

**T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**WRITTEN END COMMENTS: TEACHERS' PRACTICES AND
STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS**

DOCTORATE'S THESIS

Diran Roussyala Golfiden CHEDID

**Department of English Language and Literature
English Language and Literature Program**

FEBRUARY, 2024

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(Y1614.620005)**

**Department of English Language and Literature
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Thesis Advisor: Prof. Dr. Türkay BULUT

FEBRUARY, 2024

ONAY FORMU

DECLARATION

I hereby declare with the respect that the study “Written End Comments: Teachers’ Practices and Students’ Expectations”, which I submitted as a Doctorate thesis, is written without any assistance in violation of scientific ethics and traditions in all the processes from the project phase to the conclusion of the thesis and that the works I have benefited are from those shown in the References. (14/02/2024)

Diran Roussayla Golfiden CHEDID

FOREWORD

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Türkay Bulut for her patience, understanding, encouragement, comments, suggestions and criticisms that have been invaluable to me. Thank you for your guidance, wisdom, and commitment to fostering my intellectual growth. I also want to thank the TİK jury members Prof. Dr. BirsenTütüniş and Asst. Prof. Hülya Yumru that played a significant role in the research which was marked by their generosity of sharing their expertise, resources, and encouragement. Their contributions have enriched this work in ways that words cannot fully capture.

This thesis is dedicated to all those who have been a part of my journey, directly or indirectly, specifically to my spouse Baker for his patience, understanding, and encouragement during the late nights, the moments of frustration, and the celebrations of small victories.

Special thanks to my friend Mireille for her unwavering support, laughter, and camaraderie. Your friendship has been a vital source of joy and resilience throughout this academic journey.

My gratitude also extends to my mother for her support and encouragement. Thank you, Aiten, for being my source of inspiration, my confidante, and my biggest cheerleader. This achievement is as much yours as it is mine. Your sacrifices and the belief you instilled in me form the very foundation of this achievement.

In the midst of academic endeavors and scholarly pursuits, you, my baby Kenan entered my life as a beacon of pure joy and boundless love. As you grow, may these pages serve as a testament to the importance of dreams, hard work, and the endless possibilities that await you. This dedication is a small expression of the profound impact you've had on my life and the motivation you provide for creating a better future.

Lastly, to my loyal companion "Frutty", thank you for being a source of inspiration, a calming presence during stressful times, and a reminder that life's most

precious moments often come in the form of a gentle purr. Your furry presence and boundless affection have been a constant source of comfort. This thesis is dedicated to you, my faithful pet, for the countless moments of joy, laughter, and unconditional love you've shared. R.I.P.

February, 2024

Diran Roussayla Golfiden CHEDID

WRITTEN END COMMENTS: TEACHERS' PRACTICES AND STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS

ABSTRACT

Assessing writing is a very delicate task for teachers. Written feedback does not consist in providing students with written codes within the essay and in the margins and giving him/ her a mark. Students often do not understand these symbols unless they are analyzed and identified by the teacher. Moreover, it is observed that they do not know how to correct the underlined mistakes or the ones in circles. In order to assess students' writings, many teachers resort to providing students with written comments at the end of their essays so that they can validate and clarify the in-text correction. Effective commenting allows students to know more about their strengths (praising the good points in the essay) and weaknesses (criticizing the negative points in the essay) and provides them with practical suggestions for future improvement. Some teachers do not provide their students with written comments for many reasons: either because of time constrains or because of the number of students and the copies that must be corrected. They also think that students do not read these comments and focus only on the mark. Others are aware of the importance of end comments for improving students' writing performance. This research attempts to investigate the way teachers comment on their students' writings. Following Fiona Hyland's and Ken Hyland's model (2001) of analyzing teachers' comments. 50 essays that contain end comments will be examined to have an idea about the way teachers give comments. In order to have a deep insight in this teachers' way of commenting, a questionnaire will be distributed to the 50 students. Furthermore, teachers will have a questionnaire so that we can get an idea about the students' and teachers' attitudes and preferences towards commenting on writings.

Keywords: Written Feedback, Assessment in Writing, Formative Assessment, Types of Feedback, Writing Skills, Effective Feedback.

YAZILI GERİ BİLDİRİM YORUMLAR: ÖĞRETMEN UYGULAMALARI VE ÖĞRENCİ BEKLENTİLERİ

ÖZET

Yazıyı değerlendirmek öğretmenler için çok hassas bir iştir. Yazılı dönüt sadece öğrencilere kompozisyon içinde ve kenar boşluklarında yazılı kodlar vermekten ve ona bir not vermekten ibaret değildir. Öğrenciler genellikle öğretmen tarafından analiz edilip tanımlanmadıkça bu sembolleri anlamazlar. Ayrıca, öğrenciler altı çizili ya da daire içindeki yanlışları nasıl düzelteceklerini bilmedikleri gözlemlenmiştir. Öğrencilerin yazılarını değerlendirmek için birçok öğretmen, kompozisyon içi düzeltmeyi doğrulayabilmeleri ve netleştirebilmeleri için metinlerin sonunda öğrencilere yazılı yorumlar sağlamaya başvurur. Etkili yorumlama, öğrencilerin güçlü yönleri (kompozisyondaki iyi noktaları övme) ve zayıf yönleri (kompozisyondaki zayıf noktaları eleştirme) hakkında daha fazla bilgi edinmelerini sağlar ve onlara gelecekteki iyileştirmeler için pratik öneriler sunar. Bazı öğretmenler, ya zaman kısıtlaması ya da öğrenci ve değerlendirilmesi gereken kompozisyonlar sayısının fazla olması gibi nedenlerden dolayı öğrencilerine yazılı yorumlar sağlamaz. Ayrıca öğrencilerin bu yorumları okumadığını ve sadece nota odaklandıklarını düşünmektedirler. Bazı öğretmenler ise öğrencilerin yazma performansını geliştirmek için yorumların son derece önemli olduğunu farkındadır. Bu araştırmanın amacı, öğretmenlerin öğrencilerinin yazılarına ilişkin yorumlarını incelemektir. Fiona Hyland ve Ken Hyland'ın (2001) öğretmenlerin yorumlarını analiz etme modelini takiben, öğretmenlerin yaptığı yorumlarını karşılaştırmak için son yorumları içeren 50 kompozisyon incelenecektir. Bu öğretmenlerin yorum yapma şeklini derinlemesine incelemek için öğretmenin 50 öğrencisine bir anket dağıtılmıştır. Ayrıca, 50 öğrenci bir anketi cevaplayacak ve her öğretmen de bir anket cevaplayarak, öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin yazılar hakkında yorum yapmaya yönelik tutum ve tercihlerinin öğrenilmesi için bir görüşmeye katılacaklar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yazılı Geri Bildirim, Yazılı Deęerlendirme, biçimlendirici deęerlendirme, Geri Bildirim Türleri, Yazma Becerileri, Süreç Yaklaşımı.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	iii
ABSTRACT	v
ÖZET	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
I. INTRODUCTION	1
A. Background of the Study.....	1
B. The Purpose of the Study	3
C. The Research Questions.....	3
D. The Research Objectives.....	4
E. The Structure of the Study	4
II. LITERATURE REVIEW	5
A. Introduction.....	5
B. Teaching Writing	5
1. Concept of Writing.....	5
2. The Importance of Writing.....	6
3. Writing Vs. Speaking.....	8
4. Teacher’s Role in Writing.....	9
5. Criteria of a Good Writing.....	10
6. Stages in Writing (pre, during, revision and editing).....	11
C. Teacher’s Feedback to Writing	13
1. Role of Feedback in Classroom	13
2. Teacher’s written feedback	14
3. Role of teacher in written feedback	14
4. Strategies of Written Feedback	15
5. Evaluation of Feedback.....	16
6. Types of Teacher Feedback	17
7. Positive vs. Negative Feedback.....	21

8.	Margin Comments vs. End Comments	22
9.	Students' Negative Attitude Towards their Teachers' End Comment	22
D.	Process Approach	23
E.	Challenges to Written Comments	24
F.	Critical Views Towards Written Comments	25
III.	METHODOLOGY	27
A.	Introduction	27
1.	Corpus of the Study	27
2.	Participants	27
3.	Profile of the Participants	28
4.	Reasons Behind the Selection of the 7 th grade Population	28
B.	Methodology	29
1.	Type of the study	29
2.	Procedures	29
C.	Summary	30
IV.	FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	33
A.	Introduction	33
B.	Findings	33
1.	Findings of Teachers' Samples	33
a.	Findings of TA's samples of end comments	33
b.	Findings of TB's samples of end comments	38
2.	Findings of Students' Questionnaire	44
a.	Findings of TA's students' questionnaire	45
b.	Findings of TB's students' questionnaire	62
3.	Findings of Teachers' Questionnaire	78
C.	Discussion	84
1.	Discussion of the Samples	84
D.	The overlap between categories	84
E.	Teachers' focus in their end comments	85
F.	Mitigation in end comments	85
1.	Discussion of TA's Students' Questionnaire	86
2.	Discussion of TB's Students' Questionnaire	88
3.	Discussion of TA's and TB's Questionnaires	92
G.	Summary	94

V. CONCLUSION.....	97
A. The Main Findings	97
B. Research Limitations.....	99
C. Recommendations for Future Research	99
D. Implications for Teaching	100
E. Conclusion	100
VI. REFERENCES.....	103
APPENDIX.....	109
RESUME.....	121

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Classification of the research participants	28
Table 2 Profile of the participants.....	28
Table 3 Teacher A’s Feedback Functions.....	33
Table 4 Teacher A’s Types of Feedback.....	33
Table 5 The focus of TA’s end comments	36
Table 6 Acts Mitigated by Different Strategies	38
Table 7 Teacher B’s Feedback Functions	38
Table 8 Teacher B’s Types of Feedback.....	38
Table 9 Focus of TB’s End Comments	41
Table 10 Acts Mitigated by Different Strategies	43
Table 11 The Imprecise Quantifiers Used by Teacher B.....	44
Table 12 Question 1: How do you judge your teacher’s written feedback comments at the end of your essays?	46
Table 13 Question 2: How often do you read your teacher’s end feedback comments?	47
Table 14 Question 3: Do you focus more on teacher’s comments or just you skip to the correction of the mistakes?	48
Table 15 Question 4: Are your teacher’s end comments helpful for understanding your mistakes?	49
Table 16 Question 5: Do you ask for clarification from your teacher on his/her writing feedback comments?	50
Table 17 Question 6: How often do you think you apply your teacher’s feedback comments to your next writing?	51
Table 18 Question 7: Do you notice any improvement in your next essays/writing tasks?.....	52
Table 19 Question 8: Do you make the same errors in your next essay/writing tasks?	53
Table 20 Question 9: How can you describe your teacher’s end comments?.....	54
Table 21 Question 10: How do you prefer it?.....	55

Table 22 Question 11: Do you think that your teacher’s comments deal with the essay’s mistakes	56
Table 23 Question 12: What do you prefer?	57
Table 24 Question 13: In your opinion, your teacher’s end comments focus on.....	58
Table 25 Question 14: Do you want your teacher to focus more on.....	59
Table 26 Question 15: In his/her end comment, does your teacher use.....	60
Table 27 Question 16: Do you prefer the use of	61
Table 29 Question 1: How do you judge your teacher’s written feedback comments at the end of your essays?	63
Table 30 Question 2: How often do you read your teacher’s end feedback comments?	64
Table 31 Question 3: Do you focus more on teacher’s comments or just you skip to the correction of the mistakes?.....	65
Table 32 Question 4: Are your teacher’s end comments helpful for understanding your mistakes?.....	66
Table 33 Question 5: Do you ask for clarification from your teacher on his/her writing feedback comments?	67
Table 34 Question 6: How often do you think you apply your teacher’s feedback comments to your next writing?.....	68
Table 35 Question 7: Do you notice any improvement in your next essays/writing tasks?.....	69
Table 36 Question 8: Do you make the same errors in your next essay/writing tasks?	70
Table 37 Question 9: How can you describe your teacher’s end comments?.....	71
Table 38 Question 10: How do you prefer it?	72
Table 39 Question 11: Do you think that your teacher’s comments deal with the essay’s mistakes	73
Table 40 Question 12: What do you prefer?	74
Table 41 Question 13: In your opinion, your teacher’s end comments focus on.....	74
Table 42 Question 14: Do you want your teacher to focus more on.....	75
Table 43 Question 15: In his/her end comment, does your teacher use.....	76
Table 44 Question 16: Do you prefer the use of	77
Table 45 Question 17: How useful to your learning do you find reading through teacher comments helpful for future essays?	78

Table 46 Mean (Standard Deviation) for both groups (Group 1= TA's students, and
Group 2= TB's students) per question..... 92

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Comparison between Speech and Writing.....	9
Figure 2 The Writing Stages (Brian, 2011).....	12
Figure 3 Frequencies of The First Question of TA's Students	46
Figure 5 Frequencies of the third question of TA's Students	48
Figure 6 Frequencies of the fourth question of TA's Students	49
Figure 7 Frequencies of the fifth question for TA's Students.....	50
Figure 8 Frequencies of the sixth question for TA's Students.....	51
Figure 9 Frequencies of the seventh question Group 1	52
Figure 10 Frequencies of the eighth question for TA's Students.....	53
Figure 11 Frequencies of the ninth question for TA's Students	54
Figure 12 Frequencies of the tenth question for TA's Students.....	55
Figure 13 Frequencies of the eleventh question for TA's Students	56
Figure 14 Frequencies of the twelfth question for TA's Students	57
Figure 15 Frequencies of the thirteenth question for TA's Students	58
Figure 16 Frequencies of the fourteenth question for TA's Students	59
Figure 18 Frequencies of the sixteenth question for TA's Students	61
Figure 19 Frequencies of the seventeenth question for TA's Students.....	62
Figure 20 Frequencies of the first question for TB's Students	63
Figure 21 Frequencies of the second question for TB's Students.....	64
Figure 22 Frequencies of the third question for TB's Students	65
Figure 23 Frequencies of the fourth question for TB's Students	66
Figure 24 Frequencies of the fifth question Group 2	67
Figure 25 Frequencies of the sixth question for TB's Students	68
Figure 26 Frequencies of the seventh question of TB's Students.....	69
Figure 27 Frequencies of the eighth question for TB's Students.....	70
Figure 28 Frequencies of the ninth question for TB's Students.....	71
Figure 29 Frequencies of the tenth question for TB's Students.....	72
Figure 30 Frequencies of the eleventh question for TB's Students	73

Figure 31 Frequencies of the twelfth question for TB's Students.....	73
Figure 32 Frequencies of the thirteenth question for TB's Students.....	74
Figure 33 Frequencies of the fourteenth question for TB's Students	75
Figure 34 Frequencies of the fifteenth question for TB's Students	76
Figure 35 Frequencies of the sixteenth question for TB's Students	77
Figure 36 Frequencies of the seventeenth question for TB's Students	78
Figure 37 Question 1: How often do you provide real time written feedback to all students' written work?.....	79
Figure 38 Question 2: Is it important to give students written comments after correcting the mistakes on the margin of the paper?	79
Figure 39 Question 3: How do you write your comments?	79
Figure 40 Question 4: What do your students prefer in your opinion?.....	80
Figure 41 Question 5: Do you respond to students' writings globally or deal with discrete points?	80
Figure 42 Question 6: Do you focus on the form or the content of writing?.....	80
Figure 43 Question 7: What do the students prefer in your opinion, the form or the content?.....	81
Figure 44 Question 8: Do you often use praise, critique or suggestions when providing written comments?	81
Figure 45 Question 9: Do you think that students prefer praise only?.....	81
Figure 46 Question 10: Do you think that students read your comments carefully and they try to apply them in their next writing?	82
Figure 47 Question 11: Is there an improvement in the next writing in general?.....	82
Figure 48 Question 12: Is time and number of students affect your giving feedback?	82
Figure 49 Question 13: In your opinion, what is the main purpose of providing feedback on students' writing?.....	83
Figure 50 Question 14: Do students ask for clarification on your writing comments?	83
Figure 51 Question 15: Do you think that giving comments can help student in achieving a better composition in their future writings?	83

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

Language communication is not delivered orally only but also via writing, and writing process is considered one of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) for learning any language. However, it is considered as the most delicate and difficult skill for teachers to teach.

Writing is not an easy task for both the teachers and the students. That is why, the former try their best to improve their students' level. Correcting students' mistakes, giving marks, and adding supplementary written comments at the end of the essay and sometimes in the margins require time and energy from the part of the teachers. Teachers face a lot of difficulties when they correct students' papers such as: the time constraints, the number of students' essays, the number of students in class, the different parts of writing in the exam, and the marking scheme. Their purpose is to help students know about their level in general, and their weaknesses and strengths in particular. Students should read their teachers' feedback seriously in order to get benefits from the different remarks and to improve their writing skill. Ferris and Hedgcock (2005) argue that in spite of the changes of the approaches to teaching writing, there is one issue that remains constant which is: "both teachers and students feel that teacher feedback on student writing is a crucial, none-negotiable aspect of writing instruction" (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005, p. 184-185).

According to these two researchers, teacher response represents "the single largest investment of teacher time and energy, much more than time spent preparing for or conducting classroom sessions" (Ibid, p.185). Teachers want to see the effectiveness of their feedback on their students' performance so that their efforts will not go in vain.

It is worthy to mention that learning a good writing skill is essential to communicate, to have a good career, to explore and obtain information, and to deliver someone's opinion, and to develop thinking skill.

Durga and Raw (2018) mention that “writing is the system of written symbols, representing the sounds, syllables or words of the language, with different mechanisms: capitalization, spelling and punctuation, word form and function”. Yet, teaching writing is not only about how to write English sentences grammatically and systematically only, but how to develop ideas about writing to be coherent. So, learners need effective writing skills that is later on to be adjusted by teacher.

To develop learners’ language, the importance of writing skill was highlighted and the need to focus more on developing it became a necessity in order to teach learners the right language and performance, since it is the most complex skill to learn, and since learners need to acquire these skills to achieve their educational and employable requirements (Durga and Raw, 2018).

It is important to highlight that a good writing process is a cognitive process that has procedures need to be follow and these procedures starting from creating a text and ending with checking the text from the teacher.

Klimova (2014) explains “the product approach to writing usually involves the presentation of a model text, which is discussed and analyzed. According to this model text learners construct a similar or a parallel text. This might seem a mechanical task; however, learners can discover the structure of the given discourse, its linguistic features and its organization of ideas. The process approach to writing in contrast focuses on the development of language use: brainstorming, group discussion, re-writing.” (p.148).

Teachers’ feedback is an essential element in learning the process of writing. It is through which learners work is revised and asked to be edited to match the criteria of the reference in that field whether in input, process, and or output. Ramaprasad (1983) explains that “feedback is information about the gap and the reference of a system parameter which is used to alter the gap in some way”.

The importance of feedback is considered an inevitable technique in education that is used in most of the developed countries as Hardavella et al (2017) have discussed that “in most European countries, feedback is embedded in education, training and daily professional activities. It is a valuable tool for indicating whether things are going in the right direction or whether redirection is required” (p. 327).

More importantly, after spending time writing the appropriate comments that

suit students' essay, the later are required to read their teacher's feedback very carefully and try to learn from the identified mistakes so that they can improve their performance in the next writing. However, some teachers notice that their students focus only on the grades and generally neglect the comments.

Feedback is considered as a great value since it develops learners' abilities and show them their points of weaknesses that they need to fix and the mistakes they need to evade.

B. The Purpose of the Study

This research attempts to investigate the way teachers comment on their students' writings. The ultimate objective is to allow teachers to know about students' opinions and choices concerning their feedback in order to adjust their commenting ways according to these preferences. It provides opportunity to observe the effect of feedback on students' performance in writing skills when teaching English as a foreign language.

C. The Research Questions

The research aims to answer the following questions:

- What are the main focuses of the teachers' end comments?

Data were collected from the copies of the students' papers by considering teachers' end comments and comparing the types of feedback given in each paper. Frequency of the feedback types will be grouped from the most used to the least used ones.

- What are the students' opinions concerning their teacher's end comments?

Data were collected from students' questionnaire regarding their teachers' end comments.

- Do the teachers' ways in providing end comments match with the students' preferences?

Data were collected by comparing teachers' end comments and students' preferences in the questionnaire.

- Do the teachers' actual end comments match with their own views?

Data were collected by comparing teachers' end comments and their views in their questionnaire about giving feedback.

D. The Research Objectives

The research aims at:

- Investigating two different groups essay samples of two teachers' end comments analyzed following Hyland and Hyland's model (2001).
- Giving a wider idea concerning teachers' method of commenting through their students' opinion.
- Showing students' preferences toward their teachers' end comments.
- Identifying the difficulties encountered by teachers and students during the feedback process.

The results of the research will suggest better ways for teachers to respond to students' writing. It will make the teacher aware of the way he/she is commenting since the main aim is to improve students' writings.

E. The Structure of the Study

The study contains five chapters. The first chapter is to get a general idea about the dissertation that includes the background of the study, the purpose, the research main questions, the research objectives, the hypotheses and the structure of the study. The second chapter will be devoted to the literature review, in which different studies related to writing skill, the notion of written feedback and process approach will be discussed. Various types of written feedback will be argued to raise teachers' awareness of each usage. At the end of this chapter, we will discuss some tips for a good written comments. The third chapter will shed light on the methodology of the study. It consists of the corpus of the study, the research participants, the research procedures and the different methods and instruments of data collection. The fourth chapter will be linked to the data analysis and discussion of the findings. The last chapter will be the conclusion and recommendation for further studies.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Introduction

The literature review will focus on two basic parts: teaching writing and teacher's written feedback. In the first part, writing will be introduced in general. On the other hand, the second part will inspect teacher written feedback, and ends with the critical views and challenges of written feedback.

Empirical studies of teacher feedback have typically represented three major categories: first, descriptive studies of what teachers actually do when responding to student writing, what the focus of this feedback is and how he comments in general. Second type of research deals with the effectiveness of teacher feedback. That is to say, it tackles the short-and long-term effects of these comments. The third type is survey of student opinions and reactions to instructor feedback (Ferris and Hedgcock, 2005: 186).

B. Teaching Writing

1. Concept of Writing

Writing is one of the greatest discovery produced by the human mind. One can say it is the pride of the human mind, and anthropologists have mentioned that man began his true history when he invented writing.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the concept of writing takes on specific considerations related to language learning and acquisition. Writing in EFL involves the development of language skills, cultural understanding, and communicative competence.

In this context, Al Khoisky (2014: 151), indicates that writing is a very complex cognitive activity that requires the writer to show his/her control over a number of variables at the same time, and this necessitates the control over the form and content about the level of the sentence, the sentence structure, vocabulary, signs,

spelling and punctuation, and the shape and drawing of letters.

Writing skill is defined as the process of discovering and producing linguistic ideas and images through the use of rules of writing in the English language (Harmer, 2005: 16). It is defined as a communicative skill for sending, storing and retrieving ideas using written symbols (Millrood, 2001: 1).

Writing skill is a vital skill of any language, and it is the fourth skill, even if it comes after reading. Writing is the means that a person uses to express his/her thoughts, so the writing skills must be developed until success is achieved through it. Therefore, students must understand the correct tips to develop their writing skills correctly and quickly (Barry et al., 2010).

Learning to write requires knowledge of a language vocabulary and an excellent practice of grammar. Indeed, learners need writing in various fields and to be exposed to writing skills and strategies with effective feedback in order to improve their writing abilities (Fageeh, 2003). As a result, a good writing enables students to write purposefully (Lucantoni, 2002).

All in all, the concept of writing in EFL involves not only language proficiency but also the development of communicative and cultural competence. It is an integral part of language learning, providing learners with the tools to express themselves effectively in English across various contexts.

2. The Importance of Writing

The importance of writing is that it is one of the most important means of human communication, and it is one of the main products that are sought through language education. It is an important process in education as one of the basic elements of culture in transmitting and expressing ideas and standing on the ideas of others.

Written expression has a great social value, and we should not forget the society's need for written expression to codify knowledge and science, as well as to preserve public and private works. Any recordal of incidents requires correct writing.

The importance of writing, through drawing letters and words, lies in expressing the human self, including concepts and meanings. Besides, it constitutes a form of linguistic communication, and this skill is no less than reading skill.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), writing holds significant importance for learners and educators alike. Writing is a key skill that contributes to the development of language proficiency in EFL learners. Through writing activities, learners practice using vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structures, thereby enhancing their overall language skills.

Moreover, writing allows EFL learners to practice and improve their ability to communicate effectively in English. Whether it's composing emails, essays, or reports, writing activities help learners express their thoughts and ideas clearly.

On the other hand, writing activities in EFL are often integrated with other language skills, such as reading, listening, and speaking. Learners may read texts to gather information for their writing, listen to spoken language to improve vocabulary, and speak to practice language production.

Further to that, writing encourages EFL learners to think critically and solve problems. When engaging in written tasks, learners must organize their thoughts, analyze information, and present their ideas logically, fostering critical thinking skills.

Also, proficiency in writing is often crucial for academic and professional success. In academic settings, students are required to submit written assignments, essays, and reports. In the professional world, effective written communication is essential for tasks such as writing emails, reports, and proposals. More importantly, EFL writing provides opportunities for learners to receive feedback on their language use. Constructive feedback helps learners identify areas for improvement, and the revision process allows them to refine their writing skills over time.

Besides, writing allows EFL learners to express themselves creatively. Whether through storytelling, poetry, or personal reflections, writing provides a platform for learners to explore their imagination and develop a personal voice in English.

According to Chappell (2011, cited in Klimova 2012: 9), writing is fundamental because of its many advantages, as it aids to:

- Expressing one's personality
- It enhances communication.

- Improve thinking skills.
- Inspire coherent and convincing arguments.
- It allows a chance to the person later to re-consider on his/her ideas and reform it again.
- Clear feedback can be provided; and
- The preparation for education and occupation.

In summary, writing is a cornerstone in the development of English language skills for EFL learners. It contributes to language proficiency, communication skills, cultural awareness, critical thinking, and overall success in academic and professional pursuits.

3. Writing Vs. Speaking

Writing and speaking are two distinct modes of communication, each with its own characteristics, advantages, and challenges. The writer considers him/herself in the place of the speaker to deliver an effective linguistic message with the use of punctuation marks that play the role of the speaker's tone during the conversation. The speaker, unlike the writer, sends words, sentences, and phrases, and uses the body language associated with the speech. Also, it is possible for the listener to stop the speaker for clarification. As for the writing process, the matter is completely different, as the writer must explain the message completely and describe his/her thoughts clearly and chronologically since the writer is far away from the audience in place and time (Asr, 1999).

Byrne makes a valid comparison between speech and writing to differentiate between the two terms in the following figure (Byrne, 1988: 3):

SPEECH	Vs.	WRITING
1. Takes place in a context which often makes references clear (eg: that thing over there).		1. Creates its own context and therefore has to be fully explicit.
2. Speaker and listeners in contact: Interact and exchange roles.		2. Readers are not present and no interaction is possible.
3. Usually person addressed in specific.		3. Readers are not necessarily known to writer.
4. Immediate feedback is given and expected: Verbal (questions, comments, etc.), and non-verbal (facial expressions).		4. No immediate feedback is possible.
5. Speech is transitory. Intended to be understood immediately.		5. Writing is permanent, and it can be reread as often as required.
6. Sentences often incomplete and sometimes ungrammatical. Hesitations and pauses common and usually some redundancy and repetition.		6. Sentences are expected to be carefully constructed linked and organized to form a text.
7. Range of devices (like stress, intonation, pitch and speed) to help convey the message. As well as facial expressions, body movements and gestures to be used for this purpose.		7. The services that can help convey meaning are punctuation, capitals and underlining.

