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International Students Use of Technology for Improving Writing Skills in College

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Margaret Godwin

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Walden University
2016

Abstract

International Students' Use of Technology for Improving Writing Skills in College

by

Margaret Godwin

MEd, Endicott College, 2008

BA, National University of Ireland, U.C.D., 1965

Doctoral Study Submitted in Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

December 2016

Abstract

Many college-level students choose to study in another country and in a second language, often in English. In this context, a high standard of written English is important to attain good grades in college and earn degrees with distinction, which may lead to successful careers. One international college provided computer tools to students to improve their writing; however, students were reluctant to use the tools provided. This qualitative study explored these college students' perceptions of their lack of motivation to use computer tools and the barriers that prevent them from improving their English writing. The research questions investigated the technology available for these English as a Second Language students, their motivation to use error correction tools, barriers to their use, and attitudes to writing well in English. This study used the social constructivist theory as its theoretical framework that students learn by interacting with others. Semi structured interviews were conducted with 20 students, and 2 focus groups of 5 participants. All were selected purposefully. Data were open coded and thematically analyzed and 4 themes emerged. The four themes were technology and its uses, user preferences, writing, and motivation. The results indicated that the participants preferred to consult teachers, with technology as an aid, and used error correction tools only as a last resort. A total immersion writing development program with follow-up mentoring was developed to improve incoming international students' writing skills and to build their confidence in the use of technology. The emergent information from this study is intended for use by students, staff, and faculty to improve international students' English language acquisition, academic achievement, and professional success.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Today's world is changing rapidly as frontiers and barriers are disappearing, and people are becoming more mobile. Communication and contacts in the professional world extend across borders, supported by the Internet and electronic communication tools. Many students choose to study in foreign countries, no longer restricting their studies and careers to their native country. Many computer tools are available today to help students write accurately and competently in nonnative languages; however, students are often unaware of them and are unwilling to search out and use these tools.

This lack of awareness is important because the number of students studying away from home has increased dramatically in recent years. In 1965 these students numbered 250,000, but by 2012 this number had gone up to 3.7 million (OECD, 2011, UNESCO, 2006, quoted in De Wit, Ferencz, & Rumbley, 2012). Just like the general, global trend, where old values and polarities of 20th century international and domestic issues are changing and giving way to new, 21st century organizational forms, today's world of education is also undergoing a transformation, and this transformation includes new technology (Merriam, Courtney, & Cervero, 2006). Information and communication technologies associated with the new, globalized, interconnected world are having an increasing impact on the world of education, creating new activities and applications that did not exist before (Nidal, Bashar, & Yousra, 2013).

English is spoken by users of a wide spectrum of first languages for various purposes, including academic activity and social interaction (Momen, 2009). The

majority of English speakers in the world are now no longer native speakers (Central Intelligence Agency, 2013). At various times throughout history, the need for a common language has been filled by languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Latin, Persian, French, and German; today's *lingua franca* is termed *English as an International Language* (EIL) by some scholars (Genç & Bada, 2010). English is the language of communication in the business and scientific worlds and the language of international commerce (Peiperi, 2012).

For students to thrive in an international environment, it is vital that they be proficient in English. Saraceni (2008) argued that English is increasingly being propelled towards becoming the worldwide *lingua franca* because of globalization and new communication contexts. Currently, there is a worldwide movement towards keeping national identity and culture by nurturing and using native languages (Smith, 2015). English, however, is being increasingly used as the standard international language of communication, (Jenkins & Leung, 2013), which is not the same as *English as a second or foreign language* (Smith, 1978). As increasing numbers of students move into an international environment where they will need to use a wider variety of personal skills and become familiar with cross cultural concerns, this globalization issue becomes paramount. In order to face these new challenges, students are often required to communicate, study, and work in a second language, which is generally English.

Young nonnative English speakers today are exposed to English at an early age in many different ways, but in particular through movies, popular music, videos, and computer games. In my professional experience, I have observed how young nonnative

speakers often learn quickly to express themselves verbally in English and can acquire good pronunciation by repetition and constant exposure to these forms of media. Learning outside the classroom is as important in today's 21st century world as learning in school (Richards, 2015). During my many years teaching EFL at different levels and in various countries, I have observed that young people from countries which do not dub English language movies but use sub-titles, tend to quickly learn everyday expressions with good pronunciation. Nevertheless, nonnative speakers of English also need to be proficient in the written language for professional reasons. I have also noted that nonnative students who communicate well in English, both with classmates and teachers, often have considerably lower written skills. One of my most difficult tasks has been trying to motivate such students to work on their written skills, and I have noticed that they are less motivated to work at acquiring accurate writing language skills. Despite the availability of language tools and computer programs for language learning, and also of virtual platforms such as Moodle, Blackboard, and such like, there is evidence that students need to be encouraged to gain confidence and motivation in writing, which is an emotional as well as a cognitive ability (Cheng, 2002).

One method that has been suggested for building students' writing confidence and motivation is to engage in social networking within classroom contexts (Yunus, Salehi, & Chen Chenzi, 2012). Although motivation carries equal weight in all four categories of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), listening, speaking, reading, and writing, writing is considered the most difficult skill (Duan, 2011). Motivation can be subdivided into intrinsic (i.e., a student's own interest in a task), and extrinsic (i.e., external factors such

as approval, reward, punishment; Duan, 2011). Motivation and attitude play a vital role in second language learning, with motivated students using more second language writing strategies than others (Gupta and Woldermariam, 2011; Lili, 2013). It was not clear prior to this study why achieving excellence in the written language of instruction is considered less important by international students, despite the negative academic effect that this has.

When a student decides to study in ABC College, where the student body is made up of 96 different nationalities, a thorough knowledge of English is expected, with high Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores demanded for college acceptance (ABC College Handbook). English has, therefore, now become one of the instruments or tools that students must use to achieve good results and succeed in their studies. Internationalization of education follows the trend of the global economy, and one of the main tools for globalization is language (Doitz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra. (2013).

However, despite the availability of numerous language learning computer tools, such as WriteClick (Pearson, 2013), Grammarly (2013), Tell-Me-More (n.d.), Rosetta Stone (2013), and Microsoft's Spell and Grammar check embedded in Microsoft Word (2013), students underuse them. Individual preferences play a role here, for example, students' use of technology for other purposes, and the suitability of the devices they are using (Ushioda, 2013). Some research has indicated that error correction by word processors is more effective than by teachers (Behjat, 2011), that the value of written corrective feedback is still being discussed, (Kim & Kim, 2011) and that more research is required into the effectiveness of grammar correction in ESL writing (Kim & Kim).

The high usage of email and Short Message Service (SMS) messaging has been accompanied by the use of language abbreviations in many different languages. For numerous students, the use of abbreviated text in their regular lives overflows into their college and later professional writing, negatively impacting their performance on tests. Opinions on the impact of texting are divided. Hameed (2016) stated that despite the practicality of SMS language its effect was dangerous, that is could over time have a negative effect on the use of language, and that it was unprofessional. However, Aziz, Shamin, Aziz, & Alais in their study of the effects of SMS texting, in particular on spelling and punctuation, found that possible negative effects on academic writing were exaggerated and that we needed to learn to manage SMS texting and build on its strength.

There is now widespread use of technology in language learning, and universities and colleges are taking the new technology on board with interest and fervor in all spheres, especially in teaching and learning (Absalom, 2012). And Hernandez and Rankin (2015) said that technology was at the heart of today's education, that it was in its DNA, and that it is not possible in our modern world to imagine a course without technology being involved both in its design and delivery. Technology in second language learning is a feature of today's education. Instructors and institutions need to investigate how students use it in order to ensure that it is productive for them and their students. For example, Kim and Chang (2010) found that improvement in second language ability was noticed in male students with daily computer use (cited by Rondon, Chiarion Sassi, & Furquim de Agrade, 2013).

But there is still a lot of work to be done before all new technology and mobile devices are accepted in the classroom. White and Mills (2014) found that students possibly preferred using their mobile devices for other purposes rather than that of education, and they concluded that much had to be done before all new devices would be completely integrated into the classroom.

Definition of the Problem

The problem investigated by this study was observed amongst second language students at a hospitality college in Switzerland, hereafter referred to as ABC College (pseudonym), that uses English as the language of instructional delivery. Most of these students, who come from 96 different countries, use English as their nonnative language. Observers have noted that an outstanding characteristic of these Generation Y students (born between the early 1980s and 2000) is their technological ability resulting from growing up with computers, the Internet, mobile phones, and social networking (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Twenge, 2006, as cited by Hills, Boshoff, Gilbert-Hunt, Ryan, & Smith, 2015). A survey of 7,700 Generation Y individuals, carried out by Junco and Mastrodicasa, indicated that 97% had computers, 94% cell phones, 76% used instant messaging, 92% multi-tasked while instant-messaging, and 34% said their primary source of news was the internet (McLeod, 2015). But, despite being well-informed about technology, hospitality students at ABC College do not use computer language tools for writing in English.

All at the study site students are required to complete a TOEFL test before entering the college. In this college, the minimum TOEFL requirements for entry into the bachelor

program are 500 (paper exam), 173 (computer scoring system), or 61 (Internet-based test), with higher scores required for the post graduate diploma and the MBA respectively. TOEFL test scores for the paper-based test range from 310–677, for the computer based test from 0–300, and for the internet-based test 0–120 (TOEFL, 2005). After an in-house diagnostic test (Appendix B), which comprises reading comprehension and writing, students whose language level is below or at the minimum are obliged to enroll in English language courses. By the time they reach the upper semesters (Semesters 4–7), all students will have completed the advanced level of English, “Critical Reading and Writing” (ABC College CRS, Appendix C).

However, faculty in the upper semesters are dissatisfied with the students’ English written skills. Faculty are familiar with the students and their work, and can see that assessment grades and final exam results are suffering because of inadequate levels of written English. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that the students themselves do not consider written language skills important and are often unaware of how their overall progress in the college is negatively impacted by their performance. All students work on their personal laptops and smartphones, and have access to library computers, but it appears that they do not fully utilize available computer language tools when completing assignments. Other tools are available to students via the school’s internal Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as BoxNet and Moodle which are also used in the delivery of courses. Instructors and faculty members are available at specific times to assist and advise students on technical issues.

However, students persist in submitting substandard work containing unnecessary errors, demonstrating the fact that they have not used the available tools, and expect faculty of other disciplines to edit their work or disregard the low standard of writing. According to James (2012), transfer of learning from EAP (English for Academic Purposes) classes to other disciplines was rare. James's (2012) findings indicated that although students did desire to transfer their learning, their efforts were limited. My personal observations as a member of faculty involved for 11 years in the teaching of English at different levels and for a variety of courses in this college, concur with James' findings. The college is concerned about this situation and would like to investigate student and faculty perceptions of the issue, in particular investigating the suggested underuse of computer software.

Students at this college are studying for a bachelor of science in hospitality management. The school has an excellent reputation, is proud of this, and is anxious to maintain it. The students themselves are motivated to succeed and most of them take up a professional activity in the luxury end of the hotel industry or the equivalent in sports, events, and entertainment fields. Their goals are to achieve excellence wherever they go, maintaining the unique school spirit and its aura of excellence. This is important for the students' career success and also for the survival of the school (ABC College Catalogue, 2016). The issue would seem to be how the same level of excellence is not evident in students' written English skills.

Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

Excellent language skills are a priority for hospitality students because English is the accepted international language of business communication, especially in the tourism/hospitality industry (Gallato, Gallato-Reamillo, Warokka, & Abdullah, 2012). Since the level of oral English among students at ABC College is high, and because speaking skills are important in the hospitality business, the emphasis in the college is on presentation, oral skills and applied learning. However, the hospitality industry today is expanding rapidly, and schools have to keep up with the need for qualified professionals. They have to combine the theoretical and practical aspects of learning, and in ABC College this is done by means of craft-based instruction (Applied Learning) and internships. Students have an opportunity to see how academic theory can be applied to the real, operational environment (Tatar, 2012).

Students often have to work in groups and language issues have a direct bearing on the performance of the group (Maillard, 2013). As a result of the emphasis on applied learning, many students at the study site ignore the need to also have good written English skills. The hospitality industry requires both interns and employees to have good levels of written as well as oral English, often requiring English writing samples as part of the job application procedure. Students are often unaware of the problems that lack of good writing skills can cause in the latter part of the degree program and how this can negatively impact results. Nevertheless, because the college has an excellent reputation as an international hospitality college (TNS, 2010), and prides itself on the academic level

of the degrees offered, it considers it necessary to confront this issue and study the options to find a solution.

Table 1 shows the results of an institutional survey at the study site regarding English standards. The results show stakeholders' dissatisfaction with the English proficiency levels required for college entrance.

Table 1

Stakeholder Opinions of Current English Levels

| | Faculty Bulle | Faculty Glion | Student Affairs | Internship Office | Response Count |
|--|------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Survey Questions/Answer Options | | | | | |
| Current English Entry Levels (IELTS) are sufficient | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Agree | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Neutral | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Disagree | 6 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 21 |
| Strongly Disagree | 3 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 8 |
| Total | 13 | 14 | 3 | 7 | 37 |
| Entry levels should be raised to 5.5 like other skills-based Higher Education courses | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree | 8 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 16 |
| Agree | 3 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 16 |
| Neutral | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Disagree | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 14 | 14 | 3 | 7 | 38 |
| Entry levels should be raised to 6.0 to compete with direct UK and European competitors | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree | 5 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 14 |
| Agree | 3 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 9 |
| Neutral | 2 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 10 |
| Disagree | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 13 | 16 | 3 | 7 | 39 |

Note: Adapted from ABC College unpublished summary survey English levels Periodic Review 2014.

Moreover, the students, too, think that the entry levels should be raised:

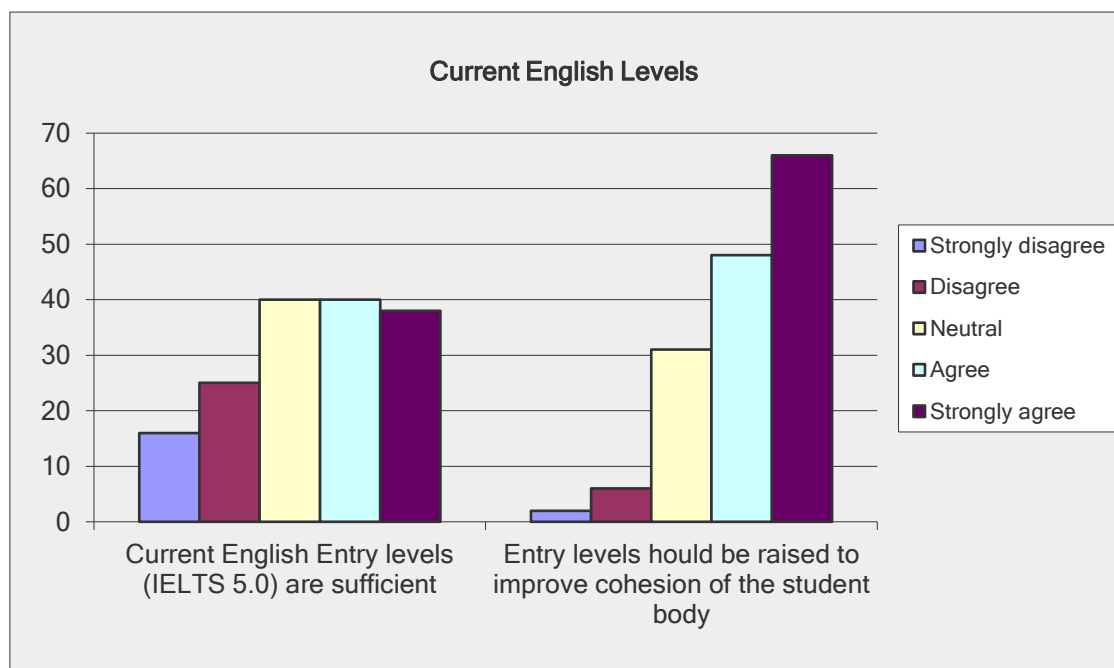


Figure 1 A bar chart showing the results of the Foreign Language & English Survey administered to students.

Adapted from ABC College, (2014). Unpublished minutes, Periodic Review.

An important aspect of student assessment is group work. Students are required to submit group projects as part of their assessment. Low levels of written English impede the smooth functioning of such groups and interfere with cooperation and synergy. Students with better language abilities often have to do a greater proportion of the work, resulting in some resentment (indicated by student representatives at college program committee meetings, ABC College, 2010). This exacerbates the feelings of inadequacy and lack of confidence on the part of the less linguistically able students. Faculty members are aware of this problem and applaud the availability of self-help and different computer assisted language learning tools.

The second chart, giving more results of a survey on English levels in class, indicates that English language levels have a strong impact on different aspects of students' studies.

And, the students themselves have strong opinions on this topic.

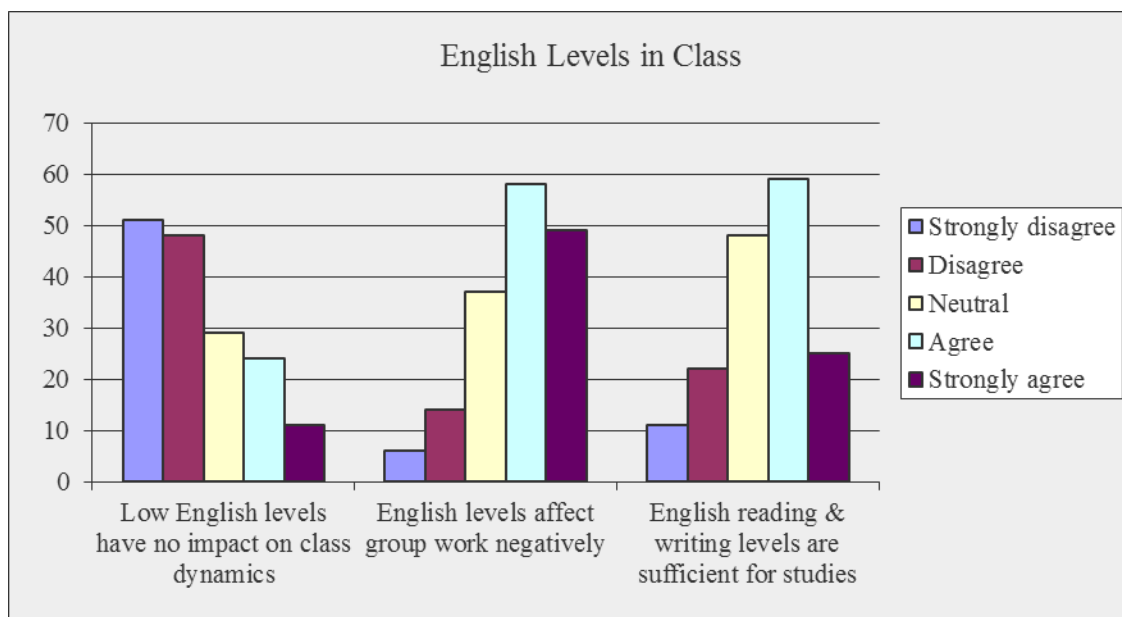


Figure 2 . A bar chart showing students' opinions related to their English levels in class. Adapted from ABC College, (2014). Unpublished minutes, Periodic Review.

The Periodic Review of 2015 includes reference to the importance of the employability of the students. English language levels, both oral and written, play a significant role in the increased employability of these students. Although employment statistics are good, student entry level jobs could improve, thus making the students more sought after in the job market (Periodic Review, 2015). As already noted, students entering the college take an English placement test. Based on the results of this test, students are exempted from English (best), placed in the Critical Reading and Writing

(CRAW) course (Appendix C), or the English for Academic Purposes (EAP), Intermediate level (lowest). The following chart illustrates that 72% of students in the lowest group (EAP Intermediate) failed Semester 1 (before Re-sit Examinations), 30% of the CRAW group, and 16% only of those exempted from English. The following chart shows there is a clear connection between low English levels and restricted progress in the all over hospitality degree.

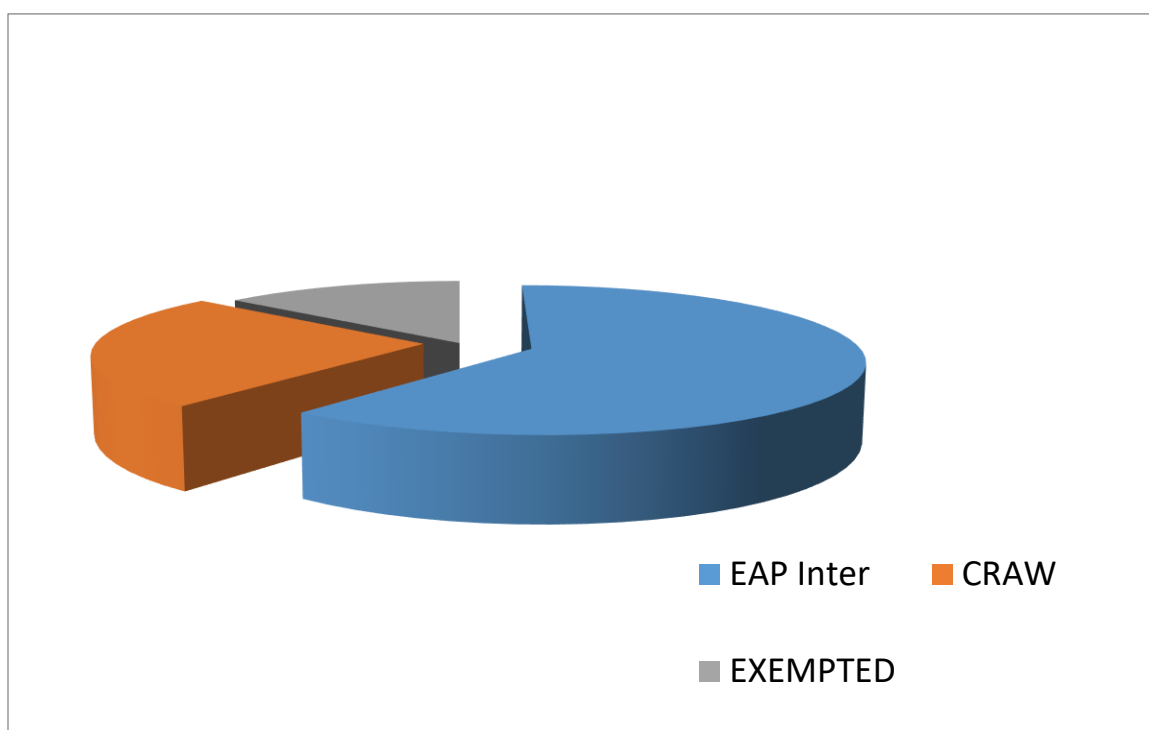


Figure 3. A pie chart showing students' progression linked to English proficiency level. Adapted from ABC College, (2014). Unpublished Minutes, Periodic Review.

