

WORKING WITH POOR WRITING SKILLS STUDENTS: THE CASE OF L2 AT THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF PELEFORO GON COULIBALY UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

Writing in English as a foreign language is so important that EFL learners ought to be equipped with effective strategies to foster their writing ability. Writing in EFL is not only relevant at the academic level, but also in our daily life, with regard to the role it plays in communication. Indeed, “writing is one of the fundamental ways you express yourself, share knowledge, and reveal your position on important issues” (Carol C. Kanar, P. 03). Referred to as one of the productive language skills, writing is deemed to be difficult to deal with, given the cognitive and psychological processes it implies. This difficulty of writing, as a language skill, has been displayed by numbers of studies, conducted by both linguists and applied linguists. In this respect, Kroll (1990) posits that “Becoming a writer is a complex and ongoing process, and becoming a teacher of writing is no less complex.” (Kroll, 1990, P.1). As depicted by this author, the issue of writing seems more preoccupying in EFL context. This situation is more common with Ivorian university students, majoring at the English department.

In Côte d’Ivoire, English is implemented as a Teaching subject from 6ème¹ to university in order to get Ivorian learners prepared for international communication. In doing so, the Ivorian educational authorities have not only stressed language

¹ Form 1 in French schooling system.

skills like speaking, listening and reading, but also the writing one. Teaching and learning materials are then designed regarding writing courses and activities from 6ème up to university to help improve learners' writing competence.

However, at the English department of Peleforo Gon university, numbers of student in Licence are poor performers in writing. In fact, as a teacher at the English department, and having in charge the course of writing skill in L1 and L2, I have been terrified by some kinds of errors made by these students in their written productions. The situation is such that you sometimes wonder if L1 and L2 students have been exposed to writing in their earlier steps in learning English. Thus, the difficulties they encounter in writing seem to be linked to both the form and the content.

This poor performance of the learners in writing, which appears as one of the most prized language skills in the context of English as a foreign language, has urged us to investigate on the issue in order to grasp the real matter that prevents them from writing effectively in English. To do so, the present study emphasizes only students with very poor writing skills, selected on the basis of the results of the final exam in the course of writing skills for the academic year 2022-2023. The study subscribes to the field of error analysis in so far as it consists in identifying the types of errors made by the learners in writing. Thus, a typology of errors will be displayed so that, on the basis of that classification, some suggestions be made to better the situation. A content analysis is then conducted with the final exam papers of L2 of the academic year 2022-2023 as corpus.

The study is guided by the following question: to what extent can Communicative Activities (CA) help develop L2 Students' Writing ability in English as a foreign language? The main objective of the study is to develop L2 Students' writing ability in English using Communicative Activities. To show the relevance of these communicative activities, we have hypothesized that the use of CA in L2 learners' writing

instruction can help improve their writing ability in English as a foreign language.

As an action research study, the method of triangulation is employed since both quantitative and qualitative methods are used to collect and analyze the data. The present study is achieved in the light of the Theory of Communicative competence by Dell Hymes (1972) in addition to learning theories such as Constructivism and Social Constructivism to reach its objective.

I. Literature review

The term ‘writing’ has much interested many researchers in EFL academic centers. Different views of writing have been proposed by scholars like Henry Rogers (2005, p.2) who regards it as the materialization of some specific linguistic utterances which shouldn’t be viewed as language which innately resides in human beings. However, according to Sourou Traoré (2019, p. 24) writing is beyond a simple means of representation of language utterances since the symbols used to communicate have to convey meaningful messages. Jeremy Hammer (2007, p.10) shares that point by arguing that “writing and speaking have their own signs, symbols and devices to make communication more effective.” Moreover, S. Traoré goes farther defining writing in the light of syntax and grammar (Traoré, 2019, p.79) which goes along with the structural view of writing. Then, writing is more than using sentences to compose it. The sentences must be meaningful in term of conversation (Sourou Traoré, 2019, p.83-84). In other words, writing is an active means of communicating ideas in its functional sense (Chasib Fanukh. Al Jubouri, 2015, p.123). from the above mentioned, we clearly see that writing appears as a very demanding language skill that can be troublesome for EFL learners.

