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FOSTERING STUDENTS WRITING SKILLS THROUGH THE USE OF COMPUTER AND ITS MULTIMEDIA SYSTEM IN ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASS IN BENIN

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ABSTRACT

This survey aims to assess the effectiveness of computer and its multimedia system in the teaching and improvement of students writing skills in English as a foreign language. The study adopts the exploratory, qualitative, and the quantitative methods. The study was carried out in public and private secondary schools in Benin and in language centres in the state, during the second semester of the academic year 2019-2020. The respondents involved in this study included 21 teachers and 205 students randomly selected from four chosen schools and language centres. The students belong to class options, A, B, C and D (A, relating to letters, B to human sciences, C to exact sciences, and D, to common sciences) added to advanced level students. Data collection was undertaken through the questionnaires, class observations and interviews. Data analysis was accomplished via the aid of a statistical tool called SPSS (Statistical Package for Social science). The findings revealed that very few teachers in Benin use computer to teach English as a foreign language in their classes. The results also revealed that many students prefer traditional methods of teaching, and very few of them like writing skill. The researcher reached some conclusions and made some suggestions and recommendations.

Contribution/Originality: This is one of very few studies in Beninese context which have investigated on how computer can make students go beyond the traditional writing techniques in EFL classes. Those engage in teaching EFL to learners can find what is needed as a basic training in the theoretical issues of Foreign and understanding of a broad range of pedagogical issues that shape classroom writing instructions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Learning a language other than one's mother tongue is both an intensive and time-consuming activity. Raimes (1983) states that:

> *When we learn a second language, we learn to communicate with other people: to understand them, talk to them, read what they have written and write to them. An important part of being fully involved in a new cultural setting is learning how to communicate when the other person is not in front of us, listening to our words and speech. Therefore, we have to leave a note, to give written instructions or to write a letter to him/ her* (p 3).

This situation explains why Kroll (1990) points out that "becoming a writer is a complex and ongoing process, and becoming a writing teacher is no less complex (p.1). Indeed, for those engaged in teaching EFL[1] to learners,

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[1]EFL: English as a foreign language

what is needed is both, (a) a firm basic training in the theoretical issues of foreign language writing and (b), understanding of a broad range of pedagogical issues that shape classroom writing instructions. As teachers, we must realize that for those engaged in learning to write in a foreign language, the complexity of mastering writing skills is compounded both by the difficulties inherent in learning a foreign language and by the way in which first language literacy skills may transform to or detract from the acquisition of foreign language skills.

It requires that teachers give students a greater responsibility and ownership of their own learning. This is to solve students' "I can't write English" problem (Gebhard, 1996) and to have less proficient student writers to improve their writing skills.

Computer can make students go beyond the traditional writing techniques that go on in EFL classes. In this manner, students can write to communicate with a reader, to express ideas without the pressure of face-to-face communication to explore a subject and to become familiar with the conventions of written English texts.

Students need to learn in context and with visual clues to be able to understand quickly. Computer can provide this rich contextual environment. Computer allows students to become active learners in a one-on-one environment. It can incorporate various learning strategies as well as accommodate a variety of learning styles.

Unfortunately, most of the English teachers in Benin today do not use computer in teaching EFL although the class population keeps increasing in size; and such a large population, it is a challenge to become a proficient and successful EFL learner. This situation is frustrating and sometimes painful, especially for writing learners.

Students who are learning a new language need some language support. EFL writing teachers know that language support is helpful not only for learners but also for teachers, as the language support facilitates the teaching and learning process. This explains why, today, EFL teachers should use computer in their classes. Indeed, using computer to teach EFL relieves teachers of more burdensome aspects, so that classroom time can be fully utilized for communication. I am aware that there is no single formula for the use of computer to teach or learn a language. But there are three important technological platforms that provide background to assist language learning in order to increase interactivity and interaction. They are: the web, the CD ROMS application and the Internet. The web offers a direct source for a variety of authentic language materials. The CD ROMS offer a second powerful technological learning environment that delivers specific applications that take advantage of large digitised sound files, graphics and video clips. Finally, the computer-mediated-communications provide a third platform where foreign language students can transcend the special and temporal confines of the classroom via the Internet. The electronic mail communication and chat offer students the highest level of interactivity because they permit one-on-one personal exchanges. The networked activities help students in language classes engage more frequently, with a greater confidence and enthusiasm, in the communication process. So, I believe that computer can help EFL students improve their writing abilities. For this purpose, this article focuses on how computer can be a supplemental tool in the process of English as foreign language learning with regard to writing skill.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Improving students witting skills through the application of computer-based learning platforms is quiet challenging. This is because developing the capacity to promote students witting skills in English requires consistency and expertise in the use and application of ICT-based resources. Most developing countries face first, the challenge of having access to technology rich in education, and even when these resources exist, most educators find it challenging to effectively use them to improve the capacity of their students to be proficient in writing. Nigeria, being a developing country, faces the challenges of access to technology targeted toward education. The Federal Ministry of Education (FME), Universal Service Provision Fund (USPF) and several private organizations have assisted many schools by providing various technology solutions, such as supplying personal computers, setting up computer laboratories and other facilities inclusive of Internet connection, as well as interactive whiteboards (IWBs) and projectors.