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

Students react positively to web-based learning projects and identify advantages such as assisting cooperation, improving knowledge of the core subject, in this case, the hospitality, tourism, events, sports, and entertainment industries, and improving both

cognitive and IT skills. However, there are also some negative aspects to web-based learning, for example, the time involved in group projects, the preference of some students for the traditional paper approach, and problems with using the platform (Wang, 2009). Canagarajah (2002, as cited by Genç & Bada, 2010) stated that non-Western researchers and academics often had difficulty publishing in English-language journals because of the “geopolitics and egotism” of academia (p. 147). There is reluctance on the part of publishers to accept these texts because of the extra editorial work necessary on account of poor language skills. Leedham (2009, as cited by Genç & Bada, 2010) discussed the skill of writing in English in the context of blended learning. Blended learning usually refers to a combination of face-to-face and online ways of teaching (Ab Manan, Alias, & Pandian, 2012). Aspects of blended learning, such as Facebook, can be a “powerful pedagogical tool” both for teachers and for young techno-savvy learners (Ab Manan et al).

It is up to teachers to be creative and keep up-to-date with today’s fast changing society. Baralt, Pennestri and Selvandin (2011), and Malone and Yoon (2014) put forward the case for Wordle, a data visualization tool, where word clouds are used to facilitate foreign language writing, especially for visual learners, and in this way certain words are given greater importance within texts. The project presented in their paper had a two-fold aim: “to facilitate the teaching of writing in class and to improve students’ writing in the foreign language” (p. 12). Anonymity in blended learning was discussed by Miyazoe and Anderson (2011), where they stated that the hiding of identity helps lower students’ anxiety compared to face-to-face writing. They found that there is a higher

participation of students in online writing activities when they can do this in an anonymous, gender- and identity-free context using pseudonyms. They concluded that more research was needed about digital writing tools, as anonymity and pseudonyms were crucial factors in improving writing skills. However, Narita (2012) noted that the pedagogical potential of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) programs has been endorsed by other researchers (e.g., Blake, 2011; Boulton, 2009; Johns et al., 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Blake (2011, as cited by Narita, 2012) said that ESL students were stimulated to use online learning, and Chapelle (2007, as cited by Narita, 2012) added that CALL programs provided learners with feedback, which improved their grammatical knowledge and promoted their error awareness.

Definitions

The following terms have been identified as relevant to the understanding and implementation of this project study:

Assistive technology (AT): Technology designed to help people with disabilities to carry out certain functions with which they have difficulty (University of Washington, 2013).

Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE): A computerized scoring system and evaluation mechanism for various writing-assessment purposes (Li, Link, & Hegelheimer, 2015).

Blended learning: Originally a buzzword in language teaching, but now a standard term referring to one of three things: a combination of traditional and web-based

methods, the use of different tools in an e-learning environment, or a combination of different pedagogic approaches (Sharma, 2010), used for this project study. .

Business Language Testing Service (BULATS): A business language assessment test offered by the University of Cambridge (England) with the principle aim of providing a certification for workplace language skills. It is also available in languages other than English (2016).

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL): A process by which a student, through using a computer, succeeds in improving his/her language.

Grammar check: A Microsoft Word self-correction tool which indicates a grammar error in the text (2013).

Grammarly: An online grammar tutorial system based on identifying frequent grammatical errors (Narita, 2012, p. 24).

Microsoft Office's review option, Track Changes: A Microsoft Word function, used to provide individual student feedback

Moocs::Massive Open Online Courses

Moodle: Modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment (Hirschel, 2012)

Prezi: An online presentation program, suited to customized work, that offers both a linear and free-flowing presentation of information, where the user creates the presentation on a blank workspace, called a canvas. (Perron & Stearns, 2010)

Rosetta Stone: A commercial language learning product using an online database (Godwin-Jones, 2011).

Socrative: An online student response system that is interactive and allows students access to instant feedback, and formulates quizzes and exercises (Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor, 2014).

Spell check: A Microsoft Word self-correction tool which indicates a misspelling and offers the correct solution (2013).

Tell-Me-More: An online language learning program (Boss & Hill, 2010).

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL): The TOEFL test examines the knowledge of English second language speakers, gives them a score which indicates their English language abilities with a view to studying in an institution where English is the language of course delivery. TOEFL is an internationally recognized test and is accepted by more than 6,000 universities and colleges in 136 countries (Alderson, 2009).

Wiki: A website developed by a group of users where anyone can add content (Wagner, 2004; Zhao, Zhang, Wagner, & Chen, 2013).

WriteClick: A computer application which reviews, edits, revises, analyzes text for grammar and spelling mistakes, and gives suggestions (Pearson, 2016).

Significance

The issue of written language learning skills is one that applies to many international universities and colleges today, where international students make up a significant percentage of the student population. “International students represented 3.5 percent (671,616 of 19,103,000) of all students attending institutions of higher education in the United States in the 2008-09 academic year” (Institute of International Education, 2011, as cited by Kelly, 2012). Many students choose to study abroad for a variety of

reasons—financial motives, family situations, work-related issues, better quality degrees, ambition. Students studying in another country confront an unfamiliar environment as well as another language, this time at a higher academic level. Achieving this level, especially in writing skills, is challenging to students, and many are unaware of the minimum standards required.

Guiding Research Questions

Research on the topic of English as a second language deals with the effectiveness of different methods, how to achieve results, teaching styles, and now also technology both for error correction and language learning. The subject of motivation has also been researched in many different contexts, including that of second language learning, specifically for English. To a greater extent, students are choosing to study in English-speaking countries where their written skills are tested to the ultimate; technology and motivation must be linked in order for students to succeed in universities in the English-speaking world.

This study focuses on international students originating from many countries with different educational backgrounds and standards, and who have also different expectations and hopes. For this reason, the findings reflect a wide variety of attitudes, opinions and preferences of students. The study emphasizes writing skills and how they are closely linked to motivation and attitudes. A qualitative case study, using interviews and focus groups, is suited to this research because of the open-ended questions where students expressed their feelings and opinions individually and in small groups in a private environment, without the pressure of grading or testing.

- How are technological language tools being used for teaching and learning with ESL students?
- What motivates international students to use error-correction language tools and what are the barriers to their use by students?
- What are international students' attitudes to writing well in English?

Review of the Literature

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

The constructivist approach to learning builds meaning and sense from experiences (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007). The social constructivist concept was appropriate for guiding this study because the problem must be understood in a combination of historical, socioeconomic, and cultural contexts (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Knowles was the first to discuss andragogy, describing it as “the art and science of helping adults learn” (Knowles, 1980, p. 43, quoted by Merriam et al., 2007). Knowles distinguished this from pedagogy, which is “preadult schooling” (Merriam et al., p. 84). According to andragogy theory, adults are motivated because of their need to know, they are self-directing, they use their past experiences, they are ready to learn, rooted in the present, problem-centred and rational, as opposed to children who are acquiring new knowledge and skills through experience. Life events and transitions differentiate adult learning from child learning (Merriam et al., p. 425).

In second language learning, unlike first language learning, motivation is one of the most important success factors (Ushioda, 2012). International students learning a second language are motivated by their career language needs; new educational

technologies offer increased possibilities of self-direction adapted to these needs. Kolb's (1984) conception of learning from experience intimated that it was based on four different types of abilities:

- openness to new experiences,
- observation and reflective skills to process such experiences,
- analytical capabilities to enable conceptualization, and
- decision-making and problem-solving skills (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007).

Raising levels of second language skills and writing ability in particular demands that international students work independently towards achieving a specific goal: an improvement in their writing level. Building meaning and sense into learning through social constructivist theory as well as using motivation through present needs (as suggested by Knowles' [1980] conception of andragogy) are important fundamentals for adult second language learners. Instrumental motivation means there is a practical reason for learning, and the need for competence suggests a higher intrinsic and more specific motivation as well as the more basic kind of motivation (Agawa, Takeuchi, & 竹内理, 2016).

Current Research Related to the Problem

The process of finding and exploring literature on this topic began with the early course modules of Walden University's EdD–Higher Education and Adult Learning (HEAL) program, using articles, books and other forms of literature. However, with the commencement of the project study itself, the need for a process and filing system

became apparent. As I had already read many articles and had collected some literature, I reviewed what I had noted, compiled notes, and then devised categories, such as blended learning, CALL, cross-culture, feedback, error correction, globalization, motivation, social networking, and trends, in which I stored the PDF files.

As I continued my research the categories increased in number until I had 28 different ones. I used the Walden University library for specific searches and to find information on particular aspects of my topic. Meanwhile, I had also set up several alerts for specific terms on Google Scholar, including *second language writing motivation*, *computer-assisted writing in second language learning*, *cross-cultural issues in higher education*, and *technology in second language learning*, which regularly provided new, recent abstracts, and full articles, for reading. I then read and added those that were most relevant to the categories.

The use of technology by students. Mobile learning consists of various learning processes delivered through portable smartphone devices and is now very popular (Holzinger, Nischelwitzer & Meisenberger, 2005, as cited by Liu & Tsai, 2013). Today's EFL learners have easy access to a multitude of information through mobile learning. The use of mobile computing devices, including cellphones, smartphones, and tablet computers is being driven by students themselves, and many of them believe that these devices are important to their academic success (Gikas, & Grant, 2013).

Accordingly, EFL learners have the opportunity to get involved in active, rather than passive, learning, and can choose for themselves (Liu & Tsai, 2013). Many students

prefer to conduct research with mobile devices, and like to have a *feature-rich, interactive experiences* via these portable devices (Dresselhaus & Shrode, 2012, p. 84).

The use of technology by faculty. Faculty response to technology involves several aspects. Esterhuizen, Blignaut, and Ellis (2013) found that faculty's attitudes to technological enhanced learning (TEL) were affected by the institutional environment, TEL realities faced by faculty, human factors, concerns and reservations about ongoing professional development needs, about expectations, and also about motivation.

Computer tools. Today's college students in the developed world have many different computer tools available to them. Different factors affect students in their approach to the use of these tools. It is not just a question of their knowledge and understanding of technology, but also their perceptions of these tools, and their attitudes towards writing well in English.

Mobile learning. Mobile learning devices and smart phones are now being used by many students. The fact that mobile devices have now become so widespread and that so many students already have access to them, opens up many new possibilities for students and for new instructional strategies (Gikas & Grant, 2013). Chung, Chen and Kuo (2013), said that mobile learning would become a milestone of education technology, and they quoted Donaldson (2010) who said that mobile technology would enable students to access opportunities for collaboration and other information resources, as well as more traditional learning.

How international students can overcome English second language issues.
Many students are now studying overseas and are confronted with cultural issues.

However, technology is making the learning environment more uniform, and the use of technology in language learning is available to all second language students equally.

Cultural influences. Students become more aware of multicultural issues when they are learning in an international environment. Interaction via discussion in small groups was the most important element in acquiring multicultural awareness (Lob, 2013).

Student motivation. Knowles' theory of andragogy indicates that adults learn through a need to know and internal motivation. One of the ways they can do this is by adhering to constructivist principles to create a more engaging and practical learning environment, including the use of technology (Chang, 2010).

Attitudes and perceptions. Motivation and attitude are also important in second language learning (Lili, 2013). Second language students often do not use transfer of learning when writing in English (James, 2012). Wu and & Hsu (2013) presented a paper on Wiki-based collaborative summary writing, referring to students' perceptions of the activity. The question that remains to be answered is why second language students do not feel motivated to acquire good written skills in English.

There is a plentiful variety of research available, both in form and subject matter, for example, journal articles, dissertations, books, reviews, case-studies, and newsletters. The authors of the literature come from many different countries and backgrounds, which on the one hand, gives the literature an international flavor, and on the other hand, illustrates how globalization has had an impact on second language learning, in particular English as a second language. Lin and Yang (2011), in questioning if Wiki technology improved students' writing skills, found that there were both functional and

psychological obstacles to using new technology enhanced learning systems, and that using new technology involved both advantages and challenges. This led them to conclude that there is still a lot to learn about integrating peer feedback and Wiki writing practice. Madhavi (2013) discussed trends in language learning through multi-media, Gonzales (2003, cited in Mahdavi, 2013) said that CALL systems in language learning represented a shift from teacher to student-centered learning, and Searson (2013) suggested that mobile tools were disruptive devices for learning.

Second language learning, like higher education in general, has been changed dramatically because of internationalization. According to Jiang (2009), universities have always been “one,” as the meaning of the root *uni* purports, but universities today are now also key drivers in internationalism and global communication. However, the question still remains as to whether this is for the better or for the worse, and also as to the exact nature of the consequences (Knight, 2012). Technology is hastening the process whereby the world is fast becoming a global village (Akinwamide, 2011). Nevertheless, barriers exist related both to students’ and teachers’ attitudes towards the use of technology, and if these are not overcome, the huge potential of CALL may not be achieved (Bhalla, 2012). Benefits from CALL instruction include “a novel approach, individualization, learner control, and frequent nonjudgmental feedback” (Warschauer, 1996, as cited by Hirschel, 2012, p. 12). Computer tools, now available to students and faculty, are numerous and varied.

Levy (2009) took a modular approach to the topic of technologies in use for second language learning. This is important because software developers are required to

be more explicit in how technology can aid and improve language achievements. In discussing writing skills, Levy, citing Pennington (2004), and Pennington and Brock, (2004), referred to significant positive changes which the use of the word processor brought about in the 1980s. Word processing tools have problems for nonnative speakers however, as the spelling and grammar checkers that are supplied with computers are often aimed at native, not nonnative speakers (Levy, 2009). The level of formality expected in writing (Hegelheimer, 2006; Hegelheimer & Fisher, 2006, as cited by Levy), depends on its purpose.

Academic writing requires tools to aid with grammar, spelling, structure, style. During the last 10 years, new tools have been developed to aid in the teaching and learning of writing. But more importantly, there are other kinds of tools more suited to a less formal kind of writing, for example, blogs. “A blog is a web-log with regular journal entries, using text, audio, or video” (Levy, 2009, p. 773). This is one of several new kinds of tool to aid in the less formal kind of writing, others being wikis, automated writing evaluation, and open-source netbook computers. Despite the negative association with Wikipedia, wikis have encouraged a more formal style of writing as opposed to the informal chat favored by blogs and chat (Warschauer, 2010).

Educators have been quick to realize that the new interest in mobile apps and the trend for iPads and tablets can be applied also to language learning (Godwin-Jones, 2011). The use of the Moodle e-learning platform makes for another interesting option for students and for teachers, although some results have indicated that it is used more as a repository than as a learning tool (Costa, Alvelos, & Teixeira, 2012). Nevertheless,

results from student participation in Moodle forums in a Taiwan case study showed that “the more they participated the more they attained in the online writing forum” (Yang & Lin, 2010, p. 2648), but that each student’s internet attitude also had a significant effect on the outcome. This aspect of student motivation also appeared in a research paper which asked the question if technology was a motivating factor for students, and if it was being used effectively by educators (Hughes, 2012).

Implications

This subject, technology and second language learning, is one which is changing all the time, due to the speed with which new technology is developing, and research is now being carried out not only on the new technology itself but on how teachers can teach with it (Jamani & Figg, 2013) .

There are various implications that affect this kind of a study. As the research involves second language students, the subject is seen from their point of view. The students at this college are mainly Generation Y, the millennium generation, born after 1982, who have grown up with and who live in a society impregnated with technology and information (Taylor, 2012). These students are intimately familiar with all kinds of technology, unlike some older faculty members who sometimes have issues with the use of technology in a domain that previously was face-to-face and teacher-centered.

A study of this nature in an international environment must, at all times, consider cross-cultural issues, as the students come from 96 different countries, and may, therefore, have different learning styles. As well as cultural differences, students also may have individual preferences regarding technology. Students like experimenting with

new gadgets and often discover new ways of learning that they like better than those presented in class. Adult learning styles encompass more than just the three categories of visual, verbal, and tactile, submitted by Jonassen and Grabowski, (1993), and Wislock, (1993), as cited by Knowles, Holson and Swanson (2011). The list can be expanded to print, aural, interactive, visual, haptic, kinesthetic, and smell (James & Galbraith, 1985, as cited by Knowles, Holson, & Swanson, 2011).

It is important for an international college to investigate students' language abilities. Today's world is changing and globalization has closed the gap between students. Standards of excellence are required, and technology plays a role in this development. This subject is topical and suited to a project study, as technology is advancing and more students are involved in distance education, combining online and face-to-face education, for the betterment of all concerned. Some interesting questions emerge at this point regarding students' motivations to learn, whether they are motivated to use technology for all types of learning or if they use technology differently depending on what they are learning.

Summary

Although ESL students today are knowledgeable about technology, they do not use error-correction computer tools when writing in English. This study, which uses a qualitative research design, is a descriptive case study based on the social constructivist theory. It investigates students' abilities and attitudes to English writing within the context and setting of an international hospitality college in Switzerland. The information provided in Section 1 explained the background to this problem, its basis and justification

both at local level and from the literature, why it is an issue not just for the students, but also for the institution.

The literature review demonstrated what is happening in the field of second language learning and technology today, how tools are being developed which can help students become more autonomous and self-helping, and how the approach to second language learning is changing worldwide. The implementation of a project study on this topic is part of the ongoing process for an improvement in how second language students at this international hospitality college in Switzerland use computer and error-correction language tools, and in their levels of written English.

The project will take the form of a total immersion writing development program for students, aimed at facilitating the process of finding, using, and evaluating computer tools to enable them to write accurately in English, and also how to improve their motivation to acquire good written skills in English. The idea was refined and modified according to the students' own preferences which emerged from the focus groups and interviews. The Writing Development Program is described in detail in Section 3, including its goals, rationale, outcomes, implementation and evaluation, and also provides a review of literature specific to the topic. This is followed by an analysis of how the research supports the project and the resources needed, how the implementation is to be done, time factors, plus roles and responsibilities of students and others involved

There will be a thorough formative evaluation of the project, including a justification of how it affects the stakeholders. Possible implications for social change will then be examined, as well as the comprehensive importance of the project for the

stakeholders, namely the school. The strengths and limitations of the project will be stated, plus different ways of dealing with the problem which have emerged from the study, what was learned about scholarship and the practitioner, including the researcher's project development skills. The significance of the work and the knowledge gained will be considered, with implications, applications, and directions for future research. In the next section the research design, sampling techniques, data collection and analysis, ethical issues, assumptions and finding will also be described.

Section 2: The Methodology

Introduction

I selected a qualitative research design for this investigation of the specific opinions and preferences of nonnative English-speaking hospitality students about the need for accurate written English skills. There are many different kinds of computer tools available for ESL students at the study site, an international hospitality college in Switzerland, hereafter referred to as ABC College (pseudonym); however, prior research suggests that students are not always motivated to use these tools (Ushioda, 2012; Wasniewski & Boechler, 2012; Wu & Hsu, 2013). This study specifically investigated nonnative English-speaking students' perceptions of the need for accurate written skills in English.

I specifically conducted a qualitative, descriptive case study. In a case study, a process or one or more individuals are explored in detail (Stake, 1995, as cited by Creswell, 2013). The focus is on small groups in a specific setting (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010). At ABC College, English is the language of delivery, all assignments must be written in correct English, using academic style with APA referencing, and language has a significant effect on grades and success in general. Students at ABC College are generally learning how to become managers in an international hospitality environment where soft skills and communication are top priority. The language of communication at ABC College is English, both orally and in writing, because qualified, skilled, international managers have to be capable of handling intricate, diplomatic situations with clients, suppliers, and personnel at every level.

The design of this study emerged from the problem statement and the guiding research questions, where the specific opinions and preferences of the students were investigated. This section discusses the study methodology; explains and discusses the research design and approach; and describes the participants, the data collection, analysis processes, and findings. The development, form, and design of the subsequent project study were based on findings that emerged from this study.

Qualitative Research

The idea of research implies finding out or investigating in an organized way (Merriam, 2015). According to Creswell (2012), the six steps involved in the organized process of investigation are

1. identifying a research problem,
2. reviewing the literature,
3. specifying a purpose for research,
4. collecting data,
5. analyzing and interpreting the data, and
6. reporting and evaluating research.

Whereas basic research concerns the intellectual extension of knowledge, applied research is about “improving the quality of practice” (p. 3), with action research relating to a problem within a specific environment. Quantitative research involves measurable results of experiments or surveys, and qualitative researchers are more interested in finding out what people think of their experiences and how they understand them (Merriam, 2015). Merriam stated that research about finding out and understanding,

which was based on the opinions of those being studied, was more likely to impact and change people's lives.

The qualitative research paradigm that I used in this study is social constructivism, which is based on cultural anthropology and sociology. Its purpose is to investigate a social phenomenon. A paradigm is a framework of philosophy or a map, and every research study is informed by a theory (Kirk & Miller, 1986). Creswell (2013) said that, in the opinion of social constructivists, individuals give their own meanings to experiences, and for this reason researchers are particularly interested in different opinions. Hancock and Algozzine (2011), in writing about case studies, said that this methodology enables the researcher to confront many different kinds of non-quantifiable realities, and that it was a holistic way of doing research in normal surroundings, using purposeful sampling.

Qualitative methodologies are suited to educational research because of their use of inductive approaches designed to arrive at a conclusion or a theory. When using inductive reasoning, a researcher observes the activity or process under investigation, searches for patterns or themes, and develops a generalization from it (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Case studies are realistic in-depth investigations in a real life situation, where "the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2013, p.18). In the case of ABC College, the students reflect their own different backgrounds, which have an influence on their habits and preferences. Case studies are appropriate for this educational study, which concerns an international group of students who come not

just from many different countries but who have experienced many varied kinds of previous education.

The research design best suited to this particular study was a descriptive case study, which could address the many different varieties of experiences and opinions of the students, thereby arriving at a “rich, thick description” (Merriam, 2015), of what was being studied. By means of interviews the students themselves describe their preferences, their attitudes to different technologies, and what motivates them to use technology, and thus to write accurately and well. According to Creswell (2013), case studies may relate to individuals, groups, or activities. In this instance, the activities in question constituted a descriptive case, presenting a description of an issue within its context (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011).

This aligned with constructivist theory’s emphasis on generating a theory by means of comprehending the participants’ many values and experiences, and understanding their different backgrounds and the historical contexts. Social constructivists search out many varied opinions rather than a small number of categories or ideas (Creswell, 2013). Because the demographic input into these interviews and focus groups was so varied, the themes and meanings that emerged were wide-ranging and diverse.

Justification for Choice of Research Design

The three guiding, research questions for this study were designed to investigate how computer language tools are being used for teaching and learning with ESL students, what motivates international students to use computer language tools and what barriers

they face, and students' attitudes toward writing well in English. The three research questions in this study were connected, because each followed the other logically. The answers to these questions were determined by enrolling students as study participants for interviews and focus groups. According to Merriam (2015), data acquired verbally is qualitative; in education, interviewing is the most common method of collecting data. I used semi structured questions to collect meaningful data from the participants, as recommended by Merriam (2015).

I considered and rejected quantitative and mixed methods approaches. Creswell (2013) stated that quantitative research gathers numeric data, employing instruments, relating variables with statistical analysis, and creating a report which uses fixed structures and evaluation criteria, which did not align with answering my research questions. Mixed methods procedures use the advantages of both quantitative and qualitative research, and the combination of the two "provides expanded understanding of research problems" (Creswell, 2013, p. 203). Creswell added that the mixed methods approach is appropriate when one method, qualitative or quantitative, is not enough. However, in this case, a qualitative methodology suited the study, because the focus was on an activity involving individuals not acting as a group (Stake, 1995, as cited by Creswell, 2012).

