers' rehearsing occurrences accounted for 68% of the strategy's total occurrences, whereas the poor writers represented 32%.

### 4.3.1.3  Scanning

Scanning is another strategy that was frequently employed by the participants in this study. They read back words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or even the whole text.

They also read the assigned topic, and in other occasions they read the outlines, or part of them that they had made before they started writing, or the directions given to them as they received the assigned topic. A similar term is categorised by Raimes (1987) as 'rescanning', by Victori (1997) as 'repeating' and by El Mortaji (2001) and Chaaban (2010) as 'reading'. Therefore, in the current study scanning comprises five sub-categories, namely: reading the assigned topic, repeating words or phrases (repetition), reading part or whole of their writing (reading larger units of discourse), reading part or whole of the outline, and reading part or whole of the directions. In order to avoid confusion, there is an attempt to distinguish between repeating and reading, with the former referring to repeating words and short phrases, while the latter used to refer to reading a whole sentence, sentences, a paragraph or paragraphs. Reading back what those subjects have written seems to have supported them to move on with their writing and extend their ideas. However, the amount of the unit read, the frequency and distribution of the activities and the underlying reason for scanning varied between writers.

The analysis of the protocols showed that scanning was the most frequent category that the subjects used in their writing task to complete an idea, particularly when a few words of a sentence had been written down. The following tables show the occurrences of the scanning strategies used by the subjects in the current study:

Table 4-11: Use of scanning strategies by the good writers

| Subject | Total Scanning Strategy Use | Reading the Assigned Topic | Repeating Words or Phrases | Reading Part or Whole of their Writing | Reading Part or Whole of the Outline | Reading Part or Whole of the Directions |
|---------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| S 4 | 125 | 2 | 99 | 22 | 1 | 1 |
| S 5 | 105 | 2 | 86 | 14 | 2 | 1 |
| S 6 | 159 | 3 | 110 | 38 | 8 | 0 |
| S 9 | 149 | 3 | 127 | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| S 10 | 113 | 7 | 88 | 15 | 0 | 3 |

Table 4-12: Use of scanning strategies by the poor writers

| Subject | Total Scanning Strategy Use | Reading the Assigned Topic | Repeating Words or Phrases | Reading Part or Whole of their Writing | Reading Part or Whole of the Outline | Reading Part or Whole of the Directions |
|---------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| S 1 | 63 | 3 | 45 | 10 | 3 | 2 |
| S 2 | 36 | 2 | 30 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| S 3 | 59 | 2 | 55 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| S 7 | 44 | 2 | 32 | 9 | 0 | 1 |
| S 8 | 33 | 3 | 23 | 4 | 0 | 3 |
| S 11 | 139 | 2 | 120 | 11 | 3 | 3 |

As the Tables (4-11 and 4-12) above can show, scanning seems an important part of the composing process of the subjects, both good and poor. It is clear that it is among the strategies that are most frequently used by both groups.

The good writers in this study did a great deal of re-reading of whole paragraphs, sentences or parts of sentences (repeating) they had already produced. However, some of them, for example, S6 and S9 did that more often. Reading back a group of paragraphs, a paragraph, a group of sentences, a sentence or sometimes a part of a sentence is a strategy that is often followed by certain other activities on the part of these subjects. This was, particularly, clearly noticed with the help of think-aloud protocols, subjects' written documents and observations while subjects were writing. More planning, rehearsing, writing, revising or even re-reading once more were typical strategies those subjects employed as a response to reading back what had been written by them. In some cases, the strategy of scanning, therefore, served as a thrust that helped students move forward with developing their next ideas, and also, in some other cases, to see whether what had been written so far satisfied the writer's purpose. Here are some examples of different functions of scanning employed by those subjects.

As mentioned above, one purpose for scanning was for subjects to be able to produce more text whenever they faced a problem in doing this. The following example illustrates this function of scanning done by S9:

Parents are parents are(repetition) responsible for their child's child's(repetition) child's (repetition) *work* (rehearsing) ~~wo~~(revision for deletion)*no* child's ~~study and~~ *no* (revision for deletion) child's (repetition)child's (repetition), parents are responsible for their child's(repetition), child's(repetition) *education* (rehearsing) yeahh education (revision for substitution), education(repetition) emmm *what comes next?* (rehearsing and questioning) parents are responsible for their child's education (reading a large unit of discourse) parents are responsible for their child's education (reading a large unit of discourse) and no education(repetition) and they must *be* must(repetition) work with them to result (rehearsing) ~~res~~ (revision for deletion) to(repetition) *get* (rehearsing), *no* to(repetition) *produce* (rehearsing) to produce to produce(repetition) emmm to produce (repetition) success in their lives,

In the extract above, S9 was trying to produce a sentence, yet he seemed to be unable to continue because he could not think of a suitable word to complete the meaning he intended; therefore, he repeated a part of his sentence, and considered different word choices. The choices he was considering led to more scanning, this time of the whole of the incomplete clause, after which he became able to retrieve a word which seemed to be satisfactory 'education' and then he continued and completed the sentence. It appeared that S9 had no difficulty in retrieving words needed to complete the meaning. What we have seen in this extract is what Zamel (1983) calls a backward movement that triggers forward movement. The act of going back to what have already been produced appears to be encouraging more meaning construction.

During the composing process, S9 employed all of the subcategories of scanning, and in order to develop his ideas he constantly re-read the text in progress. In fact 17 out of 149 total scanning units involved the subcategory of re-reading part or whole of his writing (i.e., reading a large unit of discourse), and 127 times represented the subcategory of repeating words or phrases (i.e., repeating of a discourse which is shorter than a sentence) (see Table 4-11 above).

As an example of a case of reading back a large unit of discourse that led to revising, S9 stopped writing at a certain point, precisely as he finished writing his second paragraph, and started reading back what he had already written from the beginning. This process led to the deletion of a whole sentence in the second paragraph when

the subject seemed unsatisfied with it indicating that that sentence needed to be taken out because it did not fit in there. This highlighted the understanding of composing as a recursive process on part of this subject.

Similar to the other good writers, S10 used the subcategory of scanning, i.e., repeating words or phrases (88 times), and the subcategory of *reading part or whole of their writing*15 times. Repeating provided a springboard for successive ideas and allowed him to reflect on his writing. Usually after repeating, he would begin by saying, *OK now* signifying that the sub strategy of repeating provided him with new ideas. He would also guide his reading of the text by saying, *let me go through this to help get some ideas*. However, when S10 was unable to generate ideas, he resorted to the information given in the directions to help in the conceptual development (3 times), *this is given by the teacher so it must be good, let's see* (S10), a behaviour that reflected S10's understanding of composing as a problem-solving activity, and also as a recursive process.

As for reading the assigned topic, subjects often read it before they started to write anything in their essays. However, in many other cases they returned back to the assigned topic and read it through again after they had already started writing. This sub-strategy of scanning took place when subjects were having difficulties putting their ideas down on paper, or when they wanted to familiarise themselves once again. Some subjects followed certain strategies when reading the assigned topic. For example, and to analyse the task requirements, some underlined some key words (S5 and S9), or paraphrased the question to abbreviate and simplify it in order to become closer to its meaning (S6 and S9).

As for repeating words and phrases, in some cases, some subjects read a single word or phrase repeatedly, reading it several times as they felt that they were losing the train of thought when they started to write. Therefore, they adopted the strategy of repeating in order to keep the thread of an idea in their minds, as in the example below taken from S4's protocol:

> Some people, some people (repetition), some people (repetition) *like to educate*(rehearsing), *no*, some people (repetition)*be able to*(rehearsing), some people(repetition) *be able to to study*(rehearsing), some people(repetition), some people(repetition), some people

> (repetition)*don't    like    studying*    (rehearsing)    <u>some people</u>(repetition)<u>don't like, like </u>(repetition)<u> to, some people don't like to</u>(repetition<u>) study,</u>

As for reading part or the whole of their writing (reading larger units of discourse) it was at this level in particular that differences in the scanning behaviour of the good and poor writers seemed to exist. Good writers read their texts frequently and make local and global re-reading of their drafts with the purpose of generating more text, or for other purposes usually related to extensive and complex revisions (Cabrejas, 2008b) (refer Tables 4-11, 4-12).

Reading between paragraphs, was when the good writers did most of this sub-strategy and read the largest units of discourse. Reading on a completion of a paragraph by the good writers seemed to serve two purposes, firstly to verify if the paragraph was coherent, and secondly to see how successfully it expressed the ideas of the writer.

The poor writers, on the other hand, used the strategy of scanning quite frequently and for different reasons, but not as frequent as the good writers (see Tables 4-11 and 4-12 above). The poor writers used re-reading at various levels (i.e., reading the topic, over the directions, over the outline (S1 and S11), and over the text in progress). However, their reading was mainly limited to the words, phrases and sentences level.

But this process of repeating was not always there for these writers to retrieve the right word or phrase needed to complete the meaning they intended, a case that might be related to their language level and the insufficient vocabulary to do so. In the following excerpt taken from S11, for example, we could notice that she was struggling to complete a sentence she had started. She repeated several previous parts that she had written, but she had to stop at a certain point because she could not carry on. She crossed out the last word she added and needed to re-read the directions from which she picked up a word '*result*' and used it, and only then she was able to go on and complete the sentence. This excerpt is for illustration:

> <u>in other side teaching process affects</u>(repetition)<u> on the student, in other side</u>(repetition)<u>, in other side teaching process affects on the student</u>(repetition)<u>and how, and how</u>(repetition)<u>, and how</u> شني هاو ؟
> ('*how?' what*)(use of L1) (SUBJECT CROSSES OUT 'HOW')

> (revision for deletion), <u>in other side teaching process affacts on the student(repetition), affacts on the student(repetition), or maybe their success is a result of the efforts teachers put and the efficiency of the educational programmes</u> (SUBJECT READ PART OF THE DIRECTIONS)(reading the directions), <u>and(repetition)his results results (repetition), in other side teaching process affacts on the student and his results(repetition), in other side teaching process affacts on the student and his results(repetition), as well as well(repetition)</u>as the home life does.

The difficulty in carrying on after using the strategy of repeating was also noticed again with the other poor writer, S2. She started a new paragraph to talk about the advantages of the home in education. She began her sentence, repeated the last part of the phrase she started with, added some more words afterwards, repeated the whole part she had produced, but then she could not go any further. From what she said (in L1) as she could not carry on, it was clear that she was looking for a specific word '*incentive*', but she could not use it because it was not available to her at the time. Unlike her peer S11, S2 did not resort to any materials or read the directions in order to help her continue, and instead she decided to cross out the whole part she wrote and started a new sentence. It was clear that she was not able to control the process adequately through the effective use of strategies such as to write down the word in L1 for a temporary reason, or to check a dictionary. The following excerpt is to illustrate this:

> <u>The influence of the home</u>, <u>the home</u>(repetition) <u>sometimes give the student</u> , <u>the influence of the home sometimes give the student</u>(repetition)تأثير المنزل يمكن ان يكون تحفيز (*the influence of the home can be a motivation*)(use of L1) (rehearsing) ما تجيش (*It can't be like that*)(use of L1) ~~the influence of the home sometimes give the student~~(SUBJECT CROSSED OUT 'THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOME SOMETIMES GIVE THE STUDENT')(revision for deletion)

Lack of enough vocabulary in L2 that might assist her to continue the idea she had already started seemed a problem for her. Therefore, she felt confined with the limited vocabulary she had and consequently her next decision was not always appropriate.

To sum up, the good writers used this strategy more often and more effectively. Their use accounted for 63.5 % of the total use of this strategy in both groups, while the poor writers' use represented 36.5%. Also the good writers read back more

frequently over larger chunks of discourse than the poorer writers (representing 73% of the total number of occurrences) and as a consequence , they were in a position to monitor and evaluate previously written texts and made the necessary revising and editing, or just carried on writing. The poor writers, on the other hand, used the strategy of scanning frequently yet mainly repetition of single words or phrases (see Table 4-12 above) and sometimes their poor knowledge of other effective strategies and also their poor lexicon would prevent them from continuing with writing and completing the meaning intended.

#### 4.3.1.4 Avoidance and postponement

In analysing the subjects' protocols as well as their interviews, the data revealed certain behaviour when the subjects tried to escape dealing with a specific problem they encountered as they were engaged in producing their essays. The writers usually returned back and tried to solve these issues (postponement), but sometimes they just avoid dealing with that encountered problem completely (avoidance). The latter behaviour was categorised as a strategy of avoidance and similar behaviours were also identified by Leki (1995), Maamouri (2001), and Chaaban (2010). The following table shows the frequency of occurrence for these strategies for both groups during the writing session.

Table 4-13: Avoidance and postponement strategy occurrences for both groups

| Group | Good Writers | | | | | Poor Writers | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Subjects | S4 | S5 | S6 | S9 | S10 | S1 | S2 | S3 | S7 | S8 | S11 |
| Avoidance strategy use | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Postponement strategy use | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

As illustrated in the table above, neither avoidance nor postponement strategies were used by the good writers while composing except for S6 who used the strategy of postponement once. S6 intended to postpone writing her thesis statement till she finished writing and started with the introduction talking about education in general:

*I think I'll leave the thesis statement until the end of writing , because it's better, because I know what I've written so I can summarise it  in few words and have a good topic*. When asked in the interview about the reason behind this decision, she replied: "*The more I write the better thesis statement I could have. Also this is what we learnt in our course of writing. The thesis statement is the main idea of an essay and it is usually expressed at the end of the introduction. So I'll leave it till the end of the introductory paragraph.*" This verbalisation supported S6's understanding that writing is a recursive activity. She did not adopt a linear view in her composing process and did not have to write her introduction with a thesis right away to compose her essay. She also believed that this was an effective strategy of writing because it was related to previous instruction and for this reason she applied it.

On the other hand, different cases (mainly strategies of postponements) were performed by most of the poor writers, but for different purposes from S6's, as can be seen in the examples below.

While she was producing her second draft, S2 came across the word *excellent* which she realised that it had a spelling mistake. She tried at the beginning to solve the problem immediately by repeating the word in an attempt to recall the right spelling for it, but when she knew that was not possible she expressed her intention to leave it aside for the moment so that she would come back to it later and sorted it out. The following excerpt taken from S2's protocol can illustrate this case of postponement:

> Ofcourse the home is playing (editing for form or tense verb)the main role to make their children success, but sometimes there's circumstance to prevent them to get for example the exllane
>
> إكسلن إكسلن خليها توا نوليلها بعدين و خلاص) (*excellent, excellent, I'll just leave it now and I'll come back to it later*) (use of L1) (postponement) (planning  editing for spelling) score

However, data from thinking-aloud**,** as well as through observing this subject till she submitted her essay revealed that she did not return back to solve this problem of spelling as she planned earlier which might give an indication of  poor language competence or a lack of commitment on part of this subject.

Also S2's behaviour, as illustrated in the following excerpt, can be regarded as an avoidance strategy. She started with a sentence in a new paragraph, but because it

was not possible for her to find the right syntax for it; therefore, she decided to cancel the whole incomplete sentence to avoid using erroneous syntax or maybe not wanting to use the dictionary to look for a proper word or expression that could go in there.

> The influence of the home, the home(repetition) sometimes give the student , the influence of the home sometimes give the student(repetition) تأثير المنزل يمكن ان يكون تحفيز (*the influence of the home can be a motivation*)(use of L1) (rehearsing) ما تجيش (*It can't be like that*)(use of L1) ~~the influence of the home sometimes give the student~~(SUBJECT CROSSED OUT 'THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOME SOMETIMES GIVE THE STUDENT')(revision for deletion)

Another strategy of postponement was noticed as used by S8 (a poor writer) who seemed to be uncertain about the spelling of the word *until* and whether he should write it with double '*l*'. So instead of dealing with this uncertainty immediately; he delayed it to a later stage and resumed writing: *Emmm, is it with double 'l', do I need to add 'l' to until. I think it's with one 'l', OK I will check that later.*

Another poor writer (S11) also used the strategy of postponement to postpone dealing with an issue related to word choice. While writing a sentence she realised that she had used the word *bad* which she had already used in a previous sentence, and she saw that she needed to change it because it was unsuitable in that particular position, as she thought. Therefore, instead of changing it immediately, she decided to put it between brackets so that she might come back to it later and replace it. The following extract is to illustrate this case of postponement:

> If we have a student, student (repetition), if we have a student (repetition), a student (repetition) of a bad, a bad, a bad, a bad a bad(repetition) *home environment* (rehearsing) home environment, and this student, student(repetition)faces many cirrcumectances CIRRCUMECTANCES faces many bad cirrcumectances (repetition) أباد هنا قديش منها باد (*I've used 'bad' already*) (use of L1) خليها بين قوسين (*it sounds unsuitable ' a bad' here*) (use of L1), متجيش (*let's put it between brackets*) (use of L1) (planning to revise for word choice)

The reason why S11 did not deal with this matter of word choice immediately and tried to change the word *bad* on the spot, could be because she did not want to interrupt her train of thought at the time and postponed dealing with the issue until

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later when she did her revising and wrote her second draft. S11, indeed, she changed the word *bad* that she put between brackets into the word *difficult* as she produced her second draft; therefore, instead of writing *bad circumstances*, she said and wrote *difficult circumstance*.

In sum, the strategy of postponement was mainly used by the poor writers. When it became hard for them to control the composing demands all at a time, they, therefore, might minimize these demands by postponing an issue till later time in the composing process. Writing has always been seen by many researchers as a demanding and complex process that needs continuous control and manipulation of various sub-processes. Flower and Hayes (1981:31), for instance, view the process of writing as "an act of juggling a number of simultaneous constraints." Also Stevenson, et al., (2006:203) argue that writing involves "cognitive cost". They also add, "as text production requires the use of working memory, and this working memory is of limited capacity, increased cognitive effort devoted to one component is said to lead to a decrease in the remaining resources available for other components." From these arguments, it can be inferred that the postponement strategies applied by the poor subjects were because they were devoting a considerable part of their memory resources to a certain process that they believed should take priority at that certain stage of composing. As they finished from that stage, they then were able to handle those issues that were postponed earlier.

### 4.3.1.5 Questioning

Questioning as a strategy refers to the questions asked by the subjects as a means of clarifying ideas, or evaluating what had been written to direct the composing process. They asked themselves various questions regarding ideas, grammatical structures, word choice, punctuations, organisation, and content coherence (see Tables 4-14 and 4-15 below). They often tried to give answers to the questions they raised in a way as if they were engaged in a sort of internal dialogue. Analysis of the data derived from the think-aloud protocols, semi-structured interviews and the observations revealed that not all the subjects used all of the sub- categories of the strategy of questioning that mentioned above. The eleven subjects asked themselves a total of 85 questions. The majority , 27.5 % of the questions were for checking word choice; 21.25% for checking ideas; 18.75% for checking organisation; 15% for checking

grammatical structures; 10% for checking coherence, and 7.5% for checking punctuation.

These subjects asked different questions before they started writing, while they were writing their essays, and while revising. To see how subjects used this strategy some examples will be presented.

S4 (a good writer), for example, used questioning in both stages: before he started writing and also while writing. Thus, the outlines he produced prior to writing were presented in the forms of questions. He, for instance, asked himself (*Which one shall I start with?*) (*What shall I write here?*).

S3 (a poor writer) asked a question, in Arabic, at the onset of her protocol to clarify about the wording of the assigned topic: (*what does it mean 'than by' here? Does it mean 'more than'?*). Again afterwards, she used the same strategy and asked another question on the topic, in Arabic: (*so the assigned topic here is like a question?*), which indicated that this subject was facing some difficulties in understanding the topic as a whole and therefore resorted to this strategy.

We could see that there is a difference here between these two writers in terms of how they used this strategy. For S4, for example, questioning was related to planning in order to help him recall what and how he was going to write. For S3, however, questioning was more related to the understanding and comprehension of the topic assigned which could be a sign of a lack of linguistic competence on the part of this subject.

Table 4-14: Use of questioning strategies by the good writers

| Subject | Total Questioning Strategy Use | Checking Ideas | Checking Word Choice | Checking Grammatical Structures | Checking Punctuation | Checking Organisation | Checking Coherence | Checking spelling |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| S 4 | 15 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 7 | 1 | |
| S 5 | 16 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| S 6 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| S 9 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| S 10 | 13 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | |

Table 4-15: Use of questioning strategies by the poor writers

| Subject | Total Questioning Strategy Use | Checking Ideas | Checking Word Choice | Checking Grammatical Structures | Checking Punctuation | Checking Organisation | Checking Coherence | Checking spelling |
|---------|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| S 1 | 14 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 4 | |
| S 2 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| S 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | |
| S 7 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | |
| S 8 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | |
| S11 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

## 4.3.1.6  Revision

Revision as a strategy in this research includes two sub-strategies, namely: revising and editing. Revising refers to the changes made by writers on the content level. It involves the writer clarifying his/her argument, adding things that are needed, and/ or taking out things that do not belong. In other words, it may involve thinking the text through again. Editing, on the other hand, refers to the changes made by the writers on the surface level such as correcting spelling errors, adding and changing punctuation, or changing wording. To put it another way, editing as contrary to revising does not lead to any changes to the message that the writer wishes to convey through their texts.

While analysing the subjects' think-aloud protocols and their essays, it was revealed that subjects did use these two sub categories of revising and editing, and because they were used in various ways, I needed to describe them in detail. For this reason, Raimes' (1987) sub-classification of the two sub categories was adopted as they were thoroughly explained by her. According to Raimes (ibid), editing accounts for changes in the areas of addition, deletion, grammar, spelling, punctuation, verb form or tense as well as word form, while revising accounts for other changes such as addition, deletion, substitution, and word choice.  It is worth mentioning here that the

addition or deletion related to the sub category 'editing' are mainly concerned with adding or deleting of syntactic markers such as plural endings and articles. In other words, features that still do not affect or change the meaning.

In the current study, the protocols also revealed that there were two kinds of revision: revisions that took place as soon as the writer completed drafting, i.e., revisions during the post-drafting phase. The other kind, however, were revisions which usually made while performing the strategy of scanning. The analysis revealed that subjects in both groups (good and poor writers) used revising while composing and also after finishing their essays (except for S9); however, the application of this strategy was influenced by their proficiency level. Revisions done by the good writers mostly took place during the time of re-reading what had previously been written. Revising and editing will be discussed respectively in the following sub-sections.

### 4.3.1.6.1  Revising

Tables 4-16 and 4-17 contain a break-down of the types of revising made. Most of the revising actions occurred as the essay was being created.

Table 4-16:  Revising strategy occurrences for the good writers

| Subject | Total revising strategy use | Addition | Deletion | Substitution | Word choice |
|---------|------------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| **S4** | 11 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| **S5** | 12 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| **S6** | 18 | 3 | 5 | 10 | 0 |
| **S9** | 23 | 2 | 16 | 5 | 0 |
| **S10** | 12 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 |

Table 4-17: Revising strategy occurrences for the poor writers

| Subject | Total revising strategy use | Addition | Deletion | Substitution | Word choice |
|---------|------------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|-------------|
| S1 | 20 | 7 | 10 | 3 | 0 |
| S2 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| S3 | 17 | 13 | 0 | 4 | 0 |
| S7 | 11 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| S8 | 11 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 |
| S11 | 21 | 2 | 13 | 4 | 2 |

Moreover, the tables above indicate that the frequency of revising is linked to the writing proficiency level of the subjects. This is in keeping with studies such as Zamel (1983), Porte (1996), and Hayes (1996). In the current investigation, good writers appeared to be more able to identify global problems with their essays and accordingly revise them. Nevertheless, it might be worth mentioning that none of the subjects of this group revised the ideas generated or the plans they made for their essays. All subjects adhered to their original plans. That is, the subjects of this group did not think about changes to the main theme and ideas. But they thought about changes in the details they used in developing their main themes.

In the following extract, S4 applies revising. After reading what he had already written before submitting his draft in its final shape, he applied revising for addition when he decided to add, *when they teach* to his sentence: It happens because they don't revise at home or not listening to the teachers *when they teach.*

On the other hand, it was true that S9 did not produce a second draft or proof-read his essay as he finished writing it; however, the analysis showed that this subject revised his text while he was producing it. He revised many times, and the total number of times he revised was 23 as we can see in Table 4-16, above. Some of the revising done by S9 can be explained as examples. One of the major instances of revising this subject did, had to do with the organisation of the whole essay. After writing a whole paragraph within the body of his essay, he stopped and began reading the assigned topic and the outlines. After that he also read the whole text

which preceded that paragraph to see if what he had written was coherent. As he finished reading all of that, he decided to cross out the last sentence in the paragraph before the one he wrote last saying: *this needs to be taken off*, then he made another decision which was to postpone the paragraph that he wrote last and decided to begin a new paragraph instead so that the one he wrote last could come after it.

In the extract below we see another example of revising. Subject S11, revised to replace 'life' with 'environment', clearly because she realized that the use of the word 'environment' is more general as she said.

> The home life and teaching process have both  equall role in success or fail in education. The home ~~life~~ (SHE CROSSES OUT THE WORD 'LIFE')(بنغير الكلمة هذه) (*I want to change this word*). The home life, *I think environment, environment is more general* ,the home **environment**, the home environment and teaching process have both equall role in success or fail in education.

In another occasion, the same subject (S11) applied revising for word choice again when she replaces the phrase ' *has a bad*' with  the verb ' *causes*' as we can see in the following extract: It has a bad physical, it ~~has a bad~~ physical problem (SHE CROSSED OUT 'HAS A BAD'), physical problem… it causes a physical problem for the student, it causes a physical problem for the student- that it can be a barrier for his, a barrier for his teaching.

It is important to mention that all the subjects employed this strategy while engaged in the process of producing their texts and also after completing the first draft, except for S9. However, most revising cases occurred earlier in the process while texts were being composed.

### 4.3.1.6.2  Editing

The other sub-category of the strategy of revision is editing. As explained before, editing refers to changes which targeted superficial level features of the text.

Table 4-18: Editing strategy occurrences for the good writers

| Subject | Total editing strategy use | Addition | Deletion | Grammar | Spelling | Form or tense verb | Punctuation | Word form |
|---------|---------------------------|----------|----------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-----------|
| S4 | 8 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 |
| S5 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| S6 | 19 | 3 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| S9 | 9 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| S10 | 14 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 |

Table 4-19: Editing strategy occurrences for the poor writers

| Subject | Total editing strategy use | Addition | Deletion | Grammar | Spelling | Form or tense verb | Punctuation | Word form |
|---------|---------------------------|----------|----------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------------|-----------|
| S1 | 8 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| S2 | 7 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| S3 | 10 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| S7 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| S8 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| S11 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

There was little editing throughout the composing process. Two of these writers edited as they drafted the essay as well as when they redrafted or read the essay on completion. In the following extract, the subject (S4) edited his text in terms of punctuation by replacing a comma with a full stop, and in terms of capitalization by capitalizing the word *not*. The editing occurred while reading his draft and prior to submitting it in its final form. He did not produce a second draft: Did everyone succeed in their life? Well it depends, if they educated them self or not *full stop here*;. (editing for punctuation) **N**ot (editing for capitalisation) everyone likes to study.

While S11 read what she had written in her first draft as a step before writing her final draft , she employed editing to add the third person singular inflection '*s*' to 'face': the home environment has a result in the student, when he face faces a social problem in his home.

In the following extract, subject (S3) edits her text in terms of verb form, by changing the verb 'have' into 'had'. This editing occurred while rewriting the final draft and copying it out in its final shape**:** Then the child brought up and he (revision for addition)~~have~~ **had**(editing for form or tense verb)  a concept and ideas (revision for addition) in his mind, that the(editing for addition) success in education is a part of his personlity (revision for substitution).

### 4.3.1.7   Use of the L1

The strategy of using the L1 in L2 writing by the subjects was identified. Krapels (1990:49) maintains that this strategy is a "fairly common strategy among L2 writers." This strategy was used by both groups, and all of them but one (S9) used it at least once, as can be seen in Table 4-20 below.

Table 4-20 : Occurrences of using L1 strategy for both groups

| Good writers | | Poor writers | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Subject** | **Total use of the L1** | **Subject** | **Total use of the L1** |
| S4 | 9 | S1 | 10 |
| S5 | 2 | S2 | 35 |
| S6 | 1 | S3 | 13 |
| S9 | 0 | S7 | 2 |
| S10 | 47 | S8 | 7 |
| **Total use of L1** | **59** | S11 | 22 |
| | | **Total use of L1** | **89** |

The table above shows that the poor writers used the L1 in writing their essays more frequently than the good writers to facilitate their L2 writing. Apart from S10, who made use of L1 most (47 times), we can see that the number of times (59) the good writers used the L1 was much less than that for the poor writers (89). This tendency is in keeping with many previous research findings (e.g., Wang & Wen, 2002; Woodall, 2002; Alhaysony, 2008; Chabaan, 2010). This is in terms of the number of times the L1 was used by subjects in the current study. However, as for the reason why the L1 was used by the subjects, the data in the current study revealed that subjects in both groups used it for three different reasons. First, they used it as a tool in order to retrieve words, phrases and grammatical structures (cf. Manchón et al., 2007). Second, it was used in thinking about the topic to create mental and written plans and generate ideas. The third reason was related to the students' intention to make sure whether the words or expressions they use correlate with the intended meaning. These facts are in keeping with Cumming's (1990) findings which revealed that the L1 use is not limited to generating ideas only: it is also used for retrieving words and verifying their appropriateness.

## a. Vocabulary retrieval

We shall see now efforts made by subjects from both groups as they try to use their L1 (Arabic) in order to help them find the target vocabulary in English. The group of good writers, except S9, used the L1 for the different purposes mentioned above

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including word retrieval. However, although this strategy was successful with some students, it might be interesting to know that in some other cases, students' attempts to retrieve words using the L1 were not fruitful. If we look at the following extract as an example, we see that it represents a case where L1 (Arabic) fails to give the intended support for S10 in retrieving the suitable word in English: <u>Back to my example, the teacher I had in primary school for science had encouraged me to narrow my future thinking on scientific fields and that was not only because of the encouragement</u>, *encouragement* استعملناها واجد (*we have used this word a lot*), emmm معاش تبي تجي تشجيع تشجيع, تشجيع (*encouragement, encouragement, encouragement*), (*it cannot be retrieved*).

In the extract above, the subject wished to use a synonym for the English word *encouragement* as he realised that he had used this word before and he did not want to repeat it again, so he tried to verbalise the Arabic equivalent (تشجيع) *encouragement,* many times, but seemed unable to retrieve it. The L1 did not help him to retrieve the synonym for this vocabulary so, rather than writing *support or back-up*, for example as alternatives, he settles for *encouraging* instead of *encouragement* and continues writing. In another occasion, and when the same subject, S10, was writing his final draft he added another part to his second paragraph and again resorted to his L1 in an attempt to retrieve a word he could not find in English by verbalising the Arabic equivalent (يكافيء) *reward.* However, once more his Arabic did not help him retrieve the intended word he was looking for, and consequently he just replaced it with another expression- *will buy a gift, or even encourage his son by telling him how proud he is of him*, which he thought would keep the same meaning he was intending to convey. The following excerpt from his protocol demonstrates the subject's attempt: <u>and in, in result, the father will</u> emmm يكافيء ...كيف يعني يكافيء (*rewards… how can I say rewards?*), <u>will</u> emmm, <u>will maybe</u> emmm, <u>and in result, the father will buy a gift or even</u> emmm <u>or even encourage his son by telling him how proud he is of him.</u>

It might be worth mentioning that this subject (S10) was the one who used the L1 most while composing (47 times) (see Table 4-20). This means he used it once in every (2.7) minutes throughout his composing session which lasted for (128.9) minutes in total. However, and in spite of the many times he used his L1 it seems did

not help him much to retrieve words in English. When this subject was asked about the reason that made him use his L1 (Arabic) that much in his L2 composition and if he applied this strategy often, he gave the following answer during the semi-structured interview session**:** *"Sometimes I find difficulty in remembering a word in English to be used for the meaning I have, so I think about the meaning in Arabic, and if I find it I translate it in English. Sometimes I think in English, but when I try to make it look more effective, I try to think in Arabic and then translate it into English. I find it very useful."*The reply that this subject gave explained the reasons that led him to use Arabic for vocabulary retrieval, though it was not successful in the occasions we have seen above.

On the other hand, the good writer, S4, successfully managed to retrieve an expression in English by using Arabic. In the following example, we see how he faced difficulties in retrieving the expression *better life*, so he said the Arabic equivalent three times, and eventually remembered the English expression.**:** <u>so that's why people should educate them self, so that's why people should educate them self</u> *to have a* (بش يعيشوا حياة افضل , لكن كيف انقولوا حياة افضل ، حياة افضل ، حياة افضل) <u>to have</u> *better life, but how can I say  better life, better life, better life)* <u>yes, better life</u>, <u>to have a better life</u>. <u>So that's why people should educate themselves to have a better life.</u>

With the other good writer, S5, Arabic was also used to retrieve a word she was looking for to complete a sentence. The strategy of word retrieval was successful with this subject, but she was not required to repeat the Arabic equivalent several times as we saw in the previous examples, as is apparent in the following example:

> <u>Parents cannot</u>, <u>cannot</u>, <u>cannot be</u>… *what shall I say?* …<u>good in all of the subjects because</u>, <u>because they</u>, <u>because they</u>, yeahh… <u>parents cannot be good in all of the subjects</u>, <u>parents cannot be good in all of the subjects because</u>… *how to say* متخصص *(specialised) in English? specialised, yes, specialised*, <u>parents cannot be good in all of the subjects because they might be specialised in maths for example so they would not be as good as they are in English or science.</u>

Hence, looking at the four cases above, we could find two different examples although all the cases belong to the same group of students (good writers). The first two (in S10's case) are examples where the L1 (Arabic) fails to give the intended support in retrieving the suitable word in English; whereas the second two examples

(in both S4 and S5's cases) represent a successful use of Arabic by the subjects in order to support them find the targeted vocabulary in English.

The whole group of poor writers used the L1 (see Table 4-20 above).  Again, as far as word retrieval is concerned and if we look at the following extract, we can see an example where Arabic was successfully used by the subject in order to support her find the intended word in English**: <u>parents can help their children and</u>... emmm يطمئن يطمئن (how can I say 'reassure' in English) كيف ممكن انقول   **يطمئن بالانجليزي** يطمئن(reassure reassure reassure ) *yes reassure, reassure*.

In the extract above, the subject failed to remember the word *reassure* so she verbalises the Arabic equivalent (يطمئن) several times and finally remembered the English word and wrote it down.

### b. Use of L1 to think about the topic

The second purpose for using Arabic by the subjects in the current study was to think about the topic to create mental and written plans and generate ideas. Regarding this function of L1 use, the subjects' protocols revealed that subjects in both groups used their L1 for this purpose except the good writer S9 (see Table 4-20 above) who, when asked during the interview if he had at all used his L1 in writing his essay, consciously ensured that he thought in English because he found it easier to think and write in the same language than to translate from one to the other. Nevertheless, the writer who used the L1 (Arabic) predominantly in this study was also the good writer S10. This subject started his essay reading out the topic aloud, and as soon as he finished reading the topic he began writing in English. However, before he had reached the end of his first sentence had switched into Arabic. The predominant pattern in his resorting to his L1 was for him to rehearse the idea in Arabic and start writing aloud in English. He would then re-read the words or phrases he had written and try to continue speaking in English. However, he seemed to face difficulties expressing his ideas in English and reverted to rehearsing in Arabic and writing aloud in English.

In the following extract which was taken from S10's protocols we can see how he used Arabic in order to think about the topic and create mental plans and generate ideas. This seems to be an effective procedure for this subject especially when we

know that he did not write down any written plans or outlines for his essay before he started writing. This was applied after the subject read aloud the topic once and then started writing his first sentence, but before completing it.

<div dir="rtl">

يعني هوا الموضوع اللي فهمته إن النجاح في التعليم محفز أكثر او يمكن تحفيزه عن طريق حياة الطفل او الطالب في البيت والتدريب اللي يحصله

</div>

**(S10):**(*So the topic and according to my understanding is discussing how success in education is stimulated or it can be more stimulated during childhood at home and through training a child could receive*)

The justification that this subject gave for using Arabic to generate ideas for his essay was related to the topic. He stated that the fact he was asked to write about himself made the ideas he was generating flow in his L1 (Arabic). This is in keeping with Cumming (1987) who argues that in one of the cases writers tend to use their L1 to produce content information is when they are writing personal essays, which is the case here. Moreover, several studies suggest that there is a relationship between the topic and the EFL writer's L1. Lay (1982) and Friedlander (1990) argue that EFL writers tend to use their L1 extensively if the topic is related to the culture of their L1.

Another character that distinguished this subject (S10) from his other peers in terms of L1 use, was that he sometimes created whole parts of his text in Arabic and then translated this into English. This was particularly done as he started to write his conclusion. He started doing that by writing in Arabic as can be seen in the following extract.

<div dir="rtl">

(S10): النجاح التعليمي للطالب يعتمد على فعالية البرامج التعليمية وجودة التدريس من حيث إختصاصية المدرس في مجاله

</div>

(*The educational success of the student depends on the effectiveness of the educational programme and the quality of teaching in terms of assigning teachers to teach within their field of specialisation.*)

**c. Correlation of words and expressions with the intended meaning**

The third and final function of L1 use, to verify whether the words or expressions subjects use correlate with the intended meaning, is shown in the following extract:

**(S8)**: <u>About the effectiveness of the educational programme, it does affect the educational success by the syllabus system</u>

*النظام المنهجي؛ لا ماتجيش؛ نقولوا منهج وخلاص؛ منهج تعليمي*

 (*syllabus system. No, it does not work like that, we just say syllabus, educational syllabus*) <u>by the syllabus</u>. <u>About the effectiveness of the educational programme, it does affect the educational success by the syllabus</u>

In this extract, S8 produced a phrase 'syllabus system'. Nonetheless, he seemed to be unhappy with this. Hence, he translated the phrase that he produced into Arabic to verify the extent to which it matched his intentions. Again in his L1, he judged the expression did not match the intended meaning he was looking for. Therefore, he crossed out the word 'system' and kept the word 'syllabus' only.

The results of this study suggest that the subjects' writing proficiency is related to the frequency of the use of Arabic (L1) in their English (L2) writing. As can be seen in the table above, good writers use L1 less (excluding S10) often than poor writers. This could be attributed to the likelihood that the poor writers in this study had a lower English language proficiency level; therefore, they find it more difficult to use L2. Hence, they rely heavily on their L1 in order to generate ideas, or retrieve English vocabulary.

### 4.3.1.8 Awareness of audience

What is meant by awareness of audience here is the writer's observation of the person or a group of people who will read his/her essay, and therefore, writers are expected to make their writing clear enough in order to avoid the reader's misinterpretation of the ideas generated by the writer. Some of the subjects in this study made use of this strategy. However, it is worth mentioning here that the subjects in the current study are student learners who mainly base their success as writers on their achievements and the good scores they obtain on the module of writing, and to consider their teachers' instructions and how to fulfil their requirements. In other words, in this context, the teacher is the targeted reader for most of the writers. For this reason I have to differentiate between the concept of audience awareness as a strategy and the concept of accommodating the teacher's

demands which is also another strategy, but different from the first one in terms of being narrower and more specific. Yet, the notion of the audience seemed to vary among the good and poor writers in this study. These results were concluded from the semi-structured interviews, the subjects' think-aloud protocols, and the data from the analysis of the drafts and written plans. These tools revealed that while most good writers (e.g., S4, S5, S6) consider the reader throughout the writing task, there was no evidence in the protocols of the concern for audience from the poor writers except for S11, who decided to cross out a word (richey) from her text saying that this word might mislead the reader who probably thinks that it refers to 'rich' which means having much money.

In the following example taken from the think-aloud protocol, we can see how S11 considers the reader and how that consideration contributes to some changes in her writing.

> The other case, the other case , a student of a very, very relaxed and richey homelife ممكن هنا يعتقدوا ب"ريتشي" معناها فلوس (*someone might think that 'richey' refers to money here*). The other case a student of a very relaxed and , relaxed لازم فيه حاجة ثانية, (*there must be something else that can be said here*), relaxed , the other case a student of a very relaxed

> باهي حتى ريلاكسد ساد (*OK 'relaxed' alone is enough*), a student of a very relaxed  and richey homelife (SUBJECT CROSSED OUT ' AND RICHEY').

In the interview, however, this subject confirmed considering the audience in her writing, but not all the time, she said, "*really not all the time. Sometimes I feel I should write and just for me and not for the others, because when I express my feeling I just express my feeling*". Then she paused for a while and afterwards continued saying, "*Just I don't care about the reader*". At this point, this subject made it clear that a reader for her is mainly a teacher, "*Maybe in the case of an assignment, I will care, because there is someone who will read my assignment. In this case I will care of his or her explanations, the conditions, all of his or her favourites*". Here, the researcher interfered and asked her, *what about in today's session, did you consider the reader, and if yes, who was he/she?* She paused for a while before answering, then said *you* and started laughing.

This is an example of a poor writer' concern for an audience which is usually associated with the same reader, namely their English language teacher, or the researcher in the case of this particular task in the current study. S2, another poor writer also regarded the present researcher as an audience, or maybe as the reader as she finished putting down her ideas in writing. She asked me, *Can you read this text for me?* referring to her paper, and when I asked her why you want me to read it, she replied: *to know if I, emmm there is some lack in it, if you don't mind*. This kind of behaviour, which appeared to serve different purposes: e.g., to check out how her ideas sounded, and to test on a reader (the researcher) what had already been put on paper, and to see the reader's reaction about her writing, indicates that the person addressed was the researcher rather than anonymous individuals, and that she wanted to have an immediate feedback or response on her writing. In the interview session and when this subject was asked if she had considered a particular reader or readers to her essay, she replied *yes*, but when asked who was her reader, her answer was direct and she said it was me (the researcher), indicating that I was the only expected reader and she was considering that throughout the whole session of her writing. However, one might argue that this kind of behaviour can be considered as reader awareness, because this subject (as well as S11 above) still had the sense of audience any way, and she attempted to meet her reader's expectations, no matter who they are.

We have seen two cases of poor writers' concern for audience; they verified that when they write they did consider the reader of their writing, who was often their teacher, (or the researcher in this particular case) and therefore they centred the attention on the features that the reader was concerned about such as suitability and correctness of language.

However, other subjects in the current investigation explained that they would write in a different way for a different reader as demonstrated from the interview with the good writer (S5):

> "*In my opinion, when I am going to write something I consider the reader in everything about the information I have. So when the reader reads my writing I want to give him the impression and not just you know, for example, if it is the teacher not just write the assignment by the whole students and just check the grammar and spelling and*

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*punctuation, but it is important for me that my reader will be attracted by my writing. I try in my writing to convey a certain message or information. You know, the reader will forget about the good grammar and style because every time he will see good grammar or style, for example, but not every time he will see good information or good writing.*"

S5, then, viewed a reader from a different angle to that viewed by the two poor writers S2 and S11. A reader to her (S5) is more than just a teacher who is usually interested in the grammatical, lexical and stylistic features in his/her students' writing. A reader to her is anonymous— could be anyone interested in a good piece of writing rather than just in a text that is free from grammar, spelling or punctuation mistakes.

The good writer, S4, also considered the reader when clearly voiced his thoughts: *I'm asking a direct question now for a reader*. Then he changed his mind after he had asked himself a question and then answered it—*Shall we ask a direct question now for a reader?*, *No, make sense then ask*. This is quite a direct reference and a clear indication of a reader awareness manifested by this subject as he tried to start a new paragraph in his essay.

When this subject (S4) was asked in the interview whether he considered the reader when he was writing his essay, his answer was as follows: "*yes, I put that in a type of rhetorical questions to make them involved and think about it as well when they read them.*"

In fact, what this subject did in terms of considering the reader was unique. Even the first sentence he wrote in his essay was a question *Did everyone succeed in their life?* Moreover, the writing plan he created at the beginning of the writing session was a group of questions. Among the five good writers, he and S9 were the only subjects to make use of rhetorical questions as representation of the target reader.

S10, another good writer, also asserted that it is very important to bear in mind who is going to read the essay and the purpose and audience from the beginning of writing: "*Yes Of course, and that's another point that I am always dealing with. When I am writing something I try to think what's the reader will think about what I am writing and does what I am writing persuade him to get the idea I have.*"

It might be worth noting here that the task those subjects asked to write about did not directly dictate the presence of audience, as for example to ask them to 'persuade', 'inform', or 'invite' someone so that they could generate their ideas with a potential reader in mind. Therefore, the consideration of audience and the way an audience (whether merely as a particular teacher, a researcher or just any reader) is viewed by those subjects could be one of the strategies that highlights a difference between these two groups of writers in terms of strategy use. As the subjects in the current research shared similar cultural and linguistic background, definitely this difference of how they view a reader cannot be attributed to different level of experience in writing. Perhaps, then for this reason, the poor writers did not employ this strategy in the same way as their good counterparts did could be a result of a lack of instruction during earlier pre-college education or not having enough instruction at the college stage. However, all teachers who participated in this study affirmed that part of their instructions in how to write in English was for the student to have a reader in mind whenever they are engaged in a written task. Hence, regarding the question '*Do your students bear in mind who is going to read their essays?*' teacher 1 (T1) said " *yes, they do. We keep telling them that they should consider their reader. This helps them be more focused. For some of them the reader can be anyone in general, but I think most of them consider us as their readers because they are always concerned about their marks*". The other teachers, T2 and T3 also assured me that most of their students considered them (the teachers) as their readers, but T3 added "*but there are some students who have more general conception about a reader they try to address, and we feel that through their writing they want to convince readers rather than ourselves as teachers or graders to continue reading. This is clear from the style demonstrated in their writing.*" As for the question, '*Do you think that audience awareness by students would increase the productivity of their writing?*', the teachers' answers were all positive and they assured me that considering the audience would make them more focused and dedicated to their work. Hence, from this analysis we could conclude that audience awareness consideration on part of the subject differed according to their level of writing proficiency and that good writers had the ability to address a general reader who could be anyone rather than their teacher or examiner (see Table 4-21 below).

Table 4-21: The type of audience considered

| Issue | Good writers | Poor writers |
|---|---|---|
| **Who is audience?** | -general audience | -tutors |
| | -the researcher | -the researcher |
| | -tutors | -examiners |

### 4.3.1.9 Use of Dictionary

Most FL teachers and learners consider dictionaries to be beneficial for certain activities (Christianson, 1997). In this sub-section, I will discuss how the subjects in this study tried to use the dictionary as a strategy to solve particular problems in writing.

Out of the eleven students, only seven of them were noticed using a dictionary (see Table 4-22 below). Those who used the dictionary were, mostly, among the good writers. In other words, only three of the poor writers (S7, S2 and S1) used a dictionary, and all but one (S9) of the good writers used it.

Table 4-22: Use of dictionary by both, good writers and poor writers

| Good writers | | | Poor writers | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Subject** | **Occurrences of dictionary use** | **Reason for using a dictionary** | **Subject** | **Occurrences of dictionary use** | **Reason for using a dictionary** |
| S4 | 4 | Check spelling (3T*) and usage (1T) | S1 | 1 | Look for a synonym |
| S5 | 1 | Check spelling | S2 | 1 | Check spelling |
| S6 | 3 | Look for a synonym (1T) and check spelling(2T) | S3 | 0 | - |
| S9 | 0 | - | S7 | 1 | Check spelling |
| S10 | 2 | Check spelling | S8 | 0 | - |
| **Total occurrences of dictionary use** | 10 | | S11 | 0 | - |
| **\* T, stands for ' number of *times'*** | | | **Total occurrences of dictionary use** | | 03 |

Besides asking the subjects to bring their own dictionaries to the writing session, it is worth noticing that a monolingual dictionary (Collins Cobuild Learner's Dictionary) was provided by the researcher and put on the subjects' desk so that they could use it. However, the subjects were allowed to use any kind of dictionary they wanted. The types of dictionary used by those subjects were both monolingual and bilingual, and one of them, S6, used an electronic dictionary. Yet, more striking is the fact that only one of the four good writers who used a dictionary, made a successful use of it. These results are discussed in more detail below.

Table 4-22 above shows that the good writers used the dictionary more often than the poor writers while writing their essays. Both groups of writers, however, used the dictionary mainly to check spelling mistakes or to find a synonym. Only the good writer S4 used it for a different purpose, i.e., to check a proper English usage. This subject used a monolingual dictionary to look up several words on different occasions to check spelling, usually of adjectives such as '*obvious*' and '*strict*'. However, in another occasion he used his dictionary for a different purpose. For instance, he knew the word '*blame*', that he wanted to use, but was not quite sure of the preposition to go with it. He first used the preposition '*for*'. However, he resorted to the monolingual dictionary and found, "*The police blamed the explosion on terrorists*". Therefore, he crossed out the preposition '*for*' and wrote, *Kids nowadays, blame it on the teachers when they get bad results in their tests.* Dictionary strategies of this kind, used by the good writer (S4) seem effective in solving particular problems in writing, especially ones related to English usage.

The only good writer who did not use a dictionary was S9 (see Table 4-22). This writer stated that he did not usually use a dictionary while writing especially for spelling purposes, but might use a dictionary for other purposes such as a definition of a word or word usage. This was what he said in the interview: "*I only use the dictionary when I need a definition of a word, or a word I don't understand, or to check the use of a word, and how to use it in a sentence only. But not using it for spelling, never.*" However, it seemed that he did not need to use the dictionary for those purposes (finding a definition or usage of a word) in this particular task of writing.

All students in the study committed errors while writing. S2 (a poor writer), for example, used the dictionary provided by the researcher to look up one word '*circumstance*'. When she used the dictionary to check the spelling of this word, it took her about three minutes to find the word itself in the book. She never used the dictionary again to look up any other words during the writing session even though she knew that there were some other spelling mistakes elsewhere in her writing. In fact, this subject stated in the interview that though she liked writing in English, she did not write very often due to her poor spelling and that checking the dictionary every time caused some writing difficulties for her and interrupted her ideas. These were her exact words: *"I like writing in English, but I don't write always because I am poor in spelling and checking the dictionary each time terribles me and cuts my ideas".*

S1( another poor writer) used her Arabic English dictionary to look for the Arabic word 'محفز' (*incentive*) in order to look for an alternative to the word 'motivation' because she used it once before. She could not find a suitable English word to use, so she finally decided to use the same word 'motivation' again.

As we have seen above, most of the good writers used the dictionary for different purposes such as checking spelling, vocabulary usage and finding a synonym, and they have used it more frequently than the poor writers, while only half of the poor writers used it and mainly for checking spelling or finding a synonym. What is significant in this sub-section is what appeared to be the reason behind why the poor writers avoided using the dictionary. The poor writer S2 acknowledged having a problem when using the dictionary, and S1 was unsuccessful in her dictionary use when she tried to look for a synonym which might justify their dislike for using it as we can see in Table 4-22 above.

