

Proposed Correction Techniques for Alleviating the Problem of Teachers' 'Over-Correction' and Developing Preparatory-Stage Students' EFL Writing¹

Dr. Emad A. Albaaly (Assistant Professor of Curriculum & Instruction of English)
(Suez Canal University)

Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the effectiveness of 'correction codes', 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues in writing,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' as writing correction techniques in improving Preparatory-Stage students' EFL writing and alleviating the problem of EFL teachers' over-correction of their students' writing. A quasi-experimental approach with one experimental and one control group design was adopted. The experimental group was taught by the three techniques whereas the control group was taught using the 'teacher's written comments.' The participants comprised 56 students enrolled at the 24th of October Preparatory-Stage Official School; they were randomly selected and equally divided into two groups (24 students each). The research mainly designed two instruments: 1. a writing skill checklist and 2. a writing pre-post-test aided with writing correction rubrics (developed by the researcher) with criteria, elements, scores, and correction codes administered for correcting the students' writing. The results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group on the writing post-test. The related effect size was at a 'medium' level ($p < 0.05$), and the numbers of students' errors were reduced at a higher rate in the experimental group than in the control group. Therefore, it was concluded that 'correction codes, whole-class oral feedback on common issues in writing, and metacognitive strategy encouragement' as writing correction techniques were more effective in both developing students' writing and reducing their errors and thus teachers' over-correction than 'the teacher's written comments.' It was recommended that the three techniques be employed when teachers

¹ Accepted: 2024-06-23

Published: 2024-07-04

correct students' writing, more research be administered to test their related effectiveness in the other three language skills at the other educational levels in Egypt, and a broader investigation be carried out.

Key Words: *EFL writing, teacher over-correction, error correction, correction codes, whole-class oral feedback, metacognition, Egypt*

1. Introduction

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) writing involves developing skills and techniques for students to effectively communicate their ideas, thoughts, and opinions through the written word. Good writing is performed in a planned and reflective way rather than through spontaneous and impulsive oral interaction. To achieve better proficiency levels, EFL students need to employ such techniques to further ensure that their writing is correct and free from errors.

This research offers three proposed techniques not only to overcome the problem of the teachers correcting the Preparatory-Stage students' same errors again and again (as will be detailed later) but also to develop writing skills through the students' employment of their mental abilities rather than obtaining direct answers. The proposed three techniques are 'correction codes," whole-class oral feedback on common issues in writing,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement.' It is to be noted that the three techniques have not been researched in the Egyptian context as far as EFL writing is concerned, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, as the results of the investigation will prove later.

Structure-wise, the present research first establishes grounds from the literature on the purposes of EFL writing to keep the focus on them, the EFL writing skills to be developed and assessed, the process of EFL writing correction and related importance to be considered, the EFL writing challenges met by EFL Preparatory-Stage students, and ways to obtain more effective writing correction through the three

proposed techniques. The rationale for conducting this research and related problem is also highlighted. Then, the relevant methodology adopted, including the design of two new instruments, is established and the related results, findings, and discussion are finally pointed out.

Originally, the purposes of EFL writing include:

- a.** Developing writing skills: EFL students train to improve their ability to generate ideas, organize their thoughts, use appropriate vocabulary, apply correct grammar and sentence structure, and convey their message clearly (Jurianto et al., 2015).
- b.** Learning writing strategies: EFL students learn various strategies to manage writing tasks, such as prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing. Such strategies help them become more effective writers (Jurianto et al., 2015).
- c.** Practicing different genres: EFL students exercise writing various genres, e.g. descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative essays, to expand their writing repertoire (Qin & Uccelli, 2016).
- d.** Receiving feedback: EFL students receive feedback from their teachers and peers to improve their writing. This feedback can make them focus on content, organization, language use, and mechanics of writing (Jurianto et al., 2015)
- e.** Developing writing fluency: EFL students work on improving their writing fluency by experiencing writing regularly and increasing their vocabulary and grammar knowledge (Richardson, 2022)

By focusing on these purposes of EFL writing, teachers aim to help their students become confident and competent writers in English, which is an essential skill for academic and professional success. The skill of EFL writing skill is known to incorporate various (sub-) skills.

1.1. The EFL Writing Skills

A careful review of the EFL writing skills in the literature yields several ones under certain areas, such as content, language, organization, mechanics, and task achievement. Ahmadi and Parhizgar (2017), Ferdouse (2012), Kaewnuch (2013), Khalavi and Zeraatpishhe (2023), Piazza and Wallat (2006), and Ramezani et al. (2023) clarify the writing areas, sub-areas, and related skills to be assessed, as shown in Table (1):

Table (1) the Writing Skills

Area	Sub-Area	Skill	
Content	Cohesion	The ability to use/show the following correctly:	
		Appropriateness	
		Idea development	
		Focus on topic	
		Clarity	
		Conjunctions	
		Coordinators	
		Transitions	
Language	Vocabulary	Logical sequence of ideas	
		Vocabulary accurately	
		Vocabulary range	
	Grammar accuracy	Grammar accuracy	Vocabulary appropriateness
			Verb tenses
			Subject-verb agreement
			Prepositions
			Articles
			Word order
			Adjectives
			Adverbs
			Determiners
			Voice, i.e. Active/Passive
Structure range			

Organiza- tion	punctuation
	Adherence to the rhetorical genre
	Commitment to the expected format
Mechanics	Style
	Spelling
	Clear handwriting
Task achievement	Task achievement

It is noteworthy that the skills in Table (1) above are needed by teachers to perform thorough corrections.

1.2. EFL Writing Correction

EFL writing correction refers to giving feedback and guidance to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students to help them develop their writing skills. It involves identifying and addressing various types of errors in students' written work, such as grammatical errors, spelling errors, punctuation issues, and problems with vocabulary, organization, and content. According to Mahmoud and Orabi (2015, pp. 1678-1679), the aspects of EFL writing correction include:

- a. Identifying errors: Teachers carefully read through students' writing and recognize areas for improvement. This process can involve underlining errors, using correction codes, or highlighting specific issues.
- b. Providing feedback: Teachers provide feedback in various ways, such as using rubrics and checklists to evaluate writing performance, restructuring sentences to show correct usage, or using colors to highlight strengths, weaknesses, and errors.
- c. Encouraging self-correction: Teachers can direct students to identify and correct their errors by providing hints or by using a gradual approach, such as initially providing correction codes and

gradually reducing support as students become more knowledgeable about them.

Further, with other strategies, Coomper (2016) and (Randasa, 2019) mention the following:

a. Focusing on specific errors: To make the correction process more practicable, teachers can focus on certain types of errors, such as the ones related to capitalization, article usage, or verb tenses, and provide targeted remedies to them, according to Coomper (2016) coping in views with Mahmoud and Orabi (2015).

b. Promoting revision: By encouraging students to revise their writing based on the feedback provided, teachers can aid them in adopting the corrections and make their overall writing skills better over time (Coomper, 2016).

c. Peer Correction: The process involves one student reviewing another student's writing for correction. It is beneficial in error identification, and learners express positive views about it (Randasa, 2019).

However, contrary to what Mahmoud and Orabi (2015) stated on teacher error correction feedback, recent research proposes that teacher error correction feedback may not necessarily improve EFL learners' ability to correct writing errors. Research including Taiwanese EFL college students found that, despite widespread feedback and reviews, most errors were 'not self-corrected after a three-month instruction' (Tseng, 2023).

Effective EFL writing correction requires a balance between providing constructive feedback and allowing students to express themselves freely without being overly constrained by error correction (Sary et al., 2022). It is generally seen that by using a variety of correction techniques and promoting self-reflection, teachers can help EFL students develop their writing abilities and become more confident and effective communicators.

Recent research, e.g. Farjadnasab and Khodashenas (2017) and Teach Opians (2019), handles various writing errors made by students in writing. It emphasizes that the aspects of EFL writing that should be corrected include correction of grammatical errors, i.e. verb tense inconsistencies, subject-verb agreement issues, and sentence structure inaccuracies. The existence of these aspects is essential for enhancing the overall quality of EFL writing. It is essential to mention that addressing grammar errors helps students communicate their ideas precisely and effectively. This is supported by many researchers and experts, e.g. Farjadnasab and Khodashenas (2017) and Teach Opians (2019), a specialized professional blog.

According to Teach Opians (2019), the following errors and mistakes should be considered when correcting students' writing:

- a. Spelling Errors:** Correction of spelling errors is decisive in EFL writing to guarantee clarity and accuracy in written communication. Teachers should address spelling errors to help students improve their language proficiency and avoid confusion.
- b. Punctuation Errors:** teachers must correct punctuation in EFL writing to guarantee coherence and readability. Teachers should correct punctuation errors, such as missing commas, incorrect apostrophes, and misapplication of punctuation marks, to help students improve the organization and clearness of their writing.
- c. Organization and Cohesion:** Correcting problems related to organization and cohesion, such as unclear transitions between ideas, lack of logical flow, and fragmented paragraphs, is crucial to EFL writing. Teachers should help students structure their writing effectively to enhance cohesion and coherence.
- d. Vocabulary Use:** manipulating vocabulary errors, such as incorrect word choices, inadequate vocabulary range, and misuse of idioms expression, is vital in EFL writing. Correcting vocabulary errors helps

students express themselves accurately and strengthen their language proficiency.

e. Content Relevance: Confirming that the content of EFL writing is relevant to the topic and effectively conveys the intended message is vital. Teachers should correct content errors to help students stay on topic, provide sufficient details, and communicate their ideas.

