Developing Students' Writing Skill through

Using Prewriting Strategies

A Case Study of Some Libyan Introductory Classes at the

Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli

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1.1 Abstract

The study seeks to highlight the importance of using prewriting strategies to improve the student's ability in writing. The study was conducted in some introductory students at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli in Spring 2016. The data was collected from students' written test and classroom observation. It was found that most students who use prewriting strategies such as cubing, clustering, looping or outlining are better in writing. The data collected implied that students can improve their writing if they are taught these prewriting strategies.

1.2 Introduction

According to Smith (2008:19) "Writing instruction has changed its focus from product to process in the past forty years". Smith (Ibid. 20-22) also states that teachers of writing in English as a Foreign Language can start teaching their students how to use prewriting strategies, where and when to use them. Moreover, he (Ibid.) adds that teachers of writing can begin teaching these strategies from the earliest levels to help students to become good writers. In addition, students' interaction, their homework and writing tasks are also parts of prewriting strategies.

Smith (Ibid. 23-24) mentions that most teachers agree of the importance of prewriting strategies in order to help their students improve their writing abilities. He (ibid.) also proposes that writing is a complementary process, it is composed of three interrelated strategies: prewriting, during-writing and post-writing. Prewriting stage: starts before the students put their ideas on paper. During-writing stage: starts when the students begin to produce their first draft, whereas post-writing: is a stage that allows the students to edit their writing, correct spelling, punctuation, grammar, then revise and prepare to write the final draft. (Ibid.)

Most teachers of English as a Foreign Language use prewriting strategies to develop their students' writing. Moreover, these strategies can help students to increase their process of thinking and organize their ideas in writing. There are different prewriting strategies such as cubing, free writing, clustering, looping, brainstorming and outlining. Cubing is a strategy that helps students to think about the topic and collect words about it. Free writing requires writing all the ideas that cross the student's mind on paper without correcting spelling, punctuation and grammar, whereas clustering is called "mind-mapping" strategy, which allows students to discover and understand the connection between ideas. Looping is a strategy that helps the student-writer to focus on his/her ideas and try to discover a writing topic. Brainstorming helps to gain a lot of information within short time and outlining strategy is called "making lists" tool because it allows students to generate and organize ideas to reinforce a topic. (Ibid.)

1.3 Statement of the Problem

This study focuses on difficulties that introductory students face in writing. The writing skill is relatively neglected by teachers in the classrooms. They usually focus on other areas in the textbook such as grammar, vocabulary, listening or speaking.

The study concentrates on the use of prewriting strategies that may have a significant role in helping students develop their writing skill.

1.4 Significance of the Study

First, the rationale for this study is to highlight the use of prewriting strategies in the process of teaching and learning of writing in English as a foreign language. Second, to help both the teachers and students particularly in Libyan universities to develop the writing through using prewriting strategies. Third, the findings of this work could be useful for teachers to concentrate more on the use of prewriting strategies in the classroom, this may facilitate the difficulties that students may face in writing. Finally, to evaluate through empirical investigation the role of prewriting strategies in developing the students' ability in writing. It is hoped that the results of the present study would encourage teachers and students to focus more on teaching and learning prewriting strategies in the classroom in order to enhance the mastery of the writing skill ability.

1.5 Objective of the Study

The present study aims at investigating the role of using prewriting strategies on the writing of Libyan introductory students at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of

Tripoli. Thus, it is hoped that using prewriting strategies in the classroom would help students improve their writing abilities and create attitude towards writing.

1.6 Hypothesis of the Study

This study attempts to test the following hypothesis:

Using prewriting strategies has a positive effect on Libyan introductory students' writing abilities at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli and eventually leads to develop their ability in writing.

1.7 Research Questions

This study is undertaken with the following research questions:-

1- Do students at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli use prewriting strategies?

2- Are the instructors of writing subjects at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli familiar with prewriting strategies?

3- To what extant do English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers of this level (Introductory) at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli use teaching strategies in teaching writing?

1.8 Participants, sample, procedure and instruments

The data of this study consisted of two instruments: students' written test and classroom observation.