Figure 1 Comparison between Speech and Writing

4. Teacher's Role in Writing

Teachers play a crucial role in fostering writing skills in students. Their influence extends beyond simply imparting knowledge of grammar and syntax; they also guide and inspire students to express themselves effectively through writing.

Hedge argues that writing tasks can help learners who need to write English in their social, educational or professional lives. Some of these learners know what they require to be able to write in English. "Others may be uncertain about the nature of their future needs. Our role as teachers is to build communicative potential.. By encouraging the production of whole texts in the classroom, we can provide for these different motivations for writing" (Hedge 1988: 8).

As for Brooks and Grundy, the teacher's role is considered as "an enabler of students self discovery rather than that of instructor" (Brooks and Grundy 1990: 53, cited in Miler 1997: 153). The teacher encourages his/her students to practise self-correction, especially in native speaker language use.

A teacher's role in writing is multifaceted, encompassing instruction, feedback, encouragement, and the cultivation of a positive and creative learning environment. Effective writing instruction not only enhances students' language skills but also empowers them to communicate effectively in various contexts.

5. Criteria of a Good Writing

Good writing is characterized by several key criteria that contribute to effective communication and engagement. Remarkable writing requires following some standards that leads to the right content and cultural style. These standards guides to know the main criteria that must be followed for a good writing, which are:

- Choosing the Topic

The flow of the topic when writing is one of the most important things that can build all the upcoming paragraphs and attract the reader to see the topic (Diana et al, 1991).

- Unity and coherence of the topic

The paragraphs must be related to the main subject matter in a coherent way in order to absorb the information in its best way (Diana et al, 1991). The coherence of a writing speech results from a detailed plan. The introduction and the conclusion must be common in meaning.

- The choice of words and clear structure

Choosing the correct words in writing is essential in a way that its importance in serving the topic and making it more accurate and appropriate to the main idea of it, as the diversity in the sentences is more consistent for the reader in order not to get bored while reading.

- Literary Style and the form

As this method is based on the formation of sentences attractively and with harmonious words and phrases to give it a verbal rhythm of sentences in the text

(Abdul Latif, 2007).

Moreover, the form of the essay should have three main components (introduction, body and conclusion).

- Objectivity and well-supported argument

Writing also should be objective, not emotional or personal. Writing is a prelude to any information, and sentences should be without one's personal opinion and judgment.

- Accuracy

Writing should be accurate, clear and correct. Written works present theories, facts, situations and quotes, so, the writer should present it honestly and completely (Abdul Latif, 2007).

Evaluating writing against these criteria helps ensure that the written work is effective, engaging, and suited to its intended purpose and audience.

6. Stages in Writing (pre, during, revision and editing)

The writing process is often divided into several stages, each with its own distinct activities and goals. These stages help writers systematically develop their ideas, refine their expression, and produce a polished final product. The commonly recognized stages in writing include prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing.

There are four steps to the writing process, which are divided by (Routman, 2005) as follows:

First: the pre-writing stage or the planning stage: in this stage, the objectives and the audience are defined, the topic to be written is determined, a list of the basic elements is prepared, the scattering of ideas is collected by brainstorming, exchanging of ideas, drawing plans, taking notes and free writing. These are the steps of building the first draft.

Second: The stage of writing the draft: This stage the writer organize and formulate ideas in a written form. At this stage, what is written may be deleted, added or changed. The focus is on writing only without paying attention to any kind of mistake.

Third: The stage of revision and editing: In this stage, the written subject is

reviewed. Grammar, metaphysics, sentence structure, punctuation, numbering, and style are checked. At this stage, adding, rearranging, replacement, and rewording are applied.

Fourth: The publishing stage: In this stage, different people are involved in reading the written text. Students exchange the final version with each other, and critically read what they have written in order to verify that their writing has been done in light of quality standards.

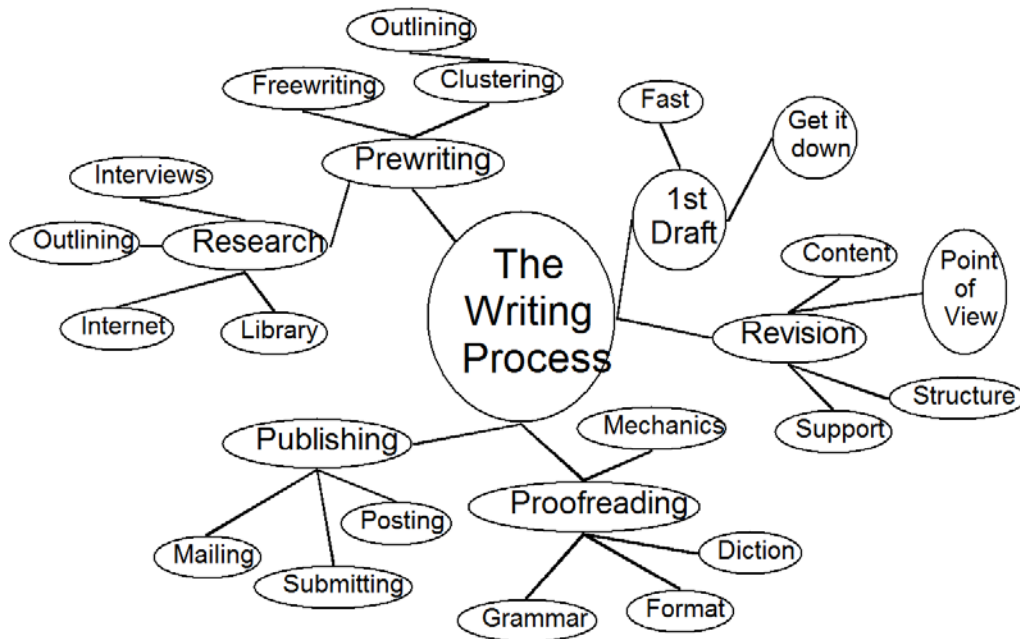


Figure 2 The Writing Stages (Brian, 2011)

It's important to note that these stages are not always linear, and writers may revisit earlier stages as needed. Additionally, collaboration with peers or feedback from instructors can play a crucial role in refining the writing throughout these stages.

The main goal here is that the writing processes develop the awareness of the learners on how they produces ideas, revising the structure, knowledge, and ideas, translating it into speech, and then into written speech, in order to meet the audience's requirements, expectations, and the writer's goals.

C. Teacher's Feedback to Writing

1. Role of Feedback in Classroom

The teacher uses feedback as a formative assessment tool for student learning, and it is also used to modify strategies in teaching in order to improve students' performance. The importance of feedback is considered as a tool that improves students' teaching methods, not just for giving marks to students, but to reflect what and how students perform by showing the points of strength as well as the points of weakness to their students in order to improve themselves.

Moreover, by giving feedback, especially orally, teachers build self-confident toward their students, and creates more active and participatory learning environment (Alanzi, 2017).

Oftentimes, teachers and students view feedback differently, and this disagreement in attitudes is mostly present in the educational and social contexts that might be unnoticed, and in most cases it is ineffective although students consider it as an important component of the teacher's practice (Hashash et al, 2018).

In addition, the feedback from teachers is mostly dedicated to correcting students' social behaviour, not only academic performance. The students who suffer from major social problems were keen to improve interaction with the teacher and other students, and for this reason, teachers provide supportive feedback to encourage them in order to have their performance in line with expectations (Hashash et al, 2018).

Added to that, Moss (2002) proposes that teachers' feedback can speed up the process of language learning by providing information about rules and the limits of language use, which would otherwise takes students a long time to deduce on their own. Teachers' feedback is considered as "a prime requirement for progress in learning" as proposed in Tunstall and Gripps (1996: 9). Therefore, "giving feedback is one of the key roles that leader plays in classroom" (Al Fahdi, 2005). Moreover, types and contents of feedback to deliver can play a major role in helping the teacher succeed in his/her job. (cited in Phuc, 2010: 21-22).

Feedback in the classroom serves as a powerful tool for assessment, motivation, communication, and continuous improvement. When delivered

thoughtfully, feedback contributes to a positive and dynamic learning environment, enhancing both student and teacher outcomes.

2. Teacher's written feedback

Teacher's written feedback is an essential component of the assessment and learning process in education. It involves providing written comments, suggestions, and assessments on students' work, whether it is assignments, essays, projects, or other written tasks. Effective written feedback serves multiple purposes and can significantly impact students' academic development.

Written feedback should be the main goal the students look for while writing any task. Although it might take a lot of time for teachers to provide their feedback, which is why researches have studied the use of an electronic correction system that can provide immediate feedback through automatic assessment, it showed significant improvement in students' English language proficiency and in writing essay structure, and as a result, students more able to write their English tasks in a better way (Cinkara and Galaly, 2018).

It is worthy to mention the difference between feedback and criticism. As Bound (2000, p.7) distinguishes these 2 terms as follows: "A good feedback is given without personal judgment or opinion, given based on facts, always neutral and objective, constructive and focus on the future, whereas criticism is a personal fault finding, very subjective, usually constructive, involves emotion and past oriented" (cited in Phuc, 2010: 20-21).

A teacher's written feedback is a valuable instructional tool that goes beyond assessment. It is an opportunity for positive reinforcement, guidance, and encouragement, fostering a supportive learning environment and promoting student growth and development.

3. Role of teacher in written feedback

The role of teacher in providing feedback improves students' writing skills. When teachers provide students with constructive and positive written feedback based on encouraging students to write and that writing has improved, students preferred their teachers' feedback in which made it easier for them to correct their mistakes in their daily homeworks and papers (Cinkara and Galaly, 2018).

In order to improve students' performance in writing, teachers should pay attention to their feedback. In fact, constructive feedback is the key to have a good writing. Teachers may present themselves as helpful facilitators offering support and guidance.

Keh (1996) also showed that comments are the basic element in the writing process approach, which is defined as "input from the reader to the writer that affects the provision of information and the review of the writer, that is, it includes comments, suggestions and questions submitted to the writer and aimed at improving students' writing" (Cited in Flower, 1979).

Indeed, the role of a teacher in providing written feedback is multifaceted and critical to the learning process. Effective feedback not only assesses students' work but also serves as a valuable tool for guidance, improvement, and motivation.

4. Strategies of Written Feedback

Effective written feedback is a crucial component of the teaching and learning process. It goes beyond simply correcting errors; it should guide students toward improvement, reinforce positive efforts, and encourage reflection.

Teachers can use various strategies to provide feedback, and there are many factors that are identified and selected as the most appropriate strategy. These types of feedback help teachers in the process of providing effective feedback.

Indeed, the feedback and the ways to present it greatly affect the motivation of students to write, and some researchers have linked the lack of motivation and development in writing with teachers' methods of providing feedback (Covill, 1996).

Numerous studies confirmed that some students are not motivated to write because they do not get proper feedback from their teachers. Teachers' feedback are reported to tend to focus on form and content which makes this type of feedback general, unclear, and unhelpful (Zamel, 1985).

As a result, this can reduce students' interest in writing and negatively affect their writing quality. It is important therefore for teachers to carefully select the most helpful feedback which motivates students and helps them improve their writing. Thus, there is a need for exploring some different strategies of feedback and investigating EFL learners' attitudes towards them. Some of these strategies are: peer

feedback, avoiding mentioning the same feedback, traffic lights highlighters (red, orange, green), class codes instead of written comments.

Effective written feedback is a continuous process, and ongoing communication with students about their progress is essential. Additionally, adapting feedback strategies based on the individual needs of students and the nature of the assignment can enhance its impact on learning.

5. Evaluation of Feedback

The evaluation of feedback, whether written or oral, comes as an immediate and direct response to the student's performance and is the best thing that the teacher uses in enhancing learning and in motivating students (Hattie and Timberley, 2007).

However, it is still not clear how observations affect students' behavior and the type of appropriate feedback in some situations, and many theories show the extent of the impact of feedback on teacher motivation and learning outcomes at its simplest levels, where feedback was defined as one of the most important information provided to students (Adams, 1971).

Therefore, certain feedback has a positive effect on learning outcomes for students, and it can have a negative impact if there is a contradiction between the objectives of the procedure and the current situation.

Although writing is not an innate ability, the role of teachers has made it easier for students to become good at writing. Studies have also proven that the role of the teacher as a respondent enables him/her to fulfil the role through written observations and comments (Ravichandran, 2002).

Teachers should also provide feedback on students' drafts so that they can make reviews to improve their writing.

By evaluating one's feedback, a better result may be achieved. Doing so requires checking whether the given feedback is clear and will improve the learner's performance in future, as well as mentioning the successful criteria that have been used.

6. Types of Teacher Feedback

There are many types of feedback, as some researchers categorized it into two types of feedback: internal and external feedback, and feedback based on the time of its submission which is immediate and delayed feedback (Narciss, 2013).

In this context, sometimes it is not appropriate for the student to wait for a long time for the results of his/her performance to advise whether the performance was good or poor. Some examples of non-immediate feedback are mentioned below:

- The student waits for the end of the year until the results of the pass and fail results are issued.
- Not correcting the exam papers immediately, and returning them to the students after a long period of time, which may lose its effect.
- Neglecting some negative behaviors, and discussing these behaviors with the student after a period of time passed since such behavior occurred which the student might forget it.

On the other hand, immediate feedback enables teachers to give support or encouragement when students make mistakes or need to be motivated. Richard (1998) argues that giving spontaneous correction helps students be aware of the mistake straight away. However, he draws our attention to the fact that “sometimes this feedback type discourages learners from speaking as they may feel that every word in their speech is being judged” (Richard, 1998: 23).

There is another way in classifying types of feedback based on the amount of information, which is divided into total and partial. As Shute (2008) indicated that the feedback is based on the level, which is divided into the level of verification and the level of detail, and that the level of detail contains all the information related to the subject, and this type of feedback achieves a better reinforcement than what the type of feedback achieves in terms of verification (cited in Thanh Le, 2016).

Moreover, below are the types of feedback according to Brookhart (1958):

- **Descriptive feedback:** this type of feedback provides specific information about the strengths and weaknesses of a person's performance. It focuses on what was done well and what needs improvement. Descriptive feedback is detailed, constructive, and aims

to guide the individual towards better performance. It advises learners on what to improve and the way they can correct their reasoning, and how to move forward in learning process.

- Evaluative feedback: it provides an overall judgment or evaluation of a person's performance. It typically includes a grade, rating, or ranking based on predetermined criteria. It is concerned with evaluating the performance or behavior of the learner and measures it with grade. It may be immediate or delayed.
- Effective feedback: it is the use of criteria-based phrases to describe the strength and weaknesses of the learners' task and advise them to use some suggested strategies independently in future tasks. It is a communication process that aims to provide specific, timely, and meaningful information about strengths, areas for improvement, and strategies for growth.
- Motivational feedback: it encourages and supports learners to motivate them (cited in Phuc, 2010: 22). It refers to feedback that is designed to inspire and encourage individuals by highlighting their strengths, progress, and potential. It aims to create a positive and supportive environment that fosters motivation, engagement, and a growth mindset.

When it comes to the concept of descriptive feedback, John Hattie is a prominent educational researcher whose work is often referenced.

Hattie does emphasize the importance of effective feedback in his research. According to his synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses in his book "Visible Learning: A Synthesis of Over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement", he found that feedback has a significant positive impact on student learning.

Hattie emphasizes that feedback should be timely, specific, and actionable. He stresses the need for students to have a clear understanding of the learning goals and success criteria, so they can effectively utilize the feedback provided. Additionally, Hattie suggests that feedback should focus on how to improve and should provide guidance on how to bridge the gap between current and desired performance.

While Hattie's work doesn't explicitly categorize feedback into descriptive feedback and other types, his research highlights the importance of providing detailed, specific, and constructive feedback to support student learning and growth.

Also, in his book "Visible Learning Feedback," Hattie and Timperley emphasize the importance of feedback being specific, goal-referenced, and providing information on how to improve. They propose a feedback model that involves clarifying learning goals, assessing the gap between current and desired performance, providing feedback, and offering opportunities for students to act on the feedback received.

In "Visible Learning for Teachers," Hattie discusses the power of feedback in enhancing student learning and provides evidence-based strategies for effective feedback practices. They emphasize the importance of timely, specific, and actionable feedback that is focused on the task and provides guidance on how to improve.

They also discuss the concept of visible learning, which emphasizes making learning outcomes and processes visible to students, teachers, and other stakeholders. Hattie shares insights into the factors that have the most significant impact on student achievement, including the role of feedback, assessment, instructional strategies, and classroom practices.

Regarding feedback, Hattie highlights its importance as a powerful tool for enhancing learning outcomes. He explores different types of feedback, effective feedback practices, and the impact of feedback on student engagement and progress. Hattie provides evidence-based strategies and guidelines for delivering feedback that is specific, timely, actionable, and focused on learning goals.

This book serves as a valuable resource for educators seeking to maximize their impact on student learning. It offers practical insights, research findings, and evidence-based strategies that can inform instructional practices and foster continuous improvement in the classroom.

Also, in his article "The Power of Feedback", it has been influential in shaping the understanding and implementation of feedback in educational settings. It provides valuable insights into the characteristics and impact of effective feedback on student learning. (Hattie, J. and Timperley, H., 2007: 81-112)

They emphasize the importance of providing effective feedback that focuses on the task, clarifies goals and success criteria, and provides strategies for improvement.

Hattie emphasizes the importance of feedback as a powerful tool for improving student learning and provides practical guidance on how to deliver effective feedback. He also explores various types of feedback, the characteristics of effective feedback, and strategies for implementing feedback in the classroom. The article also discusses the role of feedback in the broader context of assessment, goal setting, and student engagement.

Hattie and Timperley argue that feedback is a crucial element in the teaching and learning process, emphasizing its potential to enhance student performance.

Hattie and Timperley's analysis demonstrates that feedback has a substantial positive effect on student achievement when it is used effectively. They emphasize that feedback needs to be carefully planned, targeted, and aligned with the specific needs of the learner. The authors also acknowledge that feedback is not a one-size-fits-all approach and should be tailored to individual learners, taking into account their prior knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Another way of classifying feedback is found in Crane's study (2006) as well as in Flemming and Levie (2003):

- Confirmative feedback: that informs the learner the accuracy of a response.
- Corrective feedback: that informs the learner with his/her incorrect response.
- Explanatory feedback: that includes relevant information about the context of the correct response.
- Diagnostic feedback: that explains the source of the incorrect response by comparing it with common mistakes.
- Elaborative feedback: that provides related information designed to enhance and extend the learners' knowledge acquired (cited in Phuc, 2010: 22).

Further to the above, there are some other related ones according to Bitchener et. Al (2005):

- Direct feedback: from teacher to learner without an intermediary, and identify the mistake and correct it.
- Indirect feedback: through messages without correcting the mistake but only by showing the mistake.

7. Positive vs. Negative Feedback

Positive feedback, through which the teacher informs learners that they are satisfied with their performance in the task or part of it, and that what they answered is correct and acceptable (Narringer and Ghoson, 1979).

As for the negative feedback, it is the feedback through which the learner is informed that his/her performance in the task or in part of it is wrong and unacceptable because it does not follow some standards (Koka and Hein, 2003).

The feedback method affects students positively or negatively. Inappropriate feedback generates negative and serious feelings among students. Therefore, it is important for teachers to choose the appropriate strategies to affect positively on learners' performance.

At times, descriptive feedback may be viewed as judgmental feedback. This is what the students may feel by describing the behavior he/she has done more than needed, and therefore psychologists indicate that criticism and praise are both harmful, and that what students need is to understand the wrong behavior and direct it towards the appropriate rule (Koka and Hein, 2003).

Both positive and negative feedback play essential roles in the learning process. Positive feedback motivates, reinforces strengths, and fosters a positive learning environment. Negative feedback, when delivered constructively, guides students toward improvement, corrects misunderstandings, and prepares them for real-world challenges. A balanced and thoughtful approach to feedback contributes to a supportive and growth-oriented learning experience.

8. Margin Comments vs. End Comments

Margin comments and end comments are two common approaches to providing feedback on written assignments, papers, or essays. Both methods have their advantages, and the choice between them often depends on the teacher's preferences, the nature of the assignment, and the learning goals.

End comments represent the part in which teachers can elaborate their ideas and notes concerning a student's paper. Commenting on student writing "gives teachers their best shot at shaping the way students formulate ideas and arguments, the principal currency of both the academy and the large world of educated people" (HWP, 2000, p. 7). It represents "an important vehicle for communicating expectations and offering guidance" (Ibid).

These final comments allow teachers to draw the students' attention to some points that should be taken into consideration in order to avoid repeating the same. Also, teachers can suggest some pieces of advice addressed to students' performance to improve it in next tasks.

On the other hand, margin comments is the added note to a text that is related to a specific mistake. Margin comment represents "an important bridge between an instructor's overall assessment of a paper and particular textual examples that verify it" (HWP, 2000: 4).

Sometimes students consider marginal comments as too few or too many as they are unhelpful and make them feel annoyed. These comments consist of scattered marks such as "? , !, VT", or words like "good, vague, unclear".

In essence, the choice between margin comments and end comments depends on instructional goals, the nature of the feedback, and the preferences of both the teacher and the students. A thoughtful and strategic approach to feedback can enhance the effectiveness of the learning experience.

9. Students' Negative Attitude Towards their Teachers' End Comment

Students' negative attitudes towards their teachers' end comments on their assignments can stem from various factors. Understanding these factors is essential for educators to address any issues and enhance the effectiveness of their feedback.

When teachers don't make a balance between their authority and their role of helping students improve, the latter will not be satisfied with these comments. They may think that their teachers “don't intervene enough in their writing”, “these comments weren't specific enough”, “I couldn't figure out what she wanted me to do”, “ I never know what he was looking for”. However, students can complain about their teachers' over interference. For instance, they can say: “she only liked what I wrote when I gave her back her ideas”, “He made a suggestion that would have meant a whole new paper”, “I wrote she wanted to hear” (Ibid).

Encouraging an open dialogue, providing specific and constructive comments, and acknowledging students' efforts can contribute to a more positive and effective feedback experience. Regular reflection and refinement of feedback practices based on student input can further enhance the impact of end comments.

D. Process Approach

The process approach, in the context of teaching writing, is an instructional methodology that emphasizes the stages involved in the writing process. Instead of focusing solely on the final product, the process approach encourages students to engage in a series of prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing stages. The aim is to help students develop their writing skills, critical thinking abilities, and an understanding of the writing process itself.

Process approach considered to be very effective on the production of written forms. It is considered as one of the most effective ways to improve the writing of English language students (Williams and Jasmine, 2003).

As Graham (1993) mentions that “Process writing is a move away from students writing to test their language towards the communication of ideas, feelings and experiences. It requires that more classroom time is spent on writing, but as the previously outlined activities show, there is more than just writing happening during a session dedicated to process writing”.

Molavi (2014) also discussed the role and influence of English language teachers by checking the written feedback during the process of writing. Also, the results of the study showed that different types of feedback have an impact on writing improvement, and the study also revealed that the comment is more effective

with students' attitudes and their influence in a good way (Al-Sawalha, 2016).

Indeed, the process approach to writing is widely used in language education and is considered effective in developing students' writing skills, fostering a positive attitude toward writing, and promoting a deeper understanding of the writing process.

E. Challenges to Written Comments

While written comments are a valuable tool for providing feedback on students' work, several challenges can arise that may affect the effectiveness of this form of communication. Teachers should be aware of these challenges and strive to address them to enhance the impact of their written comments.

Paterno, concludes that the analysis and comprehension of the content of teachers' feedback through Kultura's study imposes certain challenges to the teaching of second language:

First of all, feedback, like any writing process is a "chaotic procedure hindered by faulty, ambiguous or mixed messages". Thus, teacher of composition should be careful when delivering messages in his/her feedback as well as accurate in the diagnosis of student writing. Also, teacher's past experience is more or less related to his/ her present practices. So, they must diversify the role they assume in the writing classroom in order to satisfy their students' needs (Paterno, Kultura, 2001: 13).

The second challenge presented by Paterno is to know that feedback is a point of interaction and communication between students and teachers, not just an intervention tool. Also, it is both a process and a product-oriented. Moreover, the author affirms that we should take into account the individual relationship shared with students so that is is easy to decide when and what kind of feedback is needed. For example, "it is possible to write critical statement to one student, but not to another because we know that the former is not one to take things personally" (Ibid: 13-14). Hence, it is the teacher's responsibility to determine "the ideal student-teacher' relationship entails" (Ibid: 14).

Another point which should be taken into consideration, is the nature of teachers' responses. They must be genuine and satisfying students' needs in order to be effective. However, the problem is that teachers don't have enough time to write a

detailed feedback. Hence, they need to provide students with oral feedback added to written comments in order to “facilitate classroom dialogue, clarify statements and downplay the negative impact of some responses” (Ibid).

One important thing, also, is that teachers should make sure that their students have got to what is intended in their written comments.

According to Paterno (Kultura 2002), these challenges require self practice in our classrooms so that we can have an idea about students’ needs and willingness. We should analyse the data encountered and resulted from our classrooms. Therefore, we can change our feedback behaviour and make it fit students’ preferences in order to help them revise and improve their writings (Ibid).

To address these challenges, teachers can adopt a thoughtful and student-centered approach to providing written comments. Regular self-reflection on their feedback practices, seeking input from students, and being open to adjustments can contribute to more effective feedback processes.

F. Critical Views Towards Written Comments

While written comments are a common method of providing feedback on student work, there are critical views and considerations regarding their effectiveness and potential drawbacks. It's important to be aware of these perspectives to refine feedback practices and enhance the overall learning experience.

In the abstract of Zamel’s article (1985) “Responding to Student Writing”, the written feedback of teachers to their students’ writings takes much time and has many disadvantages. Firstly, teachers do not use clear criteria that take into account the constraints of the composing task and their crucial role in affecting writing performance. The study’s findings prove that ESL composition teachers make similar types of comments and they focus more on specific errors and problems that are related to language. In addition, the marks and comments are described as confusing, arbitrary and inaccessible. These written comments do not make students understand that writing or producing a text requires time. Therefore, teachers should facilitate revision by treating and judging students’ writing as a work in progress (portfolio assessment) and not as a final product.

Furthermore, Sommers's (1982) "Responding to Student Writing" is a research on teacher commentary and its specific effect on a student's development. After studying the commenting styles of 35 teachers, the findings indicate that there are two tendencies: "The first was that teacher commentary could take student attention away from their own purposes in order to satisfy the teacher's purposes" (Sommers, 1982: 108). The thing that misdirects students attention is feedback that identifies errors in a first draft. As a result, this will draw students' attention to the form at the expense of content (cited in Carothers, 2008).

To address these critical views, educators should continually reflect on their feedback practices, seek student input, and be open to adapting approaches based on the diverse needs of learners. Balancing feedback, fostering engagement, and creating a supportive learning environment are essential considerations in mitigating the potential drawbacks of written comments.

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Introduction

This chapter seeks to examine the methodological part of this dissertation in order to get a deep insight into teachers' end comments. The first section introduces the corpus of the study consisting in teachers' samples of end comments for the 7th year of students' essays. The second, the third and the fourth subtitles describe the subjects and their profiles as well as the reasons behind selecting this particular population. The following point will deal with the instruments and the procedures used in this research. The last point will examine the methodological tools employed in this dissertation. They consist first in analyzing two samples of teachers' end comments according to Hyland and Hyland's model (2001). Second, a questionnaire is administered to these two teachers and to their students to obtain a deep insight in the way of commenting through these students' attitudes and preferences towards the end comments.