The aim of this study was to gain detailed knowledge of the students, the technology they are using, and their perceptions of written skills. Qualitative research accentuates complexity rather than the norm and emphasizes "that which contributes to plurality rather than to a narrowing of horizons" (Glesne, 2011, p. 273).

Participants

The degree offered at ABC College is a bachelor of science in hospitality management with different specialties. The students in this college come from 96 different countries to learn and apply hospitality management skills. The course comprises seven semesters, five academic semesters and two internships. There are two campuses, one for the Semester 1 and Semester 2 students (aged usually between 17 and 20) with approximately 500 students on campus at any one time. Semester 3 is the internship semester. The other campus is situated at a distance of 36 kilometers and is for the upper semesters, Semesters 4, 6 and 7 (for students aged usually between 19 and 22), with approximately 700 students. Semester 5 is the internship semester.

Interviews were conducted with eight male and 12 female students drawn from both campuses. There were also two focus groups, each consisting of five participants not from the original group of 20. The participants ($N=30$) were composed of 15 men and 15 women, ranged in age from 18 to 27, and represented 22 nationalities. Their previous education was also varied, equally divided between local public schools and private schools, with some having private language lessons and others following summer language programs, both in native countries and abroad. Students were recruited by sending a letter by email (Appendix D) that explained the research and invited them to participate and gave the purpose of the study. They were asked if they would like to participate in this study. They were informed that participation was voluntary, information would be kept confidential by me as the researcher, and that there would be

no repercussions for opting in or out. Access to the students was not difficult as I was a faculty member working on both ABC College campuses at the time of this study.

The sampling technique most often used in qualitative research is purposeful, and, according to Patton (1990, as cited by Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010), this is to assure that the data gathered is information-rich. Sampling was purposeful since I (the researcher), as a faculty member of the college, had access to students on both campuses. None of the participants were students enrolled in my classes; I did not know any of them personally. This was to ensure that the process was ethical and that there were no biases that might impact this study.

This case study was interpretative research, where it was assumed that reality is socially constructed. It describes, tries to understand, and interprets actions and procedures, has multiple realities and is context-bound (Merriam, 2015). Qualitative research is an inductive process, where data is gathered to build a concept or theory. Qualitative researchers build theories or categories from information gleaned in the field, from interviews, from observations (Merriam, 2015). Some of the characteristics of a qualitative researcher are a questioning attitude, acceptance of ambiguity, careful observation, good questions, ability to think inductively, and to express the outcome in words (Merriam, 2015). This case study followed the above approach—gathering and analyzing the literature for themes, using beneficial questions aimed to acquire information-rich material from interviews and focus group discussions, considering the collected data, searching for themes and patterns, aiming to arrive at a conclusion.

Establishing a Researcher-Participant Relationship

One of the purposes of qualitative research is to comprehend the situation from the participants' point of view, not the researcher's. This is called an insider perspective (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011). In qualitative research, the researcher is the main "instrument for data collection and analysis" (p. 9), therefore the researcher should be part of the environment and spend time to interact with students. I have been on the faculty at ABC College for 11 years and I am familiar with the environment. Although I did not know the students interviewed personally, I have had experience of students from the same backgrounds and the same countries during my years at this college. Thus, it was possible for me to be objective but at the same time to have an insider perspective.

Measures for Ethical Protection

The academic director and academic dean of the college provided written permission for the study, using the Institution Consent Form (see Appendix E). When this was received, the researcher contacted participants by email, keeping in mind the fact that my own students were not eligible to take part.

Protection of Participants

Participants were given consent forms in advance which they were required to sign (see adapted Walden Consent Forms in Appendices F and G). I reviewed the purpose of the study and the nature of their participation before each interview and at the start of each focus group. Participants were reminded that they could opt-out at any point during the interview, without retribution, and that no one at the college would know they were involved in the research. The interview and focus group recordings and

transcriptions, including notes and other relevant materials, were kept in a locked office. All data will be kept for five years and then destroyed according to Walden University and ABC College's regulations.

Data Collection

After I officially received consent to conduct this research from the institute, I sent an email to the students who had agreed to take part (Appendix H). Twenty individual interviews and two focus groups of five participants each were scheduled, based on the availability of the students. These took place during the months of June, September, October, November, and December of 2014, with the summer holiday period intervening. The interviews and focus groups were held on the two campuses, with students from Semesters 1, and 2 on one campus, and with the students from the upper semesters on the other. The interview and focus group questions were prepared based on the research questions of this study. The content of the questions was also aided by the literature, to ensure a semistructured format with open-ended questions. According to Creswell (2012), the qualitative interview takes place when a researcher asks an individual or several people open-ended questions, audio-records and transcribes their answers. Flexibility is necessary in interviews for a qualitative study, so that information-rich data will emerge. Glesne (2011) said that interviews should be like "getting words to fly," where the interviewer's questions "stimulate verbal flights" (p. 102). It is the researcher's task to tap into the interviewee's special knowledge and make sense out of the words (Glesne). Focus groups can be considered as group interviews with a selected group of individuals, or they can be an informal debate among the participants, facilitated

by the interviewer, using questions designed to encourage discussion (Bloor & Wood, 2006, as cited by Glesne, 2011). The interviews and focus group discussions were conducted, digitally recorded and transcribed, in order to find out the broad areas of interest and concern, and to discover what preoccupies students most regarding this topic. In this way, I was able to go into detail to gain the *rich, thick description* specified by Merriam (2015, p. 43).

Two focus groups took part in this study and individual interviews were held with 20 students who were selected to participate in this study. The selection was based on having a variety of age, nationality, gender, native language, and course of studies. Face-to-face sessions are the best way to hold focus group discussions and two were conducted with students of seven different nationalities, so that the two focus groups with five students in each were composed of students of very different backgrounds. A structured framework was used with specific questions aimed at stimulating the flow of information and interaction between students, taking into consideration the different language levels and abilities (Appendices I and J). Questions for focus groups and for interviews were developed keeping the research questions in mind, but remembering that research questions formulate what the researcher wants to understand, whereas interview questions are what the researcher asks in order to reach that understanding (Maxwell, 1996, as cited by Glesne, 2011). A good interview protocol is important so that there can be a certain degree of standardization among the different interviews, although the interviewer can ask other questions that have emerged from the dialogue (Lodico,

Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Interviews were semi structured, with open-ended questions, allowing for students to answer in an unconstrained manner (Creswell, 2012).

Each interview was digitally recorded and subsequently transcribed. I took notes during the sessions, material which is available as background information for reporting. Although I did not know these students personally, I am familiar with the institute, having been on the faculty for eleven years. This means that I know the school environment, and this provided a good background to the interviews and focus groups. Cross-cultural learning is a characteristic of this institution where assessments are both group-based and individual. In discussing project-based collaborative learning, Shadiev, Hwang, and Huang (2015) stated that in order to address cross-cultural understanding, universities today had to “transform, to function effectively and comfortably in a world characterized by close multi-faceted relationships and permeable borders” (p. 123). I have had the experience of using cross-cultural situations successfully, to improve communication and understanding, and to achieve positive results. I have used this knowledge in my research. However, qualitative research is interpretive. The interviewer has to be closely involved with the interviewees (Creswell, 2013). I am aware of my own reflexivity, my biases and assumptions, and how these may have influenced how I conducted the study. However, the variety of backgrounds of the students interviewed gave me the possibility to assume an outsider/observer stance, and thus enabled me to be as objective as possible (Merriam, 2015).

Data Analysis

The information gathered from the interviews and the focus groups sessions was analyzed, using the process recommended by Creswell (2012). Creswell figuratively explained the data analysis process as follows:

1. Prepare and organize the data for analysis,
2. Explore data by coding,
3. Use codes to develop a more detailed idea of themes,
4. Represent the data with visuals,
5. Make interpretation of meaning of results by personal reflection on findings and literature,
6. Choose and conduct validation checks to assure accuracy of data (p. 237).

Maxwell (2012) and Creswell (2013) recommended that the data analysis process start during the data collection to “progressively focus interviews and to decide how to test emerging conclusions” (Maxwell, p. 236). A computer software package, suitable for qualitative research, was used to aid the analysis process. This particular one was selected because of ease of availability and access to advice and training. According to Merriam (2015), the definition of data analysis is “the process of making sense out of data” (p. 175). Finding answers to the research questions is the goal of a research study, thus the goal of data analysis is to discover these answers, also called themes or findings (Merriam). The main feature of a case study is that it is “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single bounded unit” (Merriam, 2015). The issue of language learning can be called an instrumental case, because it draws attention to a specific issue

(Creswell, 2012). Lunenberg (2011) held that a case study was an “in-depth analysis” and that it was particularly “valuable in answering exploratory questions” (p. 4).

First, I read through the paper transcripts making notes on each paper. I also kept a written journal where I allocated a page to each individual and noted which categories were predominant, adding quotes from interviews where relevant, and where interviewees had said something significant (Appendix K). Although quotes are interesting and colorful, they should be kept short and be interpreted by the researcher to illuminate the perspective (Glesne, 2011).

Using my notes, I began the coding process by entering all the transcripts into a computer software program, using pseudonyms for the participants. In discussing codes and coding, Lichtman (2006), as cited by Saldana (2008), spoke about five to seven major concepts in a study emerging from 15 – 20 categories, based on 80 – 100 codes. In this study there was a clear appearance of four main themes, based on 27 categories, condensed from 55 codes.

The next step was entering the categories, subcategories, and further subgroups as nodes. I then read through all the transcribed interviews again, connecting the relevant sections of each transcript to the different node categories, subcategories, and subgroups. Next, I realized that I would have to delete some categories as there had been some overlap and repetition. I also saw that new categories, codes, would also have to be added, based on what had emerged from the detailed study of the interview and focus group transcripts. Credibility was assured by using member checks, asking one or more of the participants to review the conclusions arrived at. Because of the nature of the

private college in this study, there is a good collegial spirit among the multi-national faculty. A peer debriefer assisted me, helping to “re-examine assumptions and consider alternative ways of looking at the data” (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010, p. 274).

Discrepant Cases

To assure quality data, it is important to recognize the potential for discrepant cases or discrepant information. It is up to the researcher, who is interviewing individual participants, and facilitating the focus groups, to be aware of differences and to include discrepant opinions in the analysis. The researcher must be aware of his/her own assumptions and not bias the data to support it. It is always tempting to ignore data that do not fit the conclusion (Maxwell, 2012). Negative or discrepant cases need to be considered in order that the final results analysis will reflect the views of the majority of people in the study. In this study there was one discrepant case. The interviewee in question was dyslexic and said that without technology he would not have been able to continue his studies. His contribution was included in the general results as, despite being a discrepant case, it aligned with the theme of support, technologies as a support for language learning to a greater or lesser degree.

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, Delimitations

This is a qualitative case study, using interviews and focus group discussions with 20 participants in the interviews, and 10 in the focus groups (two groups of five participants who did not participate in the interviews). The students who took part were not personally known to me, and came from 22 different countries and regions of the world. The numbers participating might have been a limiting factor, but as this is

qualitative research, where the purpose is to acquire a deep understanding in a specific setting, the fewer the participants, the more detailed the data collected. Patton (2002, as cited by Merriam, 2015) recommended that a sample size should be “based on expected reasonable coverage of the phenomenon given the purpose of the study” (p. 246).

Possible further limitations involve reliability, validity and generalizability. However, this does not consider the point that case study research includes differences—“ideologically, epistemologically, methodologically and most importantly, humanly” (Shields, 2007, as cited by Merriam, 2015, p. 52). The delimitations of the research could be my biases, but in qualitative research the researcher’s own feelings and subjectivity contribute to the research and the data acquired. Reason (1988, as cited by Maxwell, 2012) spoke about “critical subjectivity” as a

“quality of awareness in which we do not suppress our primary experience; nor do we allow ourselves to be swept away and overwhelmed by it; rather we raise it to consciousness and use it as part of the inquiry process” (p. 225).

The scope of this qualitative study was also limited, as it involves only one college, and although qualitative research can sometimes be applied generally, it is usually more difficult to generalize qualitative research, despite Gobo’s statement (2004, as cited by Merriam, 2015) that generalizations based on large samples can sometimes be overrated. Becker (1991) and Ragin (1987), as cited by Maxwell (2012), said that qualitative studies could not be applied to other specific populations, but that any theory development could be applied to other situations. And this led Guba and Lincoln (1989,

as cited by Maxwell, 2012) to speak about “transferability” instead of “generalizability” of qualitative research.

Results of Data Analysis

Demographic Data

The demographic data have been presented (Figure 4). The information is also included in Table 1, so that the multiplicity of the interviewees can be observed. Looking at the socio-linguistic environment in the diverse cultural world of today, changes to the traditional approach to ELT (English Language Teaching) can be identified. As a result of the global spread of English, many different kinds of English are emerging. Recognizing these new forms of English indicates that any of them could be used for international communication (Matsuda, & Friedrich, 2012; Sharifian, & Marlina, 2012). According to Marlina (2009), students from different countries may seem different to local students. But this difference should not be seen as universal. Faculty should appreciate this diversity in how students approach learning. Thus, differences in background and experience can be seen to have had an effect on student responses and opinions. Hofstede (2001), Hofstede, Hofstede, G.J., and Minkov (2010) have discussed culture as national culture, and have suggested that this plays a role in students’ attitudes towards education, relating to attributes such as “power distance” and “individualism vs. collectivism” (cited by Viberg & Grönkund, 2013). Participants, 15 males and 15



Figure 4. A map showing the geographic dispersion of interview and focus group participants.

females, ranged in age from 18 to 27, and represented 22 nationalities. Their previous education was also varied, equally divided between local public schools and private schools, with some having private language lessons and others following summer language programs, both in native countries and abroad. This follows the constructivist theory which is concerned with “understanding multiple participant meanings, social and historical construction and theory generation” (Creswell, 2013, p. 6). According to Creswell, social constructivists look for “the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas” (p. 8). Because the demographic input into these interviews and focus groups was so varied, the themes and meanings which emerged were wide-ranging and diverse.

Table 2

Demographic Breakdown of Interview and Focus Group Participants

| <i>Participant</i> | <i>Gender</i> | <i>Age</i> | <i>Nationality</i> |
|--------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Student A</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>18</i> | <i>Chinese</i> |
| <i>Student B</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>20</i> | <i>Egyptian</i> |
| <i>Student C</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>21</i> | <i>Belgian</i> |
| <i>Student D</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>19</i> | <i>Russian</i> |
| <i>Student E</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>22</i> | <i>Ukrainian</i> |
| <i>Student F</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>Swiss</i> |
| <i>Student G</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>27</i> | <i>Portuguese</i> |
| <i>Student H</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>24</i> | <i>Ecuadorian</i> |
| <i>Student I</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>21</i> | <i>Swiss/Peruvian</i> |
| <i>Student J</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>Italian</i> |
| <i>Student K</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>Turkish</i> |
| <i>Student M</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>20</i> | <i>Chinese</i> |
| <i>Student N</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>22</i> | <i>Swiss/Serbian</i> |
| <i>Student O</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>Italian</i> |
| <i>Student P</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>20</i> | <i>Kazakhstani</i> |
| <i>Student Q</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>21</i> | <i>French/Israeli</i> |
| <i>Student R</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>23</i> | <i>French</i> |
| <i>Student S</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>22</i> | <i>French</i> |
| <i>Student U</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>21</i> | <i>Polish</i> |
| <i>Student V</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>21</i> | <i>Dutch</i> |

Focus Groups:

Group A – three nationalities – French, Tunisian, Turkish, four males and one female.

Group B – five nationalities – Taiwanese, Korean, Thai, Pakistani, French, two males, three females.

Interview Findings

The problem concerns second language students at a hospitality college in Switzerland, and why they do not use technology to improve their writing skills, despite being well-acquainted with technology. This qualitative study, based on the social constructivist theory focused on the issue within the context and setting of an international college. It considers what motivates students to use error correction tools, and their attitudes to writing well. The research questions that this study set out to answer were how technological language tools were being used for teaching and learning with ESL students, international students' motivation to use error-correction and language learning tools, including identification of barriers to their use, and international students' attitudes to writing well in English. The main themes identified from this study were technology, preferences (the human factor), writing, and motivation. The data were identified from the analysis of 20 interviews and two focus group sessions. From an initial reading of the transcripts, 12 main categories, 28 subcategories, seven subgroups, and 52 minor groups emerged. These categories were based on my hand-written notes, compiled with the first reading of 20 interview and two focus group transcripts (Appendix L). They were entered into a computer software program as nodes (Appendix M), and the transcripts were studied again for main themes (Appendix N). The four themes emerged from 27 categories, condensed from 55 codes (Appendix O). The interview findings are shown in Figure 6.

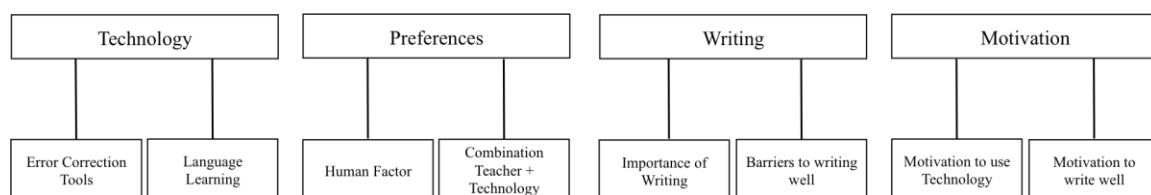


Figure 5. A flowchart showing the major research themes and their subdivisions.

Technology

In this study there were two different aspects of technology – error correction tools, and computer technology for language learning. The theme, technology, came up most often in the course of the interviews, both from the positive and the negative view points. Hernandez and Hankin (2015), when speaking about higher education and second language learning, said that technology is in the DNA of this field (p. 2). Likewise, the information gleaned from the data in this study is that technology is here to stay.

“Technology is all around us, technology is here to stay, like it or not” (Student J).

However, students did not come forth with lots of information on technology. It had to be “pulled” from them by means of many questions, but it was evident that they did not feel the need to communicate enthusiastically about their favorite technology in a discussion about second language learning. Interviewees said that they used technology principally for entertainment and not for learning - “the Internet is more important for entertainment than for learning” (Student A), “I mainly use Facebook and Skype” (Student D), “CDs, videos, Tell-Me-More, What’s App.”“ influence of English/American movies was greatest, with subtitles you learn fast” .. “having fun.... learning Spanish on the side” (Student V).

Error-correction tools. Interviewees' use of error correction tools was sporadic, not constant and many criticized these tools and said they did not really help. They were familiar with many tools, for example, Microsoft Spell and Grammar Check (usually mentioned first by interviewees), Write-Click, MyWritingLab, Turnitin, the Oxford On-line Dictionary (and other online dictionaries), Google Translate, Grammarly, Mendalay, On-Line Thesaurus, a Russian error-correction website called "multitrans.ru," Babbel, Text Edit Mac, small mobile translators, and phone apps., "we have translators, talking dictionaries, to translate from our native languages into English (Asian students)... you can type or talk into it", "Google Translate is the quickest dictionary", "Babbel will check spelling" (Focus Group B).

But comments were often negative – "error correction tools are just used as a security" (Focus Group B), "I am not interested in online correction tools" (Student M), "technology is limited; humans are needed for explanation, most students don't care" (Student E), "error-correction tools are good for spelling, not for grammar - to improve grammar, you need to buy special apps (\$30)" (Student N), "Google Translate is useful for words and synonyms, but Word tools – there is no explanation, just corrected each time" (Student Q), "Write-Click is better than all others" (Student B). Interviewees spoke about technology for error correction as a possible way to work, but most expressed an acceptance of technology mainly when there was no-one around to help them. Out of the 26 times that error-corrections tools were mentioned, 13 were negative comments "humans are needed for explanations" (Student E), "it's unnatural not to go to a human for help" (Student F).

Technology for language learning. When the interviewees mentioned technology for language learning, out of 18 who commented on their personal use of technology, only five had negative comments about the technology for language learning. Interviewees spoke in detail about what kinds of technology they had used during the course of their studies, prompted by the interview questions. “We have a Chinese application (on phone) that photographs writing and translates automatically—such as airport signs and books” (Student A), “in Australia, everything is recorded, students can watch the class again.....accuracy projects a certain image of who you are and how serious you are about your work” (Student F).

One student said that her first introduction to technology and language learning came in the form of interactive games which were supplied by her parents, “it is important to get these when young” (Student N), “my friend signed me up for Tell-Me-More, but I never used it” (Student H), “technology can be used more, e.g. if teacher is sick, class could work on Tell-Me-More on their own in the IT lab”, “technology is like something on top of the course, rather than being an independent way of learning” (Student O), “negative side of technology—it does not motivate you to write well, e.g. abbreviations” (Student V).

However, all interviewees said that movies were very important, especially those with English subtitles. With regard to technology for language learning, most interviewees said that they preferred to learn languages with a teacher and use technology as an extra or in addition to teacher-led courses “a computer does not see... if a student

does not understand something, it does not repeat...” (Student R), “technology is convenient for both the teacher and the student... but for learning? No!” (Student Q).

With regard to language learning, students were aware of the positive and negative aspects of using technology – advantages included: learning via the Internet, Facebook, interactive language programs such as BBC Languages, movies with subtitles, TED lectures, Tell-Me-More, and Rosetta Stone which are computer language learning schemes, used in this college to learn other languages, where students could study at their own pace. Students found them good for learning to speak. For language learning there were some students who preferred to use technology because of the freedom to work as fast and/or as slowly as they wanted, whenever they wanted to. However, they also emphasized the disadvantages of language learning technology: distractions via Facebook and Skype. Another disadvantage of using error-correction tools, stressed by several interviewees, was not remembering how to spell words as the computer corrects spelling automatically (Spell Check), as mentioned by Student A as a barrier to writing well, getting the correct spelling by clicking meant that she did not remember “the correct word, so next time I make the same mistake”. Also mentioned among the disadvantages of technology was bad use of it by teachers who sometimes were not familiar with Moodle, or Socrates or Prezi (alternative presentation software), and who put too much text in their slide presentations.

Table 3

The Advantages of Using Technology for Language Learning Listed by Participants

| Technology | Advantages |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet • Facebook • Interactive language programs such as BBC Languages • Movies with Sub-titles • TED Lectures • Rosetta Stone • Tell-Me-More | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freedom to work alone • Freedom to work fast/slow • Freedom to work whenever and wherever you want • Freedom to work whenever and wherever you want • Available at all times; subjects topical & student-friendly • Student can learn at own pace • Student can learn at own pace |

Table 4

The Disadvantages of Using Technology for Language Learning Listed by Participants

| Negative Aspects for Students | Negative Aspects of Technology |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distractions • Memory not used • Bad use of technology by teachers • Self-control on part of student needed to motivate independent study of online language courses, such as Rosetta Stone, and Tell-Me-More | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook, Skype • Too much reliance on technology for spelling • Too much text on slides, PowerPoint, Prezi, Socrates • Specific goals needed for students to persevere • No specific feedback for student • No individual explanations given |

Preferences

The theme “preferences” had also two parts, the human factor, and combination teacher + technology.