## 4.4 Chapter summary

The current chapter featured the presentation of the writing strategies and sub-strategies that the subjects of the current investigation used while composing during the writing sessions and which were identified in their think-aloud protocols. Some of the data was presented quantitatively in tables. Moreover, the present researcher endeavoured to discuss possible explanations for the composing behaviours that the

subjects practised during the composing times using data collected from semi-structured interviews and observations. The actual findings in this chapter can be summarised as follows: (1) the good writers showed more recursive behaviour while producing their texts— they planned, rehearsed, re-read their texts more frequently, and made more attempts of revision (see Figure 4-1 below). The poor writers, on the other hand, appeared to be less recursive showing less backward and forward movements within the text; (2) the good writers used more planning strategies (global and local) than the poor writers in total, and they globally planned their essays both prior to and while writing. Moreover, most of the good writers used outlining, contrary to the poor writers who the majority of them did not;(3) the good writers used more of scanning strategies as they moved forward with their texts, particularly reading longer units of discourse. They made both local and global re-reading of their drafts to generate more text or for purposes of revision. They re-read more between paragraphs to clarify about coherence and also to check for the clarity of the ideas expressed; (4) the use of L1 in L2 writing appeared to be related to the subjects' writing proficiency. That is, the lower the writing proficiency is, the more use of L1 (see Figure 4-1). The poor writers relied heavily on their L1 in order to generate ideas, or retrieve English vocabulary or also in verbalising their thoughts; (5) subjects viewed readers of their texts differently. While the good writers' perception of a reader was related more to general readers (i.e., anonymous individuals), the poor writers' view of a reader was mainly associated with the same person, namely their language teacher, or the present researcher; (6) dictionary was more used by the good writers, and for purposes such as to find a synonym, word usage or to check spelling. The poor writers, on the other hand, appeared to be less interested in using dictionary and they mainly used it for checking spelling; finally (7), the good writers wrote more text, using longer sentences. They also spent more time performing the written tasks than the poor writers. The following figure is presented to illustrate the frequencies of strategies used by both groups while writing.
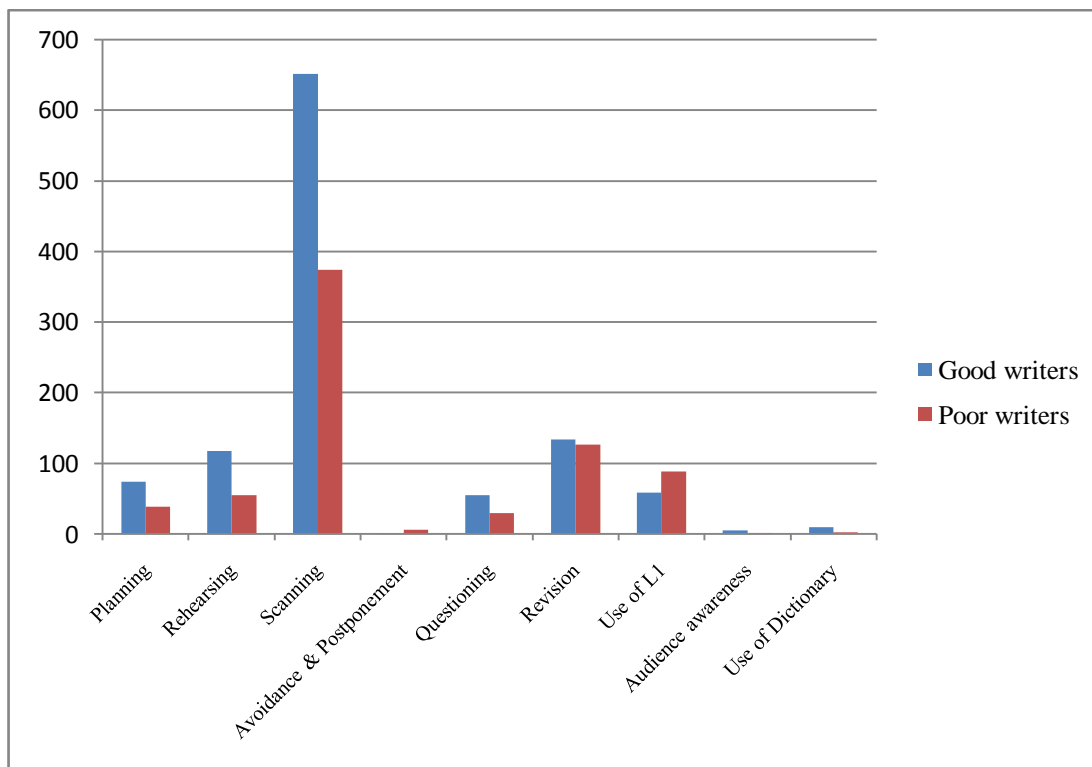
**Figure 4-1: Frequencies of writing strategies used by both groups**

The findings in this chapter could be further tested in the next chapter which will be dedicated to presenting findings related to an intensive analysis of the think-aloud protocols and interview sessions, to illustrate the strategies used and the approaches followed by four selected subjects with different levels of writing proficiency when composing in L2 relying on the qualitative analysis of the data. Also, the quantitative data presented in this chapter could serve as a basis to support results emerging in the qualitative investigation in the next chapter.

# Chapter 5: Writing Strategy Use vs. Writing Proficiency and Language Proficiency Differences

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter reports on the results of the intensive analysis of the think-aloud protocols, and presents the strategies and the techniques used by four writers representing two different levels of writing proficiency, namely good and poor writers when writing in L2 (English) in a more detailed description than a quantitative analysis allows. These writers were selected on the basis of the scores they received in the writing proficiency test in English. Because of shortage of space, I shall focus in this chapter on two good writers (S6— her score in the placement test was 84.3 out of 100, and S9— his score was 79.3 out of 100), and two poor writers (S3—her score was 46.3 out of 100, and S2— her score was 46 out of 100), (see Table 3-3 in Chapter Three). The rationale behind the choice of those particular writers was that because S6 and S9 were the best writers among the group according to their scores in the writing proficiency test, while S2 and S3 were the weakest among the group according to their scores (see Table 3-3).The purpose behind this in- depth analysis of the four subjects' composing strategies is that such a description and analysis of the subjects' individual behaviours and strategy use, will add to a full understanding of the difference in strategy use among those subjects who represent different writing proficiency levels. The following research questions were addressed for this reason: Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use? If yes, how and why do they differ?

In order to answer these questions, the protocols of the four selected subjects mentioned above were evaluated, with a view to exploring and analysing their composing behaviour and strategy use across the assigned writing tasks. Moreover, students' responses in the semi-structured interviews are presented and analysed.

This chapter is organised into four sections. The first section is the introduction. The second section shows the background of the four selected subjects, including their language proficiency level, the quality of their written texts produced for the think-aloud session, their previous writing experience and instructions, and also their

motivation for the task. The third section deals with selected writing processes and strategies used across the argumentative writing tasks in English. Section four concludes the chapter.

## 5.2 Background of the selected subjects

Table 5-1: The chosen subjects

| Subject Code | Year of study | Age | Writing proficiency* | Language proficiency level** | Gender | Years of studying English |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| S6 | Fourth | 21 | Good | High | Female | 10 |
| S3 | Fourth | 21 | Poor | Low | Female | 10 |
| S2 | Fourth | 22 | Poor | Low | Female | 11 |
| S9 | Fourth | 21 | Good | High | Male | 10 |

*For subjects' writing proficiency test scores, see Table 3-3 in Chapter 3
** For subjects' language proficiency level details, see Tables 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and 5-5

As illustrated in Table 5-1, the chosen subjects represent two different writing proficiency levels (good writers and poor writers), and they are all at the same academic level, i.e., fourth year English majors, and they all had studied English for a total of 10 years, except for S2 who had studied English for 11 years because she had to repeat year one secondary school. Now I will look at the background of each of those subjects independently.

S6 is a good writer, and with regard to the information gathered from the interview the types of texts she generally wrote in English were emails to other Arabic speakers as a social activity practised outside the classroom, notes, class assignments and essays practised during the writing classes and sometimes at home. As a response to the question in the interview of how often does she like writing in English, she responded that she often liked writing, and the reason was as follows: *"I like writing but write when I need to because after all I found it easier to write in Arabic rather than in English".* This response indicates the laborious and effortful nature of L2 writing no matter how proficient and/or motivated the writer is, due to a lack of automatized knowledge (DeKeyser, 2007). In the secondary school stage, however, this subject majored in 'English Specialisation' which involves intensive English classes throughout the four years of study and a lot of writing in English (see section 1.6).

S3, on the other hand, is a poor writer and as for the data collected from the interview, the texts she generally wrote in English were emails, brief notes in close friends and classmates' diaries inside and outside the classroom, and class assignments and notes written during the writing classes. Regarding the question about how often she liked writing in English, she said rarely and the reason for that was as she stated: "*because I feel the writing process is very difficult and usually boring with my all respect*".S3's response, in fact, signifies both the demands on her to write in L2 and also a lack of motivation (see 5.2.5). However, this subject shared the same history of English with S6; that is, she was also enrolled in the English Specialisation division at the secondary education level, and she had had the same English courses and a considerable amount of practice of English writing at the secondary stage (see section 1.6). However, it might be worth mentioning here that the four subjects investigated in this chapter had attended three different secondary schools (i.e., the two good writers attended the same school, while the two poor writers came from two other different schools).

As for S2 (the other poor writer), and in terms of the texts she generally wrote in English, she stated that she wrote e-mails, letters and notes, and when asked how often she liked writing in English, she replied that she sometimes liked writing and the reason was as she said: "*I like writing in English, but I don't write always because I am poor in spelling and checking the dictionary each time terribles me and cuts my ideas*". This writer might really like L2 writing, but from her response one could understand that what mattered most were orthographical issues rather than the translation of ideas themselves.

The fourth student in this analysis, S9, stated in the interview that the texts he generally wrote in English were e-mails, phone text messages, reports, and essays. The kind of reports this subject was involved in writing were related to a mixture of both technical and financial reports while working in a company (business sector) during out of term periods, as he stated. In response to the interview question on how often he liked writing in English he said that he often wrote in English, and he justified his preference in writing in English saying: "*I've been studying English for a while and I can express what I'm thinking clearly using English*". S9's answer revealed self-efficacy and ability to perform written tasks clearly. This subject was

enrolled in an English Specialisation secondary school before he became a university student of English, and he had had intensive courses of English including courses in writing. As stated above, he and S6 had attended the same secondary school.

In the following sub-section, and before embarking on analysing the subjects' writing strategies and behaviours, I will look at the subjects' language proficiency background records as fourth year English majors, as another variable that might contribute to writing strategy use and also to essay writing quality in this research which will also be looked at next in sub-section 5.2.2 below.

### 5.2.1   Subjects' language proficiency

The language proficiency level was assessed in terms of the scores derived from the accumulated results on the six language modules: Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing which the subjects studied during the three past years at the English department (refer 3.10.2.1.1.2). Although subjects are homogeneous in that they are typical Libyan fourth-year university students who had studied English through formal instruction in an EFL environment, they demonstrated a wide range of scores on language proficiency. Tables 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and 5-5 below illustrate the results these subjects scored in each module as well as the overall mean of their scores, and the final percentage.

It might be worth mentioning that the module 'Vocabulary' is taught only in the first year (as can be seen in the tables of results below), and this is also the case regarding the module 'Listening'. As for the modules 'Reading' and ' Speaking', they are presented in both the first and second year, while 'Grammar' and 'Writing' are taught in first, second and third year.

### 5.2.1.1   Results of modules studied

As illustrated in Tables 5-2 and 5-4 below, the two good writers, S6 and S9, scored quite high marks in all courses particularly in Speaking (an average score of 87.5 and 92 out of 100, respectively) and in Vocabulary (90 and 88 respectively) as well as in Reading (87.5 and 88.5 respectively), and Grammar (88 and 83.3 respectively), and

finally Listening (84 and 85 respectively). This in turn correlates with the high scores they achieved in Writing (85.3 and 84.6 respectively).

On the other hand, S3's (the poor writer) mark in Vocabulary was a passing grade (59), and for S2 it was good (71), but this was in the re-sit exam she took the following year because she failed this subject when she had the course in the first year. S3's score in Grammar in the first year was just the mere passing mark needed (50), while it was (55) for S2. Moreover, S3 failed this module (Grammar) in the second year and had to re-sit it in the year that followed in which she scored a quite humble mark (55), though she scored a 'very good' mark (75) in 'Grammar' in the third year. S3 passed the module 'Writing' in the first year (66), but failed this module in the following year and had to re-sit it in the third year where she scored a passing mark (50).

As for S2, she obtained (63) in writing in the first year which means satisfactory, but received quite a good mark (74) in the second year, then again dropped into a lower mark (53) in the third year. However, S3's scores in 'Reading' were clashing i.e., she had a 'very good' score (82) in the first year while she had only a 'pass' score (58) in the second year. In S2's case, she scored (65) in Reading in the first year which means merely good, while dropped into (60) in the second year which means satisfactory. However, when looking at the total percentage S3 and S2 had for all these modules during the three years of their study, they were 63.9% for S3, which means only 'pass', and 61.4% for S2, which also means 'pass'. As for the good writers S6 and S9, they scored an overall percentage of (87.05%) and (86.9%) respectively which means 'excellent' (see Tables 5-2, 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5 below).

Table 5-2: S6's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 90 | - | - | 90 |
| Grammar | 94 | 91 | 79 | 88 |
| Listening | 84 | - | - | 84 |
| Speaking | 83 | 92 | - | 87.5 |
| Reading | 87 | 88 | - | 87.5 |
| Writing | 83 | 89 | 84 | 85.3 |

* Marks are out of 100

| | Overall mean of scores | 522.3 |
|---|---|---|
| | Percentage | 87.05 |

Table 5-3: S3's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 59 | - | - | 59 |
| Grammar | 50 | 55** | 75 | 60 |
| Listening | 75 | - | - | 75 |
| Speaking | 68 | 57 | - | 62.5 |
| Reading | 82 | 58 | - | 70 |
| Writing | 66 | 50** | 55 | 57 |

* Marks are out of 100
** A re-sit exam score

| | Overall mean of scores | 383.5 |
|---|---|---|
| | Percentage | 63.9% |

Table 5-4: S9's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 88 | - | - | 88 |
| Grammar | 88 | 79 | 83 | 83.3 |
| Listening | 85 | - | - | 85 |
| Speaking | 90 | 94 | - | 92 |
| Reading | 89 | 88 | - | 88.5 |
| Writing | 84 | 86 | 84 | 84.6 |

* Marks are out of 100

| | Overall mean of scores | 521.4 |
|---|---|---|
| | Percentage | 86.9% |

Table 5-5: S2's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 71** | - | - | 71 |
| Grammar | 53 | 62 | 50 | 55 |
| Listening | 61 | - | - | 61 |
| Speaking | 53 | 59 | - | 56 |
| Reading | 65 | 60 | - | 62.5 |
| Writing | 63 | 74 | 53 | 63.3 |
| * Marks are out of 100 ** A re-sit exam score | | | Overall mean of scores | 368.8 |
| | | | Percentage | 61.4% |

To conclude, the two good writers' spoken English proved to be quite high compared with the other two poor writers. This also applied to the other linguistic aspects which are probably more connected with the skill of writing such as vocabulary, reading and grammar. The two good writers' achievements in these aspects outperformed the other two poor writers significantly. As for the skill of writing, data revealed significant difference between the two groups as the two good writers had some excellent scores in this subject while the other two poor writers' scores were both satisfactory. Moreover, the subjects' individual achievements in this skill correlated with their achievements in the other skills too.

In the following sub-section an attempt is made to analyse the written texts produced by the four subjects as they performed the think-aloud protocol sessions.

## 5.2.2 Quality of texts produced

The instrument used to obtain data on subjects' writing quality in this study was the same essays written in the argumentative mode that they worked on while producing their think-aloud sessions. The tasks were scored holistically using Jacob et al.'s (1981) composition profile (see Appendix 10). Two independent raters (Ph.D. holders in EFL, who received their degrees from the UK) took part in evaluating the essays (see Appendix 16). In addition, the tasks were analysed for the overall length. Overall length of the essay refers to the total number of words found in a written text.

The adapted holistic scoring guide comprises five levels or bands: content, organisation, vocabulary, language use and mechanics (see 3.10.2.2.1.3). For the purpose of reliability, the two raters who participated in scoring the essays were given an explanation on how to use the holistic scoring scales. The word count of the text of the writing scripts was done manually by the researcher and one of the raters who participated in the study.

### 5.2.2.1 Results of students' writing quality

The more proficient subject S6 obtained an average total score of 80.3% on her essay, while S9 received 84.3%. The less proficient subject's (S3) overall quality of writing seems to be rated much lower, with an average total score of 38.2% on her essay, and her counterpart S2 scored 42.6% (see Appendix 16 for the four raters' evaluations of the essays). It was also found that the more proficient subjects, S6 and S9, produced more words (339 and 399 respectively) than the less proficient subjects, S3 and S2, who produced 278 words and 159 respectively. Moreover, the total time composing spent by the good writers was longer in comparison with the time spent by the poor writers (see Table 5-6).

Table 5-6: Language proficiency level and writing quality and length

| Subject | *Language proficiency level | Holistic score of writing task | Overall length of essay | Total time (in minutes) spent composing |
|---------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| S6 | High (87.05%) | 80.3 | 339 words | 103.16 |
| S3 | Low (63.9%) | 38.2 | 278 words | 40.41 |
| S2 | Low (61.4%) | 42.6 | 159 words | 49.46 |
| S9 | High (86.9%) | 84.3 | 399 words | 58.24 |

\* Language proficiency level is measured as a total percentage subjects received in modules: Vocabulary, Grammar, Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing in the past three years in college, as illustrated in Tables 5-2 and 5-3, 5-4, and 5-5.

### 5.2.2.2 Texts analysis

Although the main purpose of this research was to investigate the problem-solving strategies of the subjects, the present researcher believed it would be relevant to examine the essays in terms of the linguistic knowledge that the subjects

demonstrated in their written texts. My intention here is to link process to product and to use the product as a further way to understand what has happened in the process (Perl, 1978).

Being an experienced EFL teacher who taught writing and evaluated English majors' written texts for a number of years (including the work done in the current research), the essays were analysed by the researcher who also, as seeking more objectivity in analysing the subjects' written texts, consulted a senior lecturer in Nottingham Language Centre at NTU who supervises and teaches writing courses, and also referred to the raters' evaluations of the essays (see Appendix 16).The two groups of subjects produced two different written products.

Table 5-7: Subjects' composing fluency

|  | S6 | S3 | S2 | S9 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Number of words in final draft** | 339 | 278 | 159 | 399 |
| **Number of sentences in final draft** | 21 | 11 | 9 | 21 |
| **Average sentence length** | 16.1 (words) | 25.2 (words) | 17.6 (words) | 19 (words) |
| **Number of paragraphs in final draft** | 5 | 3 | 4 | 6 |

### 5.2.2.2.1 Discourse organisation

Looking at the essay produced by the good writer S6 (see Appendix 12), one can see that there were efforts made by this subject in order to create a readable and organised written text. She, for example, showed a clear understanding of the subject and demonstrated good ability to communicate in writing. This subject produced two drafts, and she wrote 339 words in total in her final draft. She produced 21 sentences all together in five paragraphs and the average sentence length was 16.1 words (see Table 5-7 above).

S6 started her essay with the introduction followed by all arguments in three body paragraphs (developmental paragraphs) and ended the essay with the conclusion in which she restated the thesis statement. It is also noticeable that the body paragraphs

include topic sentences that support the writer's position. Actually, S6 organised her first and second drafts in the same way.

As for the essay produced by the good writer, S9, I can see that he managed to write a good essay which included ideas one can easily and smoothly follow. He produced a single draft of 399 words forming 21 sentences and 6 paragraphs with an average sentence length of 19 words (see Table 5-7). As can be seen in the written text for S9 (see Appendix 15), the essay consists of three major parts: introduction, body and conclusion. S9 organised his essay by starting with the introductory paragraph, followed by four main arguments in the four body paragraphs. Each of the four paragraphs included a topic sentence that supported the writer's point of view. Then the essay was ended by the conclusion. The introduction, though short, contained a clear thesis statement and contained two-sided point of view. The body paragraphs also provided possible counter-arguments and refutation. Moreover, S9 wrote an effective conclusion trying to summarise all main arguments and clearly stating his point of view.

As for S3, she also produced two drafts, and the analysis of her essay revealed that she wrote 278 words in total in her final draft, and she produced 11 sentences all together in three paragraphs. The average sentence length was 25.2 words (see Table 5-7). It might be worth mentioning here that due to misuse of commas and full stops by S3, the number of sentences counted in her essay was based on the interpretation of the 'real' sentences, i.e., the smallest units to which grammatical rules apply (t-units) rather than on the number of full stops.

In terms of organisation, the essay written by S3 was a good example of organisational errors. Different parts of her text did not make sense because she put the sentences in an unstructured way that sometimes made it very difficult to understand what she had been trying to say. This occurred sometimes without inserting appropriate punctuation marks that could assist the reader to determine the boundaries of each phrasal chunk. She, for example, wrote:

> *When the child get more awareness he will follow himself instruction, and try to select what he want from the study and the educational programme and help him self to be success, while there are a lot of spacailization in front of him, he will try to select the best for himself.*

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Concerning the large scale organisation of S3's essay, it could be seen that she organised her essay using two different patterns. According to the first draft, she produced what could be called a one very long paragraph in which it was difficult to distinguish what was an introduction, a paragraph within the body, or a conclusion. Then she produced the second draft in which she organised her essay into three paragraphs. The first two can be clearly distinguished by indentation. However, the third and last paragraph was not initially meant to be a concluding paragraph. Then suddenly concluded the essay and wrote her last sentence in which she briefly expressed her point of view and said that all the reasons she mentioned were necessary and important to be successful in education.

The two raters, who took part in evaluating S3's essay, (see Appendix 16) agreed that it contained several deficiencies. These deficiencies included an absence of paragraphing, deviation from the main subject and not addressing the question adequately, lack of depth and analysis, lack of organisation, and lack of attention to tenses and spelling.

S2 (the other poor writer) on the other hand, wrote the shortest essay of all producing 159 words in total. She produced two drafts and the number of paragraphs she wrote in her final draft was 4, and the number of sentences produced was 9 with an average sentence length of 17.6 words (see Table 5-7).

In terms of the linguistic features presented in S9's essay, I will look at the transitional words and phrases appearing in the essay and also sentence structures. As for the transitional words used, S9 effectively used 15 of them within paragraphs and also between paragraphs such as *however*, *moreover*, *thus*, *nevertheless*. He, for example, wrote: *However, the question is how much of their efforts is needed?*, and *Nevertheless, this success can be limited when a student has friends at school that do not want to learn.* With regard to sentence structure, S9 wrote the highest number of complex sentences, followed by compound sentences. The least frequent type of sentence structures were the simple sentences. The analysis of the text revealed that only few errors were spotted in this subject's essay, and only one spelling mistake was seen in his text.

In sum, S6 and S9's essay were coherent, unified, well-organised and logically developed within a paragraph and between paragraphs.

Concerning the poor writer, S3, the analysis showed that there were a number of errors and shortcomings of organisation. The errors in S3's writing included frequent grammatical, lexical, semantic and syntactic errors. As for the grammatical errors, for instance, there were errors in agreement, articles and prepositions. She made various subject- verb agreement errors in her essay. For example, she wrote, *when the child know that the education is very important in his live*, and in a different occasion she also wrote, *that he find in his enviroments*. She also made an agreement error between a noun and a pronoun, *while there are a lot of speciailization in front of him*, and she also wrote, *as aguide for the student to learn them and improve their personalities*. Another grammar error was also found in this subject's essay— she wrote, *when the child get more awareness he will follow himself instruction*, meaning '*when the child becomes more aware,* he/she *will follow the instructions by himself.*'

In addition, one can see that this subject's essay was full of misspellings, such as the ones above ( '*enviroments*', '*speciailization*') and different others dispersed throughout the essay as will be noticed below (also see Appendix 14 for S3's whole written text).

**5.2.2.2.2  Error and comprehensibility**

 Only a few errors were detected when analysing S6's essay. Among the errors made by this subject were errors related to distinguishing words according to their word class as, for example, when she wrote,  *If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success even if he has big encourage and support from his family.* This subject used the wrong function of words (i.e., using the noun' *success*' instead of the adjective '*successful*' preceded by the verb '*be*' ); thus instead of writing '*he will not be successful*', or  maybe '*he will not achieve success*' she wrote ' *he will not success*'. Also she wrote the incorrect phrase '*big encourage*' instead of writing '*much encouragement*' for example, which is partially a lexical error, i.e., using the word '*big*' instead of '*much*'(formal) or '*a lot*'(informal), and partially again an error related to word class, i.e., using the verb '*encourage*' instead of the noun '*encouragement*'.

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This subject also used the wrong phrase when she wrote '*in the other side*' instead of '*on the other hand*' as she tried to compare two different facts, an error that is related to language use. Her writing also included a single spelling mistake ' *encourging*'. Otherwise, this subject showed a good command of written English using facts and pertinent information and discussed several main points relevant to the assigned topic. The words and idioms she used were accurate, effective and concise. Also the sentences she used were well-formed and complete, avoiding too long sentences and most of the phrases and clauses were appropriate to function and were properly placed. One of the raters commented on S6's writing saying:

> *Good piece of writing, which shows interest and ability to communicate in writing. The writer is able to express herself very well, developing and organising her ideas logically and demonstrating a good command of some vocabulary. She presents a central idea directly related to the assigned topic with sufficient clarity. However, this essay lacks insight and depth.*

On the other hand, S3's extensive use of the L1 in thinking while writing seemed to influence her way of writing. For example, she misused the definite article as a result of the interference of Arabic genitive construction (El- Aswad, 2002). She wrote, *then the child brought up and he had a concept and ideas in his mind, that the success in education is a part of his personlity*. In Arabic, abstract words such as 'النجاح' (*success*) are preceded by the definite article '*al*' (*the*), which is not the case in English. Also she wrote, *Then the role of the teacher will be appears in his life when the child go to the school,* where she should not use the definite article before the word *school*, because for a native speaker of English, he/she would think of the primary activities that take place within institutions such as schools or hospitals rather than the buildings themselves, a case which is different in Arabic and a definite article is needed. Preposition errors were also detected in S3's writing— she said and wrote, *Success in education must be begining from the home,* instead of '*success in education begins at home*'. As mentioned above, the influence (interference) of Arabic is clear in this subject's writing. When she was not clear which preposition to use in a particular case, she matched that with its Arabic equivalent and gave a literal translation of that Arabic preposition in English.

Moreover, there are various lexical errors made by this subject, which might be due to her limited English vocabulary. She, for example wrote, *while that he will improve his knolwedge,* instead of '*in that case, his knowledge will be increased*'. She also wrote, *what he want to be in study*, instead of ' *what field of study* he/she *would like to choose*' or ' *which academic discipline* he/she *would like to choose*'. She also used the word *learn* instead of *teach* when she wrote, *the role of teacher as aguide for the student to learn them.*

Punctuation is also another problematic area for S3. She, for instance, said and wrote:

> *... if he like the way of the teacher. is teaching the course or the lessons while that he will improve his knolwedge about the study. and his personltiy what he want to be in study. and think about his future a lot . he will try to be success like his teacher. and her the role of teacher as aguide...*

From the way this subject wrote most of the parts in her text, one can see how important and influential punctuation is in the comprehensibility of writing. As a reader, it is difficult sometimes to keep a focus, to distinguish the boundaries of sentences, or to follow the ideas she was trying to convey due to the wrong use of punctuation. Moreover, the influence of L1 was also prevalent in S3's writing in that she rarely used capitalisations, especially when beginning a new sentence. In writing in Arabic, capitalisation does not exist.

### 5.2.2.3  Written products and target audience

Concerning the correlation between the four subjects' written texts and their mental representations of the audience, one can see that the good writers and the poor writers had two different notions of audience and that such a difference in audience awareness had affected the way they composed and eventually the way they shaped their texts. Data derived from the interviews with these subjects revealed that S6 viewed her reader as anyone interested in what she was trying to communicate, while S3 wrote for herself, or for the teacher or the examiner (in the case of a written exam), " for the purpose of knowledge display" (Cabrejas, 2008a: 100).

Analysis of S3's essay showed that she lacked explicit links and signs that made her essay easy to understand by the reader. She, for instance, did not use enough signalling devices, clear structure, a good introduction that, for instance, contained a clear thesis statement and enough background and also contained two-sided point of views. She also did not use an effective conclusion that, for example, restated the thesis statement and summed up all arguments mentioned in the body paragraphs (Sengupta, 1999:302). Her essay lacked the necessary transitional expressions which often used by good writers to help the reader follow along, and even the few ones she showed were not used properly. For example, on line three in her introduction (see Appendix 13), as she was trying to refer back to something which had been discussed, she wrote: *all these will encourage him to be success in his study*. In fact, '*all these*' had no clear back reference, and it was not obvious whether she meant to refer to the people she had already mentioned (parents, sisters and brothers) or to the home and/or the background of those people.

On the other hand, analysis of S6's and S9's essays revealed that they were aware of the conventions of good writing, and it was clear that they had done whatever possible to make their ideas flew smoothly. For example, they made use of different signalling devices such as connectors through which sentences were clearly connected so that the reader can follow along, recognising how one detail leads to the next, and forming cohesive paragraphs with clearly linked sentences. They, for instance, used a number of transitional words and phrases such as '*for example*' and '*such as*' (example transitions); '*so*' (cause-effect transition); and '*whereas*' (contrast transitions). The purpose of using these transitional expressions by S6 and S9 was to guide the reader from one sentence to the next, and indeed they used them effectively. Moreover, a reader of S6's and S9's essays could see that there were links between the different paragraphs. For example, the points that were mentioned in S6's introduction (i.e., home, quality of teaching, and the student himself), were presented successively in the subsequent paragraphs, a skill that can help the reader have a smooth and coherent transition from one paragraph to another. S6 and S9 also used clear boundaries between sentences by using proper punctuation marks and capitalisations.

As part of the subjects' background information, the following sub-section will be devoted to explain the subjects' previous L2 writing experience and instruction.

### 5.2.3   Previous learning experience and instruction

### 5.2.3.1   At the secondary school

From the interview responses obtained from S6 and S9 who attended the same secondary school, they asserted that they had done a lot of essay writing throughout the secondary school. For example, S6 and S9 confirmed that as part of their English lessons, they had to write an essay a week, to be finished in class and handed in. They confirmed that the essay topics were partially assigned by the teacher, but in most cases students were given the chance to choose topics for themselves to write about. Moreover, those subjects asserted that their teachers instructed them in how to plan and revise their essays and stressed the importance of having an outline prior to writing.

On the other hand, S3's and S2's responses to the interview question were different. They said that they received no instruction in how to write an essay except that it should have an introduction, a body and a conclusion, and the writing they had done consisted mainly of guided writing exercises and grammar exercises, and the feedback on the essays they received consisted of the teacher going through the common grammatical mistakes with the class. They also added that the majority of English lessons were taken up with English grammar or practising exam-oriented skills such as vocabulary and reading comprehension. Therefore, the lessons during this stage can be described as grammar/translation oriented, and the teachers usually encouraged them to memorise words, sentences and grammatical rules. The following extract was taken from the interview to display the answer S3 gave to the question: *How was writing in English taught at school?*

> *"In the high school, they... errrr, the books were good and the teachers told us we should write an introduction, main body and conclusion, but we don't know in the high school, we didn't know exactly what we should write in the introduction or in conclusion for*

*example. And we write more when answering in the grammar exercise book and the teacher corrected our mistakes in the same book."*

S2 confirmed that she had received nearly the same guidance as S3 in terms of how to go about writing an essay, but added *"In the secondary school, our teachers when they teach us the book they did not concentrate on the writing skills and they said do them at home because time is very little in school."* S2's answer, in fact, indicated that there was a lack of emphasis on teaching the skill of writing on part of the teachers at the secondary school stage which might be due to time limit or maybe lack of qualified teachers to teach such a demanding skill.

### 5.2.3.2  At the university

At the university, where all lectures and assignments were in English (see 1.6, for more details), the current subjects had to do substantially more writing. All subjects had had the same instruction in discourse level writing skills. The difference in their degree of skill as writers did not therefore appear to be related to the amount or type of writing instruction received at the tertiary level of education. Therefore, the subjects' responses to the interview question '*What kind of writing tasks have you practised in college and have they been equally emphasised?',* were similar, and they all confirmed that they had practised different text types such as narrative, descriptive and argumentative and with equal emphasis.

However, writing practice in English outside the class appeared a variable that was found related to the subjects' writing performance. The researcher expected that subjects who practised writing outside the classroom would benefit from their practice and acquire some techniques that would help them improve their writing skill and reach a good writing performance. S9 who practised English writing  out of term time, as mentioned in the student's profile in section 5.2, had benefited  from this practice and was motivated to do even better in his writing course so that he could attain a job at a firm after graduation (see 5.2.5). The data also told us that S6 practised writing outside the classroom setting through sending emails in English as a social activity. This type of writing practice, though it might be informal sometimes, could expose the writer to different writing styles that might contribute to the development of her composing skills.

### 5.2.4   Reading habits

The good writer S6 reported that she was enthusiastic reader throughout her secondary school years and still reads almost daily, and that almost all her reading was in English. S9 also admitted that reading in English was one of his favourite habits at the secondary school stage and also at college "*I liked reading when I was at school and I still like reading now but I am a bit busier now but anyway I still like reading and especially reading about English literature and novels. I like novels by Thomas Hardy in particular.*"

By contrast, S2 and S3 reported that they neither found time nor particularly enjoyed reading at secondary school or at university. For S3, she mentioned that this was still the case. Her reading was restricted to brief episodes with either English or Arabic magazines. This subject in fact reported that she had ever done any pleasure reading to speak of. During secondary school she rarely read anything in either the L2 or the L1 apart from school texts, and the situation has remained much the same. Her leisure reading now consists of an occasional brief flip through an Arabic magazines and she never attempts to read English for pleasure. The case for S2 was not different from S3. She also said that she had never enjoyed any reading activities to speak of apart from reading the texts provided in her reading comprehension module book or other materials related to her study, and mainly for exam preparation purposes.

### 5.2.5   Motivation for the task

Motivation is an important factor that contributes to writing. Students who are motivated for the written task are more likely to produce a better text than those who are less motivated. Motivation explains "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it." (Dornyei, 2001:8).

It might be worth mentioning here that teaching writing as a module at the Department of English at MU, is a formidable task. Teachers are often discouraged to teach such a complex and time-consuming task because of the large number of students and the belief among teachers that students are often reluctant to practise

writing unless it is an obligatory homework or for exam purposes. One of the teachers (T1) explained her point of view as follows:

> "*I have been teaching writing here since 90's, and to teach writing for a large number of people is no doubt a hard and time-consuming task. Also students mainly do not show much interest in practising writing except for a few of them who might have some personal reasons to improve their writing, but most of the students are practising this skill just to pass it or to get marks for their homework assignments.*"

Another teacher (T2) added, "*In writing classes only a few students participate in the class. The rest are just sitting passively giving an indication that writing for them is not that important, or some of them are maybe shy. All they need is just to pass it. Teaching writing to such students puts more demands on teachers especially with the short time given for the course.*"

On part of the students, however, the lack of motivation to write as expressed by the poor writer, S3, indicated that writing was not important after graduation when she would become a teacher. She said: "*I think writing is not important for teachers. They don't need in teaching. In the school we did not take writing a lot. They gave us more another skills than writing. They gave us that an essay should have three parts, introduction, body and conclusion. They explained us that reading and speaking and grammar are important.*" This stance could be an influence of past learning experience. It was understood that writing was neglected by S3's teachers and in turn she neglected it in her own university courses. S2, on the other hand, also showed her lack of motivation to practise writing saying, "*When I will be a teacher I will not teach writing. Writing is not easy to learn or teach. I hate spelling. I will just teach grammar or anything. I don't want my students to laugh on me if I learn them bad writing.*"

This belief of unimportance of writing for S2 and S3 upon graduation and the unwillingness to be involved in teaching it as they become teachers might account for their poor motivation to practise and improve this skill. Therefore, they believed that other aspects or skills such as grammar or reading were more important if they chose to work as teachers after graduation.

Different from the attitude shown above, the other two good writers were motivated to learn and practise the skill of writing due to different reasons. S6, for example, stated that she was interested in writing as an activity, and in developing her writing skills because she was planning to pursue a career as a translator after graduation. She explained that being a successful translator required good command of English writing and enthusiasm to improve the writing skills. She said, "*Writing is one of my hobbies in both Arabic and English, also it is important for me to be able to write well in English because I am planning to work as a translator and I can earn more money and become independent. That is the reason why I am working hard to improve my written and spoken English.*" The other good writer, S9, had another motive to develop his skills in English in general and in writing in particular. In the interview, he made it clear that his prospective career gave him the enthusiasm to work hard and improve his writing in English. He said, "*I like English, and I love to practise the language especially with the native speakers. I want to carry on with the foreign company after graduation next year, and my writing skills are so important, and there is more chance to earn more with foreign companies than being a school teacher.*" Moreover, the two good subjects stated that writing was taught adequately at school and their teachers had emphasised this skill and had given them sufficient in-class practice and homework.

From what have been said above, the subjects had different perceptions about English learning in general and about acquiring good writing skills in particular. These perceptions shaped their attitude and enthusiasm to improve their writing skill. The poor writers were not motivated to develop their writing skills for reasons related to the unimportance of writing as it was less emphasised by their teachers at school and consequently they saw it unimportant after graduation. The good writers' motivation to develop their writing skills (apart from the fact that they both liked writing as an activity) was driven by reasons related to more successful future careers upon graduation.

In the next section, a description and comparison of the approaches and writing strategies used by these four subjects across the writing task will be investigated, evaluated and analysed.

**5.3 Writing strategies used across the assigned writing tasks**

In sub-section 5.3.1 below, S6's and S3's cases will be investigated together first, then S2's and S9's cases will be investigated next separately in sub-section 5.3.2. The four cases will be thoroughly examined to see what types of strategies and behaviours employed, and to see whether those subjects were similar or different in their strategy use.

**5.3.1 S6 and S3's writing strategies**

**5.3.1.1 Planning strategies**

**5.3.1.1.1 Planning strategies prior to writing**

I will introduce first the planning strategies before these two subjects put pen to paper and started writing their essays, and then the planning strategies during writing will be presented.

As can be noticed in the parts that have been excerpted from the subjects' protocols (see Appendix 18-A), they started with completely different steps. While S6 planned both what strategies to use and also the content of her essay, S3 however, did not plan what strategies to use and she barely planned the content of her essay. After reading the topic once, S6 started to rehearse in order to find a focus then she planned what she should include in her essay by dividing the title into three main parts of concern. She underlined key phrases in the topic (e.g., *students' home life, quality of the teaching, educational programme*) with the aim of focusing on the main fundamentals in it in order to be fully aware of what she was required to write. These parts would form the total shape of her essay. So she outlined the body of her essay, i.e., what to talk about in each of the three paragraphs within the body of her essay as follows: (1) students' home, (2) the quality of teaching, and (3) the student himself, respectively. After that this subject decided to start with the introduction talking about success in education in general, and started writing her first sentence which was as follows: *Education is important for everyone*. S6 adhered to the outlines she had put at the onset of the writing task in writing her real task. This was confirmed by the answer she gave in the interview:

*"Well, I usually stick to the initial plans because normally I plan what I need to write in each paragraph in the body of my essay and for the introduction I usually put the general idea and for the conclusion I conclude all the ideas I mentioned in the introduction and the body but in different way. So I don't usually need to change anything because I've already planned everything in advance."*

What she said about the unchanged written plans was also confirmed in her written production where it was clear that all the points she had on her outline list were there and in the same sequence, in her final version of the essay (see Appendix 12). These activities took S6 (2.05) minutes (see Table 4-1 in Chapter Four), and that was the exact time she had spent before she started writing her first sentence.

As for S3, although she relatively took more time, 3.44 minutes, (see Table 4-2 in Chapter Four) than S6 before she began writing; she obviously had shown less confidence than S6 to make a start with writing. For example, after she silently spent some time looking at the topic as an attempt to read it, despite the researcher's instructions to keep verbalising as much as she could, she asked the researcher whether it was acceptable for her to copy down the topic. Then just in the middle of copying the assigned topic, and as an attempt to better understand it she paused and inquired, in Arabic, about the meaning of the phrase "*than by*" which was included in the topic. The English translation to her question was as follows: *What does 'than by' mean?*, *Does it mean 'more than?'*. As soon as she finished copying down part of the assigned topic once, she started rehearsing and trying out ideas in Arabic repeating some key words and phrases from the topic, " in an attempt to get closer to its meaning" (Raimes, 1987: 456), then she made her decision (in Arabic) to start writing. A translation of this rehearsal and the global planning she made are illustrated in excerpt 3 in Appendix 18-A.

After that she started writing immediately as the idea came to her and produced her first sentence repeating the first three words in the title *success in education*: *Success in education must be beginning from the home when the child know that the education is very important in his live.*

S6 and S3 were similar in the use of some planning strategies before doing any writing as they both approached the topic in one way or another. That is, S6 read

through the assigned topic, while S3 copied it down as a way to have more focus for she was struggling in understanding it due probably to her limited linguistic knowledge. Moreover, they both concentrated on the key words of the topic to develop ideas and decide what to write about. They also both used global planning to decide what to write in the next paragraph as, for example, S6 when decided to start with the introduction as soon as she felt ready to begin the task in which she planned to talk about success in education in general, whereas, S3 decided to start talking about 'childhood' first in her first paragraph without mentioning, however, whether that was an introductory paragraph or a paragraph in the body of her essay. However, S6 not only planned what to say in the introductory paragraph, but also what to include in the whole essay (see excerpt 1 in Appendix 18-A). It might be worth mentioning here that a number of the strategies that S3 used were not verbalised by her, an issue that could be related to her linguistic competence, or to the nature of the think aloud task as will be highlighted later in Chapter Six.

However, these two subjects differed in the use of some other strategies before they started writing. For instance, S3 did not use strategies used by S6 such as underlining any of the key words in the topic, nor did she make any lists or put down notes. She also did not globally plan her essay as a whole, as for example to decide how to organise her essay in terms of how many paragraphs would be included or which paragraph to start with. As Perl (1979:330), describing her basic writers, she put it, "began writing without any secure sense of where they were heading". However, we have seen that she did make a comment or judgement about the topic, and also rehearsed to try and find a focus, and both were done in Arabic.

In fact, S3 used Arabic a number of times before she started writing, and for different purposes. For example, she used it in asking questions about the topic in an attempt to understand what she was required to write. One of those questions was addressed to the researcher asking about the meaning of a phrase in the topic '*than by'* (see excerpt 2 in Appendix 18-A). She also used Arabic when she rehearsed for a while ideas that might form a beginning for her writing using key words from the topic. She also used Arabic to plan what to write in the first paragraph (i.e., to talk about childhood). One could argue that using Arabic that much by this subject (S3) in this early stage and before starting to write was due, partly, to the fact that she was facing

some difficulties understanding the topic and the questions she asked about the topic were good indication for that, and partly due to the greater difficulty for her to think in English a fact that was supported by the answer she gave to the interview question: *Did you think in Arabic or in English while writing?*, to which she answered, " *When I write in English, I think about my ideas in Arabic, because I find it better to do that and then I just translate my ideas to English and write them*". This might also be related to her relatively limited English vocabulary (see 5.2.1), and therefore understanding the essay question as a whole was not easy for her. This could be the reason why she could not create a global plan of the organisation of her topic, and instead, she just picked one of the key words in the title (i.e., *child*) and decided to begin writing about it. Using the L1 was obviously less demanding for her to generate ideas that she could try and translate into English later. Therefore, S3 did less overt planning than S6, and if she produced some ideas she did not follow that by planning them in the form of notes, or rehearsing for the whole task. The time before writing was mainly spent on how she could interpret the topic, so that whatever she wrote next would not be irrelevant. Moreover, she did not use an outline as S6 did. The following table displays a summary of S6's and S3's strategies and behaviours prior to writing.

Table 5-8: Summary of S6 and S3's strategies and behaviours prior to their writing

| Subject | Comments |
|---|---|
| S6 | ➢ She thought about exactly what the topic was asking her to write about (i.e., she had a focus). <br> ➢ She organised her ideas into a plan, so that she could decide which ideas she was going to include and organised them into a logical order in the plan. <br> ➢ The strategy of global planning was used by this subject as she decided how to organise her essay and what to say in general. <br> ➢ She rehearsed to find a focus. <br> ➢ She wrote down an outline for the essay. |
| S3 | ➢ She had more trouble in understanding the given topic than S6 did. <br> ➢ No evidence of any typical prewriting strategies such as trying out beginnings or making notes or outlines was noticed. <br> ➢ Arabic was mostly the medium of thought in this stage of the writing process, and rehearsing about the topic was also done in Arabic. <br> ➢ No sign of creating a global plan of the organisation of her topic. |

**5.3.1.1.2  Planning strategies during writing**

During writing, there were some differences and similarities between the two subjects in the use of planning strategies. Hence, the strategy of planning for S6 was not limited to the beginning of the protocol in order to find a focus and use it as a starting point to generate ideas and list them in a form of an outline, but it reappeared all through the writing process. For instance, as the writer was proceeding with writing, she repeatedly used local planning to fulfil various purposes. For example, stating about the end of a paragraph, e.g., *I think I've finished the introduction, I'll try to re-read it again*. Also when planning occurred at amore local stage, as to plan for writing a topic sentence, *e.g., I'll start with a topic sentence about student's home*, or a concluding sentence for a paragraph, e.g., *so I have to write something to end up my paragraph*, and considering ideas and words in relation to each other within a sentence, e.g., *I think I need to change the beginning* (see Appendix: 11-A). These were types of local planning that the writer used quite often within sentences in a paragraph and between paragraphs. She also used global planning in what to say next in the succeeding paragraph, e.g., *so now I am going to move on to the body, and start writing about the student's home*, which is an example of considering ideas and paragraphs in relation to each other.

On the other hand, S3's plans were different from her counterpart in that she was not clear enough about what decisions she would make regarding her next coming steps. I did not hear any verbalisations about how, for example, to begin a paragraph, change particular wordings within a sentence, end up a certain paragraph, decided on certain connections between paragraphs, and so on.  However, it was noticed, as she moved on with writing, that she did re-read larger segments of her work, but she did not verbalise any decision as a plan to do so. As far as a strategy such as re-reading was employed here and it was not verbalised, this could represent difficulty on part of the subject in either speaking it out in English, or due to lack of vocabulary in whatever language (L2 or L1) to explain what she was doing, or to the nature of the think aloud task. This strategy of re-reading was done twice while she was writing her first paragraph. However, as she finished writing her first paragraph, she stopped and verbalised (in Arabic) her global planning indicating that she had finished what she called it the first stage, and now she should start with the role of education and

school: (*I have finished the first stage, and after this I'll start with the role of education and school*), which was similar, to a certain extent, to the global planning done by S6.

By looking at the excerpts in Appendix 18-B, one can notice the difference between these two subjects in terms of how they approached the first paragraph in their essays. As far as planning is concerned, I could see not much explicit verbalising behaviour in S3's protocol. For example, she did re-read her first paragraph as she finished writing it (see Appendix 18-B), but she did not verbalise this local planning decision behaviour. S3 also interrupted herself in the middle of writing her first paragraph by asking how long the essay should be, referring to the number of words required for the written task, a question which was followed by a comment that indicated a dislike of writing on the part of this subject, *I don't like writing too much*. The reason behind expressing this feeling about writing as the subject explained during the interview was as follows: " *Writing needs a lot of thinking, and when I write I have to think about everything, and not like speaking for example. I have to think about spelling, about punctuation and about words and about grammar mistakes. It's not easy.*" This might be considered as lack of motivation for the task on the part of this subject that consequently affected her strategy use which I believe was already affected by her low L2 linguistic proficiency.

Because of paucity of global planning used by S3 (i.e., the global planning that involves planning the whole structure of her essay, or organisation of the essay as a whole), this subject was not successful in looking at and considering her essay as a whole. Although she chose to start to write about childhood at the beginning, for example, it is clear from the excerpt (see Appendix 18-B) that S3's writing was instantaneous afterwards and whatever ideas she generated she wrote them down on the spot. She focused on small units such as words and phrases in the assigned topic, on which she started creating ideas and put them down on paper which then resulted in writing what looked like a two-sentence paragraph that lacked proper punctuation marks (see 5.2.2.2).

### 5.3.1.1.2.1 Planning for revision

Another form of planning used in the writing process, was planning for revision. While she was drafting her essay, and sometimes as she began a new paragraph, S6 tended to plan to perform some changes and amendments. This kind of change could either occur immediately or after completing the whole essay. This form of planning took place within and between sentences. S6, in fact, employed this strategy on different occasions throughout the writing process; whereas, there was no sign of using this type of planning by S3 (see excerpts in Appendix 18-C).

The examples shown in the excerpts referred to above indicate that S6 employed planning for revision on different occasions throughout the writing process. For instance, the first excerpt is an example of planning to revise the beginning of the topic sentence of the first paragraph in the body of her essay. Hence, after writing the introduction, and as she started to write the body of the essay, she stopped after writing the first two words of the topic sentence and planned to revise them, *I think I need to change the beginning*. This decision resulted in replacing the words she wrote with different ones. In the second excerpt, in the middle of sentence #7, S6 expressed her dissatisfaction with what she had written. Consequently, she planned to revise this sentence, *I'll try to find more simple sentence than this to express my view*, and repeated the word *unlike* aloud then drew a circle around it; however, she continued writing and completed the sentence. According to the protocol, this case of planning for revision was considered after finishing the first draft. That is, in her final draft, this subject considered changing this sentence and she divided it into two shorter sentences— #7 and #8 (see Appendix 12 for S6's final draft). This shows that, while engaged in writing her first draft, this subject did not want to interrupt the flow of her ideas. So instead of stopping, she progressed and finished the sentence with the available vocabulary she had at the time in an attempt to keep the progression of the text.

As mentioned earlier, S3 did not verbalise any revisions at this stage, and therefore she did not plan any kind of revision. The revisions she made (see 5.3.1.4) were done while producing her final draft and she did not plan for revision as she did so. This would indicate that S3's view on composing was rather linear and less recursive, unlike S6 who attempted to start revising as soon as she finished writing the

introduction in her first draft (see Appendix 11-A).Table 5-9 below is to summarise the planning strategies and behaviour during writing.

Table 5-9: Summary of S6 and S3's planning strategies and behaviours during writing

| Subject | Comments |
|---|---|
| S6 | ➢ She used both local and global planning on different occasions.<br>➢ She explicitly verbalised her global and local plans, i.e., what to include in the essay, and what to write next..<br>➢ She repeatedly used local planning for, e.g., what to say next at the level of a sentence, or a part of a sentence, or to declare a movement from one part to another within the essay.<br>➢ She used global planning different times in what to say in a succeeding paragraph, and when planning to edit her whole paragraphs before commencing the conclusion.<br>➢ She planned for revision at the level of words, phrases and sentences mainly for substitution. |
| S3 | ➢ She had a single case of a global planning for what to include in a successive paragraph.<br>➢ There were no explicit verbalising behaviours in S3's protocol concerning local planning. She was not clear in what to include in her next steps.<br>➢ She did not look at and consider her essay as a whole, i.e., she did not globally planned her essay while writing.<br>➢ She did not plan for revision. |

## 5.3.1.2 Scanning

The strategy which was used most by both subjects was the strategy of scanning. Re-reading what has been written so far to refresh their minds and to aid the next bit of planning and move forward is confirmed as a common strategy of both subjects regardless of their writing proficiency level. This less cognitively demanding strategy than for example other strategies such as rehearsing or planning, (Alhaysony, 2008) was, in fact, used by all subjects in this study, and it occurred at different levels (see 4.3.1.3). Hence, both S6 and S3 also used it, as can be seen in the excerpts in Appendix 18-D, but there are some differences in what way and how often they used it as it will be explained below.

S6 and S3 used re-reading at different levels and in different occasions (i.e., reading the assigned topic, reading the outline (in the case of S6), repeating words or phrases, reading part or whole of their writing). However, the sub-strategy of scanning, i.e., reading part or whole of the directions, which was confirmed as being used by other subjects in this research (see 4.3.1.3) was in fact not used by either subjects in question (see Tables 4-11 & 4-12 in Chapter Four).