1.8.1 Students' Written Test

In order to make students' written test, the following points were included:

(A) The Students' Background

Seventy Libyan students were chosen randomly from some introductory classes at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli in Spring 2016. They were male and females (25 males and 45 females), aged between 19-21 years old. The participants were done a placement test by the researcher. The result obtained from the test showed that the level of the participants was approximately the same (Pre-Intermediate level). All of the participants have been living in Libya since they were born accept two who lived in England, (one student lived in England for 6 years and the other one lived there for 11 years).

(B) Sample of the study

The study included seventy Libyan students who studied English Language for three years at secondary school, then they started to study English language at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli. The students studied a course called (Introductory) on English, Arabic and other foreign languages such as Spanish, French Italian as well. They did two examinations (mid-term and final) in all languages that they studied. The duration of the semester was from the 20th of February 2016- to the 30th of June 2016. The Department of English decided to use New English File Textbook (Pre-Intermediate) to teach those students. The book is designed to cover the four English language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) besides grammar, vocabulary as well as pronunciation. So writing was included to be taught in New English File textbook for introductory students.

(C) Procedures of the Study

The research included a case study of some introductory students at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli. It was conducted on two groups. Each group consisted of thirty-five students. The first group (the Experimental Group/Group A) was taught in writing paragraphs by using prewriting strategies. The teacher started to warm up the class by giving a general idea about the topic. Then s/he explained the lesson and supported that by examples to clarify it. After that, the teacher asked the students to write a paragraph about the topic using prewriting strategies (or any of the strategies they prefer) for example, cubing, free writing, clustering….etc. Besides these strategies, the students also used the other two stages of writing (during-writing and post-writing). However, the main concern of the

lesson was centered around using prewriting strategies. The teacher also checked whether the students had used these strategies in their writings or not by revising their papers in the classroom. Finally, the students were tested in writing a paragraph. The purpose of the test was to show the importance of using prewriting strategies in order to develop students' writing ability.

The second group (the Control Group/Group B) was taught by the traditional method of teaching. The teacher started the lesson by giving a simple idea about the topic. Then s/he also explained the definitions given in the lesson. After that, the teacher read the lesson and answered the questions with the students. S/He also asked the students to write a paragraph about the topic using the model

provided by the book in the classroom or at home. Finally, the students' writing were checked and corrected in order to make sure that the students followed the same instructions of the lesson thoroughly. The students were also tested in writing a paragraph using one of the models that were previously introduced during the course. The aim of the test was to evaluate the students' ability in writing through using the traditional method.

Both groups attended two classes a week for six weeks. Each period lasted for (ninety minutes) and each lesson included a part for writing. The period that was given for writing in the classroom was about forty-five minutes each lecture. At the end of this study, two types of samples were taken for each group: students' written test and classroom observation.

(D) The Teachers' Background

In order to conduct this study, two Libyan teachers were selected randomly from the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli. They were a male and a female and their ages were 36. These teachers were holders of M.A degree in English Language Teaching. They were teaching English at least for seven years and both have been living in Libya since birth. The teachers were chosen to teach both groups (the Experimental Group/Group A and the Control Group/Group B) for six weeks.

(E) Students' Written Test

The following is the test from which samples of "Group A and Group B" were extracted. There were choices of topics to write in the test and the total mark was out of 25.

Write a paragraph about only one topic:

(a) Your favourite photo

(b) Describe your old friend

(c) Your last holiday

(d) Your routine on Fridays

1.8.1.2 Classroom Observation

According to Flynn et al. (2004:68) "Classroom observation is a useful assessment in order to gather evidence and collect data to evaluate the students' level in achieving learning objectives." Elbow (1985:23-25) says that classroom observation is an effective technique because it helps teachers maintain accurate account of each students' development. Classroom observation can provide actual data about teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom.

(A) Participants, place and time

The observation took place in five introductory classes, all of the classes are at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli. It also dealt with five Libyan teachers, holders of M.A in English Language Teaching. They were four females and only one male, each aged between (32-37). The participants were teaching English at least for (five to ten years), only one teacher lived in England for four years, while others live in Libya.

The duration of the classroom observation was two months, from the 1st of March 2016 April to the 30th of April 2016. The

researcher observed each teacher twice during two months; each lasted approximately forty-five minutes.

The assessment checklist was prepared to find out whether the results obtained from the students' written test and those of the classroom observation are alike. Five aspects were observed:

1- How much time do teachers spend on teaching writing?

2- Which strategies do teachers use in writing?