1. Corpus of the Study

The corpus of the study is made up of:

- TA's samples of end comments
- TB's samples of end comments
- Questionnaires of students of TA
- Questionnaires of students of TB
- TA questionnaire
- TB questionnaire

2. Participants

50 students from two 7th year classes wrote the essays from which Teacher A's and B's end comments were taken. They were selected randomly by the teachers.

These students were both males and females and studied at The Rosary School in Amman, Jordan.

In addition, the 50 participants answered a questionnaire from both teacher A's and B's students in order to have a deeper insight in both teachers' way of commenting and knowing students' preferences.

Moreover, both teachers answered a questionnaire to compare their answers to their given feedback.

Table 1 Classification of the research participants

Participants	Numbers
Teachers' questionnaire	2
Students' of Teacher A questionnaire	25
Students' of Teacher B questionnaire	25
Total students' questionnaire	50
Teachers' A students' samples	25
Teachers' B students' samples	25
Total essays samples	50

3. Profile of the Participants

The participants are all native speakers of Jordanian Arabic. They are aged between 13 and 14 and all from the 7th grade. The students' experience with English is expected to be sufficient as they have spent the primary years in learning the English language. Hence, their proficiency level varies from pre-intermediate to intermediate. All these information about students' profile will be summarized in the following table:

Table 2 Profile of the participants

Nationality	Jordanian
Age	From 13 to 14
Educational background	Primary education (6 years)
Language spoken	Jordanian Arabic
Language studied at the primary school	Modern Standard Arabic
	French
	English
Proficiency level in English	Intermediate

4. Reasons Behind the Selection of the 7th grade Population

The rationale behind the choice of these levels as representatives samples was that students were more interested in improving their English than the beginners,

especially improving their writing skill as the rise of social media and digital platforms has amplified the need for effective written communication. Teenager students often engage in online discussions, share their opinions, and create content on platforms like blogs, social networks, and forums. Improving their writing skills allows them to communicate more effectively in these digital spaces and reach a wider audience. Hence, they were more motivated than younger ones to read their teachers' comments and follow their advice.

B. Methodology

This section will introduce us to the type of the study as well as to the different procedures and instruments used in order to collect data.

1. Type of the study

The study deals with a survey about teachers' end comments which begins with examining teacher A's samples of end comments following Hyland and Hyland's model (2001). Then, it is compared with other samples of Teacher B.

Dealing with the types of teacher feedback, the research will focus on the way teachers comment on their students' essays, their focuses, and the functions used in commentary.

In addition to the descriptive study of end comments, this research will also investigate students' opinions and reactions to their teachers' feedback. Indeed, these methods will be very useful to see if teachers' commentary goes in tune with students' preferences.

Also, teachers' questionnaire will present whether their answers match with their practices in the comments given to their students' writing.

2. Procedures

The data collection procedure lasted 3 weeks and was collected at the end of the academic year of 2022.

Two teachers were asked to select students' writing compositions that involves written end comments, and copies of it were taken. The selection of the students' paper were chosen from 2 classes randomly and are analyzed following

Ken Hyland's and Fiona Hyland's model (2001). Teacher A's and B's students were selected to answer a questionnaire related to their view and preferences towards the methods of their teacher's end comments in general, not only towards the analyzed end comments in the samples. Therefore, the questionnaires were administrated in the last week of the education year so that students could judge their teacher's end comments after having been acquainted with them during the whole year.

After the required data were collected, all scores were quantitatively analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The means for both groups were all computed. For further analysis, Frequencies were also observed.

At the same time, a questionnaire was answered by both teachers of the two selected classes to get an idea about their attitudes and preferences towards commenting on writing.

Both questionnaires results, teachers' and students' questionnaires, will be analysed and compared to each other. Moreover, their answers will be compared to the actual feedback given to the students in order to check if there are discrepancies between their viewpoint and teachers' practices.

The study of teachers' feedback will present a descriptive study of what teachers actually do when responding to students writing, what the focus of these feedback is and how he/she comments in general, as well as students' opinion and reactions to their teachers' feedback.

C. Summary

Teacher's B samples of end comments focus on criticism more than praise. In other words, the negative comments will be more than the positive ones. Moreover, direct suggestions is missing, and teacher only focus on revealing the points of weakness so that students avoid repeating mistakes despite mentioning in their questionnaires of the teachers that he often uses praise.

On the other hand, Teacher's A samples shows a great number of suggestion of feedback, and this matches her student's view as well as her answer in teachers' questionnaire.

The result of the students' of teacher B questionnaires indicate the importance of teachers' feedback and comments and that it is helpful however they did not notice any improvements in their next essays after reading teachers' comments, and this is because teachers did not give any suggestions or corrective feedback on their performances. Noting that both teachers do not provide oral feedback once they provide the corrected writings papers to the students. Even the students do not ask for clarification from the teacher if they do not understand their comment. As per the students' questionnaires, their focus is only on the correction of the mistakes and the marks they will take.

Hence, the results of students' of teacher A questionnaire shows that the students do notice improvements on their next writing thanks to their teacher written feedback of suggestions.

As for the teacher B, the reason of not giving suggestions to their students is because he believe that students just care about the grade and his feedbacks is neglected. Also, another main reason, is the shortage of time and pressure of the amount of papers to be corrected.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Introduction

The forth chapter will be devoted to two basic things. First, will analyze the findings that were collected from different instruments of data collection. Second, it will discuss the results obtained in the findings section.

B. Findings

1. Findings of Teachers' Samples

a. Findings of TA's samples of end comments

Teacher A's comments were written in the same papers of the student, that is to say at the end of the essay which is about 25 essays having different topics.

These end comments were divided into feedback points to be analysed which were about 80. Following Hyland and Hyland's model (2001), they were classified into three categories, which are praise, criticism and suggestion. Also, the feedback will be categorized into its types: descriptive, evaluative, effective and motivational feedback according to Patrice Ball. (Adapted from "Effective Feedback? Classroom Edition" by Patrice Ball).

The identification of response was clear thanks to the use of linkers of addition and contrast as well as the presence of discrete sentences.

Table 3 Teacher A's Feedback Functions

	Praise	Criticism	Suggestion	Overall
Number of feedback points	20 (25%)	4 (5%)	56 (70%)	80 (100%)

Table 4 Teacher A's Types of Feedback

Types of feedback	Effective	Descriptive	Evaluative	Motivational
Frequency	70%	15%	5%	10%

While analyzing the teacher's end comments, the overlap between the three categories especially between praise and suggestion was noticed. Sometimes, it was difficult to differentiate whether the feedback point under examination was a suggestion or had a critical aspect. Indeed, any suggestion, in general, implied a need for improvement. Thus, it was a criticism in another way. In the following examples, it seems that the comments are piece of advice that urges the student to revise his or her essay before handling the paper. However, it can hide a critical aspect through the use of the imperative form to indicate that the essay lacks proofreading.

- Revise your essay for corrections before handing your paper.

In the second, third, and fourth examples below, the same comment was expressed differently. The teacher used modals like “should”, “ought to” and “have to” to make the suggestion more obvious instead of using a verb in the imperative form:

- You should pay more attention to incorrections.
- You ought to revise your essay for correction.
- You have to revise your essay before handing your paper.

The use of the verb “need to” is the next step examples could be another way to show the importance of the revision of the essay. Although the comment was read as an explicit suggestion, it implied a critical aspect (lack of revision) as it is shown in the two following examples:

- You need to revise your essay for correction.
- You need more practice to improve your writing skill.

Another example shows the overlap between criticism and suggestion is mentioned below. In fact, the teacher drew his or her student's attention to the style of writing. At the same time, she insisted, in an indirect way, on the necessity of revising the style. This comment could be an advice, a warning and a criticism:

- Mind your style.

Generally speaking, suggestions can play a double role. The teacher might give the student a piece of advice to improve the current essay as it is the case for

example below:

- You shouldn't speak about your country negatively.

Or the teacher might encourage the student to pay more attention in future writings as it is shown in the following example:

- Remember that in the national exam, they won't allow you to write in another piece of paper.

The comments that lack the previous features (the modals of assumption and obligation) or verbs like “try” were generally considered as criticism. Moreover, the latter were known by the use of negative adjectives that described the student's performance. Unlike the suggestions which focuses mainly on the correction of mistakes, the criticism dealt with content and described it negatively which implied an urge to ameliorate the quality of writing as it is stated in the following examples:

- The content is brief.
- The content of your essay is quite superficial.

The comments could be read indirectly as: try to expand more on your content or the content of your essay must be rich enough.

- It is such a long essay which leads to numerous incorrections.

Unlike the previous comments, this one criticized the length of the essay which meant that the student writes irrelevant information. The intended meaning was: you should limit yourself to the required information to avoid many mistakes.

The next comment criticizes the ambiguity of the essay's content:

- Unclear confusing content.

This written feedback could be read in the following way: try to make your content as clear as possible.

Furthermore, it was noted that the conclusion part was not treated well by two students. It was either irrelevant or a repetition of what was said previously.

- The conclusion is irrelevant!

It could be understood differently as: the conclusion must be relevant to the topic.

- The last sentence which sounds like a conclusion is just a repetition of the first one or the one that precedes it.

This comment can be in the form of suggestion like: in the conclusion part, you ought to summarize what has been said previously, not repeating it.

Apart from content, the end comments criticize the quality of English:

- Faulty English.

The hidden suggestion could be: pay attention to the quality of your English. Try to avoid mistakes.

In addition, in her end comments, TA focused on the form (19%), the content (54%) and general comments (27%).

Table 5 The focus of TA's end comments

	Form	Content	General	Total
Praise	10%	15%	0%	25%
Criticism	2%	3%	0%	5%
Suggestion	7%	36%	27%	70%
Overall	19%	54%	27%	100%

- Mitigation in end comments

In TA's end comments, there was only one strategy of mitigation used which was paired act patterns: teacher A combined her critical remarks with praise as mentioned below, to reduce the degree of authority and directness of criticism that might affect the students' confidence:

- Convincing arguments but the content is brief.

A second type of combination was between praise and suggestion:

- Interesting coherent content and rich vocabulary. Yet, you should pay more attention to incorrections. For that, you have to revise your essay before handing your paper.
- The content is interesting and coherent. But, you shouldn't speak about your country negatively (poor + problems). You ought to revise your essay for correction.
- Simple but clear English with coherence convincing ideas. However, you

need to revise your essay for correction.

Three critical comments were strictly followed by suggestions:

- The content of your essay is quite superficial. Mind your style. There are numerous incorrections to be avoided.
- Faulty English and unclear confusing content. You need more practice to improve your writing skill.

The third criticism was linked to a suggestion and extended it to future writing behaviour:

- It is such a long essay which leads to numerous incorrections, and remember that in the national exam, they won't allow you to write on another piece of paper.

Following praise-criticism, praise-suggestion and criticism-suggestion, there was a more common and complete pattern which was praise-criticism-suggestion triad as in the following examples:

- Convincing arguments. (praise)

But the content is brief. (criticism)

Revise your essay for corrections before handing your paper. (suggestion)

- It is such a long essay which leads to numerous incorrections. (criticism)
- And remember that in the National exam they won't allow you to write on another piece of paper. (suggestion)
- Yet, the content of your essay and the language you've used are quite satisfactory. (praise)
- Simple but clear English with coherent convincing ideas. (praise)
- However, you need to revise your essay for correction. (suggestion)
- The last sentence which sounds like a conclusion is just a repetition of the first one or the one that precedes it. (criticism)

Table 6 Acts Mitigated by Different Strategies

	Paired acts	Unmitigated
Praise	15%	10%
Criticism	4%	1%
Suggestion	50%	20%
Overall	69%	31%

b. Findings of TB's samples of end comments

Thanks to the form of comments, it was easy to identify the boundaries of the feedback points. After identifying and counting the different feedback points, they were classified according to their focus: praise, criticism and suggestion, as well as the 4 types of feedback: descriptive, evaluative, effective and motivational feedback.

What was obvious for teacher B's written comments was that all comments had the form of short sentences or brief hints with a small hyphen before the beginning of any comment. Moreover, the teacher expressed his comments, especially the criticism, in bald form as well as the simple short sentences. These end comments were divided into feedback points to be analysed which were about 70.

Table 7 Teacher B's Feedback Functions

	Praise	Criticism	Suggestion	Overall
Number of feedback points	3 (4%)	67 (96%)	0 (0%)	70 (100%)

Table 8 Teacher B's Types of Feedback

Types of feedback	Effective	Descriptive	Evaluative	Motivational
Frequency	0%	2%	96%	2%

The overlap between categories could occur mainly between the criticism and suggestions as it was said by Hyland and Hyland (2001): "embedded in every suggestion is an assumption that the text needs improvement". In general, any suggestion hides a critical aspect. However, the degree of explicitness of the criticism differs according to the way feedback is expressed. Teacher B tend to express his criticism directly through the use of short bald expressions, criticizing mainly the frequent use of spelling mistakes.

- Many spelling mistakes.
- Too many spelling mistakes.

Teacher B criticized mainly students' grammar as in the following examples:

- Some grammar mistakes.
- Many grammar mistakes.
- A few grammar mistakes.
- Too many grammar mistakes.

It was noted that there was juxtaposition in comments that dealt with spelling and grammar mistakes, for instance:

- Some spelling and grammar mistakes.
- Many grammar and spelling mistakes.

Furthermore, the criticism tackled the students' choice of words. The teacher used the same way, that is to say, the bald form in order to describe the students' failure to choose the suitable and correct word, for example:

- Some ill-chosen words.
- A few ill-chosen words.
- Many ill-chosen words.

It was noticed that there was only one case of coordination between the criticism of choice of words and grammar:

- A few grammar and word-choice mistakes.

Also, bald expressions were used to evaluate students' English, in general as in:

- Poor English
- Very poor English

The negative comments were extended to the tense, the sentence, the punctuation and capitalization, the vocabulary and the content. In these areas of focus, the teacher used both bald expressions and simple sentences to express his criticism. For example, when dealing with problems of punctuation and capitalization, he sometimes wrote:

- No capitalization

- No punctuation and capitalization

On the other hand, he used the simple sentences structure to comment on the same area:

- Your punctuation and capitalization aren't accurate
- Your punctuation isn't accurate.

The same can be said when the teacher described students' sentences, it was noticed that both forms were used like:

- Very long sentences.
- Some awkward sentences.
- Many of your sentences are meaningless.
- Some of your sentences don't suit the topic.

However, in the comments that dealt with content, ideas and vocabulary were expressed in the simple sentences form only, for instance:

- The content isn't rich enough.
- Your vocabulary is poor.
- Your vocabulary isn't rich enough
- Some ideas aren't well developed.

Although there was a tendency used by teacher B to be direct in giving his criticism, students had read their teacher's comments attentively and deeply in order to get the implied meaning of criticism. Apparently, there was a clear absence of any form of suggestion because no expression involved verbs like "try" or modals of obligation such as need to, could and should. However, the interpretation of the following could reveal the hidden intention to advise students in their comments.

- Some ideas aren't well developed.

In this comment, the teacher meant that the student should better develop his or her ideas, that is to say, it could be written differently in the form of suggestion: you should develop your ideas in a better way.

In the second example, the teacher examined the content of the students'

essays. The criticism of the content could be interpreted as an attempt to make students investigate well this area.

- The content isn't rich enough.

It could be read as “try to make your content rich enough”.

- Your punctuation isn't accurate.

This comment could be read as “pay attention to your punctuation”.

- Some of your ideas are too general to suit the topic.

It could be turned into a suggestion like “you should choose specific ideas that are closely related to the topic”.

- No need to use the empathic form here.

This feedback could be turned into this suggestion “you should not use the empathic form here”.

- You haven't mentioned the main point of the topic.

It could be suggested here that “you ought to mention the main point of the topic”.

- Some of your ideas are too general to suit the topic.

The student could read this comment as “try to make your ideas as specific as possible to best suit the topic”.

Moreover, TB's end comments might be classified according to their focus: the form (63%), the content (21%), and general focus (17%).

Table 9 Focus of TB's End Comments

	Form	Content	General	Total
Praise	2%	1%	1%	4%
Criticism	61%	19%	16%	96%
Suggestion	0%	0%	0%	0%
Overall	63%	20%	17%	100%

- Mitigation in end comments
- Paired act patterns:

The teacher combined the critical remarks with praise in order to reduce the degree of authority and directness of criticism that might hurt the student's

confidence as done in Teacher A as well. Below are some examples:

- Some spelling and grammar mistakes
- On the whole, that's good.

In this example, there was a positive evaluation of the essay in general. Here the praise came after a direct criticism of the spelling and grammar mistakes. The purpose of the praise was to reassure the student that although there were some mistakes in grammar and spelling, the essay in general was good.

- Some ill-chosen words
- A fascinating writing style
- Many spelling mistakes
- Some grammar mistakes
- Some ill-chosen words
- A good writing style

In the above examples, the focus of teacher's praise was on the writing style. It also came after the direct negative evaluation of the choice of words. The purpose of the teacher was to show the point of the strength in this essay which was the fascinating writing style of the student.

- Some spelling and grammar mistakes
- Some ill-chosen words
- The content is OK

In these comments, the teacher examined four areas in writing which were spelling, grammar, choice of words and content. As in the previous examples, he began with the points of weakness (the spelling, grammar, and the choice of words) and ended up with praising the content of the essay.

- The content isn't rich enough!
- Your grammar is OK.

This time, there is a problem with the content. The teacher urges the student to elaborate more on the content. However, he is satisfied with the grammar.

- Some grammar mistakes
- “Firmly” doesn't collocate with “admit”
- The content is good

In these examples, the teacher commented on the grammar mistakes and the choice of words. After criticizing the two previous focuses, he praised the student's content.

- Some mistakes.
- Your vocab isn't that rich, but your grammar is OK

In the final example, the paired acts were in the form of a subordinate clause. The criticism tackled the presence of some mistakes and the lack of vocabulary. Concerning the grammar, everything was OK.

Table 10 Acts Mitigated by Different Strategies

	Paired acts	Hedged	Interrogative	Unmitigated
Praise	4%	0%	0%	0%
Criticism	4%	64%	3%	23%
Suggestion	0%	0%	0%	0%
Overall	8%	66%	3%	23%

- Hedges

The second strategy of mitigation was the use of hedges. The main purpose behind this use was to reduce the negative effects of criticism. They consisted generally in modal lexical items, imprecise quantifiers, and usuality devices such as often and sometimes. In teachers B's samples of end comments, the use of imprecise quantifiers was obvious in most criticism. These are some examples:

- Too many spelling and grammar mistakes
- Too capitalized
- Many spelling mistakes
- Many ill-chosen words
- A few grammar mistakes
- Some ill-chosen words
- Very long sentences

- No punctuation and capitalization

In the following table, the different imprecise quantifiers used by teacher B were classified according to how many times they were repeated.

Table 11 The Imprecise Quantifiers Used by Teacher B

	Many	Too many	Some	A few	Too	Very
Percentage	22%	2%	29%	2%	0.5%	9%

- Interrogatives

Teacher B sometimes used the interrogative form so that he could reduce the tension of a harsh criticism. This method was used mainly when the student's writing was totally irrelevant to the topic. In other words, he did not understand what was normally required in this type of writing. As the situation was quite critical, the teacher hid his total disappointment in rhetorical questions as it is the case in the following examples:

- Are you writing a talk?
- Is this an essay?
- Does it suit the topic?
- So what? Some of your ideas are too general to suit the topic.

2. Findings of Students' Questionnaire

Students' questionnaire was distributed to the 50 participants, divided into 2 groups: 25 students of Teacher A, and 25 students of Teacher B. The questionnaire comprised of 17 questions, in which its purpose was to get insights about the participants attitude as well as preferences toward their teachers and comments. The first and the second questions were general question. The first deal with the attitudes of students towards the importance of their teacher's end comments. The second tackled the frequency of reading the teacher's comments by his/her students. The aim of the first two questions was to warm students with the topic. The third till the eighth questions examined the students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of their teachers' end comments. At this level, the questions were still general preparing students to the main research questions. The remaining nine questions (from question nine to seventeen) were more detailed and descriptive questions. They tackled four main focuses to judge teachers' end comments. They consisted in describing four

main areas which were:

- The clarity and length of comments (questions nine and ten).
- The way they are presented by the teacher (globally or specifically) (questions 11 and 12).
- The focus of these written comments (the form of the content) (questions 13 and 14).
- The teacher's acts in the end comments (praise, critique, suggestion) (questions 15 and 16).

The responses of these questions will allow the reader to get insights about the main aspects of teachers end comments thanks to students' attitudes (mainly questions 9, 11, 13 and 15) as well as s/he will have an idea about the students' preferences concerning the end comments (questions 10, 12, 14 and 16).

a. Findings of TA's students' questionnaire

The first eight questions were general questions to get an overall idea about the importance and effectiveness of Teacher A's end comments.

Question one: How do you judge your teacher's written feedback comments at the end of your essays?

The first question elicited the importance of teacher's end comments from students' perspectives. The latter were asked to circle the degree of importance they choose, from one which represented the degree unimportance to five which presented the degree of extreme importance. The results are shown in the following figure:

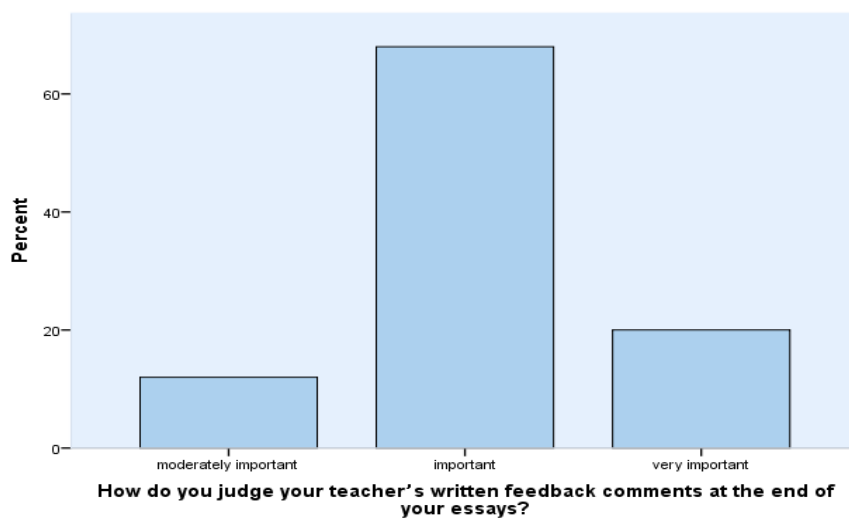


Figure 3 Frequencies of The First Question of TA's Students

Table 12 Question 1: How do you judge your teacher's written feedback comments at the end of your essays?

	Number of students	Percentage
Not important	0	0%
Slightly important	0	0%
Moderate important	3	12%
Important	17	68%
Very important	5	20%

The findings which are displayed in the figure, show that the degree of moderate important received only three responses (12%). No one (0%) responded to the first and second degree (not important and slightly important). The fourth degree received 17 responses (68%). 5 responses were devoted to the degree number five which represented 20 % of the total of responses.

Question two: How often do you read your teacher's end feedback comments?

The question inquired about the frequency of students' reading of end comments. The purpose of this question was to see if the students paid attention to their teacher's comments or just focused on the mark. The students had five options which were always, often, sometimes, rarely and never to describe how often they read written comments.

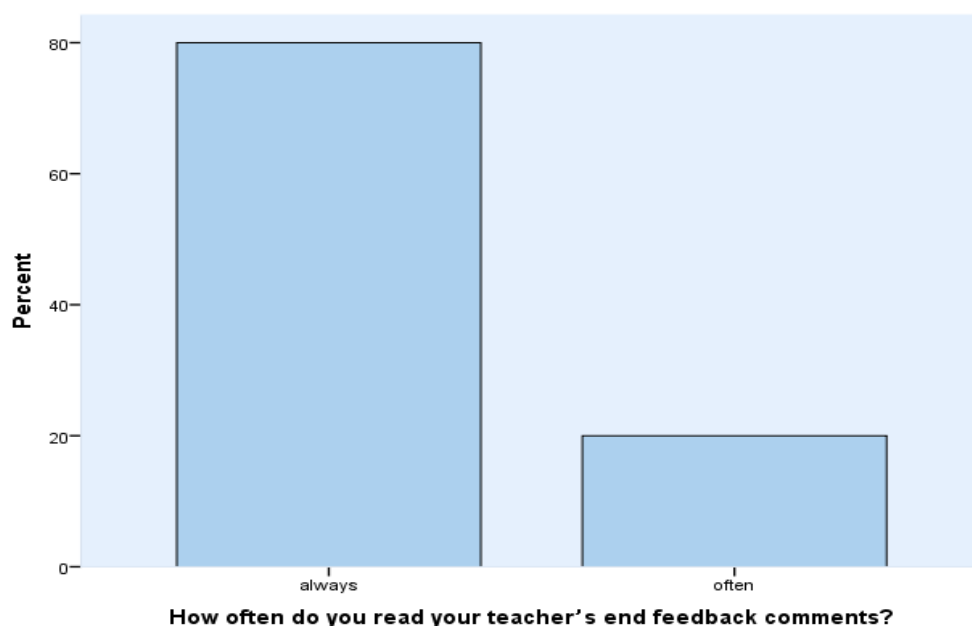


Figure 4 Frequencies of the second question of TA's Students

Table 13 Question 2: How often do you read your teacher's end feedback comments?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	20	80%
Often	5	20%
Sometimes	0	0%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%

As it is indicated from the above figure, the first option (always) received most responses 80%. Five students (20%) chose the second option (often). None of them chose sometimes, rarely nor never.

Question three: Do you focus more on teacher's comments or just you skip to the correction of the mistakes?

The question above inquired about the frequency of students' reading of end comments. The purpose of these question was to see if the students pay attention to their teacher's comments or just focused on the mark or correction.

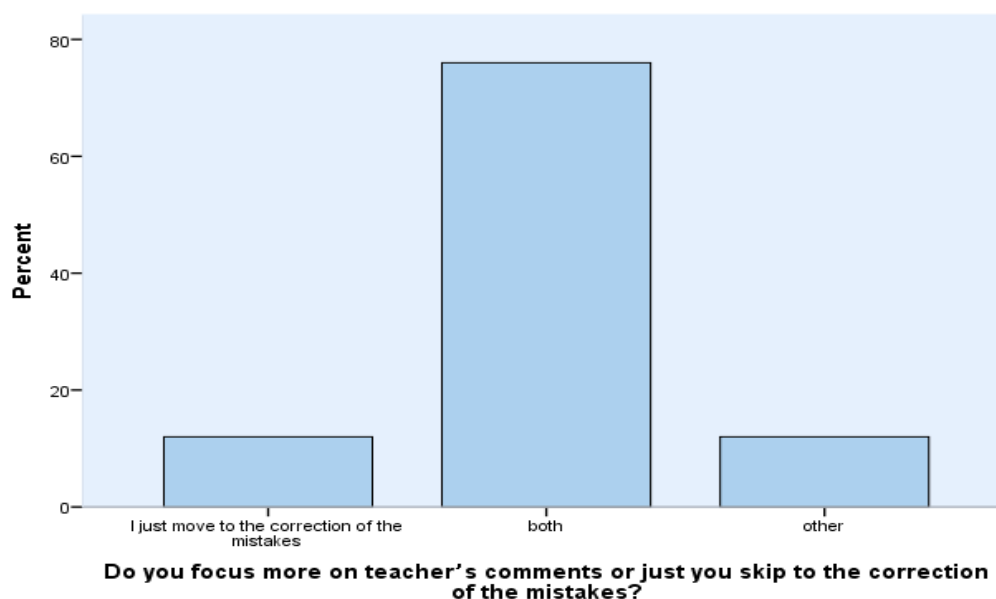


Figure 5 Frequencies of the third question of TA's Students

Table 14 Question 3: Do you focus more on teacher's comments or just you skip to the correction of the mistakes?