It is seen that by focusing on correcting these aspects of EFL writing, teachers can help students improve their language skills, enhance their writing proficiency, and effectively communicate their ideas in English.

Levy (n.d.), a specialized professional blog author, points out that teachers should consider the following when they perform corrections:

They should consider the situation, i.e. they should consider the context in which the writing is performed, whether it is informal or formal, extemporaneous or planned. They should understand the purpose of the language being used and the participants involved. They should tailor their correction approach based on the specific situation to guarantee that corrections are appropriate and beneficial for the student. According to the source, teachers should focus on language as communication and stress the primary purpose of language as conveying a specific message rather than showcasing correctness or elegance. They should encourage students to prioritize effective communication over perfection in their writing. By focusing on language as a tool for communication, teachers can help students develop their writing skills in a practical and meaningful way.

Buddon (2008) also recommends that teachers should provide opportunities for self-correction: encourage students to identify and correct their errors by raising their awareness of common errors and providing guidance on how to address them. By giving students the

chance to self-correct, teachers empower them to take ownership of their writing and improve their skills independently.

By incorporating these strategies into the writing correction process, teachers can create a supportive and effective environment for students to enhance their writing skills and make meaningful progress in their language development.

1.3. Importance of Writing Correction

The importance of writing correction in EFL education lies in its ability to enhance language proficiency, improve communication skills, and foster language development. The pivotal reasons highlighting the significance of writing correction in EFL include:

a. Improving Language Accuracy: Writing correction helps EFL students to identify and articulate errors in grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and sentence structure. By addressing these errors, students can boost the accuracy of their written English, leading to clearer and more effective communication (Farjadnasab & Khodashenas, 2017)

b. Enhancing Writing Skills: Correcting writing errors offers students feedback on their language use, helping them comprehend their weaknesses and areas for improvement. This process encourages students to refine their writing skills, have better control over language rules, and yield more coherent and organized written work ("How To Correct", 2024; Teach Opian, 2019).

c. Promoting Self-Editing Skills: in the process of writing correction, students learn to self-edit their work by recognizing and correcting errors independently. This learning fosters autonomy in learning and empowers students to take possession of their writing, leading to increased self-confidence and proficiency in writing ("How To Correct", 2024).

d. Encouraging Communication: Operative writing correction focuses not only on identifying errors but also on providing positive feedback that improves the quality of students' writing. By stimulating clear and articulate communication, writing correction helps students communicate their ideas more effectively and engage in meaningful written discourse (Farjadnasab & Khodashenas, 2017).

e. Facilitating Language Acquisition: correcting students' writing plays a crucial role in language acquisition by supporting language rules, vocabulary usage, and sentence structures. Students can internalize correct language patterns and improve their language proficiency little by little, by receiving feedback on their writing (Farjadnasab & Khodashenas, 2017).

f. When they lack motivation, the teacher should encourage students to write by presenting their best writing to the class and using positive reinforcement (Abd El-Rahman, 2011, p.31).

In summary, writing correction in EFL education is essential for improving language accuracy, enhancing writing skills, promoting self-editing abilities, encouraging effective communication, and facilitating language acquisition. By providing constructive feedback and guidance, teachers can help EFL students develop their writing proficiency and become more confident and competent writers in English.

1.4. Writing Challenges to EFL Preparatory-Stage Students

It is evident that the most recent EFL writing difficulties faced by preparatory stage students in developing their writing skills in Egypt. The following represents the challenges:

a. Weakness in generating ideas and giving supporting details: pilot research, conducted on EFL second-year preparatory students in Egypt, revealed a remarkable weakness in students' writing skills. These were evident in their inability to express ideas related to the task and give supporting details (Abdrabo, 2020).

- b.** Difficulty in applying correct sentence structure and using relevant vocabulary: The pilot research also found that Preparatory-Stage students struggled with applying correct sentence structure and using a good range of vocabulary in their writing (Abdrabo, 2020).
- c.** Challenges in punctuation and spelling: Preparatory stage students in Egypt face difficulties using punctuation and precise spelling (Abdrabo, 2020).
- d.** Lack of proficiency in English: EFL students face noteworthy challenges in evolving their academic literacy skills due to a lack of proficiency in English, which delays their ability to read and write academic texts (Gao & Wang, 2023).
- e.** Differences in educational and cultural backgrounds: EFL students come from such various educational backgrounds that they differ significantly from Western academic cultures, making it difficult for them to understand and meet academic prospects (Gao & Wang, 2023)
- f.** Challenges with Artificial Intelligences: Abdalkader (2022) revealed that Preparatory-Stage students faced challenges in dealing with Artificial Intelligence to enable their writing, but they could cope later, having obtained procedures.
- g.** Lack of opportunities to express mathematical ideas: According to Abd El-Rahman (2011), the problems that preparatory stage students face in writing in English include a lack of opportunity for expression. The research mentions that Egyptian preparatory stage pupils learning mathematics in English primarily engage in writing activities that involve solving problems following standardized steps, but they do not freely express their feelings. This is supported by Abdulhamid et al. (2021) discussed later in this section.

These challenges mentioned above highlight the need for targeted interventions and strategies to help Preparatory-Stage students in

Egypt overcome their writing difficulties and develop their writing skills effectively.

Selim (2022) supports the views of Abdrabo (2020) discussed earlier and provides a constructivist-based approach to solving this issue. Abdulhamid et al. (2022), agreeing with Abd El-Rahman (2011) discussed earlier, point out that a limit to the students' opportunity to express their ideas, suggestions, and feelings in writing is witnessed, hindering their ability to develop a deep understanding of ideas.

According to Al-Jarf (2011), certain challenges face Egyptian students:

Frustration with Error Correction: EFL writing classes, especially in large settings, can lead to frustration among students and teachers due to the extensive correction of writing errors. Students may feel unappreciated for their efforts, leading to a sense of suppression in their writing. The imposition of restrictions and artificial writing topics can further contribute to student frustration and lack of motivation in writing tasks.

Repetitive Errors Despite Correction: Despite meticulous error correction by teachers, students often continue to make the same errors repeatedly in their writing assignments. This behavior indicates that traditional error correction methods may not be effective in reducing errors and enhancing students' writing proficiency. Students may struggle to internalize corrections and apply them consistently in their writing.

These problems highlight the need for targeted interventions and effective teaching and writing correction strategies to address the challenges that Preparatory-Stage students face in writing. By understanding these issues, educators can tailor their approaches to support students in developing their writing skills and overcoming obstacles in their language learning journey.

1.5. Making Writing Correction Effective

Recent literature provides valuable writing correction practices/techniques for teachers. It addresses the effectiveness of correction codes (i.e. only) for grammar in improving students' writing (Harefa & Sibarani, 2023). Martinez (2018), Muliyah & Aminatun (2020), and Wei & Cao (2020) clarify the benefits of focusing on global issues in writing. Much literature stresses the efficacy of encouraging students to use metacognitive strategies for writing correction, e.g. Dahal (2023); Luo, (2017); Tremble (2024); Yamson & Borong (2022); Ziemińska (2023). These three techniques are detailed below.

1.5.1. Use of Correction Codes

Martinez (2018) provided an overview of research on L2 writing and L2 writing assessment, aiming to make L2 writing a central topic within the field of Second Language Acquisition. Wei & Cao (2020) found that university learners favored feedback in codes. However, research that opposed this finding discovered that the majority of students did not understand their teacher's feedback including correction codes (Muliyah & Aminatun, 2020).

This evidence provides quite a strong basis for the need for a rather intensive investigation of the effects of correction codes on developing students' writing, which provided a rationale for conducting the present research.

1.5.2. Feedback on Common Issues

Harefa and Sibarani (2023) address ways in which writing correction can be effective. Their research focuses on understanding the types and sources of errors for students, particularly the local and global errors within the communicative effect taxonomy. It highlights the prevalence of local errors, such as articles, auxiliaries, nouns and verb inflections, and quantifier errors, besides global errors. The research delves into the sources of errors, highlighting intralingual factors as

the primary cause, followed by interlingual, context of learning, and communication strategy sources. The analysis sheds light on ‘error patterns and frequencies’, providing valuable insights into students’ challenges in writing descriptive texts, especially in grammar aspects like articles and inflections.

To make writing correction effective, Harefa and Sibarani (2023) mention that teachers can focus on common and patterned issues by implementing the following strategies:

1. ‘Focus on larger, or global, errors’: at the time of correction, teachers should prioritize handling the larger errors that impact general comprehensibility, such as run-on sentence patterns, stress patterns, verb tense switches, and subject-verb agreement issues. By following this, teachers can help students improve their writing in a rather meaningful way.
2. ‘Focus on patterns of errors’: besides considering the gravity of an error, teachers need to focus on the frequency of certain errors. They need to address recurrent issues that affect general comprehensibility, such as consistently neglecting articles or making redundant grammatical errors. By targeting patterns of errors, teachers can help students make considerable improvements in their writing, pp. 153-154.

It is understood that the above-mentioned ‘focuses’ can be used to improve students’ writing either at the oral or written levels.