3- Do teachers encourage their students to write a paragraph by using prewriting strategies?

4- Do teachers ask their students to write a paragraph in the classroom or at home?

5- Do teachers ask their students to write a paragraph by themselves or by memorizing a model paragraph?

1.9 An Overview of the Arrangement of the Study

The study focuses on the effectiveness of teaching prewriting strategies in order to improve students' ability in writing. This study also focuses on the impact of using prewriting strategies on introductory students' writing. The methodology of this study includes a students' written test and classroom observation. It is hoped that the results of the present study would encourage teachers and students to focus more on teaching and learning prewriting in the classroom in order to enhance the mastery of the writing ability.

1.10 Literature Review

Lee and Tan (2010:137-138) state that there are important steps in writing process. These steps include: finding and gathering resources, formulate aims of writing, working on writing plans, generating content and revising the production. According to Oluikpe (1997:36) (as cited in Kolade,2012:21) "writing is a skill which demands that students plan, order their imagination and ideas clearly in sequences." Oluikpe (Ibid. 38-39) also mentions that many writers, even for those who have writing skills consider writing is a difficult task. Moreover, weak students-writers need to practise a lot and follow writing guidance as well.

Lorenz, Green and Brown (2009:119-125) comment that using prewriting strategies is important for students because during writing process, students try to get their initial thoughts onto paper. At this stage, they can create new images about the topic, produce new information and ideas with the help of schema. Lorenz, Green and Brown (ibid.) also say that many students who use the prewriting strategies are able to form their ideas, shape their topic in their minds before they start writing and order their time as well. In addition, these strategies help students to imagine and think deeper about a topic on their own choice.

2- What is Prewriting?

Oluwadiya (1992:5-7) states that prewriting is the first stage that the students do in the process of writing . It starts at the point where students explore their own thoughts, form their images about a topic. It is not important in this point to write in an organized way, but it is

necessary to keep the students in writing. Prewriting strategies help students a lot to discover what they want to write and how to form the images into written sentences, then write them on paper. In other words, prewriting stages help students to write better and form their ideas easier. (Ibid.).

Reid (1995:21-25) agrees that it is important for teachers to know which strategy is appropriate to use according to students' level. In addition, teachers should also explain to their students how to choose a certain strategy and when they use it. Ried (ibid.) emphasizes that teachers should know that not all writing strategies are suitable for all levels of students as well as students need to know all of these types and then use strategies that they prefer. (Ibid.)

2.1- Prewriting Strategies

Students need to use different prewriting strategies in order to develop their English writing skill. They should also be familiar with all of these strategies as well as use the one that works best for them. This study presents six useful strategies: cubing, free writing, clustering, looping, brainstorming and outlining.

2.1.1 Cubing

Cubing is usually called as a problem-solving technique, it helps students to think about the topic and gather a number of words about that topic on paper. Elbow (1985:27-30) observes that cubing is considered as an information collecting tool because it guides students-writers to the way of getting words, drawing images in their minds about a topic and forming sentences, then writing them on paper. Moreover, this strategy can be used when students-writers

reach the point of starting a topic, after that all thoughts will be connected and engaged together then they start to write them down.

2.1.2 Free writing

Free writing requires writing down all of the ideas on paper even before a student begins to read about it. S/He does not need to focus on completing her/his sentences or correct spelling, punctuation or grammar. In addition, a student is just interested in mentioning all the ideas that come to the her/his mind on paper even if these thoughts do not make sense or do not relate to the topic. A student sometimes needs to have a break between five to ten munities before starting to write, then s/he continues writing down all the ideas that has in her/his mind about the subject. (Allison, 2008:3-5)

Chastain (1988:245) states that students write about a topic without directing them to plan, order or revise their thoughts while they are engaged in writing. They will know that themselves, from time to time, they write unconnected sentences or they form some type of non- sentences. They sometimes feel that they are helpless in writing. All these points mentioned above could happen during writing process, but they should keep writing and engage themselves with their connected thoughts and start with the first idea that reaches their minds. (Ibid.)

