

Addressing EFL Productive Skills Challenges: Observational Insights and Effective Feedback Strategies

Aborder les défis des compétences productives en anglais langue étrangère (EFL) : perspectives observationnelles et stratégies de feedback efficaces

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Abstract:

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is vital for global communication, yet learners often struggle to develop the essential productive skills it requires. This study delves into the challenges second-year LMD students at Naama University have in developing writing and speaking skills throughout the course of a semester. The study involved 33 second-year LMD students and used a mixed-methods approach. As part of the approach, classroom observations, audio recordings, and targeted feedback were utilized to identify key challenges in both writing and speaking. The qualitative data from classroom observations and audio recordings revealed detailed insights into students' performance and identified specific hurdles to mastering certain skills. The quantitative part entailed implementing tailored feedback mechanisms, which were evaluated using pre-and post-assessments to determine their impact on student performance. The findings emphasize the relevance of feedback and activity-based learning in improving EFL productive skills and make practical recommendations for teaching approaches.

Keywords: English as a Foreign Language (EFL) - Productive Skills - Writing Challenges - Speaking Challenges - Feedback Strategies.

Résumé :

L'anglais langue étrangère (EFL) est essentiel pour la communication mondiale, mais les apprenants peinent souvent à développer les compétences productives indispensables qu'il exige. Néanmoins, ces dernières représentent souvent un défi pour les étudiants. La présente recherche examine les difficultés rencontrées par les étudiants de deuxième année LMD de l'Université de Naama dans le développement de ces compétences au cours d'un semestre. L'étude, menée auprès de 33 étudiants, adopte une approche mixte combinant observation en classe, enregistrements audio et rétroaction ciblée. Les données qualitatives ont permis d'identifier les obstacles spécifiques à la maîtrise des compétences productives, tandis que la composante quantitative, fondée sur des prétests et post-tests, a mesuré l'impact de la rétroaction sur les performances. Les résultats confirment l'efficacité de la rétroaction formative et de l'apprentissage par l'activité dans l'amélioration des compétences productives et suggèrent des orientations pédagogiques pertinentes pour l'enseignement de l'EFL.

Mots- clés : Anglais langue étrangère (EFL) – Compétences productives – Difficultés en expression écrite – Difficultés en expression orale – Stratégies de rétroaction.

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Introduction

In the contemporary globalised landscape, English as a foreign language (EFL) is essential for academic, professional, and social communication. In EFL, productive skills – writing and speaking – are fundamental for efficient communication and interaction. However, these skills are often the most problematic for learners, especially in non-native English-speaking environments, due to linguistic accuracy, coherence, fluency, pronunciation, and confidence challenges. Limited exposure to authentic English usage and inadequately tailored feedback exacerbate these challenges.

At Naama University, second-year LMD students encounter considerable challenges in developing their productive abilities. Writing challenges encompass issues related to grammatical accuracy, coherence, and lexical choice, whereas pronunciation errors, insufficient fluency, and hesitancy in interaction characterise speaking difficulties. These challenges impede their academic achievement and capacity for effective real-world communication.

This study aims to identify these students' challenges and evaluate the efficacy of targeted feedback strategies in addressing these difficulties. By addressing these issues, the research seeks to enhance students' communicative competence and provide valuable insights for improving EFL instruction.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Productive Skills in EFL Contexts

Writing and speaking are essential to effective communication within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. These competencies empower learners to express their ideas clearly, engage in substantive discussions, and participate in academic, professional, and social interactions. Writing is a productive skill that necessitates the capability to compose coherent and grammatically precise texts, whereas speaking demands fluency, accurate pronunciation, and the ability to communicate in real-time.

As articulated by Harmer (2007), productive skills encompass not only linguistic accuracy but also entail cognitive processes, including the organisation of thoughts, the selection of suitable vocabulary, and the adaptation of language to various contexts. Nonetheless, cultivating these skills presents significant challenges for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in non-native environments, primarily due to restricted exposure to authentic language usage, inadequate opportunities for practice, and the cognitive demands inherent in real-time language production.