The human factor. Students’ preference for the human factor just emerged from almost everything they said, it quietly slipped out, but it was clear that this was what, in

their opinion, was necessary to learn a language or to improve writing skills - error-correction by humans, not by machines. It was interesting to note that when speaking about “human help”, the students alluded not only to teachers, but also to classmates, family members, mentors, “I brainstorm with my classmates and use them to help me...” (Student D), and “I feel proud when other students ask me for help...” “teachers who understand students’ problems help in motivation...” (Student I), “technology on its own is good for entertainment, but for learning, a human brain is needed (Student B).

The human factor emerged early on in the interviews, under many subheadings. It is worth noting that the human factor was not featured in the interview questions, nor specifically emphasized in the research questions. The human factor was a strong preference for the majority of interviewees, either alone or connected to the use of technology. The human factor was also emphasized in some students’ reactions to technology. As already mentioned, one student said that “technology would not motivate you,” and another interviewee said that she was “too lazy” to use technology. Other comments spoke about the importance of a teacher understanding students’ problems, and that this would help in motivation. One student said she felt really proud when other students asked her to help with writing. There were also contradictions in what some interviewees said. Student J expressed “If a human being has to learn something, it is better that a human being is teaching. I am all for that kind of improvement”, but then added “technology is here to stay”. Most students referred to the input of a human being necessary to provide explanations. Peer assistance was also a preference for many

students, indicating a mature and realistic approach to group dynamics and communication.

Combination – teacher + technology. The interviewees' other preference was what they termed “the best solution”, “best solution: combination of technology and brain” (Student B). The students interviewed were realistic, and thinking of future educational situations, said that they knew that having teachers was an expensive way to learn, “technology is expensive so you need someone. It takes not just your time but someone else's as well” (Student P).

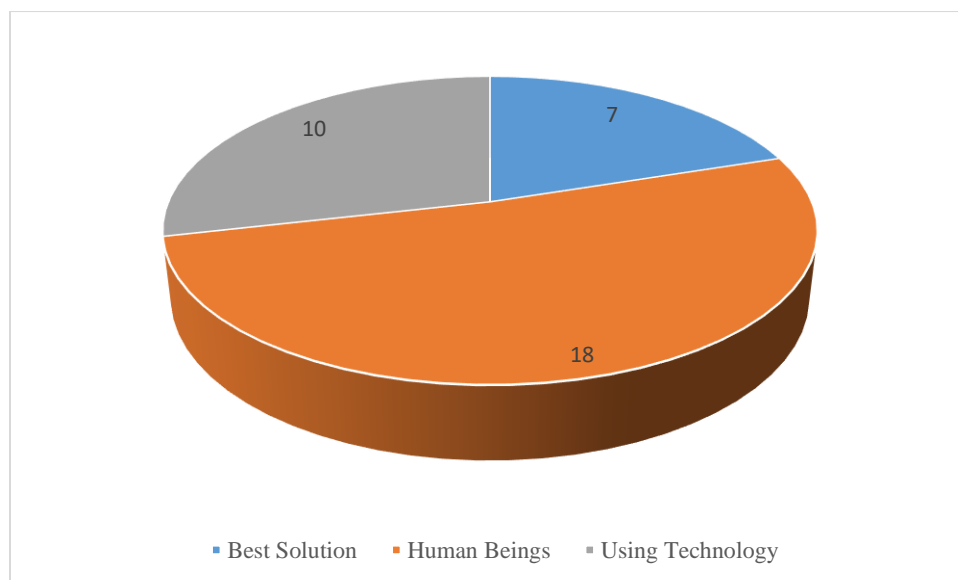


Figure 6. A pie chart showing students' preferences based on information emerging from interviews.

Writing

The theme “writing” has two main subcategories, the importance of writing, and barriers to writing well.

The importance of writing. When discussing writing with interviewees, they told me that they wanted to write well for career purposes, but they were not at all clear about

how they were going to do this, nor were they motivated in the short-term. Regarding writing well within the college environment, they had mixed opinions - “you need to write well for group work.... [there are] cross-cultural issues in group work..... and different ways of working” (Student C), “it’s very important to write well, it gives you credibility” (Student N), “writing well is kind of like your business card” (Student O), “writing is a business tool”.... “succeed – good grades – good writing skills” (Student S), “previously most communication was done by telephone. Email is more precise, therefore, it needs to be written well for understanding, especially with cross-cultural influences” (Student U).

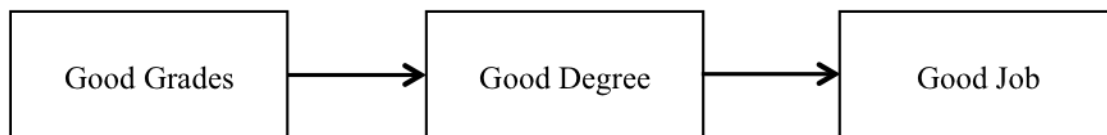


Figure 7. A flowchart showing the importance of writing.

The theme writing is connected to other important subthemes, such as attitudes, career and professional aspirations, managerial and leadership skills, and how to achieve these goals. Students saw the importance or error-correction tools in being able to write accurately, not just for the correction of mistakes, but for providing alternate and more sophisticated vocabulary. As mentioned before, the program WriteClick was singled out by students as their preferred error-correction tool. Many interviewees referred to Turnitin as a helpful software, not just to detect plagiarism, but also for grammatical and structural assistance. Several students mentioned an academic writing course they had followed in college, which really helped improve their written English. The course was

teacher-centred, had technological back up, but individual feedback from a human was a significant part of this course.

Barriers to writing well. Barriers to motivation for writing well included the use of abbreviations in writing, “a negative side of technology – it does not motivate you to write well, e.g, abbreviations” (Student M), and also the fact that students rely too much on technology “these tools also have negative effects, the spelling effects, because you just click and it will help me to change the word. Sometimes I don’t spend time to remember what is the correct word, so next time I will make the same mistake” (Student A). Barriers to motivation for writing well included the predominance of SMS texting abbreviations, teachers who put emphasis on content and not style, teachers who themselves were nonnative speakers, error-correction tools that do the work so students’ English writing never really improves, and note-taking that is done by computer, not by hand, “writing on computer – in one ear and out the other – hand-writing sticks” (Focus Group A).

Motivation

The two subcategories of the theme motivation were motivation to use technology and motivation to write well. The theme motivation was connected closely to two different aspects of this study. First, most interviewees spoke about motivation when discussing the use of technology both in error-correction and language learning. Second, motivation was the most important element in students’ attitudes to writing accurately in English. But the two were also connected, as an efficient use of error-correction

technology enables students to write well, especially if they are also motivated to write well for other reasons.

Motivation to use technology. Motivation to use technology for error-correction and language learning was less predominant in this study, the main reason given by many interviewees was “to get good grades.” Some thought that using this technology was just for security, a backup, and that the thesaurus “helps when it’s not about quality but quantity” (Student P). Two interviewees said that student use of error-correction tools depended on the teacher, and that some teachers were not good at technology so they did not encourage its use by students. “Technology can be mishandled by teachers” said Student U. “The school should use their technology more. Technology is very important to students with, for example, dyslexia,” (Student V).

Motivation to write well. The discussion on the topic of motivation to write well was more detailed and was debated with more conviction and passion than motivation to use technology. There was a clear link between motivation and writing skills, motivation to succeed meant good grades, good grades meant having good writing skills. Reasons students gave for being motivated to write well included, to get good grades, achieve goals, need for good writing when aiming for managerial and leadership positions, promotion at work, being professional, respect for people in foreign countries, and teachers who understood students’ problems. One student said it was even more important for nonnative speakers to prove themselves by writing well in English (Student Q), “writing well is like public speaking, it is professional credibility”, “writing well is kind of like your business card”, “writing is a business tool”, “it projects a certain image

of who you are and how serious you are about your work”, “first impressions are important, especially to be taken seriously” (Focus Group B).

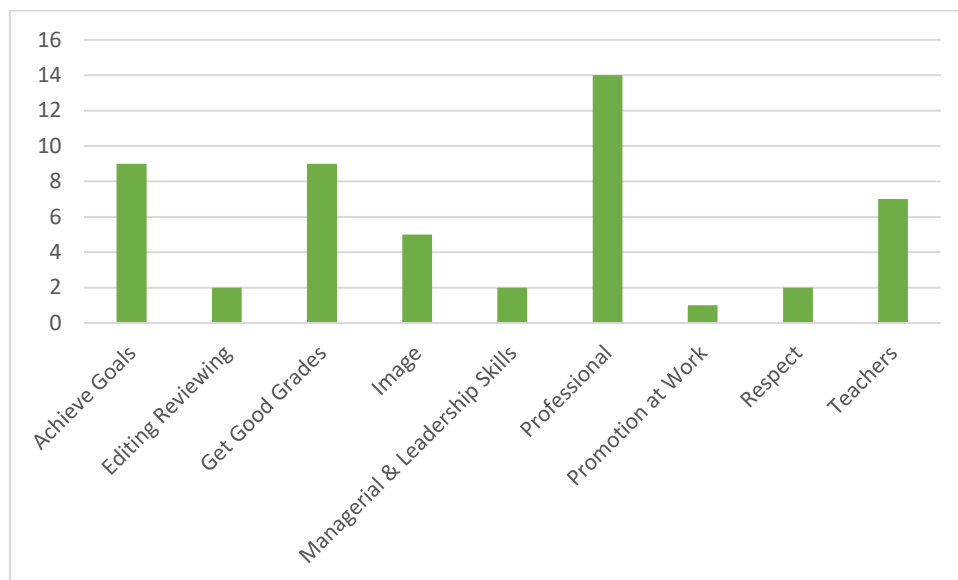


Figure 8. A bar chart showing students motivation to write well.

All students interviewed belong to Generation Y (the generation born between the early 1980s and 2000). Despite belonging to this generation, they seem to feel more comfortable with older style learning, and seem not to completely trust technology. Approximately every 20 years, a new generation enters the workforce and each time this happens managers struggle to adapt to the expectations and habits of the new group (Howe, & Strauss, 2007; Gelbart, & Komnios, 2012, as cited by Kilber, Barclay, & Ohmer, 2014). Generation Y views the world differently from previous generations, and they strongly believe that everyone has a specific, individualistic overview of the world (Sheahan, 2005, & Balda, & Mora, 2011, as cited by Kilber, Barclay, & Ohmer). The interviewees in this study are clearly Generation Y, individuals born approximately between 1981 and 2000. However, none had used technology in their early schooling

(elementary school), where it seems that in all their different countries, a traditional teaching method was preferred, where they used books but with games and songs animated by the teacher, suited to their young age, “we had games, singing songs, just some basic technology, like CDs” (Student U), “we used to watch videos and like TV and also for some games, like matching words with sentences or grammar” (Student A), “my school was pretty small, we didn’t have a computer, and we were learning English just from books and that kind of thing. We were supposed to work with a CD, but I was not doing it.... working on the CD was a bit useless...(Student C).

Several interviewees spoke about learning the alphabet, and rote learning was also featured. However, two students mentioned younger siblings who were learning almost exclusively via technology, and this they accepted positively. The question arises –is it still a generational issue, that the newest generation, Generation Z (born just before or after the millennium), would be more inclined to use technology? Meghan West (2014) stated that manufacturers today are aiming at this younger generation (Generation Z), born between the mid-nineties through to 2010, who are experts in technology and social media, who like multi-tasking, and who can rapidly process large amounts of information. Most students said they had been introduced to technology via entertainment or interactive games purchased by their parents. At secondary or high school, technology was introduced in varying ways and to varying degrees – CDs, movies (with own language subtitles at first, later on English subtitles), TV shows, some PPTs, but most interviewees mentioned their teachers.

Themes and Research Questions Alignment

Themes one (Technology) and three (Writing) address the first research question—how are language tools being used for teaching and learning with ESL students; themes one (Technology), two (Preferences), and four (Motivation) address the second research question – what motivates international students to use error-correction language tools and what are the barriers to their use; and finally themes two (Preferences), three (Writing), and four (Motivation) address the third research question—what are international students attitudes to writing well in English?

Conclusion

Qualitative research deals with what people think and it is suited to educational research because of the inductive method. The data collected was information-rich, provided answers to the research questions, and gave a new insight into the present use of technology in second language learning. A further goal was to see what modifications and improvements could be achieved for the future, not only for this college but for other institutions too. There was an overlap between the main themes – technology, preferences, writing, and motivation. The interviewees felt that to use technology for error-correction and language learning, you needed to be motivated, and this was not easy to achieve “the negative side of technology is that it does not motivate you to write well” (Student V).

International students today, most of whom belong to Generation Y (born between 1980 and 2000) have been brought up on technology. But despite this familiarity, they do not consider computer tools and technology as the most suitable way to learn and

improve second language skills, in particular writing. The information emerging from the interviews showed that students are only motivated to use these tools as a last resort, all of them preferred to ask assistance from a teacher, colleague or classmate. Some students had issues with ease of use of these computer tools because of having another language as the basic language of their computers, with English just as a second, optional one. This was a potential barrier to using spell and grammar check options.

The final research question about international students' attitudes to writing well in English indicated that most of the interviewees regarded writing well in English as very important in a professional context and that if they wished to get to the top in their professions their writing skills would be a clear indication of these skills and abilities. However, they were not so clear and forthright about their motivation to write accurately within the college context. They also considered that cross cultural issues played a role here, with some nationalities this aspect was more important than others.

Transcripts and notes and memos were peer reviewed by a colleague who teaches English at the college and who has been involved in publishing materials for teaching English for the hospitality industry. Peer reviewers or referees have an important role in research as they are the ones who must "keep the bar high" (Belcher, 2007:4, as cited by Bocanegra-Valle, 2015). Important aspects of this task are being fair and checking the reliability of the work. The process is a "key part of science" (Campanaria, 1998a, p. 182, as cited by Bocanegra-Valle, 2015).

From the data which emerged from the interviews, it was clear that many of the students interviewed, whose writing skills were undeveloped, would benefit from a short,

total immersion, writing program, followed by individual mentoring, before starting their studies at this international hospitality college in Switzerland, and by taking this writing development course on their return from internship if their grades were low. The objective of the writing development program is to improve these students' levels of written English, to familiarize them with academic writing skills, as required by the college, and to give them more confidence. The following section outlines the proposed Writing Development Program.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

This descriptive case study at a hospitality college in Switzerland, hereafter referred to as ABC College (pseudonym) collected information regarding nonnative English-speaking students' perceptions about the use of technology in second language learning. The participants provided details of their personal use of error correction tools, described their attitudes towards writing skills in English, spoke about the barriers which prevented them using these tools, and discussed motivation issues with regard to writing well in English. This section discusses how to meet the needs of students regarding writing in English, how to motivate them to aspire to higher standards, how to use the themes identified in the study, and how to handle the goals, objectives, and outcomes discussed.

To this end, I proposed a special writing development program (WDP). This section contains a detailed discussion of the WDP, its goals and what will help in achieving them; the rationale for setting up this program; and the theories behind the program. It also includes a literature review related specifically to this project, and finally a description of the implementation and evaluation of the project.

Description of the Project

This project is a total immersion writing development program (WDP) carried out over two days with follow-up mentoring. It will be aimed at two groups of students:

- students whose English placement tests have indicated that their English writing skills have not reached the standard required by the college if they are to follow a complete degree course through English, and

- students who are entering the upper part of the college (Semester 4), returning from internship, whose overall grades are negatively impacted by weak writing skills in English.

The purpose of the writing development program is to make students aware of the need for improvement of these skills, help them identify their weaknesses, and give them the opportunity to focus on writing, either before they start their degree course, or when they are entering the upper part of the college. Participants for this program will be chosen solely based on meeting the above criteria.

This program is designed to give students the opportunity to learn more about the art of writing, how to use it, and to gain confidence and ability in this particular skill.

There will be an introductory plenary presentation session led by the instructor, followed by workshops and individual sessions, and an assessment at the end of the program.

Goals and Rationale

The goal of this program is to make students more aware of technology and error-correction tools and how these tools can help improve levels of second language written skills. The course is designed to enable students to identify and replicate different writing styles and improve their level of writing by practice and feedback. The feedback will involve corrections, comments and assistance, in line with the findings of the data analysis, which indicate that human beings take precedence over all tools and software. The overall purpose of this program is to make students concerned about the importance of having an advanced level in written English.

Another important aim of the writing development program is to boost student motivation. Motivation plays a key role in second language learning in general and in the achievement of advanced writing skills in particular. The literature and information gleaned from this study's interviews and focus groups indicates that students are often not motivated to improve their writing skills in English because they do not consider this to be essential to their college studies or their career aspirations. The writing development program will address the issue of poor motivation and its effect on language and writing techniques. The discussion curriculum will provide details of what motivates students to improve their writing skills, what demotivates them and why. It will also present writing samples from real-life to help students analyze their quality and their relevance and suitability to the situation(s) in question, the positive and negative effects of such writing on the targeted audiences.

By the end of the two-day total immersion writing development course, students will be able to:

1. Paraphrase correctly without plagiarism or omissions, using examples from business reports, academic material, journalism, legal documents, advertising texts, and more.
2. Summarize accurately short texts, in this case, relating to the hospitality, events, sports, and entertainment industries,
3. Use a selection of error-correction tools with ease, know how to locate these tools, identify which ones suit specific tasks, and meet personal gaps in writing abilities,

4. Find, identify, and use online language learning/practice material, define when these could be used, for personal study and/or specific subject matter research
5. Identify different writing styles, and
6. Create a structured outline for a range of academic and business writing.

Rationale

The rationale for setting up this program was based on several factors. Students are required to have a specific English as a Foreign Language (EFL) level when entering college. Advanced English courses, including a course in Creative Reading and Writing, are obligatory for students whose EFL levels are insufficient (confirmed by a placement test on arrival at the college). Despite the EFL stipulation, and despite the mandatory English courses taken by students in Semester 1, many of them lack the necessary skills to successfully complete their hospitality studies through the medium of English. Students' academic results are negatively impacted due to this weakness, and lecturers and professors in the later stages of the college (Semesters 6 and 7) complain about students' levels of written English. Identifying these issues, a rigorous writing development program of advanced writing skills, with special reference to technology and computer error-correction tools, is designed to meet students' needs, whether they are perceived needs or not.

Scholarly Rationale. When considering the information gleaned from the data collected and analysed, it became clear that students considered that the optimal learning environment involved teachers, and that they did not appreciate technology alone as a

means of learning and improving their writing skills. The Writing Development Program was thus developed in order to meet this educational need.

The constructivist theory suggests that learners are actively trying to understand their experiences and build on them (Driscoll, 2000, as cited by Siemens, 2005). The theory, first identified by Leo Vygotsky in 1929, said that children learn cognitively through interactions with people and in particular because of their environment (Kivunja, 2014). The constructivist theory was an appropriate tool for examining the students at ABC College because of their varied backgrounds, experiences, and cultures. Knowles' theory of andragogy states that adults learn by their motivation and their need to know (Knowles, 1980, as cited by Merriam, et al., 2007). It is appropriate for students at this college because with maturity their motivation increases. Students are oriented to what is happening in the here and now, and they make rational decisions based on these needs. "We have to be professional, all the time, and I think that part of being professional is also to show your skills and your ability to write correctly" (Student J, 2014, p. 7).

Project Genre. The Writing Development Program will be delivered to students on entry to the college after a placement test prior to starting Semester 1 and/or to students in Semester 4 on their return from their first internship. The hotel management bachelor programs at ABC College include two six-month internships, which provide students with training opportunities, enhance their professional competences and personal development. They are thus learning not just the theories of hotel management, but also coming into contact with the practical side of the business by work experience.

Many of them will have improved their English language skills during this period, others may have been immersed in other languages and cultures, and for these two reasons this program will offer them the possibility of facing up to writing issues, of refreshing their writing skills, and/or confirming new abilities.

The analysis of data acquired through the interviews and focus group sessions suggested that students are concerned about their writing abilities, feel motivated to improve for business and professional reasons, and that they know that technology and error-correction tools are available for this purpose. However, many of the students in this study stated that they felt that the presence, aid, and assistance of educated, trained professionals were the most significant factors in the transfer of skills and the perfection of second language writing. One student clearly expressed her preference for the human factor in teaching and learning, by saying that instead of using computer error-correction tools she would, if possible, get her father or godmother to check her work , “... but I usually, I give it to my father or to my godmother who is an English teacher for the Cambridge, so I did it like this, so I never really used online technology for that ...” (Student F).

Review of the Literature

The rationale behind this study was the need for students to improve their levels and styles of writing in English as a second language, and to consider their personal and professional motivation towards writing well in English. Recent changes in centers of learning have indicated that the role of the teacher in the classroom is becoming one of facilitator. According to Ezza (2014), using technology in teaching facilitates transparent

teaching where the teacher is prepared to share knowledge/information with the student. Students today have access to many kinds of technology, classrooms have become centers of technology and students have all the facilities available to become autonomous learners. Autonomous learners are those who positively accept responsibility for their own learning. It is considered that learners will be motivated when they realize that they are responsible for their own language learning development (Yunis & Arshad, 2014).

There are many, varied uses of technology in language learning. For example, the positive effects of Automated Writing Evaluation (AWE) are considered to be that students are encouraged to engage in revision and writing practice, and that linguistic accuracy is improved (Li, Link, & Hegelheimer, 2015). However, results of the above study on AWE, despite indicating that there were positive improvements, showed that students' opinions were mixed (Li, et al). Phillips (2007, as cited by Li, Link, Ma, Yang, & Hegelheimer, 2014) stated that AWE tools "provide both diagnostic holistic scores and feedback on writing samples" (p. 66). Technology in this field is being developed all the time, and it is hoped that it will soon become "the main evaluator to provide test-takers with useful performance and diagnostic feedback" in addition to all the other detailed scores about the learner's abilities (Lee, 2015, p. 301).

There are many new novel approaches to language learning. However, the success of new technology is often impacted by students' enhanced motivation. Their curiosity about new technology motivates them to use it. In addition, improvements in the writing skills of students involved in such new projects are sometimes affected by additional feedback given by teachers because of the experimental nature of certain projects

(Alnasser & Alyousef, 2015). Polio and Shea (2014) discovered when measuring linguistic accuracy in second language writing research that only holistic measures and the number of preposition errors showed any change over time, and that other errors remained unchanged. Cross cultural issues often interfere with overseas students' writing skills, and individual feedback is the optimal manner of approaching such problems, which differ from country to country and from student to student. Chang (2014) argued that "overseas students' academic writing challenges far exceed the matter of language proficiency...and useful feedback can be a powerful mediator in this process." The author suggested that the practice of feedback without cultural sensitivity "largely instils in the students a sense of insecurity and excludes them from the broad communities of academia and English language writers" (p. 273). Bocanegra-Valle (2014, as quoted in Ferguson et al., 2011) posited that nonnative English speakers were at a distinct disadvantage regarding publication in English, and wanted to "raise awareness of the use of English by LSP scholars who need to gain visibility in international academia and recognition in their home educational contexts" (p. 66). Thus, individual feedback in a culturally sensitive environment is very important, and it would seem that the teacher still plays a significant role in writing in second language learning.