2.1.3- Clustering

Clustering is considered as "mind mapping or idea mapping" strategy. It helps students to discover and understand the connection

between ideas. Clustering is a technique allows the student-writer to choose an encircled topic around which whatever maybe found in connection with what will be selected to be shaped in a tree-branch like relationship. In this case, students-writers can choose the topics that they prefer, then they try to develop them. (Santa, 2011:3)

Pica (1986:17-20) says that clustering is a strategy that helps the student-writer to run and connect ideas, form images and order feelings around a stimulus word until a sentence becomes ready to be written. Pica (ibid.) also clarifies that the student-writer starts with writing a circled word or phrase in the center of a page, it may connect with a topic that is chosen by her/him. Then s/he writes words or phrases s/he associates with the first word, circling them, ordering them with the first word and then showing the connection worked out in her/his mind by drawing lines. The student-writer can also add other new words to the diagram or delete unsuitable ones. In this stage, s/he can use clustering in different ways, such as outline or a list of sub-topics s/he likes to cover as scaffolding that directs her/him to what s/he wants to focus on within the larger subject in preparing a cluster diagram. (Ibid.)

2.1.4 Looping

According to Spack (1984: 112) "Looping strategy is an invention technique by the application of which the student- writer abides by a non-stop writing in the absence of self-censorship." She (Ibid. 116 -119) explains that looping is another effective prewriting technique that helps the student-writer to concentrate on his/her ideas and try to discover a writing topic. In looping, primarily, the student-

writer is required to write freely and rapidly without stopping on a topic for at least five minutes. She (Ibid.) also adds that looping and free writing are similar because in looping, the student-writer needs to write quickly, s/he does not edit or stop. Then s/he reads all the ideas and circle those s/he finds interesting ideas or more appropriate. After having a suitable statement to start with, s/he will begin writing down on a paper.

Zahorik and Dichanz (1994:75-76) explain that the student-writer requires to read and reread again, summarize and write in a single sentence what has been formed. The student-writer needs also to repeat reading the above paragraphs while writing in order to make sure about coherence and cohesion of her/his writing.

2.1.5 Brainstorming

Pope and Prater (1990:65-70) observe that brainstorming is one of the most important techniques used to create as much as unexpected ideas or viewpoints that a student needs during writing process. They (ibid.) also say that brainstorming is called "listing" because it helps to produce a lot of information within short time. The student-writer starts with writing down all thoughts that emerge from the general topic s/he is thinking about. This procedure can be more successful if s/he works in a team. All team members can create and involve in producing ideas, with one member acting as scribe. In brainstorming strategy, the student-writer does not need to correct grammar, edit spelling or throw out what might not be a good idea. Simply, s/he should write down a lot of possibilities, even

unconnected or incomplete sentences. After that, the student-writer orders the items and then start writing. (Ibid.)

2.1.6- Outlining

This strategy is known as "making lists" tool, it allows students to generate ideas to reinforce a topic. A scratch outline can often be the most useful single technique for writing a good topic. (Santa, 2011:4-5)

During the scratch outline process, the student-writer requires to think carefully about the particular point s/he makes, about the exact item that s/he wants to support and then organizes all what have mentioned in the exact order in which s/he wants to arrange items. It is a plan that enables the student-writer to achieve a supported and organized composition. (Ibid.)

3- Approaches to Teach Writing

There are three approaches to teach writing: traditional approach, new approach and process approach.

3.1- Traditional Approach

Dicker (2003:136-138) mentions that at the early stages of learning, teachers directed the focus of writing only on grammar and spelling errors to catch students' attention. Students used to change the tense of the text from present to the past or turn the text from active to passive. There is no real chance to create their own writings.

According to him (Ibid.139) "this approach is based on the belief that learners should not be asked to produce the language before they

are ready. This belief is echoed in the Natural Approach whose proponents maintain that children often go through a silent period trying to express their thoughts in a second language." Dicker (Ibid.140-144) also states that at more advanced levels, students were asked to write compositions and the main concern was on the final form and errors should be avoided. Students would get high marks if they made few mistakes. Teachers did not pay any attention to the students' thoughts or to the development of their choosing the best idea to write about. Every student used to repeat the same vocabulary and sentence structure which made most of students' writing without creativity. (Ibid.)

3.2 New Approach

Moll (1990:241-243) explains that the main concern of writing has changed over the last few years. It has been shifted from focusing on grammar and spelling errors to the mechanical aspects of writing. Teachers have to direct their students at the ideas they like to write. This can be used by encouraging students to increase a sense of audience or by giving them topics to write according to their own choice. In addition, students feel free in writing because they are not focused on editing spelling or correcting grammar.