Despite these efforts, an evaluation of the improvement in learning outcome indicates that improving students writing skills despite skill development initiatives as highlighted constitutes a challenge especially as English as a foreign language. Apart from that, the use of ICT-based resources to improve the skills of students requires that electricity is stable to foster the teaching and learning exercise coupled with other working infrastructure which in most cases is lacking. Studies have attempted to evaluate the most optimal strategy to ensure the integration of learning using modern technology. Cakir, Delialioglu, Dennis, and Duffy (2009) stated that the use of technology in improving students writing skills has the prospect of improving students' achievement in English writing. There finding shows that the effectiveness of improving students writing skills depends on the availability of resources and the proficiency of educators. The study conducted by Inan, Lowther, Ross, and Strahl (2009) substantiated the foregoing by stating that students capacity to improve writing skills in English using ICT-based learning in developing countries requires a well-structured teaching and learning program that is sufficient to improve learning. Unfortunately, many students go without the help they need. Many students who struggle with reading and witting English find it more of a challenge to understand what is thought through the ICT-based platforms. Hence an evaluation of how the use of available ICT technology in Benin is pertinent to improve the effectiveness of programs intended to improve students writing skills in English.

3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objective of the study is to assess the effectiveness of using computer and its multimedia system on developing EFL students' writing skills in comparison with the traditional method used by most English teachers.

The specific objective of the study was to identify the factors that affect the use of computer and its multimedia system in EFL Classes.

4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions based on the objectives of the study is expressed:

1. What are the effects of computer and its multimedia system on the development of students' writing skills?

2. What are the opportunities and challenges of using computer and its multimedia in English learning classes?

3. What are the factors that affect the use of computer and its multimedia in EFL Classes?

5. RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The insight created in this research has implications for teaching practice and educational policy in Nigeria. The need to improve English writing skills of students in Nigeria is the underlying rationale for the study. The conclusion reached in the study will create insight in improving the standard of learning in Benin in particular and Nigeria in general. This is critical because the use of modern facilities in education fosters the development of the sector, and as globalization intensifies, the application of ICT-based learning platforms becomes a more prominent feature of the educational system in Nigeria. Hence, this study will articulate on some of the most optimal strategies to incorporate computer in the teaching and learning process.

6. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

Several studies provide empirical evidence to justify the effect of computer and other ICT-based media in improving students writing skills. Al Balushi study revealed that the use of ICT-based technology has tremendous impact on students overall academic performance in English Language. Nomass (2013) corroborates the foregoing by highlighting that plans to improve learning and witting skills of students in English Language in contemporary practice could be enhanced through the use of computer-based technology. And this is even more so in developing countries and rural communities that are seemingly far off from utilizing enhanced computer systems to improve students learning experience. Jebakiruba (2016) argued to the contrary by stating that the use of traditional

learning methods in the teaching and learning of English works best in rural regions in Nigeria. The scholar stated that the use of computer and other media does little in fostering students writing skills in English due to poor infrastructure and the ICT proficiency of teachers. Egbe (2009) supported the application of computer in improving students writing skills in English. The scholar stated that ICT based platforms provides an appealing learning process that students find interesting relative to the conventional mode of teaching. Aremu and Sulymon (2012) highlighted in their study that the use of computers and ICT based gadgets in improving students English witting skills in Nigeria is paramount. This according to the scholars is justified on the basis that virtually all sectors have been impacted by the advent of the computer in promoting better teaching and learning experience. Hence adopting this method could quicken students leaning as they are exposed to various images and enticing displays. Aremu (2011) study also revealed that the use of computer and other ICT based media holds better learning prospects for students. This is because the advent of mobile devices has improved access to a host of computer platforms. Most students will find it impressive when they realize that through the application of computer technology using their mobile devices, they find learning quite easy and appealing.

7. THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The aim of the research was to find out the effects of computer and its multimedia system on the development of students' writing skills in the secondary school English classes in Benin. In order to identify the challenges related to the issue, some methods and approaches were designed to conduct the research.

8. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study will utilize the survey design. This method is considered appropriate because it allows for data to be collected from respondents without any attempt at imposing restrictions or altering the outcome of the data collection procedure. More importantly the design allows the researcher to use questionnaires and/or interview methods to collect data. Additionally, the design will ensure that satisfactory levels of control of variance are realized. Moreover, this procedure is conducted to ensure that an adequate comprehension of the issue is accomplished.

8.1. Research Procedure and Data collection Technique

The instrument for data collection will be through the use of a well-defined and targeted set of questionnaires to elicit responses from target audience. Using this medium, an evaluation of students' perception of learning using both conventional and computer-based learning will be determined. This method will involve the administration of questionnaire through the directives of the school administrators.

In order to obtain reliable data and to achieve my goal, I have chosen a sample population of English learners and English teachers of Benin secondary schools. This population includes learners from the sixth year of English to the seventh year of English, all options considered. The sample population includes also EFL teachers randomly selected from four Benin secondary schools and from two English language centres. This means that the sample population is from state- owned and private secondary schools and from language centres as well, in Benin republic.

The learners' population includes 205 students from five different secondary schools and two language centres. The EFL teachers' population involved in the study is 21 teachers from the chosen schools and language centres. The respondent learners involved in the study belong to class options, A, B, C and D (A, relating to letters, B to human sciences, C to exact sciences, and D, to common sciences) added to advanced level students.

Below are some tables which present the lists of the secondary schools, English language centres, and learners involved in the students.

Table-1. Schools.

Schools	Administration Division
CEG Abomey-Calavi	Atlantique
CEG Zogbo	Littoral
Cours secondaire Notre Dame des Apôtres.	Littoral
Collège Père Aupiais.	Littoral

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

Table-2. Language Centres Involved in the Study

Language centres	Administrative Division
American language centre.	Littoral
CE.BE.LA.E²	Littoral

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

Table-3. The students who are involved in the study.

Class and option Identification	Number of respondents.
Sixth year A, B, C	72
Seventh year D	25
Seventh year A, B	48
Seventh year C	14
Advanced level (all options)	46

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

8.2. The Research Instruments

The research instruments I have used were the questionnaires, class observation and interviews.

8.2.1. The Questionnaires

We have used two categories of questionnaires: one category for teachers and another one for students. The questionnaires include 8 questions to teachers as well as to students. The questionnaires aim at getting information related to the use of modern high technology, to the main barriers of its implementation in EFL classes, and the perception teachers and students have about the use of computer in EFL classes.

The survey took place in the first term of the academic year 2019-2020 in Benin. 205 copies of the questionnaire to students were handed out to the selected students and 21 copies of the questionnaire to teachers were also handed out to the 21 selected teachers. Both questionnaires were filled in on the spot in the chosen schools and they were collected back immediately. Prior to the filling in of the questionnaires, we have assured the respondents that their identity will not be revealed in the frame of the research under consideration; just their answers and opinions will be used as illustrations of the chosen data.

8.2.2. The Class Observations

Prior to the class observation session, I negotiated my access to the selected class with the school authorities. I explained to them the objectives of my research. When they understood the importance of my research, they put me in touch with some EFL teachers of the school.

When I met these EFL teachers, I informed them about my research work. I also told them that their identity would be kept confidential. After the information meeting, I was accepted in the class and was introduced to the students by the class teacher. Then, I went to sit at the back bench in the classroom. This position enabled me to observe what was going on in the class, to pay attention to that teacher's behaviours and to those of the learners as well. I took note of what happened in the class, listened to what the teacher and students were saying. That is how I observed every EFL teacher involved in this research and the class observation enabled me to collect reliable data in regard to writing skill learning.