Furthermore, the interaction between linguistic knowledge and cognitive abilities complicates the acquisition of productive skills. Learners must comprehend grammatical rules

and vocabulary and employ them effectively in both writing and speaking tasks. This simultaneous demand frequently results in errors, hesitations, and diminished confidence, especially among learners in academic environments where effective communication is paramount (Hyland, 2019). Consequently, although productive skills are crucial for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, their advancement presents a considerable challenge that necessitates implementing focused instructional strategies.

1.2. Challenges in Writing and Speaking

EFL learners encounter a multitude of challenges in acquiring productive skills.

Writing constitutes a multifaceted skill that challenges native speakers and learners of a second language, as evidenced by the metaphors employed by authors such as Fitzgerald, Strachey, and Eliot (Hedge, 2005). In contrast to spoken language, written communication necessitates systematic organisation, clarity, and adherence to precise grammatical conventions, thereby presenting significant challenges for individuals learning English. Arab students, for example, encounter difficulties with word order, tense consistency, and coherence due to interference from their first language (Al-Gharbally, 2015; AbuRass, 2015). Furthermore, inflexible pedagogical techniques impede the development of essay-writing skills by overlooking interactive methodologies (Nyang'au, 2014). In Oman, students encounter vocabulary and content difficulties, necessitating a comprehensive approach to reading and writing instruction (Seyabi & Tuzlukova, 2014). Frequent challenges encompass the formulation of a thesis, the cohesion of paragraphs, and the selection of appropriate vocabulary, necessitating specific feedback and customised strategies (Ariyanti & Fitriana, 2017; Ahmed, 2019). External factors such as class size and limited resources exacerbate the challenges associated with instruction, thereby rendering structured guidance imperative for enhancing writing skills (Hidayati, 2018).

Conversely, speaking entails a distinct array of challenges. Pronunciation errors, including misarticulating phonemes or applying inappropriate stress patterns, are common and can significantly hinder intelligibility (Thornbury, 2005). Fluency challenges, marked by frequent pauses, the use of filler words, and instances of repetition, significantly impede learners' capacity to communicate easily. These challenges are frequently intensified by psychological factors, including anxiety and diminished self-confidence, which may dissuade learners from engaging in speaking activities.

The restricted access to authentic language input constitutes a substantial factor contributing to these difficulties. In numerous English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, learners encounter limited opportunities to interact with native speakers or engage with authentic materials, constraining their capacity to internalise natural language patterns (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). Moreover, the absence of effective feedback in numerous instructional environments results in learners frequently being unconscious of their mistakes and lacking direction on rectifying them. In the face of linguistic, cognitive, and environmental barriers, it is difficult to develop productive skills, making it an extremely complex issue.

1.3. Effective Feedback Strategies in Language Acquisition

Feedback is generally recognised as an essential element in language acquisition, especially in enhancing productive skills. It functions as a tool for learners to recognise and rectify errors, enhance their language proficiency, and cultivate confidence in their capabilities. Research has identified several feedback strategies that are particularly effective in addressing the challenges encountered by EFL learners.

Explicit error correction entails directly identifying errors and providing the correct form. This strategy effectively enhances grammatical accuracy, providing explicit and prompt guidance regarding particular errors (Ellis, 2009). Conversely, recasting entails reformulating a learner's erroneous utterance without explicitly drawing attention to the error. This technique is less intrusive and enables learners to deduce the appropriate form through contextual cues, thereby rendering it especially beneficial for enhancing fluency and pronunciation (Mackey & Goo, 2007). Additionally, metalinguistic feedback, which encompasses the provision of explanations or enquiries regarding linguistic rules, fosters critical thinking among learners concerning their errors and facilitates an understanding of the foundational linguistic principles. This strategy is particularly advantageous for mitigating persistent grammatical challenges and promoting sustained learning (Ellis, 2009). Interactive activities, including role-playing and narrative, allow learners to practise speaking in dynamic and engaging contexts while receiving prompt feedback. These activities improve fluency and boost confidence, making learning more engaging and motivating.