	Number of students	Percentage
I read carefully my teacher's comments	0	0%
I just move to the correction of the mistakes	3	12%
Both	19	76%
Other:	3	12%

Students had five options for this question, which were always, often, sometimes, rarely and never to describe how often the students care about their teacher's comments. As visualized through the figure, the most answer received was "both" (76%): focusing on teacher's comments and correction. On the other hand, 12% chose the option "I just move to the correction of the mistakes", and 12% chose "other": mark.

Question four: Are your teacher's end comments helpful for understanding your mistakes?

Question four investigated whether teacher A's end comments helped students in understanding their mistakes or not. The finding will be clear through the below figure:

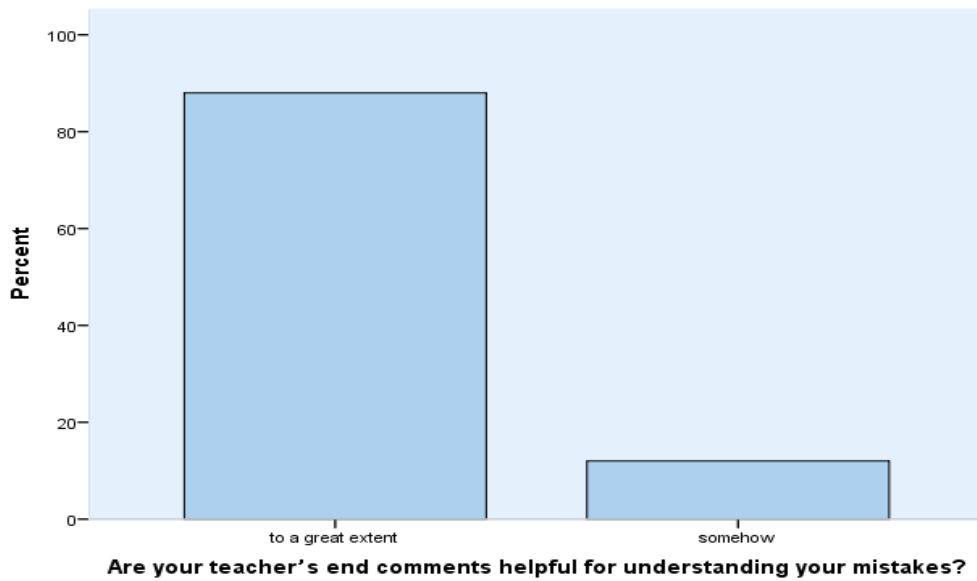


Figure 6 Frequencies of the fourth question of TA's Students

Table 15 Question 4: Are your teacher's end comments helpful for understanding your mistakes?

	Number of students	Percentage
To a great extent	22	88%
Somehow	3	12%
Very little	0	0%
Not at all	0	0%

The results show that the majority of students (90%) agreed that their teacher's end comments were to a great extent helpful and they allowed them to understand their mistakes. Only three students (10%) indicated that these comments somehow are helpful.

Question five: Do you ask for clarification from your teacher on his her writing feedback comments?

This result of this question shows us whether teacher A's comments are clear enough for the students or not.



Figure 7 Frequencies of the fifth question for TA's Students

Table 16 Question 5: Do you ask for clarification from your teacher on his/her writing feedback comments?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	0	0%
Often	0	0%
Sometimes	4	16%
Rarely	15	60%
Never	6	24%

As shown above in the figure and table, most of the students 60% chose "rarely" 60%, while 24 % selected "never", and 16% chose "sometimes". "Always" and "often" was not selected at all for this question.

Question six: How often do you think you apply your teacher's feedback comments to your next writing?

In the above mentioned question, students perception for applying their teacher's comments in their future writing tasks were asked.

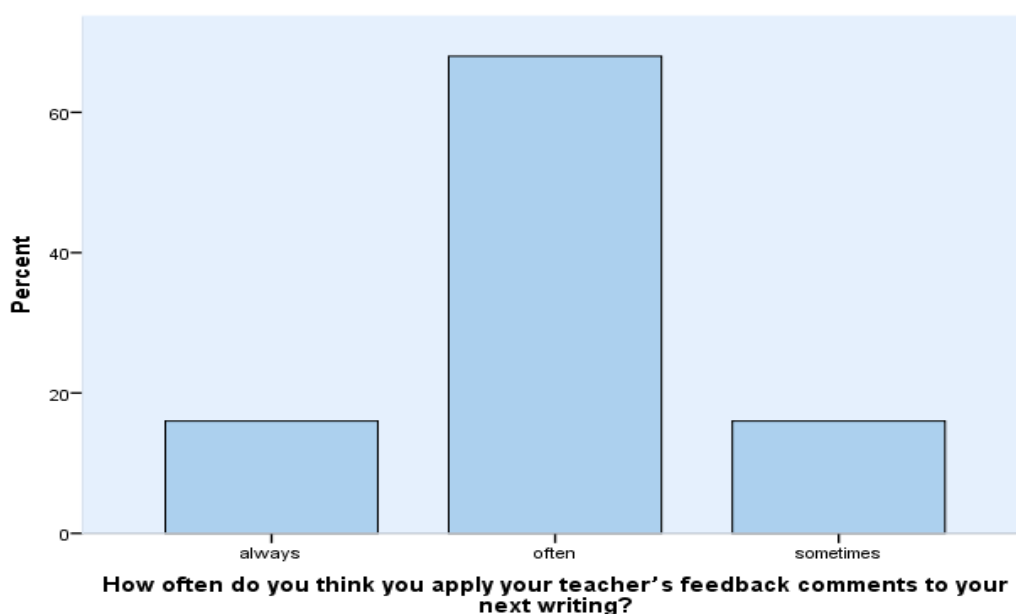


Figure 8 Frequencies of the sixth question for TA's Students

Table 17 Question 6: How often do you think you apply your teacher's feedback comments to your next writing?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	4	16%
Often	17	68%
Sometimes	4	16%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%

Based on the above results, 17 students answered "often" which makes 68%, and 16% of the students selected "always" as well as "sometimes".

Question seven: Do you notice any improvement in your next essays /writing tasks?

The seventh query was about the effectiveness of teachers and comments.

According to the results displayed in the figure below, the number of students responded by "often" were 18 constituting a percentage of 72%, whereas six students (24%) responded as "always" and only one with "sometimes".

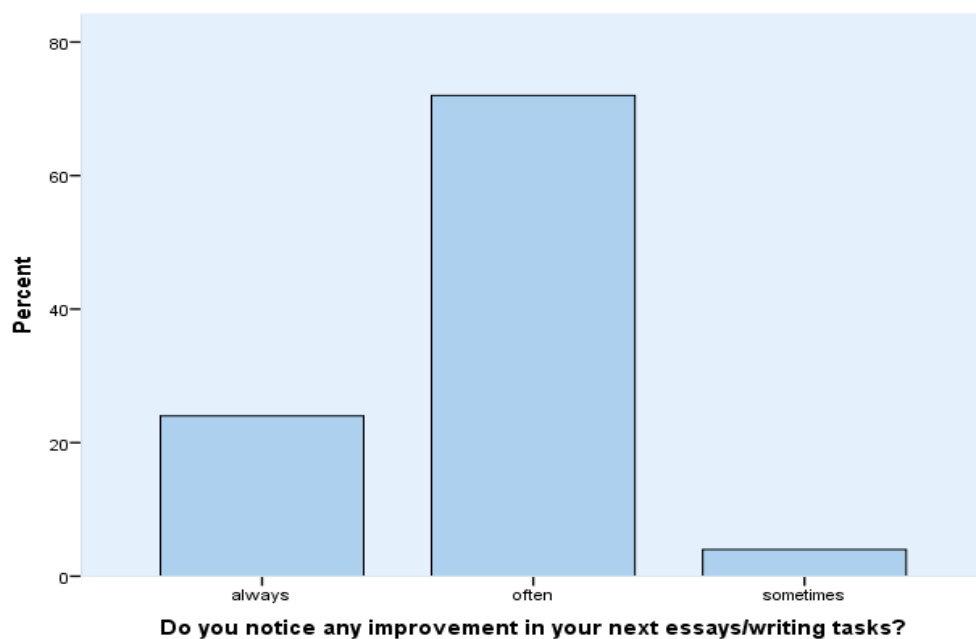


Figure 9 Frequencies of the seventh question Group 1

Table 18 Question 7: Do you notice any improvement in your next essays/writing tasks?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	6	24%
Often	18	72%
Sometimes	1	4%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%

Question eight: Do you make the same errors in your next essay/ writing tasks?

The answers of question eight show whether the students are aware of their repetitive previous mistakes done to their new essays or not.

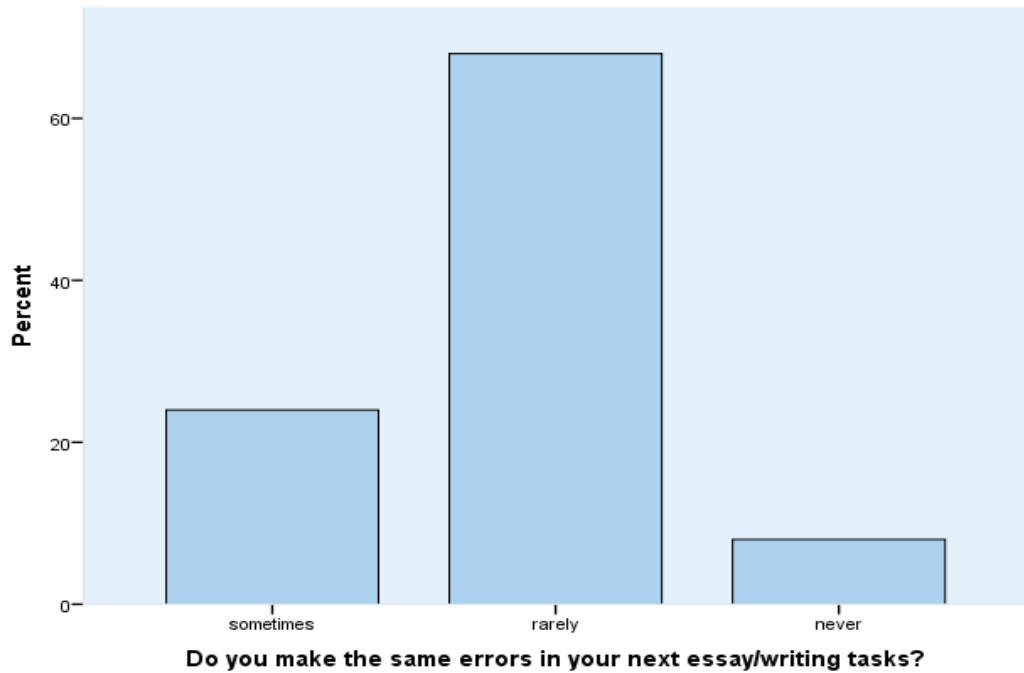


Figure 10 Frequencies of the eighth question for TA's Students

Table 19 Question 8: Do you make the same errors in your next essay/writing tasks?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	0	0%
Often	0	0%
Sometimes	6	24%
Rarely	17	68%
Never	2	8%

The most answers received was “rarely” to form 68% of the students, and 24% of them chose “sometimes”, while 8% answered “never”.

Question nine: How can you describe your teacher's end comments?

This question dealt with the first area of the description of end comments which was the clarity and length. Students were asked to choose the adjective that best describe their teacher's end comments.

As shown in the figure, the first option received the highest percentage of responses (72%) as “clear”, and the 4 student described their teachers' comments as “long”, and 3 students as “ambiguous”. No one saw that their teacher's end comments were “brief”.

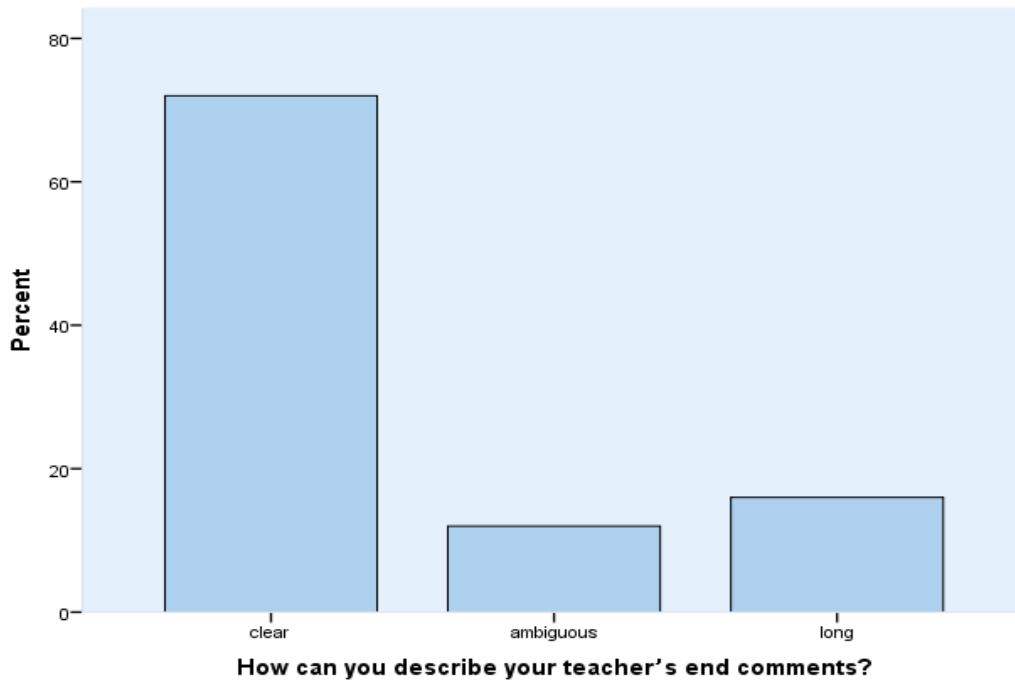


Figure 11 Frequencies of the ninth question for TA's Students

Table 20 Question 9: How can you describe your teacher's end comments?

	Number of students	Percentage
Clear	18	72%
Ambiguous	3	12%
Brief	0	0%
Long	4	16%

Question ten: How do you prefer it?

Unlike the previous question which represented the four adjectives or options that described the teacher's end comments separately, question ten presented them in the form of two dichotomies. Each dichotomy combined clarity with length. The first option dealt with "clear and short", whereas the second option was "clear and long".

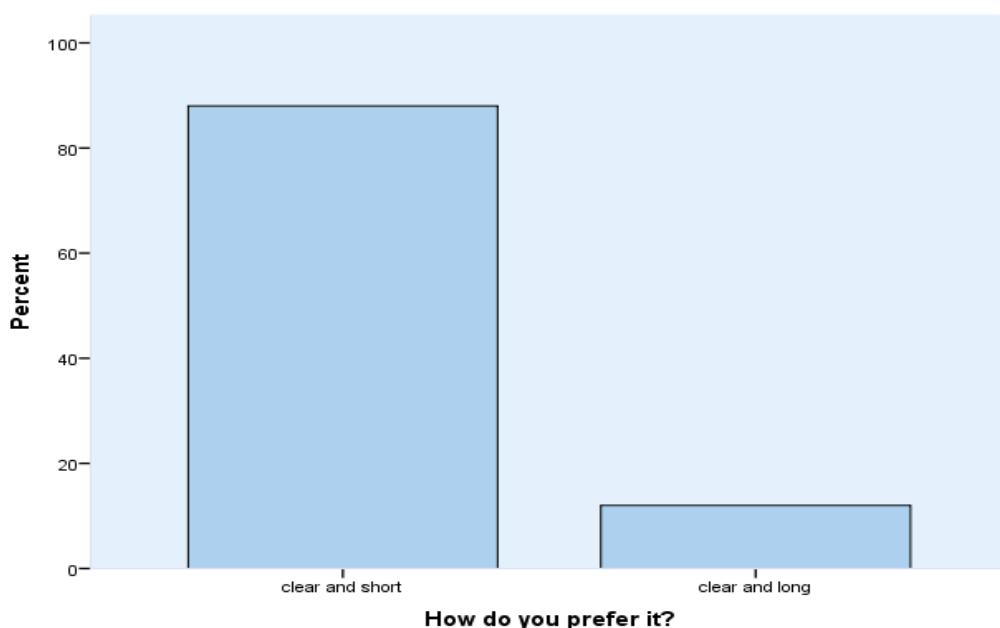


Figure 12 Frequencies of the tenth question for TA's Students

Table 21 Question 10: How do you prefer it?

	Number of students	Percentage
Clear and short	22	88%
Clear and long	3	12%

As clearly shown from the figure, the first option (clear and short) received most responses 22 (88%) which implies that students wanted their teacher's end comments to be clear and short. However, only three students chose the second option (clear and long) representing a percentage of 12% which means that students did not prefer long comments in general.

Question eleven: Do you think that your teacher's comments deal with the essay's mistakes:

This question talked about the second area of the description of teacher A's end comments which consisted in the way the teacher comments: globally or specifically. As it is clear from these two choices, again it was a dichotomous question. The option "a" was about global mistakes and the option "b" was about specific mistakes.

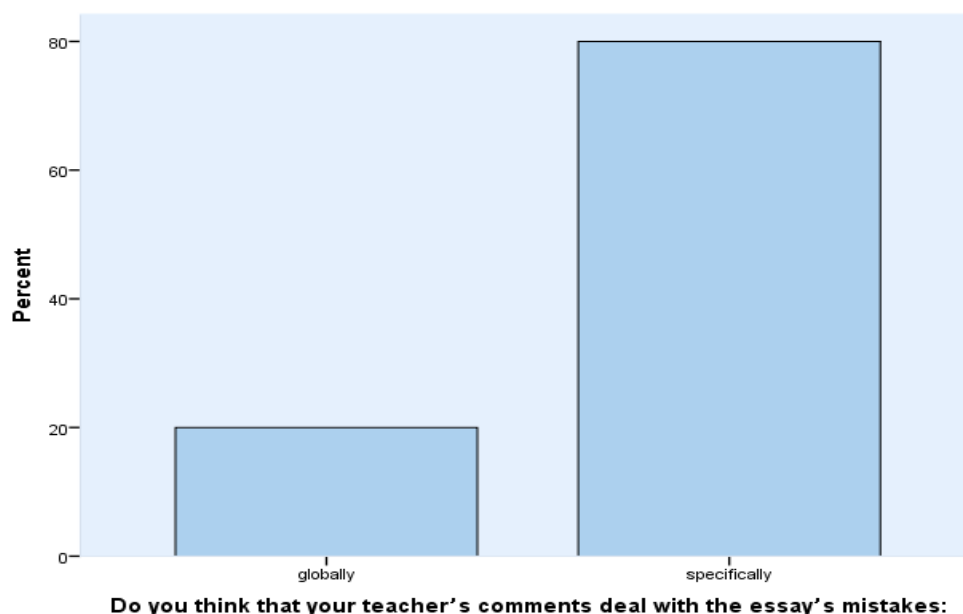


Figure 13 Frequencies of the eleventh question for TA's Students

Table 22 Question 11: Do you think that your teacher's comments deal with the essay's mistakes

	Number of students	Percentage
Globally	20	80%
Specifically	5	20%

The results are displayed in figure 19 as follows: it is obvious that the first option which was “specifically” got higher percentage (80%). In fact, it received the greatest number of responses (20). However, five students selected the second option “globally” to form a percentage of 20%. Hence it' is possible to say that the teacher commented on her students' mistakes specifically.

Question twelve: What do you prefer?

The difference between this question and the previous one was that the focus of question 11 was on the students' preferences concerning the way they wanted their teacher to write her feedback rather than on their attitude towards this issue. The nature and the options given remained the same.

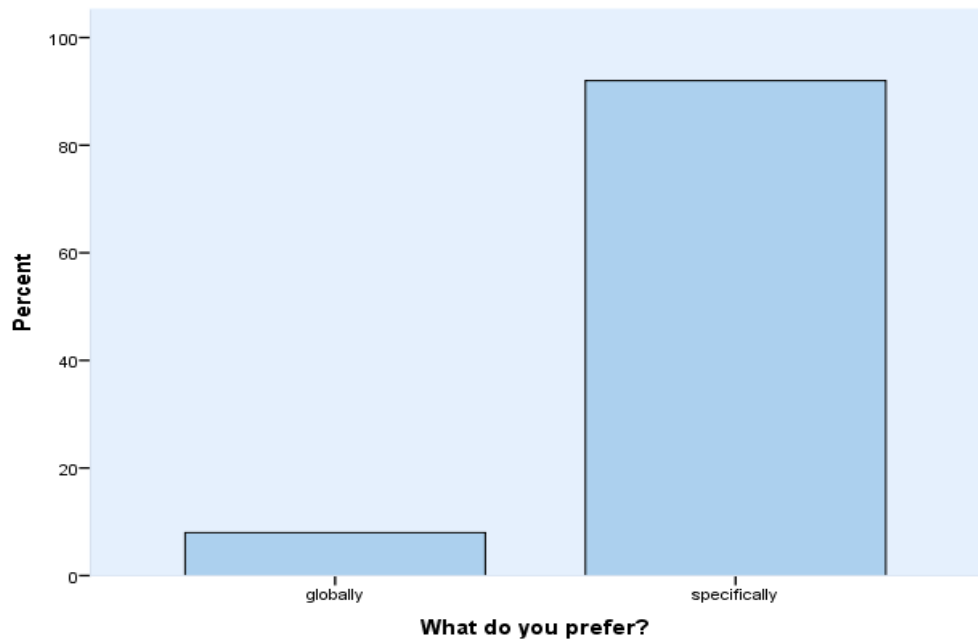


Figure 14 Frequencies of the twelfth question for TA's Students

Table 23 Question 12: What do you prefer?

	Number of students	Percentage
Globally	2	8%
Specifically	23	92%

The findings of question 12 indicates that students' preferences did go hand in hand with their attitude towards the way their teacher presented her written end comments. The results showed that students preferred specific comments (23 responses) were devoted to the second option "specifically" while only two responded to the first option representing 8%.

Question thirteen: In your opinion, your teacher's end comments focus on:

Question 13 tackled the third area of description which was the teacher's focus in end comments. Three options were presented: the first was the form (a), the second was the content (b), while the third was both options. The result shown in the following figure will introduce the reader to the main focus in teacher A's end comments from her students' perspectives.

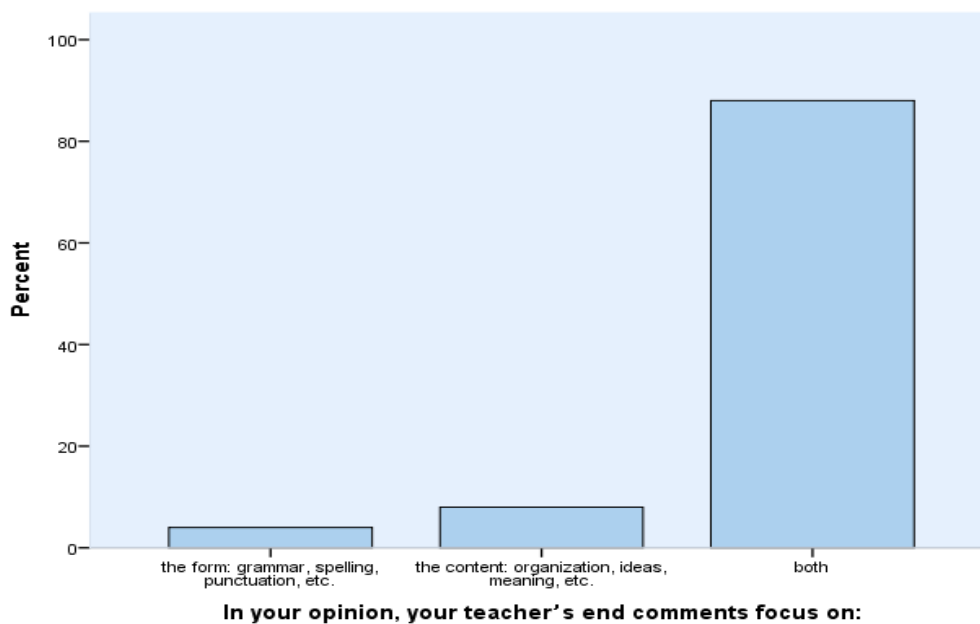


Figure 15 Frequencies of the thirteenth question for TA's Students

Table 24 Question 13: In your opinion, your teacher's end comments focus on

	Number of students	Percentage
The form: grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc..	1	4%
The content: organization, ideas, meaning, etc..	2	8%
Both	22	88%

The figure shows that only one student selected the first option “the form”, and two students chose the second option “the content”. However, 22 students chose the third option “both”. The figure shows that the highest percentage of students' responses was devoted to the third option which was both content and form (88%). This indicated their attitudes toward their teacher's focus in her end comments.

Question fourteen: Do you want your teacher to focus more on:

This query was about the students' preferences concerning what their teacher focuses on in her final comments: the form, the content or both. The options were the same as in the previous question, but students were asked to select the appropriate options they preferred.

The results displayed in the figure shows that the first item “the form” received only two students that wanted their teacher to focus on form in her comments. The second item “the content” received zero responses. The third option received the highest number of responses (23) which indicated that students preferred

both the form and the content in their teachers written comments to form 92%.

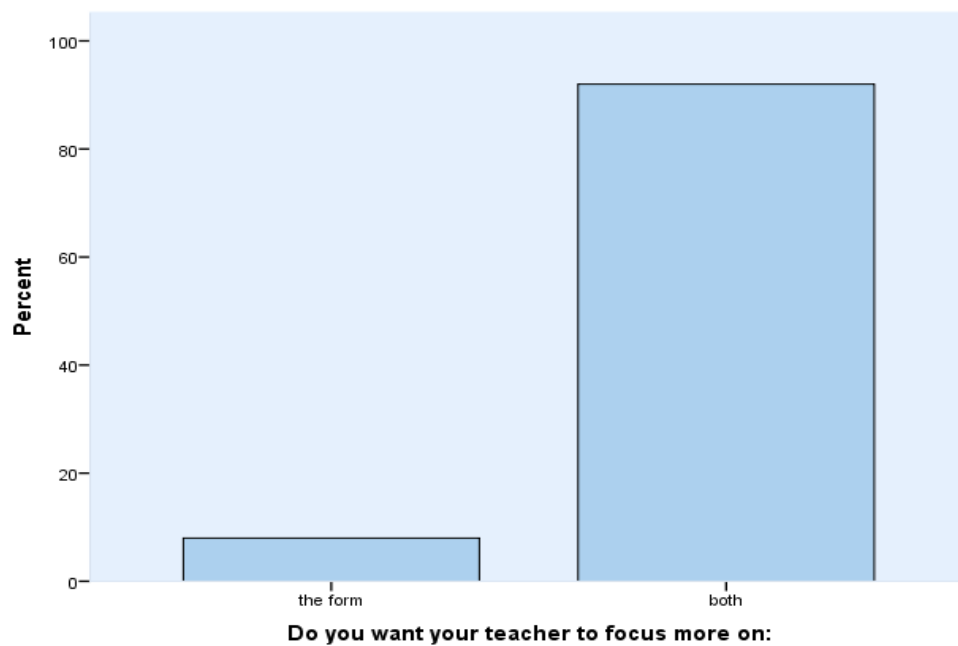


Figure 16 Frequencies of the fourteenth question for TA's Students

Table 25 Question 14: Do you want your teacher to focus more on

	Number of students	Percentage
The form	2	8%
The content	0	0%
Both	23	92%

Question fifteen: In his/her end comment, does your teacher use:

This query was about the fourth area that described the teacher's end comments which were the different acts used in feedback. The question was made up of three options that reflected the different teacher's acts. these options were first praise (a), second critique (b), and third suggestion (c).