In Second and Foreign Language (SFL) context, learners' writing tasks either deal with explanation or argumentation essays in academic setting when it comes to essay writing. There are two types of essay writing in academic center: short essay and a five-paragraph essay. Jason Davis and Rhonda Liss (date unknown, p.4) affirm: "like a short essay, a five-paragraph essay has three basic parts. Unlike a short essay may contain one or two body paragraphs, a five-paragraph essay has three body paragraphs." In universities, EFL learners mostly write five-paragraph essays which are composed of three main parts: an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion. Each of the three parts responds to some related criteria according to Coyle & Peck (2005), cited in Sourou Traoré (2021, p.429). This means that each of these paragraphs contains particular detail in their constructions to make the writing more coherent and effective for communication purposes.

An effective writing is not only a matter of respecting the process of writing but also relies on internal aspects of a written text (sentence structures, grammatical devices, vocabulary etc.). According to David Nunan (1996, p.37) a successful writing is a text which is well-structured and written with the use of correct sentence structures, spelling, punctuations, and grammatical devices to create cohesion and coherence within the ideas and paragraphs of the writing. In the same sense, Jeremy Hammer (2007, p.24-25), states: "for a text to be coherent, it needs to have some kind of internal logic which the reader can follow with or without the use of prominent cohesive devices." That is to say, a writing even lacking linking words should allow the discourse community to understand the purpose of the writer and to interpret it easily.

Thanks to the nature of writing and its communicative purpose in human beings' life, it is quite necessary to regard the concept of writing in the light of communicative approach. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a teaching

approach which intends to develop the communicative abilities of the learners. As argued by Sourou Traoré (2019, p.6) “CLT considers that the goal of language teaching is to develop the communicative competence through the integrated acquisition of the four language skills (Writing, Reading, Listening, and Speaking).” So, CLT requires the teaching of language units inductively instead of deductively since in “CLT classroom, the learners are motivated in learning grammar aspects and language units through communicative activities” (H. Douglas Brown, 1980, p.242). These communicative activities are summarized by W. Littlewood (1981) cited in S. Sielle (2019, p. 51): pre-communicative activities and communicative activities which include functional communication and social interaction activities. In the context of the teaching of writing, social interaction activities seem more relevant.

Furthermore, writing is acknowledged as a very complex skill on both sides: acquisition and teaching. Many researchers’ investigations revealed problems that hinder EFL learners to write effectively. These problems could be categorized into three parts. The problem could be related to learners themselves due to “a negative attitude towards this language skill” (S. Traoré, 2019, p.36). Indeed, this negative attitude is caused by some “factors like anxiety” (S. Siéllé, 2019, p.49-50) and “lack of motivation” as concluded by Asna Belkhir and Radia Benvelles (2017, p.82). Next, there is the matter of learning environment with “the phenomenon of large class size” concluded by Melissa (2012) cited in (S. Traoré, 2019, p. 38) and Jérôme Kouassi’s (2015). The learning background could also be a factor as concluded by Khaled Alostath (2019) and S. Traoré (2019) who target “teachers, curriculum and teaching approaches used to guide writing classes.” Finally, there is the irrelevance of some teaching materials in writing classes concluded by Koatenin (2016) and Dahigo (2011), cited in Sourou Traoré (2019, p.9). For them, many teaching materials in Ivorian educational system

are not worth using to guide a writing class because they don't give an equal consideration to writing as they do with other skills.

II. Methodology

This study is an action research study since it aims at investigating and enhancing the Licence 2 learners' writing competence at the English Department of Peleforo Gon Coulibaly University. As stated by Jack C. Richards and Richard Schmidt (2010, p.8) "in teacher education, teacher-initiated classroom research that seeks to increase the teacher's understanding of classroom teaching and learning and to bring about improvements in classroom practices." However, the findings of the study cannot be generalized.