3.3 The Process Approach

Leki (1991:34-35) says that when the process approach was traditionally used, the emphasis became mainly on the product itself. He (Ibid.) clarifies that the aim of this approach changed from the

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process of writing a paper to the process of achieving the final form
of the paper. Thus, a good written paper was assessed according to
its format. The paper had to be neat, errors-free and well-organized.

4- Investigating Developing the Students' Writing Abilities through Prewriting Strategies

This work includes the empirical study of developing the writing
skill through prewriting strategies. It attempts to examine the
effectiveness of teaching prewriting strategies at the Department of
English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli, "introductory
course."

The practical part of the present study consists of two data
collection, namely: students' written test and classroom observation.
Consequently, the results will be presented and discussed in the
following sections:-

4.1 The Results of the Students' Written Test.

4.1.1 The Results and Analysis of the Students' Written Test

No. of students	Group A Total Mark (25)	Ratio	No. of students	Group B Total Mark (25)	Ratio
1	22	88%	1	23	92%
2	25	100%	2	24	96%
3	19	76%	3	15	60%
4	18	72%	4	17	68%
5	18	72%	5	14	56%
6	24	25%	6	19	76%
7	25	100%	7	21	84%

8	25	100%	8	17	68%
9	22	88%	9	16	64%
10	24	96%	10	13	52%
11	22	88%	11	7	28%
12	21	84%	12	4	16%
13	23	92%	13	4	16%
14	21	84%	14	11	44%
15	23	92%	15	21	84%
16	18	72%	16	13	52%
17	19	76%	17	20	80%
18	20	80%	18	12	48%
19	16	64%	19	17	68%
20	18	72%	20	4	16%
21	12	48%	21	12	48%
22	22	88%	22	13	52%
23	19	76%	23	11	44%
24	22	88%	24	19	76%
25	22	88%	25	8	32%
26	20	80%	26	15	60%
27	20	80%	27	15	60%
28	16	64%	28	16	64%
29	21	84%	29	1	4%
30	19	76%	30	22	88%
31	23	92%	31	16	64%
32	21	84%	32	19	76%
33	15	60%	33	17	68%
34	20	80%	34	13	52%
35	21	84%	35	12	48%

Table (1)

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As apparent from the above table that "Group A" have scored higher marks than "Group B". Twenty –three students from "Group A" have scored from (20-25) marks out of 25, which means that only twelve students from thirty-five got less than twenty out of 25. On the other hand, in "Group B", only six students from thirty-five have scored from (20-25) and twenty-nine students have scored less than twenty out of 25.

The result obtained from this test supports the research questions that were presented in the introduction as well as the hypothesis of the study in this paper. The above table (1) shows that the students of " Group A" have developed their writing by using prewriting strategies and got high marks, whereas most students of "Group B" got weak marks.

Consequently, the findings of this study are as follows:

1- The present situation of teaching/learning the writing skill is not a perfect one. Most teachers do not use prewriting strategies in teaching writing

2- Most students do not get enough time to practise writing in the class as well as they do not get immediate responses from their teachers when they try to correct their mistakes.

3- Much opportunity of writing practice was wasted by teachers' dominance. They write the model of the paragraph on the board and ask their students to copy the model and memorize it.

4- The absence of writing activities in the classroom because most teachers think that writing could be assigned as homework.

4.2 The Results of Classroom Observation

The collected data from the five tables follows the five aspects given below:

1- How much time do teachers spend on teaching writing by using prewriting strategies?.

Strategies	No. of teachers	No. of teachers who used it	% of teachers who used it	No. of teachers who did not use it	% of teachers who did not use it
Less than 30 minutes	5	1	20%	4	80%
Between 30 minutes and one hour	5	0	20%	5	100%
More than one hour	5	0	20%	5	100%

Table (2)

Table (2) presents that teachers did not have enough time to use prewriting strategies in the class as well as they did not give their students an opportunity to practise these strategies. Moreover, their lectures time was spent on teaching how to form sentences in the introduction and in the conclusion, correcting grammar or spelling, but not on writing itself. Only one teacher who used prewriting strategies in teaching and s/he spent less than 30 minutes to teach her/his students these strategies in writing. Four teachers (80%) ignored teaching writing by using prewriting strategies in their classes and they stated that writing could be assigned as homework.