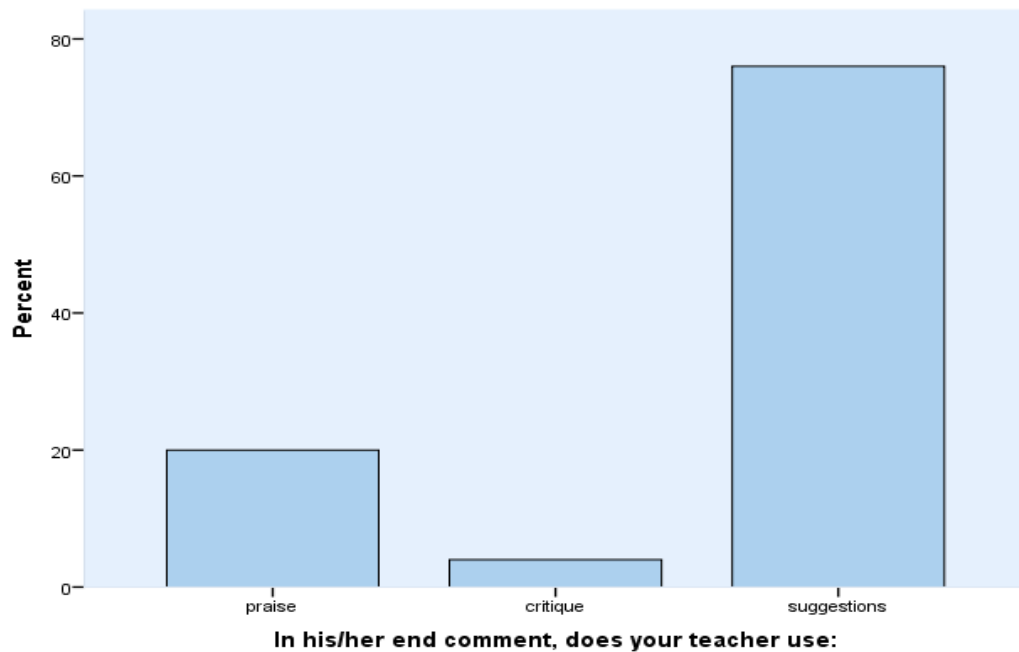


Figure 17 Frequencies of the fifteenth question for TA's Students

Table 26 Question 15: In his/her end comment, does your teacher use

	Number of students	Percentage
Praise	5	20%
Critique	1	4%
Suggestions	19	76%

The figure shows that the first option "praise" received only five responses (20%), and one student selected the second option "critique", and 19 students selected the third option "suggestion". So, the majority (76%) affirmed that their teacher used suggestion more in her comments.

Question sixteen: Do you prefer the use of:

This question asked students to express their preferences concerning their teacher's acts in end comments. Three items were provided, the same options as the above question.

The highest number of responses (15) which represented 60% was devoted to the third option "suggestion". 10 students selected the first option "praise", and none of them chose critique, as shown below:

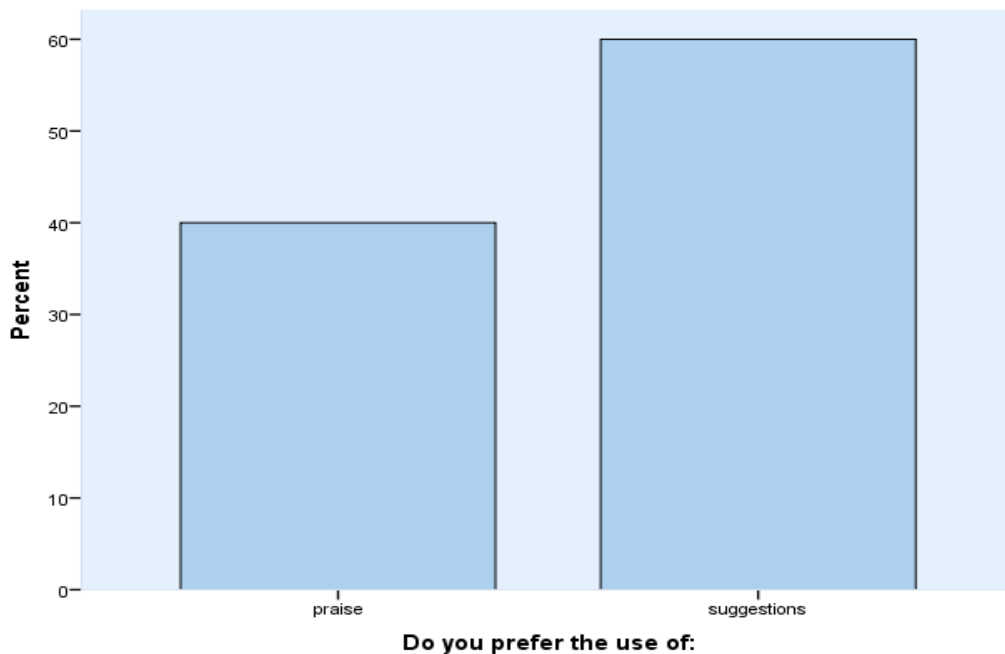


Figure 18 Frequencies of the sixteenth question for TA's Students

Table 27 Question 16: Do you prefer the use of

	Number of students	Percentage
Praise	10	40%
Critique	0	0%
Suggestions	15	60%

Question seventeen: How useful to your learning do you find reading through teacher comments helpful for future essays?

In this question, it demonstrates whether students are aware of the importance of teachers comments in their essays in their learning journey that helps them to improve for future essays.

The figure below, demonstrates that all students are aware that their teacher's comments on their writings are useful.

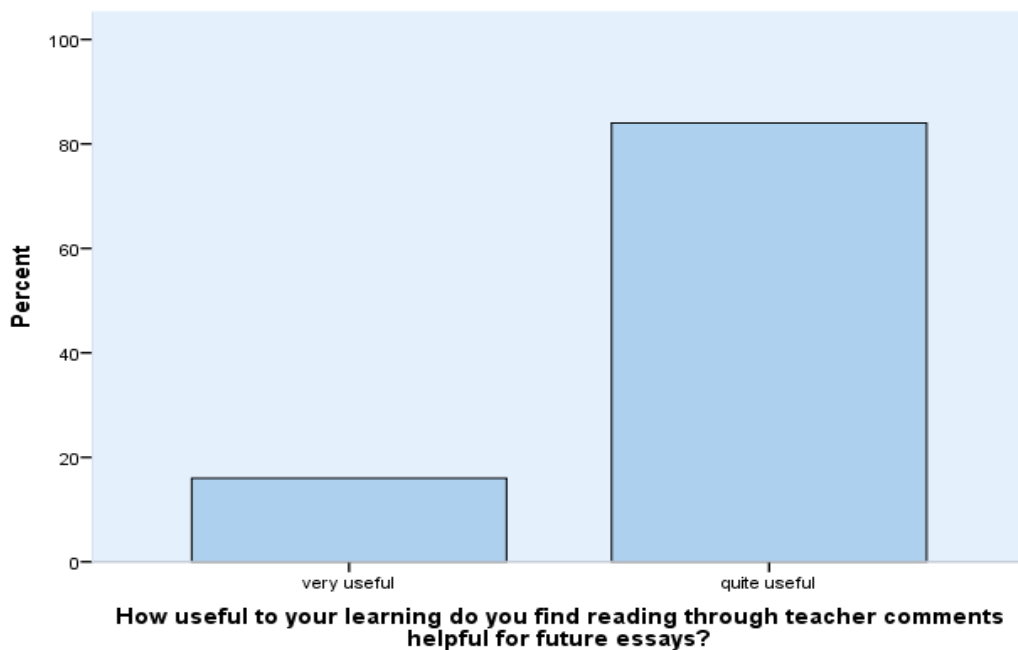


Figure 19 Frequencies of the seventeenth question for TA’s Students

Table 28 Question 17: How useful to your learning do you find reading through teacher comments helpful for future essays?

	Number of students	Percentage
Very useful	4	16%
Quite useful	21	84%
Not very useful	0	0%
Not at all useful	0	0%

With 84% of the students selected “quite useful”, and 16% chose “very useful”. None of the students answered not useful to their teachers comments.

b. Findings of TB’s students’ questionnaire

Question one: How do you judge your teacher’s written feedback comments at the end of your essays?

From the below results, it is noticeable that “slightly important” and “moderate important” received the highest percentage of 40% each. The number of students who selected “not important” were three with percentage of 12%, and two students selected “important”. However, none of them chose “very important”.

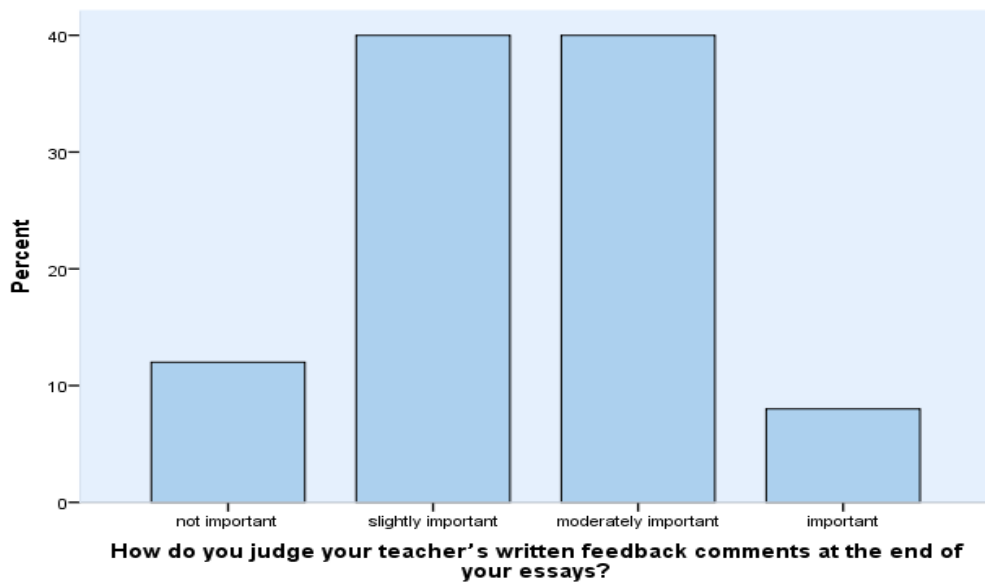


Figure 20 Frequencies of the first question for TB's Students

Table 29 Question 1: How do you judge your teacher's written feedback comments at the end of your essays?

	Number of students	Percentage
Not important	3	12%
Slightly important	10	40%
Moderate important	10	40%
Important	2	8%
Very important	0	0%

Question two: How often do you read your teacher's end feedback comments?

The findings show that 80% of the students often read their teacher's end comments. Then, 3 students (12%) sometimes read these comments. The first and the fourth options "always" and "rarely" received respectively 1 response representing a percentage of 4% each.

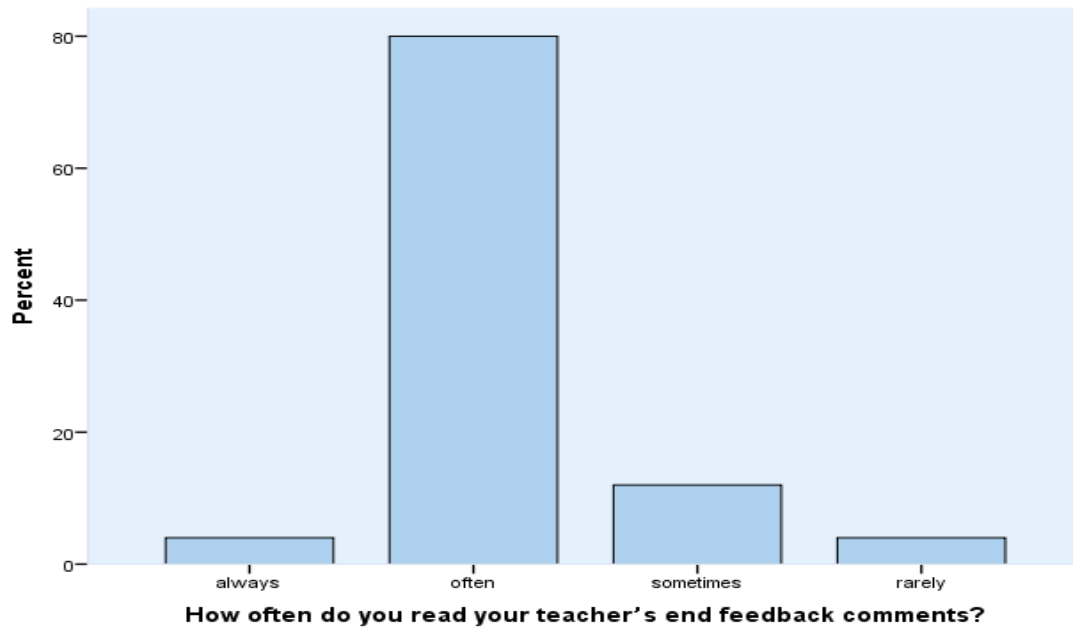


Figure 21 Frequencies of the second question for TB's Students

Table 30 Question 2: How often do you read your teacher's end feedback comments?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	1	4%
Often	20	80%
Sometimes	3	12%
Rarely	1	4%
Never	0	0%

Question three: Do you focus more on teacher's comments or just you skip to the correction of the mistakes?

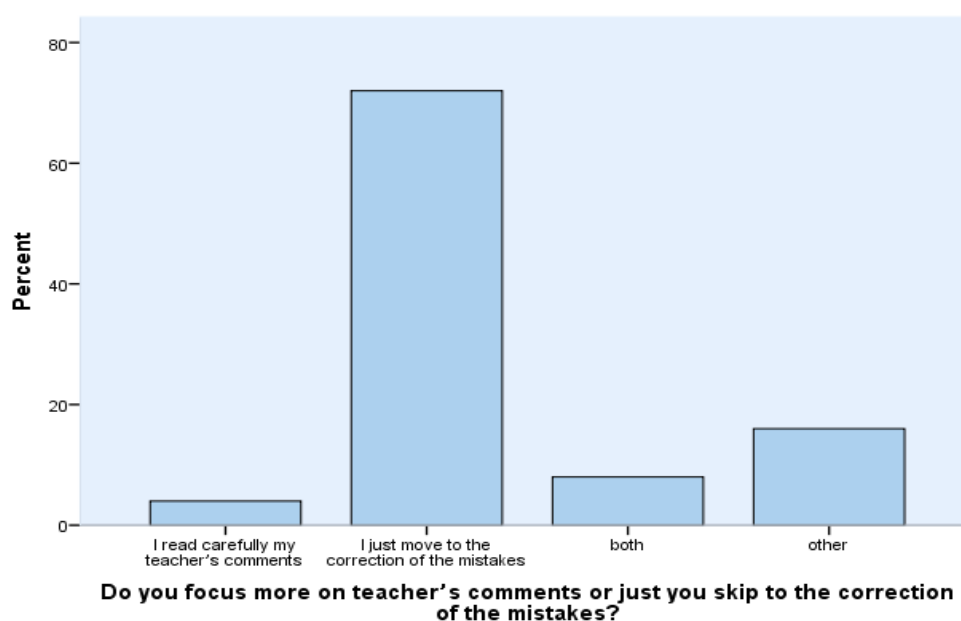


Figure 22 Frequencies of the third question for TB's Students

Table 31 Question 3: Do you focus more on teacher's comments or just you skip to the correction of the mistakes?

	Number of students	Percentage
I read carefully my teacher's comments	1	4%
I just move to the correction of the mistakes	18	72%
Both	2	8%
Other:	4	16%

From the results of the above figure, 72% of the students confirm that they just move to their teacher's correction of the mistakes without reading their detailed comments. On the other hand, only one student reads teacher's comments, and two students selected both answers. While four of the students wrote that they only focus on the mark.

Question four: Are your teacher's end comments helpful for understanding your mistakes?

The results of this question prove that most students agreed that their teacher's end comments were not helpful to form 72% for "very little" and 16% for "not at all". While 12% of the students selected "somehow" helpful.

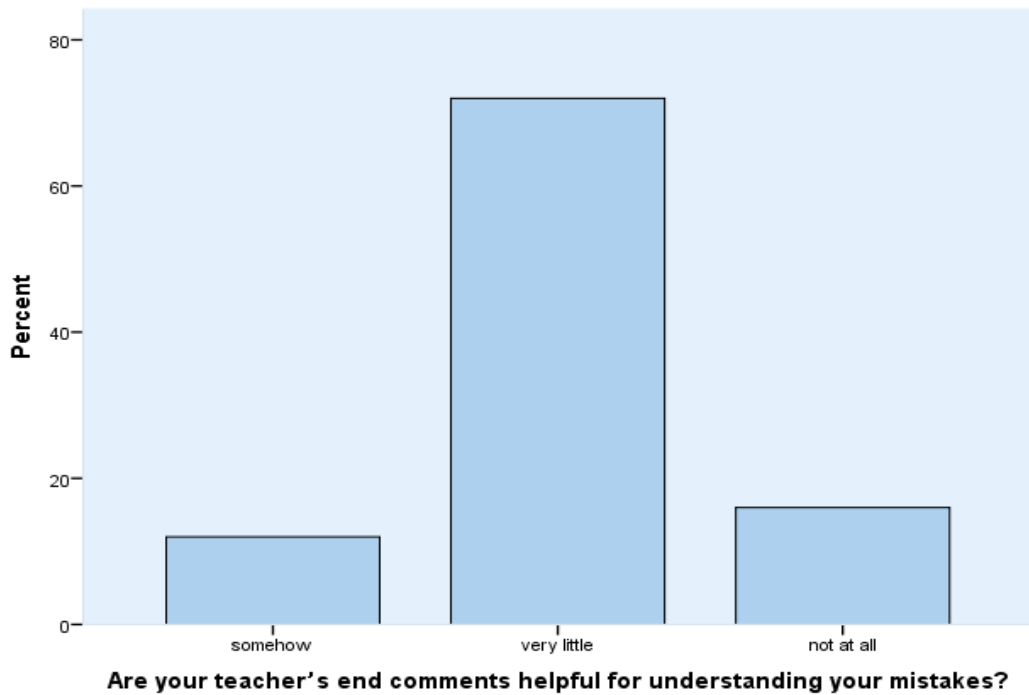


Figure 23 Frequencies of the fourth question for TB's Students

Table 32 Question 4: Are your teacher's end comments helpful for understanding your mistakes?

	Number of students	Percentage
To a great extent	0	0%
Somehow	3	12%
Very little	18	72%
Not at all	4	16%

Question five: Do you ask for clarification from your teacher on his her writing feedback comments?

The results of this question show that 18 students chose “often” to form 72%, five student chose “sometimes” with 20%, and only two students selected “always” (8%). Non of the students selected “rarely” nor “never”.

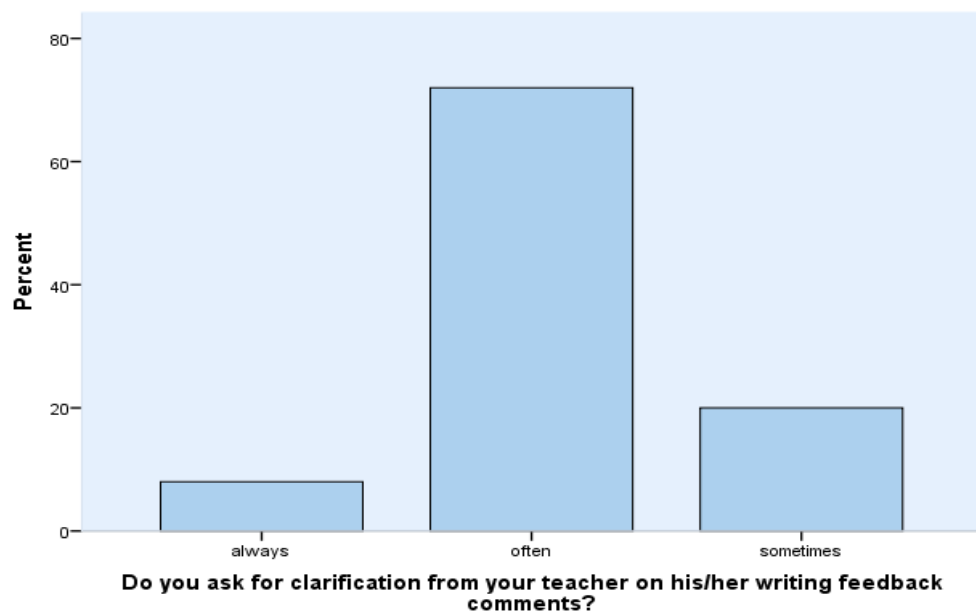


Figure 24 Frequencies of the fifth question Group 2

Table 33 Question 5: Do you ask for clarification from your teacher on his/her writing feedback comments?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	2	8%
Often	18	72%
Sometimes	5	20%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%

Question six: How often do you think you apply your teacher's feedback comments to your next writing?

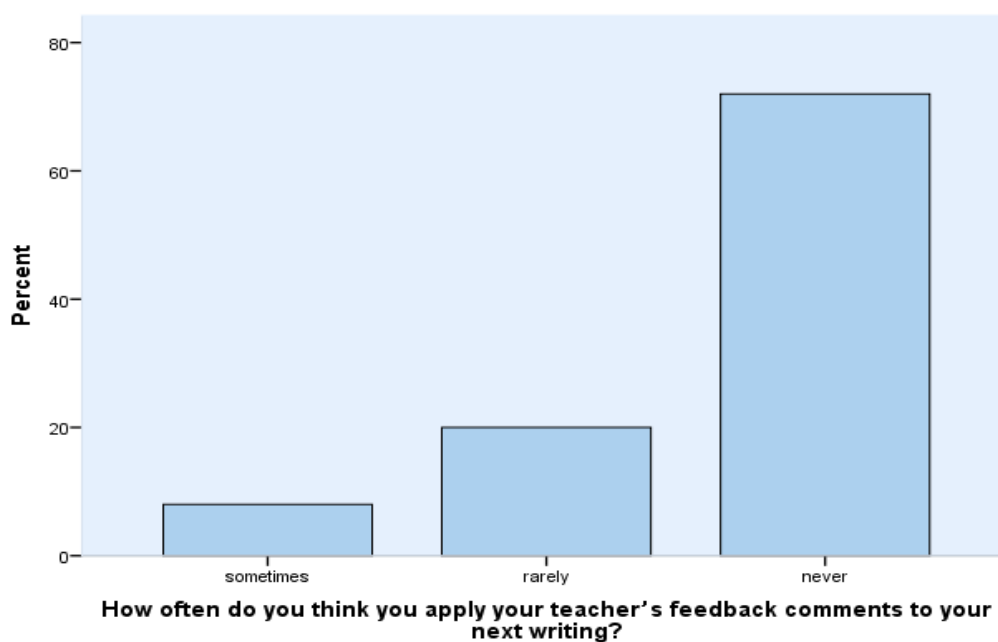


Figure 25 Frequencies of the sixth question for TB's Students

Table 34 Question 6: How often do you think you apply your teacher's feedback comments to your next writing?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	0	0%
Often	0	0%
Sometimes	2	8%
Rarely	5	20%
Never	18	72%

As shown in the figure and table above, the most answer received by the students is “never” to form 72%. Five of them selected rarely with 20%, and only two students chose “sometimes” (8%). Zero of the students chose “always” or “often”.

Question seven: Do you notice any improvement in your next essays /writing tasks?

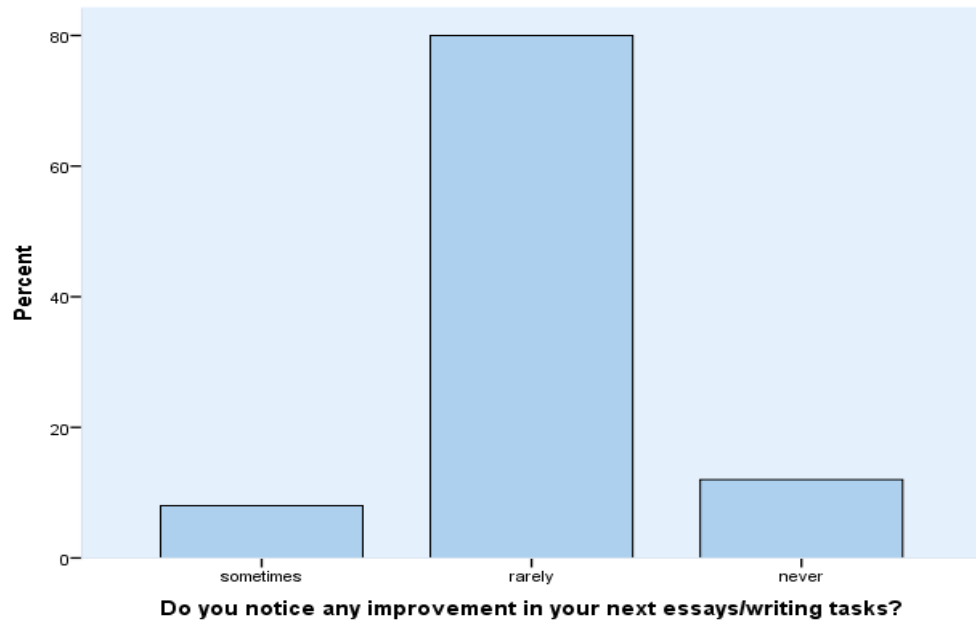


Figure 26 Frequencies of the seventh question of TB's Students

Table 35 Question 7: Do you notice any improvement in your next essays/writing tasks?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	0	0%
Often	0	0%
Sometimes	2	8%
Rarely	20	80%
Never	3	12%

In the previous question, the results show that the majority of the students answered by “rarely” (80%). However, two students chose the option “sometimes”, and three of them noticed that they did not notice any improvement in their next writing tasks.

Question eight: Do you make the same errors in your next essay/ writing tasks?

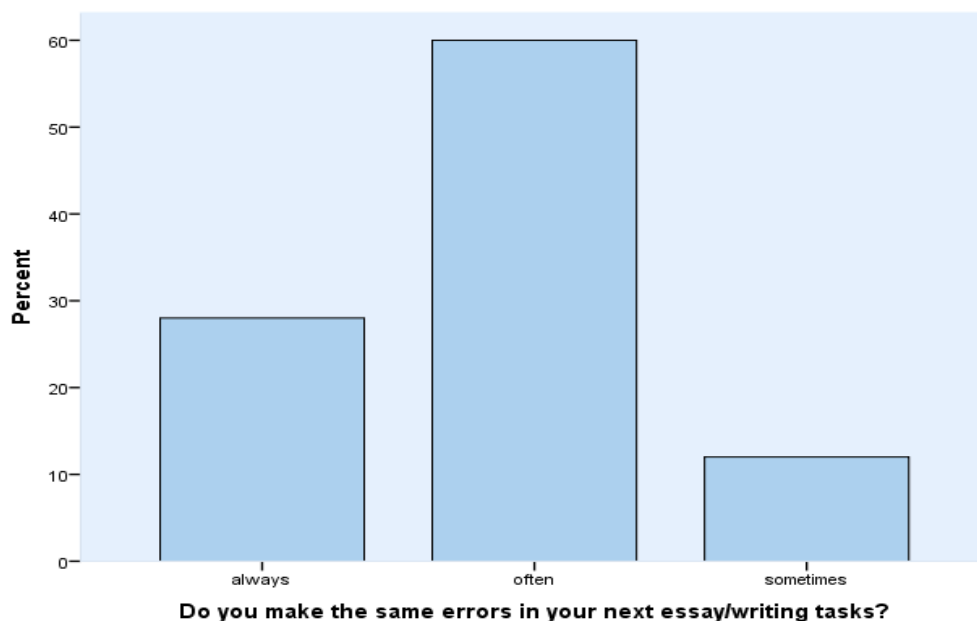


Figure 27 Frequencies of the eighth question for TB’s Students

Table 36 Question 8: Do you make the same errors in your next essay/writing tasks?