The participants in the study are only L2 students and their writing instructors. The whole population of poor writing skills students is composed of 75 students among who fifty (50) participants are selected to work with. The sample includes 38 boys or 76% and 12 girls or 24%. The selection was done randomly without any distinction of gender, age, and other factors in order to give everyone the chance to be among the participants.

Two different data are used in order to achieve our objectives. The first data of the study are based on corpus linguistics which is the L2 learners' papers collected after their writing skills exam. The second data are collected with the target population and their writing teachers through written questionnaires. These data aim at analyzing the students' writing papers and finding out the nature of the difficulties they encounter in writing and getting more information about the problem areas as regard EFL learners written productions.

Both quantitative and qualitative method are used to collect the data. Indeed, a survey questionnaire of opened-ended

questions was addressed to the target population and another including both close and opened-ended questions to writing instructors. Accordingly, content analysis method was used to analyze the qualitative data which help identify the nature of the learners' difficulties in writing and see how far the writing course objectives, activities, teaching approach, and the classroom management could account for the poor performance of L2 students at writing.

As for the quantitative data, a comparative analysis method was used in order to present numerically in different tables using percentages. It consists in discovering the percentage of learners who have negative or positive perception as regard writing in English, have problems with the organization of the essay paragraphs, problems with sentence structures; use more/less reading and translation as strategies to improve their writing; are for argumentative essay or others and finally the frequency of learners who enjoy communicative activities as writing activities. In order to find solutions to Licence2 students' difficulties in writing, a didactic and pedagogic intervention was conducted with six (06) participants. This intervention aimed at using communicative activities in a writing course to see their impact on the participants' writing ability.

III. Data presentation and analysis

III.1. Presentation of the qualitative data

A. The data from the corpus

The learners were asked to write a five-paragraph essay about Global warming which arouses anxiety in the whole world. The data below show the nature of their difficulties in writing.

Nature of problems in L2 students' writing	Some examples of the problems
<u>Tenses</u>	global warming is* (<i>has</i>) become; Those problems are* (<i>have</i>) affected the world; Global warming is causes* = caused) by... et
<u>Subject-verb-agreement</u>	What is* (<i>are</i>) the causes ; this concern* = concerns ; human actions is* (<i>are</i>); can causes* = cause ; this have* (<i>has</i>); industries creates* = create ; animals are concern* = concerned ;this phenomenon are* (<i>is</i>)
<u>Pronoun references</u>	global warming who* (<i>which</i>); the bush fires who* (<i>which</i>); We can Talk to* (<i>about</i>); Its* to say= <i>it means that, that is to say</i>
<u>Demonstrative adjective:</u>	This* (<i>these</i>) issues ;
<u>Connector and sequence words</u>	Lack of connector words for paragraphs; bad use of Also* (<i>then, moreover, furthermore...</i>)...etc; Note: Many students did not use sequence words (First, Second, next, then, moreover, furthermore, however, finally, ...etc)
<u>Wrong use of articles</u>	A* big things; a* (<i>an</i>) impact; the* global warming
<u>Plural of words or expressions</u>	Many reason* = reasons ; many type* = types ; Differents activity* = different activities ...etc
<u>Wrong use of prepositions</u>	Look in* (<i>at</i>); consequences in* (<i>on</i>) our life; for* (<i>to</i>) finish;...etc
<u>Infinitive mark of verbs</u>	To takes* (<i>take</i>);try to stopping* (<i>to stop</i>);...etc
<u>Problems with long sentences</u>	Also it can effect* (<i>affect</i>) the deforestation, the temperature will change its shapes and form. (long and Unclear sentence). -“Finally, global warming is the phenomenon that arouses anxiety all other * (<i>over</i>) the world throughout* (<i>through</i>) the climate change, the disparution* (<i>disappearance</i>) of the forest, Air pollution and water and greenhouse effects* (<i>affects</i>) which involves* (involve) most destruction in the world and past to other world.” (Long sentence with many mistakes words and semantic problem.) - We “ are* ” (omitted) going to talk about of* strategy* (<i>strategies</i>) that we can take for (<i>to</i>) finish* (<i>stop, eradicate</i>) it. ...etc
<u>Short sentences</u>	As consequences, we can must be* (<i>must be</i>); Global warming involves the greenhouse effects*. Causes, gives rise to ; If we want not* (<i>don't want to</i>) see these .; -Global warming is the lack to several consequences in human life*. (Bad supporting sentence and problem of semantic)
<u>Omitted words</u>	Which ‘ is ’ destroying; can (be) caused; can (be) also caused by.; Needs “ of ” human beings; we “ are ” going to; this is caused by human “ beings ” etc...
<u>Using the appropriate words in the appropriate place</u>	Other* (<i>over</i>) the world; rules* (<i>roles</i>); Like* (<i>As</i>) consequences we can ... Are Very seriously* (<i>serious</i>);...etc
<u>Choice of vocabulary</u>	Actuel* (<i>now</i>); gaz* (<i>gas</i>); In effect* (<i>in fact</i>);