S6 finished the introduction and she only had to re-read the first sentence in the paragraph twice before she continued again and completed writing the rest of the paragraph till the end (see Appendix 18-D). However, as she finished, she decided to go back and re-read it again as a whole to see if what she had written matched the intended meaning. As she was contented with what she had written, then she moved to the first paragraph in the body of her essay, *So now I am going to move on to the body and start writing about the student's home*.

Reading over longer chunks of discourse by this subject was quite common, as she read between sentences and between paragraphs as illustrated in the first excerpt (see Appendix 18-D). Hence, as she completed a paragraph, whether it is the introduction, a paragraph within the body or the conclusion, she would read it before moving forward to writing the following paragraph within the body of her essay. These incidents of global reading enabled the subject to look at ideas and paragraph in relation to each other and to check for meaning and coherence (El Mortaji, 2001). S6's such composing process supported a recursive understanding of writing.

Reading back what she had written also helped S6 produce some vocabulary needed to continue with writing when moving forward was difficult for her. In the second excerpt, as demonstrated in Appendix 18-D, we could see that she decided to read back a few sentences as she had difficulty moving forward, and this eventually helped her find the suitable words to keep the meaning and continue writing. We could also see that she had made some changes, on the way, to the text while she was applying the strategy of re-reading (e.g., the omission of the preposition 'on'), though this was not her primary concern when she first decided to read back what she had written. Therefore, reading back by S6 not only assisted her in the completion of her task, but also helped her evaluate previously written text and made whatever changes needed.

Moreover, S6 needed to go back to the outline in order to remember the ideas she generated and pre-planned before she started writing as illustrated in excerpt 3 in Appendix 18-D. While writing her first draft, and as she finished writing sentence 5 of the first paragraph in the body of her essay, S6 stopped and went back to read the outline she had written on the first page of her first draft. This helped the student to have more focus and produced a concluding sentence that reflected the main concept

of the paragraph i.e., students' home. In fact, this subject revisited the outline different times throughout the writing process, and whenever she needed to recall the ideas she had generated at the outset of the protocol as she did, for example, while writing her last sentence in the concluding paragraph. She stopped, read the outline, and then rephrased the three points in the outline and included them in the last sentence of her essay. S6 knew that the outlines provided good control over her ideas and they successfully helped her to integrate them to develop her argument.

In addition to reading the outline, S6 read over her text. For example, in the fourth excerpt (see Appendix 18-D), as soon as she finished writing the last paragraph in the body of her essay she decided to go back and read the introduction. As she explained, a conclusion to her was a repetition of the introduction but in different words. Therefore in order to focus on the main idea, she had read back the introductory paragraph three times before she commenced the conclusion. This behaviour reflected her understanding of composing as a problem-solving activity and a recursive process.

Reading the assigned topic was also observed, as illustrated in the fifth excerpt in Appendix 18-D. S6 read the assigned topic three times throughout the writing session, and in the fifth excerpt mentioned above the subject referred to the topic and read part of it as she commenced the second paragraph in the body of her essay where she intended to write about the quality of teaching. Then she read the whole title again and continued with writing. In fact, this subject's reading of the title was infrequent, i.e., she read it at the very beginning when she commenced her essay, then twice more when writing the second paragraph in the body of her essay. This could be due to the fact that she had focused on the title and rephrased it and underlined certain key words in it before she began writing; therefore, she did not need to read it more frequently.

On the other hand, S3's reading behaviour was different from that of S6. This can be seen in the size of the parts being read by this subject (see Tables 4-11 and 4-12 in Chapter Four). For example, excerpt 1 in Appendix 18-D shows that most of what this subject re-read while writing her first paragraph was a repetition of single words or phrases rather than reading larger units of discourse (i.e., a sentence or more) which, as can be seen, was only done twice while she was producing her first

paragraph. So we have seen that this subject usually repeated the last word, or words, in the part that she had already produced. She did so to keep herself progressing and seemed related to gaining momentum for what was to come next (Hall 1987: 265), and maybe to show that she was fulfilling the requirement of the task and kept verbalising her thoughts. However, S3's reading afterwards was not only limited to single words or phrases, but also to a sentence level (see excerpt 2 in Appendix 18-D). In fact, this subject's writing counted much on reading back parts of the title (see excerpt 2). To put it differently, this subject had to go back to the topic to help her focus on the main theme in it, for she had not rephrased the title or underlined any key words in it, nor did she put any outlines before she commenced writing. So instead of making a list of issues from the title in the first place, she took one issue from it, wrote about that, and then went back to the title to think about what to write next. This could be the reason that made her revisit the topic whenever she lacked ideas to keep herself within its demand. The following table is to summarise the scanning strategies used by both subjects.

Table 5-10: Summary of S6 and S3's scanning strategies

| Subject | Comments |
|---------|----------|
| S6 | ➢ She reread what she had written at a paragraph level (i.e., she read longer chunks of discourse) especially when moving from part into another within the essay.<br>➢ Re-reading helped S6 retrieve necessary vocabulary needed to move forward.<br>➢ She read the outline several times to help her keep the focus and to remember the ideas she generated prior to writing.<br>➢ She read back the assigned topic |
| S3 | ➢ She repeated single words or phrases rather than reading larger units of discourse.<br>➢ She read the assigned topic to help her focus on the main theme in it.<br>➢ She did not read an outline because she did not produce one. |

### 5.3.1.3 Rehearsing

Rehearsing is another strategy that was employed by these subjects for text generation. The most common types of rehearsing employed were strategies to find a focus, elaborate and clarify an idea, and rehearsing for word choice.

S3 rehearsed for ideas before writing. She rehearsed before she commenced the introduction where she verbalised her thoughts in Arabic to find a focus. Once she

had enough ideas in her mind, she was ready to start. S3's use of rehearsing was not in fact restricted to the onset of the protocol, but she also rehearsed throughout the process as can be seen in the second excerpt in Appendix 18-E. Hence, after completing her introductory paragraph, S3 did not proceed with writing immediately. Instead, she used rehearsing and verbalised her thoughts, and once she had sufficient ideas in her mind, she was ready to begin. What is worth mentioning here is that most of the rehearsing this subject did was in the L1 (Arabic) that is, rehearsing ideas in one language to be written in another (El Mortaji, 2001).

On the other hand, S6 rehearsed more often than S3 (see Tables 4-9 and 4-10 in Chapter Four). S6 rehearsed for word choice as observed in the first and second excerpts in Appendix 18-E, and it occurred in the questioning tone. S6 would ask a question with the intention of finding a suitable phrase or expression. Then she would give different answers to the question, and would choose and select the most appropriate one and incorporate it in her text.

In a different case, as illustrated in the third excerpt (see Appendix 18-E), S6 chose to rehearse as she finished writing the body of her essay and decided to write the conclusion. She rehearsed what ideas to include in the conclusion, as a result of which she decided to re-read the introduction, as she thought that ideas in both conclusion and introduction are the same but to be expressed in different words. Using more rehearsing on the part of S6, and especially rehearsing and questioning helped her retrieve information and developed her ideas and her argument than did S3 who rehearsed relatively infrequently in her L1 which she used quite often in her writing. However, rehearsing in the L1 by S3 meant she had thought in her L1 and then had to translate her thoughts and ideas into L2 which resulted in some cases in writing down awkward and non-cohesive sentences that might fail to convey the meaning intended as can be seen in the following part taken from S3's final draft: *while that he will improve his knolwedge about the study. and his personltiy what he want to be in study. and think about his future a lot . he will try to be success like his teacher. and her the role of teacher as aguide for the student to learn them and improve their personlities to be success...* (see Appendix 13 for S3's whole text).The subjects' rehearsing strategies can be summarised as follows:

Table 5-11: Summary of S6 and S3's rehearsing strategies

| Subject | Comments |
|---------|----------|
| S6 | ➢ She rehearsed both prior to and while writing.<br>➢ She rehearsed more often than S3, and she rehearsed in a questioning tone which distinguished her from S3.<br>➢ She rehearsed in L2 for word choice and to elaborate and clarify ideas before writing them down. |
| S3 | ➢ She rehearsed both prior to and while writing (similar to S6).<br>➢ She rehearsed mostly in L1(unlike S6).<br>➢ Her rehearsal was mainly to find a focus and to elaborate and clarify ideas which then translated and written down in English. |

## 5.3.1.4 Revision strategies

In terms of revising and editing, both subjects shared the use of similar types of strategies at different levels of the writing process while writing the second (and final) versions of their essays. Therefore, the two subjects were found to use similar types of revising, such as revising for substitution and addition, and also similar types of editing such as editing for addition, deletion, form or tense verb, and word form (see Tables 4-18 and 4-19 in Chapter Four). In fact, neither S6 nor S3 used revising for word choice, and the total number of revision strategies (including both revising and editing strategies) used by S6 and S3 were 37 times and 27 times respectively. Therefore, S6 used these strategies more frequently than S3 as can be seen in Tables 4-16, 4-17, 4-18, and 4-19 (see section 4.3.1.6 in Chapter Four).

Two kinds of revision were revealed by the protocols of both subjects: the first one was revision that occurred as a consequence of re-reading back what had been written, and the second one was immediate revision took place immediately after writing a word or a group of words.

However, it was observed that no revising or editing strategies were performed by S3 while writing the first draft and she made all of her revisions while writing her second and final draft. On the contrary, S6 made different revisions in her first draft as can be seen in the excerpts in Appendix 18-F.

In the first excerpt (see Appendix 18-F) and as S6 decided to start with the first paragraph in the body of her essay, she crossed out the first two words *although the*, that she wrote for the topic sentence of the paragraph, and verbalised her intention to

change them. So she substituted these two words for another word *education*, and then she made another revision where she preceded the word *education* by the definite article *the* and also added the suffix *al* changing the part of speech of the word *education* from a noun into an adjectival phrase *the educational*, and continued writing – *the educational process….* She also made another revision afterwards where she crossed out (i.e., editing for deletion) the word *about* which she had just written.

It can also be observed that S6 did some types of editing while writing her first draft as can be seen in the third and fourth excerpts in Appendix 18-F. In excerpt 2, for example, she used *editing for deletion* when she crossed out the preposition *of,* and in excerpt 3 she used *editing for word form* by adding the suffix *ing* to the word *encourage.* All these changes took place as a consequence of re-reading back what had been written.

We have seen that S6 began to revise soon after she had started to write her first draft, which explains the recursive process of revision, while there was no sign for such revisions on the part of S3 in her first draft, and she did not even attend to surface-level changes, such as vocabulary, spelling and punctuation at this stage of the composing process.

On the other hand, while writing their final drafts and as mentioned before, both subjects were engaged in different types of revisions. In excerpt 1 (see Appendix 18-G), we could see that S3 made many revising and editing changes on her second draft. Hence, she used revision for addition, revision for substitution, editing for form or tense verb, editing for addition. But it was clearly noticed that the strategy she used most at this stage was the strategy of revision for addition. For example, she added more chunks of words to her original text, and she also substituted some words and phrases for others. Moreover, what this subject changed did affect the meaning sometimes and resulted in adding further ideas to the text after these strategies were used as a result of adding large chunk of words and substituting part of what she had written for other different parts. This much revision done on the second and final draft could be attributed to the fact that S3 had not made any revision on her first draft because she, at the time, wanted to put down the ideas she had at hand fairly soon without worrying too much about revising or editing. This resulted in adding

various chunks of words and she was in a hurry to commit her thoughts directly to paper without trying them out or assessing them in connection with the whole essay.

Therefore, these changes were not necessarily appropriate, or added much to the improvement of the text as we can see in the excerpts in Appendix 18-G. For instance, various spelling and grammatical mistakes were not considered by her, and her text still lacked the appropriate punctuation and capitalisation. There were no clear boundaries between sentences and the whole text was written as if it was a few very long sentences.

S3 continued using the strategies of revision for addition and revision for substitution for the rest of her text when writing her final draft as can be illustrated in excerpt 2 in Appendix 18-G. Moreover, she used editing for grammar, editing for word form, and editing for deletion (see excerpt 3 in Appendix 18-G) in dealing with surface level features.

On the other hand, S6's first paragraph on her second (and final) version was rewritten rather smoothly as can be seen in the first excerpt in Appendix 18-G. No major changes occurred at this particular stage apart from a revision which involved substitution. Hence, as S6 was not satisfied with the first phrase *we can*, in her second sentence, she substituted it by another one and therefore instead of saying: *we can consider…*, she decided to write: *Most of us consider…*, and afterwards she commented that the latter would be more convenient and convey the meaning intended. She then continued with copying the rest of the paragraph without attempting to make any more changes.

In addition to revising for substitution in the first paragraph, S6, again, revised for substitution in the second paragraph, but in this case the process took longer time and it involved other types of strategies such as repetition of words and phrases, commenting, local planning, rehearsing and questioning, as illustrated in excerpt 2 (see Appendix 18-G). Therefore, as soon as she decided to substitute the word *unlike* for *whereas* and started writing the sentence, S6 also had to make changes to the part of the sentence where the word *whereas* belonged. As a result, she planned to change the sentence and started repeating parts of it till she came to a point where she was stuck because she did not know how to complete the sentence in progress and

expressed her confusion. Then she planned to compare between the two options by rehearsing in a questioning mode *is it better to say…?* till she settled down with one of the two options: *whereas uneducated parents are unable to take part in the learning process*, which was observed as another revision for substitution.

It was observed through S6's protocol (see Appendix 11-A) that the type of revising she used while writing her final draft was mainly revising for substitution (see Table 4-16). This shows that she had access to a large vocabulary, which is considered as an indication of the subject's good level of writing proficiency (see sub-section 5.2.1 above).

S6 did not make any changes to paragraph 3 (see excerpt 3 in Appendix 18-G) while producing her final draft, and she just redrafted it as it was, and nearly the same happened with the concluding paragraph apart from using editing for word form when she changed the word *and* into *as well as* (see also excerpt 4). Therefore, the changes S6 made in her entire writing did not, in fact, alter the ideas already existed or develop new ones. The following table illustrates a summary of both subjects' revision strategies.

Table 5-12: Summary of S6 and S3's revision strategies

| Subject | Comments |
|---------|----------|
| S6 | ➢ She revised her text at different levels of the process- at the beginning, middle, and the end of the writing processes (which explains the recursive process of revision), and she revised and edited while producing both first and final drafts.<br>➢ Some of her revisions were done as a result of re-reading, especially after reading back larger units of discourse.<br>➢ The type of revisions she did most on both drafts were revisions for substitution. |
| S3 | ➢ She revised only while producing the second draft.<br>➢ Her revisions occurred mainly within the sentence in progress, and they were done mostly by adding new words to the text (revision for addition).<br>➢ The changes she made on her second draft resulted in affecting the meaning of the original text sometimes because of using many revisions for addition. |

### 5.3.1.5 Questioning strategies

S3 used questioning more often than S6, and she used them mostly in Arabic (L1). For example, at the outset of the protocol, she asked questions to facilitate the understanding of the assigned topic in order to find a focus. At the beginning, she asked to copy down the assigned topic, and that was in English: *Can I write the title,*

*the topic?* (see excerpt 1 in Appendix 18-H). Then she began writing the topic, and before finishing that she stopped and asked again, in Arabic this time, about the meaning of the phrase *than by* which was in the topic: (*What does it mean 'than by' here? Does it mean 'more than'?*)(see excerpt 2 in Appendix 18-H). Asking these questions about the topic was considered as an attempt by this subject to understand what was required of her to write about, because understanding the topic for her means understanding what ideas to include in the essay. This was confirmed when she once more asked in Arabic about the topic, a translation of which is as follows: (*So the assigned topic here is like a question?*). Hence, three questions so far were asked by S3 about the assigned topic before she started writing her first draft.

Nevertheless, the strategy of questioning was used by S6 but for different purposes. That is, S6 did not ask any questions about the topic, nor did she copy it down. Instead, she read it once, and then commented by saying '*OK*', which indicated that she faced no difficulties understanding the topic and what was required of her to include in her essay (see Appendix 11-A). In fact, the cases where S6 used questioning as a strategy occurred twice throughout the whole writing process. Once for the purpose of checking word choice: *who use, or who's using? I think who always use the same technique, who use, who using, I think using is better* (see excerpt 1 in Appendix 18-H), and the second time when she used Arabic for a single occasion in a questioning mode to check the structure of a sentence:نزبطها كيف هنايا (*how can I fix it here?*) (see excerpt 2 in Appendix 18-H). Asking only two questions by S6 during the whole writing process and for the purposes such as the ones I have highlighted above indicates that the subject was quite aware of the purpose of writing, knew what was required of her, and therefore showed self-confidence and self-reliance in moving on with writing without unnecessary interruption.

Asking questions by S3, however, continued when she finished writing the first paragraph in the first draft in her essay. In fact, the question she asked (again in Arabic) was not about the topic this time, but it was about how much she needed to write in her essay as a whole: (*how long is the essay? I mean the length of writing?*)(see excerpt 4 in Appendix 18-H). Asking such a question by S3 meant that she was not very much interested in writing especially when she followed this

question by a comment saying that she did not like writing too much (see Appendix 11-B for the complete protocol of S3).

Moreover, S3 used questioning again after rehearsing for a while to ask about the third point included in the topic. The subject said that she had talked about two points so far, the home and the teacher, and that she was trying to remember the third issue. This was followed by a long rehearsal in Arabic in which she decided to talk about the educational programmes as the next point in her essay. The following table includes a summary of the subjects' use of questioning.

Table 5-13: Summary of S6 and S3's use of the questioning strategies

| Subject | Comments |
|---------|----------|
| S6 | ➢ She used questioning only twice- once to check word choice, and again for checking coherence.<br>➢ She did not ask any questions to clarify about the topic which meant that she understood the topic and its wording fully.<br>➢ She was quite aware of the purpose of writing and knew what was required of her and showed self-confidence while writing; therefore, she did not interrupt herself by asking many questions. |
| S3 | ➢ She asked different questions, e.g., to check ideas, check word choice and to check organisation.<br>➢ She asked questions mainly in L1.<br>➢ She asked questions to clarify about the topic prior to writing giving an indication that she had some difficulty with the interpretation of the assigned topic. |

### 5.3.1.6  Use of dictionary

Only S6 resorted to her electronic dictionary to find solution for her lexical problems. S6 used her dictionary mainly to find a synonym for a word or to check spelling. S6 used the dictionary three times during the composing process— once to find a synonym for the word 'effect' and twice to check spelling. However, direct observation and examination of S3's protocol reveal that she did not use the dictionary though she had the opportunity to do so.

### 5.3.1.7  Overall summary of S6's and S3's strategies and behaviours

The qualitative analysis of S6's and S3's data revealed that the subjects employed similar writing processes, i.e., planning, drafting, and reviewing but more recursively on part of the good writer, S6; however, they adopted different approaches and procedures. S6's planning strategies at the onset of the writing process differed from

those of S3 in that the former made use of global planning and organised her essay and what to say in general, and wrote down an outline for the essay to which she adhered and never changed in the process of writing. S3, unlike S6, did not set high goals at the beginning of the protocols; hence, there was no evidence of trying out beginnings, making notes or outlining. S6 also rehearsed and made use of her prior knowledge by deciding what to write in her thesis statement. Also she used a type of rehearsing not used by S3 which was rehearsing using questioning, and rehearsing for word choice.S3's rehearsing about the topic was done in Arabic and she spent most of the time at the onset of the protocols trying to understand the topic and to figure out how to proceed, and she embarked on writing soon after finding her focus. As those subjects proceed with writing, S6 was more capable to view her ideas, sentences and paragraphs in relation to each other. She repeatedly used local planning and declared what to say next, and also planned globally, for example, in what to say in some succeeding paragraphs; she also planned for revision. On the other hand, no evidence of any local planning done by S3 while writing, nor did she plan for revision. Moreover, S6 showed no difficulty in verbalising her thoughts while writing, while S3 was observed as uncertain on how to go about the task at some point in the protocol (see Appendix 11-B).

S6 was also keen to read back what had been written to check the progress of her text and assess the overall meaning and unity. She showed her ability to read beyond the sentence level, and read over a group of sentences and paragraphs, especially before starting with a new paragraph or when moving from one part to another. Rather than allowing her to look at ideas in relation to each other and proceed forward in the text, S6's re-reading sometimes resulted in revising and editing.S3's re-reading was mainly at the words and phrases' level rather than reading larger units of discourse. Revision, for S6, was used as an integral part of writing and took place at various levels and while producing both drafts; S3, on the other hand, revised only while producing the final draft. Taking into account that S6 applied the conventional stages of writing and also did S3, but S6 used effective strategies more frequently and at different levels of the process, and therefore she displayed more recursiveness than S3.Usually good writers follow the conventional writing stages of planning, drafting, and post drafting, and they are more committed to the writing task and often produce more than one draft at a time. They also use more effective writing strategies than

poorer writers. The research literature support this position as many research findings (e.g., Pianko, 1979; Flower and Hayes, 1980; Raimes, 1985; Whalen, 1993; El Mortaji, 2001; Chaaban, 2010) reveal that it is the writing strategies and general writing processes that mainly distinguishes good from poor writers.

At this point, I shall turn to the other two cases, S2 and S9 representing two more examples of good and poor writers.

### 5.3.2   S2 and S9's writing strategies

These two case studies (S2 and S9) are included in this qualitative analysis for two-reasons. First, to present two more cases of good and poor writers in order to test the findings and supplement answer already given in the previous sub-section to research question 2: Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use? Second, the possibility that S6 wrote a good essay because she had followed the conventional phases of writing, i.e., pre-drafting, drafting and post drafting as sequential stages was not necessarily true in all cases. S9, another good writer, in fact seemed to break these rules when he did not adhere to these conventional stages and never had a post drafting stage as such; yet by considering his final essay, it is noticeable that he did not miss to incorporate in the text everything that would meet the good standard of written text. In other words, S9 was a case that did not fit expectations. He produced only one draft, and submitted his essay without redrafting it or even proof-reading it. Therefore, this case (S9) needs to be analysed to explain the findings in relation to the other good writer (S6), and also to the other two poor writers (S3 and S2) where relevant.

However, in what comes next I shall start with analysing the data related to the poor writer (S2) first, leaving the unconventional case (S9) to be introduced later. An attempt will be made to compare this poor writer (S2) with the other poor writer S3, whose case has already been discussed in the previous sub-section 5.3.1, and to the other good writers, where relevant, to see if the strategies used were similar or different. Then I shall turn to the other good writer (S9) to see what type of strategies him and S6 also shared or did not. The two cases (S2 and S9) will be investigated in light of the data derived from the protocols, interviews, direct observation and

written texts in an attempt to bring more findings, confirm or otherwise the previous findings regarding S6's and S3's cases, contribute to answering the research questions, and add more to the research discussion.

### 5.3.2.1 S2's writing strategies

Data revealed that S2, as a poor writer, seemed to struggle in writing her essay. Moreover, there were signs of some difficulty in verbalising her thoughts while writing. In the next sub-sections, a description of the approach and strategies employed by S2 across the writing task will be investigated and analysed, then compared with her peer (S3) and justify any strategic and/or behavioural similarities or variances where relevant. The strategies that were mostly used by S2 at the onset of writing are planning, rehearsing, and use of L1. I shall start with the planning strategies first.

### 5.3.2.1.1 Planning strategies

Planning strategies before any writing is done will be discussed first. Afterwards, planning strategies during writing will be presented.

### 5.3.2.1.1.1 Planning strategies prior to writing

S2 started in a similar way to the two good writers (S6 and S9) as she, for example, began with reading the assigned topic. However, she only read part of the topic twice instead of reading it as a whole and then began writing down the same part that she had read. This, to a certain extent, was similar to S9, as he also read the assigned topic first and then wrote it down, but different from her counterpart (S3) who only started with writing down the topic instead of reading it first. S2 was also different from S3 in that she verbalised her thoughts in Arabic when she planned to read the topic *(at the beginning I'll read the topic)* while her peer (S3) expressed her willingness to write the topic in a questioning tone in English.

Nevertheless, S2 was similar to her counterpart (S3) in that both writers never used any other relevant strategies at this stage as, for example, underlining of key words in the topic or paraphrasing the assigned topic in their own words. This can be illustrated in the following excerpt taken at the onset of S2's protocol:

في الاول بنقراء العنوان.1 (*at the beginning I'll read the topic*) (use of L1)(local planning). <u>Success in education is influenced more by the student home or educational programme</u> (reading part of the assigned topic). Emmm العنوان(*the topic*)(use of L1) <u>Success in , success in</u> (repetition) <u>education is influenced more by the student home or the educational programme</u> (reading part of the assigned topic). (SUBJECT READ PART OF THE TOPIC TWICE).

ايه هذا كويس (*yes, that's good*) (use of L1) <u>Success in education is influenced more by the student home or education progam.</u>

2.

الانترودكشن لازم نكتبوا فيها المين ايديا (*in the introduction we should write the main idea*) (use of L1)(global planning)صعب اني نفكر بصوت عالي صعب(*it's difficult for me to think-aloud*) (use of L1) ( STUDENT HERE COMMENTED ON VERBALISING HER THOUGHTS SAYING IT'S DIFFICULT TO THINK ALOUD)

3.

ما قدرتش ما عرفتش كيف نطلعها ما عرفتش (*I can't, and I don't know how to do it, I don't know*)(use of L1) (AGAIN SHE SAID IT'S DIFFICULT TO THINK ALOUD)

4.

اول حاجة بنقسمه الى عدة بارغرافات (*First I need to divide it (the essay) into several paragraphs*)(use of L1)(global planning) emmm

أني بنقول أن جميع الأماكن في المجتمع تؤثر في التعلم و لكن كيف نجيبوها هذه ؟كيف إنجيبوها؟ الأماكن في المجتمع

(*I want to say that every place in society has an influence on education, but how can we say this in English? how can we say it?*) (use of L1) (rehearsing and questioning), ( *places in the society*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), <u>every place in society, in the society has influence on education, on education, on the success in education</u>(rehearsing) أوكي خليني نبدي(*OK, let me start*) (use of L1) (local planning)

As can be seen in excerpt 1 above, S2 planned (using L1) to read the assigned topic. In fact, reading and/or writing down the assigned topic was a strategy observed in all the four cases as if one cannot do the task without this. After reading part of the assigned topic twice, S2 commented on that by saying in Arabic (*yes, that's good*), which was observed as a sign of understanding the topic wording, a fact that was contrary to S3's case when we saw that she (S3) was struggling in understanding the wording of the assigned topic (see 5.3.1.1.1). After S2 read that part of the topic twice, she started writing it down.

It is clear that the strategies S2 used at this stage were planning to read the topic (local planning), and also what to include in the introduction (global planning: planning the content of a paragraph) as she stated in Arabic: (*in the introduction we should write the main idea)* as can be seen in excerpt 2, or planning to divide her essay into several paragraphs (also in Arabic) (*First I need to divide it into several paragraphs*) as shown in excerpt 4, but did not state how many paragraphs or plan the content of those other paragraphs. Moreover, apart from being used in a

superficial way, this type of global planning done by S2 was limited to the onset of the writing process.

S3, on the other hand, also did a global planning indicating what to start with next, but she did not plan what strategies to use. Moreover, neither S2 nor S3 used written plans (outlining), nor did they plan the content of their essay as a whole.

It might be worth mentioning here that prior to starting writing, S2 suddenly verbalised her thoughts (in Arabic) stating that it was difficult for her to think aloud (see excerpts 2 and 3 above). She consecutively repeated her concern about the difficulty to think aloud twice, using Arabic. At this time the researcher decided to interfere and proposed that she could have a break and start again afterwards if she wished, but she insisted to carry on and started again immediately. This was in keeping with the response S2 gave in the interview regarding the difficulty in thinking aloud while writing, she said: *"Difficult. It's better when you write not to say anything, because if you think aloud you will disturb everything in writing"*. It might be possible that S2 found the writing task demanding and stressful and was probably not good at it; therefore, tried to blame the think-aloud task whether or not it was really affecting her.

S2 also used local planning once more after she had rehearsed in L1 for a while and asked herself questions (again in L1) about how she could say in English what she had already rehearsed (*How can we say this in English?*). Her local planning this time represented what she had intended to do next which was her decision to start writing, (*OK, let me start)* and it was again in L1. These attempts of verbalisation in L1, indicating different strategies (e.g., rehearsing, and local planning) where, in the former, she explained difficulty in how to say things in English, confirm that she could think-aloud her thoughts while writing. However, this was done in L1 instead of L2 which might be related to reasons connected to linguistic competence issues (see 6.5.1) rather than to difficulties in implementing the think-aloud task as she claimed above in her response to the interview question.

At this point, she started writing her first sentence: *Every place in the society has influence on the success in education*. The activities S2 practised before started

actual writing took her 6.17 minutes, which was the longest compared with her peers (S6 and S3) (see Table 4-2 in Chapter Four).

When comparing S2 with S3, as poor writers, with respect to time prior to writing, one can see that they demonstrated both different and similar strategies. What was different is that S2 adopted more planning strategies than S3. S2 used four planning strategies (two global and two local) compared with only one (global planning) that was used by her peer (S3). However, I observed that S2's global planning attempts were really general as she did not plan the content of her essay's paragraphs.  In addition, both commenced the task differently as S2 read part of the assigned topic twice before writing it down, while S3 began with writing the whole assigned topic without reading it. However the similarities they shared at this stage were that they verbally planned, rehearsed, and mainly verbalised their thoughts in the L1. What they also had in common was that neither S2 nor S3 rephrased the assigned topic or underlined any of the key words, and more importantly neither of them wrote anything down as an outline. This was in line with the interview results, as both subjects asserted that they had not planned in writing. S2, as indicated in the interview, believed that writing down a written plan did not work for her and that she preferred to write ideas simultaneously as they came to her mind. She reported: *"I didn't plan in writing because I want everything to comes out natural"*. Then she added: *"but I plan if it is an exam to guess what kind of thoughts I have"*. S3 also had a similar response when asked if she had planned: *" I think about what I am going to write of course, but I don't usually write my thoughts"*. Additionally, S2 and S3 did not mention the reader nor did they consider his/her expectations at this stage, but S2 mentioned that me (the researcher) was her reader for this particular task a fact that was confirmed through her responses in the interview: "*yes, I thought about you as my reader*"; however, for S3, the story was different as she asserted that she wrote only for herself and not for anyone else in this particular session: "*Not every time I consider the reader. I don't care about this matter. In today's writing I just wrote for myself only.*"

### 5.3.2.1.1.2 Planning strategies during writing

Regarding the planning strategies during writing, the sub-strategy of local planning was not restricted to the outset of the protocol for S2, but it was there throughout the

writing process. As can be seen in the following excerpts, S2 applied local planning as she moved from one stage to another using the Arabic word 'توا'(*tawa*) means '*now*', which indicated that she had already finished writing about an idea and now ready to plan and write a new one.

---

1.توا البارغراف الثاني (*now, the second paragraph*)(use of L1) (local planning)

2.توا لازم نكتب على مزايا المنزل (*now, I should write about the advantages of the home*)(use of L1)(local planning)

3.توا الكنكلوجن (*now, the conclusion*) (use of L1) (local planning)

---

As illustrated in the above excerpts, when she was about to write her second paragraph, S2 planned to move from general ' *Every place in the society has influence on the success in education*' (the first sentence in her introductory paragraph), to specific (*now, I should write about the advantages of the home*). S2 also used local planning (using '*now*' again) when decided to start with her conclusion (see excerpt 3 above). However, there was not any other sign of planning done by S2 as, for example, to make local planning about the details to be included in every sentence of the introduction or any other paragraph, end up a certain paragraph, decide on particular connections between paragraphs, and the like, a case that was similar to her counterpart (S3) who also never did any of these local planning. However, S2 used local planning for two other different purposes. The first, when she decided to look up a word (circumstance) in a dictionary, and it was the only case that she used her L2 (English) in planning what to do next: <u>*I need to check it in the dictionary*</u>, and the second when she planned (using L1) editing for spelling: (*I'll just leave it now and I'll come back to it later*) as she decided to leave checking the spelling of the word 'excellent' till later, though, in fact, she did not.

It is worth mentioning here that all the planning attempts S2 had were done in the L1, except for the one that has just been mentioned above (planning to look up a word in a dictionary). This was in common with S3, as both subjects verbalised their planning thoughts using their L1.

In comparison with S3 in terms of planning during writing, it can be said that S2 and S3 were different in that S2 used local planning 3 times while S3 never used any. No cases of global planning were performed during writing by either subject.

**5.3.2.1.2  Rehearsing and use of L1**

The think-aloud protocols indicated that there were 15 cases of rehearsing occurred throughout the writing session performed by S2 (see Table 4-10 in Chapter Four). As illustrated when talking about planning, S2 rehearsed at the onset of the protocol to find a focus. After reading and then writing down the part of the topic, S2 rehearsed in L1 to find a focus, but it appeared that she was facing some difficulty in how to translate the ideas into English. This became clear when the subject started asking herself questions in L1 (*but how can we say this in English? how can we say it?*) (rehearsing and questioning). These questions were asked with the intention of finding words to start with in English for what she had already rehearsed in L1. As soon as she found the words, she started rehearsing them again (in English), then when she felt ready to start writing she planned to do so (*OK, let me start*) and began immediately. The excerpts below are presented here for ease of reference. This is how she did it:

---

1.أني بنقول أن جميع الأماكن في المجتمع تؤثر في التعلم و لكن كيف نجيبوها هذه  ؟ كيف إنجيبوها؟
الأماكن في المجتمع

(*I want to say that every place in society has an influence on education, but how can we say this in English? How can we say it?*) (use of L1) (rehearsing and questioning), ( *places in the society*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), *every place in society, in the society has influence on education, on education, on the success in education* (rehearsing). أوكي خليني نبدي(*OK, let me start*) (use of L1) (local planning).Every place , every place (repetition) in the society has influence on the success in education, success in education (repetition).

2.بعتالي أهم مكانين هما البيت و المدرسة.
 (*then the two most important places are the home and school*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), *the most, maybe the most important place, places is the home and schools* (rehearsing). Ahha, Maybe the most important places is the home and schools.

---

The strategy of rehearsing in Arabic and then trying to translate the ideas into English, then once more rehearsed them in English before writing them down was quite common in S2's protocols as illustrated in excerpts 1 and 2 above. When the words of the voiced ideas are written down, this type of rehearsing is referred to as rehearsing leading to writing (Perl, 1979). Sometimes, however, S2 tried to work it out the other way round. In the second paragraph, for instance, she started writing straightaway after she planned to write about the advantages of the home. Before she was able to complete the first sentence, she stuck and began rehearsing in Arabic, but the rehearsal in her L1 did not help her explain the idea and carry on with writing in English this time. Therefore, she changed her mind and commented in Arabic (*it can't be like that*) and immediately crossed out what she had written, then started

rehearsing in Arabic in an attempt to find the focus again. This can be illustrated in the following excerpts:

---

1.The influence of the home, the home(repetition) sometimes give the student , the influence of the home sometimes give the student(repetition) تأثير المنزل يمكن ان يكون تحفيز(repetition) (*the influence of the home can be a motivation*)(use of L1) (rehearsing)ما تجيش (*It can't be like that*)(use of L1) the influence of the home sometimes give the student (SUBJECT CROSSES OUT 'THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOME SOMETIMES GIVE THE STUDENT')(revision for deletion)Emmm,

2.
نقولوا المنزل أحيانا يلعب دور مهم في النجاح في نجاح الطالب (*we may say that the home sometimes plays an important role in the student's success*)(rehearsing)(use of L1)

نقولوا (*we can say*)(use of L1) Of course, of course the home is play the main role in success, in success , the home is play the main role in success, but sometimes there's circumstances, but sometimes there's circumstances to prevent them to complete their study (rehearsing). Of course of course (repetition)the home the home(repetition) is play is play(repetition) the main role to make their children, children (repetition)SUCSUCCESS spelling success success (repetition)

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It was noticed that whenever S2 started rehearsing in Arabic, she could have the focus and was able to carry on with writing, but this was not the case once she started writing straightaway without rehearsing the ideas in advance in Arabic. We could notice that S2 was not successful when she started writing without rehearsing in L1 as illustrated in excerpt 1 above, but later when she started rehearsing in Arabic she became more confident and ready to start. This might also give her bases to not only write down the idea in the target language but also to rehearse in the L2 (see excerpt 2 above). It looked as if S2 was thrust forward by rehearsing in L1 and it helped her to maintain focus and elaborate and clarify ideas. This behaviour was also noticed with S3, as her rehearsals were mainly done in L1 then ideas were copied down in English after being translated. It could be argued, however, that the subjects' heavy reliance on L1 could be a result of their basic thinking in Arabic. This in turn might result in translating, directly, ideas from L1 into L2 which might also lead to producing sentences that might not sound English.

Hence, the use of the strategy of rehearsing by the other poor writer S3 while writing her essay was for pretty the same purpose S2 used it for, and both writers used rehearsing quite often both before writing and while writing. The reason S3 used it for was also to elaborate an idea, but she also used it for a different purpose such as to find a new focus. It is worth noting here that both subjects mainly rehearsed in the L1. However, rehearsing in a questioning form was rare and it was only done once by each subject.

### 5.3.2.1.3  Scanning

Re-reading what had been written so far to aid the next bit was a strategy that had been used by S2 to refresh her mind and move forward. S2 used the strategy of re-reading at different levels. She, for example, re-read the assigned topic, re-read part or whole of her writing, and re-read words or phrases that she had already written (see Table 4-12 in Chapter Four). However, no cases recorded for re-reading the directions that were given to the subject at the beginning of the session nor there were any cases of re-reading of an outline because S2 simply did not write one. This was in fact similar to the other poor writer, S3, who did not re-read the directions, nor the outline because she did not have one.

The analysis of the protocols revealed that S2 mainly repeated single words or phrases, and that she had little concern about re-reading part or whole of the text especially at the beginning of writing. Moreover, the analysis revealed that the purpose of re-reading done by S2 was, sometimes, to enable her produce more text whenever she faced a problem in doing so, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

> 1.بعتالي أهم مكانين هما البيت و المدرسة
>
> (*then the most two important places are the home and the school*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), _the most, maybe the most important place, places is the home and schools_ (rehearsing). Ahha, <u>May the most important places is the home and schools. May the most important places is the home and schools</u> (reading a large unit of discourse). <u>both of them has the main</u>, <u>main</u>(repetition), <u>main</u>(repetition), <u>has the main</u>(repetition), <u>has the main</u>(repetition)<u>motivation</u> for<u>, for student to success.</u>

In the above excerpt, S2 wrote a sentence '*May the most important places is the home and schools.*', yet appeared to be unable to go forward because she cannot think of a suitable word or words to start with next and keep the meaning she intended, so she read back the sentence she had just written and considered new words to start with in her new sentence and retained the meaning. Again she applied the sub-strategy of scanning (repeating) and repeated words and phrases after which she managed to retrieve an expression that seemed to be satisfactory (see the excerpt above). No repetition or re-reading took place while producing her second draft.

The similarities found between S2 and S3 were that they both applied exactly the same types of strategy of scanning while writing their essays (see Table 4-12 in Chapter Four), i.e., 'reading the assigned topic', 'reading words or phrases that they had already written', and in some cases 'reading part or whole of their writing', but

neither of them read the directions nor outlines. The difference between them, however, was related to the frequency of two of the sub-strategies of scanning. That is, S3 outnumbered S2 55 times to 30 times in 'reading words or phrases', but S2 outnumbered S3 4 times to 2 times in 'reading part or whole of their writing'.

### 5.3.2.1.4  Use of dictionary

Data revealed that dictionary was used only once by S2. This single occasion of using a dictionary by S2, who declared having difficulty in finding the words, occurred when she wanted to write the word 'circumstance'. For ease of reference, the following excerpt illustrates this:

---

1.To make their children success (repetition), but sometimes sometimes (repetition)there's s (editing for deletion) cicurmistance

كيف السبيلينق ابتعها توا ؟ (*how to spell it now?*) (use of L1 ) (questioning) *I need to check it in the dictionary* (planning to look up a word in a dictionary) (use of dictionary)

---

As it can be seen in the excerpt above, S2 wrote the word 'cicumstance' down incorrectly, then she knew about her mistake and asked herself a question in Arabic: (*how to spell it now?*) and decided to look it up in a dictionary which took her about 3 minutes to find it. For example, when she started looking for the word, she did not know at the beginning whether to look under 'C' or 'S'. Moreover, S2's protocols and observed behaviours appeared to indicate that she avoided using the dictionary afterwards. That was evidenced by, for example, the occasion on which S2 avoided using the dictionary to check the spelling again of a different word 'excellent' that she had decided to postpone earlier, and preferred to keep it as it was, uncorrected, even when she rewrote her second draft (see the excerpt below).

---

1.Ofcourse the home is playing (editing for form or tense verb) the main role to make their children success, but sometimes there's circumstance to prevent them to get for example the exllane
اكسبلن اكسبلن خليها توا نوليلها يعدين و خلاص (*excellent, excellent, I'll just leave it now and I'll come back to it later*) (use of L1)

---

The interview held with S2 gave an explanation for her behaviour: "*to be honest, I hate using the dictionary when I'm writing. But it is sometimes necessary for me because of my spelling mistakes in writing. It's really bad when I write I have to check a word I don't know or the spelling is wrong. I lose my concentration you know.*"

Maintaining concentration while writing, seems to be a problem for S2. For this reason, and if we go back to sub-section 4.3.1.4 in Chapter Four, we will see that most of the poor writers, including S2, used the strategy of postponement (S2 also used the strategy of avoidance) because at some point those poorer writers (or less language proficient writers) might find it a bit complicated to handle the writing constraints of orthographical, lexical, grammatical, and discourse decisions simultaneously which might be due to inefficient use of the available working memory capacity (cf. Schoonen et al., 2003& Stevenson, et al., 2006).

For S3, likewise, using the dictionary seemed unfavourable as the data revealed that she had never used a dictionary at all during her writing session though her final draft essay included several spelling mistakes and other usage errors (see Appendix 13). This supports the evidence that using a dictionary by those two poor writers is an undesirable habit which might be due to its distracting nature for those writers' thoughts while writing.

A good use of a dictionary could be regarded as a good indication for the writer's concern to use appropriate lexicon in order to transmit a message precisely to a reader through writing. We have seen that S2 had shown little concern for using the dictionary in order to have a better word choice or even to correct a spelling mistake of a word.

### 5.3.2.1.5 Concern for audience

Think-aloud protocols usually provide little evidence of concern for a reader, unless the writer him/herself overtly verbalised his/her awareness by making a direct reference to the reader when composing. It can be said that there was no evidence of direct reference to a reader at any of S2's composing processes. Moreover, the text S2 wrote (see Appendix 14) lacked the needed explicit links and signs that could facilitate understanding the written text by a reader. For example, there were no clear transitional expressions used between sentences or even between paragraphs (except for the adverb '*all in all*' which used to begin the conclusion) to help the reader keep a smooth flow of the ideas being expressed, let alone the other mechanical and punctuation mistakes. However, in the interview, S2 made reference to the audience when composing, but her concern was only how to get good marks when her text got

evaluated. That is, she considered the reader only when she believed that her text would be evaluated by someone who could be her language teacher or an examiner, i.e., "a reader with some kind of authority" (Victori, 1999: 544). This means that a reader to S2 is not perceived as a realistic goal (cf. Victori, ibid). S2's responses are a good illustration of this: "*When it is a teacher that will read my text, I would be scared, but when it is a normal person, I don't care because he will not evaluate me*". On the other hand, S2's counterpart (S3) reported never considering the reader when writing her essay for the think-aloud session, and she asserted that she just wrote for herself and not for another particular reader. However, she would have the same attitude, as S2, about a reader if the essay or text was written for her language teacher or an examiner. She (S3) explained that when saying: "*But when I write the exam, I think about the teacher or the examiner, and when I start writing I start thinking how is it gonna be convinced by the reader.*"

### 5.3.2.1.6 Revising and editing

It is a fact that incidents of reviewing strategies are not easy to observe because writers sometimes do their reviewing silently and in some other times maybe instinctively. However, the revising activities done by S2, as revealed by the think-aloud protocol and direct observations, showed that she did revise on both first and second drafts. The revision she did on her first draft, for example, included revisions for deletion, revision for substitution, and she also did some editing, such as editing for deletion and editing for spelling (see Table 4-17 and 4-19 in Chapter Four). The same types of revision were repeated by S2 when producing her second and final draft and she also used two more different cases of editing, i.e., editing for grammar and editing for form or tense verb (see Appendix 11-C for S2's complete think-aloud protocol).

In the excerpt below, we can see a case of a strategy of revision that was applied by S2 when she was producing her first draft:

---

1.<u>The influence of the home</u>, <u>the home</u>(repetition)<u> sometimes give the student</u> , <u>the influence of the home sometimes give the student</u>(repetition)تأثير المنزل يمكن ان يكون تحفيز (*the influence of the home can be a motivation*)(use of L1) (rehearsing)ما تجيش (*It can't be like that*)(use of L1) ~~the influence of the home sometimes give the student~~ (SUBJECT CROSSED OUT 'THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOME SOMETIMES GIVE THE STUDENT')(revision for deletion)Emmm,

---

In the example above, S2 wrote down the first line in a paragraph after she finished writing the introduction. Then she repeated verbally the first part of what she had written trying to translate it into Arabic to check the meaning and find a finishing point. At this point, however, she expressed her disagreement on what she had produced, also using Arabic: (*It can't be like that*) and started crossing the whole line. This incident of revision was followed by rehearsing, using L1, on the part of the writer and eventually she could start the paragraph again using different wordings but without altering the original meaning.

In spite of the fact that both poor writers (S2 and S3) had demonstrated many similar, but also different, strategies when writing their essays; however, at the revising stage, the difference is important. It could be said that S2's revising strategies, as revealed in her protocol were almost limited to the editing of surface-level structures such as grammatical and lexical features. In other words, the changes she made on paper did not affect the meaning, contrary to the other poor writer (S3) whose changes (which were only made on the second draft) did affect the meaning of the text because of the various chunks of texts added or replaced through using the strategies of revision for addition and revision for substitution. This massive revision done on the part of S3 on her second draft, was justified as to compensate for the lack of revision done while producing the first draft.

S2, in fact, spent most of her composing time on her first draft and the subsequent draft had only a few changes on it and no further ideas were added to the text. S2's revising procedure could be more appropriately defined as proof-reading strategies because they are limited to editing of surface level features. S2's response in the interview illustrates this: "*When I revise, I usually read what I have written from the beginning and see if I have forgot a word or anything like, for example, wrong spelling or wrong grammar, but I am not good in punctuation marks, to be honest, and usually revise them as well.*"

### 5.3.2.1.7 Overall summary of S2's strategy use and behaviour in connection with the other poor writer S3

What we have discussed earlier concerning how these two poor writers, S2 and S3, approached their writing tasks, and the types of strategies they used while composing, can be summarised as follows:

What the two poor writers, S2 and S3, had most in common in terms of the strategies used when writing in L2 was the prevalent use of the L1 throughout their composing processes. For example, when rehearsing their thoughts they usually started in Arabic and afterwards switched into English as they began writing down the ideas emerged. Moreover, both writers were found frequently switching into Arabic when verbalising content plans, and also when making comments or questioning. It could be argued that these two writers' prevalent use of Arabic while writing in English could be attributed to their lower level of L2 proficiency which resulted in increasing the likelihood to think in their L1 rather than in their L2, thus a greater use of the L1. However, English was almost used when transcribing ideas, and when reading back or repeating text that had already been written which might be for the purpose of fulfilling the requirement of the think aloud task. One exception to this occurred when S2 read back a part of a line she wrote to begin her first paragraph, then she changed her mind and crossed the whole line out (as explained and illustrated in the excerpt above). Another case was recorded when S3 repeated a single word in Arabic after it had been written in English. This activity was apparently performed with the aim of assessing whether the English word written down made any sense to her, and whether it expressed the intended meaning. Thus, no notable differences were identified in terms of L1 use while writing in L2 between these two poor writers except in the number of occurrences of this strategy as S2 outnumbered S3  35 to 13.

S2 and S3 also, and to a certain extent, approached their tasks in a similar way, as they both for example tried to have a focus by either reading or writing down the assigned topic, or by asking questions to clarify the meaning (S3). S3, for example, asked two questions related to the topic as to gain more time that would enable her to better grasp the topic and clarify its structure, followed by rehearsing the ideas that came to her mind before started writing.

In terms of rehearsing, we saw that both writers rehearsed in their L1. However, the difference these two writers exhibited in their strategy use existed in the strategy of revising. That is, as S2 reviewed both her first and second drafts, S3, on the other hand, revised only her second and final draft and used quite many revising strategies causing a lot of changes to the text. Moreover, thinking aloud as a technique required to elicit subjects' writing strategies and behaviours while composing in English seemed to be problematic to execute for S2, despite the instructions and training all subjects equally received. It was also noticed that S3 had had such difficulty in thinking aloud and composing at the same time and most of her verbalisation was done in L1 (see 6.6, and Appendices 11-B & 11-C).

In general, both poor writers appeared to be less motivated for the written task, which was clear, for example, through their lack of attention paid for a reader whom for S2 and S3 was mainly their teacher or examiner and for the purpose of getting marks. Their lack of motivation could also be reflected in them being indifferent towards using the dictionary despite, maybe, the good reason for using it, especially on part of S3 whom also never endeavoured any efforts to revise her first draft and who also explicitly explained her dislike for writing, as explained in previous sections. The relatively short essays produced, and also the relatively short time spent composing (see Table 4-5 in Chapter Four) could be another sign of a lack of motivation for the task on part of those subjects, as writing for them seemed laborious and demanding and consequently, they seem to have low motivation to perform and develop this skill, hence practising it was mainly to pass it or to get good grades. This might be apparent in the answers they gave when asked about whether it was important for them to be able to write well in English, and why.

**(S2):**"*Yes, I think it's important and important also to success and get good marks because it's not easy this subject.*"

**(S3):** "*It's of course important, but I don't like it, but of course I want success in it, so I practise it and especially before the exams.*"

The interview responses above reveal that the interest these writers had in writing was rather linked with their willingness to pass and get good marks than, for example, to master or even improve this skill.

Now I will explain how the good writer, S9, approach his writing task, and the writing processes and strategies he applied while composing, and see how these strategies were similar or different in connection with the other good writer S6.

**5.3.2.2   S9's writing strategies**

In the following sub-sections, I will explain the processes and strategies S9 adopted while composing, and will begin with the planning stage and explain how he set himself off and got ready to write (i.e., the planning strategies he used prior to writing). After that, planning strategies during writing will be presented.