The effectiveness of feedback is further enhanced when it is tailored to the specific needs of learners. For instance, peer correction fosters collaborative learning, allowing students to benefit from one another's strengths and weaknesses. In a comparable manner, non-verbal feedback—such as facial expressions or variations in tone—can discreetly indicate errors without interrupting the continuity of communication. Together, these strategies foster a conducive learning environment that encourages active engagement and self-reflection, thereby enhancing productive skills.

1.4. Research Gaps

Despite the extensive body of research on EFL productive skills and feedback strategies, several gaps remain, particularly in the context of Algerian higher education.

Although research has examined the challenges faced by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners in diverse contexts, there exists a lack of studies addressing the difficulties encountered by second-year LMD (Licence-Master-Doctorate) students in Algeria. These students frequently encounter distinct challenges attributable to the particularities of the Algerian educational system, which include constrained resources, substantial class sizes, and an emphasis on repetitive memorisation rather than on the development of communicative proficiency.

Moreover, although the efficacy of feedback strategies has been extensively examined, there is a lack of research regarding the influence of activity-based methods, such as role-playing and narrative, on enhancing both writing and speaking competencies among Algerian learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Most current research predominantly concentrates on

writing or speaking in isolation rather than investigating the interrelationship between these two competencies. Furthermore, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the efficacy of customised feedback strategies in mitigating the particular linguistic and psychological obstacles encountered by this cohort of learners. This study seeks to rectify these deficiencies by examining the distinct challenges encountered by second-year LMD students at Naama University and assessing the efficacy of feedback-oriented interventions in overcoming these obstacles. By emphasising both writing and speaking competencies and integrating activity-based methods, the research offers an in-depth comprehension of how specific feedback can improve the productive skills of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners within this framework.

1.5. Research Questions/Hypotheses

1. What are the primary challenges second-year LMD students face at Naama University in developing EFL writing and speaking skills?
2. How effective are targeted feedback strategies in improving students' productive skills?
3. What role does activity-based learning play in enhancing EFL learners' confidence and fluency in speaking and writing?

This study is grounded in the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996), which posits that language acquisition is facilitated through meaningful interaction and feedback. Additionally, it draws on Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, emphasizing the role of social interaction and scaffolding in learning. Integrating these theories provides a robust framework for understanding how feedback and collaborative activities can enhance EFL learners' productive skills.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, to provide a thorough comprehension of the challenges encountered by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners and the efficacy of specific feedback strategies. The mixed-methods approach was selected to triangulate data, thereby facilitating a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the research problem.

The quantitative aspect included classroom observations and audio recordings, which yielded comprehensive and descriptive insights into the challenges faced by students in their writing and speaking endeavours. These methodologies facilitated a comprehensive examination of the particular errors committed by students, their interaction patterns, and their reactions to feedback. The quantitative component encompassed pre- and post-assessments designed to evaluate the influence of feedback strategies on students' productive skills. This dual methodology allowed the researchers to encompass both the extensive and intricate

aspects of the phenomena under examination, thereby facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the research enquiries.

2.2. Participants

The research encompassed a cohort of 33 second-year LMD (Licence-Master-Doctorate) students who are currently enrolled at the Naama University in Algeria. The participants, aged between 18 and 22, exhibited a relatively equitable gender distribution (15 males and 18 females). All participants were non-native English speakers possessing intermediate proficiency levels, as assessed by their performance in prior English courses. The selection of these participants was predicated upon the challenges with productive abilities identified by their instructors, thereby rendering them a suitable sample for examining the efficacy of feedback strategies.

Gender	Count	Percentage %
Male	15	45.45
Female	18	54.55
Total	33	100

Table 1 : Participant Distribution

2.3.Data Collection

The study was conducted over one semester, and to ensure a comprehensive data collection process, the study utilized the following tools:

2.3.1. Observational-Checklists:

Observational checklists were employed during classroom sessions to methodically record students' errors and the feedback provided by the instructor. These evaluations encompassed categories including grammatical accuracy, vocabulary usage, coherence, fluency, and pronunciation. The real-time documentation facilitated the prompt identification of persistent issues and the assessment of the efficacy of feedback strategies.

2.3.2. Audio-recordings:

Classroom interactions were documented to meticulously capture specific occurrences of speaking errors and the corresponding feedback provided. Subsequent to their recording, these audio files were transcribed and analyzed to identify patterns of errors among students. The audio data additionally offered insights into the dynamics of feedback provision and student reactions.