	Transformate* (<i>transform</i>); provoque* (<i>provoke</i>); incendie* in forests (<i>bush fires</i>); Disparition* (<i>disappearance, vanishing</i>) Manufactory* (= <i>factories</i>); phenomena* (<i>phenomenon</i>); foot* (<i>food</i>) ...etc
Punctuation	Like (<i>As</i>) consequences, we can ... ; if the climate changes, it can; ...the rainy season. We can take....; If we want not (<i>don't want to</i>) see these phenomenon, we must take care... etc...
Capitalization	thirdly (<i>Third</i>); ...dirt. it* (It) is ..; this* (This); .we* (We) can etc...
Spelling	manies* (<i>many</i>); exemple* (<i>example</i>); tolk* (<i>talk</i>); sencitze* (<i>sensitize</i>), reduc* (<i>reduce</i>); human bening* (<i>beings</i>); maine* (<i>main</i>); Heath* = <i>health</i> ; Nonwadays* = <i>nowadays</i> ...etc
Content and organization	Remark: Only 6 students' writings respected the organization ideas (topic sentence-supporting sentences-explanation and examples. The main parts of essay paragraph

B. Data from L2 learners' writing instructors

⇒ Data related to question 1: **What is the goal of your writing course?**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher2
1-To teach students to write correct sentences	√	
2-To help the students find arguments for writing tasks	√	
3- To help students write successfully in English	√	√

⇒ Data related to question 2: **How do you conceptualize the role of a writing instructor?**

Statements	T1	T2
4-A writing instructor must be authoritarian.		
5-A writing instructor must be facilitator.	√	√
6-A writing instructor must facilitate and encourage the learning.	√	√

⇒ Data related to question 3: **Do you create a stress-free atmosphere for writing sessions?**

	Teacher1	Teacher2
7-Yes	√	√
8-No		

⇒ Data related to question 4: **Which teaching approach do you use in the writing class?**

	Teacher1	Teacher2
9-Product Approach		
10-Process Approach	√	
11-Genre based Approach		
12-Other:	An eclectic method

⇒ Data related to question 5: **Do you associate the learners to the choice of writing topics? (Learners' choice in the topic chosen for the examinations)**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
13- Yes	√	√
14- No		

⇒ Data related to question 6: **What types of activities do you use to test learners' understanding of a writing course.**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
14-Individual assignment	√	
15-Pair assignment	√	√
16-Group assignment	√	√
17-Homework assignment	√	

18-Exposé presentation		√
19-Writing debates or interviews	√	
20- Other:	Peer revision writing

⇒ Data related to question 7: **Do you always encourage the learners in writing practice?**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
21- Yes	√	√
22- No		