**5.3.2.2.1   Planning strategies**

**5.3.2.2.1.1   Planning strategies prior to writing**

After reading the assigned topic, S9 used a set of strategies such as writing down the assigned topic (see excerpt 1 below), repeating and underlining some of the key words and phrases in the topic in order to focus on the key components in it and fully understand what he was required to include in his essay. In fact, S9 started his composing session by emphasising the cognitive nature of composing by saying: *let's think, think, think*, (see excerpt 2 below), indicating his understanding that the composing process is a problem-solving activity, and that before writing a lot of thinking needed to be done, and a number of decisions might also need to be taken. Thus, he rehearsed in L2 for a while trying out possible ideas, and also verbalised his intention to simplify the content of his essay and divide it by organising ideas into certain main categories using frequent questioning. The writer said that he needed to split the essay into basically more obvious and simpler components (see excerpt 3). Accordingly, S9 spent most of his pre-writing time, although short (3.35 minutes), planning on the overall elements of the essay (i.e., global planning) and started copying down these elements in an outline form mostly in questioning form on a separate piece of paper. The following excerpts illustrate these activities:

1. The topic success in education is influenced more by students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme. Discuss. Emmm  (reading the assigned topic)
" success in education is influenced more by students' home-life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme"(SUBJECT WROTE DOWN THE ASSIGNED TOPIC BETWEEN INVERTED COMMAS WITHOUT VERBALISING HIS INTENTION TO DO SO)

2. Emmm, let's think, think, think, success in education (repetition) in home, basically parents (rehearsing) , emmm,

Regarding outlining,  we could see in excerpt 3 above that S9 rehearsed mostly in a questioning form to develop ideas for his outlines and then planned copying down the ideas related to the topic using the phrases: *let me write*..., *let me state*…, *let's go to*…, starting with the ideas concerned with the home first and wrote down notes, such as: *student and education at home*; *who teaches them at home?*; and *how long do they study for?,* then moved to writing down notes that were related to school, for example, *students and school*; *how effective is the teacher?*; *how much influence do the students have on each other's learning?,* and the like. Adopting written planning (outlining) basically seemed to give S9 a clear guideline of what to include in the essay. As soon as he finished writing down these outlines, he then decided to begin writing *OK let me start*. Nevertheless, when asked whether he was restricted to the initial plans while writing, S9 responded that he did not. S9 believed he was not constrained by his initial plan when writing, and in the interview he said he would add new ideas or sometimes discard planned ones as he developed the text. These were his exact words:

> *"I don't. No, no. Sometimes the ideas in the plan are not mentioned in the essay and sometimes some ideas in the essay are not in the plan. I don't just stick to the plan, no. So, just like I said, it's just flown, and the ideas just come, and the time I was planning I didn't have that idea. But sometimes I just discard an idea when I find it inappropriate to what I was writing at the time. Maybe at the time I was planning I found this could work, but when I am writing it I tried it and it didn't work really."*

What S9 said in the interview resonated with the data revealed from the protocols and also by what he had really put on paper. He did not stick to all the outlines he

made. For example, in his outlines he wrote down a note related to the materials to be used by the teacher and whether they are available or not (see excerpt 3 above); however, nothing was mentioned about this in his actual text. Moreover, he wrote a whole paragraph talking about his own case as an example (see Appendix 15), an idea that in fact was not among his written plan list, but was taken by S9 from the directions given to the subject along with the assigned topic at the onset of the writing task (see excerpt 4 above).S9's such behaviour supported the view of composing as a recursive process.

However, when comparing S9 with his counterpart S6 with regard to the strategies employed prior to writing, one can see that both subjects approached their essays in some similar ways. For example, they both read the topic at the onset of the protocols, underlining certain key words and phrases in the topic, but S9 also wrote the assigned topic down as soon as he finished reading it aloud, which was not the case for S6. Both subjects also rehearsed to find a focus (S6), or to develop ideas (S9) and globally planned their essays and wrote down written plans, though they differed in the number of outlines they had, as S9 wrote down more outlines and used most of his outlines in a question form, while S6 wrote them in a statement form. Moreover, S6 adhered to the exact outline she had written prior to start writing, while S9 did not. When comparing S9 with the other poor writers (S3 and S2) in this regard, it was clear that they were different in that none of the poor writers had an outline for their essays.

What differentiated S9 from his peer (S6) at this stage was the use of rehearsing as a strategy used to aid planning. For example, S9 was concerned about rehearsing and finding a focus by repeating some key words and phrases from the topic before making his plans and final decisions. Afterwards, he rehearsed mainly new ideas and then rehearsed by asking himself questions, like '*What else?*'. S6, on the other hand, used the strategy of rehearsing mainly to find a focus as soon as she finished reading the topic, and also paraphrased the assigned topic using her own words in the language being written in. We have also seen that S9 used a different strategy which was simplifying the complicated ideas he inferred from the topic by expressing his intention to split the essay into less complex components, as he said.

In sum, though S9 and S6 differed in somehow in planning and in the strategies used to aid planning, it could be concluded that both writers had a lot in common in this respect, and the most noticeable behaviour they shared at this stage was that all their strategies and decisions verbalised in the L2. Now planning strategies as used by S9 while writing will be explained.

### 5.3.2.2.1.2  Planning strategies during writing

For S9, planning was not only restricted to the onset of the protocol. S9 used the strategy of planning while writing quite frequently. Consider the examples below:

---

1. ~~Thus~~, making school making school (repetition)thus making school (repetition) a no thus making school(repetition)  ~~a place~~ no(revision for deletion)  making school(repetition)  , no ~~school~~ (revision for deletion) home (rehearsing), making(repetition) home studying home(rehearsing) studying at home more effective. How many words I need to write? (questioning) talk about myself I think now (global planning) I can't really say I can, can I? I can't really use the first person, can I? (rehearsing and questioning) However, they are people that cannot study at home and they are not used to it. For example, for example(repetition) in my case, I my case(repetition), I (repetition) was brought up to be independent and not rely on parents to do all the teaching

2.I need to see the topic again and look around to find an idea (SUBJECT AT THIS POINT SAID THAT HE NEEDED TO LOOK AT THE TOPIC AGAIN BECAUSE HE LACKS IDEAS) (local planning) success in education is influenced more by students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme. Discuss. (reading the assigned topic) I need to read all this (SUBJECT HERE WENT BACK TO READ THE OUTLINES) (local planning) (reading the outlines).

3.Let me read it (planning to read the essay) I will read from beginning (SUBJECT STARTED READING THE WHOLE TEXT FROM SCRATCH)  Success in education comes through…

4.I think I think that's everything. Let's put conclusion now really (planning to end the essay). I will give my final thoughts. I will explain how good teaching is really important, yeahh. And what if teaching is not successful, yeah, OK (global planning)~~To conclude to conclude~~ (repetition)~~with teaching~~ (revision for deletion) Teaching is not easy ~~to be done~~ no (revision for deletion) not easy(repetition) not easy(repetition) for anyone.

5.So the success in a students' education relies on them more than it relies on anyone else.(reading a large unit of discourse) Emmm, this needs to be taken off (planning revision for deletion), ~~So the success in a students' education relies on them more than it relies on anyone else.~~ (revision for deletion)

---

Apart from the global planning and local planning strategies S9 used at the onset of the writing task when he outlined his essay and planned the major ideas and general content of his essay, S9 used planning in the writing process of his actual essay as we can see in the examples above. The first excerpt shows that when S9 finished writing a paragraph in the body of his essay and needed to write the next paragraph, he needed to do global planning about what to include in that paragraph and decided to write about himself, then started rehearsing for his ideas.

As for local planning, it occurred many times (see Table 4-7 in Chapter Four) in different parts of the essay. Looking at the second excerpt above, for example, the writer planned to read the assigned topic when he felt that he lacked the ideas to

continue writing, and as it seemed that reading the topic had not supported him enough, he then again planned to read the outlines.

In excerpt 3, S9 used once more local planning when he planned to read the whole essay right from the beginning. S9 did this as he finished writing a paragraph within his essay and about to start a new one, a strategy that was repeated twice by him. Another example of local planning done by the writer is illustrated in excerpt 4. S9 planned to end his essay and started with the conclusion. Afterwards, he resorted to global planning to decide what to include in his conclusion.

In addition, a different type of planning used by S9 in the writing process was planning for revision as can be seen in excerpt 5 above. S9 tended to plan to make an amendment which took place immediately. When he was about to start with a new paragraph, he decided to read the whole text from the beginning, and while doing that the writer expressed his dissatisfaction with a sentence. As a result, he planned to cut it off. According to the protocol, all revisions done by S9 were considered before completing the essay, as we will see when discussing the strategy of revision.

It can be clearly noticed that global planning as a strategy was used by the writer both at the onset of the writing task to generate ideas for the outline, and also as about to write the conclusion. Between these two main occurrences of global planning, several other local and also global planning strategies were captured as illustrated in the excerpts above (for more details see Appendix 11-D for S9's protocol).

Likewise, the other good writer, S6, used planning during the writing process, and it was not limited to the onset of the protocol only. However, the number of times both writers (S9 and S6) used this strategy was slightly different (S6 outnumbered S9 in global planning: 5 times to 4 times respectively, and also in local planning: 18 times to 16 times respectively). As for the function of these planning strategies, both writers used global planning of organisation and what to include in their essays prior to start writing and then followed by planning the content in writing (outlining), and also planning the content or the general idea to be developed in the following paragraph. As for the local planning while writing, both writers used it for different purposes such as planning what to write next in the text, planning to revise, planning

to avoid repeating words, and planning to end writing. In summary, there was no distinguishing difference between the two good writers in terms of planning while writing. Of certain importance is the fact that all these strategies were not limited to the onset of the writing process, which gives a clear sign of the recursive nature of writing as an activity on the part of both writers. What differentiated S9 and S6 from the other poor writers (S2 and S3) in this respect, however, was that global planning done on the part of the poor writers was restricted to the onset of the protocols, except for one occasion when S3 did global planning when decided what to include in a successive paragraph. Global planning in S9's case continued throughout the writing process.

### 5.3.2.2.2 Rehearsing and questioning

Rehearsing was one of the most frequently used strategies for text generation by S9. S9 used rehearsing for finding a focus, finding a new idea or clarifying an old one, as well as rehearsing and questioning and rehearsing for word choice. Rehearsing was also used both before writing and while writing. What distinguished the rehearsing behaviour of S9 from his peers in this research, was that many of his rehearsals were done in the questioning tone in order to find a new focus, as for example when using questions such as '*what else?*', '*what about them?*', '*I can't really say I can, can I?*', '*what comes next?*, 'what can I say?'*, and the like. These types of rehearsal were usually followed by other strategies on the part of the writer such as re-reading or planning, or in many other cases they might just lead to writing. This seemed to be a good strategy which helped S9 to generate many answers and ideas that consequently helped him move forward.  It was noticed that S9 was concerned about rehearsing to try different ideas before deciding to write, and he was careful in what to write and also in choosing words. The following excerpts can illustrate this:

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1. I am trying to, like split the essay into basically more, not as complex as this really, emmm, like students at home, how they study at home? And what they do at home, and how effective is that to students? And then talk about students at school or college or whatever they go to (rehearsing to develop ideas for the outline)

2. Who teaches them at home? How long do they study for? What else? (rehearsing and questioning) Let's go to students at school (local planning) Students and school. How effective is the teacher? Or how effective can the teacher be? How much influence do the students have on each other's' learning?, what else (rehearsing and questioning), emmm, ya, The material used by the teacher and whether)

3. Students, students(repetition)what about them?(rehearsing and questioning) students(repetition), first sentence. Can I say students are? (rehearsing and questioning) students (repetition), students (repetition)  no students (SUBJECT CROSSED OUT THE FIRST WORD IN HIS ESSAY '*STUDENT*') (revision for deletion) Success in education comes through determination and the hard, and the hard (repetition),the hard(repetition) work the student the student(repetition) produces,

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Excerpt 1 above is an example of rehearsing done by S9 in order to develop ideas for the outlines he set later. This type of rehearsing occurred at the beginning of the protocol. He did this rehearsing immediately after he read and then wrote the assigned topic, and rehearsed for a while using some of the words from the topic as an attempt to find a focus.

Moreover, we see in excerpt 2 above how S9 rehearsed using questions while writing down his outlines at the onset of his protocol. On both occasions, as can be seen above, he rehearsed by asking the question '*what else?*' As said before, this type of rehearsing was repeated elsewhere throughout the writing process, and it appeared that he was successful in generating the right ideas each time he used this.

In the third excerpt, we can see that S9 started rehearsing in a questioning tone again as soon as he started with his first sentence in the first paragraph in the essay. Being concerned about rehearsing at this level, particularly while producing the first sentence which usually carries the basic meaning and introduces the main form of the whole topic was a consequence of the writer's concern to clarify and express the importance of the topic to the reader.

The strategy of rehearsing, however, was also used to fulfil a different function. For instance, the fourth and fifth excerpts above show that the writer stopped in the middle of a sentence and began rehearsing for word choice. In those excerpts, the writer rehearsed using questioning with a view to choose a word from two options. In excerpt 5, for example, he rehearsed to choose either '*studen*t' or '*child'*. The questioning was followed by choosing one of them (student), and continued writing afterwards. These attempts of rehearsing whether with or without questioning shows that S9 frequently tried to provide as many possibilities to complete his writing and see if it made sense, a distinctive feature of good writers like S9.

As for questioning as a strategy, S9 used it once to inquire about the number of words he needed to write in his essay, ' *How many words I need to write?'*. This question was addressed to the researcher and was asked prior to start writing the last paragraph in the body of his essay to see if what had been written was enough or he might need to write more. When the researcher replied that he might write as many words as he liked, the student decided to see the directions and afterwards began to write another paragraph about his own experience as a learner (see excerpt 6 above).

Rehearsing was also seen practised by the other good writer S6, but not as frequent as S9 particularly prior to start writing. S6 used rehearsing only once prior to begin actual writing to find a focus, and made use of this strategy while writing for different purposes such as to elaborate on an idea or for word choice. S9, on the other hand, and as we have seen, used it for several times at the planning stage, especially rehearsing and questioning when trying to develop ideas for the outlines at the onset of the writing task, and also during writing. It might be worth mentioning here that the many times using the strategy of rehearsing and questioning on the part of S9 when composing had made him stand out from the rest with respect to strategy use which seemed of important help for him to generate information.

### 5.3.2.2.3 Scanning

In addition to planning, rehearsing and questioning, S9 used the strategy of scanning quite frequently. S9, in fact, read back the assigned topic, the outlines, the directions, and read what had been written, i.e., reading within a sentence in progress, between sentences, over a number of sentences, and even paragraphs as strategies that provided S9 with the necessary tools to check how ideas within sentences and paragraphs were associated to each other, and to have the impression that everything already put down was sensible and meaningful before going any further with the text. What is unique with this subject were the many occurrences of re-reading at the level of words, sentences, and paragraphs; thus, it was the most dominant strategy in the writing task. However, once he finished writing his essay, he never endeavoured to re-read it as a whole. Consider the following for some examples on re-reading done by S9:

In different occasions, S9 stopped and went back and read the topic or the outlines he put down at the onset of the writing task. This happened when S9 lacked the ideas to continue. In excerpt 1 above, for example, S9 decided to read the assigned topic as soon as he completed writing a paragraph in the body of his essay, and wanted to start a new one. Then when finished reading the topic he was observed as resorting to the outlines he put at the beginning of the protocol.

However, these two attempts of re-reading were not enough to provide him with an idea to start the next paragraph. He, therefore, planned once more to re-read the whole text from scratch (as illustrated in excerpt 2) and only then he was able to commence his new paragraph after making some major changes on the sequence of the last paragraph in the essay, at the time.

Moreover, re-reading back very often on the part of S9 could be one of the reasons that gave him much space to do revision (see 5.3.2.2.4) as an on-going process instead of doing that independently as a post writing activity. Thus, it can be said that reading on the part of this writer was also frequently done for the purpose of reviewing as can be explained in more details in the next sub-section.

As for reading single words or phrases that he had already produced, this in fact was the most frequent strategy S9 used, and there was similarity between this subject and S6 in their use of this strategy as they both used it quite often and for similar purposes— that is to evaluate the written text, or maybe to retain information in their minds or agreeing with (Arndt, 1987). Therefore, S9 was noticed going back every

time and then to read bits that had already been written as to provide impetus to continue composing. Excerpt 3 above shows how S9 used this strategy, and how that helped him continue. However, when needed to follow that up with a new sentence, he needed to read back the whole sentence (maybe for several times) that had already been written in order to check the idea and be able to continue and retain the cohesiveness of the text (also see excerpt 3 above).

In sum, the strategy of re-reading over text that had been already written at different levels assisted the writer to move ahead and write more text.

### 5.3.2.2.4 Revising and editing

S9 displayed evaluating strategies (revising and editing) while writing his text, but not upon completing it. In other words, all of the revisions and editing were done on the same single draft (i.e., the final version) he produced. This in fact was much in agreement with his own view of 'revising' referred to in the interview: *" I didn't revise my essay as I finished it. For me the essay was finished as soon as I finished writing the ideas, and I feel that I have reached the number of words required really. So revising is usually a continuous process for me that I do while I am writing.*" Moreover, evaluating was performed on the part of the writer as based on his own intuition, that is '*just play it by ear*'; there was no evidence in the data which indicated he had resorted to any other external resources such as a dictionary to check the suitability of the problematic element, a fact that might reflect a good command of language and confidence in oneself.

Reviewing began when the writer was putting his first ideas down. S9 revised and edited words, sentences and whole paragraphs, and sequencing of paragraphs. As for reviewing the whole essay upon completion of the first draft, however, this was never noticed and he submitted his essay as soon as he finished writing the conclusion. In fact, the simultaneous process of writing and reviewing was carried out till the writer handed in his essay declaring completion.

Some of the revisions done by S9 were consequences of re-reading back what had been written; however, there were also some revisions (mainly editing) that were performed instantaneously after copying down a word or some words, which

involved mostly revisions for deletion, and/or substitution. Now we shall see some of the excerpts taken from S9's protocol to illustrate the revision strategies used:

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1.Parents are parents are(repetition) responsible for their child's child's (repetition) child's (repetition) work (rehearsing) ~~wo~~ (SUBJECT WROTE THE FIRST TWO LETTER IN THE WORD 'WORK' THEN CROSSED THEM OUT)(revision for deletion)no child's ~~study and~~ no (SUBJECT CROSSED OUT AGAIN '*STUDY AND*') (revision for deletion) child's (repetition)child's (repetition), parents are responsible for their child's(repetition), child's(repetition) education  (rehearsing) yeahh education (revision for substitution),education(repetition) emmm what comes next?

2. Let me read it (planning to read the essay) I will read from beginning (SUBJECT STARTED READING THE WHOLE TEXT FROM SCRATCH)  Success in education comes through determination and the hard work the student produces. Education is not just at school, so the student must work outside school, precisely at home. Parents are responsible for their child's education, and they must work with them to produce success in their lives. However, the question is how much of their efforts is needed? this depends on how bright the child is. Some only need to be taught by their teacher in class and then they understand the lesson and therefore, apply what they learnt on the problems given for home-work. Moreover, some not as bright need more teaching and given that the teacher has limited time, there will be no one to teach the student except their parents. So the success in a students' education relies on them more than it relies on anyone else.(reading a large unit of discourse) Emmm, this needs to be taken off (planning revision for deletion), ~~So the success in a students' education relies on them more than it relies on anyone else.~~ (revision for deletion)

3.Emmm, yeahh. I think this paragraph should be shifted. I need to precede it by another one really. Emmm, let's continue talking about parents then, yeahh. So this should come after that (planning organisation).
4.  apply what they learnt and therefore, they apply what they learnt(repetition) ~~to~~   no apply what they learnt(repetition)on (editing for grammar) the problems given for homework.
5. The parents now face a problem of how to teach ~~their thie~~ (revision for deletion) 'e' before 'i' here yeahh 'e' before 'i' (rehearsing for spelling) (editing for spelling)their child.

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In excerpt 1 above, the writer started a new sentence, but while writing he stuck with a word and started rehearsing to find a suitable expression that could fit the meaning. He could find one and began to write it down, but then crossed it out before even completed writing it. Then also found a different one, but immediately crossed out that one too, and frequently started repeating the last word before the one he was looking for '*child's*', and then also repeated the whole group of words before he could finally find the right word '*education*' and substituted it for his previous choices. This is an example of revision that was done by the writer following the strategy of re-reading at the level of a single word or words, and it was in fact repeated in different occasions in the writing process.

In another stage, however, revision was done after reading back a large unit of discourse, namely the whole text produced so far. Thus, when needed to start a new paragraph, the writer planned to re-read the whole text from beginning. While doing that, he came across a sentence he believed that it should be taken out ,*Emmm, this needs to be taken off* , so he deleted it straightaway and then continued re-reading the rest of the text (see excerpt 2 above). Deleting this whole sentence was done as the

writer was reading aloud the previously written text and he did that quite fast and without any hesitation.

Moreover, re-reading the whole text written so far, provided the writer with a global view of his essay, and placed him on a stance that enabled him to review the organisation of the text as a whole in terms of unity and coherence. So, after re-reading the whole text produced so far and made a revision for deletion (i.e., deleting the sentence he thought that was irrelevant, as illustrated in excerpt 2) he recognised that the next paragraph was also unconnected to the previous text, so he decided to precede it by a new paragraph and keep the unity of the essay. Again this type of revision was unique to this writer, as none of the other writers made such a major revision for the organisation of the essay. So he did not hesitate to discard a complete sentence, and then reorganised his paragraphs so that the new paragraph he added served as a bridge that connected between the previously written text and the other paragraph he shifted (see excerpt 3 above).

In addition, S9 did a number of editing which involved spelling, grammar, punctuation, deletion of a preposition and of an adverb and so on. Some of these examples of editing are presented in excerpts 4 and 5.

The kind of revisions this subject performed all through his writing process was a good proof of the recursive nature of writing. He planned, rehearsed and asked questions, transcribed his ideas, read back over words, sentences and also paragraphs for the purpose of clarity, accuracy and coherence, and revised and edited making whatever necessary changes to the text. All of these strategies occurred while producing one draft, and all done in a rotary fashion allowing him to see for himself when certain elements of his text needed to be looked over. However, these might also be the strategies other writers use while composing, particularly those of good writing proficiency such as S6 and S4.

### 5.3.2.2.5 Overall summary of S9's strategy use and behaviour in connection with the other good writer S6

S9, as a good writer, showed a number of strategies and behaviours that can be summarised as follows:

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Analysis of the protocol showed that S9 was a type of student who had confidence in oneself and performed the written task after setting some goals and plans for what to include in his essay. He commenced the session by reading aloud the assigned topic, and writing it down, then moving to the next step which was planning and outlining.

Moreover, S9 never overtly switched (vocalised) to his L1 while composing. S6 used her L1 only once for lexical searching purpose, while S9 did not use it and said that he even never think in Arabic while writing in English:

> "*No. I don't think in Arabic. The thing is it depends on the type of task, if Arabic I think in Arabic, and if English, then I think in English. I don't really switch on and off between them. Because if I think in Arabic that means I have to translate what I think of into English, and then I am obviously having problems, so I don't get myself in that position.*"

S9 as a case was similar to, but also quite different, in certain aspects, from his other peers in this investigation in terms of writing quality, writing process, and strategy use. For instance, he produced a legible essay in which he displayed a number of good writing conventions such as good understanding of the subject, discussing of several points pertinent to the topic, using fluent expressions, using appropriate transitional markers, and also using good argument (see 5.2.2). However, the question is how in terms of the other conventional writing processes and strategies that usually pertinent to good writing, did this subject fit in. He, for example, spent just nearly half of the time spent composing by his good writer counterpart S6 (see Table 5-6). Also unlike S6, he never used a dictionary. He also produced only one draft, and he was never involved in a reviewing stage to revise his essay upon completion or even proof-read it, plus he never showed any difficulty in verbalising his thoughts and strategies while composing in English. Yet, and in spite of all this, S9 was still able to produce a good essay. This might raise the question of how salient it is for a writer being consistent with the conventional writing processes of planning, drafting and post drafting to be considered as a good writer who could eventually create a good text. Even poor writers sometimes could use these conventional writing processes (e.g., S2, S3, S1, and S11 in the current research). There might be some other factor, then, that could also contribute to good writing such as concern for audience.

### 5.3.3 Concern for audience

In this sub-section, I will discuss audience awareness as perceived by the four cases (S6, S3, S2, S9) investigated in this chapter. The data on the subjects' perception of the target reader, derived mainly from the semi-structured interviews, and aided by the think-aloud protocols and subjects' written documents.

There were differences between the four writers in terms of their concern for audience and about getting their ideas across to the reader. When they were interviewed and asked about their perception of the audience, S6's response was as follows:

> *Yes, sure. When I write a piece of writing, I do not consider a particular reader. I know we shouldn't address it for an intended reader, for someone in particular. For example, some of my classmates who say we usually write it for the teacher, and think about his way of thinking. I don't usually do this. When I write I just imagine that anyone of my classmates, anyone of my family, or even anyone in this world can read it and understand it. So that's why I always have the habit of reading my essays aloud.*

S6's comment indicates that she observed the readers as anonymous individuals, and not only as a particular reader. She had a general believe about readership in such a way that a reader could be anyone in this world – a classmate, a family member, a teacher or anyone else. She said that she usually disagreed with some of her classmates who said they often write for their teachers and consider their way of thinking and try to satisfy them. She added that this was the reason why she always had the habit of re-reading her essays aloud each time she wrote. However, what S3 said was not in line with S6. This is how she put it:

> *Not every time I consider the reader. I don't care about this matter. In today's writing I just wrote for myself only. But when I write the exam, I think about the teacher or the examiner, and when I start writing I start thinking how is it gonna be convinced by the reader.*

S3's comment indicates that she mainly projected herself as the reader of her own text, and that the perception of a reader is not important to the extent that she never cared about the reader when writing. However, then she mentioned considering the

reader if it had to do with the course lecturer as the reader of her text or the examiner if she was writing for an examination. In other words, when the topic was assigned by the lecturer, then the reader was definitely the lecturer. Unlike S6, however, S3 perceived the reader as her own or as the lecturer rather than as anonymous individuals.

S9, on the other hand, confirmed that the audience was always considered in his writing, and the following was his answer to the interview question of whether he considered the reader when writing: "*Yeahh, the audience is at the back of my mind all the time, while writing, before writing, it is just automatically a kind of check.*"

As for S2, she also said that she considered the reader whenever she wrote, but her reader for this particular session was me, the researcher. This is what she said in the interview regarding reader awareness: "Yes*, to be honest, I considered the reader all the time and you were my reader today, but when I wrote before it depends on the teacher.*"

In sum, the four subjects displayed different views of mental representations of audience. S3 perceived mainly herself and sometimes the course tutor, or the examiner as the audience of her writing, while S6 had a wider view about audience awareness and invoked her classmates, her family members or anyone else, depending on the purpose of her writing, as her target audience. Although there was no direct reference to audience on part of all subjects, analyses of the drafts those four subjects produced indicated that they perceived their intended readers differently which was reflected in the way their writings were shaped (see 5.2.2.3). In line with Sengupta (1999), and Wong (2005) this suggests that the mental representations of audience may have an influence on shaping decisions on the content in writing.

## 5.4    Chapter summary

This chapter reports on the writing strategies and behaviour of the four selected subjects, who represented two different proficiency levels in both L2 writing and language level. These subjects' background, quality of their written texts, previous instructions they had in L2 writing, and their motivation for the task were also

highlighted. It was revealed through data analysis that these subjects had established different linguistic competences, different individual writing abilities reflected in their written texts, and different motivational attitudes to the learning of writing. The data also showed different applications of writing strategies and behaviours while performing the writing tasks. All of these variations those subjects demonstrated occurred even though they had shared a homogeneous academic achievements and learning instructions. A discussion of the findings in relation to both the questions of the current research and the related literature will be presented in the following chapter.

# Chapter 6:  Findings and Discussion

## 6.1    Introduction

In the first chapter, the primary aim of this research was identified, and in Chapter Two this was justified by reference to the relevant literature. Chapter Three, discussed the methodology, and Chapters Four and Five explored the data analysis of the writing processes and strategies of the Libyan students majoring in English at MU. In the current chapter, I present the findings of the data analysis, and link them with the related literature, and also discuss reflections on the methodology used in this study. I also present a tentative writing model of EFL Libyan students explaining the processes and strategies used by subjects in the current study.

Before starting, it is important to remember that this study considers writing strategies to be: decisions, actions and techniques used by the writer behaviourally or mentally, from the time he/she starts thinking about the writing task, throughout the actual writing time, and including time spent making revisions. These strategic tools are chosen consciously and purposely as tools that are believed to facilitate the task of conveying a message through writing.

## 6.2    Summary of the data that answers the research questions

It was indicated in Chapter One that this research investigates the writing strategies of Libyan university students at MU. The work reported here tries to compare the strategies of good and poor writers of English among the population of fourth year English majors, and to determine any differences and/or similarities in writing strategies employed by both groups as well as to provide possible explanations for the findings. To that end, this investigation tries to answer the following research questions. A short summary of the results to every research question is presented in the following table.

Table 6-1: Summary of the answers to the research questions

| Research questions | Data that answer each research question | Chapters that answer research questions | A brief answer to the research questions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **RQ1: What strategies do Libyan students of English as a foreign language use while writing in English?** | Think-aloud protocols, students' and teachers' interviews, observations, and written documents analyses | Chapter Four— sections 4.2 and 4.3 demonstrate the findings. Findings are analysed as inferred during think-aloud protocols and observations. Teachers' interview responses provide answers on students' strategies. Written documents as analysed by the researcher provide results on the drafting task as presented in section 4.2.2. Table 4-6 in Chapter Four indicates the strategies and sub-strategies students adopted and their definitions. | **Planning:** Global planning ,Outlining ,Local planning; **Rehearsing:** Rehearsing leading to writing, Rehearsing and questioning; **Scanning:** Reading the assigned topic, Repeating words or phrases, Reading part or whole of their writing, Reading part or whole of the outline, Reading part or whole of the directions; **Avoidance and postponement; Questioning; Revision:** revising, editing; **Use of L1:** L1 used for vocabulary retrieval, for creating mental plans and generating ideas, and for verifying produced language and content items; **Audience awareness; Use of Dictionary** |
| **RQ2: Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use?** | Think-aloud protocols, students' interviews, observations and written documents analyses. | Chapters Four and Five— sections 4.3 and 5.3 demonstrate and discuss the findings. Findings are analysed as reported by the students in the think-aloud protocols, observations and students' interviews. Data show differences between good and poor writers in both sections— 4.3 and 5.3. <br><br> Jacob et al.'s (1981) composition profile was used to evaluate students' essays. Essays were analysed by the researcher and a senior lecturer at NTU. Chapter Five, section 5.2.2 presents the results of the analysis. | Strategies varied in frequency and kind between good and poor writers. |
| **RQ3: If yes, how and why do they differ?** | Think-aloud protocols and interviews with both students and teachers, and students' academic performance records. | Chapters Four and Five— sections 4.3 and 5.3. Analyses of think-aloud protocols and interviews for both students and teachers show how students differ. <br><br> Chapter Five, sections 5.2.1, 5.2.3, and 5.2.5 demonstrate and discuss the findings. The results of the interviews analyses for both students and teachers, and data from students' academic performance records show why students differ. | At the pre-writing phase, most good writers planned globally, and to some extent locally for their topics. Most poor writers did not write according to any predetermined plan. Instances of re-reading and rehearsing were dominant for both groups. Nature and frequency of revising and editing were different between good and poor writers. Use of L1 and strategy of avoidance and postponement were dominant among poor writers. This was attributed to the inability of the poor writers to think and write in English, and to their poor English repertoire. Language proficiency, motivation, and previous instructions seemed to have effects on students' writing strategies. Poor writers seemed unable to produce good written text because they stumbled over lexis, grammar, punctuation, and capitalisation. They did not know how to solve these writing problems and lacked the use of strategies, particularly meta-cognitive to regulate the written task and ease the difficulties. |

The first column in Table 6-1 above represents the research questions, the second column represents the part of the data which explores them, the third column represents the chapters and sections that provide answers for them, and the fourth column represents a brief answer to each question.

## 6.3 Writing processes and strategies used by fourth year Libyan university students of English

The findings in this section are discussed as a response to the first research question: 'What writing strategies do Libyan students of English as a foreign language use while writing in English?' This question seeks to explore the strategies and behaviours common to the whole group of students participated in this research.

### 6.3.1 The writing process of Libyan students

The subjects' writing behaviour, irrespective of their writing proficiency, did not reflect a strict linear procedure. In contrast, their writing was recursive in nature and various main writing strategies such as planning (global, and local), rehearsing, drafting, scanning and revising occurred frequently throughout the writing process. That is, they shuttled back and forth among these processes (Flower and Hayes, 1981; Raimes, 1985; El-Aswad, 2002) a finding that was also reported in different EFL/ESL writing studies (Zamel 1983, 1984; Humes, 1983; Raimes 1985, 1987; El Mortaji 2001; Alhaysony, 2008). Nevertheless, there seemed to be a variance in the degree of recursiveness among the individual subjects across the different levels of writing proficiency (see section 6.4).

A close examination revealed that as soon as students were given instruction to begin to write, some of them started by reading the topic frequently. Some of them did so only twice, but some did it for several times (see Tables 4-11 and 4-12 in Chapter Four, pp. 128-9), and ended up writing their first sentence through focusing on some key words in the topic such as, *success*, *education*, *students' home, educational programme*, and the like. Some of the writers had a written plan (outline) in a form of short statements and sometimes questions. Others, however, did not have such a plan for their writing (see Tables 4-7 and 4-8 in Chapter Four, p. 111). They began writing without having a general frame in mind about where to go and how long their

writing would take. This correlates with what Hairston (1986) calls it " Extended reflective writing" in which the writer discovers much of his or her thought during the writing process. The writer starts with something which is more than an  idea of what he or she needs to say, but not quite sure exactly where the paper is going or where to this idea is heading (p. 445). Moreover, this finding seems in line with the finding of Perl's (1979) research on her unskilled college writers' composing processes. She noticed that her subjects began with no idea what to write, "…they began writing without any secure sense of where they were heading", (p, 330), and that they only began to "figure it out" as they went along with writing.

The quantitative data indicates that the subjects spent different time span before they started their actual writing (see Tables 4-1 and 4-2 in Chapter Four, pp. 92-93). Some of them spent very short time (e.g., S10, S8, S6, S11), and others spent a relatively longer time (e.g., S1, S7, S4, S2) depending on how they perceived the task and their knowledge of topic (see 6.4 for more details).

As subjects started their actual writing, they proceed with the process of drafting (which Flower and Hayes call 'translation') the ideas they already set prior to start writing or the ones they generated as a consequence of reading back the assigned topic or the instructions. When they were not sure enough about something, they read back what they had written in order to evaluate it (i.e., they repeat words or phrases, or re-read part or whole of their writing) (see 4.3.1.3 and Tables 4-11 and 4-12 in Chapter Four, pp.128-9), and if they had a negative impression about it then they made revisions either on the content level (revision) or on the surface level (editing) (see 4.3.1.6 and Tables 4-16, 4-17 (pp.140-41), and Tables 4-18, 4-19 (p. 143) in Chapter Four,  for a break-down of the types of revision made).This kind of process supports the notion of the recursive nature of those students' writing as will be explained in section 6.7 in this chapter where a tentative writing model (based on Flower and Hayes's 1981 L1 model) of the current subjects will be presented. This finding substantiated by much previous research (Flower and Hayes, 1981; Victori, 1999; El Mortaji, 2001; El-Aswad, 2002; Alhaysony, 2008).

L1 was used by the subjects throughout the writing processes while composing (see 4.3.1.7 in Chapter Four) (though it is skipped by the proficient writer, S9) for different purposes: to retrieve words, phrases and grammatical structures (Manchón, et al., 2007), to think about the topic to create mental and written plans and generate

ideas, and to verify the appropriateness of words and expressions used, findings which are in keeping with Cumming (1990). However, it could be argued that, in the end, use of L1 did not lead to a good quality of text on part of the poor writers despite their more frequent use of this strategy (see Table 4-20 in Chapter Four, p. 145) while composing.

Once the writers finished writing their essays, some of them went back and re-read the text and did some revising and/or editing. This process included checking issues of style like sentence structure, vocabulary and checking for editing errors. However, others spent some time in rewriting their essay without making any changes, while others just handed in their essay as soon as they finished writing them happy with the revising and/or editing they made when producing their first draft ( S9) (see Tables 4-1 and 4-2 in Chapter Four, pp. 92-93, for the different times spent on these activities).

### 6.3.2  Writing strategies of Libyan students

Subjects of the current study applied several strategies while composing, namely: planning, rehearsing, scanning, avoidance and postponement, questioning, revising and editing, use of L1, use of dictionary and reader awareness (see 4.3 in Chapter Four). However, some of those strategies are unavoidable parts of the writing process such as planning and revising, and others are conscious choices such as scanning (repeating and re-reading), avoidance and postponements, use of L1, and use of dictionary.

Planning in the literature varies in form and focus. Raimes (1987), for example, categorises only one type of planning, which is planning structure or strategy. More recently, Sasaki (2000) classifies five subcategories of planning, namely global planning, local planning, thematic planning, organisation and conclusion planning, two of which were used in the current study as global planning and local planning.

In the present study, three categories of planning were uncovered: global planning, local planning, and outlining. The data analysis showed that subjects (both good and poor writers) employed different sets of planning subcategories (see Tables 4-7 and 4-8 in Chapter Four, p. 111). Moreover, it appeared that the level of proficiency

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influenced the planning behaviour of the subjects (see section 6.5). The data also revealed that the type of planning used most by the subjects was the local planning, and the one which was used least was outlining (see Tables 4-7 and 4-8 in Chapter Four, p. 111).

The majority of subjects planned before they began to write, except for subject (S10), who did not display any explicit planning before he started writing, and subject (S8), who stated that the notion of planning to him is only to understand the question (the topic) very well then started writing immediately. He added, "*I don't usually plan what to write in each paragraph, because the ideas come to me while I am writing*". However, it was noticed that the subjects who overtly planned, did not follow their outlined plans, except for one subject, S6 (see section 5.3.1) a finding that supports Kaufer, Hayes, and Flower (1986: 124), none of whose subjects "followed their plans exactly in producing their essays.", they erased, made changes and paused to change things whenever they had new ideas. Subject S5 made it clear when she said:

> " W*hen thinking about the ideas I have about the topic, for example, I say that I have these ideas but I should include this one in the introduction, those ones into the body, and that one into the conclusion* (global planning). *I do this through my mind, but while writing I may change and other ideas may come to me. So it's a semi-organized planning and not a completely organized one.*"

The reason why those subjects differ in their planning activities could be due to how they perceive the topic assigned. In other words, their familiarity with the topic determines their planning strategies. Some of them only mentally planned at the beginning, and then just carried on planning throughout the composing process (cf. in-process planning – Reid, 1990; Cumming, 1989; Flower & Hayes, 1980; Bacha, 2001), because they feel that the topic is not very demanding. Others, however, made explicit planning, and need to exert much effort as they find the topic unfamiliar or demands extended writing. This was identified by subject (S10):

> "*It depends upon the topic I write about, or I will write about. For example, if I am writing on something familiar to me or a letter to a friend, for example, I do not need to plan that, but as for writing on a*

*topic or a task which is difficult then I have to. It depends on two things, in fact, the length of the task and the familiarity of the topic."*

The initial process of generating ideas, that falls in the field of the pre-drafting phase, and which can be done in several ways: thinking, making notes, questioning, or even brainstorming about the topic was in some cases done in the subjects' L1, e.g., S10, S3 and S2. This finding is in line with some previous studies (e.g., Pennington and So, 1993; Bacha, 2001; El-Aswad, 2002; Wang and Wen, 2002; Stapa and Abdul Majid, 2009), where it was revealed that L1 had been used by writers when composing in their L2, and that they were more likely to rely on their L1 when they were managing their writing processes, or generating and organising ideas. It is at the pre-drafting phase where the writer usually decides what to say about the topic. The information about the topic is retrieved from the students' long term memory (LTM). Sometimes students are not able to consciously differentiate between long-term memory information on the topic and information on the language of expression, and in some cases the writer may consider that the linguistic information is more important than the ideas on the topic. This clatter of content and grammar information in the long-term memory hinders idea generation in the second language writing process (Scott, 1996). To solve this issue, L2 writers may use their L1 for generating ideas and then they transfer their ideas in L2 so that the writing process can carry on. This might justify the frequent use of L1 on part of the poor writers in this study, a finding which is in keeping with previous research such as El-Aswad (2002), Alhaysony (2008) and Alharthi (2012).

Rehearsing is another strategy applied by the subjects in the current research (see 4.3.1.2, and refer to Tables 4-9 and 4-10 in Chapter Four, p. 123, for subjects' rehearsing occurrences) for purposes such as finding a focus, finding a new idea or clarifying an old one, trying out a new idea or elaborating on a new one. Research in the literature also reported this strategy (e.g., Perl, 1979; Zamel, 1983; Sasaki, 2000; El-Aswad, 2002). Rehearsing by subjects in the current study usually leads to writing (Perl, 1979), and complete an idea particularly when some words of a sentence were written down. However, in other cases, rehearsing done by subjects was followed by other strategies such as re-reading or planning. A similar behaviour was reported by El Mortaji (2001).

Scanning was the most frequently used strategy by subjects in the current research no matter of their proficiency level (see Tables 4-11 and 4-12 in Chapter Four, pp. 128-9). The relevant literature revealed that this strategy was employed by participants in different research (e.g., Raimes, 1985, 1987; Hirose and Sasaki, 1994; Sasaki, 2000; Chaaban, 2010). Raimes (1987), for example, mentioned three sub-categories of reading, namely 'reading the assigned topic', 'reading sentences', and 'reading the whole draft'. Similarly, Chaaban (2010) uncovered four sub-processes of reading employed by her subjects, which are 'reading the topic question', 'reading part or whole of the outline', 'reading the generated text', and 'repeating'. However, data analysis in the current research revealed five sub-categories of scanning: reading the assigned topic, repeating words or phrases (repetition), reading part or whole of the students' writing (reading larger units of discourse), reading part or whole of the outline, and reading part or whole of the directions. Hence, the scanning sub-categories that were uncovered in the present research correspond to certain extent with the findings of the above mentioned studies, but one more sub-category was revealed which was 'reading part or whole of the directions'.

Scanning in the current research was used by the subjects to serve three goals. Firstly, subjects resorted to the assigned topic, outlines or the directions and read them all or sometimes one of them whenever they had the feeling that what they had produced so far deviated in focus from what was needed to be addressed. This was in line with Raimes' (1987) finding who found that her subjects read the topic in order to "orient themselves once more" (p.455). Secondly, subjects re-read the last word or words to help them to be more precise, and to help them think about how to continue and what to write next. Raimes (ibid) identified this process, i.e., reading of a part or the whole last sentence as 'rescanning', and stated that "it appears to have helped them (Raimes' subjects) to work out how to move forward and develop the next idea" (p. 455). Thirdly, re-reading was done for the purpose of reviewing. Subjects' reading back of what had been written sometimes resulted in revising for different purposes such as revising for deletion or substitution (see Tables 4-16 and 4-17 in Chapter Four, pp. 140-41). Editing for grammar, punctuation or spelling could also be a result of re-reading a finding which is in line with Sullivan, 2006, and Alhaysony, 2008. Another purpose for re-reading was to fulfil the requirement of the

think aloud task and keep verbalising of thoughts, a finding which was also reported in Alharthi (2012).

Analysis of the data also revealed that some of the subjects in the current research employed the strategies of avoidance and/or postponement whenever they needed to avoid or delay a specific problem in writing. These strategies were mainly used by the poorer writers (see Table 4-13 in Chapter Four, p. 134) and for the purpose of coping with writing complexity which required writers continuously juggle a number of simultaneous constraints (Flower and Hayes, 1981). Those writers tended to postpone specific composing activities in order to minimize the cognitive load that might be connected with text production, a finding that is in keeping with Stevenson et al., 2006; Chaaban, 2010; and Alharthi (2012). Stevenson et al (ibid: 203) argue that "as text production requires the use of working memory, and this working memory is of limited capacity, increased cognitive effort devoted to one component is said to lead to a decrease in the remaining resources available for other components".

In terms of revising, it was noticed that all participants revised their essays (see Tables 4-16, 4-17 (pp. 140-41), and Tables 4-18 and 4-19 (p. 143), in Chapter Four). The subjects in the current study paused several times to read what they had written (internal revision), asked questions, and avoided or postponed dealing with particular writing problems, and in many occasions they changed words, phrases and sentences or added them. However, most subjects' revising was mainly like proof-reading activities than an extensive revising that concerned with the organisation and content of their texts, a finding which was in keeping with Beach (1976).

In line with earlier research, one of the main findings during the different writing processes is that all subjects, except S9, used their L1 to certain degrees (Knutson, 2006; Wang & Wen, 2002). The use of the L1 was mostly to compensate for L2 limitations. Whenever subjects face difficulties of shortage of knowledge in the L2, they then switch to L1 to compensate for this shortage (Cumming, 1990). These findings are also consistent with studies found that L2 writers use translation to compensate for their poor vocabulary ( Cumming, 1989; Uzawa & Cumming, 1989; Uzawa, 1996). L1 was also used to facilitate the think aloud task when subjects found it hard to verbalise in L2, e.g., S2 and S3 (see Appendices 11-B &11-C) — a

similar finding was reported by Alharthi, 2012. . In other cases L1 was used in idea-generating and in text generating (e.g., S10, S4, S5) rather than in revising activities. This finding is in line with previous findings (Pennington and So, 1993; Bacha, 2001; Van Weijen et al., 2009) which revealed an extensive use of L1 at linguistics, textual, and ideational processing stages (Scott 1996, El-Aswad, 2002).

The use of a dictionary as a strategy to solve particular problems in writing was also used by the writers. All good writers (except S9) used a dictionary for different purposes such as to check spelling, check usage, or to look for a synonym. In contrast, only 3(out of 6) poor writers used a dictionary, and two of those three (S2 and S7) used it to check spelling, while the other poor writer (S1) used it to look for a synonym.

In sum, this section presents and summarises the common writing strategies these participants used in relation to L2 writing research in the literature. It gave an answer to the present study's first question: 'What are the writing strategies Libyan students use while writing in English?'
In the following sub-section, I attempt to explore the second research question of this study: Do proficient and less proficient writers differ in their strategy use?

## 6.4    Strategy differences between the writing proficiency levels

The most striking finding of the current research was the clear difference in writing behaviour of the participants who are supposed to be homogeneous in respect to their learning achievements and language level. This finding resonates with Arndt (1987) who found important differences among her homogeneous group of writers in terms of writing behaviour and strategies. Also research conducted by Sullivan (2006) concluded that high achieving writers are able to use different strategies to cope with the various demands of the writing process. The strategies employed by those writers assist them in planning, generating ideas, monitoring and evaluating. Findings of the current research correspond with this conclusion. The discussion in this section will mainly focus on the findings related to the four case studies presented in Chapter Five. I will also refer to findings from Chapter Four, where relevant.

The qualitative analysis of the protocols produced by the four subjects (S6, S3, S2 and S9) showed that those students use a set of strategies to approach their writing task, to deal with the assigned topic, and to generate ideas and produce their texts (see sections 4.3 and 5.3). Still, the frequency of occurrence of these strategies, the types of their usage, the effectiveness in using these strategies, the flexibility in the subjects' choice and plans and the purpose of their writing differ among these writers. The think-aloud protocols in the English argumentative task has revealed, at a first glance, that the subjects shared similar writing processes such as planning, revising and editing, but the fact is that S6 and S9 as good writers used strategies in a different and more effective way than S3 and S2 as poor writers (see 5.3.1 and 5.3.2), as can be discussed below.

Concerning planning, although it was revealed that all subjects used it, the two good writers used it both at a local and global level of the writing process. This was clear from the protocols and written texts produced. This finding was consistent with Whalen and Menard's (1995), Raimes' (1987) and Zamel's (1983) finding concerning skilled and unskilled writers' strategies.

S6, for example, tried different types of planning, such as planning the content of her paragraphs, and outlining, while S9 showed more flexibility and planned to simplify the theme by dividing the subject matter into certain points, mainly in a questioning form, that formed the outlines of his essay. On the other hand, S3 and S2 did not establish high aims at the onset of the writing tasks; instead, they spent some time trying to understand the topic then began writing as soon as they found their focus. That is, they used planning mainly at a local level and when they planned globally they did it only to what to say in the next paragraph, or by saying that the essay was to be divided into several paragraphs (S2) without saying how many or what to include in each. They seemed to start writing without a sense of where they were heading with their texts. Similar behaviour was reported by Perl (1979) and Raimes (1985).

The finding about the relative effectiveness of the two groups' planning are consistent with El Mortaji's (2001), Yang's (2002), and Chaaban's (2010) conclusions that good writers plan more effectively than poor writers; however, different from Yang's (2002), Sasaki's (2000) and Angelova's (1999) findings that

good writers spend more time planning prior to writing. The poor writers in this study spent more time prior to writing (see Tables 4-1 and 4-2 in Chapter Four, pp. 92-93), and they were like Raimes' (1985) Yin Ping and Perl's (1979) Tony, whom both spent more time on activities prior to writing than the good writers. The apparently varying findings suggest that it is the quality of planning done rather than the amount of time spent planning that differentiates good from poor L2 writers. The justification for the relatively shorter time the good writers spent before writing, though they were involved in producing a written plan, is that they made good understanding of the essay topic and what was required of them to write about, and therefore they did not need much time to think about it.

Further, the sub-category of outlining was used mainly by the good writers. They wrote outlines in which they involved the ideas that they eventually included in their essay. These writers resorted to the outlines they had and used them as directions as they moved on with writing, showing more flexibility. Use of outlining on part of the good writers could be linked to their previous learning experience as they both asserted that teachers at the pre-college stage emphasised the use of outlining as a writing strategy, a case which was different from the other two poor writers who said that the teaching of L2 writing at the pre-college stage was rather neglected (see 5.2.3).This finding is in line with the findings from preceding studies in both L1 and L2 which describe the writing process of skilled writers as recursive in nature (Flower & Hayes, 1981; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987).

The poor writers, then, did not use outlining as a sub-category of planning. They were involved in repeated episodes of think-write till the essays were finished. Similar finding was observed by Bereiter and Scardamalia (ibid) who argue that unskilled writers tended to stop and think about what they were going to write next every time they managed to achieve a coherent chunk, behaviour contrary to skilled writers, whose planning tends to be global.

Regarding rehearsing, there were certain strategies used by the good writers that either were not used or were not used to nearly the same extent by the poor writers. Bereiter and Scardamalia (1982) argue that one of the difficulties associated with writing is generating ideas and information without the help of a conversational partner. Rehearsing and questioning, for instance, was a strategy that distinguished

the good writers from the poor ones. Rehearsing in a questioning tone about various aspects of the topic during the planning stage or the drafting stage on the part of the good writers, particularly S9, in fact involved a highly directed and efficient approach to retrieving information. It enabled them to 'dig' for ideas instead of waiting passively for whatever might turn up. In the poor writers' case, they waited for ideas to come to them, and rehearsing and questioning appeared only once in each poor writer's protocol and this strategy and other strategies of rehearsing were mainly performed in L1 and for the purpose of retrieving vocabulary in order to help translate an idea that already being rehearsed in L1 (S2), a finding that is in keeping with Nattress' (1986).

The other strategy those subjects used differently (to some extent) was scanning. Many researchers in the literature acknowledged the use of this strategy by their subjects (e.g., Perl, 1979; Zamel, 1983; Raimes, 1985; Victori, 1999; Sasaki, 2000; El-Mortaji, 2001, and Chaaban, 2010). Both S6 and S9 continually went back to read and repeat what they had written, whether only words, parts of sentences, sentences, or reading of the whole draft (S6) to reconsider what had been written in order to clarify their position or to decide whether they had fulfilled targets they had previously established. Similar findings were reported by Sullivan's (2006) high achieving writer, Susan. This re-reading, in many cases, led frequently to rehearsal and to writing (Raimes, 1987). Such a recursive approach to writing enabled them to shift back and forth between the different processes. In fact, S6 and S9 had the most re-reading occurrences (159 times and 149 times respectively) (see Table 4-11 in Chapter Four, p. 128) of all in the group involved in this study, a finding which contradicted with Pennington & So's (1993) whose less proficient learners spent more time re-reading their texts than the more proficient ones. This could partly justify the relatively long time (103.16 minutes) spent composing by S6. However, having had this number of occurrences of re-reading emphasised the fact that the two good writers were committed to the writing task and were eager to produce a good piece of writing and this consequently allowed them to make revision in their text. This resonates with Hayes (1996:14-15) who suggests that "when we read to revise, we treat the text quite differently. We are still concerned with the text message, but now we are also concerned with bad diction, wordiness and poor organization."