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² Centre Béninois de Langues Etrangères.

8.2.3. The Interviews

In order to have authentic and straightforward information relevant to my research, I carried out informal and semi-structured interviews. In informal interviews, I just followed the ideas and opinions of the informants about the topic at hand. And through their answers and questions, I just led them to what I was expecting them to provide me with.

In semi-structured interviews, I saved time and I obtained directly what I wanted my respondents to give me as information. This was possible because the questions were pre-set prior to the interview session and I could emphasize on the given questions while the interview was in progress.

8.3. Method of Data Analysis

The study adopts the use of descriptive statistics (percentages) to evaluate the variables which forms the basis of testing the relevant hypotheses. Based on this; an item and variable which have a higher percentage value will be judged to have more effect. However, items variable with lower percentage will be considered to have leaser impact.

9. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Table-4. Teacher's answers with regard to the use of computer in EFL teaching Class.

Questions	Answers				
	Yes	**%**	**No**	**%**	**Total**
1-Do you know how to use high modern technology in English teaching?	6	28.57	15	71.42	21
2- Does your school have its own modern high technology for teaching purpose?	3	14.28	18	85.71	21
3- Do your students have access to computer in your school?	11	52.38	10	47.61	21
4- Do you encourage your students to use the Internet for research purpose?	17	80.95	4	19.04	21
5- Do you use video to teach English?	3	14.28	18	85.71	21
6- Do you use computer to teach English as a foreign language?	1	4.75	20	95.23	21

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

Table 4 presents the percentage of the teachers who can use modern high technology in their EFL classes. Question ONE reveals that 28.57% of the respondent teachers can use modern high technology in teaching EFL, and 71.42% cannot do it. This shows that 15 teachers out of 21 are not able to teach with high modern technology tool. The answers to question 5 display that only 3 teachers (14.28%) out of 21 use videos to teach EFL whereas 18 do not use it. The answers to question 6 reveal that only one teacher uses computer to teach EFL, and 20 do not use it for teaching purpose. This is justified by the fact that there are only 3 teachers whose schools have their own modern high technology tool for teaching purpose. The answers to question 3 and question 4 illustrate that 52.38% of the students have that access. However, the EFL teachers involved in this study encourage students to use internet for research work, 17 EFL teachers encourage their students to use internet and 4 EFL teachers are reluctant to do it. In short, according to the data displayed on Table 4, schools in Benin are not equipped with modern high technology tool and most of the teachers are not trained for the use of modern high technology tool in EFL teaching.

Table-5. The main barriers to the use of modern high technology tool in EFL classes.

Questions		Answers			
7- What difficulties do you have in using modern high technology in your EFL classes?	**Yes**	**%**	**NO**	**%**	**Total**
a) Modern high technology not available.	19	90.47	3	14.28	21
b) Do not know how to use modern high technology.	8	38.09	13	61.90	21

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

In Table 5, question 7 (a) shows that modern high technology tool is not available in EFL classes. Indeed, 19 teachers agree that modern high technology is not available in their schools. In the same trend, question 7 (b) shows that 13 teachers have no knowledge about how to use modern high technology in EFL teaching.

Table-6. EFL teacher's perception of modern high technology.

Questions	Answers				
	Yes	%	NO	%	Total
8. Do you think that it is good to use modern high technology in learning English with special reference to writing skills?	18	85.71	3	14.28	21

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

On Table 6, most of the respondent teachers report it is good to integrate modern high technology in EFL class teaching. The data displayed in Table 6, reveal that EFL teachers would like to implement modern high technology in their EFL classes. They back up the idea of learning writing skills through modern high technology.

Table-7. Students' answers in regard to learning approach.

Questions	Answers				
	Yes	%	NO	%	Total
1. Do you like to learn English through grammar?	181	88.29	24	11.70	205
2. Do you like to learn English through translation?	158	77.07	47	22.92	205
3. Do you like to learn English through writing activities?	143	69.66	62	30.39	205

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

Table 7 displays that 181 (88.29%) of the respondent students prefer learning English through grammar; 158 (77.07%) of the informant students like to learn English through translation and 143 (69.60%) of the students enjoy learning English through writing activities. The data in Table 7 illustrate that writing skills is the one that students prefer the least.

Table-8. Students' opinions about language skills.