⇒ Data related to question 8: **As we're in communicative area, do you use communicative activities in your writing courses?**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
21- Yes	√	√
22- No		

⇒ Data related to question 9: **If you use communicative activities, what are they?**

Statements	Teacher1	Teacher2
23-individual writing work that, each student shares with their neighbors or friends before the final feedback.		√
24- I give <u>pair or group work</u>.	√	√
25- I organize <u>a written debate or interview in the class</u>.	√	
26- Other:

⇒ Data related to question 10: **are the course activities selected according to learners' needs and levels in writing skill?**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
27- Yes	√	√
28- No		

⇒ Data related to question 11: **After testing the students' understanding on the writing course, did they show positive reactions before they sit for the final exam?**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
29- Yes	√	√
30- No		

⇒ Data related to question 12: **Do you share the idea that Licence 2 students at the department of English encounter some difficulties in writing? If yes, please what are they?**

Statements	Teacher 1	Teacher 2
31- Related to sentence structures	√	√
32- Related to organization of essay writing.	√	√
33- Related to grammar points	√	√
34- Related to capitalization		
35- Related to punctuations	√	√
36-Related to UNITY within their writing.	√	√
37- Related to COHERENCE within their writing.	√	√
38- Related to the topic understanding.		

Data related to question 13: **As a writing instructor, what do you suggest to improve Licence students' writing skills at the English department of Péléforo Gon Coulibaly University?**

Teacher 1	Teacher 2
1- students must read a lot; 2- they must learn their grammar rules; 3- practise a lot writing	1- encourage learners to read more 2- emphasise the communicative and real-life tasks completion during the writing course 3- rethink the objective of the writing course to meet the learners' real needs for communication.

III. 2. Presentation of the quantitative data

The survey written questionnaire was given to the fifty participants and it included five parts. Each part was composed of closed questions which required YES, A BIT, or NO responses.

I. Identification of the Participants

Data related to the statement 1: identification of participants' genders

Genders	Absolute value	Relative value
Males	38	76%
Females	12	24%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 2: participants' baccalaureate degrees

Degrees	Absolute value	Relative value
BAC A1	1	02%
BAC A2	45	90%

BAC D	4	08%
BAC C	00	00%
OTHER:	00	00%
Total	50	100%

Data related to the statement 3: participants' decision before joining the English Department.

I willingly came at the department of English	Absolute value	Relative value
YES	38	76%
NO	12	24%
Total	50	100%

II. The relation of the Participants with Writing.

Data related to statement 4: writing is an important skill for my study career.

Writing is very important for my study career.	Absolute values	Relative values
Yes	47	94%
A bit	03	06%
No	00	00%
Totals	50	100%

Data related to statement 5: Writing course is one of my favorite courses.

Writing course is one of my favorite courses	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	26	52%
A bit	18	36%
No	06	12%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 6: I like writing in English

I like writing in English	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	36	72%
A bit	13	26%
No	1	2%
Total	50	100%

III. The learning Strategies of the Participants to Improve their Writing.

Data related to statement7: I frequently write in English to improve my writing.

I frequently write in English to improve my writing.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	27	54%
A bit	20	40%
No	03	06%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 8: I read documents and books in English to improve my writing

I read documents and books in English to improve my writing.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	20	40%
A bit	24	48%
No	06	12%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 9: I drill to translate texts and documents in English to improve my writing

I drill to translate texts and documents in English to improve my writing	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	21	42%
A bit	22	44%
No	07	14%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 10: I learn only grammar rules to improve my writing

I learn only grammar rules to improve my writing	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	25	50%
A bit	10	20%
No	15	30%
Total	50	100%

IV. Licence 2 Students' Difficulties in Writing

Data related to statement 11: Writing in English is difficult.