The other poor writers, on the other hand, used the strategy of scanning but less frequently than the good writers. The findings in this respect suggested that the poor writers used this strategy whenever they found difficulty in generating further text. Unlike the good writers, re-reading back what those poor writers had written did not result in revising or editing of texts.

Avoidance and postponement were mainly used by the poor writer (S2). The use of these strategies by S2 served the purpose of coping with the complexity of the writing process that required this writer continuously juggle a number of simultaneous constraints (Flower and Hayes, 1981). Data analysis showed that this writer's decisions to postpone particular composing activities were due to a tendency to lower the cognitive load that was accompanying the production of text. This finding correlates with Leki's (1995) who found that her subjects were likely to " manipulate the cognitive demands of writing for their disciplinary courses by, for example, deferring attention to grammatical issues until they had generated the ideas in their texts to their own satisfaction" (p.253).

In terms of revision strategies, there were differences between the two groups and also among individuals themselves. For example, the good writer's (S6) revision occurred at the beginning, middle, and at the end of the writing processes, while the poor writer's (S3) revision mainly occurred at the end of the writing process. This finding is in keeping with Rashid's (1996) who claimed that the advanced writers planned and revised more globally than the intermediate writers in his study.

Moreover, good writers made more revising than their poorer counterparts (see Figure 4-1), and this might be due to the more re-reading done on the part of the good writers. That is, the more they re-read the more revisions they did. S6, for example, made use of this strategy when producing both drafts (first and final drafts), whereas the less proficient subject (S3) used it only while producing her final draft. Also, in spite of the fact that S9 had produced only one draft, we saw how recursively he revised his essay by evidence of the many re-reading, repeating and rehearsing occurrences appeared in his protocol (see Appendix 11-D). This behaviour confirms the more recursive nature of writing implemented by the more proficient subjects (S6 and S9).

The L1 (Arabic) use while composing was also different between the two groups. The poor writers used the L1 in several occasions while writing in L2, while the good writers never used it except once by S6. This was in keeping with Sasaki and Hirose (1996). In fact, the poor writer (S3) used Arabic to ask questions about the topic as it seemed she had difficulties understanding it. Afterwards, she used Arabic again in rehearsing possible options to make a start with her essay. Trying out ideas in Arabic by this subject provided her with a basis to assess these ideas that might be clear to her in the mother tongue before she started writing. S3 and S2 used Arabic whenever they finished writing about a particular stage in their writing and decided to move into a next one, as for example, when S3 declared that she finished writing about 'the child' as the first stage and then decided to write about 'the role of education and school' as the next stage (*I have finished the first stage, and after this I'll start with the role of education and school*). Therefore, whenever the poor writer S3 faced problems of shortage of knowledge in the L2, she tended to switch to her mother tongue to compensate for this lack of knowledge (Cumming, 1990). Similar behaviour was observed in the current study with S2 who tended to resort to L1 (Arabic) quite often, so she used it in thinking about the topic to create mental plans and generate ideas.

This is in keeping with Wang & Wen's (2002) finding which showed that the amount of L1 use decreased as the writers' L2 proficiency increased. However, contradicted with Cumming's (1997) and Wang's (2003) findings which suggested that the higher proficiency learners were frequently observed resorting to L1 and "appeared to benefit extensively from switching to their L1 for rhetorical choices and discourse" (Wang, ibid: 368).

Another main difference between both groups is that of reader consideration. The intensive analysis of the protocols gave indication of S6's and S9's concern for the reader that was observed in different aspects of their writing and at different levels of the process. For example, the subjects' concern to get to the heart of the idea being expressed by rehearsing and carefully choosing the right focus, choosing the most effective expressions and even words (see 5.2.2.3), and their frequent reading of ideas, sentences and paragraphs in relation to each other to ensure that their intended meaning was conveyed and to make sure that coherence within the whole text was

obtained throughout the writing process (see 5.3.1.2 and 5.3.2.2.3). On the other hand, S3 and S2 made no reference to audience and their protocols showed no concern for that (see 5.3.3), and they failed to take the reader into account when planning and generating their text, similar to Raimes' (1985) unskilled writers, who wrote from an egocentric view point and frequently took the reader's understanding for granted. This finding also correlates with El-Mortaji (2001) and Chaaban (2010).

Flower and Hayes (1981) argue that good writers frequently redefine their readers and assignments when composing. Moreover, good writers consider their goals and how they want to influence the reader. In the current study, reader awareness strategy was confined to the good writers, S6 and S9. Though they did not overtly mention the reader in the course of their writing, we have seen how S6's and S9's final texts were carefully written in order to make sure they make sense to the reader (see 5.2.2.3). This resonates with Nystrand (1989) who argues that competent writers shape their texts by creating a balance between their own intentions and purposes of writing and the expectations and demands of their reader, a competence that the less proficient writers, S3 and S2, did not have.

The use of dictionary as a strategy to solve some writing problems was more used by the good writers (see 4.3.1.9). For example, both S2 and S3, the poor writers, acknowledged having problems when consulting the dictionary (cf. Victori, 1999), a reason that may justify their dislike for using it. S2 reported becoming easily distracted when consulting a dictionary even when using it to check the spelling (see 5.3.2.1.4).

## 6.5    Factors affecting the subjects' writing processes

The discussion in this section is connected to the findings related to the four case studies presented in Chapter Five and I will also refer to findings from Chapter Four, where relevant. This discussion aims at answering the third research question: If yes, how and why do they differ?

### 6.5.1   Linguistic competence

Linguistic competence is a key difference between the four subjects. These subjects' wide range of scores on language proficiency (see 5.2.1) resonate with their writing strategy use in terms of their quality and frequency, and these subjects showed a variety of different patterns of behaviour in their writing. For instance, the good writers, S6 and S9, had a better reading proficiency which enabled them to understand the task instructions as a whole, and had a better understanding of the writing topic. Moreover, the high achievement S6 and S9 made in 'Vocabulary' as a module can justify these subjects' more frequent use of the strategy of revising for substitution (see Table 4-16 in Chapter Four, p. 140) in which they substituted words or phrases for other different vocabulary throughout the writing process when they believed that they would improve the meaning they intended to convey. S6's and S9's good vocabulary also helped retrieve new words needed to continue moving forward when using the strategy of reading back what they had written without the need for them to resort to vocabulary in L1 for temporary compensation, or repeating similar words. They also understood the vocabulary of the assignment, and therefore they never asked questions about the topic as contrary to the other two poor writers. This finding resonates with Al-Sharah's (1997) that good knowledge of vocabulary in the target language helps EFL students to produce better writing.  Meanwhile, concerning the writing proficiency, considering the high scores they obtained during the three years (i.e., a mean of 85.3 for S6, and 84.6 for S9), enabled S6 and S9 to concentrate on higher-level global writing considerations without getting bogged down much in local issues such as word choice.

In addition, S6's and S9's overall language proficiency level (87.05% and 86.9% respectively) corresponded with the range of strategies these subjects used. Data analysis in Chapters Four and Five revealed that the two good writers' planning strategies were different from the poor writers' in terms of frequency and quality. S6 and S9's occurrences outnumbered those of their poorer counterparts (see Tables 4-7 and 4-8 in Chapter Four, p. 111), a finding that is partially in keeping with Jones & Tetroe's (1987) who found that L2 proficiency controlled the amount of writers' planning while composing in the L2. Moreover, the types of planning the good writers used were more effective in terms of being more flexible about their plans,

and this was particularly clear in S9's case who viewed writing as a non-linear and creative process as when added a new idea and discarded another from his pre-planned outlines and formulated his ideas in a way he believed would contribute better to his essay while composing.

These findings echoed those of many previous studies (e.g., Roca de Larios, et al., 2008; Dreyer & Oxford, 1996; Green & Oxford, 1995; Kaylani, 1996; Lan & Oxford, 2003, and Sasaki, 2000) who concur that more proficient learners use a wider range of writing strategies more efficiently than less proficient learners. This, however, is not in keeping with Raimes' (1985). Her two subjects 'Johnny and Harriet' whose proficiency levels were the highest among the group, showed far less recursiveness in their writing than their less proficient peers. For example, they read back only occasionally, they rarely rehearsed, and they made only few changes in their texts. Hence, highly proficient language learners' use of good writing strategies reported in previous research was not totally supported in that study.

On the other hand, the poor writers' (S2 and S3) low achievement in speaking, for example, seemed to correlate with the more L1 verbalisations of the strategies S3 intended to use, and also seemed to resonate with the difficulties S2 encountered in verbalising her thoughts at the onset of her protocol (see 5.3.2.1.1.1). Moreover, S3's low achievement in vocabulary, and S2's failing of this subject and the need for her to repeat the course (see Table 5-5, p. 166), could be the reason behind the lack of global planning due to difficulty in understanding the wording of the topic and the essay question as a whole.

S3, for example, took longer to understand the essay title, she perhaps understood it less well, and she found it harder to verbalise in English, hence greater use of L1. This finding correlates with Beare and Bourdages (2007) who investigated a group of skilled bilingual writers and found that language switching is not common among highly proficient bilingual writers except for one of their participants who frequently used her L1 in L2 content generation and who turned to be lower in second language proficiency than her peers. This finding, i.e., frequently resorting to the L1 by S3 and S2 as a compensation strategy (cf. Cabrejas, 2012) is also in keeping with Woodall's (2002) results, as he found that how often learners use their L1 during L2 writing is related to L2 proficiency, i.e., less proficient L2 learners switched to their L1s more

frequently than more advanced learners. This finding also resonates with Wang and Wen (2002) who found that more proficient writers tended to rely less on the L1 especially in idea generation than less proficient writers. Wang and Wen (2002) concluded that the amount of L1 in the L2 composing process declines with the development of the writers' L2 proficiency. It also corresponds with Raimes' (1985) who suggests that a lack of linguistic knowledge in her participants might influence their writing performance.

In terms of the subjects' writing quality, however, the results suggest that proficiency level is significant in relation to the writing quality as measured by holistic score and overall length. The more proficient subjects S6 and S9 demonstrated superior overall quality of writing to, and wrote longer text than that of the less proficient subjects S3 and S2. This finding confirms previous research (e.g., Rashid & Rafik-Galea, 2007; Sasaki, 2000; Sasaki and Hirose, 1996; Tedick, 1988) which suggest that L2 language proficiency contributed to overall writing ability, and that more linguistically proficient students should outperform less proficient students in writing. This finding also, and irrespective of task types, confirms results of previous studies with ESL writers that overall length tends to increase proportionally with L2 proficiency levels (Reid, 1990; Tedick, 1988). This suggests that the more proficient subjects were able to demonstrate greater fluency. In contrast, at the lower level, the subjects may not have been linguistically competent enough to write a longer essay on an argumentative type of writing task. However this finding contradicts with the finding concerning Raimes' (1985) ESL student 'Johnny' who had the highest score in a language proficiency test and had many years of exposure to English, yet still considered as unskilled in writing according to the uniform relatively low ratings (2/2/2) received on his essay when marked by three trained evaluators.

It could be argued that the more proficient subjects' fluency in all aspects of the language helped them to take more risks and add variety to their writing, an advantage which the less proficient subjects might lack, so that they were more constrained in terms of vocabulary and syntax. Poorer fluency enforced them to restrict themselves to the structures and vocabulary they knew (cf. Carlson, 1988).

The high scores the two more proficient subjects, S6 and S9, had in L2 enabled them to perform certain strategies throughout the writing process. Their better reading

proficiency enabled them to understand the assigned topic and the task instructions as a whole. Their higher achievements in vocabulary enabled them to use a variety of words and expressions in their writing. It was also found that the more proficient subjects had made many revisions for substitution (see Table 4-16) where they substituted words and expressions for other while revising as an attempt to improve their texts, a strategy which reflected their high command of vocabulary acquisition. The good writers' high command of spoken English enabled them to verbalise their thoughts with ease in the L2, and by doing so avoided the risk of translating ideas from L1into L2 and therefore the possibility to affect meaning. Although the good writers tended to plan their texts globally prior to writing, a strategy that ought to take more time on their part (Sasaki, 2000), one of the findings in the current research was that the poor writers had spent longer time prior to writing trying to grasp the assigned topic than the good writers in spite of the fact that they (the poor writers) did not globally plan their essays (i.e., to decide how to organise their texts as a whole either verbally or in writing— outlining). This could be again attributed to the low level of language proficiency on the part of the poor writers as they needed more time trying to understand the title and got themselves oriented to its demands before being ready to start. This finding, however, is inconsistent with Sasaki's (2000) who found that his more skilled writers spent a longer time in planning, whereas the least skilled writers spent a shorter time. Hence, the poor writers in the current research might have viewed the task as more complicated and demanded a high level of knowledge and therefore, they tended to use their L1 which is their stronger language for thinking both in planning to write and in writing. This could justify the greater use of L1 by the poor writers prior to and during writing. On the other hand, the good writers' high language proficiency enabled them to understand the written task more easily, and view it as less cognitively demanding than the other poor writers. And because their L2 proficiency is quite high it enabled them to think in their L2 instead of their L1. This resonates highly with Qi (1998) and Hu's (2003) findings in relation to thinking languages in L2 writing.

### 6.5.2 Motivation

Writing is a complex task and time-consuming process that needs focus and determination. These characteristics suggest that motivation can play an important role "in determining whether students will engage in writing activities, what kind of writing tasks they will undertake, with what level of effort and attention they will approach the various phases of the writing process, and how they exploit the learning potential of writing tasks" (Kormos, 2012:391). Moreover, in Kellogg's (1996) model 'The role of individual differences in writing process', Kellogg explained how motivational and cognitive variables affect the students' writing processes and how individual difference factors can, consequently, affect the quality of their final written texts.

Subjects' motivation for the task proved to be another difference between the two groups of writers represented by the four cases discussed in Chapter Five. There are two types of motivation according to Deci and Ryan (1985, cited in Kormos, 2012), which are extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Extrinsically motivated students are those who engage in learning only in order to obtain grades or to avoid being degraded. Intrinsically motivated students, on the other hand, are those who engaged in learning because they enjoy and love to learn. In the present research, it might be argued that the poor writers, S2 and S3, were extrinsically motivated, while the good writers, S6 and S9, were both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated. The extrinsic motivating factor in the case of S2 and S3 was that they both were engaged in learning the skill of writing merely to pass this module as part of the academic programme. To put it differently, those subjects' involvement in writing was to cope with the course demands to obtain the required grades to pass and get good marks, or at least not to fail. There was no internal motivation on part of those writers that could cause them to improve this skill.

The two good writers, S6 and S9, tended to be both intrinsically and extrinsically motivated for they liked writing as an activity in itself, then also liked to practise it. They were also extrinsically motivated as being driven by external reasons such as pursuing a particular job after graduation.

It could also be argued that these motivating factors (i.e., intrinsic and extrinsic) and the absence of the internal motivation on part of the poor writers could be linked to the way how those subjects approached their writing task in the current study. For instance, S3 in interview described herself as lazy in writing, *"I feel the writing process is very difficult and usually boring with my all respect"* (S3), (cf. Victori, 1999). This obviously affected her use and choice of strategies. For example, she did not make any revisions on her first draft (see 5.3.1.4), nor did she spend any time re-reading the task as a whole (see 5.3.1.2) to check its unity and coherence before proceeding to the final draft (see Appendix 11-B). She also did not consult a dictionary (see 4.3.1.9) or plan the organisation of the essay (see 5.3.1.1). This was also the case with S2. This clearly influenced her choice of postponement and avoidance strategies (see Table 4-13 in Chapter Four, p. 134) – she postponed correcting a spelling mistake, but avoided doing that in the end, and she avoided consulting a dictionary (see 5.3.2.1.4).

On the other hand, an evidence for being more motivated is the greater use of writing strategies on part of the good writers (see Figure 6-1 below), particularly metacognitive strategies such as planning and reviewing (see Tables 4-7, 4-8, 4-16, 4-17, 4-18 and 4-19 in Chapter Four), to " aid in achieving goals" (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003:173).
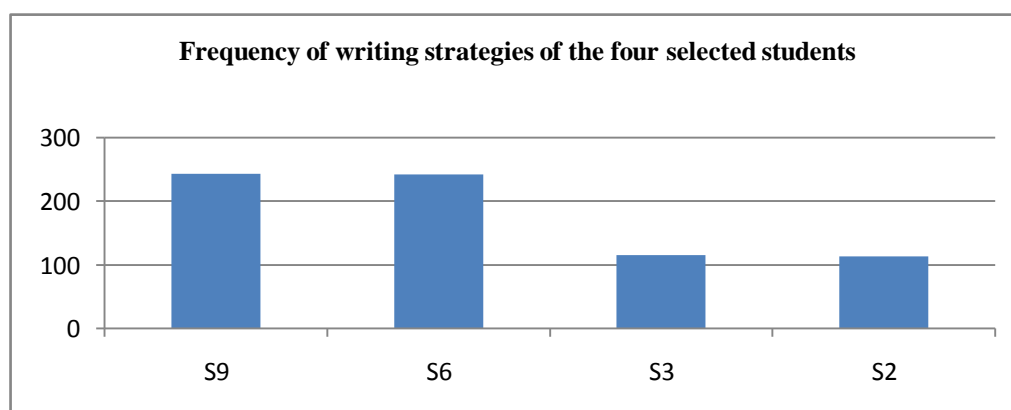


**Figure 6-1: Frequencies of writing strategies of the four selected students**

The other two poor writers, however, were less persistent and showed less use and development of strategies (see Figure 6-1 above). The poor writers' lower level of persistence compared with the other good writers may be attributed to their lack of liking of English writing while the other two liked certain kinds of writing (see

section 5.2), which suggested that their motivation was of a more self-determined nature.

Apart from being extrinsically motivated as discussed above, the two poor writers also showed absence of motivation to write for other separate reasons. First, the perception those two subjects hold about the unimportance of writing for them upon graduation (see 5.2.5). This notion was influenced by their unenthusiastic past learning experience as their secondary school teachers did not give writing enough emphasis or attention (see 5.2.3.1). This could lead them to believe that writing in English would be unimportant when they finished their university degree and became teachers of English. Second, teachers explained that students, especially the weaker ones, lacked self-assurance and they were shy and did not want to expose their mistakes in front of others (see 4.2.2.3). This could be another reason for their lack of motivation to practise writing. This finding correlates with that of Chaaban (2010) whose subjects also showed lack of motivation and self-confidence while performing writing, and also were negatively influenced by certain teaching practices and by the perceptions they hold about the value of writing (see section 2.8).

This attitude contrasted with that of the good writers S6 and S9.Those writers enjoyed the learning process of writing per se, and showed enthusiasm to develop their ability in writing driven by the desire to pursue a job they liked after graduation for which being a successful writer is important. Hence, this leads to the conclusion that one striking difference between the two groups lay in the extent of effort they expended and in their commitment to their writing. This finding correlates highly with the findings emerging in Victori's (1999) investigation in which her good and poor subject writers were completely different in terms of their personal commitment to their writing, and that the weak writers' poor writing approach was "attributed to their admitted laziness and lack of commitment to the writing task" (p.550).

Table 5-6 in Chapter Five (p. 167), also shows that S6 and S9 spent more time composing than S3 and S2: 103.16 minutes, 59.24 minutes and 40.41 minutes, 49.46 minutes respectively. This also can be interpreted as a lack of commitment to the writing task on part of the less proficient subjects. We have also seen that S3 had encountered difficulty in understanding the assigned topic, and this difficulty might have prevented her from being motivated to the topic (see 5.3.1.1), and therefore she

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produced less text, an interpretation supported by her comments in her think-aloud protocol: *I don't like writing too much*, and in the interview when she was asked: *How well do you enjoy writing in English?,* and she answered: *"I usually don't enjoy writing very much because when I am writing I always fear from mistakes in grammar, in spelling and many things, so writing is very hard task for me and I don't like it so much frankly"*. This correlates with the findings of Raimes (1987), who suggests that different variables could account for the time spent composing like, for example, commitment to the writing task, the motivation to the assigned topics, or sense of the present audience. Our finding concerning motivation also proved Gardner's (1985) justification that "Attitudes and motivation are important because they determine the extent to which the individuals will actively involve themselves in learning the language" (p.56).

### 6.5.3 Past learning experience

Another factor that appeared to influence the subjects' writing, as revealed from the data analysis, is their learning experience of writing in the past and also their reading habits. The findings emerged from the data showed that the subjects representing the two levels of writing proficiency (S6 and S9 vs. S2 and S3) were exposed to different writing instructional approaches during their secondary stage of education. Data from the interview suggested that the two good writers received more instructions on how to write an essay and they had more chance to practise writing in class than the other two poor writers (see 5.2.3). The limited exposure to L2 writing and writing instruction on part of the poor writers, and having a scant knowledge of what writing entails posed difficulties for them to develop their writing skills while in college. In this connection, Spack (1997: 51) maintains that "the literary instruction they (the students) receive prior to entering college may be inadequate to satisfy the demands they now face." The type of instruction those poor writers had received in writing made them view writing as a process of fixed groups of expressions and ideas where grammatical rules were applied rather than a proactive approach of trying out their own ideas through practising various modes of expression. This finding is in keeping with El-Aswad, (2002) and Chaaban (2010) whose subjects were also influenced by

the poor instructions they received in writing. Chaaban (ibid) argues that "This factor negatively affects students' perceptions about the nature of writing."(p. 261).

Moreover, the pleasure reading these subjects had done throughout the secondary school and college appears to have a relationship with their writing skill. S6 and S9 who read a lot in secondary school and have continued to do so, appeared to have less difficulty when writing in expressing their ideas. It could be as Krashen (1984) argues that extensive reading directly improves writing abilities. He also suggests that reading has given these writers an unconscious feel for language that the other writers lack. My finding here is in keeping with Nattress' (1986) who found that her subjects' writing skill was influenced by the amount of pleasure reading they did during the secondary school stage.

Moreover, it could be argued that reading for S6 and S9, had enhanced their vocabulary and expressions by exposure to language through reading. This in fact goes in line with Buckingham's (2008) findings, whose participants also enriched their own stock of vocabulary and expressions by exposure to language through their discipline-specific reading. Participants in Belcher and Connor's (2001) reflective study on L2 writing development also underscore the importance of broad exposure to a variety of text types. This is also in keeping with research which has shown that extensive reading leads to better vocabulary knowledge, better verbal fluency, better syntactic knowledge, better semantic memory, better metalinguistic awareness, and broader knowledge of the world (cf. Stanovich et al., 1996; Wagner & Stanovich, 1996).

## 6.6   Reflections on the think-aloud task

The methodology designed for this study is mainly qualitative to show how and why the writing processes and strategies took place in an EFL educational context. Quantitative methodology is also used as a means of revealing how this took place. Thinking aloud is used as a core source of data-collection in this study and in order to validate the task, students were equally pre-trained in thinking aloud, the researcher-participant interaction was minimized as much as possible (cf. Manchón et al., 2005; Raimes, 1985), and no time limit was set for the writing task in order to

avoid any reactivity effects. Also more importantly, to facilitate the process of thinking aloud, students were encouraged to verbalise their thoughts in whatever language (L1 and/or L2) they felt most comfortable with while implementing the task (cf. Manchón et al., 2005).

Yet, it might be argued that the observed differences in strategies, in terms of frequency and kind, could be the result of the students implementing think-aloud instructions differently. One of the findings in this study was that the poor writers used strategies less frequently in total when performing the writing task, except for two strategies namely: use of L1 and avoidance and postponement (see Figure 4-1). For example, data from the protocols showed that the good writer S6 repeated words or phrases twice as many as the poor writer S3 (110 times and 55 times respectively) while performing the task (see Tables 4-11 and 4-12). But, the question that needs to be asked here is what if S3, for instance, had repeated some of the segments silently? Moreover, it was observed that S3 verbalised reading larger segments of her work, but she did not verbalise any decision beforehand as a plan to do so (see 5.3.1.1.2). It is important to note that the think aloud protocols sometimes do not provide a complete picture of some writers' thought processes. Not all writers were able to verbalise all their thought processes in the think-aloud protocols, for different factors such as the nature of the think-aloud protocol which interferes with their natural thinking processes (see section 3.7.2.1.1), or it might also be related to the fact that it was the first time for them to conduct such a task, so they might not be certain that they were doing the right thing, or it could be because of my presence there as a researcher who had to monitor their performance.

In the think-aloud protocols, and in spite of the training students received, there were some complaints about the difficulty of thinking aloud as a task on part of some of the poor writers (e.g., S2 and S3) when they produced their compositions. S2, for example, found the task difficult and reported this by saying: (*It's difficult for me to think aloud*) (see Appendix 11-C). She added that she was not used to writing while verbalising her thinking. She felt uncomfortable because there was another person present. Also S3 was not sure how she could go about the task at some point in the protocol when she asked the researcher: (*Shall I verbalise my thoughts now as if I'm talking to myself and you are listening to me? Or is it as if there is no one*

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*around?)*(see Appendix 11-B). These questions were asked because she might feel uncomfortable verbalising her thoughts as her mental privacy would be interrupted by the researcher who was listening to the way she was composing and thinking aloud. These points raise some concern about the validity of the think aloud protocol, which was highlighted by different researchers in the literature such as Hyland (2009), Sasaki (2005), Nunan (1993) and Faigley and Witte (1981) (see 2.2.2 and 3.7.2.1.1).

It might be worth remembering, moreover, that the subjects in this study are fourth year university students of English who are supposed to have a good command of language and therefore they might think that they were expected to verbalise all or, at least, most of their thoughts in English instead of L1 when thinking aloud. This in fact put some of them, especially the less proficient ones, under constraint while implementing this task taking into consideration the presence of the researcher who was listening to how they were verbalising.

It is to be acknowledged, then, that this issue is a negative feature of think-aloud protocols and that there is no simple way of answering the questions that I have posed above. In spite of this drawback, however, the think-aloud protocols have proved to be suitable, valuable, informative and reliable in extracting the cognitive process data for analysis in this research. Moreover, in order to provide an in-depth and rigorous understanding of the inquiry the think-aloud protocols were backed up by interviews, observations, and documents analysis as a means of triangulation to get more valuable findings. Piloting the methodology could also be accounted as another originality of this research where some tasks were abandoned and others were modified (see 3.10.1.3).

## 6.7   Writing process model of the Libyan EFL students

Through evidence of analyses of the protocols, a composing process model of the Libyan EFL student subjects is tentatively proposed to signify the internal processes of the Libyan student writers' minds as they produce a writing task, and other factors (Affect) which could have possible influence on the writing process. A possible contribution of the current research is the intention to provide a further detailed account of composing process categories and strategies used while producing a text,

and to see more clearly how the strategies relate to each other and to the different writing processes.

Figure 6-2 below illustrates an EFL writing model that is similar to Flower and Hayes' (1981) cognitive process model of L1 writing (see also El-Aswad, 2002), and which is designed to account for the three components of writing environment the subjects engaged in: the task environment, the writer's long-term memory, and the composing process with additions made from our own data. The task environment includes the input and the output of the writing task. That is, it refers to those elements outside the writer like the topic, the audience and the purpose. When the writer is engaged in writing, the text produced so far is already included in the task environment. This part of the model is confirmed by the many attempts of re-reading the subjects of the current study did (see Tables 4-11 and 4-12 in Chapter Four, pp. 128-9). The task environment also includes the external resources, such as dictionaries in the current research (see figure 6-2).

# Task Environment

| The Rhetorical Problem, Topic, Audience, Purpose | Dictionaries | Text Produced So Far |
|---|---|---|

## The Writer's Long-Term Memory

***Knowledge of the topic***
-real/imagine
-easy/difficult
-common/uncommon
-familiar/unfamiliar

***Knowledge of writing conventions:***

**Discourse related:**
-Argumentative
**Essay writing related:**
-Organisation: move from general to specific, introduction, body, conclusion

***Knowledge of audience***

-Teacher's rules and expectations
-Audience: teacher, researcher, examiner,anonymous individuals
-purpose

**Affect:**

Attitudes, emotion, motivation towards writing in L2, teaching of writing, reading
-L2 linguistic proficiency
-Effective strategy use
-Writing proficiency

## Writing Processes

### Planning

***Real planning:***

-Global planning:

-outlining

-Local planning:

***Strategies done in support of planning:***
Rehearsing
Repeating
Reading:
-read the assigned topic, paraphrase the assigned topic, underline key words in the assigned topic, read the instructions, read the outline
- reading within sentence, between sentences, after-text-writing

Questioning
Avoidance and postponement
Use of L1

### Drafting

***Units of composing in L2 and L1***

words, phrases, sentences, clauses, group of sentences, paragraphs, and essays

***Strategies used while drafting***

speaking while writing
planning,
rehearsing,
re-reading,
repeating words and phrases,
questioning grammar, lexis,
use of L1,
use of dictionary

### Reviewing

***Evaluation***
***Global/local***

***Revising:***

-Addition, deletion, substitution, word choice

***Editing:***

-Addition, deletion, grammar, spelling, form or tense verb, punctuation, word form

***Levels of reviewing***
-while writing and after finishing the whole passage
-after finishing the first draft (on 2nd draft)
- only while writing the essay (on one draft)

***Strategies done in support of reviewing***
Read what has been written,
Questioning
Use of L1
Planning: global/local

## Monitoring:commenting/metacommenting

**Figure 6-2: A Tentative writing model of EFL Libyan students**

The writer's LTM comprises of knowledge of the topic, writing conventions, audience and purpose. In addition, I added other factors within the learner's LTM which were not included in Flower and Hayes' model such as knowledge of languages (L2 linguistic proficiency), motivation towards writing in L2, and towards teaching of L2 writing, and past learning experience which includes learner's knowledge of writing strategies, a factor that can be determined by the writer's writing proficiency. These factors may affect the student's choice of strategy. Hence, student's writing in L2 can also be influenced by L2 linguistic proficiency level of the writer, and the writer's effective use of strategies. Effective use of strategies is in turn influenced by knowledge of writing strategies (e.g., through instructions), motivation levels, and the writer's linguistic proficiency which controls to what extent strategies can actually be applied to L2 text.

As shown in this study, in order to perform a writing task, a writer needs much from the long-term memory. A writer needs to be provided with knowledge of writing strategies that he/she has to develop through his/her past learning experience in the L2. In addition, the writer would need knowledge of writing conventions (in our case, writing conventions related to the structure of an argumentative composition), and essay writing related knowledge, for example, how to organise an essay moving from general to specific, and also how to organise the information gathered (e.g., introduction, body, and conclusion).

The writing process in the current model comprises the writing strategies (cognitive strategies) the writers employed during the task in order to facilitate their writing or to overcome different writing problems within the three main components: planning, drafting, and reviewing (revising/editing). Planning contains two sub-categories: actual planning strategies (global, local and outlining), and strategies done in support of planning (e.g., rehearsing, repeating, reading, questioning, etc.). Generally, the students retrieve relevant information from their long-term memories and planned either mentally or in writing (outlining), globally or locally. Drafting includes the writer's expressing of ideas into written language. Writers used a number of strategies within the process of drafting such as speaking while writing, planning, re-reading, repeating words and phrases, questioning for grammar and lexis, use of L1 and use of dictionary. Reviewing which attempts to improve the quality of the text

comprises revising, and editing (as actual reviewing strategies), and other strategies that could assist reviewing such as re-reading, questioning, use of L1 and planning. This means that re-reading and questioning and use of L1, for example, are multi-functional strategies since they also fall under the categories of planning and drafting. The reviewing process interconnects with other processes in different times of the writing process.

Another component which forms a part in the writing process is the monitor which refers to what strategy to use (metacognitive). In other words, the writer can switch his/her processes back and forth and insert one process or sub-process within another through using the monitor. This flexibility is shown by the bidirectional arrows which also indicate complexities of the writing process itself. That is, composing never follows a fixed route or stages but, on the contrary, processes are closely interconnected and affect one another.

This model is different from Flower and Hayes' L1 model in that it is of L2 writing, while Flower and Hayes' is of L1 writing. Therefore, another aspect of writing, which was not included in Flower and Hayes' model, which is L1 utilisation was added to this model as explained previously. This aspect should be included in the EFL writing process of this research as L1 use is an integral part of L2 writing (though we have seen in this study that L1 was skipped by some proficient writers, e.g., S9). Moreover, I use the term 'Drafting' instead of the term used by Flower and Hayes, i.e., 'Translating', which might confuse the reader (cf. El Mortaji, 2001). Furthermore, my model differs from Flower and Hayes' (1981) and El-Aswad's (2002) models as it is more detailed (see figure 6-2) by including more sub-categories in order to provide a better picture for the writing process. For instance, under the category of *planning*, two sub-categories were added: actual planning and strategies done in support of planning. Actual planning includes global planning, outlining and local planning; while under the sub-category of *strategies done in support of planning* a number of strategies were listed such as rehearsing, repeating, reading, questioning, avoidance and postponement, and use of L1. Under the category of drafting different other sub-categories were included such as speaking while writing, planning, re-reading, repeating words and phrases, questioning for grammar and lexis, rehearsing, use of L1 and use of dictionary. Also under the

category of *reviewing* two sub-categories exist: actual reviewing ( revising and editing), and *strategies done in support of reviewing* which in turn includes the sub-subcategories of reading what has been written, questioning, planning and use of L1. Moreover, within the task environment I included the use of dictionaries as an external resource used by the students in this study which also did not exist in Flower and Hayes' (1981) model nor in El-Aswad's (2002).

## 6.8    Chapter summary

In summation, the findings presented in this chapter revealed that the writing process of the Libyan students is recursive in nature. Students, no matter what their proficiency level in writing, adopted a set of writing strategies to approach their writing task, to generate texts, and for evaluation. However, these strategies were found to be used more frequently and more effectively by the good writers. It was also found that strategy use by Libyan students of English is a process that is influenced by certain factors. Among the factors that appeared to be influencing the Libyan students' composing behaviour are their language proficiency, motivation to write, their past learning experience and reading habits, and also their writing practice outside of classroom settings. In other words, the ineffectiveness of strategy use on part of the weaker writers was perhaps due to a lack of linguistic knowledge, lack of motivation, a lack and/or absence of writing instruction during pre-college stages, or all of these. Findings also suggested that differences in some of the strategies used, in terms of frequency and kind, might be related to the nature of the think aloud protocol task, as we have seen that some of the poor writers expressed certain complaints towards writing and thinking aloud at the same time.

In this chapter, a tentative model was also proposed based on the students' writing processes and strategies observed, with respect to the factors: learners' linguistic knowledge, motivation, and educational background which appeared to be responsible for the differences in strategy use between the two groups of participants.

In the next chapter, the concluding chapter, the major findings will be presented, and the contribution of the study will be identified. Limitations, suggestions for further research and implications for teaching will also be presented.

# Chapter 7: Conclusion, Suggestions for Further Research, and Teaching Implications

## 7.1 Introduction

The current chapter is to provide a conclusion of the investigation. The major findings related to the writing process and writing strategies in L2, and also the differences between good and poor writers in using these writing strategies will be summarized. Then factors that might have effects on the writers' composing strategies and behaviours will also be highlighted. I will also identify how the study contributed to the field of writing strategies at university level in the EFL context in general, and the Libyan context in particular. Limitations of the study will also be discussed, and suggestions for further research in the area of writing strategy and implications for teaching will also be presented.

## 7.2 Summary of the study

This study was conducted to investigate the writing strategies employed by the fourth year English majors studying English as a foreign language at MU, Libya. The aim was to study two groups of writers, namely good writers and poor writers among the fourth year group of students and see if there was a difference in their strategy use and if yes, then why. Using think-aloud protocols, semi-structured interviews, observation and students' written documents, a number of strategies were revealed.

In Chapter Four, the writing processes and strategies used by the writers in this study were investigated. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were carried out to investigate the writing strategies and sub-strategies used by the writers while engaged in writing an argumentative type of discourse and the frequency of occurrence of various strategies were revealed. The most frequently used strategies were scanning followed by revision, rehearsing, use of L1, planning, questioning, dictionary use, and avoidance and postponement.

In Chapter Five, the qualitative analysis, four selected case studies representing two different levels of writing proficiency and language proficiency were investigated intensively. The findings showed that the more successful and less successful

subjects were different in terms of quantity and quality of their strategy use, and the quality of their written products. It appeared that different factors contributed to the different writing approaches adopted by the subjects. Among these factors were students' language proficiency, their motivation to write, and their past learning experience. The following section includes the major findings.

## 7.3    Overall findings

### 7.3.1    The writing process

The finding of the current research that is quite prevalent in most related studies, as stated in the literature, is concerned with the nature of writing which is a complex recursive process, i.e., non-linear, as suggested by Flower and Hayes (1981), Pennington and So (1993), El-Aswad (2002), and Alhaysony (2008). Hence, the intensive analysis of the eleven subjects' protocols showed recursiveness in their writing process, and all subjects used planning, drafting and text evaluation strategies (see the tentative model in section 6.7), a finding that was also reported in different earlier ESL/EFL research (e.g., Zamel, 1983; Raimes, 1985, 1987; El Mortaji, 2001; Junju, 2004).

Nevertheless, there seems to be a variation in recursiveness among the subject writers in relation to their writing proficiency and language competence. As shown by the think-aloud protocols, the good writers would frequently stop to re-read, plan, rehearse, revise and edit their texts whenever they wrote a paragraph or even sentences before they carried on with writing. The poor writers' composing process, on the other hand, appeared to be less recursive. There was, for example, much less backward and forward movement within the text revealed by the less number of times those writers re-read what they had written when compared to the good writers (see Figure 4-1). They were more interested in dealing with words and grammatical issues than how to develop their ideas. These findings are in line with Zamel's (1983) who also confirmed that her unskilled writers were more concerned with minor issues and superficial accuracy and performed less revision than the other skilled writers in her group who paid more attention to generate and explain ideas and were less concerned with accuracy. In other words, and as Victori (1999) puts it,

they "were not bound by ideas they had already written down. Rather they would often add new ideas and restructure old ones on evaluating them." (p.550).

However, before presenting key findings relevant to each group of writers separately, I attempt to present the findings that are common to the whole group.

First, the use of L1 in L2 writing was prevalent among most writers in this investigation. This emphasises the notion that L2 writing process is a bilingual event. Writers have two languages at their disposal when writing in L2. This is consistent with previous research (e.g., Cumming, 1990; El-Aswad, 2002; Wang and Wen, 2002; Junju, 2004; Alhaysony, 2008; Van Weijen et al., 2009; Alharthi, 2012).

Second, according to the subjects' think-aloud protocols, scanning was the most used strategy by all subjects, especially reading what had been written. This strategy was used throughout the different writing processes, i.e., planning, drafting, and text reviewing. This echoes findings from previous studies such as El Mortaji (2001); El-Aswad (2002); Junju (2004),and Alhaysony (2008).

Third, subjects tended to plan mentally rather than in writing. It was also found that local planning was used more frequently than global planning. This correlates with findings from El-Aswad, (2002), and Alhaysony, (2008).

Fourth, all subjects rehearsed frequently for different purposes such as to find a focus, find a new idea or clarifying an old one. The analysis of the protocols showed that rehearsing leading to writing was frequently used by subjects on their writing task to complete an idea, particularly when a few words of a sentence had been written down. This agrees with El Mortaji (2001), and Alhaysony (2008).

Fifth, all subjects revised and edited their texts, and all of them made local revisions while composing. This correlates with findings in earlier research (e.g., Whalen and Menard, 1995; El-Aswad, 2002).

### 7.3.2 Writing behaviour and strategies of good writers

The findings that can be drawn out of the analyses of the think-aloud protocols, interviews, observations, and written documents concerning the good writers' writing behaviour and strategy use in this study, can be summarised in the following:

First, the analysis of think-aloud in Chapter Four indicates that the good writers used significantly many overall writing strategies while composing in L2.

Second, good writers used all categories of local planning, global planning, and outlining (except S10) and began the process with apparent understanding of the task requirement (see 4.3.1.1.2.2). They were also found to plan both prior to and while composing. This finding was consistent with Whalen and Menard's (1995), Raimes' (1987) and Zamel's (1983) findings concerning skilled and unskilled writers' strategies.

Third, meta-cognitive knowledge about English writing contributed a great deal to the quality of writing. Findings show that students who planned their writing were successful writers, whereas students who did not plan encountered difficulty in processing their composition task. In general, good writers' writing was characterised by the use of explicit meta-cognitive knowledge, so at the pre-drafting phase they planned globally, and to some extent locally for their topic. This planning provided them with bases to keep track of the main ideas of the topic, and know where to go in their writing. So the writing process of the good students in this research is of a recursive nature, which confirms Flower and Hayes' (1981) cognitive process model of writing (see 2.2.2). This finding was in keeping with Alharthi (2012) and Angelova (1999).

Fourth, the rehearsing incidences done by the good writers were usually followed by other strategies such as re-reading, planning or revising, and in most cases rehearsing led to writing. Rehearsing and questioning, which might be one of the strategies that clearly distinguished good writers from poor writers, helped them (the good writers) retrieve information and developed their ideas and their arguments. This type of rehearsing made the good writers' minds act proactively and started searching for ideas instead of sitting passively waiting for whatever to turn up.

Fifth, good writers frequently stopped to re-read what they had written with the purpose of generating more text, or for other purposes usually related to extensive and complex revisions (Cabrejas, 2008b) (see 4.3.1.3). That is, reading between paragraphs and reading larger unite of discourse, (i.e., global re-reading) enabled them to be in a position to monitor and evaluate previously written texts, and made the necessary revising and editing, or just carried on writing. This was in particular what differentiated the good writers from the poor writers in terms of the size of the units read. This highlighted the understanding of composing as a recursive process on part of those good writers. Such findings were consistent with El Mortaji (2001); Alhaysony (2008); and Chaaban (2010).

Sixth, the findings suggest that the good writers, in general, revised more and spent more time working on their papers than the poor writers. Revisions done by the good writers mostly took place during the time of re-reading what had previously been written. Moreover, good writers were more able to identify global problems with their essays and accordingly revise them.

Seventh, the qualitative data gathered from the subjects' interview confirmed that good writers enrich their knowledge through reading in L2 (see 6.5.3). Along with their writing practice which added to their understanding of what writing entails, good writers improved their knowledge through reading for pleasure, and literary work. These writers enhanced their vocabulary and expressions by exposure to language through reading which would consequently reflect on their performance as writers. Thus, by time, the good writers become more independent and develop their own approaches and strategies. This finding is in keeping with Nattress (1986), and El Mortaji (2001).

Eighth, good writers were aware of their audience and therefore, they manifested a quite good range of audience-related strategies, as for instance, they took much more care with the way they built their sentences and paragraphs, and were more careful with their word choice in order to be more interesting and convincing to the intended reader. This finding was also proved by previous research (Horwitz 1989; Al-Semari, 1993; Victori 1997; El Mortaji, 2001; Alhaysony, 2008).

### 7.3.3   Writing behaviour and strategies of poor writers

The major findings emerging from the present investigation show that the main factors that differentiate poor writers from good writers are the degree of linguistic competence, motivation for the writing task, and for L2 writing instruction in general, and also their past learning experience (see 7.3.4). Results of this investigation revealed that participants are aware of different strategies that could facilitate the production of good writing. Nevertheless, the issue could be not how many writing strategies a learner might be aware of, but how effectively these strategies could be used in terms of evaluation and text generation (Manchón, 2001). The findings in this respect were in line with other research (e.g., Pennington and So, 1993; Cava, 1999; El-Aswad, 2002). Hence, poor writers in the current study knew about different writing strategies, but they might have failed to employ some of them in a way that could have helped them achieve their goals and improve their performance in writing. Hence, as the good writers' main focus was how to proceed coherently throughout the text and re-structure the ideas generated, backed up with their knowledge about the purpose and requirements of the task, good perception of the writing problems, and good knowledge of strategy use, the poor writers, on the other hand, appeared to struggle with their writing. Being preoccupied with their lack of appropriate lexical items and their persistent concern about the grammatical aspects and morphological rules such as how and when to use the right tense, prepositions and expressions further delayed their processing at the global text-level problems (Victori, 1999). Hence, the following reasons emerged to be influencing the result of those poor writers' approach.

To start with, the problem of limited mental capacity on part of those writers was obvious. Being concerned with searching for the appropriate lexical items, and struggling with grammar and spelling as their main writing problems could prevent those writers from considering aspects at a higher level of discourse. In this case, there would be little capacity left to provide for the other less immediate concerns as, for example, thinking about the topic or considering the audience. As Perl (1980) points out, much of their attention is taken up by the encoding process that it constantly interrupts their train of thought.

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Second, in terms of the writers' conception of the task, the poor writers conceived writing as less recursive and sometimes as a sequential linear process which, if followed then would lead to the production of a good text. S3, for example, depended on her initial understanding of the task and copying down the topic once to develop her ideas and continue writing in a sequential manner (stages) (see 5.3.1.1.2). Thus, depending on ideas she could pick from the topic question at the onset of her protocol, she stuck to them without an attempt on her part to add new ones, develop or restructure the old ones. Moreover, her poor knowledge about how to arrange her ideas into separate paragraphs led her to end up with writing a two or three paragraph essay an aspect which could be related back to her previous instruction (see 5.2.3 and 6.5.3).

Third, those writers appeared to have limited knowledge regarding the use of particular metacognitive strategies which, if applied, could have helped them plan their ideas in a better way, an issue which could be related back to past learning experience at a pre-college stage (see 5.2.3). For instance, S2 and S3's lack of perception of the usefulness of utilising an outline to plan their ideas prevented them from applying such a strategy prior to start writing; hence, their progress through the task over-depended much on the text for generating new ideas, a behaviour typically associated with poor writers (Flower and Hayes, 1981) who follow what is called the "what-next-strategy" (Cumming, 1989:113).

Fourth, use of L1 and translating from Arabic into English were prevalent in the poor writers' protocols (see Figure 4-1, and Appendices 11-B and 11-C). This was attributed to the inability of the students to talk and write in English, and to their poor English repertoire. I found that the poor writers switched to their L1 in their protocols and did some literal translations which raised problems of incompatibility such as mismatches in some grammatical categories, punctuations and certain expressions (see 5.2.2.2.2). This finding is in keeping with those of Alharthi (2012), Alhaysony (2008), Wang (2004), and El-Aswad (2002).

### 7.3.4   The influence of external factors on students' writing

Findings of the qualitative analysis conducted for the four case studies (see Chapter Five) revealed that the students' writing process is affected by certain factors.

First, students' language proficiency (see 5.2.1) controlled the range of strategy use as can be summarised in the following points:

(1) High achievements in vocabulary (see Tables 5-2 and 5-4) enabled the students to use, more frequently, the strategy of revising for substitution (see Table 4-16) whereby they had more flexibility to use a variety of words and expressions throughout the writing process in order to improve the meaning they intended to convey. Rich vocabulary also enabled them to use more frequently the strategy of re-reading and therefore helped them retrieve new words needed to continue moving forward (see 5.3.1.4 and 5.3.2.2.4). Low achievement in vocabulary for the poor writers (see Tables 5-3 and 5-5), on the other hand, could be the reason behind the lack of global planning due to difficulty in understanding the wording of the topic and the essay question as a whole. The analysis also revealed that poor writers faced difficulty in choosing the appropriate words for their topic, and instead of solving this problem they tried to avoid or postpone using the words, and in some cases they failed to return back and solve these issues. This strategy of avoidance and postponement was used by most of the poor writers, particularly S2 (see 4.3.1.4 and Table 4-13), which might be related to their poor competence in vocabulary (see 5.2.1), a finding that is consistent with Alharthi (2012).

(2) High achievement in writing (see Tables 5-2 and 5-4) enabled good writers to concentrate on higher-level global writing considerations without getting bogged down much in local issues such as word choice. They planned, outlined, and generated ideas and evaluated them throughout their writing.

(3) High level in spoken English enabled good writers to verbalise their thoughts with ease in the L2, and therefore avoided the risk of translating ideas from L1into L2 and the possibility to affect meaning.

(4) High overall language proficiency level facilitated the amount of writers' planning. That is, it enabled them to do more planning throughout the writing

process. Moreover, the types of planning the good writers used were more flexible, and this was particularly clear in S9's case (see 5.3.2.2.1), a finding which is in keeping with Jones & Tetroe's (1987), Cumming's (1989), and Pennington & So's (1993).

(5) Moreover, the analysis revealed that there was a correlation between students' language proficiency and the quality of their written texts (see 5.2.2). The two good writers S6 and S9 produced writing of better overall quality for an argumentative task (see 5.2.2.2). That is, they wrote coherent, unified, and well-organized essays; while the other two poor writers' (S2 and S3) essays were of poor quality, comparatively, because they stumbled over lexis, grammar, punctuation, and capitalisation (see 5.2.2.2), particularly in connection with the negative L1 use during L2 writing. This is consistent with Alharthi (2012) and Van Weijen, et al., (2009).

Second, motivation as a factor did play an important role in the students' writing development (see 5.2.5). It was found that the good writers were more enthusiastic and motivated to write and their motivation was driven by two factors: firstly, as being themselves interested in writing in English (i.e., intrinsically motivated), (see 5.2 and 5.2.5) and also by their desire to pursue a job they were keen to start upon graduation (i.e., extrinsically motivated). On the other hand, the motivation that the poor subjects exhibited was linked to grades. That is, they wrote only when they were told and just to pass the module of writing and get more marks (i.e., extrinsically motivated). Their past learning experience of writing at the secondary stage of education discouraged them to develop this skill. Being less motivated for writing in English, those writers showed less commitment to the writing task. This obviously affected their choice of strategy, as we have seen when those subjects avoided using certain strategies. S3, for example, never cared about revising her first draft. She also avoided using a dictionary to correct the many spelling mistakes in her essay, and the same also applied to S2 to a certain extent. Hence, the more motivated students used writing strategies of most kinds more often (see 5.3 and Figure 6-1), and more effectively than did the less motivated students a finding that correlated highly with Oxford and Nyikos (1989).

Third, the interview responses obtained from the poor writers confirmed that writing instruction was almost unavailable during pre-college stage. In other words, those students went to schools in which they studied English writing as a skill that was considered less important than other aspects such as grammar, reading and vocabulary acquisition. Also in spite of the fact that text books include writing practices, but attention given to this skill was minimal, besides teachers did not adopt a process oriented training. Therefore, those students wrote only when they had to, such as for assignments or examinations. Also, they did not get proper feedback which focused mainly on surface issues such as grammar, spelling and punctuation. This kind of teaching practice influenced the students' work with writing and gave them negative insights about the value of writing in English. This finding is consistent with El-Aswad (2002) and Chaaban (2010).

On the other hand, information obtained from the students' interviews revealed that the two good writers received more instructions on how to write an essay and also had been given more chance to exercise writing in class. Moreover, as reading for pleasure, in addition to reading some literary work, and also their writing practice all contributed to the improvement of the good writers' composing, the poor writers' knowledge on writing, on the other hand, was restricted to the instructions they received in class without an attempt on their part to practise it independently and the amount of reading they did was limited to the textbooks. Therefore, the good writers became more independent expanding their knowledge through reading in general, while the poor writers always waited passively for what they might receive in class. These findings were in keeping with El-Aswad (2002), El Mortaji (2001), and Nattress (1986).

To sum up, one major finding of this work is that the writing process investigated has to be seen in context. Factors such as L2 proficiency, motivation and past learning experience (as highlighted in the literature— see 2-10), have a significant bearing on writing in L2 and have to be taken into account when studying the composing process as well as the final written product.