Questions		Answers				
		Yes	%	NO	%	Total
4. Do you think that listening skill, reading skill, writing skill, and speaking skill have some importance in English learning?		102	49.75	103	50.24	205
5. Which skill is the most important for you?	Listening skill	90	43.9	115	56.04	205
	Reading skill	95	46.3	110	54.6	205
	Writing skill	75	36.5	130	63.4	205
	Speaking skill	155	75.60	50	24.3	205

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

In Table 8, most of the respondent students (155) agree that speaking skill is the most important for them and the four skills do not have the same importance. The informant students prefer speaking skill followed by reading skill.

Table-9. Answers related to the use of modern high technology by students.

Questions	Answers				
	Yes	%	NO	%	Total
6. Do you use modern high technology in your daily life	106	51.70	99	48.29	205
7. Does your English teacher encourage you to use modern high technology as a learning tool?	79	38.72	126	61.27	205
8. Does your English teacher use modern high technology in EFL teaching?	49	23.90	156	76.84	205

Source: Field Investigation, October 2019.

In Table 9, question 6 reveals that 106 (51.70%) students use modern high technology and its multimedia system in their daily lives. This average score may be due to the fact that most of the English teachers do not encourage their learners to use modern high technology as a learning tool. When we refer to question 7, we notice that 79 (38.72%) students are encouraged by their teachers to use computer for purpose. Question 8 reveals that modern high technology is not available in many schools in Benin.

10. THE DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This part of the work hinges around the three main questions the present study is supposed to answer: the effects of computer and its multimedia system on the development of students' writing skills, the opportunities and challenges of using computer and its multimedia in English learning classes, and the factors that affect the use of computer and its multimedia in EFL Classes. The results provided by the various participants in the study have highlighted the topic at stake.

When I refer to the questionnaire to EFL teachers (Table 4, question 1,2,5,6), I notice that most of EFL teachers in Benin do not use modern high technology in their classes because they have no knowledge about how to use and also because of lack of computer in their schools. To remedy this situation, the school authorities and the government should equip Benin secondary schools with computer and its multimedia systems. In the same trend, they should recruit qualified EFL teachers. They should also emphasize on the prospective teachers' training in order to provide them with some potential teaching strategies and techniques. For the in-service training, the government and the school authorities should organize seminars and workshops to improve these EFL teachers' knowledge and experiences in regard to the use of modern high technology tool in their EFL teaching. Question 4, Table 1, displays that 17 teachers out of 21 encourage their students to use the Internet for research purpose although they are not familiar with it as teachers (c.f. answers to question N°1, Table 4). Indeed, the Internet is the greatest innovation in information technology. Kenworthy (2004) states "the internet has made many opportunities available to both students and educators that were not feasible in the past. For example, newspapers, magazines, grammar, dictionaries, key pals and mailing list, etc" (p 3)

I agree with Roger, as newspapers, magazines, grammar, dictionaries, etc, are accessible at any time through the Internet nowadays. With the internet, writers can obtain authentic materials to compose their pieces of writing. It is clear that the Internet is fluid in information and it can help learners to make notes and documents by themselves. This is why Edward (1997) advocates that "the Internet is good for English teaching" (p. 2). Regarded as a new tool in the education system, the Internet should be seen as useful complement to English teacher's classroom-based teaching and they should encourage their students to take advantage of the power of this means of communication and information.

Unfortunately, very few teachers use computer to teach English as a foreign language. Only one teacher out of 21 respondent teachers use computer to teach EFL in Benin, according to the answers displayed in Table 4, question6.

But using e-mail (electronic mail) in a writing class can take place over any kind of network; this could be in a lab or a cyber space. The advantages and reasons of this medium are numerous for the students and the teacher in the writing class.

First, Belisle (1996) advocates that "by using e-mail in the writing class, students become familiar with a communication tool that is vital to their survival in the 21st century " (p.2). This because, in the world of education and technology, e-mail is quickly taking the place of voice and paper communication.

Second, a teacher can interact with a student or a group of students working on a project at times that are more convenient to the ability to electronically monitor the individual or group writing process from the brainstorming phase to the final draft.

Third, Kupelian (2001) argued that "e-mail provides a kind of non-threatening atmosphere in which students feel less inhibited about expressing themselves, are more likely to revise their work and are stimulated to learn by connecting to real audience" (p.5).

E-mail can also help students write more than traditional pen and pencil writing. This leads us to key activities.