Writing in English is difficult.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	06	12%
A bit	36	72%
No	08	16%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 12: I can write correct short sentences in English

I can write correct short sentences in English.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	41	82%
A bit	09	18%
No	00	00%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 13: I can write correct complex sentences in English

I can write correct complex sentences in English	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	14	28%
A bit	32	64%
No	04	08%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 14: I can well structure my writing. (introduction, body, and conclusion)

I can well structure my writing. (introduction, body, and conclusion)	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	41	82%
A bit	09	18%
No	00	00%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 15: I can do a good introduction

I can do a good introduction	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	36	72%
A bit	14	28%
No	00	00%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 16: I can do a good conclusion

I can do a good conclusion	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	34	68%
A bit	16	32%
No	00	00%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 17: I can write a good paragraph

I can write a good paragraph	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	29	58%
A bit	21	42%
No	00	00%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 18: I can write coherence paragraphs in an essay writing.

I can write coherence paragraphs in an essay writing.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	33	66%
A bit	16	32%
No	01	02%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 19: I can perfectly organize my ideas to make successful paragraph.

I can perfectly organize my ideas to make successful paragraph.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	15	30%
A bit	34	68%
No	1	2%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 20: I always review more than once my writing before giving to the teacher

I always review more than once my writing before giving to the teacher	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	30	60%
A bit	16	32%
No	04	08%

Total	50	100%
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Data related to statement 21: I can find and correct by myself my mistakes and errors in my writing

I can find and correct by myself my mistakes and errors in my writing.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	17	34%
A bit	30	60%
No	03	06%
Total	50	100%

V. Learners' Needs in writing

Data related to statement 22: I like writing on news

I like writing on news	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	15	30%
A bit	19	38%
No	16	32%
Total	100	100%

Data related to statement 23: I like writing letters, reports, and email in English

I like writing letters, reports, and email in English	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	04	8%
A bit	20	40%
No	26	52%
Total	50	100%

Data relate to statement 24: I love writing narrative paragraphs in English

I love writing narrative paragraphs in English.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	13	26%
A bit	23	46%
No	14	28%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 25: I like argumentative essays

I like argumentative essays	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	40	80%
A bit	09	18%
No	01	02%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 26: I appreciate when the teacher gives us some writing topics to do individually.

I appreciate when the teacher gives us some writing topics to do individually.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	34	68%
A bit	15	30%
No	01	02%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 27: I appreciate team or group works in writing class

I appreciate team or group works in writing class.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	23	46%
A bit	20	40%
No	07	14%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 28: I appreciate when the teacher asks my friends to criticize and correct my writing.

I appreciate when the teacher asks my friends to criticize and correct my writing.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	35	70%
A bit	08	16%
No	07	14%
Total	50	100%

Data related to statement 29: I like reading my friends' writing so as to compare to mine.

I like reading my friends' writing so as to compare to mine.	Absolute value	Relative value
Yes	37	74%
A bit	07	14%
No	06	12%
Total	50	100%

III. Analysis and Interpretation of Data.

1. Analysis and Interpretation of Data from the Students

A. Data Related to Licence2 Students' Difficulties in Writing

As displayed in the tables, one can easily notice that writing, in English as a foreign language, represents a real challenge for L2 students at the English department of Peleforo Gon Coulibaly University. Indeed, the majority of the participants (**88%**) acknowledged that writing is difficult. Their difficulties in writing could be categorized as follow: syntactic problems, discourse problems and problem of proofreading. The data showed that **72%** of the participants have problems to write complex sentences in English. In fact, contrary to short sentences, long sentences involve more from the writers. To quote Kharma (1986) cited in Ibrahim Mohamed Alfaki (2015, p.41), “those students who have the problem of writing good sentences structures are unable to produce longer sentences requiring subordination and coordination.” Indeed, the writer could be confronted to problems like using parallel forms for coherence, pronoun references, linking of two clauses, punctuations, run-on sentences, verb tense consistency etc. In a nutshell, if L2 students do not know the rules within complex sentences like how to combine clauses correctly, it will be difficult to express correct long sentences in their writing; And that can negatively impact their writing.