Research discusses various aspects of writing instruction and assessment, but does not specifically focus on the timing of providing feedback to students. For instance, Abd El-Rahman (2013) mentions using feedback forms to communicate with students about their writing but does not specify when the feedback is provided.

Ezz (2018) discusses the use of drama activities to develop reading skills with intermediate EFL learners. It found that the experimental group scored higher on post-tests after studying drama compared to

the control group that used traditional methods. However, this is not directly related to writing feedback.

Abdrabo (2020) focuses on developing EFL preparatory school students' process writing skills through discourse analysis and the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA). It references the effectiveness of a dialogue journal writing approach in developing EFL writing skills among secondary school students but does not mention feedback timing.

Martinez (2018) provides an overview of research on Second Language (L2) writing assessment and instruction but does not discuss the specific benefits of providing writing oral feedback at the beginning of a lesson, besides not handling EFL.

Farikha (2020) investigated the differences between learners' writing proficiency who were taught using the writing journal technique and given feedback compared to those who were not. Findings indicate that the former group outperformed the second. No timing of feedback was given.

It is seen that while the search results cover various aspects of writing instruction and assessment, they do not contain information directly relevant to addressing the query about the benefits of providing whole-class oral writing feedback at the beginning of a lesson. More targeted research is needed to determine if there are any established benefits to this specific practice. The present research sought to fill this gap in the literature, therefore.

1.5.3. Encouragement of Metacognitive Strategies

Research clarifies that encouraging metacognitive strategies for writing correction can significantly enhance students' writing skills. Several studies provide insights into the effectiveness of metacognitive strategies in improving writing proficiency. This is extracted from the following research discussed below.

Yamson & Borong (2022) used metacognitive strategies for developing writing skills. The research, focused on 11th-grade students, found that the application of metacognitive techniques led to a significant improvement in students' writing abilities across various components. The research emphasized the importance of metacognitive strategies in enhancing students' proficiency in writing-related skills.

Luo, (2017) investigated engineering majors' metacognitive strategy use in EFL writing: the research involving engineering majors highlighted the intermediate level of metacognitive strategy use, with planning strategy being the most effective. The research identified weaknesses in goal setting, self-correction awareness, and other sub-strategies, suggesting teaching interventions to enhance effective metacognitive strategy use among students.

Ziemińska (2023) used Self-Reflecting Journals as a Metacognitive Tool. The research focused on using self-reflective journaling as a metacognitive tool to enhance learner autonomy in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses. It stressed the benefits of self-reflection in improving learning outcomes, providing extra writing practice, and enhancing the overall learning experience for students.

Dahal (2023) emphasized the role of self-correction as a metacognitive strategy to improve sixth-grade students' writing. The result designated that the self-correction technique enabled the students' writing besides motivating them towards writing.

Tremble (2024) states that there are three steps to provide direct instruction on what metacognition is and to label specific processes incorporated in writing. Tremble (2024) instructs teachers to inform their students to 1. plan their writing by setting goals, identifying purpose, considering the audience, brainstorming ideas, and selecting proper strategies, 2. monitor their writing as they work, focusing on content, organization, grammar, and mechanics, and 3. evaluate their writing after finishing a draft, emphasizing revision and editing to

improve the writing. Advice Tremble (2024) offers also informs teachers to model these processes and scaffold instruction with deliberate repetition to guarantee that improvement comes with practice.

There is only one piece of Egyptian research (Helal, 2018) that focuses on testing the effectiveness of metacognitive strategies in EFL 'reading comprehension' rather than EFL writing. The research found that a proposed unit based on cognitive and metacognitive strategies training was effective in enhancing inferential and critical reading comprehension skills among Egyptian EFL fresher university students.

The other studies discuss the use of metacognitive strategies in academic writing in general but do not specifically test their effectiveness on Egyptian Preparatory-Stage EFL students. These studies found that students have positive attitudes towards and effectiveness in using metacognitive strategies in academic writing and that the strategies lead to improved writing skills. However, they were carried out with students either in Indonesia (Handayani & Yusra (2023; Rosdiana et al., 2023) or in China (Teng et al, 2022).

It is, then, concluded that by integrating metacognitive strategies like self-reflection, goal setting, self-assessment, and self-correction into writing correction practices, educators can empower students to improve writing, take ownership of their writing process, improve their writing skills, and foster greater autonomy, and raise motivation and attitudes towards writing, in their learning process. It is also concluded that there is no related research conducted on Egyptian Preparatory-Stage students' EFL writing as far as metacognitive strategy encouragement is concerned.

1.6. Rationale for the Research

Three reasons instigated conducting this research. First, in an unplanned informal discussion with teachers at 24th Experimental

Language School during the second term of 2023, they complained that the two productive skills of writing and speaking were not given ample amount of teaching time and their students had low levels of proficiency in the two skills. This triggered the researcher's thinking to research the two issues in two separate pieces of research to help them overcome the two problems. After that, improving writing through teacher correction was decided to be one of the researcher's targets.

Second, examining literature, as reviewed earlier and related conclusions made, e.g. Abdulhamid et al.(2021), Abdrabo (2020), Al-Jarf (2011), and Selim (2022), it was concluded that 1. prep school students had weaknesses in writing, kept repeating the same errors despite teacher's comments and over-corrections, and witnessed insufficient time for writing practice 2. Egyptian studies handling correction codes to improve writing do not exist. 3. There is also no research in Egypt handling correction codes/ correction codes with whole class oral beginning-of-class feedback on common issues. There is little research in the area of 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' in the Egyptian context, as concluded earlier.

Third, to confirm the problem represented in teachers' writing over-correction due to the technique of writing correction used and identify the disadvantages it had/ reasons why it was not effective, pilot research in the form of semi-structured phone (separate) interviews with twenty-four EFL teachers of English at three educational school administrations were conducted after Construct Validity of the interview questions was checked through submitting them to Curriculum and Instruction professors who agreed on them. The vast majority of teachers (18 %75) said that they used 'written comments on students' writing' and a minority (6 %25) confessed that they did not correct at all (i.e. they offered only marks without providing corrections/feedback). The majority who said they had used the written comments stated that they had to 'correct students' errors over and over again'. A majority (16 %66) revealed that this technique

was of either limited usefulness (8 %0.33) or no usefulness (8 %0.33) in improving students' writing for various reasons including, originally, insufficient time for writing practice in the classroom, lack of follow up from teachers, students' age-related computer gaming which kept students unfocused, busy, and away from learning, students' uncaring behaviors, besides other reasons including students' absences from classes. Appendix (A) provides the detailed interview questions and teachers' answers.

The conflict in research findings regarding teacher correction also provided a rationale for conducting the present research, as discussed earlier. For example, the conflicting results of Mahmoud and Orabi (2015) and Tseng (2023) invited the researcher to do more research in the area of error correction to reach conditions that ensure positive results.

Therefore, the problem of the present research was both a field and a research problem. It reflected a practical issue related to students **not** benefitting much from teachers' written comments on their writings, leading to teachers' '**over-correction**' of the same errors and, thus, resulting in students' **weaknesses** in writing.

Students did not benefit from the teachers' written error correction as they were given the correct answers rather than offered guiding techniques to correct themselves. Thus, learners were prevented from exerting the mental effort necessary for acquiring the target writing skills. (Even, this is supported later in Table (1) where the students' writing mean scores are generally less than %50 of the total mark of eighty-one clarified in the Instruments section.) From a research perspective, the effectiveness of 'correction codes,' 'whole-class oral feedback at the beginning of class,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' needed to be investigated in Egyptian students, as inferred from the literature surveyed earlier, and, therefore, such a research gap and requirement needed filling.

1.7. Aim of the Research

This research aimed to offer proposed correction techniques to alleviate the problem of EFL teachers' 'over-correction' and develop Preparatory-Stage students' EFL writing.

Rather procedurally and more specifically, the present research sought to investigate the effectiveness of 'correction codes, whole-class oral feedback on common issues in writing at the beginning of class, and metacognitive strategy encouragement' as writing correction techniques in reducing errors in Preparatory-Stage students' EFL writing, leading to the alleviation of the problem of teacher over-correction of the students' errors in writing and, thus, writing improvement.

1.8. Questions

To address the problem of this research, employ the intervention, and find its effectiveness, the following five questions were formulated:

1. What are the writing skills required for the Preparatory-Stage EFL Students?
2. Based on the writing skills reached through the answer to Q.1, what are the writing correction rubrics/ marking schemes for Preparatory-Stage EFL writing correction?
3. What are the correction codes which can be used with the writing elements in the rubrics?
4. How far are 'correction codes,' 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' as proposed techniques of writing correction, effective in developing students' writing, as compared to the 'teacher's written comments'?

5. How far are 'correction codes,' 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' as proposed techniques of writing correction effective in reducing students' errors in writing and, consequently, helping teachers overcome writing over-correction, as compared to the 'teacher's written comments?'

1.9. Significance of the Research

This study provides practitioners, especially teachers, and researchers with a comparative effectiveness of 'correction codes,' 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' techniques with the 'teacher's written comments.' It particularly investigates the role of the three techniques, an intervention which is claimed, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, to be uninvestigated in Egyptian research to date, in developing the writing skill and alleviating the problem of teachers' over-correction of the students' writing when they produce the same errors again and again. The present study fills this research gap.