	Number of students	Percentage
Always	7	28%
Often	15	60%
Sometimes	3	12%
Rarely	0	0%
Never	0	0%

For this question, 15 of the students often do the same error in their next essays, and seven of them always do the same mistakes. Only three chose “sometimes” (12%), and none of them selected “rarely” nor “never”.

Question nine: How can you describe your teacher’s end comments?

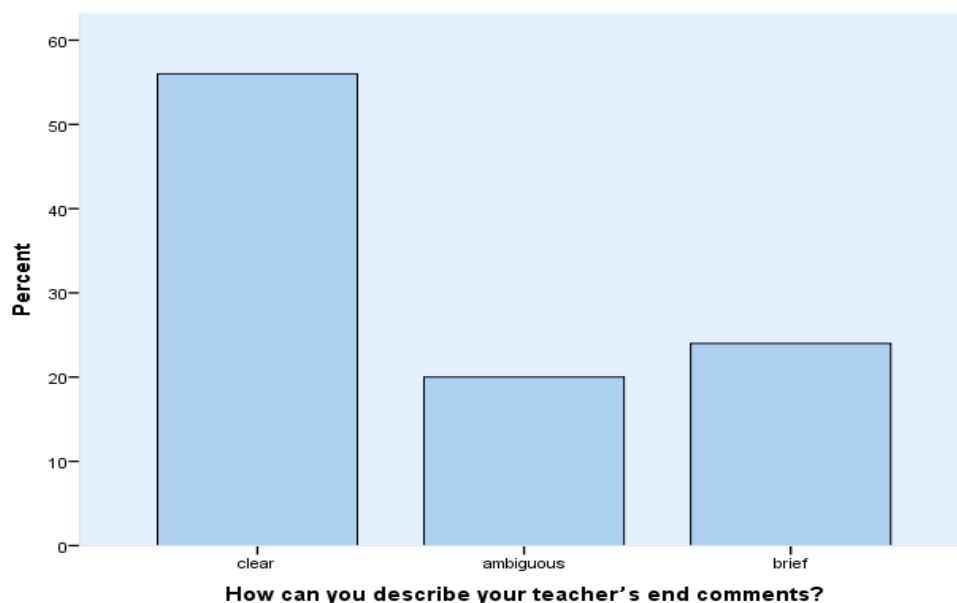


Figure 28 Frequencies of the ninth question for TB's Students

Table 37 Question 9: How can you describe your teacher's end comments?

	Number of students	Percentage
Clear	14	56%
Ambiguous	5	20%
Brief	6	24%
Long	0	0%

As it is obvious from the figure, the highest percentage of responses (56%) was devoted to the first option "clear", which means that 14 students were satisfied with their teacher's form of end comments. The number of students who thought that these comments were ambiguous was five (20%). Also, six students described them as brief remarks. However, no one claimed that these comments were long.

Question ten: How do you prefer it?

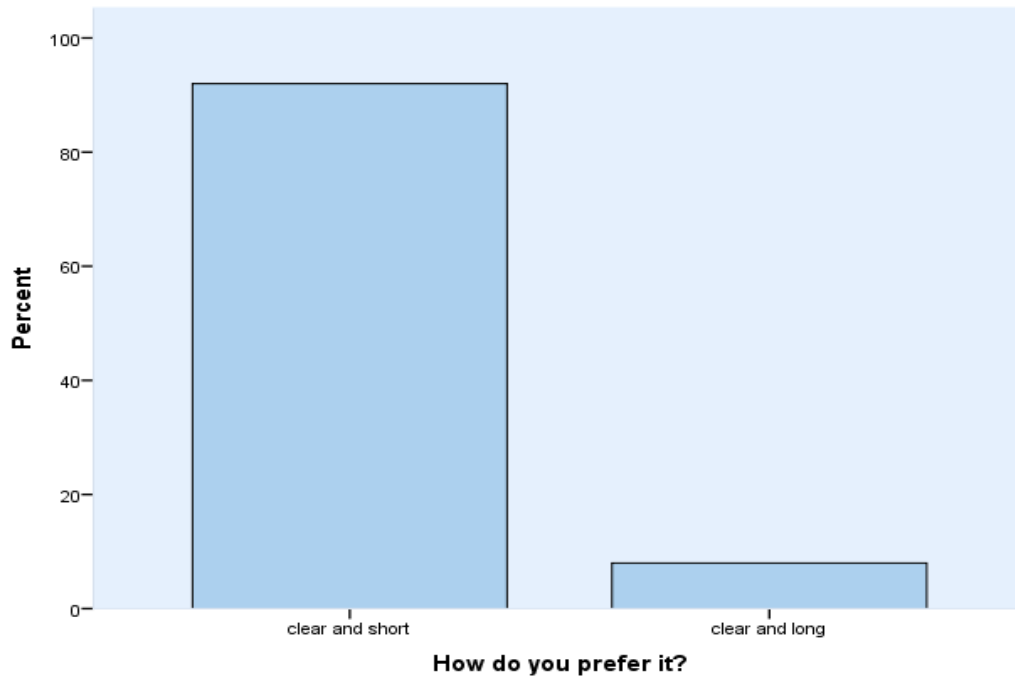


Figure 29 Frequencies of the tenth question for TB’s Students

Table 38 Question 10: How do you prefer it?

	Number of students	Percentage
Clear and short	23	92%
Clear and long	2	8%

The above figure indicates that 92% of the students preferred the end comments of the essays to be clear and short. On the other hand, only 8% (two students) opted for the second option “clear and long”.

Question eleven: Do you think that your teacher’s comments deal with the essay’s mistakes: globally or specifically?

As it is indicated from the results in the figure below, 18 students thought that their teacher responded to their essays globally, and seven responses (28%) were devoted for the second option. That is to say, seven students out of 25 thought that their teacher responded specifically to their essays.

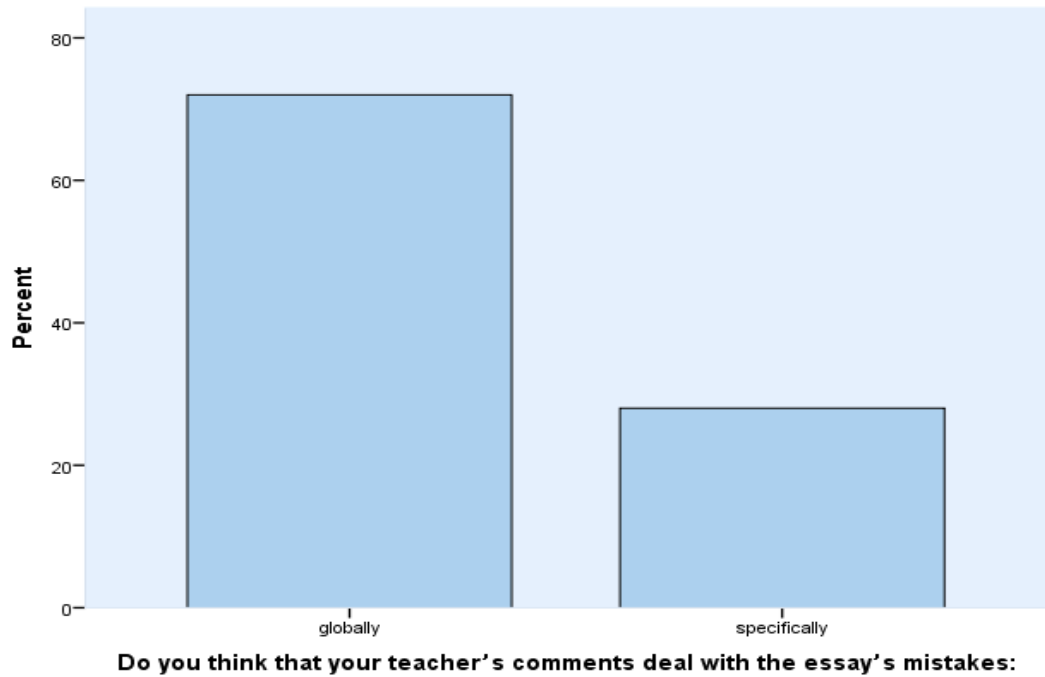


Figure 30 Frequencies of the eleventh question for TB's Students

Table 39 Question 11: Do you think that your teacher's comments deal with the essay's mistakes

	Number of students	Percentage
Globally	18	72%
Specifically	7	28%

Question twelve: What do you prefer?

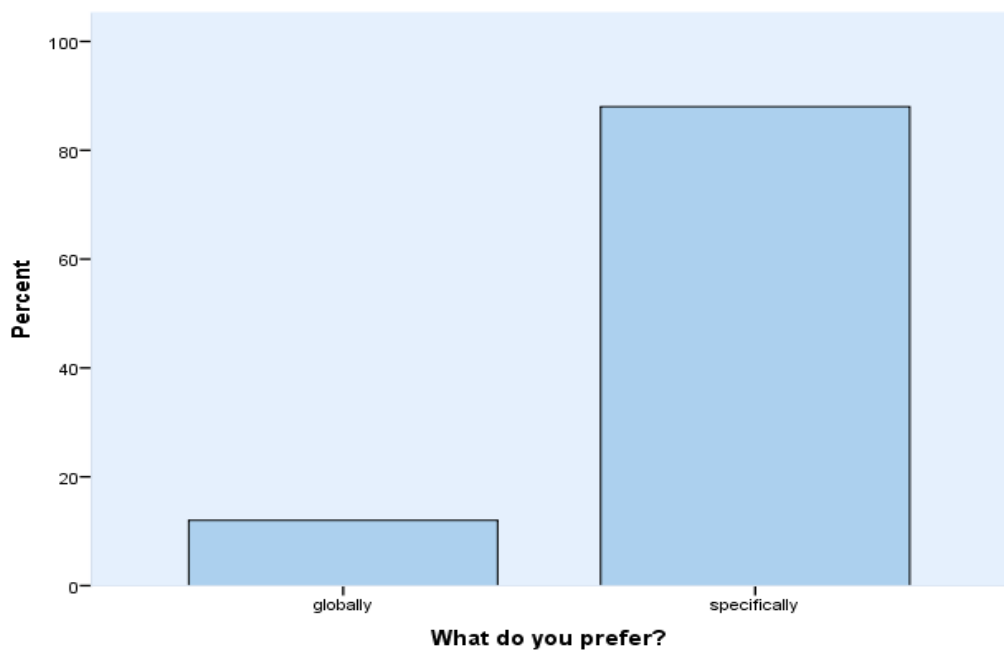


Figure 31 Frequencies of the twelfth question for TB's Students

Table 40 Question 12: What do you prefer?

	Number of students	Percentage
Globally	3	12%
Specifically	22	88%

The majority of the students 22, which represented 88% of responses, preferred their teacher to comment specifically on their mistakes. On the other hand, three response were devoted to the first option commenting “globally”.

Question thirteen: In your opinion, your teacher’s end comments focus on:

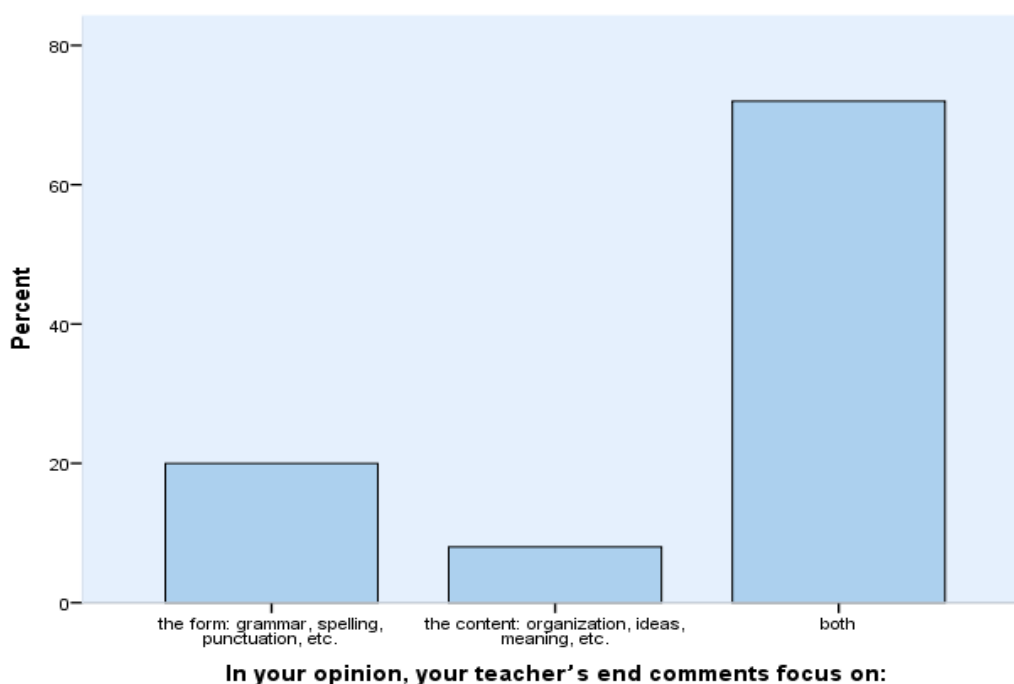


Figure 32 Frequencies of the thirteenth question for TB’s Students

Table 41 Question 13: In your opinion, your teacher’s end comments focus on

	Number of students	Percentage
The form: grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc..	5	20%
The content: organization, ideas, meaning, etc..	2	8%
Both	18	72%

This question asked for the student’s preferences about their teacher’s focus. The third option “both: the content and the form” was selected by 18 students (72%). Five students responses were devoted to the first option “the form”, and two students selected the content.

Question fourteen: Do you want your teacher to focus more on:

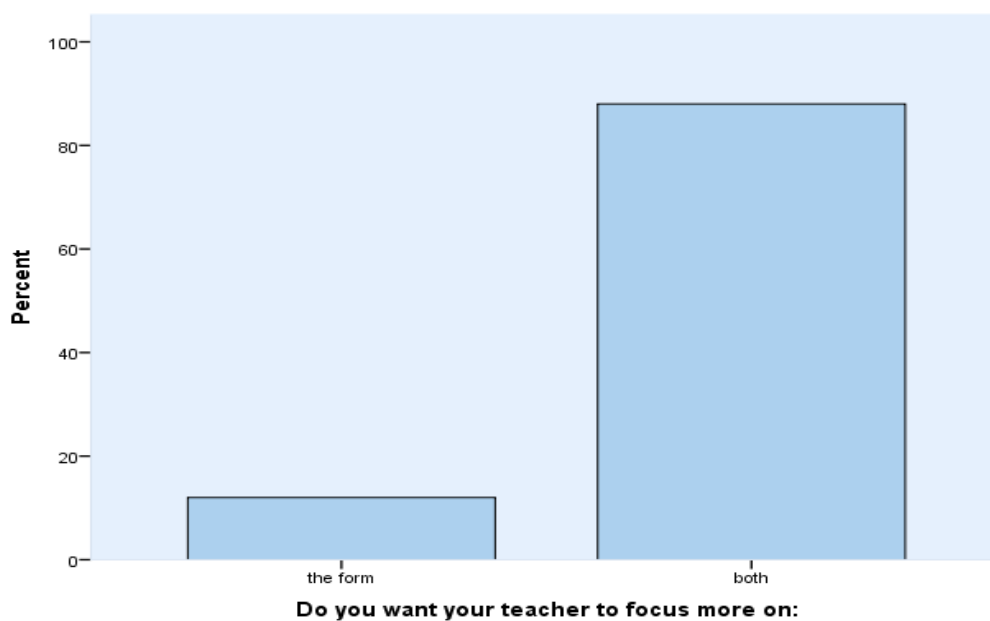


Figure 33 Frequencies of the fourteenth question for TB's Students

Table 42 Question 14: Do you want your teacher to focus more on

	Number of students	Percentage
The form	3	12%
The content	0	0%
Both	22	88%

Twenty two students preferred that their teacher focuses on both the form and the content when commenting to their essays. They presented a percentage of 88%. Only 12 % of the responses were devoted to the first option “the form” representing three students. Moreover, none of the students selected the content option.

Question fifteen: In his/her end comment, does your teacher use:

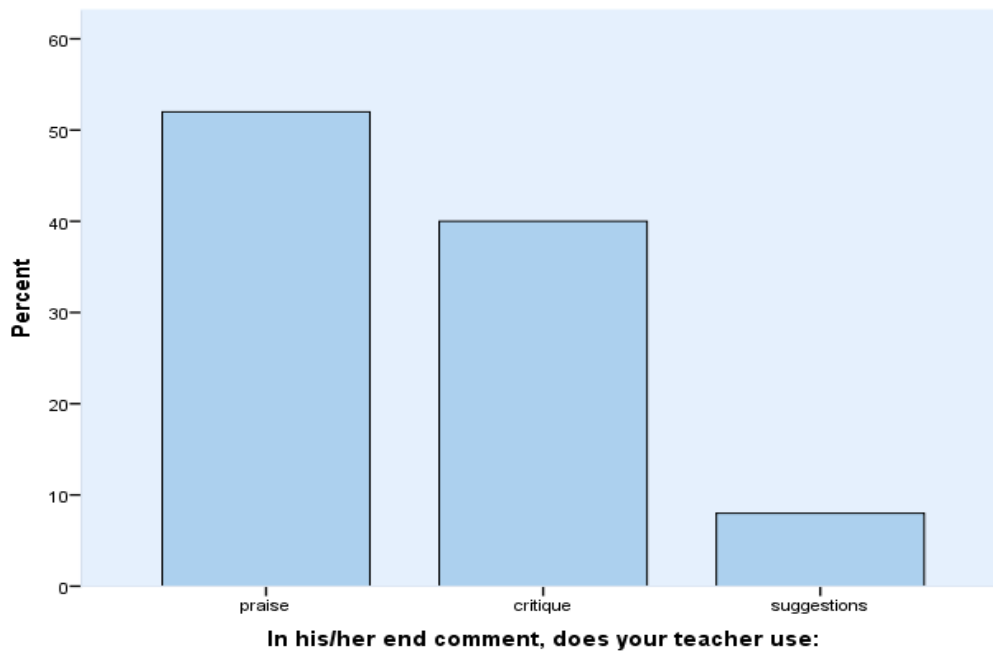


Figure 34 Frequencies of the fifteenth question for TB’s Students

Table 43 Question 15: In his/her end comment, does your teacher use

	Number of students	Percentage
Praise	13	52%
Critique	10	40%
Suggestions	2	8%

In this question, 13 students thought that their teacher used praise only in her comments, while ten students (40%) selected critique. The third option “suggestion” was selected by two students only representing 8% of responses.

Question sixteen: Do you prefer the use of:

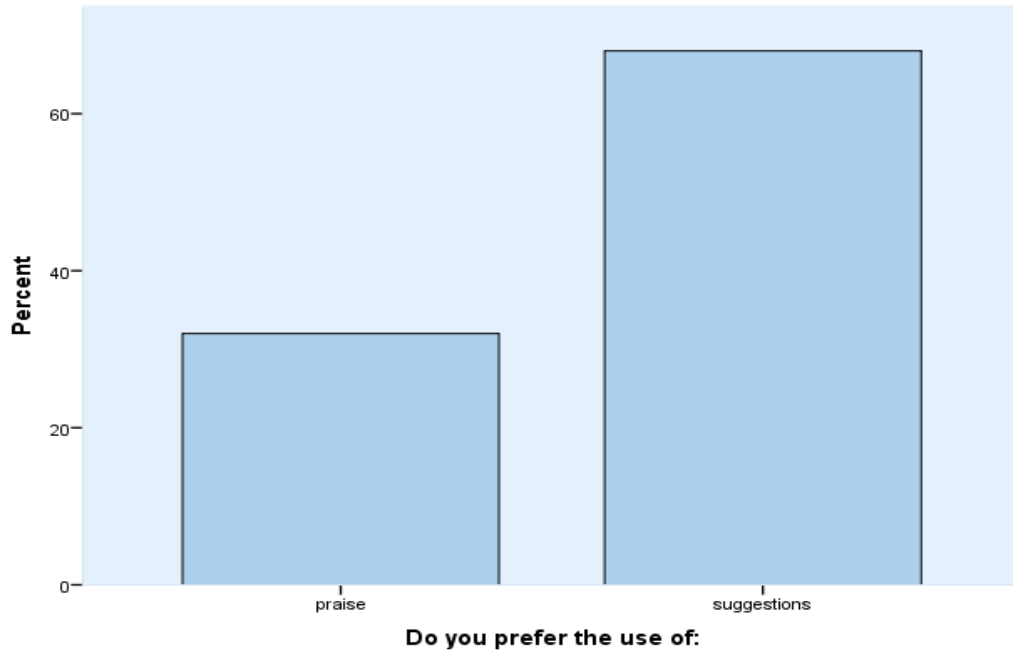


Figure 35 Frequencies of the sixteenth question for TB's Students

Table 44 Question 16: Do you prefer the use of

	Number of students	Percentage
Praise	8	32%
Critique	0	0%
Suggestions	17	68%

Regarding question sixteen, the first option praise was selected by eight students representing 32% of the responses. As for the second option “critique”, none of the students preferred it. The highest number of student (17) answered the third option “suggestion”. They represented a percentage of 68% of responses.

Question seventeen: How useful to your learning do you find reading through teacher comments helpful for future essays?

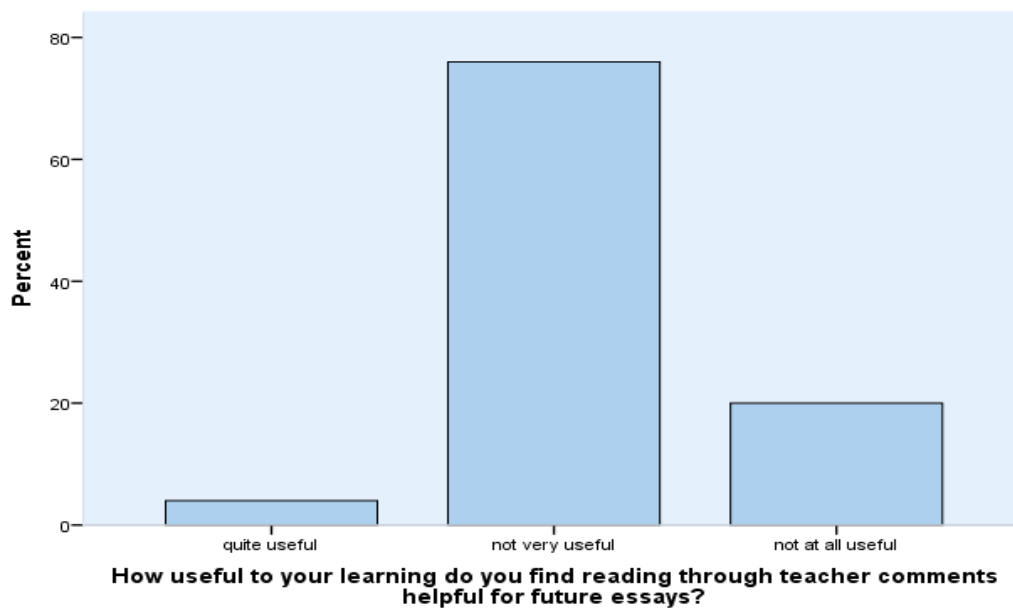


Figure 36 Frequencies of the seventeenth question for TB's Students

Table 45 Question 17: How useful to your learning do you find reading through teacher comments helpful for future essays?

	Number of students	Percentage
Very useful	0	0%
Quite useful	1	4%
Not very useful	19	76%
Not at all useful	5	20%

The last question for the students' questionnaire, shows that 76% of the students did not find their teacher's comments very useful, and five of the students found these comments as not useful at all. Only one student found these comments quite useful.

3. Findings of Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' questionnaire contains 15 questions, of which most of them are same as student's questionnaire in order to compare the answers of both. Since this case study contains two groups of students, the questionnaire was distributed to the teachers of each group (Teacher A and Teacher B).

The main purpose of their questionnaire was to check upon students answers and how they correlate between one another. Also, to check whether teachers' actual end comments match with their own views.

Below are the charts for each question, for both teachers:

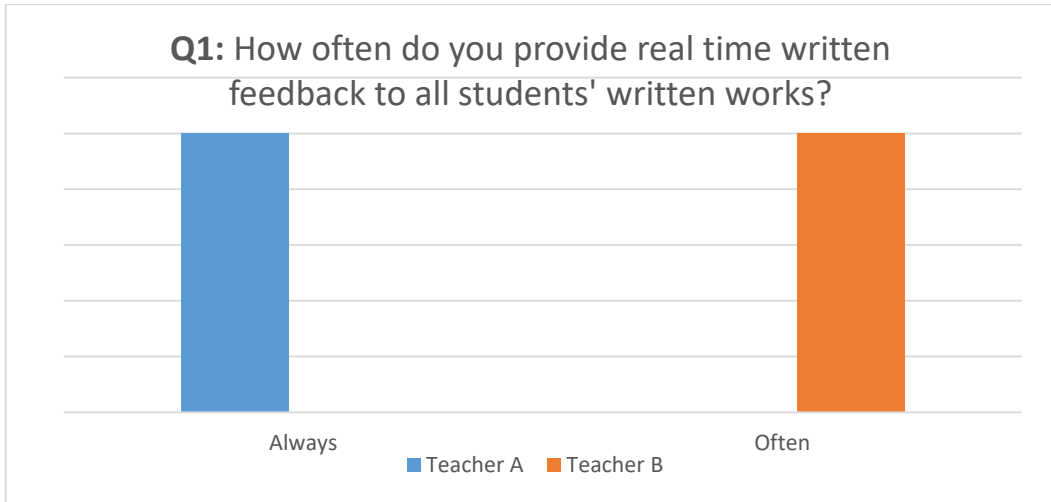


Figure 37 Question 1: How often do you provide real time written feedback to all students' written work?

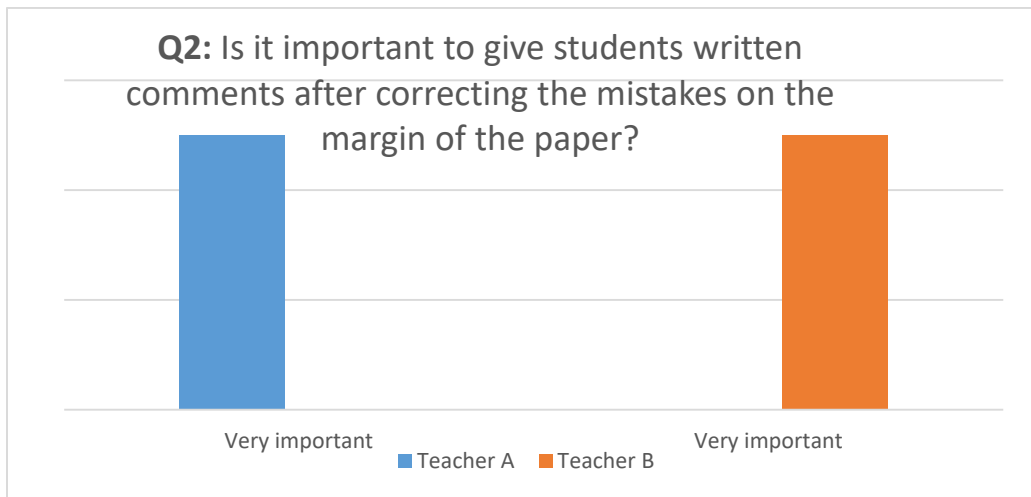


Figure 38 Question 2: Is it important to give students written comments after correcting the mistakes on the margin of the paper?