Moreover, their problems are also related to discourse. The data displayed that L2 students have problems of organizing their ideas in their writing. In fact, more than the average (**70%**) have problem to organize correctly their ideas. Consequently, L2 students have problems to establish cohesion and coherence to produce effective written texts because their arguments do not

support each other. Indeed, without unity and coherence within the paragraphs of a writing, the essay loses focus and goes off of the topic (JASON DAVIS and RHONDA LISS, Year (not specified), p. 13).

Finally, the majority of the participants (66%) could hardly correct mistakes and errors in their dissertations, the data showed. Based on the results, we can deduce that L2 students at the department of English need help to proofread their writing on their own before submitting their writing. That could be feasible if their writing instructors correct their mistakes by telling them the nature of their mistakes and errors during the practice phases. In doing so, that might help them write by caring about these zones of mistakes during their writing tests or tasks.

B. The Strategies Used by Learners to Boost their Writing

Writing is recognized as a difficult skill of language to acquire. So, learners should use effective strategies to improve their writing ability. The data showed that the majority of the participants use, as strategies, writing in English and learning grammar rules to improve their writing competence. Only a few of them use reading and translation to improve their writing ability. In fact, in the light of CLT Approach, learning language units in isolated way and individually is not an appropriate technique to help improve his writing ability. Accordingly, the use of the wrong strategies to improve their writing might be a factor that hinders the improvement of their writing competence.

C. Licence2 Students' Needs in Writing at the English Department

The data also showed learners' needs and expectations to improve their writing during the writing classes. First, at the level of writing topics during the writing class, the majority of

the participants do not like writing tasks such as, writing letters, reports, emails in English and narrative essay. They show positive reactions toward argumentative essays. Next, at the level of writing activities during the writing session, the participants show positive responses towards pair and group activities and collective or peer review as correction technique. In fact, these types of activities are required by CLT approach. Learners can learn more about writing when they work together. The lack of accurate communicative activities in writing classes can greatly impact on learners' writing acquisition.

2. Analysis and Interpretation of Data from the Teachers

The data revealed that both teachers' writing course objective is to help learners write successfully in English as a foreign language. They also likely organize their writing classes by setting the learners in good conditions of learning which could help learners learn and acquire writing effortlessly as required by CLT approach. However, they do not neither use the same teaching approach nor communicative activities to carry out their writing classes. The process approach is used on one hand whereas an Eclectic approach is applied on the other hand. Indeed, under CLT approach, the process approach is worth using to guide a writing class. It could perfectly help learners acquire the features of an effective writing. Yet the use of the eclectic approach (combination of many approaches) could help the instructor successfully reach his objective than the use of a single approach. In fact, using this approach, the teacher targets all angles of effective written texts to better equip EFL learners in their writing.

In addition, in L2 they use different activities to guide the writing classes, some of which could not work in writing classes. Indeed, activities like homework assignment, and writing debates or interview are inappropriate in a writing class.

For writing class to be more productive, the integration of appropriate communicative activities like pair assignments, group assignments, exposé presentation and peer review writing are necessary. These types of activities allow the students to work through interaction with their peers. Indeed, when working together, learners better learn and get more information to develop their writing ability. This technique consists of encouraging learners to practice writing together and help each other; then to discover and correct their mistakes and errors in their writing. These activities make a writing class communicative and meet the principle of CLT approach (learners-centered). Also, at the English Department, L2 students do not receive the same input in writing classes since different syllabus and teaching approach are used to teach them. Accordingly, some could write better than others.