Boboy and Margarita (2014) found that the professor, statistically speaking, is the most significant factor affecting students' motivation to learn English. Zhang (2014) discussed the significance of Yuehchiu Fang's research which concerned two aspects: "on the one hand, students can benefit from computer-assisted writing instructions, on the other hand, teachers can make writing instruction more effective through the new

technologies” (p. 754). Additionally, Fang added that there were other benefits in computer-assisted writing software, such as increased learner motivation and learner autonomy, characteristics that were also strongly recommended by Zarei and Hashemipour (2015), investigating the effects of CALL/Web-based instruction. Fang (2010) concluded that this kind of software can be a useful support tool in the EFL classroom.

The students at ABC College are no different than students elsewhere. They come from 96 different countries and the participants interviewed came from 22 different countries. There were 15 women and 15 men between the ages of 18 and 27 who elected to participate in the interviews and subsequent focus groups. The literature covers a variety of different countries, opinions, and backgrounds and is likewise representative of different points of view. Despite new technology being introduced every year, the importance of the human element is evident both in the literature and in the information that emerged from the interviews and focus groups.

Implementation

When the writing development program has been designed, completed, and accepted, it will be implemented on a trial basis. Students from Semester 4 will be chosen for a pilot study, as they will already be familiar with the college and have some understanding of required English writing levels. Instructors will be faculty who are already teaching in the language program section of the college’s Department of General Education, with one main instructor for the program, and two assistants for workshops, group work and feedback. The participants in the group, especially the first one, the pilot

study, will be volunteers from a group identified by the faculty who consider that their respective writing skills in English need attention.

It is particularly important that the pilot groups are small. As mentioned before, the program, which will be a two-day total immersion course, will have two distinct parts. The first part will be a theoretical information section which will discuss different styles of writing in English, ethics and mores, customs, etiquette, the impact of written skills and styles, and the reasons for the need to write well and in certain styles. The second part will be a practical hands-on part which will involve subgroups, working in partnerships, individual work, where the emphasis will be on the practical side, where the students will receive individual feedback based on each one's particular needs.

The success of the writing development program can be judged by an assessment at the end of the course and also by feedback from other faculty members who are responsible for the students' grades in all the core courses (hospitality courses) which are delivered in English and where weak written skills have a negative impact on results. Faculty can be asked to give feedback via a questionnaire at the end of the academic year. Resources needed for the courses will be the availability of instructors, the availability of small classrooms or workshops to give the classes, the support of the program leaders and managers. Barriers to the successful setting up of this program could be financial constraints, where the college is not prepared to either include the program in the faculty workload or to pay them overtime for this, time constraints in a very full college program, the availability of work spaces for faculty and students to get together for this program, and students own possible lack of motivation.

For this program to have a positive impact on the student participants there will need to be follow-up and therefore a mentor will be assigned to each student participant. The student will be required to contact his/her mentor in writing once a week during the first 10 weeks of the following semester (until the mid-term break). This should take the form of a reflective report, describing courses being followed, projects and assignment results, with special emphasis on writing skills. The mentor will give feedback on each submission. The students themselves will be responsible for submitting work regularly, preferably electronically. At the end of the 10-week period, the mentor will complete a report on the student's progress.

The overall evaluation goals will be a higher GPA (grade point average) and a higher TOEFL score for the semester and subsequently for the whole degree program. This will have a positive impact for the different stakeholders, the students themselves (better results, higher GPA), their parents (satisfaction at student's progress, and value for money invested in student's education), the college management (an increase in the percentage of students receiving higher grades, and ultimately better degrees, improved public relations for the college), and company shareholders as this is a private college. Another significant factor is that this hospitality college in Switzerland is associated with other hospitality colleges in different parts of the world. Thus, it is doubly concerned about achieving a higher level of written English in all areas, and a program such as described above would contribute strongly to an improvement in the all over level of performance not only in this college, but also in sister colleges as students often transfer to other colleges in the group for one or several semesters. Thus, the value and reputation

of the college will be enhanced worldwide, and also the reputation of other colleges in the group, many of which are in English-speaking countries.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

As mentioned before, the writing development program will take place at the beginning of Semester 1 for those with low scores on English placement tests (for group (1), and after returning from internship for those with a low GPA, prior to commencing Semester 4.

The Semester 1 students whose results of the in-house English placement test are weak, and students starting Semester 4 whose English grades are low, especially their writing skills, will be chosen to take part in the course. They will be divided into groups of six to eight students. Details of the students' progress will be tracked.

The proposed timetable for the two-day total immersion writing development program is as follows:

Day 1, Part 1

This first part of the writing development program will be an intensive, all-day information session, discussing different styles of writing in English, ethics and mores, customs, etiquette. It will also explain how written skills and styles give essential images, instant impressions, build up a background and create a positive or negative feeling. It will feature writing as an art, as a mini curriculum vitae (CV). It will stress the importance of the audience, who the piece of writing is addressed to – client, employer, employee, potential candidate for employment, patron, mentor, shareholder, stakeholder, or investor. It will also highlight the different kinds of writing style, why there should be

such differences, giving examples of what can happen when a piece of writing falls short and the desired result is not achieved. Ironically in today's digital age, writing skills have become more important than ever. There are two reasons for this: first, the internet. Text messages, social media posts, emails, blog entries, and comments are all dependent on the written word and make writing visible. Second, the job market is now more competitive than ever and an application must stand out (Wright, 2011). Unlike newspapers that involve only reading skills, today's blogs and websites require writing skills. It is not easy to read emotions and to communicate sarcasm, but if a text is well written, the meaning will be conveyed clearly (Wright).

Day 1, Part 2

The second part of Day 1 of the writing development program (WDP) will be based on individual work. It will consist of workshops and individual feedback, where students will have the possibility to make improvements, learn new techniques and become familiar with new technology and tools, based on individual requirements. The participants will be first given short tasks, each one a piece of writing adapted to a particular situation, demonstrating a particular style which will be submitted to the instructor and an assistant for feedback. The next task will be interview sessions. The participants will interview each other in pairs, each one coming from a different country or culture. The questions, which will be prepared in advance by the instructor, will be semi structured, and open-ended. Each student interviewer will be required to write a summary of what he/she found out about the interviewee in this interview. The summaries will be exchanged so that each individual can give peer feedback on what the

other student has written. An optional follow-on to this activity can be an oral summary of the outcome before all participants of the writing development program, with everyone taking notes, subsequently transcribed into a further report in indirect speech. This activity can serve as an icebreaker for students who do not know each other, and it works well in an international environment because of the students' different backgrounds. It also enables students to be more forthcoming about each other's strengths and weaknesses in writing in English, and encourages peer reviewing.

There will be a short formative assessment at the end of the first day, as the importance of accurate writing in English must be stressed at all times, so that students are aware of the fact that they must use suitable styles of writing and use correct and varied vocabulary. The purpose of the writing development course must continue to be emphasized, that English is the instrument through which the core subject courses are taught in this college, and that writing has an impact on everything they do throughout the hospitality degree program. The homework assignment will be the reading of a short text to be reviewed reflectively in the manner explained during the session. Semi-structured questions will be supplied to aid students in this task.

Day 2, Part 1

The first part of the second day of the writing development program (see Table 4), will be devoted to feedback, both individual and group. The instructor will discuss the nature of student errors, will paraphrase the students' offerings, showing how to transform good ideas into good text, stressing at the same time the importance of structure in writing, and following a plan or outline. In the next session, the instructor

will describe the different error-correction tools available. These will first be presented theoretically, using Power Point (PPT) or other online material such as Prezi (Perron, 2010), Socrative (Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor, 2014), followed by a hands-on practical session where the participants will write short assignments, and then using this material, they will practise using error-correction tools.

Day 2, Parts 1 and 2

The final afternoon of the WDP will be sessions with each student individually where they will receive feedback and formative assessment. The latest piece of writing will be used as a sample for each student to discuss his/her improvement and how he/she plans to incorporate the elements of the WDP into their university degree program. There will be a plenary final general questions and answer session, arising from topics and issues faced during the program.

The final assessment will take the form of a questionnaire and a short reflective report. The writing development program will be followed by eight weeks of mentoring. The students will be required to submit six pieces of writing to their mentor over the eight-week period. The mentor will complete a report on each student at the end of this period.

Discussion

General Project Evaluation

Evaluation can be goal or outcomes-based, and summative or formative. Formative evaluation often takes place as the program proceeds, whereas summative is a more quantifiable measure to ascertain the outcome of the program (Spaulding, 2008). In

the case of the writing development program, there will be a need for both, formative to ascertain the value of the program, whether it should continue, in what format, what modifications might be needed, and summative, so real progress on the part of the students can be measured. Have their English writing skills and their GPA improved? This is important both for students and faculty.

Outcomes-based Evaluation

Outcomes-based evaluations are also called end-outcomes, the end result. Important questions to ask when considering a program are simple ones, for example, if the program has made a difference, or if the lives of the program participants have improved as a result of the program. The importance of the evaluation of a program relates to its impact on learners and other outcomes, such as student motivation (Norris, 2016). Another aspect of evaluation is how it helps people address some kind of need within their society, by providing specifically designed services, such as bespoke programs (Norris). For this writing development program, the outcomes will be better writing skills and a higher GPA, which will be assessed via student reports, results, and the end of semester progression boards.

Implications

Improving the writing levels of international students at a hospitality college in Switzerland will affect all stakeholders. The academic management of the school is always aware of and concerned about the school's reputation, a reputation for excellence in the field of the hospitality industry. This has to be maintained despite changing standards and environment, despite a new population of students, and despite differing

levels of education on entering the college. The faculty are involved too as students' levels of writing in English affect all degree courses, and above all the students themselves will be positively affected by improved levels of English writing. It will enable them to improve their college grades and thus they will benefit more from their college education.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

This section includes a discussion of the writing development program that emerged from the study. The aim of the writing development program is to improve the writing skills of students attending a hospitality college in Switzerland (hereafter referred to as ABC College) using learning technology, error-correction tools, and instructor feedback. The source study for this project was based on the social constructivist approach, using a descriptive case study methodology. Yin (2012) said that case studies fill the need to understand a complex social phenomenon, but also examine the holistic and meaningful characteristics of group behaviour, educational performance, and international understanding. The students at ABC College, despite coming from very different backgrounds, identify with each other and the college. They work together in class units, carry out a lot of group work, and their educational aims and habits are influenced by classmates.

The writing development program developed for this study is a two-day total immersion program with mentoring follow-up and was designed to enable students to feel motivated to improve their written English skills by using technology, error-correction tools, and by providing instructor feedback. This section also includes the strengths and limitations of the writing development program. There is a discussion of possible different approaches to the problem and a personal reflection on the development of my own learning and practice of project development and evaluation. Other parts of this

section deal with leadership and change, and my own role as scholar and practitioner. Finally, there is a discussion of the implications for social change and future research.

Project Strengths

The strengths of this program are its identification of currently available technology for improving second language writing skills. The writing development program presents different error-correction tools and discusses the benefits of using them. The other important element in the writing development program concerns students' attitudes to writing well in a second language, in particular student motivation regarding accurate writing skills, and what possible barriers exist to students aiming for excellence in this field. Being successful in academic writing, especially in a second language, depends on the students' understanding of what and why they are writing (Zebari & Brime, 2015).

Motivation plays a key role in student application to the task of improvement of writing skills. Gardner (1985, as cited by Zarei & Hashemipour, 2015) defined motivation as how hard a student works to achieve new knowledge (in this case a second language), and that this is based on his/her interest to do so, followed by the satisfaction in the experience. Dornei (1994, as cited by Zrei & Hashemipour, 2015) said that "second language motivation is always dependent on who learns what languages where" (p. 275). The question that emerges from this study is, "Why are students not motivated to achieve excellence in this domain?"

There are many different strengths to this program. The students interviewed and those who formed part of the focus groups came from 17 different countries and four

different continents, and were 50% male and 50% female. The age range was also quite wide, 18 to 27, which was an additional differing factor. The language ability of the students was also varied, and the fact that their education backgrounds were so different, was particularly important, as this early training influenced their aptitudes and attitudes significantly. The strengths of this project, in particular, lie in the combination of two opposed elements, technology, which is mechanical and man-made, and motivation which comes from within, and which is very individual and personal. The study demonstrates that the two cannot be separated. Despite today's students being the products of a modern, technical age, the human, personal aspect of everything remains constant.

Project Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. The data collection took place in one college only, and was based on the opinions and attitudes of 30 students, 20 of whom were interviewed, and 10 of whom who took part in two 5-participant focus groups. An outgrowth of this project study is a technology-integrated writing development program. The need for this program emerged from the discovery that study participants did not use error-correction tools optimally, and that a special program could explain the functions of these tools in order to modify how students use them.

I also discovered an ambivalent attitude to motivation among the participants. This was a big limitation, as developing good writing skills in a second language without positive and clear motivation and a positive attitude, is a difficult task. Other limitations were time and financial constraints on the part of the college. Many of the managers and

faculty at ABC College do not see the need for a program like the writing development program. I believe that this view stems from their not having a clear picture of how weak students' writing skills are and of how this negatively impacts so many aspects of the college and its academic degrees.

Recommendations on How to Address the Problem Differently

It was not easy to find a way to address the problem, as the student body at this college is so varied. Another possible solution would have been to present a continuous course, where the students in need of writing support would have covered the material over a longer period, two hours per week, for a period of eight weeks. A course of this nature would require commitment from the students whose interest and motivation would diminish as the demands of the semester progressed, and as other hospitality related subjects, assignments and assessments, took priority. The financial and time outlay would be similar to the total immersion writing development course as proposed in Section 3. A third possibility could have been for the college to arrange for the students to take the course completely online, a self-study course, but with the same expectations and the same final assessment.

There are differing opinions on how students adapt to online courses. Jaggars (2014) said that some students preferred face-to-face courses for two main reasons – to keep connections to the college campus, and to the instructor. Students also said they “missed the direct instruction that they received in face-to-face courses, and many felt as though they were “teaching themselves” (p. 31). Students preferred to take on campus courses for difficult subjects so they could have more teacher explanations. However, for

flexibility and convenience, especially if they were working, students liked online courses. There are varied opinions on this topic, and the literature reflects this too. A study carried out by Xu and Jaggars (2013) intimated that the majority of students do not adapt easily to online learning. Joshi (2011, as cited by Zarei & Hashemipour, 2015) said that web-based learning as compared to conventional learning, permitted students to be more responsible for their own learning. He considered that web-based learning opened up new horizons and that it might be more appropriate to second language learning. Computer activities and tools, and the Internet, would help learners develop autonomy and they would need less assistance from teachers (p. 41). However, Hodge, Richardson, and York (cited by Zarei & Hashemipour, 2015) made a study of students' motivation and perceptions of learning, with regard to web-based tools, and they found that they were less motivated than students in conventional courses. Kuo, Walker, Schroder and Belland (2014) said that online learning offered students more freedom in the learning process. But they also quoted Sun and Rueda (2012), who said that students' abilities to regulate and monitor their own learning processes was also an important factor, and that those who could not do this might experience dissatisfaction and disengagement as a result. So, even though online learning offers many possibilities to students, motivation, preferences, and personal rigor play an equally important part in the process.

ABC College in Switzerland, featured in this project study, is also starting to adapt to the online model of instruction. An internship course is now being offered totally online, with mixed reactions from students. As part of the faculty team instructing the course, I have been in touch with the students involved and have ascertained this myself

(unpublished student feedback). The degrees offered at this college necessitate five semesters of academic work and two internships. Because of the international nature of the college, the students are scattered all over the world during the two 6-month periods of internship, and up to recently, credits for the internship experience were based on an internship evaluation from the employer, and a paper-based report from each student. The report related the internship experience to the theories and concepts learned in college, and included a personal reflection. The new online course replaces this, and consists of three assignment types, a community of practice (students post once every two weeks and reply to at least two of their classmates), a personal portfolio, and a problem solving assignment. The first cohort of students to take this course, which requires that each student take responsibility for his/her own learning, have indicated that they do not appreciate learning through technology, they found the platform ugly and not user-friendly, complicated, repetitive, and not academically challenging (unpublished student feedback, 2016). Some students have difficulty adapting to this new situation, some because they are not used to combining a working and study environment, and others because they are not familiar with the online tools.

Having been an instructor for the first cohort of the online internship course, I have been keenly aware of students' preferences. Likewise, as a faculty member for General Education, including EFL, I have extensive knowledge of how students study. The research and scholarship involved in this EdD project has further developed my knowledge and understanding of this subject. Keeping these preferences and information in mind, I considered the best option for this project study to be a face-to-face course, a

two-day total immersion writing development program, as presented in Section 3, with a nine-week mentoring follow-up program, in other words, with emphasis on the human element as would seem to reflect students' preferences.

Scholarship

Scholarship refers to academic learning. It involves critical thinking, analysis and development of new ideas. It means that a person is able to do empirical research and evaluate the research of others. Scholars must at all times be objective and ethical, and have the ability to write up their findings in an academic and factual manner. Scholars are agents of positive social change that affect the lives of others in a positive way.

Scholarship in the 21st century now involves blended learning too, using technology has become intrinsically connected with scholarship. Researching scholarship and blended learning, Halverson, Graham, Spring, Drysdale, and Curtis (2014) found that although research is being done in technology, comparison and interaction, not much has been done in the field of professional development, and that there is a distinct lack of information on teachers' perspectives on blended learning and the challenges it presents. Today's faculty must be aware of the need for scholarship as well as applied learning, that our fast changing world must also include scholarship. Dwyer, Hogan, and Stuart (2014), citing Butler et al., 2009, repeated the need for instruction in critical thinking in today's world, because it helps us understand information, make better decisions and solve problems. Scholarship, blended learning, and critical thinking are important aspects of education in the 21st century, but in order to make full use of what is available,

scholars have to be up-to-date in new ways of doing things, in particular new technical tools of the trade.

Project Development and Evaluation

Project development is the ability to approach a problem in a systematic fashion, to analyse the problem theoretically, and then instigate practical ways in which to solve it. Project development involves teamwork, and communicating with others is an integral part of problem development. A project leader or manager must at all times be open to viewing the issue from another angle, and be receptive to the findings of other members of the team. In this project study, the results which emerged from the data collection were not the expected ones, therefore, as the researcher, I was obliged to think of the problem from a different angle, and I had to be receptive to what emerged from the data collection and analysis. The topic was interesting, because educators today have to assume the role of facilitator, where they oversee what the students are finding out for themselves, rather than being the providers of knowledge.

A project manager and a facilitator must know how to direct proceedings, know what is happening, but must be able to stand back and let the students do the learning. According to Loyens, Jones, Mikkers, and van Gog (2015), “problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional approach that is intended to facilitate prior knowledge activation, critical analysis of arguments, and promote deep understanding of the scientific perspective” (p. 35). The objective for students taking part in the writing development program (WDP) of this project study is to be able to recognize their own

problems regarding writing and motivation, relate these to existing knowledge, and find solutions that are suited to themselves.

The project study was a reflection of the changes that are manifesting themselves throughout the world of education. As mentioned before, these students all belong to Generation Y (born approximately between 1982 and 2004), so they are accustomed to having technology all around them. However, the findings of this study indicated that the constant use of technology was for personal and for entertainment purposes, that students satisfied their curiosity and desire for new knowledge by means of technology, but that this did not extend to learning, improving, and perfecting second languages. Their preferences regarding language learning indicated that they preferred face-to-face teaching, in other words, they still had the need for guidance and feedback of the kind that can only be supplied by human beings.

Leadership and Change

There are many definitions of leadership. Stogdill (1974, as cited by Yukl, 2002) said that there are as many definitions of leadership as people who have attempted to define it. Some relevant ones are giving purpose to collective effort (Jacobs & Jacques, 1990, as cited by Yukl), “influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement” (Rauch & Behling, 1984, p. 46, as cited by Yukl), and “the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of an organization...” (House et al., 1999, as cited by Yukl). The problem that this paper addresses concerns the written English skills of students at an international college.

This qualitative study collated data from interviews, focus groups, and analyses of themes and patterns. Although the design was semi structured, the open-ended nature of the format meant that many different ideas, opinions, and suggestions have emerged which are complicated and detailed, and involve a complex process of analysis. Another way of approaching this problem would have been to do a quantitative study, using surveys, analysis of examination results, and research into the career achievements of students, based on their writing abilities. It is not easy to analyze change as any change resulting from the setting up of this program would not be seen in the present but in the future, thus analyzing the results of past students would not reflect the needs and aspirations of present and future students.

Analysis of Self

Analysis of Self as Scholar

During my time studying with Walden on the EdD program, I have had the opportunity to expand my knowledge of education. I have studied theories of adult learning and higher education, have learned to evaluate sources, to consider their relevancy, to think critically, and to consider social change. Being a scholar has made me aware of justifying opinions and criticism, of seeing every problem from both sides, and of how practice cannot be separated from theory. I have always been interested in education, especially from the practical point of view. Becoming a scholar has opened up new facets of the subject to me, and has awakened an interest in actively contributing to this area of research in the future.

Because of the ever-changing education environment, and the continuing expansion and development of technology, the nature and definition of what it means to be an educator, are also changing. The student body is today more and more technologically aware, has sophisticated tastes, but this does not mean that students no longer need guidance and backup. As educators we have to adapt to this. Although, on the one hand, the teaching role is now one of facilitator, of facilitating the students to find out more for themselves, of demonstrating, of guiding them to expanding their horizons, nevertheless, aspects of the older definition of a teacher remain, and the modern instructor, teacher, facilitator must be aware of this and know when to intervene and when to hold back.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

With many years of experience in different classrooms at different levels and in different parts of the world, I consider myself a successful practitioner. I am interested in being a facilitator in the classroom, so that the students can acquire knowledge and understanding themselves. My classrooms are always student-centered, with the lessons involving research and debate. This method is particularly successful in an international environment, where the students become the agents of imparting and sharing knowledge, both to themselves and to their classmates. Social change has become a theme in my classrooms, making students aware of the different situations in different parts of the world, and how they can contribute to making this change happen. As their knowledge expands, students become more motivated, and motivation is one of the key aspects of learning and expanding horizons.

I strive to keep up to date with the subjects I teach, and also with any technology relevant to these subjects. An international classroom involves students not just from many different backgrounds, but also students who have experienced many different ways and methods of teaching and learning. Students in an international classroom have more possibilities than most of learning from each other's ideas, and cultural differences can be very evident. They are encouraged to address issues emerging from difference and diversity (Elliott & Reynolds, 2014). As facilitator in these kinds of situations, it is my task to remain as objective as possible, encourage critical analysis, but in as diplomatic a manner as possible.

Project Developer

Having an open mind, and being objective and curious, means that I am always interested in new ways of doing things, new ideas, and new developments. Adult students today come to class with their life experiences which are "rich reservoirs of learning, and they are self-directing human beings" (Knowles, 1968, as cited by Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 84). My analytical and communication skills enable me to facilitate classrooms with students from many different countries and with many different English language abilities, thus letting each one participate in the *reservoir of learning* of each other. Today's student has abundant knowledge at his/her fingertips, and uses technology with ease and familiarity.