With the tremendous growth of the internet there are many opportunities to interact with students from other countries and cultures. International key pals can be easily found on the World Wide Web, using such search engines as Yahoo.

Key pals' activities can be one-on-one e-mail interaction. While e-mail interaction between groups is almost motivating and productive, exchanges between two individuals can also provide a very valuable language learning experience that is potentially beneficial.

Teachers can allow students to write on any topic of their choice at any time that is convenient to them. Gonglewski, Meloni, and Brant (2001) state that "students benefit from the advantages of a safe writing environment to communicate their messages while maintaining a conversational format" (p.6).

But it is important to acknowledge the problems of an intensive e-mail exchange. Indeed, Gonglewski et al. (2001) state, "to begin with, student-teacher e-mail interaction might give teacher nearly impossible amount of work" (p.6). While a student has one partner with whom to correspond, a single teacher could have as many as one hundred, and the responsibility to reply each e-mail, would become a wonderful task.

However, electronic mail is regarded as a high technological medium and it can bring effective profit to the process of learning a foreign language, especially to EFL writing skill learning. This explains why Sigrum and Donald (2001) advocate that "the electronic mail writing will improve academic writing abilities" (p.1)

Table 5 displays that 19 EFL teachers confess that their schools do not have computer for teaching purpose and they also reveal that this lack prevents teachers from using this technology tool. Table 5 still shows that 13 teachers out of the 21 teachers involved in the study do not know how to use computer to teach EFL. This situation constitutes a barrier to a successful English learning and specifically to EFL writing skill learning. Despo, Pavina, and Eleni (2005) state that "computer-based instruction has a lot of benefits" (p.5). For example, learners work at their own speed and convenience, and they are also offered with extensive practice, and students' motivation is stimulated as well. Learning effectiveness and efficiency can be improved through the proper use of computer. Despo et al. (2005) argue that "when computer is presented in the right way it can be extremely motivating, as it enables students to learn independently. Motivation, in turn, brings about more willingness to search, to discover and to learn" (p.5). So, school leaders and educational authorities should consider this usefulness of computer to equip their schools in modern high technology in order to facilitate the learning of EFL writing skill.

I think that it is advisable to equip school with computer because as we notice in Table 6, question 8, 18 teachers out of 21 involved in our study sustained that it is good to use modern high technology in learning English with special reference to writing skill (Celce-Murcia, 1991) sides with this idea when she states, "viewed as a new resource to help promote, enhance and facilitate learning the computer has fostered high expectations of more innovative new learning experiences "(p.472).

When I turn now to the students' answers, we collected in the frame of this research work, I notice that students have a diversity of interests in learning English as a foreign language. These students reveal clearly their choice with regard to teaching methods and language skill. This choice is displayed in Table 7 and Table 8 and it shows that many students prefer traditional methods of teaching, and very few of them like writing skill.

my class observations enabled me to notice this preference. The different EFL teachers I have observed were all dealing with grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension lessons. None of them taught writing activities. This phenomenon can lead students to dislike writing skill which is as important as the other language skill. Teachers should place more emphasis on teaching students to write effectively in English. They should do so

because we are today in the age of communication, and much information is expressed in written form. As a result, more emphasis should be put on teaching students to communicate through effective writing.

It is widely known that technology has invaded our lives. And we are conscious that modern high technology, with its many forms, challenges us to use it so as to facilitate our communication with other people. Unfortunately, and in the light of my investigation, my study notices that the importance given to the use of modern high technology in EFL in our schools is very tiny. In Table 6, I can observe that only 106 students out of 205 use computers connected to the internet in their daily life. This must be understood as 126 of them complain that their EFL teacher doesn't encourage them to use modern high technology as a learning tool.

Many students are not aware of computer facilities related to EFL learning; indeed 156 students out of 205 are not exposed to computer use in EFL classes according to Table 9, question 8. Only 49 students out of the 205 involved in the study have the privilege to learn EFL with the use of computer. These students who have experienced this use are convinced that modern high technology is an additional approach to language learning. Indeed, the use of computer can help learners to understand better some points in English composition such as structure and grammar rules, and vocabulary as well. In the same vein, Despo et al. (2005) advocates that "modern high technology has made more of impact on education than most teachers realize… Unfortunately, not all students are on line, but the percentage is growing in an increasing diversity of places and social strata" (p.4).