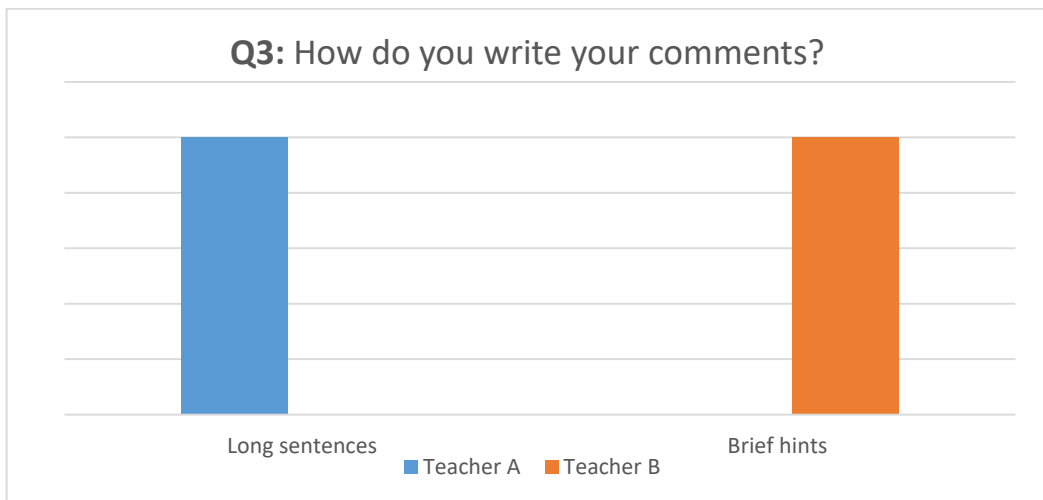


Figure 39 Question 3: How do you write your comments?

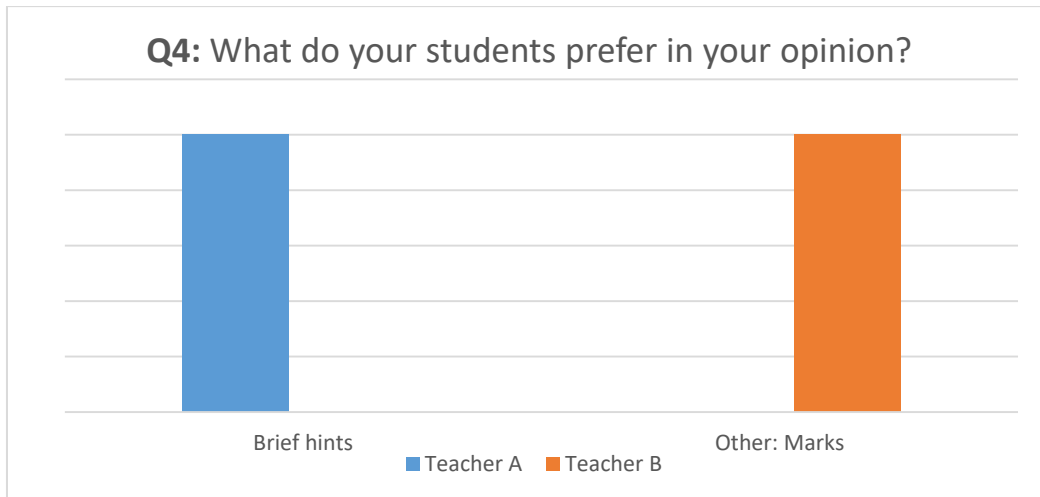


Figure 40 Question 4: What do your students prefer in your opinion?

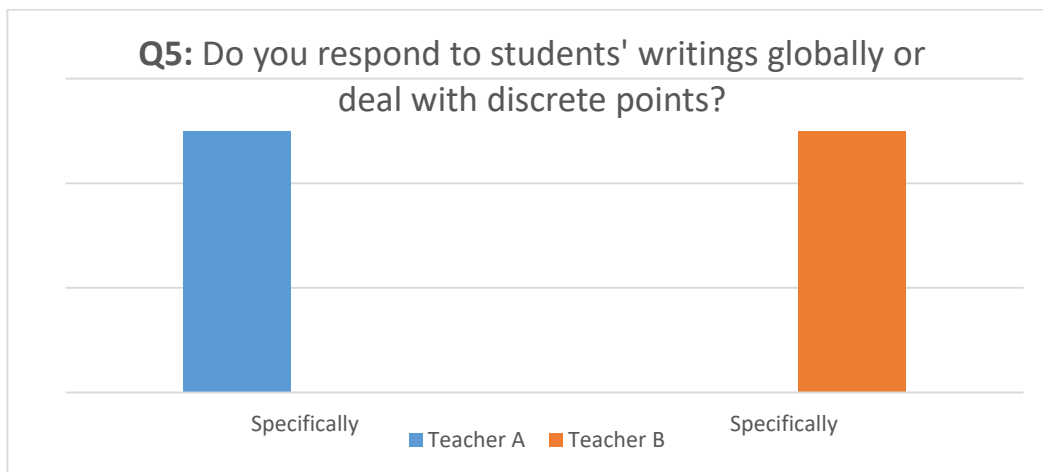


Figure 41 Question 5: Do you respond to students' writings globally or deal with discrete points?

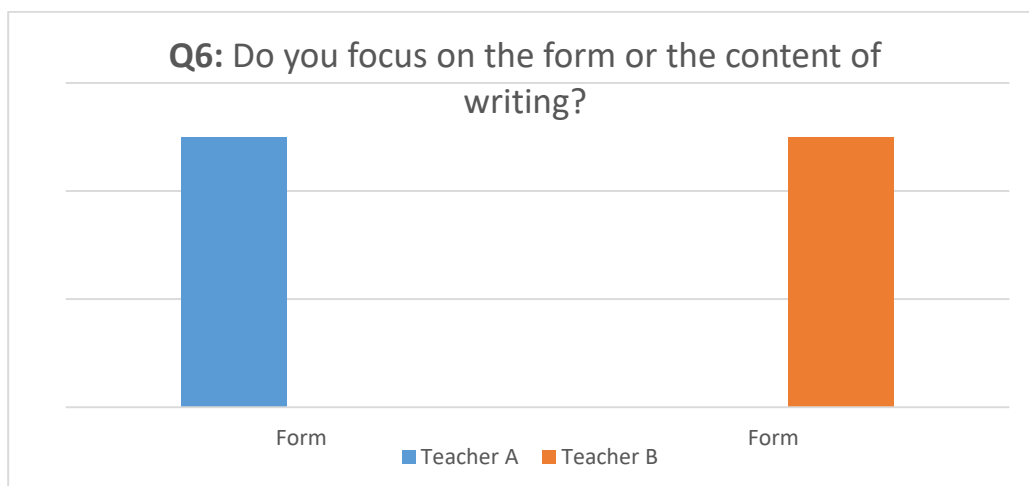


Figure 42 Question 6: Do you focus on the form or the content of writing?

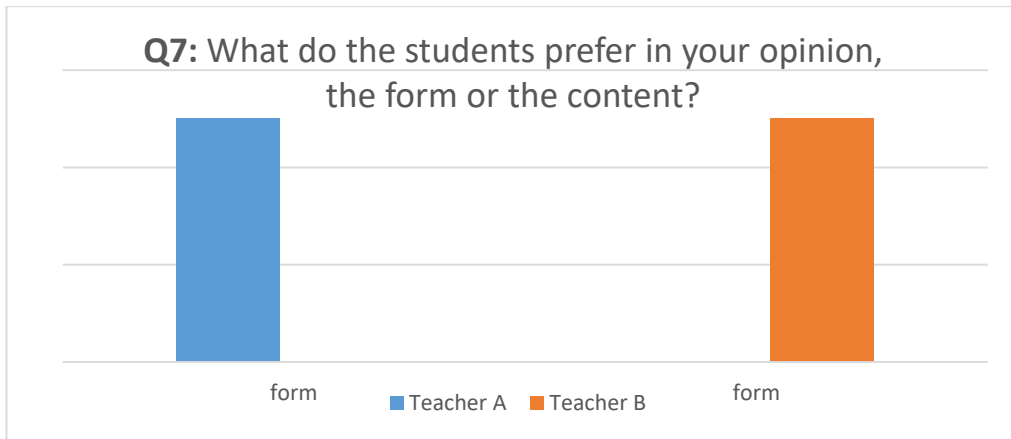


Figure 43 Question 7: What do the students prefer in your opinion, the form or the content?

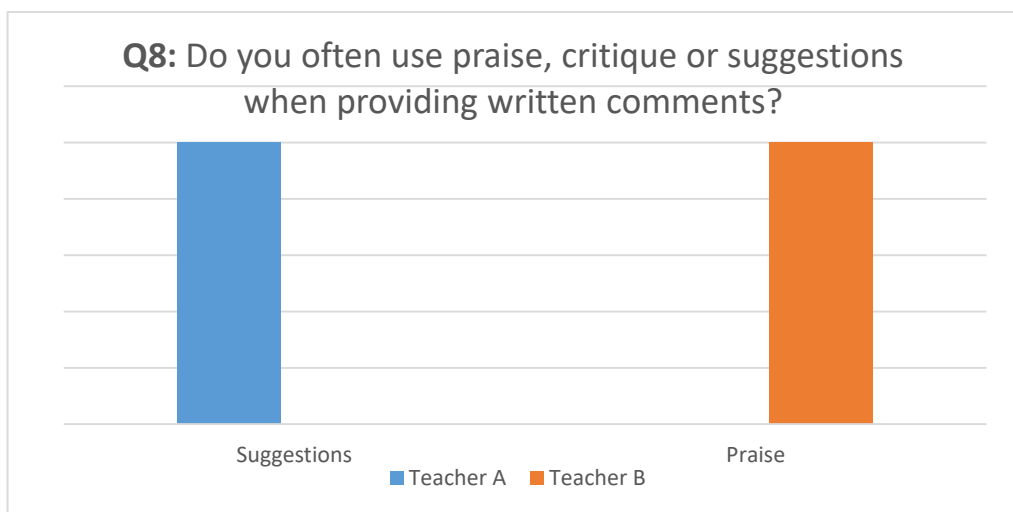


Figure 44 Question 8: Do you often use praise, critique or suggestions when providing written comments?

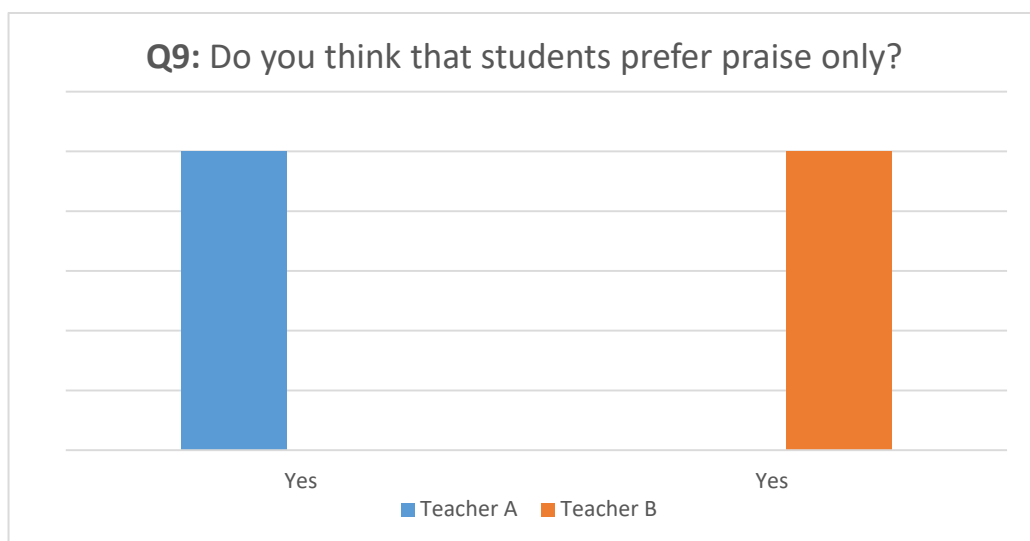


Figure 45 Question 9: Do you think that students prefer praise only?

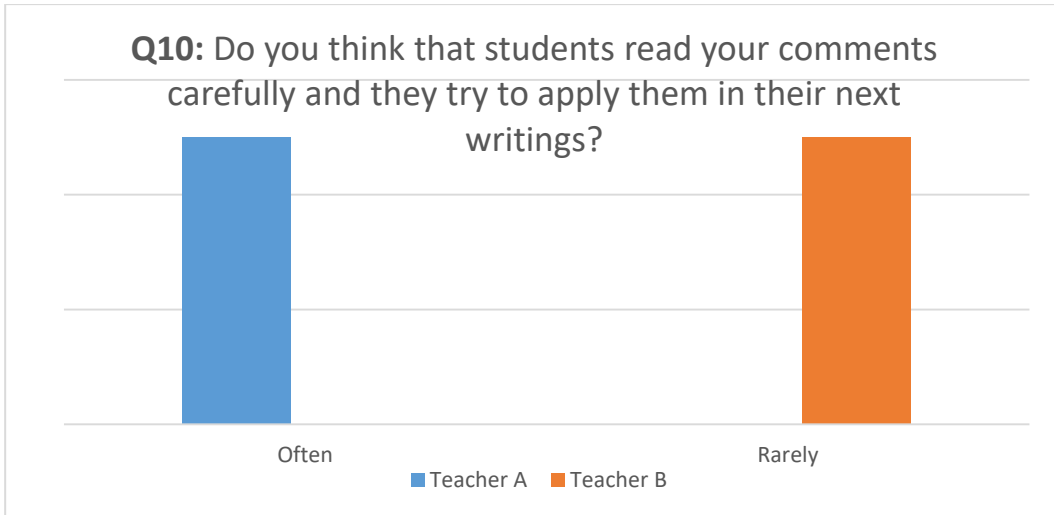


Figure 46 Question 10: Do you think that students read your comments carefully and they try to apply them in their next writing?

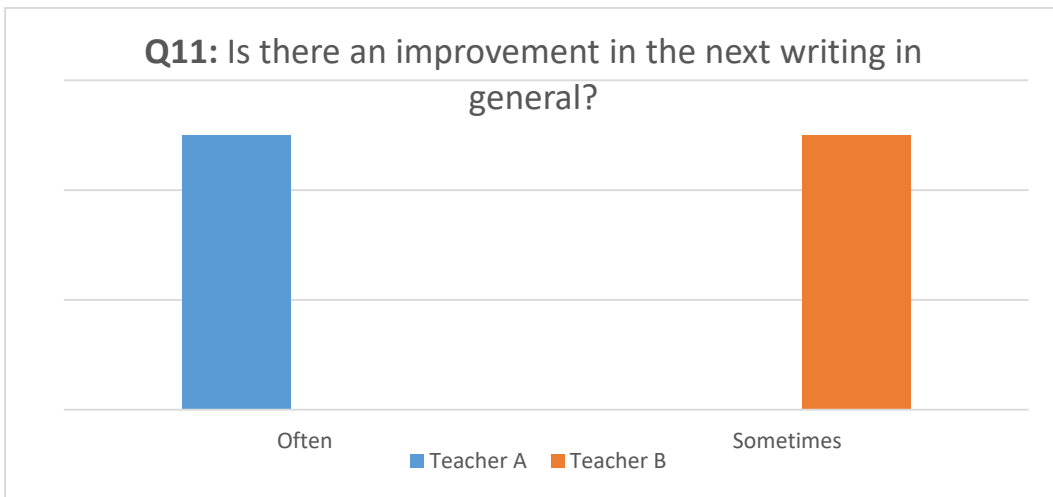


Figure 47 Question 11: Is there an improvement in the next writing in general?

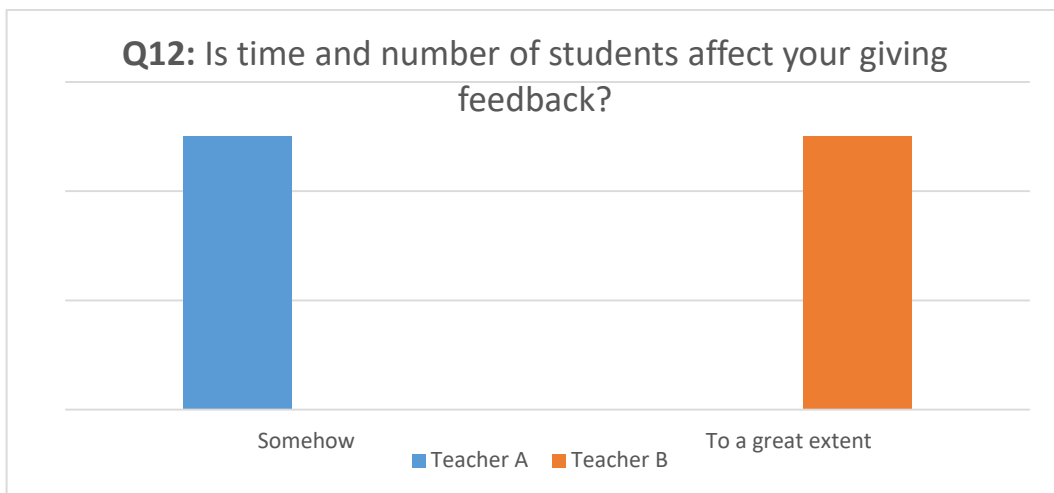


Figure 48 Question 12: Is time and number of students affect your giving feedback?

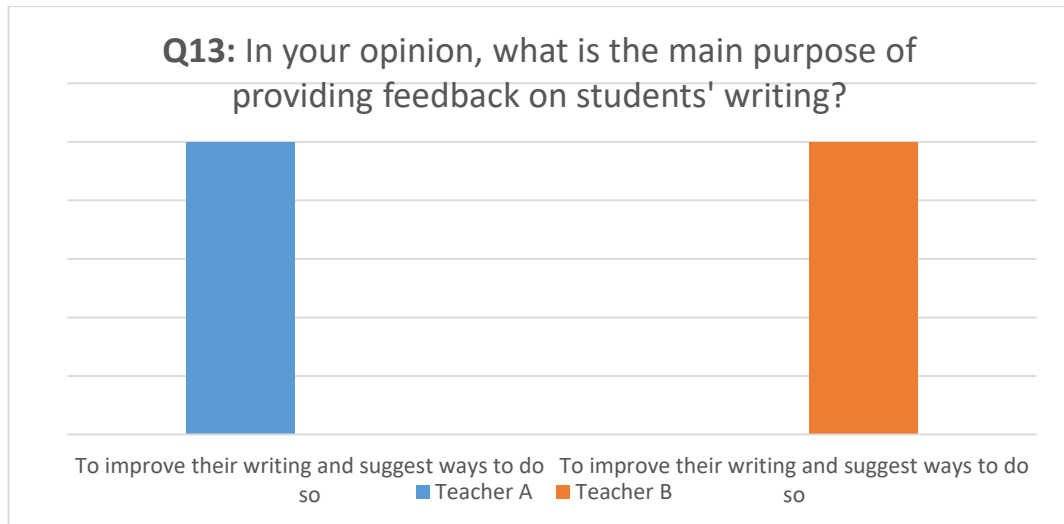


Figure 49 Question 13: In your opinion, what is the main purpose of providing feedback on students' writing?

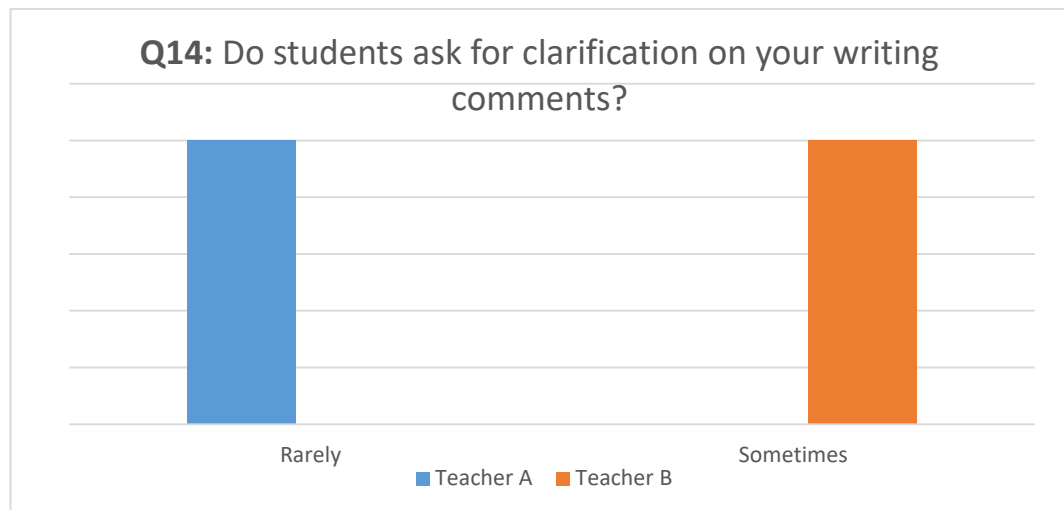


Figure 50 Question 14: Do students ask for clarification on your writing comments?

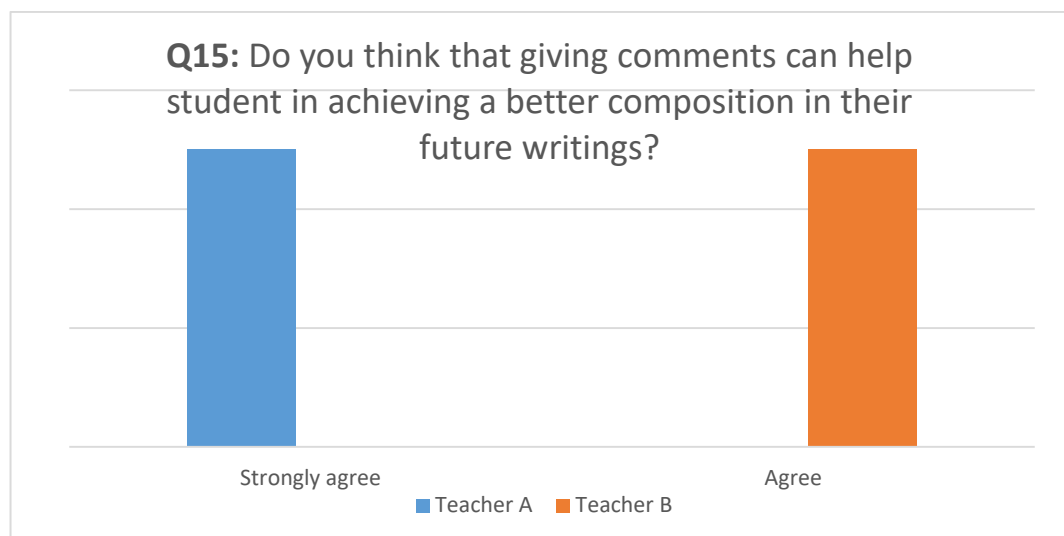


Figure 51 Question 15: Do you think that giving comments can help student in achieving a better composition in their future writings?

As it is obvious from the above results, the answers were various in terms of giving the feedback to students. However, both teachers agree on the importance of giving feedback and that students prefer praise.

C. Discussion

1. Discussion of the Samples

What was very flagrant from the very beginning in teacher A's samples of end comments was the focus on suggestions. In fact, the number of suggestions was 56 and the number of criticism was only 4, though the total of the feedback points was 80. That is to say, 95% of teacher A's comments were positive and only 5% were negative, whereas direct suggestion was totally obvious (54%). The use of direct suggestion revealed her tendency to provide students with all feedback functions and to alternate between them.

On the other hand, teacher B's end comments focus on revealing the points of weakness so that students avoid repeating them. This correlated with what Cohen and Cavalcanti affirmed in Kroll's book *second language writing*: "The comments that the teacher actually made on the essays mostly pointed out the problems rather than praise strengths." (qtd in Kroll 1990: 160).

D. The overlap between categories

Although TB's criticism were given directly and no direct suggestion was present, the application of Hyland and Hyland's model of analysis (2001) revealed that in any criticism a need for future Improvement was embedded.

In other words, there was a hidden suggestion in every criticism. On the one hand, all TB's critical points could be turned or read by students as suggestions. On the other hand, the overlap between feedback functions was easier with the feedback points of TA because there was a clear distinction between direct and indirect suggestions. Direct suggestion was known by the use of modal features like *should*, *need to*, *have to*, *must* or verb like *try*. However, indirect suggestion was known by the use of verbs in the imperative form, which could be easily read as a criticism.

E. Teachers' focus in their end comments

TB focused on the form in his end comments. In fact, a total of 70 feedback points dealt with form: 4% in praise, and 96% in criticism. So, the majority of TB's comments (61%) criticized the form and not the content of student's essays. On the other hand, a total of 2% feedback points was devoted to praise the form.

As far as the content is concerned, only two feedback points (1%) about praise dealt with the content. However, 19% criticized the content. That is to say a percentage of 20% focused on the content. In contrast, TA's samples focused on the content more than the form. Indeed, 54% of feedback points dealt with the content: 15% praised the content, and 3% criticized the content, and 36% suggestions were about the content of the essay.

F. Mitigation in end comments

- Paired acts

In TA's samples, 69% of the feedback points were combined to form paired acts. This was thanks to the linkers of coordination "and", linkers of contrast: "but", "yet", "however", and linkers of results: "for that". However, 8% of the total of feedback points were found in TB samples of end comments.

- Hedges

In TB's samples, 66% criticism were hedged through the use of quantifiers such as some, a few, many, too many, very and too. TB used many negative comments that required employing these quantifiers in order to reduce the tension of criticism. However, there was no hedged criticism in TA's end comments and there was no use of quantifiers because many criticisms were replaced by suggestions.

- Interrogatives

In order to avoid expressing his criticism in a harsh way and hurting the students, TB used interrogatives to indicate that the students did not understand what was required, for example: Is this an ad? However, it was noticed that the comments that hid an interaction between the teacher and the students were expressed mainly in the margins of the essay and not in the end. On the other hand, TA did not prefer the use of interrogatives. That is why there was no interrogative form in her comments.

- Unmitigated comments

31% of TA's end comments were unmitigated because the number of suggestions was more than criticism. Also, the latter were not so direct or harsh. In other words, there was no need to use many strategies in mitigation. In fact, she used only the strategy of paired acts. However, only 23% of TB's end comments were unmitigated due to the use of three strategies of mitigation (paired acts, hedges, and interrogatives) and more importantly the huge number of direct criticisms that had to be attenuated to reduce their force.

1. Discussion of TA's Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire showed students' attitudes and preferences towards their teacher's end comments. In the first question of TA's students' questionnaire, 88% of the students selected the fourth and the fifth choices (very important and important), and 12% chose the third option (moderate important). However, none of them chose not important or slightly important. Hence, the majority of TA's students judged their teacher's end comments positively.

In question two, which elicited the frequency of students' reading of their teacher's end comments, all the students (100%) selected the first and second option (always and often). So, all the students read these comments as they considered it very important to them, and this is shown also in question three as the students read carefully their teacher's comments and move to the correction of the mistakes. This means that all of the students spent time on reading their teacher's comments; they did not focus just on the grades.