1.10. Procedural Definitions

In the present research, the following terms were meant to reflect the following procedural definitions:

- a. 'Correction codes' are abbreviations or acronyms used instead of the whole word or words reflecting the error-related writing area or writing element. The teachers use the codes on top of the errors after underlining them to enable students to see and correct the errors.
- b. 'Whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class' is performed after the teacher surveys and identifies the global and common errors in students' writing. Then, at the beginning of the next class, they provide oral practical advice on how to avoid producing these errors again by informing the students of the correct writing conventions and rules.

c. 'Metacognitive strategy encouragement' is conducted by the teacher who keeps asking their students to be committed to 1. planning their writing by setting goals, identifying purpose, considering the audience, brainstorming ideas, and selecting proper strategies, 2. monitoring their first version as they worked, focusing on content, organization, grammar, and mechanics, and 3. evaluating their writing after finishing the draft, revising and editing well.

1.11. Hypothesis

As the present research aimed to test the effectiveness of the intervention statistically, one hypothesis was formulated, based on the experiment conditions:

1. There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and those of the control group on the writing post-test in favor of those of the experimental group.

2. Methodology

2.1 Design

This research adopted a quasi-experimental approach. Two groups from the 24th of October Official Preparatory Language School were randomly selected, one experimental and the other control. The experimental group was taught using the three techniques of 'correction codes, whole-class oral feedback on common issues in writing at the beginning of class, and metacognitive strategy encouragement' whereas the control one was taught using the 'teacher's written comments.' Each group was 24 students, with a writing pre-post-test group design for both. The teaching was conducted in nineteen sessions for seven weeks during the first term of the academic year 2023-2024.

2.1.1 Participants

The participants were forty-eight students enrolled at the 24th of October Preparatory Official School within two equal-number classes randomly selected. The first class was assigned as an experimental group while the second was a control group. The participants originated from diverse economic, cultural, and social backgrounds. They had the same level in writing, as proven by pre-test results interpreted later.

2.1.2 Instruments

To collect data, two instruments were designed and administered:

2.1.2.1 The Writing Skill Checklist

To answer the first research question, a checklist (Appendix B) including refined twenty-eight writing skills reviewed in the literature as shown in Table (1) displayed earlier was prepared and administered by the researcher. The number of skills it includes was twenty-eight. The checklist items followed a Likert-scale type: 'Unimportant, Less Important, and Important.' It is accepted that the Likert scale allows respondents to express their level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements, providing a range of responses that capture the intensity of their beliefs (Stancić, 1984). Related **Construct Validity** was ensured by submitting it to three jurors and acting up to their feedback. No modifications were required when their feedback was received because they commented it had included all the important skills. Also, the instrument reliability was checked by applying **Cronbach's Alpha** Reliability which was 0.78. It is known that Cronbach's alpha value of 0.7 or higher is deemed acceptable, indicating that the items in the survey are measuring the same construct consistently (Bote & Mahajan, 2020).

After validity and reliability-checking procedures were performed successfully, the checklist was submitted to three jurors whose specialty was English Language Instruction. They then decided all the

skills were all important ones. They (the twenty-eight skills included in Appendix B) were then selected as the skills required for the Preparatory-Stage EFL students. This selection in Appendix B answers the first research question “1. What are the writing skills required for the Preparatory-Stage EFL Students?”

The skills reached were then considered for the pre-post-writing test and the related writing correction rubrics developed as described below.

2.1.2.2 The Writing Pre-Post-Test

This research designed and used a writing pre-post-test (Appendix C). The test aimed to assess students' writing before and after being exposed to the instruction in both groups. The test comprised three tasks of paragraph writing for three genres: informative, narrative, and descriptive, and its duration was one and a half hours.

The writing correction rubrics as in Appendix D were used in assessing the test. The test covered all the criteria and elements of writing in the rubrics. The test total mark was eighty-one. After validity and reliability procedures were followed, as analyzed below, a final two-rater average was calculated to obtain a final mark for each student.

Both validity and reliability of the test were conducted. To ensure **Construct** Validity, the test was submitted to three jurors from both Suez Canal and Zagazig universities specializing in Curriculum and Instruction of English. No modifications were requested. According to Crombez et al (2020), in the context of the social sciences, construct validity is significant for ensuring that the measures used in research accurately capture the theoretical constructs being studied. For reliability purposes, the **Test-Retest** Method, in compliance with Nazariadli et al. (2019), was utilized on a sample of six students at the same school (i.e. other than those in the experiment groups) over a two-week interval, and two teacher raters gave them marks. A

correlation coefficient between students' marks on the two-week interval test results on both occasions was calculated. The resultant was 0.983, which meant the test was reliable.

To further ensure the broad validity, and specific reliability, of the instrument and consistency in scoring, according to Soemantri et al. (2023) and Good (2013), an **Inter-Rater Reliability** using a **Pearson Correlation** needed to be administered. Thus, it was conducted on the two-rater marks on one occasion. The Pearson correlation coefficient was 0.915, and, in turn, this meant the test was valid.

To even confirm reliability further, a computerized **Split-Half Reliability** method was administered to the students' one set of marks on the other test occasion. First, the writing test items were split in half; then, a **Spearman-Brown adjusted Pearson correlation** was calculated between the marks of each half of the items. This method can be used in determining the reliability of tests (Dabaghi Kupaei & Meshkati, 2023). The resultant of the coefficient was 0.819. This meant the pre-post-test was reliable being close to the value of 'one'. It is known that when such a coefficient is above 0.7, then the test is reliable (Hayati al., 2023).

2.1.2.2.1. The Writing Correction Rubrics

To answer both the second and third research questions, writing correction rubrics with correction codes (Appendix D) were prepared, designed, and administered by the researcher. The rubrics were prepared with guidance from Ahmadi and Parhizgar (2017); Ferdouse (2012); Piazza and Wallat, (2006); Ramezani et al. (2023); Kaewnuch (2013); Khalavi and Zeraatpishhe (2023). The rubrics consist of criteria/areas for writing correction, elements to be corrected, correction codes for those elements, standards for scoring, and scoring to be considered for the pre-post-test. Appendix (D) provides a complete description of the rubrics and details of the elements included in the instrument. The rubrics were validated by three jurors specialized in English Language Instruction who suggested adding a

criterion for ‘task achievement’ which was added. The final valid Writing Correction Rubrics with the codes were ready as in Appendix D. This product answers both the second research question: “2. Based on the writing skills reached through the answer to Q.1., what are the writing correction rubrics/ marking scheme for Preparatory-Stage EFL writing correction?” and the third research question: “3. What are the correction codes which can be used with the writing elements in the rubrics?”

2.1.3. The Two-Group Equivalency on The Writing Pre-Test

To ensure students' equivalency in their writing levels of both the experimental and control groups before teaching, a parametric statistics t-test was administered to identify the difference in mean scores between the two groups. (The reasons for choosing parametric statistics are mentioned in the ‘Statistical Treatment Method’ presented later.) The results were analyzed and shown in Table (2) below.

Table (2) Group Equivalency in Writing

Control Group Mean	Experimental Group Mean	Mean Difference	Standard Deviation Difference	t-Value	Probability of p.
36.1	33.8	3.7	1.1	0.550	0.585

As shown in Table (2), the control group mean is 36.1 and the experimental group mean is 33.8. The two-group mean difference is 3.7, and the standard deviation difference is 1.1. The t-value is -0.550, and the probability of power is 0.585. The difference in mean score is marginal compared to a total test mark of eighty-one. The difference between standard deviations around the two-group means (1.1) is extremely small. The t-value (0.550) is not significant, and the p-value (0.585) is ‘statistically non-significant’, according to Cohen (1988). Thus, there were no statistically significant differences at the 0.05 statistical significance level between the experimental group's

mean score and that of the control group on the writing pre-test. As a conclusion, the two groups were considered largely equal in their writing performance.

2.1.4. Procedure

This research used the Ministry of Education textbook writing material in Units 1, 2, and 3 by Cowper et al. (2020) to be taught. The topics selected for instruction were an email reply to a penfriend, an email to a friend, an informative paragraph, and a descriptive one. The pre-test was administered to both groups, and a two-rater average score was calculated for each student. The experimental group was trained to use the correction codes during the first session. In the second session, they were taught and asked to produce a first draft. Before writing the draft, they were asked to 1. plan their writing by setting goals, identifying purpose, considering the audience, brainstorming ideas, and selecting proper strategies, 2. monitor their first version as they worked, focusing on content, organization, grammar, and mechanics, and 3. evaluate their writing after finishing the draft, revising and editing well.

The draft answers were then corrected with the correction codes. Whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of the next session was given, and the students' products with codes were returned to the students for correction. The students made the corrections accordingly. The final marking was performed by the two raters and, again, an average score for each student was calculated. Another fifteen sessions followed in the same way, one session for teaching and writing and the next for applying the three techniques, with a final total of eighteen sessions. Finally, the post-test was conducted for both groups.

In the control group, the same procedures were applied except that they received written comments for each student instead of the correction codes, beginning-of-session feedback, and the metacognitive strategy encouragement.