The detailed investigation into the writing processes and strategies of Libyan university students of English carried out in this work revealed that the poor writers' composing process was less recursive when compared to the good writers. Poor

writers were more interested in dealing with words and grammatical issues than how to develop their ideas. Findings also revealed that poor writers had difficulties while performing the task which was attributed to the inability to think and write in English and to their poor English repertoire and therefore resorted more to their L1 to fill in this gap. Poor writers' lower English proficiency also affected their vocabulary choice and their understanding of the task and therefore their planning and text generation and evaluation. Findings also showed a lack of pre-planning (particularly outlining) in the writing of the poor students an issue attributed to poor pre-college training where writing instruction was almost unavailable. Findings also suggested that motivated students showed more enthusiasm to write, and they used writing strategies more frequently and more effectively, and above all they wrote because they enjoyed the task and not just for the sake of passing an exam or obtaining more marks as it was the case with the poor writers in this study. The problems therefore that students faced in writing attributed not only to the low level of their language proficiency but also to the pedagogical approaches in previous practice at the pre-college stage as well as to the quality of their motivation (cf. Kharma, 1985).

Poor writers were unable to produce good written text because they stumbled over lexis, and faced difficulties in using certain grammatical and morphological rules, punctuation and capitalization (see 5.2.2). They also lacked the use of strategies in order to organise ideas and ease the difficulties (see 5.3). As the ultimate goal of any composing task is arguably to produce a written text that contains a clear and coherent message, thus improving the final product that students produce can be best carried out through a development of the context in which learning of how to write takes place. This conclusion indicates that in looking at strategy use, it is not enough to investigate who uses what strategy in the test environment, yet other issues like task motivation, learning motivation, previous experience and training, and overall language proficiency as hindering or facilitating factors, also need to be considered.

## 7.4 Contribution of the study

This study was prompted by the paucity of research on Arab EFL learners' writing strategies. It attempts, by integrating multiple methods, to investigate the writing processes and strategies of Libyan undergraduate students to gain a deeper

understanding of their writing process. Therefore, it contributes to the field of writing strategy research in different ways:

First, by comparing strategy use of good and poor writers at a university level, the findings will add to the understanding of the patterns and variations of these strategies. Little research in the Arab world in general and in Libya in particular was conducted to investigate the writing strategy use of university students of English. The research conducted so far dealt mainly with issues related to the writing strategy use across two languages (L1 and L2) (see El-Aswad, 2002). Hence, the current research conducted to investigate the writing strategy use across two levels of writing proficiency (i.e., good writers vs. poor writers) is, and to the best of my knowledge, the first of its kind, at least in the Libyan context. This study explored composing strategies in a new context (good and poor Libyan EFL university students) and contributed to the field of L2 writing and enriched the literature with further information about writing strategies use, and it offered useful findings for the building of a more complete EFL writing theory.

Second, there is a scarcity of research on the role of individual differences in L2 writing and many of the existing research are quantitative in nature which makes it difficult to gain deeper insight into possible causal relationship between writing success and individual differences (Kormos, 2012). This study confirms and expands on previous research on the effect of language proficiency, motivation and past learning experience on the choice of writing strategies by confirming that language proficiency, motivation and past learning experience account for the difference between the two groups of writers.

Third,  four case studies were included in this study which will add to the case study literature with respect to EFL writing processes and strategies.  The contribution here is related to the vast and very detailed data provided by those case studies of EFL writers in an EFL context in terms of their behavioural and strategic performance while writing.

Fourth, the language proficiency of students participating in the present study was assessed using a different means from the ones existing in the literature. The researcher collected data included students' academic achievements in the past three

years of their study at the English department that could reflect on their overall language competence. The present researcher believed that assessing students' language proficiency throughout a long period of time of their study and in different language skills would reflect their real level of language rather than using other immediate means such as the language placement tests used in previous studies.

Fifth, findings in this research show that writing behaviour of students is similar to that found in other contexts, either in Libya ( e.g., El-Aswad, 2002) or in other FL learners' contexts in other countries (e.g., Alharthi, 2012; Chaaban, 2010; Alhaysony, 2008; El Mortaji, 2001; Victori, 1999) in approaching formal writing. This generalisation contributes to the field of writing strategy research and to the theory of FL learner writing processes in general, and therefore, suggestions and implications presented in this study could be applied to other settings in different FL contexts.

## 7.5  Limitations

Although the present study has revealed some interesting findings about EFL writer's strategy use, it has some limitations but none of them jeopardises the validity of the research:

First, because of the nature of the think-aloud protocols, the number of participants involved is limited (11 participants). However, it was suitable for this kind of study and gave rich data regarding writing strategies in English; besides, a large sample would involve a huge amount of work and time, beyond the scope of this thesis.

Second, it was observed that some students complained about the difficulty to verbalise their thoughts and paused quite often particularly at the onset of the protocol – e.g., S3 and S2. S2, for example, found the task difficult and reported this in Arabic by saying: (*I can't, and I don't know how to do it, I don't know*) (see Appendix 11-C). This happened as the researcher tried to remind this subject to continue verbalising her thoughts and not to stop for long. This in fact worried the researcher regarding the validity of the think-aloud protocols (see 3.7.2.1.1) especially when this method represented the core source of data-collection in this study. However, this reticence might be attributed to the fact that the subject did not

want the researcher to know that she was facing difficulties while writing. Such difficulties might be related to her poor language proficiency, limited vocabulary and poor grammar (see 5.2 and 6.6). As a final-year student she was afraid to be judged by the researcher and classified as a weak student and incapable of producing a good essay, therefore she tried to blame the think-aloud task.

Third, another limitation is in the nature of the composition task— students' writing strategies were investigated while they were performing a single argumentative task. Therefore, this study cannot explain aspects of the writing processes and strategies in all modes of EFL writing.

Fourth, no data were collected from the subjects on L1 writing tasks which could have shed light on the implementation of certain strategies on the L2 writing task.

Fifth, female subjects refused to be video-taped for religious, social and cultural constraints. Although the subjects were observed, the observation might have missed some of their behavioural strategies. Therefore, conducting these video recordings would have provided the research with important insights about the subjects' behaviour during the writing process.

## 7.6    Suggestions for further research

This empirical study could serve as a springboard for a number of studies in the writing field. Possible recommended research topics might include:

First, this research is the first of its kind to investigate the writing processes and strategies of fourth year Libyan university students of English to see how and why good and poor writers differ in their strategy use. In order to gain better understanding of the nature of the English writing it is recommended that more research on Arab learners, in general, and Libyan EFL learners in particular be conducted.

Second, generalizability of the findings is limited because of the study's small size (N=11). In order to extend the findings of this study, a larger sample of students should be studied, and on groups of more widely differing writing proficiency. This would give more information on how to deal with and assist students' writing.

Third, this study investigated the English writing strategies of students majoring in English at MU. Students in this study were seen switching to their L1 for different purposes (see 4.3.1.7). Another study might consider using think-aloud protocols to collect data from students' Arabic writing to study the writing processes in both languages. This would allow investigating the relationship between the students' competence in L1 and their L1 use in L2 writing, and instances of L1 use to be interpreted based on empirical evidence.

Fourth, the present research did not consider gender as a key variable. Therefore, more research is needed to investigate to what extent gender affects the EFL students' writing processes and strategies.

Fifth, data could have been collected while students performing a task of two different genres instead of one (e.g., argumentative vs. narrative) to see how strategies differ across two different types of genre, and how they could differently affect the writing process (Cumming, 1989).

Sixth, since findings revealed that motivation, language proficiency, and previous learning could affect the students' writing strategy use, without particular focus on any one of them as a role, further work could investigate each aspect individually. The finding of such studies would provide the field with deeper and interesting insights into the impact of such aspect on writing strategy use and how it could drive the writing task.

Seventh, the findings in this study revealed that the poor writers faced some difficulties in thinking aloud while composing, an issue which might affect their composing process, and the amount and kind of information verbalised by the good writers varied to that contained in the protocols of the poor writers. Further research is required, therefore, to establish to which extent this technique can distort the composing process, and also the extent to which thinking aloud is affected by the students' L2 proficiency.

Finally, more research could be conducted using number of participants from other different branches of education such as medicine, education, sciences and

engineering and in different Libyan universities in order to obtain representative conclusions about writing strategy use by Libyan students when writing in English.

## 7.7    Implications for teaching

The findings of the study provide insights into the complexity of writing as a process, and highlight the composing problems of Arab EFL learners in general and Libyan learners in particular. Therefore, they might have strong implications for the field of pedagogy and writing instructions:

First, based on the findings in this study, the good writers mostly used outlining, while most of the poor writers did not. Therefore, outlining should be dealt with in writing classes, especially for poor writers, to facilitate organising and ordering the information and ideas that the writer has brainstormed. Initial ideas will be the point of departure to which the writer will later return to initiate revisions or to add further details when he/she feels that there is a gap in the text that needs to be filled with new ideas. Such recursiveness contributes to successful writing and needs therefore to be focused.

Second, the results of this study suggest that L1 use, for some learners, can have beneficial effects. EFL writing teachers may find ways to incorporate the strategic use of this behaviour into the classroom, such as during their sub-process of planning (Friedlander, 1990; Manchón et al., 2000; Woodall, 2002).

Third, it was apparent that the main reason for using the L1 by the poor writers while composing in L2 was related to their poor language proficiency in L2. Think-aloud analysis revealed that subjects switched to their L1 whenever they faced difficulty in how to continue writing. I saw that they mainly rehearsed in Arabic when they want to construct their sentences in English and then attempted to translate that into English. They lacked the range of language (L2) that would enable them to express themselves straightaway in English. Therefore, in order to improve the general proficiency of English for those writers, more hours of English can be offered to them at the fundamental stages.

Fourth, it was clear that lack of previous L2 writing instruction had resulted in a deficiency in some subjects' writing in English. Those subjects claimed that they had

received poor instruction in L2 writing during their intermediate schooling. Therefore, L2 writing should be taught with more emphasis and attention at pre-college stages, as this would reduce writing problems at later stages. For example, teaching of writing strategies and how to use them in a fruitful way should be emphasised during pre-college writing courses.

Fifth, due to the poor pre-university training, the knowledge of writing strategies some of the students have is incomplete. Therefore, teachers of writing need to explain the writing strategies students can use in their composing process, and the role each strategy can play in their composing. Students, then, can be given the chance to choose for themselves which strategy can provide for the writing objectives they put for themselves.

Sixth, it has emerged from the present study that poor writers were less concerned for audience. Audience awareness is important to check whether or not the text says what the writer wants it to say. For instance, if students are required to write an argumentative essay, teachers should show them how to consider the pros and cons of the argumentation, defend the position with arguments, while the opposing view is rejected with further arguments, as the primary purpose is to convince an audience.

Seventh, reading was found as a backing element to writing, i.e., 'read more, write better'. It is recommended that students' reading habits be encouraged and reading classes be given more emphasis and teachers to encourage their students to write some of their compositions based on their reading.

Eighth, findings show that students differ in the quality of their motivation; therefore, teachers, either at school or in college, can work actively to improve students' motivation (Dornyei, 2001, 2003). One way to boost students' motivation and engagement to write is to give them chances to engage at a more meaningful level with the language by diverting the attention in the writing classes toward topics that are more relevant to their social and cultural context, and also by designing more meaningful and interesting writing tasks for them and give them opportunities for self-expression and social interaction.

Ninth, based on the findings in this study, teachers must raise the students' awareness of the importance of writing after graduation. This can be attained by introducing the reading and writing of different workplace genre such as business letters, reports and applications, and to emphasis the fact that much of professional communication is done in writing. Teachers also should highlight the importance of writing for students who might want to pursue postgraduate studies and then might need to write proposals, academic essays and research reports.

Tenth, the findings also reveal that some students tend to write only when they are pushed to do, or for the purpose of getting more marks. Teachers can make use of this fact by giving students more assignments to complete. Teachers, for example, can ask students to write essays on different topics and the marks they obtain on these essays will determine their overall mark in the writing course.

Finally, teaching writing is quite time-consuming especially with large groups of students as it is the case in most of the Libyan universities. Findings of the current study show that teachers of writing need to train students in paying more attention to process and not just the product of writing and the best way of doing that is by using a process methodology based on group work which would require more classroom time than is currently allocated.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1:  Approval to conduct proposed study in university context

I the undersigned, Mr **Mohamed Naji Zubia**, Head of the English department, give my permission for **Mustafa Fuzi Elshawish** to collect data for his doctoral research in the Faculty of Arts, within the English department at the University of Misurata, Libya.

I believe that in this writing research project Mr Elshawish will be working intensively with some students from the English department both individually and as a group in a variety of writing tasks and sessions. Data collection will be conducted over a period of time ranges from two to three months.

Moreover, Mr Elshawish explained that the writing sessions will be audio-taped, and the students, and also some teachers, will be interviewed as part of the data collection procedure.

Mr Elshawish has confirmed that the names of subjects will remain anonymous in the report and findings of his study, and that only he and his supervisors will have access to the raw collected data.

Signature : ………………………………………..

Data :        …………………………………….

# Appendix 2: Student's consent form

**Dear Student**,

I would like to invite you to participate in a project investigating writing. The aim of this project is to investigate and analyse the strategies that Libyan EFL university students employ when they are writing in English. This study is a good chance for you to practise writing, and to understand the difficulties and problems a writer may encounter when writing.

In case you agree, the researcher will need to meet with you for a number of sessions over an eight to ten week period of time. First of all, you will be required to fill in a questionnaire. Then you will be asked to attend a writing session where you need to write an essay in English. The writing session will be in the limit of two hours. You will be asked to verbalise your thoughts when writing. In other words, you will be instructed to say whatever comes to your mind while writing and everything you say will be tape-recorded. Finally, you will be interviewed on your writing experience. I will also need to talk to your teachers in order to obtain their views on your writing in the different writing stages.

Your involvement in the research is voluntary, and your participation will not influence in any way your academic standing. All data obtained from you will be used for the purposes of the investigation only, and will be subject to strict confidentiality.

If you are happy to take part in this study, please sign the consent form below to give the researcher the authorisation to collect data from you and publish it anonymously.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Mustafa Fuzi Elshawish,

Doctoral candidate,

Nottingham Trent University, UK

I hereby authorise the researcher, Mr Mustafa Elshawish, to receive data from me and publish it anonymously. I also understand that my participation in this study is voluntary, and I have the right to withdraw my consent for participation at any time.

Signature: …………………………..…………………..

Name in Block Capitals: …………………………………………………………………………..

Date: …………………

# Appendix 3:  Students' semi-structured interview questions

**Immediate Questions (to be asked as  soon as subjects finish writing)**

1. How did you find writing and thinking aloud at the same time as an experience?
2. Did you plan before you started writing?
3. If yes, how did you plan? Verbally, or even in writing?
4. Is it usual for you to plan ahead each time you write?
5. Do you think planning what you are going to write is a useful strategy?
6. Did you plan each paragraph and the whole essay?
7. Did you stick to your initial plan in writing your essay?
8. Did you consider your reader when writing your essay?
9. In which stage(s) of writing (before writing , while writing, and/or when revising) did you consider your reader?
10. Did you experience any problems while writing? What was a major one?
11. How many drafts have you written in today's writing session?
12. Did you think in Arabic or in English while writing?
13. Did you use the dictionary while writing?
14. What did you use the dictionary for? For example, to check spelling, to get the meaning, or to find a synonym etc.
15. In which stage(s) of writing did you use your dictionary?
16. Do you think that the dictionary was useful for you?
17. Did you revise your essay?
18. Did you revise each paragraph alone, or did you revise the whole essay as you finish it?
19. When did you think your essay was finished and ready to be submitted?

**General questions (to be asked after subjects have a short break)**

1. Can you let me know about your age and how long have you been studying English?

2. Can you let me know about the efforts you have made in order to improve your English writing before and after you entered the university? And how did they benefit your writing?

3. Do you like reading in English? If yes, how often do you read and what types of reading do you enjoy most?

4. How was writing in English taught at school?

5. How many English writing classes are you weekly taking in college?

6. What kind of writing tasks have you practised in college and have they been equally emphasised?

7. Is it important for you to be able to write well in English? Why?

8. How well do you enjoy writing in English?

9. How often do you like writing in English, and what type of texts do you write?

10. How many drafts do you usually write in English? For example, one draft, two drafts, or more.

13. What else do you plan apart from planning ideas?

14. Do you stop and read/revise your writing?

15. Do you revise your writing when you finish?

16. How do you usually revise your writing?

17. Do you think about the purpose of your writing when you are writing?

18. Do you consider the reader when you write? What type of reader is it and in what way?

19.Do you usually use a dictionary when you write? What type of dictionary do you use?

20. Do you sometimes use Arabic during English writing? If  yes, why?

# Appendix 4: Teachers' interview questions

I.  Age:  .................

II.  Qualifications:  .................................................

III.  Place of work :  .................................................

IV.  How long have you been teaching EFL Writing? ............................

1.  Do you give your students instructions in how to write in English?
2.  Do you follow a process or a product approach in teaching writing?
3.  Do you give your students instructions to use writing strategies? If yes, which strategies?
4.  Do you help your students to practise English writing? And do they practise?
5.  What are the difficulties that your students encounter when they compose in English?
6.  Do you see the time devoted to teach writing is reasonable and adequate?
7.  How do students solve their writing problems?
8.  Do you think that your students are motivated to practise writing and develop this skill? Why? Why not?
9.  Do your students bear in mind who is going to read their essays, that is, the audience?
10. Do you think that audience awareness by students would increase the productivity of their writing?
11. Do your students use the L1 in their writing in English?
12. To what extent do you think that your students are influenced by the L1?
13. What type of strategies do your students use before they start composing?
14. What type of strategies do your students use while composing (while drafting)?
15. What type of strategies do your students use after composing?

# Appendix 5: The assigned topics

***Topic in the Pilot Study***

Topic One: " TV and our children, where is the limit?"

***Topic for Subjects' Writing Proficiency Placement***

Topic Two: "Money can buy happiness. Discuss".

***Topic in the Main Study***

Topic Three: "Success in education is influenced more by students' home-life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme. Discuss".

# Appendix 6: Topic in the main study and directions

## The Writing Task

I'd like you to write a composition on a topic that I am going to give you now. While you write your composition, I would like you to say aloud anything and everything that goes through your mind. You have to do everything that you would normally do when writing a composition, the only difference being that today you are going to do it talking aloud. You may use any language (Arabic or English) that you normally use when writing. You will have a maximum of an hour and a half to complete the task.

Prompts

I- Be sure that the voice recorder is switched on the minute you receive this prompt.

2- Read, carefully, what you are asked to do.

3- Try to think-aloud; speak aloud, all your thoughts to be recorded.

4- Your thinking-aloud protocols must be recorded in all drafts.

5- Don't be quiet when want to change anything of your essay.

6- If you have any difficulties please let me know

*The Topic*

*"Success in education is influenced more by the students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme." Discuss.*

Directions

Here, you are asked to write about whether individual success in education is a result of the way a child brought up by his/her parents in the home and the training and practising they receive in their childhood, or maybe their success is a result of the efforts teachers put and the efficiency of the educational programmes employed.

Discuss this issue according to your point of view. What about your case? Were you influenced by your home life? If yes, in what way? Or maybe you were influenced more by the way you were taught. Please explain and try to give examples where possible.

Thank you

# Appendix 7: Think-aloud warm-up instructions (Ericsson & Simon, 1993:376,378)

In this experiment we are interested in what you think about when you find answers to some questions that I am going to ask you to answer. In order to do this I am going to ask you to THINK ALOUD as you work on the questions/problems given. What I mean by think aloud is that I want you to tell me EVERYTHING you are thinking from the time you first see the question until you give an answer. I would like you to talk aloud CONSTANTLY from the time I present each problem until you have given your final answer to the question. I don't want you to try to plan out what you say or try to explain to me what you are saying. Just act as if you are alone in the room speaking to yourself. It is most important that you keep talking. If you are silent for any long period of time I will ask you to talk. Do you understand what I want you to do?

{subject's response}

Good now we will begin with some practice problems. First, I want you to multiply these two numbers in your head and tell me what you are thinking as you get an answer.

"What is the result of multiplying 35 * 45" ?

{subject's think aloud report}

Good now I want you to think-aloud again as you try to answer this question. I want to solve an anagram. I will show you a card with scrambled letters. It is your task to find an English word that consists of all the presented letters. For example, if the scrambled letters are TKINH, you may see that these letters spell the word THINK. Please think aloud while you solve the following anagram.

" ELSVO= SOLVE" / " OBEMPLR= PROBLEM"

{subject's think aloud report}

Good, now I will give you another practice problem. I want you to think aloud as before as you think about the question. There is no need to keep count. I will do it for you.

"name 20 animals"

{subject's think-aloud report}

# Appendix 8: Think-aloud instructions in the writing sessions

As you write your essay, I want you to think-aloud as we did in the warm-up exercises. In other words, from the moment you look at the assigned topic throughout your writing, I want you to verbalise your thoughts and therefore say everything that goes through your mind loudly. As you verbalise your thoughts I want you to follow these guidelines:

1. Work on the task as you normally would: think about it, take notes, use outline, or just write.

2. Try to say aloud everything that crosses your mind, even fragments and stray thoughts. Say what you are thinking, reading, and writing, just as you did it in the warm-up exercises. You do not need to explain or justify what you are doing.

3. Please think aloud throughout the writing session from beginning to end. Speak audibly and as continuously as possible. If you stop speaking (10 seconds) I will remind you to think aloud.

4. As you write, if you change your mind please do not erase text that you do not intend to use. Simply cross once through anything you do not need.

# Appendix 9: Raters' scores for the writing proficiency test

| | Subject #1 | Subject #2 | Subject #3 | Subject #4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CONTENT | CONTENT | CONTENT | CONTENT |
| Reader 1 | 14 | 16 | 13 | 24 |
| Reader 2 | 16 | 14 | 15 | 23 |
| Reader 3 | 17 | 16 | 18 | 25 |
| | ORGANISATION | ORGANISATION | ORGANISATION | ORGANISATION |
| Reader 1 | 10 | 10 | 08 | 16 |
| Reader 2 | 11 | 08 | 09 | 14 |
| Reader 3 | 11 | 09 | 11 | 16 |
| | VOCABULARY | VOCABULARY | VOCABULARY | VOCABULARY |
| Reader 1 | 10 | 10 | 08 | 16 |
| Reader 2 | 10 | 08 | 08 | 15 |
| Reader 3 | 11 | 11 | 09 | 16 |
| | LANGUAGE USE | LANGUAGE USE | LANGUAGE USE | LANGUAGE USE |
| Reader 1 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 20 |
| Reader 2 | 10 | 09 | 10 | 17 |
| Reader 3 | 12 | 09 | 11 | 20 |
| | MECHANICS | MECHANICS | MECHANICS | MECHANICS |
| Reader 1 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| Reader 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Reader 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 |
| | TOTAL SCORE | TOTAL SCORE | TOTAL SCORE | TOTAL SCORE |
| Reader 1 | **46** | **49** | **42** | **79** |
| Reader 2 | **50** | **41** | **45** | **73** |
| Reader 3 | **54** | **48** | **52** | **81** |

# Appendix 9: Raters' scores for the writing proficiency test (continued)

| | Subject #5 | Subject #6 | Subject #7 | Subject #8 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CONTENT | CONTENT | CONTENT | CONTENT |
| Reader 1 | 25 | 25 | 15 | 15 |
| Reader 2 | 23 | 29 | 14 | 18 |
| Reader 3 | 24 | 25 | 16 | 15 |
| | ORGANISATION | ORGANISATION | ORGANISATION | ORGANISATION |
| Reader 1 | 16 | 15 | 09 | 10 |
| Reader 2 | 16 | 16 | 09 | 10 |
| Reader 3 | 16 | 15 | 10 | 11 |
| | VOCABULARY | VOCABULARY | VOCABULARY | VOCABULARY |
| Reader 1 | 16 | 18 | 09 | 10 |
| Reader 2 | 18 | 18 | 10 | 10 |
| Reader 3 | 17 | 19 | 11 | 10 |
| | LANGUAGE USE | LANGUAGE USE | LANGUAGE USE | LANGUAGE USE |
| Reader 1 | 20 | 20 | 10 | 10 |
| Reader 2 | 16 | 20 | 11 | 11 |
| Reader 3 | 20 | 20 | 09 | 10 |
| | MECHANICS | MECHANICS | MECHANICS | MECHANICS |
| Reader 1 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 2 |
| Reader 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 |
| Reader 3 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| | TOTAL SCORE | TOTAL SCORE | TOTAL SCORE | TOTAL SCORE |
| Reader 1 | **81** | **82** | **46** | **47** |
| Reader 2 | **77** | **88** | **46** | **52** |
| Reader 3 | **79** | **83** | **49** | **49** |

# Appendix 9: Raters' scores for the writing proficiency test (continued)

| | Subject #9 | | | Subject #10 | | | Subject #11 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CONTENT | | | CONTENT | | | CONTENT | | |
| Reader 1 | 25 | | | 26 | | | 12 | | |
| Reader 2 | | 25 | | | 26 | | | 17 | |
| Reader 3 | | | 23 | | | 24 | | | 15 |
| | ORGANISATION | | | ORGANISATION | | | ORGANISATION | | |
| Reader 1 | 17 | | | 17 | | | 08 | | |
| Reader 2 | | 16 | | | 15 | | | 11 | |
| Reader 3 | | | 16 | | | 16 | | | 11 |
| | VOCABULARY | | | VOCABULARY | | | VOCABULARY | | |
| Reader 1 | 17 | | | 17 | | | 10 | | |
| Reader 2 | | 17 | | | 15 | | | 09 | |
| Reader 3 | | | 15 | | | 16 | | | 10 |
| | LANGUAGE USE | | | LANGUAGE USE | | | LANGUAGE USE | | |
| Reader 1 | 20 | | | 19 | | | 09 | | |
| Reader 2 | | 18 | | | 17 | | | 11 | |
| Reader 3 | | | 18 | | | 20 | | | 10 |
| | MECHANICS | | | MECHANICS | | | MECHANICS | | |
| Reader 1 | 4 | | | 3 | | | 2 | | |
| Reader 2 | | 4 | | | 3 | | | 2 | |
| Reader 3 | | | 3 | | | 3 | | | 3 |
| | TOTAL SCORE | | | TOTAL SCORE | | | TOTAL SCORE | | |
| Reader 1 | **83** | | | **82** | | | **41** | | |
| Reader 2 | | **80** | | | **76** | | | **50** | |
| Reader 3 | | | **75** | | | **79** | | | **49** |

# Appendix 10: The ESL writing profile ( Jacobs et al., 1981)

| ESL composition profile | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Student** | | **Date** | **Topic** |
| Score | Level | Criteria | comments |
| **Content** | 30-27<br><br>26-22<br><br>21-17<br><br>16-13 | **Excellent to Very good**: knowledgeable, substantive thorough development of thesis, relevant to assigned topic.<br>**Good to Average**: some knowledge of subject, adequate range, limited development of thesis, mostly relevant to topic but lack details.<br>**Fair to Poor**: limited knowledge of subject, little substance, inadequate development of topic.<br>**Very Poor**: does not show knowledge of subject, non-substantive, not pertinent, OR not enough to evaluate. | |
| **Organization** | 20-18<br><br>17-14<br><br>13-10<br><br>9-7 | **Excellent to Very good**: fluent expression, ideas clearly stated/supported, succinct, well-organised, logical sequencing, cohesive.<br>**Good to Average:** somewhat choppy, loosely organised but main ideas stand out, limited support, logical but incomplete sequencing.<br>**Fair to Poor:** non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lacks logical sequencing and development.<br>**Very Poor**: does not communicate, no organisation OR not enough to evaluate. | |
| **Vocabulary** | 20-18<br><br>17-14<br><br>13-10<br><br>9-7 | **Excellent to Very good**: sophisticated range, effective word/idiom choice and usage, word form mastery, appropriate register.<br>**Good to Average:** adequate range, occasional errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage, *but meaning not obscured*<br><br>**Fair to Poor:** limited range, frequent errors of word/idiom form, choice, usage, meaning confused or obscured.<br>**Very Poor**: essentially translation, little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form, OR not enough to evaluate. | |
| **Language use** | 25-22<br><br>21-18<br><br>17-11<br><br>10-5 | **Excellent to Very good**: effective complex constructions, few errors of agreement, tense, number, word order/function, articles, pronoun, propositions.<br>**Good to Average:** effective but simple constructions, minor problems in complex constructions, several errors of agreement, tense, number, word, order/function, articles, pronoun, propositions *but meaning seldom obscured.*<br>**Fair to Poor:** major problems in simple/complex constructions, frequent errors of negation, agreement, tense, number, word, order/function, articles, pronoun, propositions and/or fragments, run-ons, deletions, *meaning confused or obscured.*<br>**Very Poor**: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate, OR not enough to evaluate. | |
| **Mechanics** | 5<br><br>4<br><br>3<br><br>2 | **Excellent to Very good**: demonstrates mastery of conventions, few errors of spellings, punctuation, capitalisation, paragraphing.<br>**Good to Average:** occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, paragraphing *but meaning not obscured.*<br>**Fair to Poor:** frequent errors ofspelling, punctuation, capitalisation, paragraphing, poor handwriting, *meaning confused or obscured.*<br>**Very Poor**: no mastery of conventions, dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, paragraphing, handwriting illegible, OR not enough to evaluate. | |
| **Total score** | | **Reader** | **Comments** |

# Appendix 11: Samples of think-aloud protocols

## 11-A: S6's think-aloud protocol

Success in education is influenced more by the students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme . (reading the assigned topic)(SUBJECT STARTEDBY RAEDING OUT THE ASSIGNED TOPIC)OK (commenting). *First I need to decide what to write in the thesis statement* (rehearsing to find a focus). *So I'll choose to write about all the factors all together* (global planning)- student's home, the quality of teaching, the student himself(outlining and paraphrasing*). I think I'll leave the thesis statement until the end of writing, because it's better, because I know what I've written so I can summarise it in few words and have a good topic* (PLANNING TO LEAVE THE THESIS STATEMENT TILL SHE FINISHED WRITING) (postponement) *So first I'll start with the introduction talking about success in education in general, then try to mention my three points at the thesis statement*(global planning) . So, education is important for everyone (STUDENT STARTED WRITING AND VERBALISING WHAT SHE WAS WRITING AT THE SAME TIME). Education is important for everyone (reading a large unit of discourse). Education is important for everyone (reading a large unit of discourse)  (STUDENT AGAIN REREAD WHAT SHE HAD WRITTEN SO FAR, SO THAT IT HELPED HER BUILD UP AN IDEA TO CONTINUE). We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching…OK (commenting)...and sometimes the student himself( STUDENT KEPT VERBALISING WHAT'D BEEN WRITTEN THROUGHOUT ). *I think I've finished the introduction, I try to reread it again* (local planning) (PLANNING TO READ THE INTRODUCTION) Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home,the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself. (reading larger units of discourse)

 *So now I am going to move on to the body* (local planning)(PLANNING TO START WRITING THE FIRST PARAGRAPH  IN THE  BODY) *and start writing about the student's home* (global planning). *I'll start with a topic sentence about student's home* (local planning) (BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE), (STUDENT PAUSED FOR A COUPLE OF MINUTES BEFORE STARTING THE NEW PARAGRAPH). *Student's home* (rehearsing). ~~Although the~~ (revision for deletion)  *I think I need to change the beginning* (local planning) (planning to revise for substitution) Mmmm, Education, (revision for substitution) Mmmm, the educational (revision for addition) process takes only, hhhhh (SIGHING)    takes only(repetition)~~ about~~(editing for deletion)(pausing) Mmmm, so only(repetition) few hours inside the school, then the students have to go back home again. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure(reading a large unit of discourse), (STUDENT RE-READING MOST RECENTLY WRITTEN PART). Of course all parents want their children to be successful, Of course all parents want their children to be successful, (reading a large unit of discourse), but the parents' background may effect on their children's  level. For example, Mmmm educated parents may educated parents may (repetition) help their (HERE THE RESEARCHER INTERFERED TO REMIND THE SUBJECT ABOUT SPEAKING MORE LOUDLY)  *I am trying to pick-up some words, so I'll start repeating sentences* (local planning), educational process takes only few hours inside the school, then the students have to go back home again. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure. Of course all parents want their children to be successful, but the parents background may effect on,(reading larger units of discourse), OK (commenting) ,may effect on their children's level,(repetition)  may effect ~~on~~ their children's level(repetition) (OMITTING "ON")(editing for deletion). For example, educated parents may help ~~their~~(repetition) (CROSSING OUT THE WORD "THEIR" (editing for deletion) AND SHIFTED IT AFTER THE PHRASE "AND MOTIVATE" THAT SHE PRODUCED) and motivate their kids, educated parents may help and motivate their kids (repetition) to work hard,   unlike educated parents may help and motivate their kids(repetition) to be(rehearsing) to work hard unlike(repetition) uneducated parents educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard unlike uneducated parents (reading larger unit of discourse) because some parents educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard unlike uneducated parents(reading larger unit of discourse)because ~~some parents~~ (STUDENT STARTED USING THE ERASER TO OMIT THE PHRASE "SOME PARENTS")(revision for deletion) It's not clear (commenting), *I'll try to find more simple sentence than this to express my view* (planning to revise a sentence) unlike (repetition) because(repetition)  uneducated parents because  (repetition) they will be unable to help their kids , educational process takes only few hours inside the school, then the students have to go back home again. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure. Of course all parents want their children to be successful, but the parents background may effect their children's level. (reading larger units of discourse)*I think it's not clear like that* (commenting).

but the parents background may effect  their children's level, EFFECT,(repetition) (IT SEEMS FROM THE WAY THE STUDENT CONCENTRATED ON THIS WORD 'EFFECT' THAT SHE BECAME UNCERTAIN

ABOUT HER CHOICE ,i.e., WHETHER TO USE 'EFFECT' OR 'AFFECT' AS A PROPER WORD IN THIS PARTICULAR CONTEXT) may effect their children's level(repetition) For example educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard unlike uneducated parents because they will be unable to help their kids(reading larger units of discourse) or (STUDENT CROSSED OUT THE PHRASE "HELP THEIR KIDS")(revision for deletion) to take part to take part(repetition) in (pause) because they will be unable to take part in (repetition)the learning process. *Students' home* (reading part or whole of the outline) (STUDENT REMINDED HERSELF OF THE MAIN THEME OF THE PARAGRAPH "STUDENTS' HOME"), unlike uneducated parents because they will be unable to take part in the learning process(repetition). *So I have to write something to end up my paragraph* (local planning). Home ,home (repetition) atmosphere plays an important role in. (STUDENT WENT BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SENTENCE AND ADDED THE WORD "SO") So So(editing for addition)home atmosphere plays an important role in (repetition) the success in education.

*Now I shall move to the second paragraph in the body, the quality of teaching* (global planning) (STUDENT PLANS TO MOVE TO THE NEXT PARAGRAPH IN HER ESSAY). Mmmm, The biggest part of , the biggest part(repetition) *on the educational programme* (rehearsing to elaborate). *We can say* (rehearsing)the biggest part of (repetition) the… the effectiveness of the educational programme (reading the assigned topic) ( STUDENT REFERS BACK TO THE TOPIC AND STARTS READING THE LAST SECTION IN IT) Success in education is influenced more by the students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme (reading the assigned topic) (STUDENT READS THE TITLE AS A WHOLE), Mmmm, the biggest part of (repetition) (pause) *let's say*(local planning) the learning operation, *so I can avoid repeating the same words - process, learning process* the biggest part of learning operation(repetition) takes place inside the school . So whatever the teachers use, the biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school (repetition). So whatever the teachers use,(repetition) so whatever the teachers use(repetition) to, so whatever the teachers use(repetition) have (STUDENT CROSSES THE WORD "to")(editing for deletion) , so whatever the teachers use(repetition)has(STUDENT CROSSES THE WORD "have")(edition for form or tense verb) has(repetition) a direct influence on the students', has a direct influence on the students'(repetition) success. The biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school. So whatever the teachers use has a direct influence on the students' success.(reading larger unit of discourse). For example; teachers who use different methodologies, METHOOODOOOLOOOGGGIES (repetition)(STUDENT TRIES TO DIVIDE THIS LONG WORD INTO SHORTER SYLLABLES IN ORDER TO FACILITATE SPELLING), for example teachers who use different methodologies(repetition) and , for example teachers who use different methodologies and (repetition) , teachers who use different methodologies and (repetition),equipments, such as computers, For example teachers who use different methodologies and equipments such as computers(repetition), will provide their students with (pause) will provide their students with(repetition), will provide their students with (repetition). The biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school. So whatever the teachers use has a direct influence on the students' success. For example teachers who use different methodologies and equipments such as computers will provide their students with (reading larger unit of discourse) variaty (MEANS "VARIETY") variaty (repetition) of information. For example teachers who use different methodologies and equipments such as computers will provide their students (SUBJECT ADDED AN "S" WHILE RESCANNING)(editing for addition) with variaty of information (reading larger unit of discourse). And learning process will be more interesting which will, which will(repetition), which(repetition), And learning process will be more interesting which will,(repetition) which will,(repetition) which will(repetition) have, And learning process will be more interesting which will have(repetition) good (pause), *I would use a synonym or other word than "effect" because I've used it so much- effect, I think "impact"* (planning to revise for substitution) (HERE THE SUBJECT USED THE DICTIONARY (ELECTRONIC ) TO LOOK UP A SYNONYM FOR THE WORD "EFFECT")(revision for substitution) *impact on the students*(rehearsing).Whereas teachers who use always the same techniques, whereas teachers who use always the same techniques, whereas teachers , who use,(repetition) *who use, or who's using?* (rehearsing and questioning)*I think who always use the same technique, who use, who using, I think using is better*(rehearsing), OK (commenting), teachers (repetition) using always the same techniques(repetition), would have negative negative (repetition)effect on their students , whereas teachers using always the same techniques,(repetition)whereas teachers using always the same techniques,(repetition) *I would omit 'whereas'*(revision for deletion), *let me start with teachers* (local planning), teachers using always the same techniques would have negative effects on their students (reading larger unit of discourse)level, because the learning process would be dull and boring. The biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school. So whatever the teachers use has a direct influence on the students' success. For example, teachers who use different methodologies and equipments such as computers will provide their students with variaty of information. And learning process will be more interesting which will have good impact on the students. Teachers using always the same techniques would have negative effect on their students level, because the learning process will (STUDENT CHANGED "WOULD" INTO "WILL" WHILE RE-SCANNING)(editing for form or tense verb) be dull and boring (reading larger unit of discourse. *So I think I'm going to finish my paragraph with a good concluding sentence* (local planning)(BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE). Mmmm, So the quality of teaching, so the quality of teaching (repetition) can, so the quality of teaching can,(repetition) so the quality of teaching can(repetition), the quality of teaching can (repetition) , so the quality of teaching can(repetition) influence success. (INAUDIABLE VOICING, THE NOISE OF TURNING A PAGE OVER MADE HER VOICE INAUDIBLE, AND SHE STARTED WRITING A NEW PARAGRAPH WITHOUT VERBALISING ANY DECISION. IT COULD BE

THAT INAUDIABLE VOICING HAD TO DO WITH THIS STEP).Apart away ( HERE THE RESEARCHER INTEREFERD AND ASKED HER ABOUT WHAT SHE WAS TRYING TO DO, AND SHE REPLIED THAT IT WAS HER FINAL PARAGRAPH IN THE BODY), apart(repetition)from, (HERE THE STUDENT CROSSES OUT THE WORD "AWAY")(revision for deletion)(revision for substitution) apart from(repetition) the, apart from the(repetition) consequences of, apart from the consequences,(repetition) of (HERE THE STUDENT CROSSED OUT THE PREPOSITION "OF") (editing for deletion)let's forget that(rehearsing), apart form the consequences, (repetition)or, apart from the consequences (repetition)that , apart from,(repetition) apart from the consequences that(repetition)result from, apart from the consequences that result from,(repetition) we can go back to points (local planning), the students' home, the quality of teaching (reading part or whole of outlines) (STUDENT RESORTED TO THE POINTS SHE HAD PUT AS A GUIDE FOR HER WRITING-OUTLINES)(reading the outline), so apart from the consequences that result from (repetition)the influence of the students' home and the quality , the students' home, the quality of teaching(repetition)(TURNED BACK AGAIN TO THE POINTS ON THE FIRST PAGE) (reading part or whole of outlines) ,apart from the consequences that result from the influence of the students' home and the quality(repetition) of teaching. This is a very long sentence (commenting), I have to divide it (local planning), Ahhhh, apart from the consequences(repetition) (pause) This is a very long sentence (commenting), I need to short it (local planning) (planning to divide a long sentence), so I could say(rehearsing),  apart from the consequences(repetition) (pause) apart from(repetition) , apart(repetition), apart from the consequences(repetition) of home and school, apart from the consequences of home and school(repetition), the student can be(pause), the student can be (repetition), Mmmmm, the student(repetition), apart from the consequences of home and school on learning, the student can be(repetition) a crucial part, side (STUDENT WRTE BOTH WORDS: "PART" AND "SIDE" ABOVE EACH OTHER AS TWO POSSIBILITIES IN THIS POSITION), apart from the consequences of home and school on learning, the student can be a crucial, (pause),part or side(reading a larger unit of discourse), the student can be a crucial part or side(repetition) , apart from the consequences of home and school on learning, the student, the student (repetition)can be a crucial side, part (reading larger unit of discourse) as,(THEN THE STUDENT CROSSED OUT "AS")(editing for deletion) the student can be a crucial part(repetition), that has a great effect on success. If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success , the student can be a crucial part that has a great effect on success(reading larger unit of discourse), on success(repetition), success(repetition). If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success(reading larger unit of discourse) even if(HERE THE STUDENT CROSSED OUT "IF"), though, it's better (commenting), even though (revision for substitution)(repetition) he has, even (repetition)(HERE AGAIN SHE CROSSED OUT "THOUGH")(revision for deletion) if he has(repetition),    "نزبطها كيف هنايا"( how can I join it here?),(use of L1 in a question mode) (HERE SHE USED ARABIC FOR THE FIRST TIME), he will not success even if he has(repetition) big encourage, if he has big encouraging (repetition)(SHE ADDED "ING" TO ENCOURAGE) (edition for word form) and support from his family. We can say (rehearsing), In the other side, if Ahhh, in the other side if (repetition)the student is motivated to learn, he will be successful even, even (repetition) if the learning , let's say (rehearsing), atmosphere is not encouraging. (AT THIS POINT THE STUDENT SHIFTED BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PARAGRAPH AND STARTED READING ALOUD WHAT SHE HAD WRITTEN TO SEE IF IT WOULD MAKE SENSE), Apart from the consequences of home and school on learning, apart from mmm(repetition), apart from the consequences of home and school on learning(repetition), the student can be a crucial part that has a great effect on success. If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success even if he has big(reading larger unit of discourse) encourge, encourge, encourge, encouge(repetition),  If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success even if he has big encourge and support from his family. In the other side, if the student is motivated to learn, he will be successful even if the learning atmosphere is not encouraging(reading larger unit of discourse).

Now I think I've finished the three paragraphs, within my first draft, so now I'll check my mistakes (global planning). Ahhh, usually in the conclusion I try to write what I've written in the introduction but using other words( BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE) (rehearsing). Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.(reading larger unit of discourse) , (STUDENT HERE TRIED TO MAKE A START IN HOW TO WRITE HER CONCLUSION. SHE WENT BACK AGAIN AND READ THE INTRODUCTION ONCE MORE). We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be effected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.(reading larger unit of discourse) Mmmm, education(repetition). Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons.(reading larger unit of discourse) (STUDENT NOW STARTED WRITING HER CONCLUSION) Everyone has an aim in life. Everyone has an aim in life(repetition), has an aim in life(repetition). And usually this aim. Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim(repetition) is , and usually this aim is (repetition)related to success in a way or another. Everyone has an aim in life. And usually  this aim is related to success in a way or another (reading larger unit of discourse). So the starting point, Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim is related to success, so the starting point, (reading larger unit of discourse)so the starting point(repetition)of  that goal is usually education. Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point of that goal is usually education(reading larger unit of discourse).Education , successful (STUDENT ADDED THE ADJECTIVE SUCCESSFUL PRIOR TO THE WORD EDUCATION) (revision for

addition) education(repetition)(ALTHOUGH STUDENT WROTE THE ADJECTIVE 'SUCCESSFUL' PRIOR TO THE WORD EDUCATION, WE COULD NOT HEAR HER REPEATING THIS WORD ALOUD, EVENTHOUGH WE COULD DO THAT WITH THE WORD 'EDUCATION'. IT IS VERY POSSIBLE THAT SOME OF HER REPETITION OR READING WAS DONE SILENTLY AND WAS THEREFORE NOT CAPTURED IN HER PROTOCOL) can be influenced by many factors such as(pause) (STUDENT HERE WENT BACK TO THE KEY POINTS SHE WROTE AT THE PRE-WRITING STAGE- OUTLINES. SHE WAS NOT VERBALISING ANYTHING AT THIS POINT, BUT POINTING AT THE THREE POINTS USING HER PENCIL AS IF SHE WAS RAEDING SILENTLY THOSE OUTLINES)(reading part or whole of the outline) , Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point of that is usually education(reading larger unit of discourse). The starting point of that(repetition) so the starting point (repetition)to that goal is usually education (repetition)(STUDENT CHANGED THE PREPOSITION "OF" INTO "TO") ( editing for grammar) . Successful education can be influenced by many factors such as (repetition)the, the (repetition)house in which (pause) (STUDENT CROSSED THE PHRASE "HOUSE IN WHICH" AND REPLACED IT BY "PLACE WHERE YOU LIVE")(revision for substitution), place where you live, the teachers, the teachers, the teachers, the teachers (repetition)(pause),(HERE THE STUDENT WENT BACK TO THE INTRODUCTION OF HER ESSAY) and the student himself(reading part or whole of the outline) , *I think I may change it here*(local planning). Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point to that goal is usually education. Successful education can be influenced by many factors such as the place where you live, the teachers, and(reading larger units of discourse), Mmmm, such as the place where live, the teachers and(repetition)you as a student(*revision for addition).*

*I think I have finished, so I am checking my mistakes now*(planning editing).(AT THIS STAGE THE STUDENT STARTED RE-READING THE ESSAY RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING) , Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life (reading a large unit of discourse)(STUDENT UNDERLINED THE PHRASE "WE CAN"). And the success in getting the prober (repetition) (THE STUDENT CIRCLED THE WORD "PROPER" AND SHE LOOKED IT UP IN HER ELECTRONIC DICTIONARY FOR SPELLING. THEN SHE CORRECTED THE SPELLING MISTAKE AND CONTINUED READING)(editing for spelling). And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself. The educational process takes only few hours inside the school, then the students have to back home again. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure. Of course all parents want their children to be successful, but the parents background may effect their children's level. For example, educated,(reading a large unit of discourse) *I think an* (editing for addition*) educated parent, no it's plural* (rehearsing)(HERE THE STUDENT ADDED THE ARTICLE "AN" THEN AGAIN CROSSED IT OUT AFTERWARDS) (editing for deletion), educated(repetition) parents may help and mooottttiiivvvvated (HERE THE STUDENT PAUSED IN ORDER TO CHECK THE SPELLING OF THE WORD "MOTIVATED"), their kids to work hard. Unlike uneducated parents because they will be unable(reading a large unit of discourse), because they will (repetition)not be able(STUDENT MADE A CHANGE HERE: USED NOT ABLE INSTEAD OF UNABLE)(revision for substitution), to take part in the learning process (repetition), to take part in the learning process(repetition), the learning process(repetition). So home atmosphere plays an important role in the success in education (repetition), so home atmosphere plays an important role in ~~the~~ (editing for deletion) (STUDENT CROSSED OUT THE ARTICLE "THE") success in education(reading larger unit of discourse).

The biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school. So whatever the teachers use has a direct influence on the students' success. For example, teachers who use different methodologies and equipments such as computers will provide their students with variaty of information. And learning process will be more interesting which will have good impact on the students. Teachers using always the same techniques will have negative effect (reading a large unit of discourse), negative effect(repetition) on their students level, because the learning process will be dull and boring (repetition). So the quality of teaching can influence success (reading a large unit of discourse) (NO CHANGES TAKE PLACE IN THIS PARAGRAPH).

Apart from the consequences of home and school on learning, the student (repetition), the student(repetition) can be a crucial part that has a great effect on success(repetition). If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success even if he has big (repetition), big,(repetition) it's not nice to use big here(commenting), even if he has(repetition), even if he has big(repetition) encourage and support from his family(repetition). In the other side, if the student is motttiiiivvvated (HERE THE STUDENT CORRECTED THE SPELLING OF THE WORD MOTIVATED)(editing for spelling), to learn, he will be successful even if the learning atmosphere is not encouging (repetition).

Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point (reading a large unit of discourse), the starting point(repetition) to that goal is usually education (repetition). Successful education can be influenced by many (STUDENT CORRECTED THE SPELLING MISTAKE IN THE WORD "MANY")(editing for spelling), factors such as the place where you live, the teachers and you as a student (reading a large unit of discourse), the place where you live, the teachers and(repetition) your desire.

(STUDENT MADE A CHANGE: "YOUR DESIRE" INSTEAD OF "YOU AS A STUDENT")(revision for substitution). *I want to repeat it in another paper* ( planning to rewrite the essay)

(THE STUDENT HERE ASKED FOR ANOTHER PAPER TO USE IN WRITING HER FINAL DRAFT)

Education is important for everyone. Most of us(revision for substitution) (SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED THE PHRASE "WE CAN" FOR "MOST OF US") I think it's more convenient (commenting) consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be effected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.

(THE STUDENT AT THIS STAGE STARTED COPYING WHAT SHE HAD WRITTEN SILENTLY, WITHOUT AN ATTEMPT TO THINK ALOUD FOR MORE THAN TWO MINUTES TILL THE RESEARCHER INTERRUPTED HER AND ASKED HER TO THINK ALOUD AGAIN EVEN DURING THE WRITING OF THE FINAL DRAFT (NO OTHER CHANGES TAKE PLACE IN THE FIRST PARAGRAPH).

The educational process takes only few hours inside the school, then the students have to back home, to go (rehearsing) back home(repetition), to back home(repetition)again. So, home would be considered as a (editing for addition) (THE SUBJECT ADDED THE ARTICLE "A" BEFORE THE WORD "PART") part of the educational procedure. Of course all parents want their children to be successful, but the parents background may effect their children's level. For example, educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard ~~unlike~~ whereas(revision for substitution)whereas(repetition),uneducated parents, I may change this sentence, I'll try another sentence(local planning) , whereas uneducated parents (repetition) whereas uneducated parents may be(repetition), whereas uneducated parents may be unable to(repetition), uneducated parents may be un(repetition), whereas uneducated parents, (repetition)whereas(repetition) I think it's confusing (commenting), I'll try to compare between the two sentences and choose the best one (local planning). So, so is it better to say unlike uneducated parents because they will not be able to take part in the learning process, or whereas uneducated parents are not able (rehearsing and questioning), I think this is better (commenting), whereas uneducated parents are unable to take part in the learning process (revision for substitution) .So home atmosphere plays an important role in ~~the~~ ( editing for deletion) (STUDENT CROSSED OUT THE ARTICLE "THE" BEFORE THE WORD "SUCCESS) success in education. The biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school. So whatever the teachers use, the biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school. So whatever the teachers use (reading larger units of discourse)has a direct influence on the , on the(repetition) students' success. For example, teachers who use different methodologies and equipments such as computers will provide, will provide(repetition) their students with variaty of information. And learning process will be more interesting, which will have good impact on the students. Teachers using always the same techniques will have negative effect in their students' level, because the learning process will be dull and boring. So the quality of teaching can influence success.

Now I'll re-write the third paragraph(local planning) Apart from the consequence of home and school on learning, the student can be a crucial part that has a great effect on success. If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not succeed even if he has big encourge and support from his family. In the other side, if the student is motivated, he will be successful even if the learning atmosphere is not encourging.