3. Results

3.1.Frequency, Types, and Feedback Strategies for Speaking Errors

To evaluate the intervention's effectiveness on students' speaking performance, **Table 2** analyses the frequency of speaking errors before and after the intervention, highlighting its

impact on error reduction. **Table 3** summarizes the pre-test and post-test results' mean, standard deviation, t-statistic, and p-value.

Table 4 classifies common speaking errors with descriptions and examples, while **Table 5** outlines feedback strategies, ranging from direct correction to implicit techniques, to foster self-awareness and language development.

Type of Speaking Error	Before Intervention (%)	After Intervention (%)
Pronunciation Errors	40%	15%
Fluency Issues	35%	10%
Grammatical Errors in Speech	25%	10%
Vocabulary Limitations	30%	15%
Interactional Hesitancy	45%	20%

Table 2: Frequency of Speaking Errors

Categories	n	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	T	Sig (P-Value)
Pre-Test	33	35.00	7.07	9.59	< 0.001
Post-Test	33	14.00	3.74	-	-

Table 3: Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Speaking Errors

The initial mean score of 35.00% (SD = 7.07%) indicated a considerable prevalence of speaking errors; however, post-intervention, the mean score decreased to 14.00% (SD = 3.74%), demonstrating a marked improvement. The reduction was found to be statistically significant ($t = 9.59$, $p < 0.001$), affirming the intervention's efficacy.

Error Type	Description	Examples
Pronunciation Errors	Mispronunciation of sounds, incorrect stress patterns, or intonation issues that make speech unclear.	- Pronouncing "vegetable" as /'vedʒtə,bəl/ instead of /'vedʒtəb(ə)l/. - Stressing the wrong syllable in "address" (e.g., /'ædres/ instead of /ə'dres/). - Flat intonation in questions, e.g., "Are you coming?" with a downward tone.
Fluency Issues	Frequent pauses, filler words, or repetition due to difficulty in maintaining a smooth flow of speech.	- "I... uh... went to the... uh... market, and... and I bought... um... some apples." - Repeating words: "I-I-I think..."
Grammatical Errors	Incorrect use of grammar structures in spoken sentences.	- "She don't like it" instead of "She doesn't like it." - "He go to school every day" instead of "He goes to school."
Vocabulary Limitations	Difficulty selecting appropriate words or overusing basic vocabulary, leading to vague or unclear communication.	- Overusing basic words: "It was good. The movie was good." - Incorrect word choice: "I need to borrow you my book."
Code-Switching (Mixing Arabic and English)	Alternating between languages within a single utterance due to lexical gaps or habit.	- "I will bring the <i>maktab</i> tomorrow" (<i>maktab</i> means "desk" in Arabic). - "She said this is <i>mouhim</i> ," meaning "important" in Arabic.

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Borrowing (Using French words with English)	Incorporating French words into English sentences, often for stylistic or habitual reasons.	- "We had a <i>rendezvous</i> yesterday." - "Can you pass me the <i>stylo</i>?" (French for "pen").
Interactional Hesitancy	Reluctance to engage in conversations due to lack of confidence or fear of making mistakes.	- Silent pauses before answering: "Um... I don't know... maybe... yes?" - Speaking only in short phrases, like "Yes" or "No."

Table 4: Types of Speaking Errors

Feedback Strategy	Examples
Explicit Error Correction	- Student: "He go to school every day." - Teacher: "No, it's 'He goes to school every day.'"
Recasting	- Student: "I goed to the park." - Teacher: "Oh, you went to the park? That sounds fun!"
Metalinguistic Feedback	- Student: "She don't like apples." - Teacher: "Is 'don't' correct for third-person singular? Think about the rule."
Clarification Requests	- Student: "He speak very good English." - Teacher: "Pardon? Can you say that again?"
Echoing	- Student: "She can sings well." - Teacher: "She can sings?"
Tone Indication	- Student: "I have many informations." - Teacher: "You have many informations?" (emphasizing the error in tone).
Reformulation	- Student: "Yesterday, I eated pizza." - Teacher: "Oh, yesterday you ate pizza?"
Peer Correction	- Teacher: "Can someone help Ahmed with this sentence: 'She don't like apples'?"
Activity-Based Feedback	- Role-Playing: Simulating a marketplace conversation. - Storytelling: Narrating weekend stories with feedback.
Facial Expressions	- A confused look for incorrect usage, prompting the student to reconsider their answer.