Developing new projects, based on new technology and ideas, is an important addition to the skills base of today's educator. An example of new ideas in teaching today is that of Flipping Classroom model in which the usual elements of a class are reversed or

flipped (Moraros, Islam, Yu, Banow, & Schindelka, 2015). For example, instructors can pre-record their class or lecture, students can study it before coming to class, and then use classroom time for other activities, discussions, or follow up sessions. Today's educators have to be aware of project development and management principles but they must also remember that part of the brief of a teacher educator is to be innovative and creative.

Overall Reflection and Importance of Work

What has been the most interesting aspect of this project so far is the fact that the students, despite being children of the last years of the 20th century (born between 1982 and 2000), 21st-century students, are still interested in the advantages of working with human beings as opposed to technology. The interviews demonstrated that although some students were familiar with and liked using error-correction tools and technology, none of them advocated it in isolation, always in combination with a teacher, and some of them had no use whatsoever for technology and insisted that the only way they could learn was with the support of an educated, interested, critically thinking human being. What has also emerged from the data is that these opinions were widespread across the age, sex, nationality, and experience spectrum. Students' interest and motivation were influenced by their environment, school philosophy, present needs and future career requirements.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

As technology is developing at speed, there is a need for ongoing research into language learning tools and technology. There are error-correction tools online but it is important that they be user-friendly and that students have a knowledge of what is available and easy to access. A future direction for this study would be to provide a

primer available to students, indicating what different tools are suited to what applications, how to use them, and what their limitations are.

I originally planned this project study to have as its project the developing of a primer with useful information regarding those tools which could be applied successfully to written English, to enhance and improve it, and to eradicate errors, both of vocabulary and grammar. However, the results of the data collection and analysis did not point in that direction. Instead, all participants interviewed said that having good instructors with lots of feedback, both general and individual, was the most important factor in the acquiring of accurate and clear writing skills. They considered motivation a significant element too, but evidence from the interviews and focus groups demonstrated that they need support in achieving their aims, which included not only the acquiring of specific skills and knowledge, but also being supported by skilled, trained educators who would be the facilitators of the perceived and required change. For this reason, the idea of a two-day total immersion course emerged, which would more adequately reflect the perceived needs of the students.

Conclusions and Summary

Carrying out this qualitative study *International Students' Use of Technology for Improving Writing Skills in College* to investigate students' use of technology in language learning has been a positive journey, despite some setbacks. The supposition that all Generation Y students are technical experts and that their interests and aspirations start and end there was proven false. However, technology is with us to stay, and we cannot

consider any kind of teaching and learning situation without technology. Teachers and instructors have now become facilitators. It is up to us to adapt technology to our needs.

Although the idea of blended learning has been around for a while, it is only in recent years that educators have started to discuss what elements should be online and which ones should still be taught face-to-face. However, outcomes from blended learning classrooms tend to be comparable to traditional classrooms (Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, and Jones, 2010, as cited by Arbaugh (2014). Research has shown that interaction between learners, fellow learners, and the instructor are significant factors in course results, particularly at the graduate level, and that the influence of instructors, especially experienced ones, has a significant effect on whether a course is successful or not (Arbaugh).

A blend of “self-directed and group-directed activity is enhanced by an intentional and thoughtful instructor” (Drennan et al., 2005; Ross & Rosenbaun, 2011; Sautter, 2007, as cited by Arbaugh, 2014). According to Marcy (2014) there are three fundamental questions about the future of higher education and technology, whether we can preserve our core mission along with technology, if technology can enhance best practice and lead to student success, and if technology can be used for introductory courses using faculty expertise and benefitting ultimately the student. The future alone will tell if we are successful in these three objectives, but educational technology is rapidly growing, and costs for academic institutions are rising. It is in our interest to adapt to new innovations whether we are speaking of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) or other types of course.

In conclusion, considering Socrates the teacher, Piro and Anderson (2015) described the Socrates Café as a place that symbolizes the search for honesty. And this is extended to the online environment. They posited in their study that online discussions reflected the intellectual standards and depth of teacher education discipline. “The pedagogical goal of enhancing critical thinking instruction holds promise for practice, especially in online settings where little precedence has been established” (Piro & Anderson, p. 279). The role of critical thinking in education has expanded to include technology and its advantages, and to adapt technology to existing practices and to the students concerned. Technology in today’s classroom is vital, but it must be used to meet learning objectives and not just as a convenience to keep students occupied (Ness & Lin, 2015). New innovations, especially regarding technology, do not replace traditional approaches, but enhance them, and they motivate international students to an optimal use of technology for the improvement of writing skills in college and for future professional use.

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Appendix A: The Project

Writing Development Program

The Writing Development Program (WDP) helps semester 1 and semester 2 international hospitality students at ABC College understand that English is the major instrument through which the core subjects are taught, and that English is the language of the hospitality industry.

The WDP is an intensive 2-day session with a 9-week mentoring section. Overarching goals are to make students aware of the need for improvement in writing skills in English, to help them identify their weaknesses and give them the opportunity to focus on writing. The goal of the writing development program is to make students aware of, and how to use, technology and error-correction tools, how they can help improve second language writing skills, and to motivate students to the important role that writing plays in their studies, and later on in their careers. The Writing Development Program is aimed at two groups of students. The first group are students who are entering the College with English writing levels below the required 500 TOEFL score. The second group are students returning from internship whose overall grades are negatively impacted by weak writing skills in English.

Program Outcomes

For incoming semester 1 students:

- Raise student TOEFL scores by at least 200 points by the time they register for semester 2.

- Have students develop a “toolkit” of English grammar, writing samples, and vocabulary that they can use throughout their studies, and
- Provide ongoing mentorship with a faculty member who provides ongoing support in a nurturing atmosphere.

For second semester students after internship whose Semester 1 average is between 55 and 60, and who can benefit from English writing review.

- Have students develop a “toolkit” of English grammar, writing samples, and vocabulary that they can use throughout their studies, and
- Provide ongoing mentorship with a faculty member who provides ongoing support in a nurturing atmosphere.

Learning Objectives

During the writing development program, the student will be able to:

- Create a “toolkit” of vocabulary, grammar examples, writing samples, and student writings all available on paper and Moodle page.
- Write accurately with a minimum of mistakes—no more than three mistakes on any given piece of writing which will instill confidence.
- Demonstrate knowledge and usage of language error-correction technology and how to use these products.
- Present language error-correction technology tools throughout the nine-week mentoring program and how to use them in class.
- Recognize and use different writing styles and know when and how to use them as evidenced by their writings in the toolkit.

- Paraphrase correctly, without plagiarism or omissions, using relevant material
- Summarize disparate information quickly and easily
- Create a structured outline for a range of academic essay types
- Consistently assimilate and take onboard corrections, comments, and assistance offered by the writing development program.

Program Instructions

Three weeks prior to the start of the semester, the college will assign a program administrator (PA) who will oversee the 10-week program, including the teachers, the mentors, and the students. In addition to the following assignments, the PA will be responsible for compiling reports and evaluations of students and the program, including:

1. Immediate contact between the language department and the faculty charged with running the writing development program as soon as student language placement test results are available.
2. WDP (Writing Development Program) faculty arranges dates for the program to take place. This is to be during the semester induction week, before regular classes start.
3. Selection of a suitable room, with good audiovisual facilities, and seating arrangements.
4. Based on the number of students in need of the WDP according to the placement test, faculty in charge decides on number of extra faculty needed.

5. Coordination with language department and the academic office to confirm the employment of extra faculty for the two days of the WDP.

The Writing Development Program

The WDP is an intensive, two-day face-to-face workshop that encompasses hands-on sessions, individual and group work, and culminates in a nine-week, one-to-one mentoring follow-up program. Students will learn and discuss different styles of writing in English, ethics and mores, customs, etiquette. It will also explain how written skills and styles give essential images, instant impressions, build up a background and create a positive or negative feeling. It will feature writing as an art, as a mini curriculum vitae (CV). It will stress the importance of knowing your audience, who the piece of writing is addressed to, a client, employer, employee, potential candidate for employment, patron, mentor, shareholder, stakeholder, or investor. It will also highlight the different kinds of writing styles, why there should be such differences, giving examples of what can happen when a piece of writing falls short and the desired result is not achieved. The assignment will be to send an email introducing themselves to their partner(s). This can be used as their first assignment piece using the error correction tools.

The second day of the workshop involves the students in interviews. The participants will interview each other in pairs, each one coming from a different country or culture. The questions, which will be prepared in advance by the instructor, will be semi structured, and open-ended. Each student interviewer will be required to write a summary of what he/she found out about the interviewee in this interview. The summaries will be exchanged so that each individual can give peer feedback on what the

other student has written. An optional follow-on to this activity can be an oral summary of the outcome in the presence of all participants of the writing development program, with everyone taking notes, subsequently transcribed into a further report in indirect speech. This activity can serve as an ice-breaker for students who do not know each other, and it works well in an international environment because of the students' different backgrounds. It also enables students to be more forthcoming about each other's strengths and weaknesses in writing in English, and encourages peer reviewing.

Summaries will then be examined by faculty in charge plus assistant(s). This material will provide the basis for the afternoon feedback session. A short reading text with comprehension questions (students to fill in answers) will be supplied to students for the intervening period.

Additionally, the faculty and assistant(s) will give each student individual feedback on his/her summary submitted during the morning session. The participants will then be given short tasks, each one a piece of writing adapted to a particular situation, demonstrating a particular style which will be submitted to the instructor and and/or assistant for feedback. The workshop will continue with individual feedback, where students will have the possibility to make improvements, learn new techniques and become familiar with new technology and tools, based on individual requirements. There will be a short formative assessment, reflective reports on Day 1 of the Writing Development Program, and the complete program, with continued emphasis on the importance of accurate writing in English, so that students are aware of the fact that they must use suitable styles of writing and use correct and varied vocabulary. The purpose of

the writing development course must be repeated, stressing the fact that English is the instrument through which the core subject courses are taught in this college, and that writing has an impact on everything students do throughout the hospitality degree program. The homework assignment will be the reading of a short text to be reviewed reflectively in the manner explained during the session. Semi-structured questions will be supplied to aid students in this task.

The instructor will discuss the nature of student errors, will paraphrase the students' offerings, showing how to transform good ideas into good text, stressing at the same time the importance of structure in writing, and following a plan or outline. In the next session the instructor will describe the different error-correction tools available. These will first be presented theoretically, using Power Point (PPT) or other online material such as Prezi (Perron, 2010), Socrative (Awedh, Mueen, Zafar, & Manzoor, 2014), followed by a hands-on practical session where the participants will write short assignments (Table 6), and then using this material, will practice using the error-correction tools.

Feedback will be formative and ongoing on an individual basis so that each student understands his or her needs. Moreover, students will have a chance to assess themselves against fellow WDP students since a major component of this program involves group (collaborative) work. Each piece of writing will be used as a sample for each student to discuss his/her improvement and how he/she plans to incorporate the elements of the WDP into their university degree program.

The final assessment will take the form of a questionnaire and a reflective report. A final plenary Q and A session, based on issues arising from the program, will conclude proceedings. Students will be informed of the names of their mentors, and will be required to make contact immediately to set up dates and times for follow-up.

Table 5

Writing Development Program Timetable

| Day/Time | Event | Description |
|-----------------|-----------------|--|
| Day 1 | | |
| 8:00-10:00 am | Plenary Session | Presentation of WDP goal and objectives, instructor & student introductions, opening activity, discussion & impact of writing styles, ethics, mores, and customs, group and mentor assignments. Overview of error-correction tools. Portfolio (tool-kit) development |
| 10:00-10:30 am | Break | |
| 10:30-12:30 pm | Workshops | Workshops with assignments and activities, individual writing tasks, interviews and reports |
| 12:30-1:30 pm | Lunch | |
| 1:30-3:30 pm | Workshops | Practice with error-correction tools |
| 3:30-4:00 pm | Break | |
| 4:30-6:00 pm | Workshops | Continued practice with error correction tools Sum-up, Assignments for day 2 |
| Day 2 | | |
| 8:00-10:00 am | Workshops | Interviews, student presentations of error-correction tools, writing practice of same, review of assignments from Day 1, group work |
| 10:00-10:30 am | Break | |
| 10:30-12:30 pm | Workshops | Portfolio Refinement |
| 12:30-1:30 pm | Lunch | |
| 1:30-3:30 pm | | Interactive discussion on Motivation, what to expect in the industry, |
| 3:30-4:00 pm | Break | |

| | | |
|--------------|------------------|---|
| 4:30-6:00 pm | Final Plenary | Mentor/mentee assignments, review of the requirements, final assessments |
|--------------|------------------|---|

Table 6

Student Evaluation of the Writing Development Program (WDP)

Please answer the following questions:

Did the writing development program meet your needs? _____ Yes _____ No

Would you recommend this program to other students? _____ Yes _____ No

Was the material used interesting and helpful? _____ Yes _____ No

What goals did you set yourself?

Were you able to accomplish all your goals? _____ Yes _____ No

What were the strengths of the writing development program?

What were the weaknesses of the program?

Table 7

Student Reflective Report

Write a reflective report on the Writing Development Program (approximately 250 words).

Use the following questions to guide you:

- What are the positive aspects of writing well in English?
- What are the negative effects of writing badly in English?
- Why might you need good writing skills (a) here in college, (b) in your future professional career?
- What have you learned from this writing development program?
- How can you make sure in future that your writing is good and adapted to your needs?

Table 8

Final Report of the Mentor

Student Name and Semester: _____

Did this student complete all the required material of this course? _____Yes _____No

Did this student complete all the required assessments? _____Yes _____No

Did this student improve his/her writing skills? _____Yes _____No

Will this student require further English writing coaching?

in order to be able to successfully complete his/her degree? _____Yes _____No

Was the aim of this writing development program achieved? _____Yes _____No

Comments:

The writing development program will be followed by nine weeks of mentoring. Each student will be required to submit six pieces of writing to his/her mentor over the nine-week period. The mentor will complete a final report on each student at the end of the nine weeks.

The following are samples of some of the materials which will be used in the Writing Development Program:

Sample 1: Reading Comprehension and Writing

Masdar Plan *The Economist* December 4th 2008

Read the following article and answers the questions below

Masdar Plan: Environment: Abu Dhabi has embarked on an ambitious plan to build a zero emission clean-tech centre in the desert: Will it work?

The world's grubbiest people, measured by emissions of greenhouse gases per head, are the citizens of the United Arab Emirates. The country's huge oil wealth allows many of them to drive big, fuel-guzzling cars and live in huge, power-guzzling homes. What is more, the country's hot and muggy climate means that almost all the buildings are air-conditioned, and almost all the water is obtained from energy-intensive desalinization plants. The result is an offence to the atmosphere.

What is more, Abu Dhabi, the biggest of the country's seven princely city-states, has a huge vested interest in the continued domination of the world's economy by fossil fuels. It sits atop of 8% of the world's proven reserves of oil. At current rates of extraction, the oil will last for another 92 years. So it is with some scepticism that the world has greeted Abu Dhabi's plans to reinvent itself as a crucible of greenery.

In 2006 Abu Dhabi's development agency unveiled the Masdar Initiative to pursue "solutions to some of mankind's most pressing issues: energy security, climate change and truly sustainable human development". The initiative consists of a research institute to develop environmental technologies, an investment arm to commercialize and deploy them, and an eco-city to house these two outfits, and to serve as a test-bed for their ideas. All this, it is hoped, will turn Abu Dhabi into the Silicon Valley of clean technology, where green-minded academics, entrepreneurs and financiers will rub shoulders.

Thinking Big

The project is nothing if not ambitious. Masdar's managers say they will create an academic institution on a par with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), a global manufacturing hub for technologies such as solar power and desalination, and a city of 40,000 people with no greenhouse gas and no waste - all while turning a profit. The government of Abu-Dhabi is putting up \$15 billion in seed capital, but the investment arm and Masdar city are intended to be run on a commercial basis, in conjunction with other companies.

In the past, some of Abu-Dhabi's grandiose schemes have come to nought – most notably a plan to build a global financial hub from scratch a decade ago. More recently, developers have suggested that they might scale back other splashy projects, such as a huge new cultural quarter. But Masdar is proceeding apace. Abu-Dhabi's crown prince, Sheik Mohammed al-Nahayan, was excited about the idea from the start and is taking a personal interest in its progress, says Sultan al-Jabar, Masdar's boss.

Masdar's Institute of Technology (MIST) will admit its first students next year, the first phase of Masdar is under construction and Masdar has built up a big portfolio of renewable- energy investments, including a stake in an offshore wind-farm in Britain and three solar power-plants in Spain. It has also placed an order for two solar panel plants: one that is already under construction in Germany, and another that is to be built in Abu-Dhabi itself.

Outsiders seem keen to get involved. MIT is helping MIST with the recruitment and training of its faculty. But it is Masdar itself that has attracted most scrutiny. To reduce its emissions, especially in such an unwelcoming environment, the city will employ all sorts of innovative and outlandish technology. All the buildings, naturally, will be extremely energy-efficient. Water will be recycled to reduce the need for desalinization. There will be dew-catchers, rain-water harvesting, and electronic sensors to raise the alarm in case of leaky pipes. There will be green spaces, but with drought resistant plants, rather than the thirst lawn and flowers that are the norm in Abu-Dhabi.

No cars will be allowed – people will have to walk or take the Personal Rapid Transport – small pods that zoom around the city on tracks. Goods will be moved this way too. The city will be walled to keep out the hot desert winds.

Roofs canopies and a large tract of land will be given over to solar panels. The city is already testing 41 types of panel from 33 different manufacturers, to see which works best in the hot, dusty, desert climate. There will also be some wind-turbines.

A Vision of the Clean-Tech Future?

But Masdar's creators seem to see the plan more as a development project than as an environmental one. They do not pretend that Abu Dhabi is about to wean itself off oil and gas. But they say that the rulers want to diversify its economy in preparation for the day it runs out of oil, or of customers for it. But Abu Dhabi, thanks to its intense year-round sunlight, and its desperate thirst for water, is ideally suited to develop technologies such as solar power and desalinization. And thanks to all that oil, there is no shortage of capital. It remains to be seen what will happen with time – a dream or reality.

(Adapted from The Masdar Plan, Technology Quarterly, Economist.com, December 4th 2008)

Vocabulary

| | |
|------------------|--|
| A bit of a fudge | a bit confused |
| Alluringly | attractively |
| Ambles past | walks slowly past |
| Apace | at the same speed |
| Array | display, choice |
| Crucible | trial place |
| Dew | early morning moisture |
| Drought | a period of no rain |
| Entice | to attract, to lure |
| From scratch | from the beginning |
| Fuel-guzzling | using a lot of fuel |
| Grubby | dirty, shabby |
| Kit | equipment |
| Landfills | where rubbish is dumped to fill the land |
| Leaky pipes | pipes letting water escape |
| Mimic | imitate |
| Muggy | hot and humid |
| On a par with | the same as, along side |
| Outfits | organisations |

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Outlandish | strange |
| Power-guzzling | using a lot of power |
| Scrutinized | examined |
| Smeltera | machine which melts down metals |
| Splashy | projectsprojects which waste money |
| Spot | place |
| Spurring | encouraging |
| Test-bedtesting | place |
| Their wares | their goods |
| To come to nought | has come to nothing, has not worked |
| To deploy | to use |
| To embark upon | to set out to do |
| To mutter | to complain in low voices |
| To rub shoulders | to work side-by-side |
| Unfettered | unrestrained |

Questions

Instructions: Read the passage and then answer the questions using short factual sentences.

1. What is the present energy situation in Abu Dhabi?
2. What is the 'Masdar Initiative'?
3. What is the reference in the text to MIT?
4. Give some examples of Masdar's portfolio of renewable-energy investments.

5. What outsiders are involved and in what way are they helping?
6. Describe some of the new, strange technology that Masdar city hopes to use.
7. What kind of luxurious leisure facilities are being planned near Masdar City?
8. Abu Dhabi is well suited to what kinds of new technologies and why?
9. Why is Abu Dhabi particularly suitable to the development of solar power and desalinization?

Sample 2: Reading Comprehension and Writing

Steve Jobs The Economist

Read this article and answer the questions.

One of a Kind – Steve Jobs

Health problems complicate one of the greatest ever corporate comebacks

In the annals of history, Steve Jobs seemed to have one-upped Napoleon. The emperor made an impressive comeback from his exile on Elba. But it lasted only a momentous 100 days. By contrast, Mr Jobs escaped from his 12-year exile in 1996 to return to the company that he had co-founded, and leads it still.

After being ousted in a boardroom coup in 1985, he struggled for several years, buying or founding companies, and pursuing old interests. Over time, these succeeded in their own right – Pixar, now owned by Walt Disney, became the most successful animated film company - or as part of something else. NEXT failed commercially but succeeded technically: its software powers Apple's products today.

Napoleon's comeback ended at Waterloo. But since his own comeback, Mr Jobs has led Apple to its greatest successes yet. The iPod and the iTunes online music store have transformed the music industry. (This week Apple announced that it would soon drop the anti-copying software that has long been a nuisance for music lovers.) The iPhone has vaulted the mobile phone industry forward, just as the original Macintosh changed the computer industry in 1984. Apple's computers and laptops are resurgent.

If there are concerns, these too would have sounded familiar to Napoleon, who probably died of stomach cancer. Mr Jobs had cancer of the pancreas and had part of it removed in 1984. Characteristically, he had not disclosed this for some time. And although he appears to have beaten the cancer, he shocked investors last year by mounting a stage looking sickly and gaunt. "A common bug" he said at the time. But he is gaunt still.

Fears grew last month when Apple abruptly announced that Mr Jobs would not, for the first time since his return to the company, give the keynote speech at Macworld, an annual trade show in San Francisco. This week Philip Schiller, Apple's marketing boss, gamely took Mr Job's place. On January 5th, Mr Jobs also disclosed, for the first time, some of the details of what ails him. It is, he said, a "hormone imbalance" that has been "robbing" him of proteins, and that has a "simple and straightforward" remedy. This is plausible, since losing a part of the pancreas often impairs the production of digestive enzymes.

Mr Jobs, a Napoleonic type in many ways, including his management style, has one more advantage. The emperor had turncoats, such as Talleyrand around him. Mr Jobs has a strong executive team and a board which this week promised its "complete and unwavering" support.

(The Economist, December 4th 2008)

Vocabulary

| | |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Annals | books, volumes |
| One-upmanship | to try and always be better |
| Ousted | got rid of |
| Coup | a surprise takeover |
| Resurgent | always survives, comes back |
| Gaunt | extremely thin, unattractively so |
| Keynote speech | the main speech of a conference |
| Gamely | bravely, courageously |
| To ail | to be ill, to have something wrong |
| Plausible | possibly true, believable |
| Turncoats | informers, traitors |

Questions on Text – please write short, factual answers

1. Explain the comparison between Napoleon and Steve Jobs in the first paragraph

2. What is a boardroom coup? (Write 2 or 3 sentences to explain)
3. What 'long-awaited' change is being made with iPod and iTunes?
4. What is special about Apple Macintosh? Name 2 things)
5. What are onlookers worried about at the moment?
6. Who is Philip Schiller?
7. And having given the similarities between Steve Jobs and Napoleon in Question 1, mention now the differences between Steve Jobs and Napoleon.