Now the conclusion (local planning)Everyone has an aim in life, and usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point to that goal is usually, is usually(repetition) education. Successful education can be influenced by many factors such as the place where you live, the teachers ,and Ahhh, I may change this, as well as your desire(editing for word form) (THE SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED THE WORD 'AND' FOR 'AS WELL AS').

## 11-B: S3's think-aloud protocol

Can I write the title, the topic? (questioning)(THE SUBJECT STARTED BY ASKING THE RESEARCHER THIS QUESTION, THEN WHEN THE RESEARCHER CONFIRMED THAT SHE COULD DO WHATEVER SHE LIKED, SHE STARTED WRITING THE TITLE AND VERBALISING WHAT SHE WAS WRITING AT THE SAME TIME )

<u>Success in education is influenced more by the student's home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching.</u>

" (شن معنىthan byهناي؟ أكثر من؟) ذان باي "            (*what does it mean 'than by' here? Does it mean 'more than'?*) (use of L1) (questioning),(THE SUBJECT ADDRESSES THIS QUESTION TO THE RESEARCHER)

"يعني زي السؤال هو العنوان؟"(*so the assigned topic here is like a question?*) (use of L1)(questioning)

"اول حاجة نفكر فيها أصله مافيش سكسس(*success*) ، قصدي لما يكون فيه باكقراوند(*background*) كويس للطفل، انه هوا يكون ناجح اصلا ، حيساعدنه الكوالتي اوف تيتشينق اند افيكت افيكتفنيس اوف دي اديوكيشنال بروقرام

" (*quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme*)

(*the first thing I think about is that there is no success, I mean when there is a good background for the child; that is, when he is already successful; in this case the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme will help him*) (use of L1)(rehearsing)

نحن نتكلم عن التشايلد(*child*) أكثر حاجة،منذ الطفولة نبدوا فيها بإعتبارها المرحلة ألاولى

(*we need to talk about 'the child' most, we need to start talking about the childhood, as it is the first stage*)(use of L1) (global planning)

<u>Success in education, education (repetition), must be beginning from the home when the when the(repetition) child know that the education the education (repetition) is very important in his live. Success in education must be beginning from the home when the child know that the education is very important in his live (reading larger unit of discourse), and his parents( pause) and his parents (repetition) encourge him to be success to be success (repetition) in his study then the child then the (repetition) brought (rehearsing) brought up and have a concept in his mind.</u>

"كم طول، يعني الكتابة؟

(*how long is the essay? I mean the length of writing?*) (use of L1) (questioning) (HERE THE SUBJECT ASKS THE RESEARCHER, HOW LONG THE TASK SHOULD BE? IN OTHER WORDS, HOW MANY WORDS ARE REQUIRED?)

I don't like writing too much (commenting)

<u>Success in education must be beginning from the home when the child know that the education is very important in his live, and his parents encourge him to be success in his study. Then the child brought up and have a concept in his mind (reading larger unit of discourse) that success in education is a part of his, a part of his(repetition) life, and he trying to push him.self to do, to do (repetition) his best,</u> then <u>the role of teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme</u>(reading the assigned topic) (HERE THE SUBJECT READS ALOUD A PART OF THE TITLE),

تميت المرحلة الأولى

و بعدين بنبدي في دور التعليم و المدرسة

(*I have finished the first stage, and after this I'll start with the role of education and school*) (use of L1) (global planning)

اني بنتكلم توا حاليا

مع نفسي و انت بتسمعني ؟ أو كأنه ما فيه حد؟

*(Shall I verbalize my thoughts now as if I'm talking to myself and you are listening to me? Or is it as if there is no one around?)*(use of L1) (questioning)(THE SUBJECT HERE IS ASKING THE RESEARCHER ABOUT THINKING ALOUD. SHE SEEMS NOT QUITE COMFORTABLE WRITING AND VERBALISING AT THE SAME TIME)

then the role of the teachers, teachers (repetition), the role of the teachers (repetition) will be appear in his life, the children will be influenced by the teacher and the way he is teaching them (rehearsing), the child will influenced by his teacher in the school and the way they are teach. while that he will, he will (repetition), he will(repetition)he will (repetition)improve , himself, improve(repetition) his, his(repetition) prsonlty PRSONLTY (repetition)and think of his future alot, he will try to be success like his teacher, teacher (repetition), Mmmm, the child will, will influenced by his teachers, and the way that the teacher, the way that the teacher is teaching the students, ahhh, it make , ahhh, effect,(rehearsing) teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme (reading the assigned topic)(HERE THE SUBJECT RESORTS TO THE TOPIC AND READS PART OF IT)

في حاجة ثالثة امبكري، هم اثنين البيت والمدرس، شنو الثالثة؟

*(There was a third issue earlier? They were two, the home and the teacher, what was the third one?)* (use of L1)(rehearsing)(questioning) (THE SUBJECT HERE IS ASKING ABOUT THE TOPIC AS AN ATTEMPT TO REPHRASE IT SO THAT SHE CAN UNDERSTAND IT BETTER)

معناها توا نحكي نتكلم عن أديوكيشنال بروقرام (educational programme)، نحس في روحي كتبت عليهم كلهم، من الاول كنت متوقعة بنكتب على حاجتين والفكرة الثالثة مش حتساعد، لكن هنا كلهن بيساعدن لان كلهن بيدورن في نفس الحلقة، زمان لماكنت صغيرة كنت نبي نخش أدبي وبعدين نبي نخش قانون ولما قريت توسعت نظرتي للقرايا وشفت حاجة اسماها انجليزي ماكناش نعرفوه في البداية

*(Now this means I should talk about 'educational programme'. I feel that I have written about them all. At the beginning I expected to write about two things, and the third idea won't help, but here all of them help because all of the ideas are talking about the same point. In the past when I was young I wished to study literary at the secondary school so that I could study Law, but as I carried on studying my views on education became even clearer and I discovered that there was something called English which we did not know about at the beginning)* (use of L1)(rehearsing).

Like his teacher(repetition), to be success like his teacher(repetition), yes (commenting), then when the child, child (repetition) have, have(repetition)more awareness, awareness(repetition) معناها وعي ,(*It means 'awareness'*)(use of L1) awareness(repetition), he will, he will(repetition) follow, follow(repetition) his Mmmm, رغباته(*desires*) (use of L1) diserse , diserse (repetition)and try to select what he want from the educational educational (repetition) programme, educational programme, (repetition) . from the educational programme(repetition) and (pause), I am thinking about the educational programme, how the student help him self(rehearsing) , and help him self to be success while there are a lot of specialization in front of him he will try to select the the (repetition), in front of him he will try to select the(repetition) , the(repetition) best for himself, the best for himself(repetition),all these, all these (repetition)aspects,

كل هدينا أسباب مهمة لنجاح التعليم، هذا اللي نبي نشير له زي الكنكلوجن(conclusion) يعني

*(All these are good reasons for success in education. This is what I want to refer to here. I mean like a conclusion)*(use of L1)(rehearsing)

Ahhh, reasons, all these (repetition) reasons are very important too get success in education, I finish( AT THIS STAGE SHE SAYS SHE FINISHES AND PUTS DOWN HER PEN), I need to rewrite it (planning to rewrite the essay), so I need a new paper and a pen. I read while I am writing, or think? (questioning) (SHE ASKS THIS QUESTION BEFORE SHE STARTS WRITING HER FINAL DRAFT)

Success in education, education(repetition) must be begining from the home. when the child know that the education is very important in his live, education is very important in his live(repetition), and his, Ahhh, important in his live,(repetition)by(revision for addition), by(repetition), important in his live(repetition), by(repetition)background (revision for addition), background(repetition) that he get from his parents. sisters and brothers that he find in his enviroments (revision for addition). all these will(revision for substitution) (THE SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED 'AND HIS PARENTS' FOR 'ALL THESE WILL') encourge him, encourge him (repetition)to be success in his study. brought up (repetition), Then the child brought up and he(revision for addition)have had(editing for form or tense verb) a concept and ideas (revision for addition) in his mind. that the(editing for addition) success in education is a part of his personlty (revision for substitution) (SUBJECT USED THE WORD 'PERSONLITY' INSTEAD OF 'LIFE') , a part of his personlity(repetition). and he trying to push him.self to do his best to get a high education, EDDUUCCCATIONNN(repetition), as his family(revision for addition), as his family(repetition).

Then the role of (editing for addition)the teacher will be appears (editing for addition) in her, will be appears in(repetition) his life, the role of the teacher(repetition), the role of the teacher, will be appears in his life(repetition)when the child go to the schoole (revision for addition) he (revision for substitution) (THE SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED 'THE CHILD' FOR 'HE') will influenced by his success(revision for addition) teacher and he will try to be in the same situation .if he like, like(repetition) the way of  the teacher. is teaching(revision for substitution), the way of the teacher is teaching(repetition) the course or the lesson (rehearsing) the course or the lessons (revision for addition). هذا دور المدرس,(*this is the role of the teacher*)(use of L1) (rehearsing) while that he will improve his knowledge about the study the study(repetition) and (revision for addition)his, and his(repetition) personltiy what he want to be in study(revision for addition).and think about(editing for grammar) (HERE THE SUBJECT MADE EDITING FOR GRAMMAR BY REPLACING THE PREPOSITION 'OF' BY 'ABOUT') his future a lot. he will try he will try(repetition)to be success, to be success(repetition), to be success (repetition)like his teacher. and here  the role of teacher as a guide for the student to learn them and improve their personlities to be success in the field they want(revision for addition).

Then(editing for deletion) When the child get (editing for word form) more awareness (THE SUBJECT WROTE THE WORD 'AWARENESS' CORRECTLY IN THE FIRST DRAFT; HOWEVER, IT HAS A SPELLING MISTAKE IN THIS FINAL DRAFT) he will follow himself instruction(revision for substitution) (SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED 'HIS DESIRE' FOR 'HIMSELF INSTRUCTION'), and try to select what he want from the study and(revision for addition) the educational programme and help him self to be success. while there are a lot of spacailization in front of him, he will try to select the best for himself. In my point of view(revision for addition) all these reasons are necessary and (revision for addition) very(editing for deletion) important to get a(editing for addition)success in education. I finish

# 11-C: S2's think-aloud protocol

في الاول بنقراء العنوان (*at the beginning I'll read the topic*) (use of L1)(local planning). <u>Success in education is influenced more by the student home or educational programme</u> (reading part of the assigned topic). emmmالعنوان(*the topic*)(use of L1) <u>Success in , success in</u> (repetition) <u>education is influenced more by the student home or the educational programme</u> (reading part of the assigned topic). (SUBJECT READ PART OF THE TOPIC TWICE).

ايه هذا كويس (*yes, that's good*) (use of L1) <u>Success in education is influenced more by the student home or education progam.</u>

الانترودكشن لازم نكتبوا فيها المين ايديا (*in the introduction we should write the main idea*) (use of L1)(global planning)صعب اني نفكر بصوت عالي صعب(*it's difficult for me to think-aloud*)(use of L1) ( STUDENT HERE COMMENTED ON VERBALISING HER THOUGHTS SAYING IT'S DIFFICULT TO THINK ALOUD)

ما قدرتش ما عرفتش كيف نطلعها ما عرفتش (*I can't, and I don't know how to do it, I don't know*)(use of L1) (AGAIN SHE SAID IT'S DIFFICULT TO THINK ALOUD)

اول حاجة بنقسمه الى عدة بارغرافات (*First I need to divide it(the essay) into several paragraphs*)(use of L1)(global planning)

أني بنقول أن جميع الأماكن في المجتمع تؤثر في التعلم و لكن كيف نجيبوها هذه ؟ كيف إنجيبوها؟

الأماكن في المجتمع

(*I want to say that every place in society has an influence on education, but how can we say this in English? How can we say it?*) (use of L1) (rehearsing and questioning), ( *places in the society*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), <u>every place in society, in the society has influence on education, on education, on the success in education</u>(rehearsing). أوكي خليني نبدي(*OK, let me start*) (use of L1) (local planning)

<u>Every place , every place</u> (repetition) <u>in the society has influence on the success in education, success in education</u> (repetition).

بعتالي أهم مكانين هما البيت و المدرسة

(*then the most two important places are the home and the school*) (use of L1) (rehearsing), the most, maybe the most important place, places is the home and schools (rehearsing). Ahha, <u>May the most important places is the home and schools.</u>

<u>May the most important places is the home and schools</u> (reading a large unit of discourse). <u>both of them has main, main</u>(repetition), <u>main</u>(repetition), <u>has main</u>(repetition), <u>has main</u>(repetition)<u>motivation for, for student to success.</u>

توا البارغراف الثاني (now, *the second paragraph*)(use of L1) (local planning)

توا لازم نكتب على مزايا المنزل (*now, I should write about the advantages of the home*)(use of L1)(local planning)

<u>The influence of the home, the home</u>(repetition) <u>sometimes give the student , the influence of the home sometimes give the student</u>(repetition)تأثير المنزل يمكن ان يكون تحفيز (*the influence of the home can be a motivation*)(use of L1) (rehearsing) ما تجيش (*It can't be like that*)(use of L1) ~~the influence of the home sometimes give the student~~ (SUBJECT CROSSES OUT 'THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOME SOMETIMES GIVE THE STUDENT')(revision for deletion)Emmm,

نقولوا المنزل أحيانا يلعب دور مهم في النجاح في نجاح الطالب (*we may say that the home sometimes plays an important role in the student's success*)(rehearsing)(use of L1)

نقولوا (*we can say*)(use of L1) Of course, of course the home is play the main role in success, in success , the home is play the main role in success, but sometimes there's circumstances, but sometimes there's circumstances to prevent them to complete their study (rehearsing). <u>Of course of course</u> (repetition)<u>the home the home</u>(repetition) <u>is play is play</u>(repetition) <u>the main role to make their children, children</u> (repetition)<u>SUCSUCCESS</u> spelling success <u>success</u> (repetition) but sometimes there's circumstances to prevent them to complete their study (rehearsing)

يمكن في البيت فيه بعض الظروف تمنعهم انهم يكملوا (*there could be some circumstances in the home which may prevent them from completing..*) (use of L1) (rehearsing) ماتجيش (*it can't be like that*)(use of L1)

يمكن في البيت فيه بعض الظروف تمنعهم (*there could be some circumstances in the home which may prevent them*)(use of L1)to achieve, to achieve for example their (rehearsing)

تمنعهم انهم يحققوا اهدافهم(*prevent them from achieving their goals*) (rehearsing) (use of L1)

مش يحققوا اهدافهم يعني، ان يحصلوا ان يتحصلوا على (*it's not to achieve their goals, it's to obtain*)(use of L1) for example مثلا درجة ممتاز (*for example an excellent grade*)(use of L1) (rehearsing)

To make their children success (repetition), but sometimes sometimes (repetition) there's ~~s~~(editing for deletion) cicurmistance

كيف السبيلينق ابتعها توا ؟ (*how to spell it now?*)(questioning)(use of L1) I need to check it in the dictionary (planning to look up a word in a dictionary)(use of dictionary) (THE SUBJECT SPENDS ABOUT THREE MINUTES BEFORE SHE COULD FIND THE WORD IN HER DICTIONARY)(editing for spelling) ~~cicurmistance~~ (editing for deletion) CIRCUMSTANCE to prevent them to get for example, for example (repetition) the exllane score. Her we don't mean, we don't mean(repetition)that, that (repetition)the home

هذا لا يعني ان الحافز الذي يأتي من المنزل (*this doesn't mean that the motivation which comes from the home*)(use of L1) (rehearsing), her we don't mean that(repetition), we don't mean that (repetition)that(repetition) the motivation which comes from home doesn't or isn't? (questioning) her we don't mean that the motivation which comes from home(repetition)isn't isn't (repetition) good isn't good(repetition) isn't good(repetition) because usualy it's not enough for the student. but sometimes there's circumstance to prevent them to get for example the exllane score. Her we don't mean that the motivation which comes from home isn't good because usualy it's not enough for the student (reading a large unit of discourse)

في البارغراف الثالثة نقولوا، في الحقيقة أن بعض الناس (*in the third paragraph, we shall say, in fact some people*) (use of L1)that school doesn't (rehearsing) There's some people who think that schools and collages are better than home, and that comes under one reason which is in the schools and collages have have or has? (questioning) many, many (repetition) refrences ~~which~~ ذات اندیروا (*we shall write 'that'*)(use of L1) that (revision for substitution) that can help the student to success in their education.

توا الكنكلوجن (*now, the conclusion*) (use of L1) (local planning) All in all, I think that home and education programme have an important important (repetition)quality ~~and good~~(revision for deletion)of the teaching, of the teaching(repetition).In experience home was the main supporter, supporter(repetition) that makes me ~~to~~(revision for deletion) reach this stag of studying. In experince home was the main supporter that makes me reach this stag of studying(reading a large unit of discourse)

ما عرفتش كيف ننهيها ننهي الكنكلوجن حسيت انه هوا نفس الكلام (*I don't know how to finish the conclusion. I feel as if I am just repeating the same thing*)(use of L1)

من الأخير بنطلع من هو الأهم الهوم او ...

(*at the end, I need to say which is more important, the home or…*)(use of L1) (rehearsing) All in all, I think that home and education programme have an important quality of the teaching. in experince home was the main supporter that makes me reach this stage of studying (reading a large unit of discourse). and it's more important important (repetition) than other educational

نقول أنه هوا أهم من ...تكيف هذه ؟ إنعاودفي الكلام (*I say it's more important than… how it can be like that? I am repeating the same thing*) (use of L1) (questioning) more important than other educational (repetition)programmes. OK let me rewrite it now (planning to rewrite the essay) (AT THIS STAGE THE SUBJECT STOPS WRITING AND STARTS READING THE WHOLE TEXT BUT SILENTLY AND WITHOUT MAKING ANY CHANGES FOR A WHILE TILL THE RESEARCHER REMINDED HER TO VERBALISE HER THOUGHTS).

Every place in the society has influence on the success in education. May be (revision for addition) the most important places ~~is~~ are (editing for grammar)the home and school~~s~~ (editing for deletion)

لا مش سكولز سكول بس بدون إس (*no, it's not schools it's just school without an 's'*) (use of L1). both of them has main motivation for student to success.

Ofcourse the home is playing (editing for form or tense verb)the main role to make their children success, but sometimes there's circumstance to prevent them to get for example the exllane

خلاص و بعدين نوليلها توا خليها إكسلن إكسلن (*excellent, excellent, I'll just leave it now and I'll come back to it later*) (use of L1) (postponement) (planning  editing for spelling) score. Here(editing for spelling) we don't mean that the motivation which comes from home isn't good, because usualy it's not enough for the student.

There's some people who think that schools and collages are better than home, and that comes under one reason which is in the schools and collages have many refrences that can help the student to success in their education. (NO CHANGES TAKE PLACE IN THIS PARAGRAPH).

All in all, I think that home and education programme have an important quality ~~of~~ in (editing for grammar) the teaching. In experince مزبوطة مش هي حتى فيها نحس إكسبيرينس إكسبيرينس (*experience, experience, I feel it is also not correct*) (use of L1) home was the main supporter that ~~makes~~ me

مي هيلبس مي مايكس مش لا(*No, it's not 'makes me'- it's 'helps me'*) (use of L1) (rehearsing for word choice) that helps(revision for substitution) me reach this stag of studying. and it's more important than other educational programmes. I finish

## 11-D: S9's think-aloud protocol


The topic success in education is influenced more by students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme. Discuss. Emmm (reading the assigned topic)

" success in education is influenced more by students' home-life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme"(SUBJECT WROTE DOWN THE ASSIGNED TOPIC BETWEEN INVERTED COMMAS WITHOUT VERBALISING HIS INTENTION TO DO SO)

Emmm, let's think, think, think, success in education (repetition) in home, basically parents (rehearsing) , emmm, students, a draft, a paper (SUBJECT ASKD FOR A BLANK PAPER), students and education at home(rehearsing). I am trying to, like split the essay into basically more, not as complex as this really, emmm, like students at home, how they study at home? And what they do at home, and how effective is that to students? And then talk about students at school or college or whatever they go to (rehearsing to develop ideas for his outline), and finally just summarise all of that(global planning). OK,(commenting) let me write it down(local planning): Student and education at home, emmm, let me state the minor ideas (local planning) :Who teaches them at home? How long do they study for? What else? (rehearsing and questioning) Let's go to students at school (local planning) Students and school. How effective is the teacher? Or how effective can the teacher be? How much influence do the students have on each other's' learning?, what else (rehearsing and questioning), emmm, ya, The material used by the teacher and whether, no, whether it's available to use, no (CROSSED OUT 'TO USE') to be used (editing for grammar)at home. (outlining) OK let me start(local planning)
Students, students(repetition)what about them?(rehearsing and questioning) students(repetition), first sentence. Can I say students are? (rehearsing and questioning) students (repetition), students (repetition) no students (SUBJECT CROSSED OUT THE FIRST WORD IN HIS ESSAY 'STUDENT') (revision for deletion) Success in education comes through determination and the hard, and the hard (repetition),the hard(repetition) work the student the student(repetition) produces, the student produces(repetition) Emmm Education is not just at school, so the no so(repetition) so (repetition)the (repetition) student must work outside school as well school(repetition) outside school(repetition), precisely, PRECISELY (repetition)at home. at home(repetition)full stop (editing for punctuation), Education is not just at school, so the student must work outside school, precisely at home.(reading a large unit of discourse) Emmm yeahh, Parents are parents are(repetition) responsible for their child's child's(repetition) child's (repetition) work (rehearsing) wo (SUBJECT WROTE THE FIRST TWO LETTER IN THE WORD 'WORK' THEN CROSSED THEM OUT)(revision for deletion)no child's study and no (SUBJECT CROSSED OUT AGAIN 'STUDY AND') (revision for deletion) child's (repetition)child's (repetition), parents are responsible for their child's(repetition), child's(repetition) education (rehearsing) yeahh education (revision for substitution),education(repetition) emmm what comes next? (rehearsing and questioning) parents are responsible for their child's education (reading a large unit of discourse) parents are responsible for their child's education (reading a large unit of discourse) and no education(repetition) and they must be must(repetition) work with them to result (rehearsing) res (SUBJECT STARTED WRITING THE WORD 'RESULT' THEN HE CROSSED IT OUT) (revision for deletion)to(repetition) get (rehearsing), no to(repetition) produce (rehearsing) to produce to produce(repetition) emmm to produce (repetition) success in their lives, to produce success in their lives(repetition). Parents are responsible for their child's education and they must work with them to produce success in their lives.(reading a large unit of discourse) emmm, what can I say? (rehearsing and questioning) success in education is influenced more by students' home-life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme (reading the assigned topic) success in their lives (repetition) parents are responsible for their child's education and they must work with them to produce success in their lives. (reading a large unit of discourse) more important (rehearsing) yeahhh However, however(repetition)the question question (repetition)is how much how much (repetition) however, the question is how much (repetition)of their efforts how much of their efforts(repetition) is needed? and(THE SUBJECT WROTE THE WORD 'AND' THEN CROSSED IT OUT) (editing for deletion)no, I should read this (local planning), the question is how much of their efforts is needed? (reading a large unit of discourse) and(repetition), no I should stop no (local planning) in their lives (repetition). However, the question is how much of their efforts is needed?(reading a large unit of discourse)the question is how much of their efforts is needed?(reading a large unit of discourse) This depends on how (rehearsing) on(repetition) how how (repetition) not capital (editing for punctuation) how (repetition) bright the student, no child(rehearsing for word choice) the (repetition) child the child (repetition)is. how bright the child is (repetition) Some only need to be taught by their teacher in class and then they just unders (rehearsing) (SUBJECT ONLY VERBALISED A PART OF THE WORD UNDERSTAND 'UNDERS') and then they just (repetition) and then they (repetition) just (editing for deletion) understand understand (repetition) the lesson and therefore therefore (repetition) therefore (repetition) therefore(repetition) , and therefore(repetition) come on (rehearsing) apply what they learnt and therefore, they apply what they learnt(repetition) to no apply what they learnt(repetition)on (editing for grammar) the problems given for homework.
A new sentence (local planning), yeah, Moreover, moreover (repetition) emmm moreover (repetition) what?(rehearsing and questioning) Some only need to be taught by their teacher in class and then they understand the lesson and therefore apply what they learnt on the problems given for homework.(reading a large unit of discourse) Moreover,(repetition) some some (repetition)need some no(revision for deletion) (repetition)less bright

(rehearsing)~~less bright~~ no(revision for deletion) some(repetition) some (repetition)not as bright (revision for substitution)some not as bright (repetition)need more teaching more teaching(repetition) and given that the teacher has limited time no not comma(editing for punctuation) has limited time (repetition), and given that the teacher has limited time(repetition), there will be no one to teach the student or child?(rehearsing for word choice in a questioning tone) student except EXCEPT(repetition), EXCEPT(repetition) their parents parents(repetition). So the success in a students', so the success in a students'(repetition) in a students'(repetition)students' (repetition)education relies on them, so the success in a students' education relies on them(reading a large unit of discourse) more than it relies on anyone else.

Emmm, what else? (rehearsing and questioning)It, no (rehearsing)This success can also be limited to limited (repetition) this success can be limited (repetition) ~~to~~ (editing for deletion) limited(repetition) this success can be (repetition) success can also be limited (repetition) when yes when (rehearsing) when a student a student(repetition) this success can also be limited (repetition) is no(rehearsing) has friends at school that do not want to learn. Emmm, want to learn(repetition). They influence him to be like them and that means ~~they will~~ no(revision for deletion) means (repetition) he the student (rehearsing) the student will not be as successful as as (repetition) they should. Emmm, I need to see the topic again and look around to find an idea (SUBJECT AT THIS POINT SAID THAT HE NEEDED TO LOOK AT THE TOPIC AGAIN BECAUSE HE LACKS IDEAS) (local planning) success in education is influenced more by students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme. Discuss. (reading the assigned topic) I need to read all this (SUBJECT HERE WENT BACK TO READ THE OUTLINES) (local planning) (reading the outlines).

Let me read it (planning to read the essay) I will read from beginning (SUBJECT STARTED READING THE WHOLE TEXT FROM SCRATCH) Success in education comes through determination and the hard work the student produces. Education is not just at school, so the student must work outside school, precisely at home. Parents are responsible for their child's education, and they must work with them to produce success in their lives. However, the question is how much of their efforts is needed? this depends on how bright the child is. Some only need to be taught by their teacher in class and then they understand the lesson and therefore, apply what they learnt on the problems given for home-work. Moreover, some not as bright need more teaching and given that the teacher has limited time, there will be no one to teach the student except their parents. So the success in a students' education relies on them more than it relies on anyone else.(reading a large unit of discourse) Emmm, this needs to be taken off (planning revision for deletion), ~~So the success in a students' education relies on them more than it relies on anyone else.~~ (revision for deletion) Moreover, some not as bright need more teaching and given that the teacher has limited time, there will be no one to teach the student except their parents (reading a large unit of discourse). Emmm, yeahh. I think this paragraph should be shifted. I need to precede it by another one really. Emmm, let's continue talking about parents then, yeahh. So this should come after that (planning organisation).
(AT THIS POINT THE SUBJECT DECIDED TO PRECEDE THE LAST PARAGRAPH HE HAD WRITTEN BY ANOTHER ONE AND STARTED WRITING A NEW PARAGRAPH THAT STARTED WITH '*THE PARENTS*') (global planning)

The parents now face a problem of how to teach ~~their thie~~ (revision for deletion) 'e' before 'i' here yeahh 'e' before 'i' (rehearsing for spelling) (editing for spelling)their child. Yeahh, the parents now face a problem of how to teach their child (reading a large unit of discourse) This is usually usually(repetition) tackeled tackeled(repetition) by asking the child how they want to learn. This method cannot cannot (repetition) be applied at school because (rehearsing) ~~beca~~ at school(repetition) due (rehearsing) due to(editing for word form) the number of students and each might have a different DIFFERENT (repetition) different(repetition) have a different(repetition) way of learning and it is not possible to meet meet(repetition) each student's student's (repetition) demands. So this makes it easier for the student to learn at home according (rehearsing) according ACCCORRRDDDDIIINNNGG(repetition) according(repetition) to their style of learning learning (repetition) according to their style of learning(repetition) emmm so this makes it easier for the student to learn at home according to their style of learning(reading a large unit of discourse) The parents now face a problem of how to teach their child. This is usually tackeled by asking the child how they want to learn. This method cannot be applied at school due to the number of students and each might have a different way of learning and it is not possible to meet each student's demands. So this makes it easier for the student to learn at home according to their style of learning.(reading a large unit of discourse) yeahh, then yeahh emmm then that comes in here yeahh (HERE THE SUBJECT POINTED TO THE PREVIOUS PARAGRAPH THAT HE HAD WRITTEN EARLIER TO BE PUT NEXT)(local planning)

This success (repetition) , emmm Nevertheless (revision for addition), nevertheless, this success can ~~also~~(editing for deletion)can be limited when a student has friends at school that do not want to learn. They influence him to be like them and that means the student will not be as successful as they should. (reading a large unit of discourse) They influence him to be like them and that means the student will not be as successful as they should(reading a large unit of discourse)

Thus, making school making school (repetition)thus making school (repetition) a no thus making school(repetition) ~~a place~~ no(revision for deletion) making school(repetition) , no ~~school~~ (revision for deletion) home (rehearsing), making(repetition) home studying home(rehearsing) studying at home more effective. How many words I need to

write? (questioning), OK, let me see the directions now (local planning) (THE SUBJECT READ SILENTLY THE DIRECTIONS) (reading the directions) Emmm, talk about myself I think now (global planning) I can't really say I can, can I? I can't really use the first person, can I? (rehearsing and questioning)

However, they are people that cannot study at home and they are not used to it. For example, for example(repetition) in my case, I my case(repetition), I (repetition) was brought up to be independent and not rely on parents to do all the teaching, unless I unless I(repetition) cannot cannot (repetition) solve the task in hand. So I used to just rely on the teacher's lesson (revision for deletion) no rely on the teacher's(repetition) explanation, explanation (repetition) (revision for substitution) of the topic topic (repetition)we were studying at that time, explanation of the topic we were studying at that time(repetition) and rely on the notes I made by li (revision for deletion) or made(repetition) here during the lesson (revision for substitution).

I think I think that's everything. Let's put conclusion now really (planning to end the essay). I will give my final thoughts. I will explain how good teaching is really important, yeahh. And what if teaching is not successful, yeah, OK (global planning)

To conclude to conclude (repetition)with teaching (revision for deletion) Teaching is not easy to be done no (revision for deletion) not easy(repetition) not easy(repetition) for anyone. Learning is also not easy when the teacher is not capable of of (repetition) capable of (repetition) capable of (repetition) I don't want to use teaching again (planning to avoid repeating copying a word) getting the the (repetition) information through to the student in a fashion that allows the student to walk out of the lesson satisfied satisfied(repetition). If the teacher was not successful in doing so, then the role of the parents comes in. This role is for them to learn their child's difficulties, this role is for them to learn their child's difficulties, their child's learning (revision for addition) difficulties (repetition) difficulties(repetition) and how to over come those how to over come those (repetition) how to over come those(repetition) learning difficulties with the appropriate APPROPIATE (repetition) way appropriate way(repetition) or not appropiate way (revision for deletion) *with the appropriate way or most effective way* (rehearsing for word choice) most effective (revision for substitution)EFFECTIVE (repetition) way , and how to over come those learning difficulties with the most effective way(repetition). I think that's everything yeahhh (planning to end writing)

## Appendix 12: Written text for S6 (handwritten)

Tahani's      final draft       S6

C12

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Education is important for everyone. Most of us consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be effected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.

The educational process takes only few hours inside the school, then the students have to back home again. So home would be considered as a part of the educational procedure. Of course all parents want their children to be successful, but the parents background may effect their childrens' level. For example, educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard. Whereas uneducated parents are unable to take part in the learning process. So home atmosphere plays an important role in success in education.

The biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school. So whatever the teachers use, has a direct influence on the students' success. For example, teachers who use different methodologies, and equipment, such as computers will provide

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their students with variety of information. And learning process will be more interesting, which will have good impact on the students. Teachers using always the same techniques will have negative effect on their students' level, because the learning process will be dull and boring - so the quality of teaching can influence success.

Apart from the consequences of home and school on learning, the student can be a crucial point that has a great effect on success. If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success even if he has big encourge and support from his family. In the other side, if the student is motivated, he will be successful even if the learning atmosphere is not encourging.

Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point to that goal is usually education. Successful education can be influenced by many factors such as the place where you live, the teachers as well as your desire.

*Education is important for everyone. Most of us consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.*

*The educational process takes only few hours inside the school, then the students have to back home again. So home would be considered as a part of the educational procedure. Of course all parents want their children to be successful, but the parents background may effect their children's level. For example, educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard. Where as uneducated parents are unable to take part in the learning process. So home atmosphere plays an important role in success in education.*

*The biggest part of learning operation takes place inside the school.. So whatever the teachers use, has a direct influence on the students' success. For example, teachers who use different methodologies, and equipments such as computers will provide their students with variety of information. And learning process will be more interesting, which will have good impact on the students. Teachers using always the same techniques will have negative effect on their students' level, because the learning process will be dull and boring- so the quality of teaching can influence success.*

*Apart from the consequences of home and school on learning, the student can be a crucial part that has a great effect on success. If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success even if he has big encourage and support from his family. In the other side, if the student is motivated, he will be successful even if the learning atmosphere is not encourging.*

*Everyone has an aim in life. And usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point to that goal is usually education. Successful education can be influenced by many factors such as the place where you live, the teachers as well as your desire.*

**Appendix 13: Written text for S3 (handwritten)**

Success in education must be begining from the Home, when the child know that the education is very important in his live. by background that he get from his parents. sistres and brothers that he find in his enviroments. all these will encourge him to be success in his study. Then the child brought up and he had a concept and ideas in his mind, that the success in education is a part of his personlity. and he trying to push him.self to do his best to get a high education as his family.

Then the role of the teacher will be appears in his life when the child go to the sbcoole he will influnced by his success teacher. and will try to be in the same situation. if he like the way of the teacher. is teaching the course or the lessons. while that He will improve his knolwedge about the study. and his personltiy what He want to be in study. and think about his future abt. He will try to be success like his teacher.¹ and her the role of teacher ons aginiole for the studen + to learn them and improve their personlities to be success in the field they want.

When the child get more awarness He will follow his ~~own~~ himself instruction, and try to select what He want from the study and his and the educational programme and Help him self to be success, while there are alot of spaceilization in favrrt of him, He will try to select the best for himself. In my point of view all these reasons are neccessry and important to get a success in education.

Keys:
Pages :      1
Words :    278
Paragraphs :   3
Sentences :  14
Errors :

**Appendix 13(continued): Written text for S3 (typed)**

*Success in education must be begining from the home, when the child know that the education is very important in his live. by background that he get from his parents, sisters and brothers that he find in his enviroments. all these will encourage him to be success in his study. Then the child brought up and he had a concept and ideas in his mind, that the success in education is a part of his personlity. and he trying to push him. self to do his best to get a high education as his family.*

*Then the role of the teacher will be appears in his life when the child go to the school he will influnced by his success teacher and will try to be in the same situation. if he like the way of the teacher. is teaching the course or the lessons while that he will improve his knolwedge about the study. and his personltiy what he want to be in study. and think about his future a lot . he will try to be success like his teacher. and her the role of teacher as aguide for the student to learn them and improve their personlities to be success in the field they want.*

*When the child get more awareness he will follow himself instruction, and try to select what he want from the study and the educational programme and help him self to be success, while there are a lot of spacailization in front of him, he will try to select the best for himself. In my point of view all these reasons are neccessry and important to get a success in education.*

**Appendix 14: Written text for S2 (handwritten)**

Second draft                    S2
                                                                A 06
                                                                9/3/10

Every place in the society has influence on the success in education. May be the most important places is are the home and schools. both of them has main motivation for student to success.

Of course the home is playing the main role to make their children success, but sometimes there's circumstance to prevent them to get for example the exllane score. Herewe don't mean that the motivction which comes from home isn't good, becouse usualy it's not enough for the student.

There's some people who think that schools and collages are better than home, and that comes under one reason which is in the schools and collages have many refrence that can help the student to success in their education.

All in all, I think that home and education programme have an important quality of the teaching. In experince home was the main

Supporter that makes helps me reach this stag of studying. and It's more important than other educational programmes.

**Appendix 14(continued): Written text for S2 (typed)**

*Every place in the society has influence on the success in education. May be the most important places are the home and school. both of them has main motivation For student to success.*

*Ofcourse the home is playing the main role to make their children success, but sometimes there's circumstance to prevent them to get for example the exllane score. Here we don't mean that the motivation which comes from home isn't good, because usualy it's not enough for the student.*

*There's some people who think that schools and collages are better than home, and that comes under one reason which is in the schools and collages have many refrences that can help the student to success in their education.*

*All in all, I think that home and education programme have an important quality in the teaching. In experince home was the main supporter that helps me reach this stag of studying. and it's more important than other educational programmes.*

**Appendix 15: Written text for S9 (Handwritten)**

"Success in education is influenced more by students' home-life and training as a child then by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme"

~~Student~~ Success in education comes through determination and the hard work the student produces. Education is not just at school, so the student must work outside school, precisely at home. ~~Parents are~~
Parents are
responsible for their child's ~~his~~ ~~study and~~ education, and they must work with them to ~~her~~ produces success in their lives. ~~If~~ However, the question is how much of their efforts is needed? ~~and~~ ~~an~~ This depends on ~~the~~ ~~it~~ how bright the child is. Some only need to be taught by their teacher in class and then they ~~xxx~~ understand the lesson and therefore, apply what they learnt ~~to~~ on the problems given for homework.
Moreover, ~~&~~ Some ~~need less bright~~ not as bright need more teaching and given that the teacher has limited time, there will be no one to teach the student except their parents. ~~So the success in a student~~

~~Students' education relies on them more than it relies on anyone else.~~

② *Neveltheless* This success can ~~also~~ be limited ~~to~~ when a student has friends at school that do not want to learn. They influence him to be like them and that means ~~they will~~ the student will not be as success-full as they should. Thus, making *studying at home* ~~school~~ ~~even~~ more effective. ~~It a place~~

① The parents now face a problem of how to teach ~~their~~ ~~the~~ their child. This is usually tackeled by asking the child how they want to learn. This method €annot be applied at school ~~beca~~ due to the number of students and each might have a ~~differe~~ different way of learning and it is not possible to ~~meet~~ meet each students' demands. So this makes it easier for the student to learn at home according to their style of learning.

However, they are people that cannot ~~stu~~ study at home and they are not used to it. For example, in my case, I was brought up ~~not~~ to be independent and not rely on parents to do all the teaching unless I €annot solve

the task in hand. ~~OF~~ So I used to just rely on the teacher's ~~lesson~~ explanation of the topic we were studying at that time and rely on the notes I made ~~by t~~ during the lesson.

~~I~~ ~~To / conclude with, teaching~~

Teaching is not easy ~~to be done~~ for anyone. ~~At~~ Learning is also not easy ~~when~~ when the teacher is not capable of getting the information through to the students in a fashion that allows the student to walk out of the lesson satisfied. If the teacher was not successful in doing so, then the role of the parents comes in. This role is for them to learn their child's learning difficulties and how to over come those difficulties with the ~~appropiate way~~ most ~~of~~ affective way.

*Success in education comes through determination and the hard work the student produces. Education is not just at school, so the student must work outside school, precisely at home.*

*Parents are responsible for their child's education and they must work with them to produce success in their lives. However, the question is how much of their efforts is needed? This depends on how bright the child is. Some only need to be taught by their teacher in class and then they understand the lesson and therefore, apply what they learnt on the problems given for homework. Moreover, some not as bright need more teaching and given that the teacher has limited time, there will be no one to teach the student except their parents.*

*The parents now face a problem of how to teach their child. This is usually tackled by asking the child how they want to learn. This method cannot be applied at school due to the number of students and each might have a different way of learning and it is not possible to meet each students demands. So this makes it easier for the student to learn at home according to their style of learning.*

*Nevertheless, this success can be limited when a student has friends at school that do not want to learn. They influence him to be like them and that means the student will not be as successful as they should. Thus, making studying at home more effective.*

*However, they are people that cannot study at home and they are not used to it. For example, in my case, I was brought up to be independent and not rely on parents to do all the teaching unless I cannot solve the task in hand. So I used to just rely on the teacher's explanation of the topic we were studying at that time and rely on the notes I made during the lesson.*

*Teaching is not easy for anyone. Learning is also not easy when the teacher is not capable of getting the information through to the student in a fashion that allows the student to walk out of the lesson satisfied. If the teacher was not successful in doing so, then the role of the parents comes in. This role is for them to learn their child's learning difficulties and how to over come those difficulties with the most affective way.*

# Appendix 16: Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays

(Rater A: S6's essay)

**Composition Profile**

***A. Content:***

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject.                                    1.5 /1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used.                      1.2 /1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject.      1.5 /1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects  are shown.          1.5 /1.9

                                                           **Total :      5.7/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed.                                         2.0 /2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail.                                                  2.0 /2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate, define, compare, or contrast factual information

supporting the thesis.                                                              1.8 /2.5

                                                           **Total:       5.8/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis:**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness.

                                                                         2.2 /2.5

**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience).                                          2.5 /2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view.          2.2 /2.5

                                                           **Total:       6.9/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic.             3.25 /3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded.                                    3.0 /3.75

                                                           **Total:       6.25/7.5**

                                    **Total Content: 24.65/30**

***B. Organization:***

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another.                              0.4 /0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs.        0.7 /0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs.                                              0.4 /0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.    0.5 /0.8

<div style="text-align:center">

**Total:**    **2.0/3.3**

</div>

**2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported**

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper.

<div style="text-align:right">1.3 /1.6</div>

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit, and direct the thesis.    1.2 /1.6

<div style="text-align:center">

**Total:**    **2.5/3.3**

</div>

**3. Succinct:**

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

<div style="text-align:center">

**Total:**    **3.0 /3.3**

</div>

**4. Well-organized:**

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

<div style="text-align:right">1.2 /1.6</div>

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.    1.0 /1.6

<div style="text-align:center">

**Total:**    **2.2 /3.3**

</div>

**5. Logical sequencing:**

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence  such as time order, space order, or importance.

<div style="text-align:right">1.2 /1.6</div>

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate transitional markers.    1.2 /1.6

<div style="text-align:center">

**Total:**    **2.5/3.3**

</div>

**6. Cohesive:**

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.    1.5 /1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.    1.3 /1.6

<div style="text-align:center">

**Total:**    **2.8/3.3**

**Total organization: 15.0/20**

</div>

_**C. Vocabulary:**_

**1. Sophisticated range:**

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

<div style="text-align:center">

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</div>

1.5 /2.5

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.

                                                    2.5 /2.5

                                    **Total :**      **4.0/5**

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

                                                    0.5 /0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.        0.4 /0.6

**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.

                                                    0.3 /0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.        0.5 /0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.

                                                    0.4 /0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.        0.3 /0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.        0.5 /0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.        0.2 /0.6

                                    **Total:**      **3.1/5**

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.

                                                    2.1 /2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

                                                    2.5 /2.5

                                    **Total:**      **4.6/5**

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.                                        1.5 /1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.        1.5 /1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.        1.4 /1.6

                                    **Total:**      **4.4/5**

                        **Total vocabulary:**      **16.1/20**


*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.

0.5 /0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.4 /0.5

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed.

0.4 /0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.

0.2 /0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.          0.4 /0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.

0.3 /0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.          0.4 /0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.          0.2 /0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.

0.3 /0.5

**Total:      3.1/5**

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.

5.0 /5

**Total:      5/5**

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.          2.4 /2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.          2.5 /2.5

**Total:      4.9/5**

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.          4 /5

**Total:      4/5**

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.          2.3 /2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to its intended function.

2.4 /2.5

**Total:   4.7/5**

345

**Total Language use     21.7/25**

<u>*E. Mechanics:*</u>

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.                                                    1 /1

                                                                    **Total:     1/1**

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.

                                                                    0.3 /0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines.          0.5 /0.5

                                                                    **Total:     0.8/1**

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate.          1.0 /1

                                                                    **Total:     1/1**

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

                                                                    0.8 /1

                                                                    **Total:     0.8/1**

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication.

                                                                    0.6 /1

                                                                    **Total:     0.6/1**

                                                **Total Mechanics:   4.2/5**

                                                **Total Score:   81.65/100**

**Rater:     Abdulla Warayet**

**Comments:**   A very good writer who shows commitment and full understanding of the subject. Wrote neatly and had good organisation.

# Appendix 16(continued): Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays (Rater B: S6's essay)

<u>**Composition Profile**</u>

<u>*A. Content:*</u>

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject.                          1.4/1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used.                     1.2/1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject.         1.4/1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects  are shown.             1.4/1.9

                                    **Total :        5.4/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed.                                  2.0/2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail.                                     2.0/2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate,

define, compare, or contrast factual information supporting the thesis.

                                                                       2.0/2.5

                              **Total:        6.0/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis:**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness.   2.0 /2.5

**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience).                              2.0/2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view.              2.0/2.5

                                    **Total:        6.0/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic.              2.5/3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded.                                2.5/3.75

                                    **Total:        5.0/7.5**

                          **Total Content: 21.4/30**

<u>*B. Organization:*</u>

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another.                            0.6/0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs.                    0.8/0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs.                    0.5/0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.                    0.5/0.8

                              **Total:**        **2.2/3.3**

**2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported**

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper.

                                        1.4/1.6

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit, and direct the thesis.    1.5/1.6

                              **Total:**        **2.9/3.3**

**3. Succinct:**

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

                              **Total:**        **3.0/3.3**

**4. Well-organized:**

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

                                        1.5/1.6

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.    1.5/1.6

                              **Total:**        **3.0 /3.3**

**5. Logical sequencing:**

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence

   such as time order, space order, or importance.                    1.4/1.6

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate transitional markers.

                                        1.3/1.6

                              **Total:**        **2.7/3.3**

**6. Cohesive:**

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.                    1.5/1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.                    1.4/1.6

                              **Total:**        **2.9/3.3**

                    **Total organization: 16.7/20**

*C. Vocabulary:*

**1. Sophisticated range:**

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

                                        2.0/2.5

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.

2.0/2.5

**Total :**     **4.0/5**

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

0.4/0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.     0.4/0.6

**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.

0.4/0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.     0.4/0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.     0.4/0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.     0.5/0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.     0.5/0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.     0.5/0.6

**Total:**     **3.5/5**

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.

2.0/2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

2.0/2.5

**Total:**     **4.0/5**

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.     1.3/1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.     1.4/1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.     1.3/1.6

**Total:**     **4.0/5**

**Total vocabulary:**     **15.5/20**

*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.   0.4/0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.4/0.5

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed.

0.3/0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.

0.0/0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.   0.3/0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.

04/0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.   0.4/0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.   0.4/0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.

0.4/0.5

**Total:**   **3.0 /5**

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.

4.5/5

**Total:**   **4.5/5**

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.   2.5/2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.   2.5/2.5

**Total:**   **5.0/5**

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.   4.5/5

**Total:**   **4.5/5**

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.   2.0/2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to its intended function.   2.0/2.5

**Total:**   **4.0/5**

**Total Language use**   **21/25**

*E. Mechanics:*

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.                                         1.0/1

                                                            **Total:**     **1.0/1**

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.  0.4 /0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines.                0.0/0.5

                                                            **Total:**     **0.4/1**

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate.           1.0/1

                                                    **Total:**       **1.0/1**

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

                                                            1.0/1

                                                    **Total:**       **1.0/1**

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication.        1.0 /1

                                                    **Total:**       **1.0/1**

                                            **Total Mechanics:**       **4.4/5**

                                            **Total Score:**     **79/100**

**Rater:  Seham Abdul Rahman**

**Comments:**    Good piece of writing, which shows interest and ability to communicate in writing. The writer is able to express herself very well, developing and organising her ideas logically and demonstrating a good command of some vocabulary. She presents a central idea directly related to the assigned topic with sufficient clarity. However, this essay lacks insight and depth.

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# Appendix 16(continued): Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays

## (Rater A: S3's essay)

<u>**Composition Profile**</u>

<u>*A. Content:*</u>

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject.                    1.0 /1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used.               0.7 /1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject.   0.5 /1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects are shown.        0.7 /1.9

                                                 **Total :    2.9/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed.                            0.5 /2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail.                               1.0 /2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate,

define, compare, or contrast factual information supporting the thesis.

                                                 0.9 /2.5

                                                 **Total:    2.4/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis: .**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness.

                                                 0.8 /2.5

**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience).                         1.2 /2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view.        1.1 /2.5

                                                 **Total:    3.1/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic.        1.5 /3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded.                          1.3 /3.75

                                                 **Total:    2.8/7.5**

                                  **Total Content: 11.2/30**

<u>*B. Organization:*</u>

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another.                      0.2 /0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs.         0.4 /0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs.                    0.2 /0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.          0.3 /0.8

                                        **Total:**      **1.1/3.3**

**2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported**

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper.

                                                0.6 /1.6

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit, and direct the thesis.

                                                0.5 /1.6

                                        **Total:**      **1.1/3.3**

**3. Succinct:**

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

                                        **Total:**      **1.0 /3.3**

**4. Well-organized:**

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

                                                0.7 /1.6

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.     1.0 /1.6

                                        **Total:**      **1.7/3.3**

**5. Logical sequencing:**

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence such as time order, space order, or importance.

                                                1.0 /1.6

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate transitional markers.

                                                0.5 /1.6

                                        **Total:**      **1.5/3.3**

**6. Cohesive:**

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.                    1.2 /1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.                         0.8 /1.6

                                        **Total:**      **2.0/3.3**

                            **Total organization: 8.4/20**

_C. Vocabulary:_

**1. Sophisticated range:**

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

                                                0.5 /2.5

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.     1.3 /2.5

<div align="center">

**Total :**          **1.8/5**

</div>

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

0.2 /0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.          0.2 /0.6

**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.

0.1 /0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.          0.3 /0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.

0.3 /0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.          0.2 /0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.          0.3 /0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.

0.1 /0.6

<div align="center">

**Total:**          **1.7/5**

</div>

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.

1.2 /2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

1.9 /2.5

<div align="center">

**Total:**          **3.1/5**

</div>

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.          1.3 /1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.          1.5 /1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.          1.1 /1.6

<div align="center">

**Total:**          **3.9/5**

**Total vocabulary:**     **10.5/20**

</div>

*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.   0.3 /0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.3 /0.5

<div align="center">

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</div>

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed.

0.2 /0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.

0.2 /0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.          0. 2 /0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.          02 /0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.          0.3 /0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.          0.2 /0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.

0.2 /0.5

**Total:     2.1/5**

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.          3.0 /5

**Total:     3.0/5**

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.          1.3 /2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.          1.2 /2.5

**Total:     2.5/5**

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.          3.0 /5

**Total:   3.0/5**

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.          1.2 /2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to its intended function.

1.5 /2.5

**Total:   2.7/5**

**Total Language use          13.3/25**

_**E. Mechanics:**_

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.

0.7 /1

**Total:     0.7/1**

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.

0.2 /0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines. 0.5 /0.5

**Total:** **0.7/1**

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate. 0.1 /1

**Total:** **0.1/1**

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

0.5 /1

**Total:** **0.5/1**

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication.