Table 5: Feedback Strategies

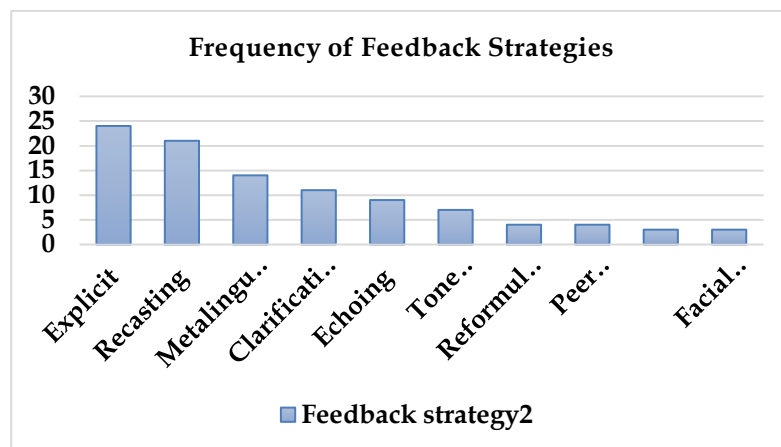


Figure 1: Frequency of Feedback Strategies

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of diverse feedback strategies employed throughout the intervention sessions. Explicit Error Correction and Recasting are identified as the most frequently employed strategies, highlighting their importance in directly rectifying learner errors and reformulating incorrect linguistic expressions. Metalinguistic feedback and reformulation are also prominently featured, illustrating their efficacy in fostering critical reflection on linguistic rules and improving linguistic precision. Moderately employed strategies, such as Clarification Requests, Peer Correction, and Activity-Based Feedback, demonstrate their effectiveness in promoting active participation and facilitating collaborative learning environments. Conversely, less commonly employed strategies like Tone Indication and Facial Expressions seem to operate as supplementary mechanisms, gently steering learners towards self-correction. This strategic distribution exemplifies a well-considered amalgamation of both direct and indirect feedback strategies designed to thoroughly facilitate the enhancement of students' proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

3.2. Writing Errors

Table 6 highlights students' samples' most common writing errors, including their frequency and percentage. We examined student writing samples for common errors in grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, redundancy, awkward wording, transitions, conclusions, and spelling. Each error type was collected and analyzed for frequency, identifying major areas where students struggle.

Aspect Analyzed	Occurrences	Percentage (%)
Grammar Errors	25	89%
Punctuation Errors	23	82%
Sentence Structure Issues	22	79%
Redundancy or Wordiness	18	64%
Awkward Phrasing	20	71%
Lack of Transition	15	54%
Weak or Missing Conclusion	16	57%
Spelling Errors	5	18%

Table 6: Frequency of Common Writing Errors

The analysis of students' writing samples reveals a high prevalence of **Grammar Errors**, with 89% of the samples exhibiting issues such as incorrect subject-verb agreement, verb tense misuse, and improper preposition usage. For example, sentences like "People is likely" and "It make easier for" demonstrate how these errors undermine readability and coherence. The frequent occurrence of such errors suggests that students may lack a solid understanding of fundamental grammatical rules. This could stem from insufficient exposure to accurate sentence structures or limited practice with grammar in varied contexts. These errors affect the clarity of students' writing and disrupt the logical flow of ideas, making it difficult for readers to follow the intended message.

Punctuation Errors are another significant issue, occurring in 82% of the samples. Misuse of punctuation marks, such as missing periods, incorrect comma placement, or using commas where colons are needed, often leads to confusion and disrupts the rhythm of sentences. For instance, the sentence "The impact of social media, its positive and its negative" fails to convey a clear distinction due to improper punctuation. These errors highlight the need for a more comprehensive understanding of punctuation rules and their application to improve sentence clarity. Students' inability to handle punctuation effectively may result from a lack of emphasis on its importance during writing instruction, leaving them unprepared to manage complex sentence structures.