2- Which Strategies do teachers use in writing?

Strategies	No. of teachers	No. of teachers who used it	% of teachers who used it	No. of teachers who did not use it	% of teachers who did not use it
Free writing	5	1	20%	4	80%

Brainstorming	5	2	40%	3	60%
Clustering	5	0	100%	5	100%
Cubing	5	0	100%	5	100%
Looping	5	0	100%	5	100%
Outlining	5	1	20%	4	80%

Table (3)

Table (3), illustrates that classroom observation shows evident that four teachers (80%) were unfamiliar with using free writing and outlining as well in their classes, whereas only two teachers (40%) used brainstorming in writing. Moreover, classroom observation revealed that none (100%) used clustering, cubing or looping in their lectures.

3- Do teachers encourage their students to write a paragraph by using prewriting strategies (or any of these strategies)?

Strategies	No. of teachers	No. of teachers who used it	% of teachers who used it	No. of teachers who did not use it	%of teachers who did not use it
Do teachers encourage their students to write a paragraph by using prewriting strategies?	5	2	40%	3	60%

Table (4)

The results of table (4) illustrates that three teachers (60%) were unfamiliar with how to raise students' interest in writing and how to use a variety of prewriting strategies to encourage students to write, whereas two teachers (40%) used these prewriting strategies and showed their encouragement to their students in the class in order to help them in writing.

4- Do teachers ask their students to write a paragraph in the classroom or at home?

strategies	No. of teachers	No. of teachers who used it	% of teachers who used it	No. of teachers who did not use it	%of teachers who did not use it
Do teachers ask their students to write a paragraph in the classroom?	5	1	20%	4	80%
Do teachers ask their students to write a paragraph at home?	5	4	80%	1	20%

Table (5)

The above table (5) shows that only one teacher (20%) asked his/her students to write a paragraph in the classroom. On the other hand, four teachers (80%) asked their students to write a paragraph as homework. Teachers stated that most students write well organized, structured paragraphs at home and just few of them write poor writings and their thoughts are disconnected. Although most of those students were successful in writing good paragraphs at home, they could not be described as students who really exhibit good writing skills because their writings may be copied from other students' papers.

5- Do teachers ask their students to write a paragraph by themselves or by memorizing a model?

Strategies	No. of teachers	No. of teachers who used it	%of teachers who used it	No. of teachers who did not use it	% of teachers who did not use it
Do teachers ask their students to write a	5	1	20%	4	80%

paragraph by themselves?					
Do teachers ask their students to write a paragraph by memorizing a model paragraph?	5	4	80%	1	20%

Table (6)

Table (6) illustrates that only one teacher (20%) encouraged his/her students to write their paragraphs by themselves, while four teachers (80%) did not. It is obvious from the data collected that four teachers (80%) encouraged their students to memorize the topic then write it down. Those students had to memorize samples of paragraphs in order to avoid making mistakes as well as save time in their examinations as well, whereas only one teacher tried to help his/her students to write their own paragraphs solely.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

According to the results that obtained from the students' test and classroom observation, the researcher has noticed that these results were not similar.

Although most of the teachers believe that using prewriting strategies is an effective way for teaching writing, three teachers complained that they have never attended or received any training on using prewriting strategies. It has been recorded that teachers' main concern was finishing the textbook before the examination time.

5- Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study showed that most teachers who teach introductory course at the Department of English, Faculty of Languages, University of Tripoli do not use prewriting strategies in teaching writing because they have not been taught these strategies as mentioned in their responses to the classroom observation. Although prewriting strategies have an effective role in developing students' abilities in writing, they are rarely used by teachers. In addition, teachers of writing consider using these strategies a waste of lecture time.

5.2 Recommendations

According to the results which have been obtained from this study, the following points are recommended:

1- Teachers should focus more on using different prewriting strategies in teaching writing as well as practise these strategies in the classroom to improve their students' writing.

2- Teachers should not dominate their classrooms, they should make a balance between guiding their students and giving enough time to practice and share in the classroom participation.

3- The Ministry of High Education and the University of Tripoli-the Department of English should prepare and organize some seminars, training programmes and workshops about teaching prewriting strategies to develop teachers' knowledge about teaching writing skills.

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