0.8 /1

**Total:** **0.8/1**

**Total Mechanics:** **2.8/5**

**Total Score:** **46.3/100**

**Rater: Abdulla Warayet**

**Comments:** A weak writer. Shows little knowledge of subject, does not communicate, shows little organisation, shows little knowledge of English vocabulary, poor sentence construction, poor mechanics- i.e., poor punctuation, capitalisation and paragraphing.

# Appendix 16(continued): Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays

# (Rater B: S3's essay)

<u>**Composition Profile**</u>

### <u>A. Content:</u>

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject.                                    1.0/1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used.                         0.5/1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject.          0.5/1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects  are shown.              0.5/1.9

**Total :     2.5/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed.                                            1.0/2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail.                                                     0.5/2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate, define, compare, or contrast factual information supporting the thesis.                                                          0.5/2.5

**Total:     2.0/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis:**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness.     0.5 /2.5

**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience).                                                                0.5/2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view.                0.5/2.5

**Total:     1.5/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic.                   2.0/3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded.                                          2.0/3.75

**Total:     4/7.5**

**Total Content: 10/30**

### <u>B. Organization:</u>

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another.                                    0.3/0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs.             0.3/0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs.                                                       0.2/0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.           02/0.8

**Total:** 1.0/3.3

**2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported**

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper.

0.5 /1.6

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit, and direct the thesis.     0.2/1.6

**Total:** 0.7/3.3

**3. Succinct:**

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

**Total:** 2.0/3.3

**4. Well-organized:**

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

0.3/1.6

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.     0.7/1.6

**Total:** 1.0/3.3

**5. Logical sequencing:**

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence such as time order, space order, or importance.

0.5/1.6

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate transitional markers.     0.3 /1.6

**Total:** 0.8/3.3

**6. Cohesive:**

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.     0.6/1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.     0.7/1.6

**Total:** 1.3/3.3

**Total organization: 6.8/20**

*C. Vocabulary:*

**1. Sophisticated range:**

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

1.0/2.5

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.     0.5 /2.5

**Total :** 1.5/5

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

0.3/0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.        0.2/0.6

**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.

0.2/0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.        0.1/0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.        0.1/0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.        0.2/0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.        0.2/0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.        0.1 /0.6

**Total:        1.4/5**

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.

0.5/2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

1.0/2.5

**Total:        1.5/5**

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.        0.5/1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.        0.8/1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.        0.5/1.6

**Total:        1.8/5**

**Total vocabulary:        6.2/20**

*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.        0.2/0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.2/0.5

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed.        0.1/0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.        0.0/0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.        0.1/0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.        0.1/0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.        0.1/0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.        0.1/0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.        0.1/0.5

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.                              0.5/5

Total:    **0.5/5**

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.                   0.5/2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.                    0.5/2.5

Total:    **1.0/5**

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.          0.5/5

Total:    0.5/**5**

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.       1.0/2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to its intended function.    0.5/2.5

Total:    **1.5/5**

Total Language use    **4.5/25**

*E. Mechanics:*

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.                           0.6/1

Total:    **0.6/1**

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.

0.1/0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines.          0.0/0.5

Total:    **0.1/1**

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate.       0.2/1

Total:    **0.2/1**

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

0.7/1

|                     | **Total:** | **0.7/1** |
|---------------------|------------|-----------|

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication.     1.0/1

|                          | **Total:**           | **1.0/1** |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-----------|
|                          | **Total Mechanics:** | **2.6/5** |
|                          | **Total Score:**     | **30.1/100** |

**Rater:   Seham Abdul Rahman**

**Comments:**  This essay does not address the question adequately. It is thin and lacks depth and analysis. The work is not properly organised. The writer needs to pay close attention to her tenses and spellings.

# Appendix 16(continued): Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays (Rater A: S9's essay)

**Composition Profile**

*A. Content:*

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject.                    1.8/1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used.              1.7/1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject.     1.6/1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects are shown.        1.6/1.9

                                                        **Total :**          **6.7/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed.                          2.25/2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail.                              2/2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate,

define, compare, or contrast factual information supporting the thesis.

                                                              2.25/2.5

                                                        **Total:**          **6.5/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis:**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness.   2/2.5

**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience).                                      2/2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view.          1.75/2.5

                                                        **Total:**          **5.75/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic.          3/3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded.                          3/3.75

                                                        **Total:**          **6/7.5**

                                        **Total Content:   24.95/30**

*B. Organization:*

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another.                     0.7/0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs.          0.8/0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs.          0.7/0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.          0.6/0.8

                                             **Total:**          **2.8/3.3**

**2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported**

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper.

                                             1.5/1.6

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit, and direct the thesis. 1.3/1.6

                                             **Total:**          **2.8/3.3**

**3. Succinct:**

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

                                             **Total:**          **3/3.3**

**4. Well-organized:**

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

                                             1.4/1.6

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.          1.5/1.6

                                             **Total:**          **2.9 /3.3**

**5. Logical sequencing:**

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence such as time order, space order, or importance.

                                             1.4/1.6

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate transitional markers.

                                             1.4/1.6

                                             **Total:**          **2.8/3.3**

**6. Cohesive:**

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.          1.5/1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.          1.6/1.6

                                             **Total:**          **3.1/3.3**

                                **Total organization: 17.4/20**

*C. Vocabulary:*

**1. Sophisticated range:**

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

2/2.5

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.        2/2.5

                                                        **Total :**        **4/5**

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

                                                        0.5/0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.        0.4/0.6

**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.

                                                        0.4/0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.        0.5/0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.

                                                        0.4/0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.        0.5/0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.        0.5/0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.

                                                        0.5/0.6

                                                        **Total:**        **3.7/5**

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.  1.5/2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

                                                        2/2.5

                                                        **Total:**        **3.5/5**

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.                                 1.4/1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.        1.5/1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.        1.3/1.6

                                                        **Total:**        **4.2/5**

                                                **Total vocabulary:**        **15.4/20**

*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.     0.4/0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.4/0.5

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed. 0.4/0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.    0.2/0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.                    0.3/0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.                    0.4/0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.                    0.4/0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.                    0.4/0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.

0.4/0.5

Total:      3.3/5

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.                    5/5

Total:      5/5

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.                    2.5/2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.                    2/2.5

Total:      4.5/5

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.                    5/5

Total:      5/5

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.                    2.25/2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to it  intended function.                    2/2.5

Total:      4.25/5

Total Language use      22.05/25

*E. Mechanics:*

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.                    0.9/1

Total:      0.9/1

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.          0.4/0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines.          00/0.5

<div align="right">

**Total:**     **0.4/1**

</div>

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate.          0.95/1

<div align="right">

**Total:**     **0.95/1**

</div>

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

<div align="right">

0.95/1

**Total:**     **0.95/1**

</div>

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication.

<div align="right">

0.75/1

**Total:**     **0.75/1**

**Total Mechanics:**     **3.95/5**

**Total Score:     83.75/100**

</div>

**Rater:     Abdullah Warayet**

**Comments:**     This is a good essay where the writer shows good understanding of the subject, and had clear argument about the topic. The language was perfect, and good selection of vocabulary and expressions were used. There were clear link between sentences and paragraphs using suitable linking words and phrases.

# Appendix 16(continued): Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays (Rater B: S9's essay)

<u>**Composition Profile**</u>

*A. Content:*

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject. 1.7/1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used. 1.8/1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject. 1.6/1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects are shown. 1.8/1.9

**Total : 6.9/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed. 2.5/2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail. 2.25/2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate, define, compare, or contrast factual information

supporting the thesis. 2.3/2.5

**Total: 7.05/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis:**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness. 2/2.5

**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience). 2/2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view. 1.6/2.5

**Total: 5.6/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic. 3.5/3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded. 3/3.75

**Total: 6.5/7.5**

**Total Content: 26.05/30**

*B. Organization:*

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another. 0.8/0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs. 0.7/0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs. 0.6/0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.        0.6/0.8

<div align="center">

**Total:**        **2.7/3.3**

</div>

**2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported**

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper.

<div align="right">

1.4/1.6

</div>

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit, and direct the thesis.  1.4/1.6

<div align="center">

**Total:**        **2.8/3.3**

</div>

**3. Succinct:**

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

<div align="center">

**Total:**        **3/3.3**

</div>

**4. Well-organized:**

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

<div align="right">

1.3/1.6

</div>

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.        1.6/1.6

<div align="center">

**Total:**        **2.9 /3.3**

</div>

**5. Logical sequencing:**

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence  such as time order, space order, or importance.

<div align="right">

1.5/1.6

</div>

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate transitional markers.

<div align="right">

1.5/1.6

</div>

<div align="center">

**Total:**        **3/3.3**

</div>

**6. Cohesive:**

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.        1.6/1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.        1.5/1.6

<div align="center">

**Total:**        **3.1/3.3**

**Total organization: 17.5/20**

</div>

*C. Vocabulary:*

**1. Sophisticated range:**

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

<div align="right">

2.25/2.5

</div>

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.  2.25/2.5

<div align="center">

**Total :**        **4.5/5**

</div>

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

0.4/0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.　　0.6/0.6

**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.　0.5/0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.　　0.4/0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.　　0.6/0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.　　0.4/0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.　　0.5/0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.　　0.5/0.6

**Total:**　　**3.9/5**

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.　　1.95/2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

2/2.5

**Total:**　　**3.95/5**

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.　　1.5/1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.　　1.4/1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.　　1.5/1.6

**Total:**　　**4.4/5**

**Total vocabulary:**　　**16.75/20**

*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.　　0.4/0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.4/0.5

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed.　　0.5/0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.　　0.25/0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.        0.3/0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.        0.3/0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.        0.5/0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.        0.4/0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.        0.4/0.5

|  | **Total:** | **3.45/5** |
|---|---|---|

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.        4/5

|  | **Total:** | **4/5** |
|---|---|---|

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.        2/2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.        2.5/2.5

|  | **Total:** | **4.5/5** |
|---|---|---|

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.        4.5/5

|  | **Total:** | **4.5/5** |
|---|---|---|

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.        2.25/2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to its intended function.        2/2.5

|  | **Total:** | **4.25/5** |
|---|---|---|

|  | **Total Language use** | **20.7/25** |
|---|---|---|

*E. Mechanics:*

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.        0.95/1

|  | **Total:** | **0.95/1** |
|---|---|---|

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.        0.2/0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines.        00/0.5

|  | **Total:** | **0.2/1** |
|---|---|---|

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate.        0.75/1

|  | **Total:** | **0.75/1** |
|---|---|---|

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

1/1

**Total:** **1/1**

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication. 1/1

**Total:** **1/1**

**Total Mechanics:** **3.9/5**

**Total Score: 84.9/100**

**Rater: Seham Abdul Rahman**

**Comments:** This is a very well written essay, and the writer showed good command of language and good argumentation. The sentences written followed up smoothly and so did the paragraphs. No sign at all of misinterpretation of the subject, and he/she used quite good cohesive ties to link sentences and paragraphs. Only few errors (mechanical) were recorded.

# Appendix 16(continued): Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays (Rater A: S2's essay)

**Composition Profile**

*A. Content:*

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject.                    1.4/1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used.                    1.4/1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject.                    1.5/1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects  are shown.                    1.5/1.9

                    **Total :          5.8/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed.                    0.7/2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail.                    0.3/2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate,define, compare, or contrast factual information

supporting the thesis.                    0.5/2.5

                    **Total:          1.5/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis:**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness.    0.3/2.5

**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience).                    0.7/2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view.                    0.5/2.5

                    **Total:          1.5/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic.                    0.5/3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded.                    1/3.75

                    **Total:          1.5/7.5**

                    **Total Content:   10.3/30**

*B. Organization:*

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another.                    0.6/0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs.                    0.3/0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs.                    0.5/0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.                    0.5/0.8

**2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported**

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper. 0.9/1.6

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit, and direct the thesis.          0.5/1.6

Total:          **1.4/3.3**

**3. Succinct:**

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

Total:          **2/3.3**

**4. Well-organized:**

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

0.6/1.6

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.          1/1.6

Total:          **1.6 /3.3**

**5. Logical sequencing:**

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence  such as time order, space order, or importance.

1.1/1.6

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate  transitional markers.          1.1/1.6

Total:          **2.2/3.3**

**6. Cohesive:**

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.          0.8/1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.          0.5/1.6

Total:          **1.3/3.3**

**Total organization: 10.4/20**

*C. Vocabulary:*

**1. Sophisticated range:**

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

1/2.5

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.          1.5/2.5

Total :          **2.5/5**

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

0.5/0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.          0.4/0.6

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**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.

0.3/0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.   0.2/0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.   0.1/0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.   0.1/0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.   0.1/0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.   0.3/0.6

**Total:**      **2/5**

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.   1.5/2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

1/2.5

**Total:**      **2.5/5**

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.      1/1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.      1/1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.      1/1.6

**Total:**      **3/5**

**Total vocabulary:**      **10/20**

*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.   0.3/0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.3/0.5

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed.   0.3/0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.   0.3/0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.   0.2/0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.   0.3/0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.   0.2/0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.   0.1/0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.   0.2/0.5

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|  |  | Total: | 2.2/5 |
|---|---|---|---|

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.                    2.4/5

|  |  | Total: | 2.4/5 |
|---|---|---|---|

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.                    1.5/2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.                    1.5/2.5

|  |  | Total: | 3/5 |
|---|---|---|---|

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.                    3/5

|  |  | Total: | 3/5 |
|---|---|---|---|

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.                    1/2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to its intended function.

                    1.5/2.5

|  | Total: | 2.5/5 |
|---|---|---|
|  | **Total Language use** | **13.1/25** |

*E. Mechanics:*

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.                    0.7/1

|  | Total: | 0.7/1 |
|---|---|---|

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.    0.2/0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines.                    00/0.5

|  | Total: | 0.2/1 |
|---|---|---|

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate.                    0.75/1

|  | Total: | 0.75/1 |
|---|---|---|

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

                    0.5/1

|                          | **Total:** | **0.5/1** |

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication.     0.85/1

|                          | **Total:** | **0.85/1** |

**Total Mechanics:    3/5**

**Total Score:    46.8/100**

**Rater:    Abdulla Wrayat**

**Comments:**  This writer wrote a weak essay especially in terms of organisation and vocabulary usage. It appeared that he had difficulty expressing himself well in English, and the words and expressions he used did not support his argumentation in a good way. This essay lacked depth and good interpretation of the subject matter.

# Appendix 16(continued): Raters' evaluation of S6, S3, S2 and S9's essays (Rater B: S2's essay)

## Composition Profile

### A. Content:

**1. Knowledgeable:**

**a**. there is understanding of the subject.                    0.9/1.9

**b**. facts and other pertinent information used.              0.9/1.9

**c**. there is recognition of several aspects of the subject.     1/1.9

**d**. the interrelationships of these aspects  are shown.        1/1.9

**Total :      3.8/7.5**

**2. Substantive:**

**a**. several main points discussed.                           0.5/2.5

**b**. there is sufficient detail.                              0.5/2.5

**c**. there is originality with concrete details to illustrate,define, compare, or contrast factual information

supporting the thesis.                                         0.5/2.5

**Total:       1.5/7.5**

**3. Thorough development of thesis:**

**a**. the thesis is expanded enough to convey a sense of completeness.   0.5/2.5


**b**. there is a method of development (comparison/ contrast, illustration, definition, example, description, fact, or personal experience).                      0.5/2.5

**c**. there is an awareness of different points of view.        0.5/2.5

**Total:       1.5/7.5**

**4. Relevant to assigned topic:**

**a**. all information is clearly pertinent to the topic.        0.75/3.75

**b**. extraneous material is excluded.                         0.75/3.75

**Total:       1.5/7.5**

**Total Content:   8.3/30**

### B. Organization:

**1. Fluent expression:**

**a**. ideas flow, building on one another.                     0.3/0.8

**b**. there are introductory and concluding paragraphs.         0.6/0.8

**c**. there are effective transition elements- words, phrases, or sentences- which link and move ideas both within and between paragraphs.                          0.5/0.8

**d**. enough is written to adequately develop the subject.                    0.5/0.8

                                                        **Total:**    **1.9/3.3**

## 2. Ideas clearly stated/ supported

**a**. there is a clearly stated controlling idea or central focus (a thesis) to the paper.

                                           0.8/1.6

**b**. topic sentences in paragraphs support, limit,and direct the thesis.     0.6/1.6

                                                         **Total:**    **1.4/3.3**

## 3. Succinct:

**a**. all ideas are directed concisely to the central focus of the paper, without digressions.

                                                         **Total:**    **1.5/3.3**

## 4. Well-organized:

**a**. there is overall relationship of ideas within and between paragraphs clearly indicated.

                                           0.6/1.6

**b**. there is  a beginning, a middle, and an end to the paper.     0.5/1.6

                                                         **Total:**    **1.1 /3.3**

## 5. Logical sequencing:

**a**. the points are logically developed, using a particular sequence such as time order, space order, or importance.

                                           0.6/1.6

**b**. this development is indicated by appropriate transitional markers.

                                           0.6/1.6

                                                         **Total:**    **1.2/3.3**

## 6. Cohesive:

**a**. each paragraph reflects a single purpose.     0.8/1.6

**b**. the paragraphs form a unified paper.     0.5/1.6

                                                       **Total:**    **1.3/3.3**

                                   **Total organization: 8.4/20**

### *C. Vocabulary:*

## 1. Sophisticated range:

**a**. there is facility with words and idioms to : convey intended  information, attitudes, feelings, distinguish subtleties among ideas and intentions, convey shades and differences of meaning, express the logic of ideas.

                                           12.5

**b**. the arrangement and interrelationship of words sufficiently varied.

                                           1/2.5

                                            **Total :**    **2/5**

**2. Effective word/idiom choice and usage:**

**a**. in the context in which it is used, the choice of vocabulary is accurate, idiomatic, effective and concise.

0.2/0.6

**b**. strong active verbs and verbals are used where possible.          0.2/0.6

**c**. phrasal and prepositional idioms are correct. They convey the intended meaning.

0.2/0.6

**d**. word placement gives the intended message, emphasis.          0.3/0.6

**e**. there is an understanding of synonyms, antonyms and homonyms.

0.1/0.6

**f**. denotative and connotative meanings are distinguished.          0.1/0.6

**g**. there is effective repetition of key words and phrases.          0.1/0.6

**h**. transition elements mark shifts in thought, pace, emphasis and tone.

0.3/0.6

**Total:          1.5/5**

**3. Word form mastery:**

**a**. prefixes, suffixes, roots, and compounds used accurately and effectively.

0.5/2.5

**b**. words are correctly distinguished as to their function- (adjective, adverb, noun, verb).

1/2.5

**Total:          1.5/5**

**4. Appropriate register:**

**a**. the vocabulary is appropriate to the topic, to the audience, to the tone of the paper, to the methods of development.          1/1.6

**b**. the vocabulary is familiar to the audience.          0.8/1.6

**c**. the vocabulary makes the intended impression.          0.7/1.6

**Total:          2.5/5**

**Total vocabulary:          7.5/20**

*D. Language Use:*

**1. Effective complex constructions:**

**a**. sentences are well-formed and complete, with appropriate complements.

0.3/0.5

**b**. single-word modifiers are appropriate to function, properly formed, placed and sequenced.

0.2/0.5

**c**. phrases and clauses are appropriate to function, complete and properly placed.

0.2/0.5

**d**. introductory It and There are used correctly to begin sentences and clauses.

0.2/0.5

**e**. main and subordinate ideas are carefully distinguished.        0.1/0.5

**f**. coordinate and subordinate elements are linked to other elements with appropriate conjunctions, adverbials, relative pronouns, or punctuation.

0.2/0.5

**g**. sentence types and length varied.        0.2/0.5

**h**. elements are parallel.        0.1/0.5

**i**. techniques of substitute, repetition, and deletion are used effectively.

0.2/0.5

**Total:        1.7/5**

**2. Agreement:**

**a**. there is basic agreement between sentence elements: auxiliary-verb, subject-verb, pronoun-antecedent, adjective-noun, nouns-quantifiers.

2/5

**Total:        2/5**

**3. Tense:**

**a**. verb tenses are correct, properly sequenced.        1.2/2.5

**b**. modals convey intended meaning, time.        1.2/2.5

**Total:        2.4/5**

**4. Number:**

**a**. nouns, pronouns and verbs convey intended quantity.        2.5/5

**Total:        2.5/5**

**5. Word order/function:**

**a**. normal word order followed except for special emphasis.        1/2.5

**b**. each word, phrase, and clause is suited to its intended function.

1.5/2.5

**Total:        2.5/5**

**Total Language use        11.1/25**

_**E. Mechanics:**_

**1. Spelling:**

**a**. words are spelled correctly.        0.7/1

**Total:        0.7/1**

**2. Punctuation:**

**a**. periods, commas, semicolons, dashes, question marks are used correctly.

0.2/0.5

**b**. words are divided correctly at the end of the lines.                    00/0.5

**Total:**      **0.2/1**

**3. Capitalization:**

**a**. capital letters are used where necessary and appropriate.          0.75/1

**Total:**      **0.75/1**

**4. Paragraphing:**

**a**. paragraphs are intended to indicate when one sequence of though ends and another begins.

0.5/1

**Total:**      **0.5/1**

**5. Handwriting:**

**a**. handwriting is easy to read, without impeding communication.

0.95/1

**Total:**      **0.95/1**

**Total Mechanics:**      **3.1/5**

**Total Score:   38.4/100**

**Rater:      Seham Abdul Rahman**

**Comments**: This piece of writing is below standard in terms of content and structure, and it is difficult to follow what is written sometimes. There seemed to be lack of organisation, and the writer's language seemed not of great help for him/her to convey their meaning. The sentences and paragraphs were not properly connected, and there were several basic mistakes

# Appendix 17: Subjects' language proficiency level

## S1's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 63 | - | - | 63 |
| Grammar | 65 | 66 | 66 | 65.6 |
| Listening | 54 | - | - | 54 |
| Speaking | 60 | 63 | - | 61.5 |
| Reading | 73 | 70 | - | 71.5 |
| Writing | 75 | 77 | 50 | 67.3 |
| | | | Overall mean of scores | 382.9 |
| | | | Percentage | 63.8% |

\* Marks are out of 100

## S2's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 71** | - | - | 71 |
| Grammar | 53 | 62 | 50 | 55 |
| Listening | 61 | - | - | 61 |
| Speaking | 53 | 59 | - | 56 |
| Reading | 65 | 60 | - | 62.5 |
| Writing | 63 | 74 | 53 | 63.3 |
| **\* Marks are out of 100** | | | Overall mean of scores | 368.8 |
| **\*\* A re-sit exam score** | | | Percentage | 61.4% |

## S3's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 59 | - | - | 59 |
| Grammar | 50 | 55** | 75 | 60 |
| Listening | 75 | - | - | 75 |
| Speaking | 68 | 57 | - | 62.5 |
| Reading | 82 | 58 | - | 70 |
| Writing | 66 | 50** | 55 | 57 |
| | | | Overall mean of scores | 383.5 |
| | | | Percentage | 63.9% |

* Marks are out of 100

**\*\* A resit exam score**

## S4's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 93 | - | - | 93 |
| Grammar | 89 | 91 | 81 | 87 |
| Listening | 78 | - | - | 78 |
| Speaking | 82 | 94 | - | 88 |
| Reading | 87 | 82 | - | 84.5 |
| Writing | 74 | 85 | 91 | 83.3 |
| | | | Overall mean of scores | 513.8 |
| | | | Percentage | 85.63% |

* Marks are out of 100

## S5's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 84 | - | - | 84 |
| Grammar | 76 | 88 | 73 | 79 |
| Listening | 59 | - | - | 59 |
| Speaking | 66 | 84 | - | 75 |
| Reading | 79 | 81 | - | 80 |
| Writing | 86 | 83 | 81 | 83.33 |
| | | | **Overall mean of scores** | **460.33** |
| | | | **Percentage** | **76.7%** |

* Marks are out of 100

## S6's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 90 | - | - | 90 |
| Grammar | 94 | 91 | 79 | 88 |
| Listening | 84 | - | - | 84 |
| Speaking | 83 | 92 | - | 87.5 |
| Reading | 87 | 88 | - | 87.5 |
| Writing | 83 | 89 | 84 | 85.3 |
| | | | **Overall mean of scores** | **522.3** |
| | | | **Percentage** | **87.05%** |

* Marks are out of 100

## S7's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 81 | - | - | 81 |
| Grammar | 62 | 67 | 53 | 60.6 |
| Listening | 50 | - | - | 50 |
| Speaking | 61 | 66 | - | 63.5 |
| Reading | 68 | 63 | - | 65.5 |
| Writing | 56 | 66 | 52** | 58 |
| | | | **Overall mean of scores** | **378.6** |
| | | | **Percentage** | **63.1%** |

* Marks are out of 100

**\*\* A re-sit exam score**

## S8's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | - | - | - | - |
| Grammar | 50** | 57 | 50 | 52.3 |
| Listening | - | 79 | - | 79 |
| Speaking | 52 | 53 | 85 | 63.3 |
| Reading | 61 | 67 | - | 64 |
| Writing | 55 | 50 | 65 | 56.6 |
| | | | **Overall mean of scores** | **315.2** |
| | | | **Percentage** | **63.04%** |

* Marks are out of 100

## S9's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 88 | - | - | 88 |
| Grammar | 88 | 79 | 83 | 83.3 |
| Listening | 85 | - | - | 85 |
| Speaking | 90 | 94 | - | 92 |
| Reading | 89 | 88 | - | 88.5 |
| Writing | 84 | 86 | 84 | 84.6 |
| | | | **Overall mean of scores** | **521.4** |
| | | | **Percentage** | **86.9%** |

* Marks are out of 100

## S10's language proficiency level

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| Vocabulary | 71 | - | - | 71 |
| Grammar | 62 | 87 | 59 | 69.3 |
| Listening | 65 | - | - | 65 |
| Speaking | 75 | 84 | - | 79.5 |
| Reading | 77 | 74 | - | 75.5 |
| Writing | 82 | 79 | 69 | 76.6 |
| | | | **Overall mean of scores** | **436.9** |
| | | | **Percentage** | **72.8%** |

* Marks are out of 100

**S11's language proficiency level**

| module | Years of study | | | Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Marks* | | | |
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | |
| **Vocabulary** | 68 | - | - | 68 |
| **Grammar** | 72 | 73 | 63 | 69.3 |
| **Listening** | 69 | - | - | 69 |
| **Speaking** | 65 | 76 | - | 70.5 |
| **Reading** | 75 | 78 | - | 76.5 |
| **Writing** | 69 | 78 | 52 | 66.3 |
| | | | **Overall mean of scores** | **419.6** |
| | | | **Percentage** | **69.93%** |

\* Marks are out of 100

# Appendix 18: Excerpts from subjects' protocols

**18-A:**

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| **1**. <u>Success in education is influenced more by the students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme .</u> (reading the assigned topic)(SUBJECT STARTS BY RAEDING OUT THE ASSIGNED TOPIC)OK (commenting). First I need to decide what to write in the thesis statement (rehearsing to find a focus). So I'll choose to write about all the factors all together (global planning)- <u>student's home,the quality ofteaching, the student himself</u>(outlining and paraphrasing). I think I'll leave the thesis statement until the end of writing , because it's better, because I know what I've written so I can summarise it  in few words and have a good topic (PLANNING TOLEAVE THE THESIS STATEMENT TILL SHE FINISHED WRITING) (postponement)So first I'll start with the introduction talking about success in education in general, then try to mention my three points at the thesis statement (global planning) | 1. Can I write the title, the topic? (questioning)(THE SUBJECT STARTED BY ASKING THE RESEARCHER THIS QUESTION, THEN WHEN THE RESEARCHER CONFIRMED THAT SHE COULD DO WHATEVER SHE LIKED, SHE STARTED WRITING THE TITLE AND VERBALISING WHAT SHE WAS WRITING AT THE SAME TIME )<br><br><u>Success in education is influenced more by the student's home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching,</u><br><br>2. " ذان باي (شن معنىthan byهناي؟ أكثر من؟) " (*what does it mean 'than by' here? Does it mean 'more than'?*) (questioning),(THE SUBJECT ADDRESSES THIS QUESTION TO THE RESEARCHER)<br><br>"يعني زي السؤال هو العنوان؟"(*so the title here is like a question?*)(questioning)<br><br>3.<br><br>"اول حاجة نفكر فيها أصله مافيش سكسس(success) ، قصدي لما يكون فيه باكقراوند (background) كويس للطفل، انه هوا يكون ناجح اصلا ، حيساعدنه الكوالتي اوف تيتشينق اند ذي افيكت افيكتفنيس اوف دي اديوكيشنال بروقرام<br><br>(*the first thing I think about is that there is no success, I mean when there is a good background for the child; that is, when he is already successful; in this case the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme will help him*)(rehearsing)<br><br>نحن نتكلم عن التشايلد (the child) أكثر حاجة،منذ الطفولة نبدوا فيها بإعتبارها المرحلة ألاولى<br><br>(*we need to talk about 'the child' most, we need to start talking about the childhood, as it is the first stage*)(global planning) |

## 18-B:

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| **1**. So <u>Education is important for everyone</u> (SUBJECT STARTS WRITING AND VERBALISING WHAT SHE IS WRIITNG AT THE SAME TIME). <u>Education is important for everyone</u> (SUBJECT IS REPEATING LOUDLY WHAT SHE IS WRITING) (re-reading a large unit of discourse). <u>Education is important for everyone.</u> (SUBJECT REPEATED AGAIN WHAT SHE HAD WITTEN SO FAR, SO THAT IT HELPED HER BUILD UP AN IDEA TO CONTINUE) (re-reading a large unit of discourse). <u>We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching</u>… OK (commenting)... <u>and sometimes the student himself</u> ( SUBJECT KEPT VERBALISING WHAT'D BEEN WRITTEN THROUGHOUT). I think I have finished the introduction. I'll try to reread it again (PLANNING TO READ THE INTRODUCTION) <u>Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.</u>(re-reading a large unit of discourse) | **1**. <u>Success in education,</u>(SUBJECT STARTS WRITING AND VERBALISING WHAT SHE IS WRIITNG AT THE SAME TIME). <u>education</u> (repetition), <u>must be beginning from the home when the</u> when the(repetition) <u>child know that the education</u> the education (repetition) <u>is very important in his live.</u> Success in education must be beginning from the home when the child know that the education is very important in his live (reading larger unit of discourse), <u>and his parents</u> and his parents (repetition) <u>encourge him to be success</u> to be success (repetition) <u>in his study then the child</u> then the (repetition) <u>brought</u>brought up and have a concept in his mind. <br><br> "كم طول، يعني الكتابة؟ <br><br> (*how long the essay should be?*) (questioning) (HERE THE SUBJECT ASKS THE RESEARCHER, HOW LONG THE TASK SHOULD BE? IN OTHER WORDS, HOW MANY WORDS ARE REQUIRED?) <br><br> I don't like writing too much (commenting) <br><br> <u>Success in education must be beginning from the home when the child know that the education is very important in his live,and his parents encourge him to be success in his study. Then the child brought up and have a concept in his mind</u> (reading larger unit of discourse) <u>that success in education is a part of his, a part of his</u>(repetition) <u>life, and he trying to push him.self to do, to do</u> (repetition) <u>his best,</u> then <u>the role of teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme</u>(reading the assigned topic) (HERE THE SUBJECT READS ALOUD A PART OF THE TITLE), <br><br> تميت المرحلة الأولى <br><br> و بعدين بنبدي في دور التعليم او المدرسة <br><br> (I *have finished the first stage, and after this I'll start with the role of education and school*)(local planning) |

## 18-C:

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| 1. So now I am going to move on to the body (local planning)(PLANNING TO START WRITING THE FIRST PARAGRAPH IN THE BODY) and start writing about the student's home. I'll start with a topic sentence about student's home (local planning) (BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE), (STUDENT PAUSES FOR A COUPLE OF MINUTES BEFORE STARTING THE NEW PARAGRAPH). Student's home (rehearsing). ~~Although the~~ (revision for deletion) I think I need to change the beginning (local planning) (***planning to revise for substitution***) Mmmm, Education, (revision for | { There was no verbalisation of planning for revision} |

| |
|---|

substitution) Mmmm, <u>the educational</u> (revision for addition) <u>process takes only</u>, hhhhh (SIGHING) <u>takes only</u>(repetition)~~about~~(editing for deletion) Mmmm, so <u>only</u>(repetition<u>) few hours inside the school, then the students have to go back home again.</u>/#4/ <u>So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure.</u>

2. <u>educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard unlike uneducated parents</u>/#7/(reading larger unit of discourse)(STUDENT STARTED USING THE ERASER TO OMIT THE PHRASE "SOME PARENTS")(revision for deletion) It's not clear (commenting), *I'll try to find more simple sentence than this to express my view* (**planning to revise a sentence**) <u>unlike</u> (repetition) <u>because</u>(repetition) (pause) <u>uneducated parents because</u> (repetition) <u>they will be unable to help their kids</u>

3. <u>And learning process will be more interesting which will</u>, <u>which will</u>(repetition), <u>which</u>(repetition), <u>And learning process will be more interesting which will</u>(repetition),<u>which will</u>,(repetition)<u>which will</u>(repetition) <u>have, And learning process will be more interesting which will have</u>(repetition) <u>good</u> /#13/, I will use a synonym or other word rather than "effect" because I've used it so much- effect, I think "impact" (**planning to revise for substitution**)

## 18-D:

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| 1. So<u>, education is important for everyone. Education is important for everyone</u> (reading a large unit of discourse). <u>Education is important for everyone</u> (reading a large unit of discourse). <u>We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching</u>…OK (commenting)…<u>and sometimes the student himself</u>. *I think I've finished the introduction, I try to reread it again* (local planning)<u>Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.</u> (reading larger units of discourse)<br><br>2. *I am trying to pick-up some words, so I'll start repeating sentences* (local planning), <u>educational process takes only few hours inside the school, then the students have to go back home again. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure. Of course all parents want their children to be successful, but the parents background may effect on,</u>(reading larger units of discourse), OK (commenting) <u>.may effect on their children's level,</u>(repetition) <u>may effect ~~on~~ their children's level</u>(repetition) (OMITTING "ON")(editing for deletion)<u>. For example, educated parents may help ~~their~~</u>(repetition) (CROSSING OUT THE WORD "THEIR" (editing for deletion) AND SHIFTED IT AFTER THE PHRASE "AND MOTIVATE" THAT SHE PRODUCED) <u>and motivate their kids, educated parents may help and motivate their kids</u> (repetition) <u>to work hard</u>… | 1.<u>Success in education</u>, <u>education</u> (repetition), <u>must be beginning from the home when the when the</u>(repetition<u>) child know that the education the education</u> (repetition<u>) is very important in his live. Success in education must be beginning from the home when the child know that the education is very important in his live</u> (reading larger unit of discourse), <u>and his parents and his parents</u> (repetition) <u>encourge him to be success to be success</u> (repetition) <u>in his study then the child then the</u> (repetition) *brought*, <u>brought up and have a concept in his mind.</u><br><br>2. <u>Success in education must be beginning from the home when the child know that the education is very important in his live, and his parents encourge him to be success in his study. Then the child brought up and have a concept in his mind</u>(reading larger unit of discourse)<u>that success in education is a part of his, a part of his</u>(repetition<u>) life, and he trying to push him.self to do, to do</u> (repetition) <u>his best</u>, then <u>the role of teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme</u>(reading the assigned topic) (HERE THE SUBJECT READS ALOUD A PART OF THE TITLE)<br><br>3. <u>then the role of the teachers, teachers</u> (repetition), <u>the role of the teachers</u> (repetition) <u>will be appear in his life</u>, *the children will be influenced by the teacher and the way he is teaching them* (rehearsing), <u>the child will influenced by his teacher in the school and the way they are teach.</u> |

3. For example educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard unlike uneducated parents because they will be unable to ~~help their kids~~(reading larger units of discourse) or (STUDENT CROSSED OUT THE PHRASE "HELP THEIR KIDS")(revision for deletion) to take part  to take part(repetition)  in because they will be unable to take part in  (repetition)the learning process.  Students' home (reading part or whole of the outline) (STUDENT REMINDED HERSELF OF THE MAIN THEME OF THE PARAGRAPH "STUDENTS' HOME"), unlike uneducated parents because they will be unable to take part in the learning process(repetition). *So I have to write something to end up my paragraph* (local planning). Home  ,home (repetition)  atmosphere plays an important role in (STUDENT WENT BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF THE SENTENCE AND ADDED THE WORD "SO") So So (editing for addition)home atmosphere plays an important role in (repetition) the success in education.

4. *Now I think I've finished the three paragraphs, within my first draft, so now I'll check my mistakes*(local planning). *Ahhh, usually in the conclusion I try to write what I've written in the introduction but using other words*(prior knowledge) (rehearsing).  Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.(reading larger unit of discourse), (STUDENT HERE TRIED TO MAKE A START IN HOW TO WRITE HER CONCLUSION. SHE WENT BACK AGAIN AND READ THE INTRODUCTION ONCE MORE). We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be effected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.(reading larger unit of discourse) Mmmm, education(repetition).  Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons.(reading larger unit of discourse)(STUDENT NOW STARTED WRITING HER CONCLUSION) Everyone has an aim in life……

5. *Now I shall move to the second paragraph in the body, the quality of teaching* (global planning) (STUDENT PLANNED TO MOVE TO THE NEXT PARAGRAPH IN HER ESSAY). Mmmm, The biggest part of  , the biggest part(repetition) *on the educational programme* (rehearsing to elaborate). *We can say* (rehearsing)the biggest part of (repetition) the…  the effectiveness of the educational programme (reading the assigned topic) ( STUDENT REFERED BACK TO THE TOPIC AND STARTED READING THE LAST SECTION IN IT) Success in education is influenced more by the students' home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme (reading the assigned topic) (STUDENT READ THE TITLE AS A WHOLE), Mmmm, the biggest part of (repetition) (pause) let's say(local planning) the learning operation, *so I can avoid repeating the same words - process, learning process* the biggest part of  learning operation(repetition) takes place inside the school . So whatever  the teachers use, the biggest part of  learning operation takes place inside the school (repetition). So whatever  the teachers use,(repetition) so whatever the teachers use(repetition) to, so whatever the

while that he will, he will (repetition),  he will(repetition)he  will  (repetition)improve    , himself,  improve(repetition)  his,  his(repetition) prsonlty PRSONLTY  (repetition)and think of his future alot, he will try to be success like his teacher, teacher (repetition), Mmmm, *the child will, will influenced by his teachers, and the way that the teacher, the way that the teacher is teaching the students, ahhh, it make , ahhh, effect,*(rehearsing) teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme (reading the assigned topic)(HERE THE SUBJECT RESORTS TO THE TOPIC AND READS PART OF IT)

| | |
|---|---|
| teachers  use(repetition) have (STUDENT CROSSES THE WORD "to")(editing for deletion) , so whatever the teachers use(repetition)has(STUDENT CROSSES THE WORD "have")(edition for form or tense verb) has(repetition) a direct influence on the students' | |

## 18-E:

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| 1. Whereas teachers who use always the same techniques, whereas teachers who use always the same techniques, whereas teachers , who use,(repetition) *who use, or who's using?* (rehearsing and questioning)*I think who always use the same technique, who use, who using, I think using is better*(rehearsing), OK (commenting), teachers (repetition) using always the same techniques(repetition), would have negative (pause)negative (repetition)effect on their students<br><br>2. I'll try to compare between the two sentences and choose the best one (local planning). *So, so is it better to say* unlike uneducated parents because they will not be able to take part in the learning process, or whereas uneducated parents*are not able* (rehearsing and questioning), I think this is better (commenting)(revision for substitution), whereas uneducated parents are unable to take part in the learning process. So home atmosphere plays an important role in the success in education<br><br>3. Now I think I've finished the three paragraphs, within my first draft, so now I'll check my mistakes(local planning). Ahhh, usually in the conclusion I try to write what I've written in the introduction but using other words( prior knowledge)(rehearsing). Education is important for everyone. We can consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be affected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself.(reading larger unit of discourse) | 1.<br><br>"اول حاجة نفكر فيها أصله مافيش سكسس (*success*) ، قصدي لما يكون فيه  باكقراوند (*background*) كويس للطفل، انه هوا يكون ناجح اصلا ، حيساعدنه الكوالتي اوف تيتشينق اند افيكتفنيس اوف دي ادبوكيشنال بروقرام<br><br>(*the first thing I think about is that there is no success, I mean when there is a good background for the child; that is, when he is already successful; in this case the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the educational programme will help him*) (rehearsing)<br><br>2.<br><br>معناها توا نحكي نتكلم عنأديوكيشنال بروقرام،نحس في روحي كتبت عليهم كلهم، من الاول كنت متوقعة بنكتب على حاجتين والفكرة الثالثة مش حتساعد، لكن هنا كلهن بيساعدن لان كلهن بيدورن في نفس الحلقة، زمان لماكنت صغيرة  كنت نبي نخش أدبي وبعدين نبي نخش قانون ولما قريت توسعت نظرتي للقرايا وشفت حاجة إسماها إنجليزي ماكناش نعرفه في البداية<br><br>(*Now this means I should talk about 'educational programme'. I feel that I have written about them all. At the beginning I expected to write about two things, and the third idea won't help, but here all of them help because all of the ideas are talking about the same point. In the past when I was young I wished to study literary at the secondary school so that I could study Law, but as I carried on studying my views on education became even clearer and I discovered that there was something called English which we did not know about at the beginning*)(rehearsing). |

## 18-F:

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| 1. Although the (revision for deletion)  I think I need to change the beginning (local planning) (planning to revise for substitution) Mmmm, Education, (revision for substitution) Mmmm, the educational (revision for addition) process takes only, hhhhh (SIGHING) takes only(repetition) about(editing for deletion) Mmmm, so only(repetition) few hours inside the school, then the students have to go back home again. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure. So home would be considered as part of the educational procedure(reading a large unit of discourse), | [ there was no sign of revising or editing strategies in the first draft] |

| | |
|---|---|
| 2. apart from(repetition) the, apart from the(repetition) consequences of, apart from the consequences(repetition), ~~of~~ (HERE THE STUDENT CROSSES OUT THE PREPOSITION "OF") (editing for deletion) let's forget that, apart form the consequences, (repetition)or, apart from the consequences (repetition)that , apart from,(repetition) apart from the consequences that(repetition)result from, apart from the consequences that result from,(repetition) we can go back to points(local planning), the students' home, the quality of teaching (reading part or whole of outlines) (STUDENT RESORTS TO THE POINTS SHE HAD PUT AS A GUIDE FOR HER WRITING- OUTLINES)(reading the outline), so apart from the consequences that result from (repetition)the influence of the students' home and the quality… <br><br> 3. he will not success even if he has(repetition) big encourage, if he has big encouraging (repetition)(SHE ADDS "ING" TO ENCOURAGE) (edition for word form) and support from his family. | |

## 18-G:

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| 1.Education is important for everyone. Most of us (revision for substitution) (SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED THE PHRASE "WE CAN" FOR "MOST OF US") I think it's more convenient (commenting) consider education as one's light in life. And the success in getting the proper education can be effected by many reasons including the students' home, the quality of teaching and sometimes the student himself. <br><br> 2.For example, educated parents may help and motivate their kids to work hard ~~unlike~~ whereas(revision for substitution) whereas(repetition),uneducated parents. I may change this sentence, I'll try another sentence(local planning) , whereas uneducated parents (repetition) whereas uneducated parents may be(repetition), whereas uneducated parents may be unable to(repetition), uneducated parents may be un(repetition), whereas uneducated parents, (repetition)whereas(repetition) I think it's confusing (commenting), I'll try to compare between the two sentences and choose the best one (local planning). So, so is it better to say unlike uneducated parents because they will not be able to take part in the learning process, or whereas uneducated parents are not able (rehearsing and questioning), I think this is better (commenting), whereas uneducated parents are unable to take part in the learning process (revision for substitution) <br><br> 3.Apart from the consequence of home and school on learning, the student can be a crucial part that has a great effect on success. If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not succeed even if he has big encourge and support from his family. In the other side, if the student is motivated, he will be successful even if the learning atmosphere is not encouraging. <br><br> 4.Everyone has an aim in life, and usually this aim is related to success in a way or another. So the starting point to that goal is usually, is usually(repetition) education. Successful education can be influenced by | 1. Success in education, education(repetition) must be beginning from the home, when the child know that the education is very important in his live, education is very important in his live(repetition), and his, Ahhh, important in his live,(repetition)by(revision for addition), by(repetition), important in his live(repetition), by(repetition)background (revision for addition), background(repetition) that he get from his parents, sisters and brothers that he find in his enviroments (revision for addition). all these will(revision for substitution) (THE SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED 'AND HIS PARENTS' FOR 'ALL THESE WILL') …. Then the child brought up and he(revision for addition)~~have~~ had(editing for form or tense verb) a concept and ideas (revision for addition) in his mind, that the(editing for addition) success in education is a part of his personlity (revision for substitution) (SUBJECT USED THE WORD '*PERSONLITY*' INSTEAD OF '*LIFE*') , a part of his personlity(repetition), and he trying to push him.self to do his best to get a high education, EDDUUCCCATIONNN(repetition), as his family(revision for addition), as his family(repetition). <br><br> 2. Then the role of (editing for addition)the teacher will be appears (editing for addition) in her, will be appears in(repetition) his life, the role of the teacher(repetition), the role of the teacher, will be appears in his life(repetition)when the child go to the schoole (revision for addition) he (editing for grammar) (THE SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED 'THE CHILD' FOR 'HE') will influenced by his success(revision for addition) teacher and he will try to be in the same situation .if he like, like(repetition) the way of the teacher. is teaching(revision for substitution), the way of the teacher is teaching(repetition) the course or the lesson (rehearsing) the course or the lessons (revision for addition). هذا دور المدرس,(*this is the role of the teacher*)(use of L1) (rehearsing) while that he will improve his knowledge about the study the |

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| | |
|---|---|
| many factors such as the place where you live, the teachers ,~~and~~ Ahhh, I may change this, as well as your desire(editing for word form) (THE SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED THE WORD 'AND' FOR 'AS WELL AS'). | study(repetition) and (revision for addition)his, and his(repetition) personltiy what he want to be in study(revision for addition).and think about(editing for grammar) (HERE THE SUBJECT MADE EDITING FOR GRAMMAR BY REPLACING THE PREPOSITION 'OF' BY 'ABOUT') his future a lot. he will try he will try(repetition)to be success, to be success(repetition), to be success (repetition)like his teacher. and here the role of teacher as a guide for the student to learn them and improve their personlities to be success in the field they want(revision for addition).

3. ~~Then~~(editing for deletion) When the child get (editing for word form) more awarness(THE SUBJECT WROTE THE WORD 'AWARENESS' CORRECTLY IN THE FIRST DRAFT; HOWEVER, IT HAS A SPELLING MISTAKE IN THIS FINAL DRAFT) he will follow himself instruction(revision for substitution) (SUBJECT SUBSTITUTED 'HIS DESIRE' FOR 'HIMSELF INSTRUCTION'), and try to select what he want from the study and(revision for addition) the educational programme and help him self to be success, while there are a lot of spacailization in front of him, he will try to select the best for himself. In my point of view(revision for addition) all these reasons are necessary and (revision for addition) ~~very~~(editing for deletion) important to get a(editing for addition)success in education. I finish |

## 18-H:

| S6 | S3 |
|---|---|
| 1. Whereas teachers who use always the same techniques, whereas teachers who use always the same techniques, whereas teachers , who use,(repetition) who use, or who's using? (questioning)I think who always use the same technique, who use, who using, I think using is better(rehearsing), OK (commenting), teachers (repetition) using always the same techniques(repetition), would have ~~negative~~negative (repetition)effect on their students

2. If the student does not have the desire to learn, he will not success(reading larger unit of discourse) even ~~if~~(HERE THE STUDENT CROSSES OUT "IF"), though, it's better (commenting), even though (revision for substitution)(repetition) he has, even (repetition)(HERE AGAIN SHE CROSSES OUT "THOUGH")(revision for deletion) ~~if~~he has(repetition), "نزبطها كيف هنايا"( *how can I join it here?*),(use of L1 in a question mode) (HERE SHE USED ARABIC FOR THE FIRST TIME), he will not success even if he has(repetition) big encourage, if he has big encouraging (repetition)(SHE ADDS "ING" TO ENCOURAGE) (edition for word form) | 1. Can I write the title, the topic? (questioning)(THE SUBJECT STARTED BY ASKING THE RESEARCHER THIS QUESTION, THEN WHEN THE RESEARCHER CONFIRMED THAT SHE COULD DO WHATEVER SHE LIKED, SHE STARTED WRITING THE TITLE AND VERBALISING WHAT SHE WAS WRITING AT THE SAME TIME )

Success in education is influenced more by the student's home life and training as a child than by the quality of the teaching.

2. " ذان باي (شن معنىthan byهناي؟ أكثر من؟) " (*what does it mean 'than by' here? Does it mean 'more than'?*) (questioning),(THE SUBJECT ADDRESSES THIS QUESTION TO THE RESEARCHER)

3."يعني زي السؤال هو العنوان؟" (*so the assigned topic here is like a question?*)(questioning)

4.''كم طول، يعني الكتابة؟ (*how long is the essay? I mean the length of writing?*) (questioning) (HERE THE SUBJECT ASKED THE RESEARCHER, HOW LONG THE TASK SHOULD BE? IN OTHER WORDS, HOW MANY WORDS WERE REQUIRED?)

5. اني بنتكلم توا حاليا مع نفسي و انت بتسمعني؟ أو ماكأنه فيه حد؟

(*Shall I verbalise my thoughts now as if I'm talking to myself and you are listening to me? Or is it as if there is no one around?*)(questioning)(THE SUBJECT HERE IS |

| | ASKING THE RESEARCHER ABOUT THINKING ALOUD. SHE SEEMS NOT QUITE COMFORTABLE WRITING AND VERBALISING AT THE SAME TIME) |
| --- | --- |
| | 6في حاجة ثالثة امبكري، هم اثنين البيت والمدرس، شنو الثالثة؟ |
| | (*There was a third issue earlier? They were two, the home and the teacher, what was the third one?*)(rehearsing and questioning) (THE SUBJECT HERE IS ASKING ABOUT THE TOPIC AS AN ATTEMPT TO REPHRASE IT SO THAT SHE CAN UNDERSTAND IT BETTER) |

# Appendix 19:List of instructions for the independent rater

1. Please make sure that you understand each writing strategy and its definition before you start coding.

2. Protocols typed with double underlined words means that they were being written down as they were verbalised. Single underlined words indicating written text being read by the students, whether they are the assigned topic, key words or phrase in the topic, directions, or previously written text, for example the title, part of the essay, or the whole essay. The underlined and italicised are the subjects' think-aloud voicing. The non-underlined, but italicised are the subject's silently written text. The quoted and italicised texts are the subjects' verbal responses to the interview questions. The italicised and parenthesised words are used for translations of L1 speech, while the words which are written in capital letters, and parenthesised, represent the researcher's remarks on the student's writing. Finally, the dotted lines represent redrafting of a text while producing the final draft.

3. Read the protocol of each sentence/phrase and then please decide whether a certain segment of the protocol is a strategy or not.

4. Write the strategies you identify in the right hand column and underline the segment(s) of the protocol which identifies the strategy you have indicated. If you cannot identify the strategy for a particular word, phrase or sentence or have any doubts, write a question mark or just leave it blank.

5. Make sure that each strategy you identify fits the definition given in our list of the writing strategies. If, however, you identify a new strategy not included in our list, write the strategy name and underline it.

6. If any protocol is not very clear, please contact me.

7. Please take your time and kindly double-check your coding.