Sample 3: Comprehension / Understanding What You Have Read

Instructions: Skim through each short paragraph below. If necessary, use the Main Idea and Details sheet to make sure you understand what you have read. Check the correct answer to the first four paragraphs below.

1. Astronauts can faint in space when a sudden change in speed causes blood to collect in their legs. They faint because there is no blood left to carry oxygen to their brain. To prevent fainting, the crew wears a special anti-gravity suit. The trousers are filled with air that forces blood from the legs to the brain.

This story mainly tells

- a. Why fainting can be dangerous
- b. Who is likely to faint
- c. How fainting among astronauts can be prevented
- d. What happens when the brain lacks blood

Answer: C

2. Most plants get their food from the soil. However, some plants eat insects to get the nitrogen they need as food. Because many of these plants smell like rotting meat, insects are attracted to them. One plant has sticky hairs for catching insects. The leaves of another plant can trap water that drowns insects.

This story mainly tells

- a. Where most plants get their food
- b. Why plants sometimes have sticky hairs
- c. How some plants catch insects for food
- d. Why insects are attracted to certain plants

Answer: C

3. Quacks, or fake doctors, claim they cure diseases. One quack said that her machine could cure cancer. A sick person stood on a metal plate and held wires against the stomach. Of course, it didn't cure the cancer. People not treated by real doctors often die. The greedy quack doesn't care. She or he is only concerned about making money from desperate people.

This story mainly tells

- a. Whether or not a quack is a real doctor
- b. How a machine was supposed to cure cancer
- c. How a quack fools sick people
- d. What type of person seeks help from a quack

Answer: C

4. Government planners accidentally destroyed a deer herd. The deer lived in a park near the Grand Canyon. Mountain lions killed the old, sick, and weak deer. But, the officials allowed hunters to kill the lions. The deer herds grew bigger and ate all the grass. Then many deer starved or died from disease. Because of a human mistake, the deer herd was destroyed.

This story mainly tells

- a. What kind of animal hunted the deer
- b. How deer grow bigger
- c. How government planners made a mistake
- d. What killed the deer in the herds

Answer: C

For paragraphs five to eight (inclusive), there are no multiple choices. Paraphrase the text, using your own words, but keeping the same meaning.

5. E-mail's intoxicating qualities are now well known: It's convenient, efficient, simple, and informal, a way to stay connected to more people, a democratizing force in the workplace and less intrusive than the telephone. But as email proliferates, it's more pernicious effects are increasingly evident. Much as it facilitates the conduct of business, email is threatening.

Paraphrase the above passage in your own words, keeping your piece of writing the same length.

6. At some point in the assimilation to the new way, the immigrant child realizes that his or her parents are no longer sources of real knowledge about the new

society. Their information and their way of life are no longer the way to success, and as soon as the child understands this, his or her attitude towards the parents' changes. Though some people consider such changes to be a betrayal, they are an inevitable part of assimilation.

7. Students frequently overuse direct quotation in taking notes, and as a result they overuse quotations in the final research paper. Probably only about 10% of your final manuscript should appear as directly quoted matter. Therefore, you should strive to limit the amount of exact transcribing of source materials while taking notes.
8. Visual defect resulting in the inability to distinguish colors. About 8% of men and 0.5% of women experience some difficulty in color perception. Color blindness is usually an inherited sex-linked characteristic, transmitted through, but recessive in, females. Acquired color blindness results from certain degenerative diseases of the eyes. Most of those with defective color vision are only partially color-blind to red and green, i.e., they have a limited ability to distinguish reddish and greenish shades. Those who are completely color-blind to red and green see both colors as a shade of yellow. Completely color-blind individuals can recognize only black, white, and shades of grey.

(Reprinted with permission of Ashton, M. A., 2014).

Sample 4: Writing Prompts

What is the effect of media on young children?

Are human beings becoming dependent on technology?

Can human beings be held completely responsible for global warming?

Does making uniforms compulsory in schools have any benefits?

Should the death penalty be abolished?

Arguments for and against euthanasia

Cosmetic surgery – medical marvel or playing God?

Meat eaters v. vegetarians, is there anything wrong in picking a side?

Lying is a necessary part of good relationships

Advantages and disadvantages of attending a single sex school

Mentoring Component

Daloz (2012) said that being a mentor was like being a guide, someone who shed light on the journey ahead, who warned of the possible dangers, by explaining the map and pointing to the signposts. The goal of this mentoring program is to encourage students to refer back to the two-day total immersion program and to use the new skills they have learned or perfected, including correct use of error-correction computer tools.

The purpose of the mentoring program is for students to have follow-up on the intensive two-day writing development program which they will have completed at the beginning of the semester. Each student will be allocated a mentor (either a faculty member, faculty assistant, or part-time faculty). A Moodle page (Hirschel, 2012) will be created for the Writing Development Program, where the mentors and their students will be named and will have specific areas allocated to them. Students will be required to contact their mentors in writing via Moodle once a week during the first nine weeks of the semester. The mentor will act as a facilitator, advisor, support system, and positive role model. He or she will be available by email at least once a week, to give feedback to work submitted weekly by student mentees. Students will upload their work to the Moodle page, and the mentor will be able to grade work submitted by students, and also give them comments and detailed feedback. The work will be stored in Moodle. The mentor is expected to be proactive in encouraging student motivation, to keep in regular communication with the student, and to provide grading and reflections at the end of the semester. The mentor will

- meet each mentee individually, face-to-face four times during the WDP follow-up period, (exact dates to be noted on the Moodle page),
- allocate a minimum of one hour per week contact with student mentees for the nine week WDP period. This contact can be by email, or can be face-to-face contact,
- provide support and guidance to the mentee, at the same time overseeing his/her abilities in writing and use of computer tools,
- aid the student in developing motivation and continuing his or her use of electronic correction tools,
- use the materials provided herein to guide the mentorship.

Selection Criteria for Mentors

The college has a team of English language teachers who teach courses such as EAP Advanced, EAP Intermediate, and CRAW (Creative Reading and Writing), (Appendix C). These courses are taken by students, who, despite having the required IELTS 5.5. college-entry standard, do not achieve the necessary English exemption level on the school English placement test (Appendix B). This team of instructors also teach on the ELP (English Language Program). This is a separate program for students who want to register for the degree programs, but whose IELTS levels are insufficient to enable them to enroll. As student cohorts differ from semester to semester, the English teaching team is made up of some full-time, some full time proportionate, and some part time faculty. Mentors for the Writing Development Program will be recruited from this group whose qualifications equip them ideally for the task.

Mentoring Duties

It will be the mentor's job to keep in touch with his/her mentees by email at all times during the nine weeks, with face-to-face meetings every two weeks (four meetings throughout the nine weeks, detailed on the WDP Moodle page). The students will be required to submit a written journal to the mentor each week (approximately 400 words). The journal should take the form of a reflective report, with the student describing courses followed, assignments and test results, other happenings, with emphasis on writing skills, and the use of error-correction tools. The mentor will review the journal, giving detailed feedback (corrections and comments via the Microsoft Word program, and/or the Moodle page) on each submission, with students themselves responsible for submitting work regularly. The mentor will grade the student's work each time and keep a record of each submission. At the end of the nine-week period, the mentor will complete a report on the student's progress and make recommendations for further improvement (see Table 8, page 124). All students participating in the Writing Development Program and the mentored follow-up period will take a summative test after the nine weeks. This can take the form of a BULATS or IELTS test, both of which are administered by the college, and these results will be compared with test results at the start of the program. Mentors and students will complete program evaluations at the end of the course (see Tables 7 and 8).

Appendix B: In-House English Level Diagnostic Test

EXAM COVER PAGE

Program: **General Education**
 Session/Semester: **N/A**
 Course: **English for Academic Purposes**
 Faculty Members: **Language Faculty**
 Type of Exam: **Diagnostic Test**
 Date of Exam: **N/A**
 Exam duration: **75 minutes**

Instructions:

This test will be used to evaluate your level in reading and writing English and to place you in an appropriate English class. You must answer all of the questions. You must write your answers on the separate answer booklet. Dictionaries ARE NOT permitted. You should spend 35 minutes on the Reading section and 40 minutes on the Writing section.

DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAPER

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------------|
| Section 1 – Reading | 20 marks |
| Section 2 – Writing | 30 marks |

| | |
|--------------|-----------------|
| TOTAL | 50 marks |
|--------------|-----------------|

Section 1 – Reading Comprehension.

You are going to read four extracts. For questions **1-10**, choose the answer (**A, B, C** or **D**) which you think fits best according to the text. There is only one correct answer for each question.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Young Environmental Journalist Competition**How to enter:**

- If you're aged 16-25, we're looking for original articles of 1,000 words (or less) with an environmental or conservation theme. The closing date for entries is 30th December 2012.
- Your aim should be to advance understanding and awareness of environmental issues. You should be able to convey complex ideas to readers of this general interest magazine in an engaging and authoritative manner.

- Your article should show proof of investigative research, rather than relying solely on information from the internet and phone interviews. You don't have to go far; a report on pollution in a local stream would be as valid as a piece about the remotest rainforest.
 - Your article should show you are passionate and knowledgeable about environmental issues. It should also be objective and accurate, while being creative enough to hold the reader's interest. We are not looking for 'think pieces' or opinion columns.
 - Facts or information contained in short-listed articles will be checked.
 - Read the rules carefully.
1. Before entering the competition, young people must have
 - A. conducted some relevant research in their local area.
 - B. gained a qualification in environmental research.
 - C. uncovered some of the evidence in their research themselves.
 - D. consulted a number of specialists on the subject under research.
 2. The articles submitted must
 - A. focus on straightforward concepts.
 - B. include a range of views.
 - C. be accessible to nonspecialists.
 - D. reveal the writer's standpoint.

The Theory of Everything

Time was when physicists dreamed of a final theory of fundamental physics, a perfect set of equations that would describe every force and particle in nature. Today that dream is being overtaken by the suspicion that there is no such thing. Some even fear that all attempts at a deeper understanding of nature are dead ends. This will lend support to those who have long claimed that research into

come from pure research.

Can we, therefore, justify spending the huge sums of money that such research demands? What it boils down to is whether we think the search for fundamental truths is important. This quest for knowledge is a defining human quality, but it's hard to quantify how our lives have been 'improved' by it. There

fundamental physics is a waste of time and money; that at best it provides answers to obscure questions which few people understand or care about.

So do these reservations undermine pure physics as a scientific pursuit? Surely, it makes no difference if the truths that physicists seek turn out to be more complex and messy than they once hoped. It could even make the search more intriguing. There are as many profound questions out there as there have ever been, and to answer them physicists need the kind of hard experimental evidence that can only

have been plenty of technological spin-offs from the space race and other experiments. But the spin-offs are not the point. In showing us how the universe works, fundamental physics could also tell us something about ourselves. And for that, a few billion dollars would be a small price to pay.

3. According to the writer, technological ‘spin-offs’ from scientific research

- A. do not justify the sums invested in it.
- B. reveal the true aims of those promoting it.
- C. should convince the public of the value of it.
- D. should not be the main reason for pursuing it.

4. In this piece, the writer is generally

- A. distrustful of those who doubt the long term value of pure research.
- B. supportive of those wishing to carry out pure research.
- C. sceptical about the long-term benefits of pure research.
- D. optimistic about the prospects of funding for pure research.

Photography

Photography was invented by nineteenth century artists as an art form for their own purposes. These men were seeking a lasting, literal record of their visual surroundings and they found it. The new combination of illumination, lens, shutter, and flat surface coated with chemicals sensitive to light produced images more lasting, more convincing in their reality, and more richly detailed than painters could produce manually in weeks and months of effort. This alone was enough to throw consternation into the ranks of fellow artists; and, after their first reaction of pleasure in a new kind of image, art critics rallied with the haughty charge that photography was not, and could not be, an art. The actual pictures so dependent upon mechanical means could not be called acts of man's creative imagination. Despite the critics, photographers knew that they had found a new art form, a new mode of expression. They used the new tools as other artists before and after them have used brush and pencil – to interpret the world, to present a vision of nature and its structure as well as the things and the people in it.

5. What are we told about the artists who first used photography?
 - A. They appreciated what photography could offer.
 - B. They preferred taking photographs to painting pictures.
 - C. They did not want anyone else to benefit from the photography.
 - D. They thought painting pictures was too arduous.

6. Art critics disapproved of photography because they thought
 - A. it needed too little effort to interpret it.
 - B. the images were visually displeasing.
 - C. it used overly complicated equipment.
 - D. it did not go beyond the literal.

[Note: This is an extract from a text on the subject of coal¹. The text preceding this extract catalogued the general belief that extracting and using coal is bad for the environment.]

Greenhouse gases arise from a wide range of sources and their increasing concentration is largely related to the compound effects of increased population, improved living standards and changes in lifestyle. From a current base of 5 billion, the United Nations predicts that the global population may stabilise in the twenty-first century between 8 and 14 billion, with more than 90 per cent of the projected increase taking place in the world's developing nations. The associated activities to support that growth, particularly to produce the required energy and food, will cause further increases in greenhouse gas emissions. The challenge, therefore, is to attain a sustainable balance between population, economic growth and the environment.

The major greenhouse gas emissions from human activities are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane and nitrous oxide. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are the only major contributor to the greenhouse effect that do not occur naturally, coming from such sources as refrigeration, plastics and manufacture. Coal's¹ total contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is thought to be about 18 per cent, with about half of this coming from electricity generation.

The worldwide coal industry allocates extensive resources to researching and developing new technologies and ways of capturing greenhouse gases. Efficiencies are likely to be improved dramatically, and hence CO₂ emissions reduced, through combustion and gasification techniques which are now at pilot and demonstration stages.

Clean coal is another avenue for improving fuel conversion efficiency. Investigations are under way into *super-clean* coal (35 per cent ash) and *ultraclean* coal (less than 1 per cent ash). Super-clean coal has the potential to enhance the combustion efficiency of conventional pulverised fuel power plants. Ultraclean coal will enable coal to be used in advanced power systems such as coal-fired gas turbines which, when operated in combined cycle, have the potential to achieve much greater efficiencies.

¹Coal: A hard, black substance which is dug from the earth in lumps and which can be burnt to produce heat or power.



A piece of coal.



A coal-fired electricity generating plant.

7. The global increase in greenhouse gases has been attributed to
 - A. industrial pollution in developing countries.
 - B. coal mining and electricity generation.
 - C. reduced rainfall in many parts of the world.
 - D. trends in population and lifestyle.

8. The proportion of greenhouse gases created by coal in electricity generation is approximately
 - A. 9 per cent.
 - B. 18 per cent.
 - C. 27 per cent.
 - D. 90 per cent.

9. Current research aims to increase the energy-producing efficiency of coal by
 - A. burning it at a lower temperature.
 - B. developing new gasification techniques.
 - C. extracting CO₂ from it.

D. recycling greenhouse gases.

10. Compared with ordinary coal, new, 'clean' coals may generate power

- A. more cleanly and more efficiently.
- B. more cleanly but less efficiently.
- C. more cleanly but at a higher cost.
- D. more cleanly but much more slowly.

This is the end of Part 1 – Reading Comprehension.

Section 2 – Writing (30 marks)

Write a four or five paragraph essay (250 words) on the following subject:

1. Explain one environmental problem facing the world today and discuss possible solutions. Support your arguments with any real life examples you may know of.

REMEMBER Organize your essay into an introduction, development and conclusion.

Include supporting examples, details or facts in the development.

This is the grading scheme for the essay:

| | |
|------------------------|----------|
| Introduction | 5 marks |
| Development | 5 marks |
| Conclusion | 5 marks |
| Grammar and Spelling | 5 marks |
| Appropriate Vocabulary | 5 points |
| Style | 5 marks |

Write your essay in the separate answer booklet.

This is the end of the diagnostic test

Appendix C: Course Reference Sheets (CRS)

Course Title: Critical Reading & Writing

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| COURSE NUMBER | 812 | CREDITS | 4 |
| PROGRAM | Undergraduate/ ESE | CONTACT PERIODS | 60 |
| SEMESTER | 1,2,3 | STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING PERIODS | 120 |
| CAMPUS | Glion | YEAR | 2016.1 |

FACULTY MEMBERS

PREREQUISITE/S EAP Upper Intermediate CEF level C1-C2 (IELTS 6.5 or equivalent):

COURSE OVERVIEW

The aim of this course is to enable the student to undertake degree studies with English language proficiency. Interactive approaches to linguistic fluency are developed through guided reading, autonomous learning and task-based writing. The course encourages critical analysis and referential comprehension of literary, historical or professional texts using research, data interpretation and referencing. It requires students to write clearly structured, analytically sound and persuasively argued essays. Students are introduced to social, geographic and cultural aspects of English as a global language.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Appraise a wide variety of academic and literary texts, apply critical reading and thinking skills, evaluate sources and employ appropriate referencing skills.
2. Analyze and write a variety of academic texts and use advanced grammar and vocabulary in written communication.

3. Recognize and understand aspects of other languages and cultures through diverse textual sources.

MAIN CURRICULUM THEMES / CONTENT

- **Reading:** Comprehension; summary and analysis; scanning, skimming, and reviewing; inferring meaning from texts; paraphrasing, distinguish irony.
- **Writing:** Essay form and function; introduction and conclusion. topic and angle; paragraph development; thesis statements. Creative, descriptive and discursive writing. Referencing.
- **Grammar:** Complex Structures (adjective and adverbial clauses, parallel structures, run on sentences, connectors and transitions, conditionals and phrasal verbs.)

TEACHING METHODOLOGY: Interactive lectures, workshops, blended learning, group work.

ASSESSMENT: Portfolio**40%**
Final Exam**60%**

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY:

Portfolio: Project focusing on research and writing skills taught and learnt (30%)

MyWritinglab, readtheory.org and home work (10%).

Final Exam: A skills-based summative exam covering all course content.

LEARNING RESOURCES:

Student Text: *Critical reading & writing*, compiled by Warburton S Keohane A., Ramati, M., Glenview, IL: Pearson Education

Studer-Doherty, R. (2009). *CRAW grammar booklet*.
Glion: GIHE

BLENDED LEARNING: MyWritingLab: resources linked to “The write stuff”
textbook

LIBRARY TEXTS AVAILABLE

Bland, P, Kesner, S. & Mayer, A. (2008). *Grammar sense 4 : Advanced grammar & writing*. New York: Oxford University Press

Carter, R. & McCarthy, M. (2006). *Cambridge grammar of English*. Cambridge, England: CUP

Chamberlain, L. (2008). *Grammar sense 4 workbook: Advanced grammar in writing*. New York: Oxford University Press

Graver, B.D. (2009). *Advanced English practice*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press

Thompson, A.J. (2006). *Focus on grammar 5.* New York: Longman

DVD/Video A variety of DVDs

DuVernay, A. (Director). (2015). *Selma*. [Motion Picture]. USA: Paramount Pictures.

Moore, M. (Director). (2004). *Bowling for Columbine* [Motion Picture]. USA: United Artists.

Spurlock, M. (Director). (2004). *Supersize me*. [Motion Picture]. USA: Samuel Goldwyn Films

ONLINE RESOURCES:

www.mywritinglab.com/Pearson Education

www.readtheory.org

<http://towerofenglish.com>/Useful links to practice English

<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk> British Council activities of various kinds

<http://www.englishforum.com> Variety of English news and resources

<http://www.cambridge.org/elt> The Cambridge site for resources

<http://www.oup.com/elt/students> The Oxford site for resources

Course Title: English for Academic Purposes (Advanced)

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--------|
| COURSE NUMBER | PG320 | CREDITS | 3 |
| PROGRAM | General Education | CONTACT PERIODS | 45 |
| SEMESTER | PG 1 | STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING PERIODS | 90 |
| CAMPUS | Glion | YEAR | 2016.1 |

FACULTY MEMBERS

PREREQUISITE/S EAP Upper Intermediate CEF level B2 (IELTS 5.5 or equivalent)

COURSE OVERVIEW

The aim of this course is to enable the student to undertake degree studies with English language proficiency. Interactive approaches to linguistic fluency are developed through guided reading, autonomous learning and task-based writing. The course encourages critical analysis and referential comprehension of literary, historical or professional texts using research, data interpretation and referencing. It requires students to write clearly structured, analytically sound and persuasively argued essays. Students are introduced to social, geographic and cultural aspects of English as a global language.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to

4. Appraise a wide variety of academic and literary texts, apply critical reading and thinking skills, evaluate sources and employ appropriate referencing skills.
5. Analyze and write a variety of academic texts and use advanced grammar and vocabulary in written communication.
6. Recognize and understand aspects of other languages and cultures through diverse textual sources.

MAIN CURRICULUM THEMES / CONTENT

- **Reading:** Comprehension; summary and analysis; scanning, skimming, and reviewing; inferring meaning from texts; paraphrasing, distinguish irony.
- **Writing:** Essay form and function; introduction and conclusion. topic and angle; paragraph development; thesis statements. Creative, descriptive and discursive writing. Referencing.
- **Grammar:** Complex Structures (adjective and adverbial clauses, parallel structures, run on sentences, connectors and transitions, conditionals and phrasal verbs.)

TEACHING METHODOLOGY Interactive lectures, workshops, blended learning, group work.

ASSESSMENT Portfolio: **60%**
Final Exam: **40%**

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Portfolio: tests, quizzes both in class and home work. (30%)

Project focusing on research and writing skills taught and learnt (30%)

Final Exam: A skills based summative exam covering all course content.

LEARNING RESOURCES:

Student Texts:

Oshima, A. & Hogue, A. (2006). *Writing academic English*
New York: Pearson Longman.

Studer-Doherty, R. (2009). *Academic English grammar booklet*. Glion: GIHE (on boxnet with link on Moodle)

LIBRARY TEXTS AVAILABLE

Bland, P, Kesner, S. & Mayer, A. (2008). *Grammar sense 4: Advanced grammar & writing*. New York: Oxford University Press

Byatt, A. S. (2001). *The Oxford book of English short Stories*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press

Carter, R. & McCarthy, M. (2006). *Cambridge grammar of English*. Cambridge, England: CUP

Chamberlain, L. (2008). *Grammar sense 4 workbook: Advanced grammar in writing*. New York: Oxford University Press

Graver, B.D. (2009). *Advanced English practice*. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press

Thompson, A.J. (2006). *Focus on grammar 5.* New York: Longman

DVD/Video Online videos and Inside Job (documentary)

ONLINE RESOURCES:

<http://towerofenglish.com> Useful links to practice English

<http://www.learnenglish.org.uk> British Council activities of various kinds

<http://www.englishforum.com> Variety of English news and resources

<http://www.cambridge.org/elt> The Cambridge site for resources

<http://www.oup.com/elt/students> The Oxford site for resources

<http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>

Appendix D: Student Invitation Letter

Dear Students,

I would like to invite you to participate in a project study which I am undertaking as part of the process of achieving a doctorate in education (Ed. D). The title of this study is “Fostering Students’ Use of Computer Tools for Second Language Learning”.