The following diagram (1) shows how the teaching and correction in both groups was performed:

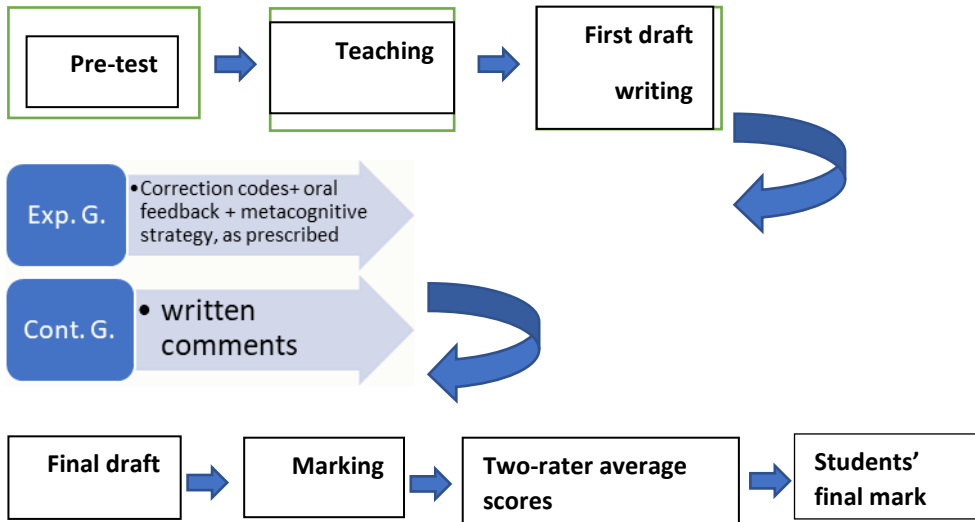


Diagram (1) the Experiment Procedures

The teaching to both groups was based on the presentation of one single writing element in two or more sessions. For example, ‘vocabulary’ use was introduced in two classes, ‘grammar’ in four, ‘content’ in two, ‘organization’ in three, ‘other mechanics’ in one, and ‘task achievement’ in one. The reason for this was the importance of knowledge grading and skill practice and alleviation of students’ anxiety about writing a whole topic, being not quite ready. It is noteworthy that graded knowledge and skill building are necessary for acquiring a skill (Stoddard et al., 2016). In the three remaining sessions, students rehearsed writing ‘whole’ topics including all writing aspects.

The following Table (3) shows how the correction codes were employed, with examples from students’ writings.

Table (3) Correction codes and examples from students' writings

Code	Example from students' writing
Voc. Ac= Vocabulary accuracy	Voc. Ac. I am very <u>high</u> .
Voc. R.=Vocabulary range	Voc. R. I <u>do</u> English I <u>do</u> football and I <u>do</u> the gym
Vocabulary appropriateness (Voc. Ap.)	Voc. Ap. She <u>does</u> falafel.
Verb tenses (V.T.)	V.T. I <u>went</u> now.
Subject-verb agreement (S. V. Agr.)	S.V.agr. She <u>work</u> home.
Prepositions (Prep.)	Prep. She work <u>home</u> .
Articles (Art.)	Art. We went to <u>pyramids</u> many
Adjectives (adj.)	Adj. My sister sleeps. But she is <u>nicely</u> girl.
Adverbs (adv.)	Adv. She cook mahshi <u>many</u>
Word order (W.O.)	W.O. Our teacher was a <u>man good</u> .
Determiners (Det.)	Det. <u>This</u> people stay in our house long time.
Voice, i.e. Active/Passive (V.)	V. The lugage <u>carry</u> by my mother
Structure range (Struct. R.)	Yesterday, I <u>played</u> football. Today, I Struct. R. <u>played</u> football tomorrow I Struct. R. <u>played</u> football.

Appropriateness (A.)	A. I <u>do</u> English
Idea development (I. Dev.)	I. Dev. <u>Maccaroni is cooked easy. It is very easy. Simple.</u>
Focus on topic (F. T.)	We had a bag at the beach, camera, <u>F.T.</u> shorts, glasses. <u>I hate reading and studying.</u>
Clarity (C.)	<u>C.</u> I <u>do</u> English
Conjunctions (Conj.)	My brother was coming home <u>Conj.</u> <u>when</u> my mother was cooking dinner.
Coordinators (Coord.)	Coord. He doesn't play a lot <u>and</u> he doesn't watch t.v.
Transitions (Trans.)	Trans. First, he came to our home. <u>Later</u> , he drank coffee.
Logical sequence of ideas (L.S.)	I cook noodls. <u>I bring hot water.</u> After that I put noodls on the fire. <u>L.S.</u> <u>I get a pot.</u>
Correct punctuation (P.)	P. Do you come to <u>giza</u> ?
Adherence to the rhetorical genre (Gen.)	<u>My home consists of three bedrooms.</u> <u>Gen.</u> <u>My father works as ateacher. My mother is a housewife.</u>

Commitment to the expected format (F.)	I cook noodls. <u>I bring hot water.</u> After, F. that I put noodls on the fire. <u>I get a pot.</u> I eat it.
Style (St.)	St. My teacher <u>has</u> a car to travel.

2.2. Experiment Observations

Several remarks were noted during the experiment:

The students had not been motivated to frequently attend the experiment or even come to school. Giving reinforcement in different shapes caused partial commitment to attending school. Although the teachers of English helped in the teaching and pre-post-test administration, they had to be rewarded, too, which ensured the continuity of the experiment. Therefore, it was observed that there was a lack of motivation, at the beginning, on the part of both the students and the teachers. This issue was attributed to the rarity of the writing instruction occasions in the classroom as it “consumed class time”, according to the interview answers of the teachers (Appendix A).

In the beginning, the students struggled with the codes. To facilitate this, they were given them on paper. Later on, having followed the three steps for metacognition, and received the whole-class oral feedback the beginnings of classes together their paragraphs or letters, and after they were engaged in the correction or editing process with the codes after self-autonomy was gained from the metacognitive strategy encouragement, the students were much satisfied with receiving high marks for all their efforts. In this way, their motivation was raised fully as they knew they needed writing for their exams.

The introduction of one single aspect of writing in most sessions helped the later proficiency in writing when the students were asked to produce a whole topic. They could build many skills according to

the training they received. Nevertheless, producing a whole topic needed much encouragement and this worked with praise.

2.3. Statistical Treatment Method

The SPSS (Social Package for Statistical Sciences, SPSS version JAMOOVI 2.5.26) for parametric statistics was used. It is known that parametric statistics are utilized when the data follows a normal distribution, which is characterized by a skewness of zero and a kurtosis of three (Armstrong, 2011). *T* test with power (*p*) and effect size (Cohen's *d*) resultants were used. They were used to determine statistically significant differences in means and the effect size according to Cohen (1988).

3. Results and Discussion

To answer the fourth research question “How far are ‘correction codes,’ ‘whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class,’ and ‘metacognitive strategy encouragement’ as proposed techniques of writing correction, effective in developing students' writing, as compared to the ‘teacher’s written comments’?”, a *t* test and effect-size were run to assess the effects of the three new techniques (or intervention) compared to the traditional one. The *t*-test and effect size results of the two groups on the post-test are shown in Table (4) below.

Table (4) statistical significance of mean difference and effect size

Mean difference	Std. deviation	<i>T</i> Value	Probability of <i>p</i>	Effect size (Cohen's <i>d</i>)
9.7	4.1	-2.358	0.025(<0.05)	0.681

As demonstrated in Table (4) above, the mean difference is 9.7, the difference in standard deviation is 4.1, the *t* value is -2.358, the probability of *p* is 0.025 (<0.05), and the effect size is 0.681. The mean difference is quite considerable. The standard deviation difference is, too. The *t* value (-2.358) is significant. The probability of *p* (0.025) indicates a statistical significance at <0.05 (according to

Cohen, 1988). Cohen's *d* effect size (0.681) is at a 'medium' level (Cohen, 1988). Then, the triple intervention is more effective in developing students' writing than the teacher's written comments at 'a medium level'. (This answers the fourth research question.) Also, if the *p* value (0.025) is less than the significance level (0.05), which is the present case, then, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative one is accepted at 0.05 statistical significance level (Cohen, 1988; Morey, 2018).

Based on the evidence and the interpretation above, the research (alternative) hypothesis "There is a statistically significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group and those of the control group on the writing post-test in favor of those of the experimental group" was therefore 'accepted' at 0.05 statistical significance level.

To answer the fifth research question "How far are 'correction codes,' 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' as proposed techniques of writing correction effective in reducing students' errors in writing and, consequently, helping teachers overcome writing over-correction, as compared to the 'teacher's written comments?'," an error-frequency analysis per each element in the Writing Correction Rubrics over weeks one, four, and seven was administered, as in Table (5) below.