Issues with **Sentence Structure** were present in 79% of the samples, indicating widespread difficulty in forming clear and cohesive sentences. Poorly constructed sentences, such as "When you communicate with people Facebook Instagram TikTok," lack necessary conjunctions and punctuation, making them confusing and fragmented. Such structural weaknesses suggest that students struggle to organize their ideas logically and fail to recognize the importance of syntactic relationships within and between clauses. This lack of clarity can impede the effective communication of ideas and reflects the need for targeted instruction on sentence formation and cohesion to help students develop a more polished and professional writing style.

Awkward Phrasing was found in 71% of the samples, pointing to significant challenges with word choice and expression. Sentences like "Social media has big and small helpful things that help" exemplify unnatural and repetitive language, which diminishes the overall quality of writing. These issues likely stem from a limited vocabulary or unfamiliarity with idiomatic expressions and stylistic conventions in English. The use of awkward phrasing often obscures the intended meaning, making it difficult for readers to engage with the text. Addressing this issue requires focusing on vocabulary enrichment and exposure to well-written texts that model concise and effective language use.

Redundancy and Wordiness, observed in 64% of the samples, further detract from the quality of students' writing. Repetitive phrases like "The impact of social media on society is a lot of positive and negative impacts on society" illustrate how unnecessary repetition and overly lengthy explanations dilute the strength of the argument. This tendency toward redundancy suggests that students may struggle to articulate their ideas concisely or fail to recognize when their message has already been conveyed. Encouraging students to prioritize clarity and conciseness in their writing can help them avoid wordiness and make their arguments more compelling and precise.

Over half of the samples, specifically 54%, displayed a **Lack of Transitions**, leading to disjointed and fragmented ideas. Sentences such as "Social media connects people. It is also good for businesses" illustrate the absence of cohesive phrasing needed to link ideas smoothly. This issue reflects a lack of understanding of how transitions function to create logical relationships between sentences and paragraphs. Without these connections, the text can feel

abrupt and unorganized, undermining the writer's ability to present a clear and persuasive argument. Instruction focused on teaching transitional devices and their role in creating coherence could help address this problem.

Weak or **Missing Conclusions** were evident in 57% of the samples, demonstrating a consistent challenge in providing a strong and thoughtful ending to written pieces. Sentences like "So the impact of social media" fail to encapsulate the main points or provide a compelling summary, leaving readers with an incomplete understanding of the argument. This lack of depth in conclusions indicates that students may not fully grasp the purpose of a concluding statement or how to synthesize their ideas effectively. By emphasizing the role of conclusions in reinforcing the main argument and leaving a lasting impression, educators can help students develop the skills necessary to craft more impactful endings.

Although **Spelling Errors** were the least frequent, appearing in 18% of the samples, they still pose challenges to the professionalism and readability of students' writing. Mistakes such as "face back" instead of "Facebook" demonstrate how even minor errors can detract from the credibility of the text. These issues may arise from carelessness, overreliance on spell-check tools, or unfamiliarity with correct spelling. While not as pervasive as other errors, addressing spelling problems remains essential to ensure that students' writing is polished and free from distractions that could undermine their message.

3.3. Feedback strategies used to address writing deficiencies

Following a thorough analysis of students' writing performance over the course of one semester, several feedback strategies were implemented to address persistent deficiencies and enhance their overall proficiency. The teacher adopted a multifaceted approach, combining formative, individualized, and technology-assisted feedback to provide targeted support and foster improvement.

Formative feedback was systematically provided, offering timely grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure corrections. This could be done through practical sessions where the teacher assigns students writing tasks to assess their writing competence with due regard to dealing with the expected mistakes they may manifest.

The rubric-based assessment was integrated through Moodle, allowing students to engage in digital writing to reduce errors while becoming familiar with evaluation criteria through a structured grading system aligned with the official assessment grid.

Collaborative writing was introduced as a peer-supported approach, encouraging brainstorming, drafting, and revision to enhance coherence and idea development.