Here is some information about the study:

We know that today many students are studying in an international environment. For the successful completion of their studies they need not only to acquire knowledge and skills, but they also need to know how to communicate, study, and work in a second language, in particular in English. Today’s “lingua franca,” or international business language, is English. It is the language of communication in the business and scientific worlds, and also the language of international commerce. For a student to thrive in an international environment, it is vital that he/she be proficient in English. This study is being conducted to investigate how language tools are being used in second language learning, what motivates international students to use error-correction language tools, what might be the barriers to their use by students, and the attitudes of international students to writing well in English.

To do this study I would like to know students’ opinions on these issues. For this purpose, I invite you to participate in an interview which will be held shortly. As soon as

all my documents are in order, I will contact you directly, including a sheet with specific interview times which you can choose as suits you.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Godwin, M. Ed.

(G.I.H.E. Faculty)

Appendix E: Institutional Consent Form

The researcher is inviting students from both campuses to be in a research study concerning the use of technology in 2nd language learning. The study would also like to investigate what students think about the use of computer tools for writing in English. This form is requesting the institution's consent to enable students to participate.

The study is being conducted by Margaret Godwin who is a doctoral student at Walden University and who is on the faculty of this institution.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current use of computer tools in writing, in particular, for students whose second language is English.

Procedures:

Students will be asked to:

- Take part in a focus group discussion which will take 50 minutes
- or
- Take part in an individual interview which will take 50 minutes

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

Here are some sample questions:

Focus Groups:

- What can you tell me about computer language tools?
- Can you tell me about your experiences using computer self-help tools?

Interviews:

- What is your opinion of the use of technology in language learning a) in the institute, and b) generally? How do you use computer language tools when writing in English?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Students' decisions whether to participate or not will be respected. No one at the institute will treat them differently whatever their decision.

Students can still change their minds at a later date. They may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as taking time to participate. Being in this study would not pose risk to safety or wellbeing.

It is hoped that the study will produce information about available language tools and computer assisted language learning, especially for writing skills.

Privacy:

Any information provided will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include names or any further information that could identify students in the study report. Data will be kept secure by the researcher. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

Questions and/or contact to be directed to margaret.godwin@glion.edu

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and understand the study. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Institution

Date of consent

Signature

Title

Researcher's Signature

Date:

Appendix F: Interview Consent Form

Dear Student:

You are invited to take part in a research study of technology in 2nd language learning and what students think about using computer tools for writing in English. The researcher is inviting students from both Glion and Bulle campuses to be in the study. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand the study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Margaret Godwin who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as a member of faculty, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current use of computer tools, in particular for English writing.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Take part in an individual interview which will take 50 minutes

Here are a sample question:

- What is your opinion of the use of technology in language learning a) in the institute, and b) generally? How do you use computer language tools when writing in English?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at G.I.H.E G. will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as taking time to participate. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

It is hoped that the study will produce information about available language tools and computer assisted language learning, especially for writing skills.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by the researcher. Data will be kept for a period of at least five years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or, if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via margaret.godwin@glion.edu. I will give you a copy of this form to keep. (for face-to-face research)

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Walden IRB Approval Number

06-02-14-0239943.

Appendix G: Focus Group Consent Form

Dear Student:

You are invited to take part in a research study of technology in 2nd language learning and what students think about using computer tools for writing in English. The researcher is inviting students from both Glion and Bulle campuses to be in the study. This form is part of a process called “informed consent” to allow you to understand the study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Margaret Godwin who is a doctoral student at Walden University. You may already know the researcher as a member of faculty, but this study is separate from that role.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current use of computer tools, in particular for English writing.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this focus group, you will be asked to:

- Take part in a focus group discussion which will take 50 minutes

Here are some sample questions:

Focus Groups:

- What can you tell me about computer language tools?
- Can you tell me about your experiences using computer self-help tools?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at G.I.H.E G. will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

Being in this type of study involves some risk of the minor discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as taking time to participate. Being in this study would not pose risk to your safety or wellbeing.

It is hoped that the study will produce information about available language tools and computer assisted language learning, especially for writing skills.

Privacy:

Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. Also, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by the researcher. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via margaret.godwin@glion.edu. I will give you a copy of this form to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Printed Name of Participant

Date of consent

Participant's Signature

Researcher's Signature

Walden IRB Approval Number

06-02-14-0239943.

Appendix H: Student Acceptance Email

|
Hello Students,

Many thanks for volunteering to help me in my doctorate study and to take part in some interviews.

Could you contact me directly so we make an arrangement for the interview?

I will be in my office tomorrow afternoon (the Faculty Office, above the Academic Office) from 1 PM.

I look forward to meeting you, and again, many thanks!

Sincerely,

Margaret Godwin, M.Ed.

Appendix I: Interview Questions

1. Please tell me which semester you are in?
2. How would you consider your level/standard in English?
3. How do you approach writing in English? Do you have a particular strategy?
4. What 2nd language learning technology are you familiar with?
5. What is your opinion on the use of technology in language learning a) in this institute, and b) generally?
6. How would you describe your personal use of technology for language purposes?
7. Which computer language tools do you use when writing assignments?
8. How would you describe your personal use of computer tools for a) foreign language purposes in general, and b) for writing, in particular?
9. How do you use computer language tools when writing in English?
10. How do you feel about these tools – how important are they for you?
11. What procedure do you follow when submitting a written assignment? What computer self-help tools do you use?
12. How important do you consider the self-help, correction tools?
13. How important do you consider having good written skills?

Appendix J: Focus Group Questions

1. We are going to be discussing English writing. What are your thoughts on English writing skills?
2. What do you know about the use of technology in language learning?
3. What can you tell me about computer language tools? How do you know about them?
4. How would you describe your personal use of technology for language purposes?
5. Can you tell me about your experiences using computer self-help tools?
6. What do you know about computer error-correction tools?
7. English is the language used in international affairs – what are your feelings about this?
8. How would you describe students' attitudes towards writing in English?
9. Do you think students have different perceptions of the importance of having good written English according to nationality? Why? Why not?
10. Do you think students at this institution experience problems with English writing? Why? Why not?
11. Do you think students at this institution experience problems with English writing? Why? Why not?

Appendix K: Excerpts from Interview/Focus Groups

Student A (Female, China)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Mixed-Communication good, academic, poor |
| Strategy for Writing | Error Correction Tools used: Internet, Facebook, Chinese application |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Student is pro-teacher |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | For professional reasons, important for Chinese, one-child family, therefore this child must be as good as possible. Spoke about using “Chinglish.” “Internet is more important for entertainment than for learning.” |
| Additional Comments | Told about a Chinese application (on phone) that photographs writing and translates automatically—such as airport signs and books. |

Student B (Male, Egypt)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Medium, but writing is poor |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Uses mobile phone. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Motivation to use technology to achieve goals, grades, promotion at work. |
| Additional Comments | Best solution: Combination of technology and brain |

Student C (Male, Belgium)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | Medium |
| Strategy for Writing | Write-Click is better than all others |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Need to write well for group work. Cross-cultural issues in group work. Different ways of working. |
| Additional Comments | |

Student D (Female, Russia)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | “Pretty average.” |
| Strategy for Writing | Uses classmates to check work (after doing an outline, brainstorming; uses old school notes |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Much more in favor of human help and traditional ways of learning. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Facebook, Skype |
| Additional Comments | Very vague, no names, BBC languages, interactive programs. Prefers a more traditional approach. |

Student E (Female, Ukraine)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | Speaking—fine; Writing—weak. |
| Strategy for Writing | Other programs, no names |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Repetition is key. Humans needed for explanations |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Parents learning English by audio cassette. “French in 30 days”. |
| Additional Comments | Technology is limited; humans needed for explanation, most students don’t care, Non-native teachers make mistakes too. Barriers include job applications, influence of other languages on English. |
| | “The more spread the language, the more difficult to control.” |

Student F (Female, Swiss)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | |
| Strategy for Writing | Movie, for subtitles. |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Depends on teacher, content vs. presentation, personal vs. professional. It’s unnatural not to go to a human being for help. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | In college, Oxford On-line Dictionary. Use of MS PowerPoint, Prezi, Turnitin for plagiarism identification. |
| Additional Comments | In Australia, everything is recorded, students can watch the class again. Accuracy...projects a certain image of who you are and how serious you are about your work. |

Student G (Male, Portugal)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | Very good. Cites importance of early learning of the alphabet. |
| Strategy for Writing | Really appreciated Academic Writing Course. |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Student does not like having to read subtitles when watching films. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Apple products because of versatility. Google Glass could be dangerous. |
| Additional Comments | Expensive institution, therefore less motivation for some students. |
| | Spell check helps with words like “below” and “bellow,” Ferrari, Peugeot.” |

Student H (Female, Ecuador)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | Very good, but difference in standard between English in Ecuador and in this college. |
| Strategy for Writing | “I would never choose the computer.” |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | None |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Spell-check, “That’s automatic.” |
| Additional Comments | South Americans are not motivated to use technology. Lazy. Little brother is using technology for English. |
| | A friend signed up for Tell-Me-More, but never used it. |

Student I (Female, Peru/Italy)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | Good. Private lessons were interactive. |
| Strategy for Writing | Relies on own knowledge, mostly first impressions. Important to be taken seriously. |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Prefers traditional dictionary. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | |
| Additional Comments | Feels proud when other students ask her help with writing. |
| | Cross-cultural issues include pride issues: ashamed to be seen as unknowing. |
| | Teachers who understand student's problems help in motivation." |

Student J (Female, Italy)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Average |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | "If a human being has to learn, it is better that a human being is teaching." |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Games, private lessons, independent study, Oxford Dictionary. |
| Additional Comments | Technology is all around us, technology is here to stay, like it or not." |

Student K (Female, Turkey)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | “Not so good.” “Very good improvement in 2 nd semester.” |
| Strategy for Writing | Essay structure learned in class, outlines... |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | . |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Just TOEFL preparation, Oxford University lots of technology...Prefers online dictionaries. |
| Additional Comments | |

Student M (Female, China)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Low |
| Strategy for Writing | CSs, but also rote learning |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Not interested in online correction tools. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | MS Word, Grammar, Spell-check, MyWritingLab ...very little use. |
| Additional Comments | “You just see and write...you never speak out in school. |
| | Grades “not necessary for nonspeakers to write well.” |
| | “Chinese students don’t want to speak to foreigners.” |
| | “No explanations by teacher.” |

Student N (Female, France/Serbia)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | Writing problems in English, but with mother tongue too. |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Likes learning with a teacher. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Good for spelling, not for grammar. To improve grammar, need to buy special apps (\$30). |
| Additional Comments | “Interactive games from parents. “Important to get these when young.” |
| | “Some students think they are too good for movies.” |
| | “Very important to write well—it is like public speaking—it gives you credibility.” |
| | “Teachers should motivate students.” |

Student O (Male, Italy)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Good |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Prefer teachers. |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | Likes Tell-Me-More and used it for private study at college, but in actual courses, not much use of technology. |
| Additional Comments | Writing well is kind of like your business card...technology is something on top of the course, rather than being an independent way of learning.” |
| | Feedback from teachers. Good writing in 2 nd language English is not so important for all subjects as long as teacher understands; Form and structure-for further studies, such as Masters, Doctorate... |

Student P (Female, Kazakhstan)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | “Very good.” |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | On-line Thesaurus. |
| Additional Comments | Technology at school, private lessons which meant getting more entertaining books than local ones: ILTS preparation. |
| | Random web-sites, multitrans.ru. Tell-Me-More requires lots of self-discipline and time; teachers expensive |
| | Attitude “depends on everything. Education, information/content, writing, they are like two keys to success.” |
| | Technology is expensive so you need someone. It “takes not just your own time, but someone else’s time as well.” |

Student Q (Female, Israel/France)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Good |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | Prefers “teacher always.” |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | No memory of programs used. Google Translate has improved...very useful for words, synonyms. Uses Babble. Word Tools, no explanation, just corrected each time. |
| Additional Comments | Non-native speakers prove themselves when they show they can write well in English. |
| | ‘It is self-rewarding to write well.’ |
| | “Technology is convenient for both the teacher and the student...but for learning? No!” |

Student R (Male, France)

| | |
|--|--|
| Level of English | Good—better at oral than writing |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | “Babble, MSWord tools, no explanation, just corrected each time.” |
| Additional Comments | A computer does not see...if a student does not understand something, it does not repeat.” |

Student S (Male, France)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Good |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | MSWord, Google Translate, Text Edit (Mac) |
| Additional Comments | “Professional future, depends on the job, even if it is in the hospitality industry.” |
| | “Writing is a business tool,” |
| | “Definitely, motivation has an impact on writing skills.” |
| | “Succeed = good grades = good writing skills.” |

Student U (Male, Poland)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Quite good (High language) |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | “Use of technology by teachers, e.g. Moodle, Socrates—good; bad use of PPT by teachers.” |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | |
| Additional Comments | Early learning: “Games, singing songs, some basic technology.” |
| | “Procrastination; previously most communication was done by telephone. Email is more precise; therefore, it needs to be written well for understanding: cross-cultural influences.” |
| | “Google Translate is the quickest dictionary. Technology can be mishandled by teachers.” |

Student V (Male, the Netherlands)

| | |
|--|---|
| Level of English | Good |
| Strategy for Writing | |
| Technology vs. Human Intervention | |
| Use of Technology and Tools for Language Learning and Error-Correction | CDs, videos, Tell-Me-More, What's App |
| Additional Comments | "Books, but influence of English/American movies was greatest, with subtitles you learn fast." |
| | "This college should use their technology more. Technology is very important for students with dyslexia." |
| | "Not much motivation at the beginning...change of school increased motivation." |
| | Technology can be used more, e.g. if teacher is sick, class could work on Tell-Me-More on their own in the IT lab." |
| | "Negative side of technology—it does not motivate you to write well, e.g. abbreviations." |
| | "Having fun on the side—learning Spanish." |

Focus Group A (4 Males, 1 Female, France, Tunisia, Turkey)

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Technology | Google Translate is not clear |
| Motivation | Grades |
| Researcher Comments | Writing/language levels are very low in this group. Very unsatisfactory, very little information gleaned, poor answers to questions. |

Focus Group B (2 males, 3 females, China, Taiwan, Thailand, Pakistan)

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Early Learning | Some technology; interactive movies |
| Technology | CDs, games, toys, translators, talking dictionaries that translate from own language into English; pocket-sized instruments—students can type or talk (also a similar phone app. |
| Motivation | Depends on nationality. |
| Student Comments | “Talking dictionary...you know that it’s not your mother-tongue, but, it’s different. There is a gap.” |
| | “It’s a big mix of...I don’t know, a big salad....” |

Appendix L: Overall Researcher Comments on Focus Groups

Much less information emerged. Difficult to get students to talk. Group B were young, shy, and inexperienced. Group A were older but very weak in English and not serious about writing.

Comments on Self as Interviewer

It was not always easy to get students to talk. As a result:

- Interviewer talked too much (trying to encourage them)
- Lots of back and forth with questions—difficult to be systematic

Emergent Discussions

- All students repeat that the human element is most important, that technology can never replace teachers.
- TED website to improve listening
- 2 students mentioned respect
- Definition of language tool = anything that helps you learn a language
- Older students tend to have less knowledge of Error-Correction Tools.
- Several students mentioned using technology to learn other foreign languages but could not remember names of programs
- Use of technology depends on learning styles, preferences
- Writing on computer – in one ear and out the other. Hand-Writing sticks.
- Word Tools correct each time, no explanation needed
- 2 students mentioned Rote Learning.

- Several students mentioned synonyms
- Technology is cheaper than a teacher

Appendix M: Computer Software Initial Theme Categories

List of initial categories entered into computer software program before detailed analysis of transcripts:

+ Attitudes (Motivation)

Communication

Comprehension

Considered Level of English

Cross Cultural Issues

+ Education

English in Primary School

English in Secondary (High) School

Group Projects

+ Preferences

+ Technology

+ Writing

Appendix N: Final Themes and Categories

| Main Categories | Sub-categories | Lower categories | Lowest Category | Notes |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| Motivation | Communication | Human Contact * | | <i>*See Preferences</i> |
| | Comprehension | | | |
| | Considered level of English | Weak, Average, Very Good * | | <i>*Not important to discussion</i> |
| | Attitudes | Cross Cultural Issues | | |
| | Education | Private Lessons Traditional Ways | Books, Rote Learning , Translation | |
| | English in Primary School | | | |
| | English in Secondary School | | | |
| | Group Projects | | | |
| | Language Ability * | | | <i>*did not come up in interviews</i> |
| Preferences | | Best Solution Human Beings Using Technology | | |
| Technology | | Computer Convenience Factor Error Correction | Grammar Check (Microsoft Word), | |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| | Grammarly, Mandalay , Mobile Phones - Predictive Text, Other , Programs On- Line, Spell Check (Microsoft Word), Turnitin, Write Click For Entertainment, | Facebook , YouTube Facebook , YouTube | |
| Internet | | | |
| iPad | | | |
| Language Learning | | | <i>*Under “Movies”</i> |
| | For Language Learning | | |
| | Internet – DVDs/Videos , * | | |
| Mandelay Mobile Phone Motivation to Use Technology | Interactive Exercises, Movies with and without subtitles; Other, Rosetta Stone, Support , Tell- Me-More | | <i>*Mentione d only once</i> |
| Teachers’ Use of Technology Technology in Primary School Technology in Secondary School | Texting Get Good Grades Specific Individual Reasons Subscribe to Courses * | Subtitles | <i>*Mentione d only once</i> |
| Tools | Cartoons Sound Recordings | | |

| | | |
|---------|--|--|
| | | <p>Movies</p> <p><i>Disadvantages</i></p> <p><i>of</i></p> <p><i>Technology*</i></p> <p>Google Glass,</p> <p>Google</p> <p>Translate,</p> <p>Mandalay,</p> <p>Microsoft</p> <p>Word – Spell</p> <p>& Grammar</p> <p>Check,</p> <p>Multitran.ru,</p> <p>MyWritingLa</p> <p>b, On-Line</p> <p>Dictionary,</p> <p>Socrates,</p> <p>Stumble</p> <p>Upon,</p> <p>Translator,</p> <p>TV, Write-</p> <p>Click</p> <p>Google</p> <p>Translate</p> |
| Writing | <p>Translation</p> <p>Barriers to</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>Well</p> <p>Hand-</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>Motivation</p> <p>to Write</p> <p>Well</p> | <p>Referencing</p> <p>Strategy for</p> <p>Writing</p> <p>Writing E-</p> <p>Mails</p> |

Key: Bold = elements added after further examination of transcripts

Italics = explanations for deletion, see column on far right for explanation

Strikethru = Categories from researcher's initial impressions, but later dismissed.

Appendix O: General Comments (Four Themes)

Focus Group A

“[students] just want to get over with the projects, they don't really consider on it, how to do it, so they don't care.”

Focus Group B

“... We have translators, talking dictionaries, to translate from our native languages into English (Asian students)... you can type or talk into it...”

Interviews

Student P: “... random websites...”

Student U: “Google Translate is the quickest dictionary....” However, they were also very critical of these tools, saying:

Student E: “...technology is limited... humans are needed for explanations....”

Student I: “...error-correction tools are just used as a security, a check....”

Student Q: “...Google Translate has improved... it is very useful for words...synonyms...”

Student R: “...Babble will check spelling...your work is corrected each time ...but no explanations are given....”

Theme One: Technology and Its Uses

Student A: “These tools also have negative effects, the spelling effects, because I can just click and it will help me to change the word. Sometimes I don’t spend time to remember what is the correct word, so next time I will make the same mistake.”

Student V: “... you learn fast with English/American movies with subtitles....”

Student C: “... we were just with books... the teacher read things, we had grammar, we never used projector.... I was old style....”

Student D: “... our teacher was Russian, most of the time they are Russian but she had a really good level of English and she lived in London for a while and she was really passionate about her job.... I have quite good basis because of her because she gave us a lot of grammar and tools, so I’m pretty happy about it.”

Student K: “...even the teacher didn’t know English. He or she just knows some grammar rules....”

Theme Two—Preferences

Student A: “... there are some web-sites... sometimes they are not even better than my teacher.... not very useful. I use Write-Click to check my grammar, most times it is my teacher who will help me check my work....”

Interviewees spoke about technology on its own, for example, the Internet being suited to entertainment but “for learning, a human brain is needed” (Student B). In this second theme too, the human influence was considered both from the error-correction point of view and for language learning. Students said they would prefer to use their classmates to check their language work rather than a technical tool. One student even said she would refer to old high school notes (Student D). The majority were more

positively disposed towards humans and the traditional approach. According to Student F, many aspects of language learning are dependent on humans, “even motivation depends on the teacher....” The only tool that most students liked was the online dictionary. Students appreciated having large dictionary resources at their fingertips and in small format (mobile phone).

Student B: “...the best solution is a combination of technology and brain...”

Student E: “...if it is something important for me, where I want to do well, then I would show it to someone, my classmates, my boyfriend, even my old high school teacher back home...they can see straightaway some mistakes....”

Student F: “...if I have any doubt about spelling, I give it to my father or my godmother who is an English teacher...so I did it like this and I never used online technology for this ...I find it unnatural....”

Student D: “...if I have a particular question, I will ask my friends who speak perfectly English or the teacher, because not always technology can really say, mention what is wrong and why. Even this writing lab (MyWritingLab), yes it sounds like a cool and really modern app that can help me, but I still—I don’t know why, maybe it’s because I don’t rely and that’s it. I rely on experience, I rely on books, on all kinds of many other things.”

Student Q: “Technology is convenient both for the teacher and the student...But for proper learning? No!”

Student R: “A computer does not see.... If a student does not understand something, it doesn’t repeat”.

Theme Three—Writing

Student E: "...technology is limited. Humans are needed for explanations...."

Student F: "... it's unnatural not to go to a human being for help...."

Student G: "... use of technology in language learning is still in the developing stage..."

Student H: "...technology will not give you the pressure needed to motivate you."

Student O: "...Tell-Me-More courses just help speaking more...."

Student P: "...Tell.Me-More requires a lot of self-discipline and time...."

Student M: "...I use error-correction tools very little...." "MyWritingLab...access to the program is difficult, there are no explanations...."

Student O: "...Technology is something given on top of the course, rather than being an independent way of learning."

Theme Four—Motivation

Student Q: "It is self-rewarding to write well."

Student N: "Writing well is like public speaking. It is professional credibility."

Student O: "Writing (well) is kind of like your business card."

Student S: "Writing is a business tool."

Student F: "It projects a certain image of who you are and how serious you are about your work."

Student I: "First impressions are important, especially to be taken seriously."

Students also referred to cross-cultural differences in motivation to write well.

Many assessments in this college in Switzerland are group projects, students of different

backgrounds have different ways of working. Some students, on the other hand, thought that it was not necessary for nonnative speakers to write well, and one student said emphatically: “You just see and write... you never speak out... some nationalities just don’t want to speak to foreigners” (Student M).

Student S: “Maturity helps students be motivated...age, nationality (it is easier for Europeans with early European education).”