Table (5) Error-Frequency Analysis

Writing Element	Error Frequencies					
	G2 per Week:			G1 per week:		
	1	4	7	1	4	7
Vocabulary accuracy	118	101(0.94)	82 (0.76)	112	79(0.71)	62(0.54)
Vocabulary range	65	58(0.88)	49 (0.74)	51	37(0.73)	30(0.59)
Vocabulary appropriateness	43	38 (0.78)	3890.78)	41	33(0.80)	26(0.62)

Verb tenses	231	187(0.81)	165(0.70)	213	175(0.81)	115(0.54)
Subject-verb agreement	141	121(0.86)	101(0.72)	140	101(0.71)	81(0.58)
Prepositions	134	111(0.83)	87(0.65)	133	99(0.73)	72(0.53)
Articles	155	132(0.84)	107(0.68)	159	112(0.70)	87(0.55)
Word order	71	61(0.86)	58(0.82)	75	60(0.8)	41(0.55)
Adjectives	45	41 (0.90)	34(0.76)	47	34(0.71)	22(0.47)
Adverbs	42	35(0.82)	34(0.81)	39	28(0.72)	17(0.44)
Determiners	55	45(0.82)	38(.68)	56	41(0.72)	31(0.54)
Voice, i.e. Active/Passive	98	76(.78)	65(0.65)	92	66(0.72)	52(0.57)
Structure range	60	56(0.92)	51(0.85)	60	50(0.82)	41(0.67)
Appropriateness	48	44(0.92)	30(0.63)	36	25(0.68)	17(0.46)
Idea development	60	45(0.68)	41(0.62)	60	30(.5	22(0.37)
Focus on topic	32	31(0.97)	28(.0.88)	36	26(0.71)	20(0.56)
Clarity	43	38(0.87)	35(0.80)	46	31(0.66)	25(0.53)
Conjunctions	167	148(0.89)	114(0.67)	166	112(0.66)	99(0.60)
Coordinators	166	150(0.90)	112(0.66)	169	122(0.71)	93(0.54)
Transitions	237	199(0.84)	171(0.71)	227	180(0.78)	152(0.67)
Logical sequence of ideas	87	77(0.89)	62(0.70)	85	71(0.84)	54(0.64)
Correct punctuation	337	211(0.63)	201(0.60)	331	201(0.61)	177(0.52)
Adherence to the rhetorical genre	9	9(100)	7(0.78)	9	7(0.78)	5(0.56)
Commitment to the expected format	10	9(0.10)	7(0.70)	9	7(0.78)	6(0.67)
Style	23	22(0.96)	15(0.64)	21	18(0.86)	13(0.62)
Spelling	233	194(0.82)	146(0.63)	221	177(0.80)	130(0.59)
Clear handwriting	72	68(0.93)	51(0.71)	66	51(0.76)	42(0.64)
Task achievement	1	1(0.100)	1(0.100)	2	1(0.50)	0(0.00)

Table (5) above demonstrates the error frequencies per element over weeks 1, 4, and 7 of the experiment. It is generally seen that there is a decline in student errors for both groups. However, Table (5) shows that the rate of error decline in the experimental group is faster, e.g. along all the writing elements as seen above. This inference means that compared

to the 'teacher's written comments on students' writings,' 'correction codes,' 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class,' and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' as proposed techniques of writing correction were more effective in reducing students' errors in writing and, consequently, helped in proportionally overcoming/alleviating the teacher's problem of overcorrecting the students' same mistakes. 'This finding answers the fifth research question.'

The finding above can be attributed to the 'triple intervention' used. However, the writing development rate of the experimental group could have been even faster if the students had been more committed to attending all classes as there had been several 'absences' observed in the experimental group, and 'full commitment' was not always guaranteed, as analyzed earlier.

The findings above can be compared with those of Ferrdouse (2012). Although both studies are similar in findings (i.e. in that both groups improved better on the post-test, and the error correction of the experimental group reflected a higher improvement), still Ferrdouse (2012) only dealt with one independent variable (correction codes) while the present research investigated the effect of a 'triple' intervention (whole-class oral feedback at the beginning of class, error correction, and metacognitive strategy encouragement). Another difference was that Ferrdouse's research (2012) was implemented at

Stamford University in Bangladesh while the present research was performed on Preparatory-Stage students in Egypt.

Another similarity was in the procedures. Both studies followed the same procedures as in the three founding sessions and subsequent sessions. However, the inclusion of 'whole-class oral feedback at the beginning of the next class and metacognitive strategy encouragement' in the present research forms a genuine difference.

Another difference is in the approach itself. It is seen that Ferrdouse (2012) followed a 'descriptive' approach and did not use a *t* test and

effect size to check the effectiveness of the treatment. Rather, it used students' marks as an indicator of improvement. By contrast, statistically assessing the effectiveness of the triple intervention was a target for the present research. Another difference is that the present research had more extensive teaching related to the writing skill and thus the Writing Correction Criteria, i.e. language, content, organization, task achievement, and other mechanics of writing. By contrast, Ferdouse (2012) only dealt with correction codes related to 'grammar'.

Regarding the 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class' used in this present research, it covered all aspects of writing including content, language, organization, mechanics, and task achievement, unlike the aspects used in Harefa and Sibarani (2023) concentrating, again, on issues on grammar. Another difference between the present research findings and implications and the other research is that in the present one, the students understood the correction codes after receiving training while they did not in the research of Muliyah & Aminatun (2020). Generally, it must be restated that Egyptian studies particularly on the effectiveness of writing 'correction codes' and 'whole-class oral feedback on common issues at the beginning of class' are not found in the literature. Regarding the 'use of metacognitive strategies' techniques in writing in the Egyptian context, a finding/difference was that the other Egyptian studies' findings were only focused on 'reading comprehension' at the 'university' level enrolled in a pharmacy college (Helel, 2018), as clarified earlier.

The above-mentioned technique-positive findings of the other studies, not in the Egyptian context, were related to academic writing at the university level in Malaysia (Handayani & Yusra (2023; Rosdiana et al., 2023) and in China (Teng et al, 2022). The main dissimilarity remains that the present research used a triple intervention (three techniques), not one.

One observation that deserves noting and which helped obtain the present research findings was the introduction of one single aspect of writing in the beginning sessions, and, then, moving gradually towards writing the whole topic according to the genres. This helped with building the student's confidence and proficiency in writing when the students were asked to produce a whole topic in the subsequent classes. They were really able to build many skills, accordingly.

The whole-class oral feedback at the beginning of classes was of 'magical' benefits. It made many errors, especially those related to grammar accuracy, vocabulary, punctuation, cohesion, and spelling vanish to a considerable extent. The other area errors were effectively handled through the correction codes and metacognitive strategy encouragement.

What also made the present results be achieved was that students were motivated. Actually, at the beginning, as previously reported in this research, they had not been motivated to frequently attend the experiment or even come to school. What worked best was giving them reinforcement in different forms and this made them committed to attending school. What also ensured the continuity of the experiment and helped achieve the present results was the financial award to teachers. It was observed that they, too, lacked motivation at the beginning. This was referred to the rarity of writing occasions in the classrooms as "writing consumed class time", according to the teachers' responses in the semi-structured interviews with them discussed earlier. Therefore, although there was a lack of motivation on the part of both the students and the teachers, the rewards worked well to face this challenge.

Also, another reason for achieving the present results was the persistent teaching of correction codes. As mentioned earlier, in the beginning of the experiment, the students struggled with the codes. To facilitate this, they were given the whole terms and their codes on

paper. Later on, having practiced employing the metacognitive strategy to revise their writing and having received whole-class oral feedback at the beginning of classes on their paragraphs or letters, and after they were engaged in the correction or editing process, they were very satisfied with receiving high marks for all their efforts after finalizing their writing. In this way, their motivation was raised fully as they knew they needed writing for their exams.

However, again, it must be stated that the students could have achieved higher results if they had been more committed to attending all the classes. Several absences were observed although the mainstream attendances were persistent.

4. Conclusions

The following conclusions were based on the findings of the present research:

1. The proposed techniques of ‘correction codes’, ‘whole-class oral feedback provided at the beginning of the next class’, and ‘metacognitive strategy encouragement’ were more effective in developing students’ writing and making fewer errors than the teacher’s ‘written comments on students’ writings’, although both were statistically effective, as proven by the reduction of student errors. The proposed techniques are thus concluded to be more effective in alleviating the problem of teachers’ over-correction of Preparatory-Stage students’ EFL writing.
2. The Preparatory-Stage students did not do much writing practice before the experiment. However, when they did, out of commitment through rewards, they made a considerable difference in their writing proficiency level.
3. Preparatory-Stage students' motivation and commitment to attend classes were raised through positive reinforcement and rewards.

4. Graded instruction was important in students' gain of knowledge and acquisition of the skill of writing and alleviating anxiety.
5. Students felt much more comfortable when they finished their final drafts, according to teachers' feedback.
6. Correction codes took time to be fully understood by students. Several students struggled with some of the codes, e.g. 'Det.' For Determiner, 'A.' for appropriateness, and 'L.S.' for Logical Sequence of Ideas. By contrast, the majority of codes were ingested quickly.
7. Providing whole-class oral feedback at the beginning of classes reduced the same error occurrences to a considerable extent.
8. The encouragement of metacognitive strategies in Preparatory-Stage students helped students rather be committed to the 'perfection' of their writing and rely on self-autonomy.
9. The teaching of writing is hard work that requires revision editing, and care on the part of both students and teachers. If revision is not made according to feedback, both are jeopardizing their efforts.
10. The proposed techniques of 'correction codes', 'whole-class oral feedback provided at the beginning of the next class', and 'metacognitive strategy encouragement' were more effective in reducing the error frequencies of the students and teacher's over-correction than the teacher's written comments on students' writings. Thus, the techniques should be considered by course designers.
11. The three proposed techniques should be employed by EFL teachers and they should further be researched intensively with the language's three other skills in the Egyptian context.
12. More research should be carried out on the effectiveness of the three techniques at the other educational levels than the Preparatory-Stage. Besides, a broader investigation of the techniques' employment at the Preparatory Stage is needed as this research, though significant, is quite limited in nature.