Individualized feedback was prioritized, with the teacher offering targeted assistance to students seeking guidance on vocabulary choices, grammar rules, and writing style.

Additionally, **automated feedback** tools available on Moodle provided instant corrective suggestions on linguistic aspects, complementing teacher feedback.

Furthermore, the teacher employed **model paragraphs**, a successful strategy that enabled students to familiarize themselves with the essential elements of well-crafted writing, such as

topic sentences, supporting sentences, and the concluding sentence, as well as clarity and coherence.

By incorporating these feedback strategies, students were equipped with the necessary tools to refine their writing skills effectively and bridge the gaps identified in their performance.

4. Discussion

4.1. Challenges Faced by Second-Year LMD Students at Naama University in Developing EFL Writing and Speaking Skills

Second-year LMD students at Naama University experience considerable linguistic and psychological obstacles that limit their language proficiency. From a linguistic perspective, students encounter challenges related to a restricted vocabulary, grammatical errors, and difficulties in pronunciation, as demonstrated by the repetitive errors noted during classroom interactions. Code-switching makes these challenges worse, wherein students integrate Arabic or French lexicon into their English discourse, thereby reflecting a deficiency in lexical confidence and fluency (Ellis, 2008). These challenges are consistent with prior research indicating that insufficient lexical knowledge may hinder second language acquisition and fluency (Nation, 2001). From a psychological perspective, students often encounter decreased self-confidence, anxiety regarding the possibility of errors, and unwillingness to engage in interactions, all of which serve to limit their active participation in speaking and writing activities (Horwitz, 2010). These emotional barriers are frequently associated with anxiety and the fear of negative evaluation, both of which negatively impact the process of language acquisition (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Moreover, poor exposure to genuine language usage and a lack of practice opportunities further limit students' communicative competence, thereby increasing their unwillingness to participate in language production. The classroom environment can further compound these challenges if it fails to properly foster risk-taking and interaction, both of which are crucial for language development (Dörnyei, 2005). To effectively address these linguistic and psychological barriers, it is essential to cultivate a more supportive learning environment, enhance opportunities for genuine communication, and implement targeted strategies to develop both linguistic proficiency and self-assurance.

Students face many challenges in their writing that impact clarity, coherence, and overall efficacy. Grammatical inaccuracies, including errors in subject-verb agreement, verb tense consistency, and preposition usage, often disrupt readability and undermine the logical progression of ideas (Ferris, 2018). Likewise, the improper use of punctuation results in ambiguity, as the absence or incorrect placement of punctuation marks weakens the clarity of sentences. This is a prevalent challenge language learners encounter (Truscott, 2016). Structural challenges increase the flexible nature of writing, as numerous students struggle to formulate coherent and well-structured sentences. Inelegant diction, frequently coming from a restricted vocabulary and challenges in selecting appropriate terminology, undermines the quality of expression. Additionally, redundancy and verbosity make arguments less precise and impactful (Hyland, 2003). Furthermore, the lack of suitable transitions compromises the logical coherence between concepts, resulting in a fragmented and disjointed reading experience (Swales & Feak, 2012). Numerous students struggle to articulate powerful conclusions, often failing to

synthesise essential points effectively or to deliver a coherent conclusion to their written work. While spelling errors occur less frequently, they continue to impact both readability and professionalism, as inadequate spelling can diminish the credibility of academic writing (Nation, 2009). These ongoing challenges highlight the necessity for focused instruction and systematic practice to improve students' grammatical precision, sentence structure, and overall coherence in writing.