To collect my data for this study, I have also used interview as an instrument of investigation. The following comments were made by the interviewees with regard to the use of computer in EFL classes:

> There is no computer in our schools for students. Teachers are not trained properly
> for this use."
> "We need computer with internet connection room".
> "I believe that computer can help both teacher and students to achieve their
> teaching\learning goals"
> "I'm very willing to use computer in my EFL classes, but I need training in the
> field. My school should organize workshops and seminars to train teachers for that
> use

On the basis of these data provided by EFL teachers, I think that they want to use modern high technology in their EFL classes. Thus, language professionals are right to mention the conditions which should be encouraged and created to favour EFL learning through the use of computer.

The use of computer increases contacts with the target language. How? Computer helps the learner to go where the target language is spoken and enables him to immerse himself in the society and culture of the given target language without moving physically to that place. By using electronic mail, the internet, key pals, etc, the learners can keep contact with the chosen language. To keep such contacts with the target language in the past, I had physically to go to the countries where the language is spoken. This approach to language learning is somehow expensive if I refer to the economy of the developing countries. Indeed, developing countries students cannot afford costly stay abroad in the process of EFL learning. Here is where modern high technology, when used wisely, can play a major role in enhancing EFL learners contact with the target language. Using this modern high technology is related to social, cultural and economic factors. That is why I call upon the decision-makers to make the pertinent choice which can enable every school to own its proper computer room for teaching/learning purpose. This choice can enable writing teachers to have computer at their disposal for writing skill teaching and, thereby bring about the change of the traditional approach to EFL writing teaching\learning. The change can also refer to the EFL writing classroom environment. This change of environment is sustained by Kroll (1990) when he said, "teachers are dedicated to fostering growth in writing by providing a sequence of lessons and courses designed to move students to acquire skill and strategies that are not only for promoting success in academic environment but are operable across a range of potential writing situations (p.3). This change can take place, as modern high technology

can be used to assist teachers in their job to bring the outside world into the classroom and make EFL learning more meaningful and exciting. But, for this purpose, what are the teaching implications for the use of computer in EFL classes?

10.1. Teaching Implications for the use of Computer in EFL Writing Classes

- General Conditions for the Use of Computer in EFL Teaching
- Educational Computer Availability.

Materials such as CD-ROMS, video cassette, and educational software should be available in every school where computer use is scheduled.

- **Teacher Training**

The data of this study reveal that some of the EFL teachers involved in my investigation lack adequate training. These teachers know neither how to use modern high technology in teaching context nor how to work with it. To solve this problem, the government and school authorities should recruit well- trained EFL teachers. They should emphasize on the pre-service training in order to provide the prospective teachers with potential teaching strategies and techniques. They should also organize seminars and workshops through in-service training for teachers who have been teaching in our schools in order to help them gain some knowledge and experience about the use of modern high technology.

- **Appropriate Schedule for EFL Teaching**

To cope with the century, challenge which is the use of computer in language classes' syllabuses should be redefined to provide opportunities for teachers to implement new ways of teaching and learning. Syllabuses should take into account class management, learners' needs, learners' level, and the load of teaching hours per week. Syllabuses should include a computer time to enable teachers and students to have room and possibilities to use computer in class time. To do this, special attention should be paid to class size and class furniture.

10.2. Specific Considerations for the Use of Computer in EFL Classes

To use computer in EFL classes some specific needs should be met. The role of EFL teachers should change, the role of EFL learners should change, and the role of EFL learners' parents should change as well.

- **The Role of EFL Teachers should Change**

EFL teachers should initiate practical exercises of learning writing skills to help students to solve the "I can't write English problem. They should devote enough time to writing skills. Teachers should give a good impression about writing skills; they should motivate students with regard to writing activities. This requires full attention, patience and perseverance from teachers. Teachers should emphasize activities like letters, instructions, and journals writing. These activities can attract more students to writing. Raimes (1983) suggests the same thing when she advocates "students write instructions for each other as to how to get from the school to their home. The readers then ask questions if they need to" (p.92).

I would like to deal with two approaches to writing skills to exemplify how to carry out writing activities with modern high technology. These two approaches are word processor writing activities and electronic mail activities.