5. References

- Abdalkader, S. M. A. (2022). Using Artificial Intelligence to Improve Writing Fluency for The Preparatory Stage Students in Distinguished Governmental Language Schools. *Egyptian Journal of Educational Sciences*, 2(2), 39-70. <https://dx.doi.org/10.21608/ejes.2022.270694>
- Abd El-Rahman, M. H. M. (2011). The effects of writing-to-learn strategy on the mathematics achievement of preparatory stage pupils in Egypt. sites.utopia Retrieved from <https://sites.unipa.it/grim/EEI-Rahman26-33.PDF>
- Abdrabo Abbas Abdrabo, A. (2020). Developing EFL Preparatory School Pupils' Process Writing Through the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (CALLA), *Journal of Faculty of Education. Banha*, 5(121), 22-42. <https://doi.org/10.21608/jfeb.2020.127741>
- Abdulhamid, M. A. A., Seifeddin, A. H., Badawi, M. F., & Al-Tonsi, H. G. A. (2021). Developing Preparatory School Pupils' Speaking Skills Through Brain-Based Learning. *Journal of Educational & Social Studies*, 27(6.3), 41-83. <https://doi.org/10.21608/jsu.2021.342273>
- Ahmadi, A. & Parhizgar, S. (2017). Coherence Errors in Iranian EFL Learners' Writing: A Rhetorical Structure Theory Approach. *Journal of Language Horizons*, 1(1), 9-37. <https://doi.org/10.22051/LGHOR.2017.8588.1011>
- Ahmed, A. (2010). Contextual challenges to Egyptian students' writing development. *International Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 3(14), 503-522. DOI: [10.1.1.301.1889.pdf](https://doi.org/10.1.1.301.1889.pdf)
- Al-Jarf, R. (2011, November 2-3). Correcting Students' Writing Errors: The Role of Communicative Feedback [paper presentation]. National Seminar on Foreign Language Teaching:

Towards a Multilingual Generation in a Globalized World.
Kedah, Alor Setar, Malaysia.

Armstrong, R. A. (2011). Non-normally distributed data and non-parametric statistics. *Optometry Today*, 51(16), 26.

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Richard-Armstrong-17/publication/355351057_Non-normally_distributed_data_and_non-parametric_statistics/links/618247773c987366c31d7e9a/Non-normally-distributed-data-and-non-parametric-statistics.pdf

Bote, M. & Mahajan A. (2020). Validity and Reliability of the Marathi Translation of the International Physical Activity Questionnaire (IPAQ) in rural Area in Maharashtra, *Indian Journal of Physiotherapy & Occupational Therapy - An International Journal*, 14(4), 79-

83. <https://doi.org/10.37506/ijpot.v14i4.11303>

Budden, J. (2008, April 6). Error Correction. TeachingEnglish

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/assessing-learning/articles/error-correction> Retrieved January 1, 2024.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

<https://www.utstat.toronto.edu/~brunner/oldclass/378f16/readings/CohenPower.pdf>

Coomber, M.J. (2016). Promoting Self-Directed Revision in EFL Writing Classes. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 20 (3), 1-19. <https://www.tesl-ej.org/pdf/ej79/a2.pdf>

Cowper, A., Cummins, J., Pelteret, C., & Penn, J. (2020). *New Hello! English for Preparatory Schools*. Longman Pub. Co.

https://elearningcontent.blob.core.windows.net/elearningcontent/content/2023/preparatory/preparatory_2/term_1/Pdf-books/english_2prep_t1.pdf

- Crombez, G., De Paepe, A. L., Veirman, E., Eccleston, C., Verleysen, G., & Van Ryckeghem, D. M. L. (2020). Let's talk about pain catastrophizing measures: an item content analysis. *PeerJ*, 8, 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.7717/peerj.8643>
- Dabaghi Kupaei, S., & Meshkati, Z. (2023). Psychometric Properties of the Persian Version of the Multiple Lifestyle Behaviors Questionnaire and its Measurement During the COVID-19 Outbreak: The Role of Gender and Exercise. *Journal of Research & Health*, 13(1), 67-78. <https://doi.org/10.32598/jrh.13.1.1645.5>
- Dahal, B. K. (2023). Students' Self-Correction: A Strategy for Writing Improvement. *Surkhet Journal*, 2(1), 41-49. <https://doi.org/10.3126/surkhetj.v2i1.58746>
- Ezz, H. (2018). *A Strategy Based on Role-Playing to Improve Elementary Stage Students' Speaking Skills* (Master's thesis), AUC, Egypt.
- Farikha, N. (2020). The Effectiveness of Writing Journal and Feedback on Increasing Writing Proficiency at University Students. *EduLink*, 2(1), 20-48. <https://core.ac.uk/reader/288194830>
- Farjadnasab A & Khodashenas M. (2017). *The Effect of Written Corrective Feedback on EFL Students' Writing Accuracy*, 2 (2), 30-42. <http://ijreeonline.com/article-1-41-en.html>
- Ferdouse, F. (2012). Learning from mistakes: Using correction code to improve student's writing skill in English composition class. *Stamford Journal of English*, 7, 62-86. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3329/sje.v7i0.14463>
- Gao, Y., & Wang, H. (2023). Developing Chinese university students' academic literacies in English language classrooms via a production-oriented approach: an action research

perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, 1-11.
<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1189555>

Good, J. (2012). Crossing the measurement and writing assessment divide: The practical implications of inter-rater reliability in faculty development. *The WAC Journal*, 23, 19. DOI: [10.37514/WAC-J.2012.23.1.02](https://doi.org/10.37514/WAC-J.2012.23.1.02)

Handayani, P., & Yusra, K. (2023). The Use of Metacognitive Strategies in EFL Academic Writing. In *Higher Education-Reflections From the Field-Volume 3*, IntechOpen. DOI: [10.5772/intechopen.109374](https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.109374)

Harefa, A.T., & Sibarani, B. (2023). An Error Analysis of Communicative Effect Taxonomy in Students' Writing Descriptive Text at the Tenth Grader Students. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 8 (6)148-155.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.22161/ijels.86.22>

Hayati, N., Izza, N., Rahmadani, Z., Fajiral, R., & Sinta, I. (2023). Sharia Employee Cooperative Service System Pt. Pupuk Iskandar Muda. *International Journal of Social Science, Educational, Economics, Agriculture Research and Technology (IJSET)*, 2(2), 1220-1225.
<https://doi.org/10.54443/ijset.v2i2.125>

Helal, E.A. (2018). The Effectiveness of a Proposed Unit Based on Cognitive & Metacognitive Strategies Training in Developing Some Reading Comprehension Skills among Egyptian EFL First Year University Level Students, *Occasional Papers*, 65, 219-268. <https://doi.org/10.21608/OPDE.2018.106577>

How To Correct EFL Writing (2024, April). TTA, the TEFL Academy. <https://www.theteflacademy.com/blog/how-to-correct-efl-writing/>

Jurianto, J., Salimah, S., & Kwary, D. A. (2015). Strategies for Teaching Writing in EFL Class at A Senior High School in

- Indonesia1. *Celt: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching & Literature*, 15(1), 43-53.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.24167/celt.v15i1.413>
- Kaewnuch, S. (2013). Power and Reader-Writer Relationship: EFL Writing Assessment, *Journal of NELTA Gandaki (JoNG)*, 33(1), 1-20. <https://ejournals.swu.ac.th/index.php/hm/article/view/3065>
- Khalavi, S. K., & Zeraatpish, M. (2023). On the Relationship of Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Depth with Their Writing Vocabulary Use, Fluency, and Organization. *Journal of Contemporary Language Research*, 2(1), 9-15.
<https://doi.org/10.58803/jclr.2023.168992>
- Levy, S. (n.d.). Correcting student error in writing and speech: When, how, and how much. Busy Teacher. <https://busyteacher.org/15517-correct-student-error-writing-speech-how-when.html>
- Luo, Y. (2017). Engineering majors' metacognitive strategy use in EFL writing: a case study within the Web-based environments. *World Transactions on Engineering and Technology Education*, 15(4), 323-330.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2019.1613349%5B1>
- Mahmoud, S. S., & Oraby, K. K. (2015). Let them toil to learn: implicit feedback, self-correction and performance in EFL writing. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, 5(8), 1672.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0508.18>
- Martínez, A. C. (2018). *Assessing ESL/EFL Writing: Research in Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education*. Routledge.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.3726/b14561%5B1>
- Muliyah, P., Rekha, A., & Aminatun, D. (2020). Learning from mistakes: Students' perception towards teacher's attitude in writing correction. *Lexeme: Journal of Linguistics and Applied*

Linguistics, 2(1), 44-52.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.32493/ljla.v2i1.6995>

Morey R.D., Homer S., Proulx T. (2018). Beyond Statistics: Accepting the Null Hypothesis in Mature Sciences. *Advances in Methods and Practices in Psychological Science*, 1(2), 245-258. DOI:[10.1177/2515245918776023](https://doi.org/10.1177/2515245918776023)

Nazariadli, S., Morais, D. B., Supak, S., Baran, P. K., & Bunds, K. S. (2019). Assessing the visual Q method online research tool: A usability, reliability, and methods agreement analysis. *Methodological Innovations*, 12(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2059799119832194>

Piazza, C. L., & Wallat, C. (2006). Elaborating the grounding of the knowledge base on language and learning for preservice literacy teachers. *The Qualitative Report*, 11(4), 729-748. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2006.1656>

Qin, W., & Uccelli, P. (2016). Same language, different functions: A cross-genre analysis of Chinese EFL learners' writing performance. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 33, 3-17. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2016.06.001>

Ramezani, M., Zeraatpishe, M., & Alae, F. F. (2023). The Role of Iranian EFL Learners' Vocabulary Size in Vocabulary Use, Content, and Organization of Their Writing. *Journal of Contemporary Language Research*, 2(2), 93-98. <https://doi.org/10.58803/jclr.v2i2.71>

Richardson, E. (2022, December 5). Building Strong Writers: Activities & Writing Strategies for ELL Students. Continental. <https://www.continentalpress.com/blog/writing-strategies-ell-students/>

Rosdiana, L. A., Damaianti, V. S., Mulyati, Y., & Sastromiharjo, A. (2023). The role of metacognitive strategies in academic writing

skills in higher education. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 22(6), 328-344.