In addition, most of TA's students (88%) argued that the written feedback at the end of their essays was to a great extent helpful for understanding their mistakes, and 12% of the students see it as somehow helpful. This shows again that the students' attitude was positive.

According to the teacher's comments, which were clear to the students, they did not need to ask for clarification from the teacher on her given writing feedback comments. Since the findings of question 9 show that 84% of the students perceive their teachers' comments as clear and long, which confirmed the results of the analysis of the samples, only three students affirmed that they were ambiguous. However, no one saw these comments as brief.

The next three questions (6, 7 and 8) are related to each other. These questions consider the frequency in applying teacher's comments on their next writings, avoiding making the same mistakes in order to improve their writing skills. Since these students do often apply their teacher's feedback comments to their next writings, they rarely make the same errors. Consequently, 96% of these students notice improvements on their next writings, and this was confirmed by their teacher as well.

What can be noticed in question 9 and 10 was that students' preferences confirmed their attitudes towards their teacher's end comments, although recent survey has suggested that there may be a misfit between written feedback teachers provided on composition and the learners' interests "that is, between what the teachers give and what the students would like to get" (Cohen and Cavalcanti in Kroll 1990, p. 155). In fact, the majority of the students (88%) preferred them to be clear and short and most of them perceived commands as clear and long. This indicated that the majority of students liked the way their teacher commented on their essays as it was clear comments. However, these comments were long as it contains suggestions. Only 12% of them preferred clear and long comments. As a result, students did not prefer long ones as they were boring or probably they needed much time to be read.

Question 11 examined whether TA commented globally or specifically on her students' writings. The majority of students (20) claimed that she used specific comments, whereas five students argued that she commented globally on their essays. These results confirm the ones in TA samples of end comments because the analysis showed that the teacher dealt basically with specific points in writing. These points represented the majority problems such as grammar, spelling, word choice and vocabulary.

As far as students' preferences towards the way TA commented on her students' essays are concerned, 92% of them prefer the way that she used in the analyzed samples. To put it differently, they opted for commenting specifically because global comments could not identify many specific problems. Hence, students could not correct their mistakes. However, only 8% chose the second option "globally". This might be because of the length and the much details in the comments as some of the students did not prefer long detailed comments.

Question 13 inquired about the focus of TA end comments (the form, the contents, or both). Although the results of the analysis of the samples indicated that she focused mainly on the content (54%) rather than the form (19%), students argued that she focused, in general, both on form and content. 8% of them selected the first option “the form” and 4% opted for the second choice “the content”. Other studies showed discrepancy between the teacher’s emphasis on content and organization and the students’ perception (grammar and mechanics). (Cohen and Cavalcanti qtd in Kroll 1990, p. 172)

In the same context, 92% of students preferred that their teacher focus on both the form and the content. However, only 8% chose the first option “form”. None of them preferred the second option “the content”. This question’s results proved that the students are satisfied with their teacher’s focus on both the form and the content because this represented what most of them preferred. This was not the case in a study showed in the article written by Cohen and Cavalcanti about “feedback on composition: teacher and student verbal reports”. Indeed, most of the students in the L1 study indicated preference for more comments on content and organization rather than the form. Only one third wanted more comments on grammar (form). (Cohen and Cavalcanti qtd in Kroll 1990: 168)

As far as the function of end comments are concerned, question 15 shows that only 20% of the students selected first option “praise”, and 4% of them opted the second option “critique”. Hence, a total of 76% of the responses were for suggestion. These results match TA real practices in the samples were 70% of the teacher’s comments were focused on suggestion, 25% on praise and 5% on critique.

The students’ preferences almost agreed with their teacher’s use of these functions. Indeed, a total of 60% of responses were devoted for suggestion and 40% of the students preferred praise. None of the students chose critique.

Since suggestion was provided by the teacher (70%), all the students find reading through teacher comments useful and helpful for future essays.

2. Discussion of TB’s Students’ Questionnaire

Moving to students’ of TB questionnaires, 80% of students claimed that these comments were moderate to slightly important and 12% selected the first degree “not important”, which indicated that these students’ attitude toward their teacher end

comments were negative. Only 8% of students claimed that these comments were important. Because teacher's written comments were not important to the students, they were not very interested in reading them: 80% of students selected the second option "often" and 12% selected the third option "sometimes". Only one student selected always, and rarely.

Moreover, 84% of students do not understand their teacher's comments and claimed that they were very little to somehow helpful in understanding their mistakes, which showed that they were not easy and not clear for most students. Indeed, other researchers indicated that half of students expressed doubt as to the usefulness of teacher comments. One student said she had doubt "because the comments pile up in my mind, making the act of writing somewhat complex and tiring, and produce unfavorable results in subsequent composition". (Cohen and Cavalcanti, qtd in Kroll 1990: 168).

For this reason, 72% of the students do not read their teacher's comments and just move to the correction of the mistakes. Only 12% do read the comments, and 16% just care for the mark.

Unlike TA's students, students of TB do often (72%) ask for clarification from their teacher on his writing feedback comments. The reason can be derived from the unwillingness of students to read the comments in details as they focus on the correction and marks. Consequently, moving to question six, 72% of the students do not apply their teacher's feedback comments to their next writing, and 20% do rarely apply it.

Since the majority of the students affirmed that these comments were not helpful, the results of question seven indicate that 92% did not notice improvement in their next essays. In other words, they noticed that the same mistakes were repeated again (88%). Indeed, researchers like Knoblauch and Brannon (1981), tested many hypothesis on better ways for teachers to respond to student writing. However, they indicated that these ways did not help students improve, as it was written in Leki's words:

They [Knoblauch and Brannon] cite studies contrasting responses of praise with responses of criticism; contrasting the effect of oral responses with that of written responses; contrasting the commentary with side comments; contrasting

copious response with brief response; contrasting responses only to error with naming errors and with offering rules; contrasting explicit suggestions for change with implicit suggestions for change. In each case, the researchers were forced to the conclusion that none of these different ways of responding to student writing produced significant improvements in students' subsequent writing. (Leki 1986 qtd in Kroll 1990: 61)

As a result, the students who noticed that they did not improve in their performance in the writing in general were more than those who improved in their composition after reading their teacher's comments. In fact, 88% of them make the same errors in their next writings. For these reasons, the results of improvements in writing were negative. Leki affirmed that "research into student reaction to written commentary gives us some clues as to why written annotations on students papers fail to improve student writing" (Leki qtd in Kroll 1990: 63). This might be due to reading the grade and discarding the annotation. (Ibid: 62)

Despite 56% of the students argued that these comments are clear, it was not useful to them and did not improve their writings. In fact, Ferris argued that the students claimed that "they experience few problems in comprehending teacher feedback, but when problems occurred, they included confusion over error codes and correction symbols" (Ferris 2003: 100).

In question ten, 92% of students preferred comments to be clear and short, which somehow confirmed the description of the nature of their teacher's end comments in the samples. Only 8% preferred them to be clear and long because long comments were boring and might be more difficult to understand.

Question 11 investigated whether TB commented globally or specifically on his students' writings. The majority of students (18) claimed that he used global comments, whereas seven students argued that he commented specifically on their essays. These results confirm the ones in TB samples of end comments because the analysis indicated that the teacher the basically with the global forms of writing.

It's interesting to note that the majority of students (88%) prefer specific comments over global ones when receiving feedback on their essays. This preference likely stems from the perceived effectiveness of specific comments in identifying and addressing individual issues. This preference uncorrelated with the teacher practices

as he mostly commented globally.

The findings presented in question 13, highlight an interesting dynamic between TB's perceived emphasis on form and content in end comments and the students' perspectives on this matter. 72% of the students mentioned that the focus of their teacher's comments were on both the form and the content, however, his practices showed that TB focused on the form with 63% of his comments and 23% for content.

Along the same lines, 88% of students preferred that their teacher focus on both the form and the content. However, only 12% chose the first option "form". None of them preferred the second option "the content". It's positive to see that the majority of students seem to be satisfied with their teacher's focus on both form and content in their feedback. This alignment between the students' preferences and the teacher's approach can contribute to a more effective and well-rounded learning experience.

Moving to question 15, the third option suggestion was only employed 8% as per the students view. Indeed, suggestion was not present in TB samples at all.

In his samples, criticism was the major function used by 96% of his comments. In the questionnaire, the students also agreed that criticism was used by the teacher with 40% of the answers. However, 52% of the students mentioned that praise was used, but the samples did only show 4%.

The students' preferences contradict with their teacher's use of these functions. Actually, a total of 68% of responses were devoted for suggestion, which was not used at all, and this correlated with the conclusions of Fathman and Walley 1985 in Kroll 1990, p. 186). Only 32% of the students preferred praise. None of the students chose critique which was used the most in the teacher's comments. Ferris (2003: 100) affirmed that "students experiences a strong preference for mixture of praise and constructive criticism".

Since suggestion was not provided by the teacher, the students find reading through teacher comments not helpful for future essays. Clearly, only one student finds these comments quite helpful.

Descriptive statistical analysis was used to compare the average scores of the questionnaire answers achieved by the first (TA's students) and second group (TB's

students). The descriptive statistics for both groups are displayed in the below table, the means and standard deviations.

Table 46 Mean (Standard Deviation) for both groups (Group 1= TA's students, and Group 2= TB's students) per question

Groups	Mean (Std. Deviation)
Q1 Group 1	4.08 (.572)
Q1 Group 2	2.44 (.821)
Q2 Group 1	1.20 (.408)
Q2 Group 2	2.16 (.554)
Q3 Group 1	3.00 (.500)
Q3 Group 2	2.36 (.810)
Q4 Group 1	1.12 (.332)
Q4 Group 2	3.04 (.539)
Q5 Group 1	4.08 (.640)
Q5 Group 2	2.12 (.526)
Q6 Group 1	2.00 (.577)
Q6 Group 2	4.64 (.638)
Q7 Group 1	1.80 (.500)
Q7 Group 2	4.04 (.455)
Q8 Group 1	3.84 (.554)
Q8 Group 2	1.84 (.625)
Q9 Group 1	1.60 (1.12)
Q9 Group 2	1.68 (.852)
Q10 Group 1	1.12 (.332)
Q10 Group 2	1.08 (.277)
Q11 Group 1	1.80 (.408)
Q11 Group 2	1.28 (.458)
Q12 Group 1	1.92 (.277)
Q12 Group 2	1.88 (.332)
Q13 Group 1	2.84 (.473)
Q13 Group 2	2.52 (.823)
Q14 Group 1	2.84 (.554)
Q14 Group 2	2.76 (.663)
Q15 Group 1	2.56 (.821)
Q15 Group 2	1.56 (.651)
Q16 Group 1	2.20 (1.00)
Q16 Group 2	2.36 (.952)
Q17 Group 1	1.84 (.374)
Q17 Group 2	3.16 (.473)

3. Discussion of TA's and TB's Questionnaires

It is worth mentioning that both teachers A and B agreed about the importance of providing their students with end comments because they helped them learn from their mistakes and avoid them in the next time. Indeed, progress in writing

could not be achieved unless a written feedback was given by teachers.

Furthermore, teacher's attitude on the nature of comments correlated with the attitude of their students. As TA claimed that her comments are long, her students confirmed that her comments are clear (70 %) and long (16%). On the other hand, TB's answer regarding his own comments were brief, and his students confirmed that his comments were clear (56%) and brief (24%).

Moving to students' preferences, both groups confess that they prefer clear and short comments with 88% answers of TA's students, and 92% of TB's students. However, the view of TB regarding his students' preferences was improper as he mentioned that the mark is what his students prefer. On the same note, these students do not ask for clarification on their students comments as TA comments are clear.

In question 12, both teachers argued that time constraints and the number of students' copies affect their given feedback. For this reason, TB writes brief hints and not long sentences or short paragraph. Yet, TA despite the numbers of writing works that she needs to review, her comments were long and clear as the main role in writing comments is to correct mistakes and give suggestions because it was the main factor that would affect the students' performance. In other words, and as shown in the first question of the teachers questionnaire, TA do always provide feedbacks, however, TB do often provide feedbacks.

The findings of questions five and six in the teachers' questionnaire confirmed the students' preferences of the way and focus of their teachers' comments. In fact, both teachers think that they dealt with students' writing specifically; but only TA commented on discrete points rather than global issues. The same thing could be said about the teachers' focus. They thought that they focused at both on the form and the content of writing, however, only TA did so in her practices, and although Teacher B mentioned that he responds to his students' writings specifically, his practices don't show that.

When teachers were asked about their expectation of students' preferences, teachers thought that they preferred the form, but students preferred both the form and the content as it appears in the student's questionnaire answers of 88% of TA's students and 72% of TB's students.

Concerning the function of comments, TA claimed that she uses suggestions

and TB uses praise. These answers correlated with students answers, as 76% of TA's students selected that their teacher uses suggestions in her feedback, and 52% of the students of TB confirmed that their teacher uses praise more in his comments. This is already shown in their writing feedback practices as well.

Moreover, both teachers expected that their students prefer the praise only because students wanted their teachers to show the points of strength in their essays. Consequently, the findings of question 16 in the students' questionnaire did not confirm their teachers' thought about their preferences as most of the students of TA did not prefer the praise but rather 15 students preferred suggestions and 10 of the students preferred praise, and 17 students of TB preferred suggestion over 8 of them preferred praise.

The third area of teachers' questionnaire dealt with the teachers' expectation of their students' future behavior. In fact, TA believes that her students do often read her comments and apply her advise on next essays. On the other hand, TB considers his students do rarely read his comments. This has a relation to students' answer regarding the valuableness of their teachers' written feedback as TA's students do believe that their teachers comments are useful, while TB's students confirmed that these comments are not useful and do not help on their future essays writings.

Aforementioned improvements on the students' next writing essays, teacher A notices that her students often do achieve and improve in their next drafts, on the other hand, teacher B noticed that his students do sometimes improve in their next performances.

Moving to questions 13 and 15 of teachers' questionnaire, teachers agree that providing written feedback on students' essays is crucial for achieving a better composition in their future essays by giving suggestions (for TA) and by showing the strength and weakness of the students writings in providing the comments (for TB).

G. Summary

This chapter gave us an idea about the general of TA's and TB's ways of giving written comments. This was revealed through the analysis of the samples and the students' questionnaire. Moreover, the first part focused on the analysis of the questionnaires of teachers and students, and the second part dealt with the discussion

of these findings.

V. CONCLUSION

A. The Main Findings

The findings of the research confirmed the directional hypothesis about the students' positive attitude towards their teachers end comments for group 1 (TA's students) and the correlation between teachers ways of giving comments and their students preferences, and the negative attitude of TB's students towards their teacher.

As far as the students of both teachers were concerned, the findings of the questionnaires showed that most of them considered that their teacher comments at the end of their essays were important. However, students of TB often read these comments unlike TA's students whose the majority of them were interested in reading their teacher's comments because of their importance and their usefulness. Moreover, the majority of students of TA affirmed that these annotations were helpful for understanding mistakes, and as a result they noticed improvement in their performance in the following writing, contrasting the students of TB whom they did not notice a remarkable improvement in their next essays. This shows that these comments were read carefully by TA's students and was neglected by the other group.

Concerning students' attitude towards the way of their teachers' commentary, the majority of TB's students argue that the comments were clear and brief, which confirmed the nature of TB's samples. As far as preferences were concerned, the majority of TB's students preferred clear and brief comments. In addition, about 72% of TB's students in the questionnaire affirmed that the teacher commented specifically on their essays, however in their samples, the teacher comments were basically on specific points. These comments do not fit the finding of TB's students' questionnaire as they preferred to comment specifically on the mistakes. More importantly, the majority of students, in general, affirmed that their teachers focused both on the form and the content in their comments. However, this did not match with the reality of TB's focused on the form in his samples. In other words, this

showed that his way was not constant. It changed according to the type of mistake and the students' level. The same could be said to the use of function. Indeed, although TB focused on criticism and did not use direct suggestion at all in his samples, students showed that he used the three function. This might be in other essays' commentary.

On the other hand, the majority of TA's students argue that the comments were clear and long, which confirmed the nature of TA's samples. This doesn't match the students preferences as they do prefer short comments. In addition, about 80% of TA's students in the questionnaire affirmed that the teacher commented specifically on their essays and their samples showed the same. These practices confirmed the students' preferences. In particular, the majority of students, in general, affirmed that their teachers focused both on the form and the content in their comments. Nevertheless, this did not match with the reality of TB's focuses, as he most focus was on the content in his samples, and did not match either the students' preferences as they wanted the teacher to focus on both the form and the content. The same could be said to the use of function. Indeed, although TA focused on suggestions in his samples, 40% of the students wanted their teacher to use praise instead.

Moving to the findings of teachers' questionnaire, it was noticed that the majority of teachers agreed with the student's attitude that providing comments was important to improve their performance. Moreover, the teachers are aware of their comments that they are brief (for TB) and long (for TA). However, the expectation of TB towards his students' preferences, was not matching the students preferences as he mentioned that students care only about the mark. As for the expectation of TA regarding her students' preferences, she mentioned that students do prefer short hints, which confirms the students' preferences. Furthermore, although teachers were aware of the necessity of correcting mistakes at their major role, TA commented specifically on the essays. This correlated with the students' choices. More interestingly, both teachers claimed that they focused on both the form and the content; this was again a point of similarity between their ways and the students' preferences. However, they expected that the latter preferred the form.

Concerning the comments' functions, the teachers' perception for their students on their way in providing comments, fits what the students wanted. In fact,

most of them claimed that they prefer praise showing the points of strength.

B. Research Limitations

Like any piece of research, this one has its limitations: one limitation is related to secondary school teachers. In fact, in order to have a deep view about the way teachers comment on their students' writings, the researcher should rely on more samples. The problem is that many teachers are not willing to give their samples while some others do not accept to participate in the interview. Moreover, for some schools, its policy do not allow for such researches.

Furthermore, the research focuses just on investigating teachers' end comments and students' opinion and preferences without examining the effectiveness of these comments on students' performance. This requires the teachers' consent to let their students write a second and a third draft in order to measure their progress in writing thanks to their teachers' written comments.

C. Recommendations for Future Research

One important area that should be investigated in future research is the effectiveness of teachers' end comments. In order to measure the effect of these comments on the progress of students' performance in writing, the students should be asked to write many drafts. Each time, the researcher should measure the progress many areas of writing (the form and the content) to see whether the students' mistakes decrease or not.

In addition, another area that deserves investigation consists in measuring whether students understand these end comments or not. This will be clear through examining the students' draft after receiving and reading the remarks. The understanding and the communication will be realized and achieved if the researcher notices an improvement in students' next drafts.

Also, interviewing teachers might prove the way of teachers commentary which was not limited to the analysis of the samples of end comments. There might be areas that could be different. In other words, teachers could use other ways of commenting that were not presented in the analysed samples.

D. Implications for Teaching

It is noticed from the findings and from the students' views that the latter need the end comments on their essays as the majority claim that they are helpful for understanding their problems in writing. For this reason, teachers should not neglect this crucial part in assessing their students' writing.

In addition to this, teachers should take into consideration their students' preferences and adjust their comments to these choices so that students can benefit from them otherwise they will be useless. It's important for educators to be aware of their students' preferences in giving comments and to communicate clearly about their expectations for assignments. Balancing feedback on both content and form can help address the diverse needs and expectations of students, fostering a more comprehensive approach to writing instruction. Additionally, considering the cultural backgrounds and individual learning preferences of students can contribute to a more effective and inclusive teaching approach.

E. Conclusion

This piece of research gives a modest idea about two teacher samples of end comments. Through the questionnaires, we discover that the majority of students are aware of the importance of end comments especially because they are beneficial for them. The majority of TA's students like the way their teacher comments on their essays, unlike TB's students. Hence, written feedback must be clear, brief and detailed so that students can understand it and achieve improvements in their performance through the provided suggestions by the teacher.

Both students and teachers are aware of the importance of commenting on writings. That is why the role of teachers is crucially important because they both guide learners through written remarks and urge them to the necessity of reading them. In this context, Mohili argues "we should abandon our perceptions of traditional writing classes and respond to our students, not simply to their writing. We should adopt the role of genuinely interested readers rather than that of evaluators. We can all learn and teach from this reciprocal, dialectical process". As Murray (1982: 144) puts it "we can learn to teach at the level where the student is, not where the teacher wishes the student was". (qtd in Mohili 1994: 27).

Moreover, incorporating student feedback into the teaching process is a valuable practice for creating a student-centered learning environment. It demonstrates a commitment to responsiveness and continuous improvement in the teaching approach.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Appendix 2. Etic

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Written End Comments: Teachers' Practices and Students' Expectations

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

You are invited to participate in this survey. The survey is specifically designed for English as foreign language learners. It is about your teacher's written feedback on your writing tasks. This research attempts to investigate the way teachers comment on their students' writings. The ultimate objective is to allow teachers to know about students' opinion and choices concerning their feedback in order to adjust their commenting ways according to these preferences. It provides opportunity to observe the effect of feedback on students' performance in writing skills when teaching English as a foreign language. So, you will help us to evaluate your teacher given feedback. Approximately 50 learners will be asked to complete this questionnaire that contains **17** questions and will take less than 10 minutes. You have the full right to answer it or to stop at certain question. All data collected from and about the participants will be maintained in strict confidence and that they will not be identified by name in any reports or other communication about the evaluation. If you have questions at any time about the procedures, you may send an e-mail to Mrs. Diran Chedid at diran.7@****. Thank you for your participation and your concern for better education.

Below you will find multiple-choice / rating scale options, by crossing the box choose your answer.

1. How do you judge your teacher's written feedback comments at the end of your essays?

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderate Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. How often do you read your teacher's end feedback comments?

Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Do you focus more on teacher's comments or just you skip to the correction

of the mistakes?

- a. I read carefully my teacher's comments
- b. I just move to the correction of the mistakes
- c. Both
- d. Other:

4. Are your teacher's end comments helpful for understanding your mistakes?

To a great Extent Somehow Very little Not at all

5. Do you ask for clarification from your teacher on his/her writing feedback comments?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

6. How often do you think you apply your teacher's feedback comments to your next writing?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

7. Do you notice any improvement in your next essays/writing tasks?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

8. Do you make the same errors in your next essay/writing tasks?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

9. How can you describe your teacher's end comments?
 - a. Clear
 - b. Ambiguous
 - c. Brief
 - d. Long

10. How do you prefer it?
 - a. Clear and short
 - b. Clear and long

11. Do you think that your teacher's comments deal with the essay's mistakes:
 - a. Globally
 - b. Specifically

12. What do you prefer?
 - a. Globally
 - b. Specifically

13. In your opinion, your teacher's end comments focus on:
 - a. The form: grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc..
 - b. The content: organization, ideas, meaning, etc..
 - c. Both

14. Do you want your teacher to focus more on:
 - a. The form
 - b. The content

c. Both

15. In his/her end comment, does your teacher use:

a. Praise

b. Critique

c. Suggestions

16. Do you prefer the use of:

a. Praise

b. Critique

c. Suggestions

17. How useful to your learning do you find reading through teacher comments helpful for future essays?

Very useful

Quite useful

Not very useful

Not at all
useful



The information below is optional. By completing this information, you are helping us to ensure that we have surveyed a broad range of learners. Please help us make sure that learners like yourself are adequately represented in our study. Thank you.

Personal information:

Male

Female

Age:

Name:

Level grade of learning:

Primary school

High school

University

Other

Thank you ☺

Written End Comments: Teachers' Practices and Students' Expectations

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

You are invited to participate in this survey. The survey is specifically designed for English as foreign language learners. It is about your written feedback on your students' writing tasks. This research attempts to investigate the way teachers comment on their students' writings. The ultimate objective is to allow teachers to know about students' opinion and choices concerning their feedback in order to adjust their commenting ways according to these preferences. It provides opportunity to observe the effect of feedback on students' performance in writing skills when teaching English as a foreign language. Two teachers will be asked to complete this questionnaire that contains **15** questions and will take less than 6 minutes. You have the full right to answer it or to stop at certain question. All data collected from and about the participants will be maintained in strict confidence and that they will not be identified by name in any reports or other communication about the evaluation. If you have questions at any time about the procedures, you may send an e-mail to Mrs. Diran Chedid at diran.7@****. Thank you for your participation and your concern for better education.

Below you will find open-ended questions, multiple-choice / rating scale options, by crossing the box choose your answer.

1. How often do you provide real time written feedback to all students' written works?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

2. Is it important to give students written comments after correcting the mistakes on the margin of the paper?

Not Important Slightly Important Moderate Important Important Very Important

3. How do you write your comments?
 - a. Brief hints
 - b. Long sentences
 - c. Short paragraph
 - d. Other:

4. What do your students prefer in your opinion?
 - a. Brief hints
 - b. Long sentences
 - c. Short paragraph
 - d. Other:

5. Do you respond to students' writings globally or deal with discrete points?
 - a. Globally
 - b. Specifically

6. Do you focus on the form or the content of writing?
 - a. The form: grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc..
 - b. The content: organization, ideas, etc..
 - c. Both

7. What do the students prefer in your opinion, the form or the content?
 - a. Form
 - b. Content

8. Do you often use praise, critique or suggestions when providing written

comments?

- a. Praise
- b. Critique
- c. Suggestions

9. Do you think that student's prefer praise only?

- a. Yes
- b. No

10. Do you think that students read your comments carefully and they try to apply them in their next writings?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

11. Is there an improvement in the next writing in general?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

12. Is time and number of students affect your giving feedback?

To a great Extent Somehow Very little Not at all

13. In your opinion, what is the main purpose of providing feedback on students' writing?

14. Do students ask for clarification on your writing comments?

Always Often Sometimes Rarely Never

15. Do you think that giving comments can help student in achieving a better composition in their future essays?

Strongly Agree Agree Undecided Disagree Strongly Disagree

The information below is optional. By completing this information, you are helping us to ensure that we have surveyed a broad range of teachers. Please help us make sure that teachers like yourself are adequately represented in our study. Thank you.

Personal information:

Male Female

Age: _____ Years of teaching: _____

Your highest level of education:

Graduate education Post-graduate education

Level grade of teaching: Primary school

High school

University

Other:

Thank you ☺

Appendix 2. Etik

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 29.07.2022-57532



T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Müdürlüğü

Sayı : E-88083623-020-57532
Konu : Etik Onayı Hk.

29.07.2022

Sayın DIRAN ROUSSAYLA GOLFİDEN CHEDİDİ

Tez çalışmanızda kullanmak üzere yapmayı talep ettiğiniz anketiniz İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi Etik Komisyonu'nun 23.06.2022 tarihli ve 2022/11 sayılı kararıyla uygun bulunmuştur.
Bilgilerinize rica ederim.

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Alper FİDAN
Müdür Yardımcısı

Bu belge, güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır.

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RESUME

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Education:

2007-2011 Fundamental License in English Language of Literature and Civilization
at ISLT Tunisia

2013-2015 Master degree in English Language and Literature Istanbul Aydin
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Work Experience:

2015-2016: University teaching professional at Mediterranean International
University (Turkey)

2016-2018: Pre-primary education teaching professional at Bahcesehir College
(Turkey)

2019-Present: Senior Intellectual Property Officer at AGIP

Languages:

-Arabic: Native Language

-English: Advanced

-Turkish: Intermediate

-French: Intermediate

Skills:

- Good command of office suit (Word processor, Excel, spreadsheet, presentation software ..)
- Practicing high-level of ballet and rhythmic gymnastics since I was a member of the Tunisian gymnastics national team since 1999