- **Word Processor Writing**

One of the easiest ways to help EFL students in writing process is computer's "word processor". This tool uses mechanical operations which encourage learners to develop their skills in conceptualizing ideas, drafting, revising and editing. Here is a sample activity.

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- **The Sample Activity**

One computer per student is what is needed. The class can be organized in small groups per week, as there may not be enough computers for the whole class. The procedure to follow is:

Step 1:   the teacher gives a topic and explains to the group what they should write. For example, an essay, a newsletter article, etc…. These students should be post-beginners or advanced-level students. The teacher should set an outline such as introduction only, the body only, or the conclusion only.

 Step 2: During the writing process, students should be engaged in pre-writing, drafting, revising and editing activities.

In pre-writing period, students can use pre-writing techniques to generate and gather ideas about the topic at hand. They can do pre-writing activities on a word page paying attention to brainstorming, jotting down ideas, etc… Then, they can shift to drafting activities. The drafting activities refer to the period when students keyboard their ideas to explore new thoughts related to their topic. The next step is revising.

Step 3: revising.

At this stage, learners revise for meaning, by adding, deleting, reorganizing structure and by considering some fragments of the pieces of writing.

Step 4: Editing.

Here, learners' hand over their writing to the class teachers for proof-reading sake, for editing purpose and for mechanical and conventional accuracy.

Step 5: sharing and publishing.

Teacher should establish regular sharing times (e. g, the end of each class period). Students can be sent for publishing, (in a school newspaper, local newspapers, etc). This makes students be proud of them and encourages them to try out writing activities. We would like now to turn to electronic mail exchange approach in writing skill teaching.

- **Electronic Mail Exchange**

Another activity to have students write successfully is key pals. When students have key pals from another country, they feel the need to communicate clearly. So, a teacher can arrange this correspondence in the target language speaking for a whole class. Electronic mail exchange program attracts more students as it is very close to "real time" communication. Besides, students enjoy high-speed transmission of their messages. For this, they can resort to key pals exchange.

- **Key pals exchange activity**

To carry out this activity, we need a computer with Internet access, for example, one computer connected per student. As the number of computers connected is still limited in developing countries, especially in schools, a class can be divided into small groups. Each group can have a frequency of session, for instance, one session a week for lab time or computer room,

Step 1: the teacher must join an international e-mail list such as yahoo, fr or yahoo, com and a school of language. Learners' messages can be sent to the teacher and he can give a reply in a single answer to the whole group. Class level can be clearly started for international key pals' connection,

Step 2: after assigning a partner classroom or school, the teacher can send a list of the students' names and their e-mail addresses to his/her partner teacher so that he or she can match up students' key pals.

Step 3: once all the students are matched up with a key pal, the teacher can give a writing task every week.

Step 4: students can exchange their e-mail with classmates for peer feedback. They can also send to the teacher who can proof-read for mistakes or awkward sentences.

Step 5: the teacher can print some e-mails which can be read in the next class time as well as some correspondent answers.

10.3. The Role of EFL Learners should Change

Warschauer (2000) states "if English is imposing the world on our students, we can enable them, through English, to impose their voices on the world" (p. 14) This statement means that EFL students need the ability to write English for real communication, which is important for their success in their lives. For such purposes, students should improve their ways of learning English, especially their ways of learning English writing skill in order to enjoy successful communication with teachers and readers throughout the world.

Students are expected to maximize their modern language learning styles through the use of computer and its multimedia system. Computer and its multimedia system can enable them to incorporate the Internet in their everyday lives, both for educational and personal needs.

10.4. The Role of EFL Learners' Parents should Change

Teachers and learners' parents have a special role to play in this computer age. Like teachers, parents should accept this new responsibility by encouraging their children to know about computer work and by supplying them with money for the Internet access. The parents, who cannot provide their children with computer and its multimedia system at home, can urge them to go to cyber cafes. Parents are also expected to raise their children's awareness about the importance of English in this century of global communication in oral and written forms.

11. CONCLUSION

Computer and its multimedia system open new ways for EFL students to learn with convenience and flexibility their target language. Indeed, for this possibility, Despo et al. (2005) state that "education is changing; students learning is becoming increasingly individualized, exploratory and collaborative. Encouraging students to use Internet in their English language classes develops and enhances their creativity. Teaching is becoming then more personal and artistic and it is up to the teachers' encouragement that students will take advantage of this new tool of learning" (p. 7).

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