<https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.6.17>

Rundassa, A. W. (2019). Peer Correction: The Relationship between Teachers' Practices and Learners' Attitude in ESL/EFL Writing Skills. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, 7(4), 282-292.

<https://doi.org/10.24940/theijhss/2019/v7/i4/HS1904-058>

Sari, I.D., Pusparini, I., & Rachman, A.K. (2022). Self-Correction E-Assessment Rubric (SCeAR) to Measure EFL Students' Writing Ability. *Paradigma: Jurnal Filsafat, Sains, Teknologi, dan Sosial Budaya*, 28(2), 75-85.

<https://doi.org/10.33503/paradigma.v28i2.2048>

Selim, M. M. T. (2022). *A Constructivism-Based Program to Develop the Writing Skills of EFL Preparatory Stage Students* (Doctoral dissertation), Mansoura University.

Soemantri, D., Mustika, R., & Greviana, N. (2022). Inter-Rater Reliability of Reflective-Writing Assessment in an Undergraduate Professionalism Course in Medical Education. *Education in Medicine Journal*, 14(1).

<https://doi.org/10.21315/eimj2022.14.1.8>

Stancić V. (1984). Some subjective and objective prerequisites to educational integration of handicapped children. *International journal of rehabilitation research. Internationale Zeitschrift fur Rehabilitationsforschung. Revue internationale de recherches de readaptation*, 7(3), 273-282.

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/6239832/>

Stoddard, H. A., Labrecque, C. A., & Schonfeld, T. (2016). Using a Scoring Rubric to Assess the Writing of Bioethics Students. *Cambridge quarterly of healthcare ethics: CQ : the international journal of healthcare ethics committees*, 25(2), 301-311. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0963180115000602>

- Teach Opians (2019, October 26). Practical Ideas For EFL Teachers To Correct Students' Writing. <https://teachingutopians.com/2019/10/26/practical-ideas-for-efl-teachers-to-correct-students-writing/%5B1>
- Teng, M. F., Qin, C., & Wang, C. (2022). Validation of metacognitive academic writing strategies and the predictive effects on academic writing performance in a foreign language context. *Metacognition and learning*, 17(1), 167-190. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-021-09278-4>
- Tremble, D. (2024, January 31). Enhancing students' writing skills using metacognition approaches. SecEd. <https://www.sec-ed.co.uk/content/best-practice/enhancing-students-writing-skills-using-metacognition-approaches/%5B3>
- Tseng C. (2023) The Effect of Error Correction on Taiwanese EFL Students' Writing Accuracy, *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, 11 (4), 34-46 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37745/ijelt.13>
- Wei, W., & Cao, Y. (2020). Written corrective feedback strategies employed by university English lecturers: A teacher cognition perspective. *SAGE Open*, 10(3), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020934886>
- Yamson, W., & Borong, N. (2022). Metacognitive strategies for developing writing skills. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention*, 9(11), 7395-7403. <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijsshi%2Fv9i011.08>
- Ziemińska, K. (2023). Self-reflecting journals as a metacognitive tool to encourage greater learner autonomy—on the example of EAP students. *Zeszyty Glottodydaktyczne*, (12), 99-109. <https://doi.org/10.4467/27204812ZG.23.008.18710>

Appendix A: Semi-Structured Interview Questions (prepared by the researcher) & Results

Sample: 24 teachers of English within three educational school administrations

Period: August 2023 – September 2023

Rubric: Answer (or answers in the same direction) by more than one half of the teachers is selected.

Questions:

1. How do you correct you students' writing?

Number & percentage giving the answer	18 (%75)	6(%25)
The answer	By giving written comments	By only giving marks. No written comments.

1a. (To those who answered positively to Q1) Were they useful? If so, how far?

The answer	Yes, often.	Yes, a little.	No, never.
Number & percentage giving the answer	2	8	8

2. Why do you think it is not useful to write comments for correcting your students' writing?

The answer	Because the students do not come much to school	Because there is not much time for writing practice in the classroom	Because we do not follow up	Because my students do not follow my comments and act up to them
Number & percentage giving the answer	4	8	6	6

3. In your writing correction, do you use correction codes, such as WO, S., P., A., etc.?

The answer	No.	Yes
Number & percentage giving the answer	23	1

4. Do you encourage student meta-cognitive strategies or self-correction and teacher whole-class oral feedback on common issues to help students improve their writing?

The answer	Yes	No
Number & percentage giving the answer	10	14

5. Do you think both correction codes, whole-class oral feedback on common issues, and meta-cognitive strategy can help students improve their writing?

The answer	Yes
Number & percentage giving the answer	24

End of Interview Questions

Appendix B: The Writing Checklist (designed by the researcher)

Area	Skill	Juror's verdict			
		Unimportant	Less Important	Important	
The ability to show or use correct:					
Content	Cohesion	Appropriateness (A.)			
		Idea development (I. Dev.)			
		Focus on topic (F. T.)			
		Clarity (C.)			
		Conjunctions (Conj.)			
		Coordinators (Coord.)			
		Transitions (Trans.)			
		Logical sequence of ideas (L.S.)			
Language	Vocabulary	Vocabulary accuracy (Voc. Ac.)			
		Vocabulary range (Voc. R.)			

	Grammar accuracy	Vocabulary appropriateness (Voc. Ap.)			
		Verb tenses (V.T.)			
		Subject verb agreement (S. V. Agr.)			
		Prepositions (Prep.)			
		Articles (Art.)			
		Word order (W.O.)			
		Adjectives (adj.)			
		Adverbs (adv.)			
		Determiners (Det.)			
		Voice, i.e. Active/Passive (V.)			
		Structure range (Struct. R.)			
Organization	punctuation (P.)				
	Adherence to the rhetorical genre (Gen.)				
	Commitment to the expected format (F.)				
Mechanics	Style (St.)				
	Spelling (Sp.)				
	Clear handwriting (H. W.)				
Task achievement	Task achievement (T. A.)				

Appendix D: The Writing Rubrics & Writing Codes (designed by the researcher)

Criterion/ Area	Skill/ Element & Code		Standard			
			Fulfilled		Unfulfilled	
			Scoring		Scoring	
			1	2	3	0
Content	Cohesion	Appropriateness (A.)				
		Idea development (I. Dev.)				
		Focus on topic (F. T.)				
		Clarity (C.)				
		Conjunctions (Conj.)				
		Coordinators (Coord.)				
		Transitions (Trans.)				
		Logical sequence of ideas (L.S.)				
Language	Vocabulary	Vocabulary accuracy (Voc. Ac.)				
		Vocabulary range (Voc. R.)				
		Vocabulary appropriateness (Voc. Ap.)				
	Grammar accuracy	Verb tenses (V.T.)				
		Subject verb agreement (S. V. Agr.)				
		Prepositions (Prep.)				
		Articles (Art.)				
		Word order (W.O.)				
		Adjectives (adj.)				
		Adverbs (adv.)				
		Determiners (Det.)				
		Voice, i.e. Active/Passive (V.)				
Structure range (Struct. R.)						

Organization	Correct punctuation (P.)				
	Adherence to the rhetorical genre (Gen.)				
	Commitment to the expected format (F.)				
Mechanics	Style (St.)				
	Spelling (Sp.)	Rater-identified			
	Clear handwriting (H. W.)	Rater-identified			
Task achievement	Task achievement (T. A.)	Rater-identified			

Appendix C: The Pre-Post-Test (designed by the researcher)

Time: 90 minutes **Total test Mark** 81 (S's mark=Total question marks obtained divided by 4)

(Assessed according to the rubrics above)

Do the following four tasks:

Task One: (81 marks) Write a paragraph on 'My Family'. (At least 10 sentences/100 words)

Task Two: (81 marks) Describe your school and the surrounding environment. (At least 10 sentences/100 words)

Task Three: (81 marks) Write a letter to your pen friend. Tell him/her of what you do in your everyday life. (At least 10 sentences/100 words)

Task Four (81 marks) Write a paragraph on 'a Nice Day I Had'. (At least 10 sentences/100 words)

End of test