4.2. Effectiveness of Targeted Feedback Strategies in Improving Students Productive Skills

The intervention illustrated the efficacy of targeted feedback strategies in reducing these challenges and enhancing students writing and speaking competencies. Strategies such as explicit error correction and recasting offered immediate and unambiguous direction, facilitating students' ability to recognise and correct the errors they made. Rewriting facilitated implicit correction without disturbing the natural flow of communication, thereby serving as an invaluable instrument for enhancing fluency and comprehension. Metalinguistic feedback and requests for clarification fostered a more profound study of linguistic rules and structures, thereby enhancing self-regulation and facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of grammar and syntax. Similarly, peer correction facilitated opportunities for collaborative learning, enabling students to learn from one another and errors and cultivate a sense of collective accountability for their educational

journey. The quantitative data derived from the study indicated substantial decreases in error frequencies, particularly concerning fluency and pronunciation. This suggests that the implemented feedback strategies effectively targeted the specific areas of difficulty experienced by the students. The decrease in interactional hesitancy indicates that constructive feedback and a nurturing classroom atmosphere were instrumental in

enhancing students' confidence. Incorporating diverse feedback strategies throughout the semester markedly enhanced students' writing abilities. By integrating formative, personalised, and technology-enhanced feedback, this approach adeptly tackled persistent grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure issues. Implementing rubric-based assessment on Moodle gave students a more comprehensive comprehension of grading criteria while promoting precision in digital writing.

Collaborative writing exercises facilitated peer interaction, thereby improving coherence and the organisation of ideas through collective ideation and revision. Concurrently, tailored feedback from educators provided personalised guidance, while automated feedback mechanisms supplied prompt linguistic corrections, thereby enhancing the learning experience beyond traditional classroom instruction. Furthermore, the model paragraphs served as invaluable references, assisting students in comprehending fundamental writing structures and enhancing clarity.

4.3. Role of Activity-Based Learning in Enhancing Confidence and Fluency

Activity-based learning has emerged as a crucial methodology for boosting students' confidence and fluency in both oral and written communication. Engagement in activities such as

role-playing, narrative, and group discussions afforded students significant, contextualised opportunities to refine their language skills. These interactive activities promoted active engagement, relieved anxiety, and cultivated a sense of enjoyment in the learning process.

Role-playing enabled students to engage with language in practical and dynamic contexts by simulating real-life scenarios, thereby augmenting their capacity to communicate effectively across a variety of situations. Storytelling and group discussions fostered creativity, collaboration, and the application of higher-order thinking skills, all of which are crucial for cultivating fluency and coherence in both verbal and written communication.

The incorporation of activity-based learning significantly contributed to mitigating the phenomenon of code-switching by immersing students in environments exclusively conducted in English, thereby prompting them to depend on their English vocabulary and expressions. This methodology enhanced linguistic proficiency and fostered a sense of accomplishment, thereby encouraging students to embrace challenges and engage actively in language production.

6. Limitations of the Study

Regardless of its valuable insights, this study is subject to certain limitations. Initially, the study was conducted solely with second-year LMD students at Naama University, which may restrict the applicability of the findings to other student demographics. Furthermore, the short duration of the intervention, which lasted merely one semester, may have been inadequate to assess long-term enhancements in students' adequately productive skills. Moreover, the study was predicated on self-reported data and classroom observations, both of which may introduce bias and compromise the objectivity of the findings.

Conclusion

This study examined the challenges encountered by second-year LMD students at Naama University in developing their EFL writing and speaking skills. The findings underscore significant linguistic and psychological obstacles, which encompass a restricted vocabulary, grammatical inaccuracies, challenges in pronunciation, and diminished self-confidence, all worsened by insufficient exposure to authentic language input.

The research further illustrated the efficacy of targeted feedback strategies in enhancing fluency, pronunciation, and grammatical accuracy, including explicit error correction, recasting, metalinguistic feedback, and peer correction. These strategies improved linguistic precision, cultivated self-assurance, and diminished communicative reluctance. The incorporation of technology-assisted feedback, assessment guidelines, and collaborative writing exercises significantly enhanced the learning experience. Activity-based learning, especially through the modalities of role-playing and storytelling, fostered engagement and creativity while diminishing the dependence on code-switching. notwithstanding its contributions, the study is constrained by its concentration on a particular student cohort and the brief duration of the intervention, which may influence the generalisability of the results. Furthermore, it is essential to consider the potential biases inherent in self-reported data and classroom observations.

Ultimately, this research provides valuable insights into the challenges encountered by Algerian EFL learners and offers practical recommendations for incorporating feedback strategies and activity-based learning into curricula. These findings have the potential to guide future research on customised interventions aimed at improving language acquisition across various educational settings.

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