IV. The pedagogical intervention

The pedagogical intervention consists of an experimental study for making suggestions at the didactic and pedagogical levels to bring possible solutions to the problems of L2 learners' writing. The pedagogical intervention was carried out with six (06) participants who acknowledged their low level in writing and wanted to improve their writing skills. The intervention aimed at using communicative activities in writing courses to improve the participants' writing ability. It was sequenced in three stages. First, a pre-experimentation conducted with the six (06) L2 students in order to do a pre-test and evaluate their initial performance. Next, a phase of treatment was done with the learners by using some communicative activities in their writing course. Finally, a post-experimentation was conducted. After knowing their initial levels, and implementing some communicative activities in their writing course, they sat for a

final test so as to show the effects of these activities on their writing competence.

The writing course was a recall about the paramount aspects of an effective writing followed by particular communicative activities (individual work with peer review and pair or group works with collective or peer review). Then, the topics of the treatment phase deal with Ivorian education, citizenship and health. They showed positive reactions on the selected themes as activities because the themes are chosen regarding their need and level. At the end of the intervention, they were addressed a semi-structured interview to have their opinions about the activities and their impacts on their writing ability.

IV.1 The Finding of the Pedagogical Intervention

N°	Names	Grades		Performance
		Pre-test	Post-test	
01	A	06	11	+5
02	B	10	15	+5
03	C	08	10	+2
04	D	07	14	+7
05	E	10	13	+3
06	F	10	08	-2

During the pre-test, the treatment phase and the post-test, the six learners were all present. The results show that among the six, **03** got **(10/20)** which gives a relative value of **50%** at the pre-test, whereas the three (**03**) left were incapable of getting the average. However, at the post test, the results show that only one (**01**) of the learners failed the test with a relative value of **16,66 %**. In the pre-test, he obtained **(10/20)**, and in the post-test he got **(08/20)**. He got down with miner two **(-2)**. The five (**05**) left passed the test which makes **83,33%**. Students **A, C, and D** who failed at the pre-test with the respective grades: **06/20; 08/20; and 07/20** get improved at the post-test. Student **A** has obtained

(+5), student **C** has got (+2), and student **D** has increased of seven points (+7). Thus, the students **B**, and **E** who successfully passed the pre-test with a fair mark (10/20), contrary to student **F** have shown an improvement with the following points: students **B** has (+5), and student **E** increased of plus three (+3). Therefore, we can conclude that the pedagogical intervention which consisted in improving learners' writing through the use of communicative activities was successful. These activities greatly influenced positively the six L2 students at the department of English who have been suffering from difficulties met in writing so far.

As suggestions, working under communicative approach, writing classes should be as communicative as possible because learners learn and assimilate better the course when they learn together. That is to say, collaborative learning ought to be promoted among EFL learners in order to help improve their writing abilities. The learning activities should then be communicative to encourage learners to communicate with one another in order to improve their writing production. At the English Department, writing instructors should be encouraged to design a common syllabus and use an eclectic approach for writing classes. That could give equal chance to L2 learners to enhance their writing making the writing classes much more productive.

Conclusion

The main objective of this study was to improve the learners' writing ability using communicative activities in their writing classes. To achieve this goal, the main question to conduct the study was: to what extent can the use of communicative activities help improve poor writing skills students' writing ability? It was hypothesized that the use of communicative activities in L2 students' writing lessons can

help improve their writing competence. Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were employed in order to identify the nature of writing difficulties met by the learners, their perceptions about writing as a language skill, and their learning needs in writing. A pedagogical intervention was conducted in view of suggesting some didactic and pedagogic situations likely to help L2 students overcome difficulties in writing.

As a whole, the findings revealed that Licence2 students at the English department encounter many difficulties in writing. In addition to their difficulties, they are taught with different syllabus and teaching approach during the tutorial sessions (practice phase). However, the pedagogic intervention showed that the use of Communicative Activities, a common syllabus and the identification of Licence2 students' needs and difficulties in writing, can help them improve their writing ability in English as a foreign language. This study is socially significant and utilitarian for the Ivorian citizens given that it intends to equip Ivorian students, learning English as a foreign language, with writing abilities that can help them communicate effectively with people from English speaking countries all over the world, and then be open to world at different levels.

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