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**Using Corpora to Enhance Learner's Academic Writing. Case study: 3<sup>rd</sup> year LMD Saida University**

Dissertation submitted to the Department of English Language and Literature as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of *Master in Didactics*.

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**Academic Year: 2017/2018**

## **Declaration of Originality**

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution. I also certify that the present work contains no plagiarism and is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Signature:

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Date: 12/06/2018

## Dedications

I dedicate this thesis to my father who has always had the faith and the trust in me to make my dreams come true.

I would like to express great appreciation to my mother, my beloved brother, my sisters, my nieces and my cousin.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to Mr. Zerrouki for his continued support and motivation.

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## Abstract

The use of academic vocabulary is one of the main hindrances learners of English foreign language are facing when writing in academic context. Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate the role of corpora in enhancing learners' academic writing and shed light on the importance of Corpus Linguistics' integration to English for Academic Purposes pedagogy proved by previous experiences of some developed countries. To achieve this present work we have investigated the following issues: A) The use of corpus Technology by learners in Academic Writing. B) The learners' attitudes towards corpus technology use in writing. C) The teachers' attitudes towards corpus technology use in writing. Yet we have dealt with a questionnaire for the targeted learners and an interview for the targeted teachers trying to answer the issues mentioned above. The results reveal that Corpus Linguistics and Electronic Corpora remain unknown at Saida University; all the targeted learners and the majority of the interviewed teachers are still not familiar with this computerized invention. Furthermore the integration of such serendipity seems very difficult if not impossible regarding the actual situation of the University: lack of materials and equipment, learners' level and motivation, teachers' unfamiliarity with such tools, and finally teachers' and learners' incompetence in mastering Information and communication technology tools.

**Keywords:** Academic Writing; Corpus Linguistics; Electronic Corpora; Information and Communication Technology

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## **List of abbreviations**

**ANC:** American National Corpus

**BC:** Before Christ

**BLC:** business Letter Corpus

**BNC:** British National Corpus

**CALL:** Computer Assisted Language Learning

**CL:** Corpus Linguistics

**COCA:** Corpus of Contemporary American English

**DDL:** Data Driven Learning

**EAP:** English for Academic purposes

**EC:** Electronic Corpora

**EFL:** English Foreign Language

**ELT:** English Language Teaching

**ICE:** International Corpus of English

**ICLE:** International Corpus of Learner English

**ICT:** Information and Communication Technology

**KWIC:** Key Word in Context

**LMD:** License Master Doctorate

**MICASE:** Michigan Corpus of American Spoken English

**Ph.D.:** Philosopher Doctorate

**SEU:** Survey of English Usage

**TEFL:** Teaching English Foreign Language

**US:** United States

**WWW:** World Wide Web

The study of language has witnessed many changes and evolutions. Nowadays the investigation of any language aspect seems almost impossible without the use of computational linguistics. Corpus Linguistics has showed great potential for foreign language learning in general and foreign language writing in particular.

A considerable amount of studies has been involved in developing the design of syllabi and courses in addition to developing teaching materials and supports. The aim of such studies is to provide and ensure a quality learning that copes with the recent advances of technology.

Improving the writing skills is of paramount importance in learning foreign languages. Writing in academic context presents serious problems for learners who feel confused and are not able to express their thoughts in an accurate and organized way.

The present research work is an attempt that has one general objective: to improve teaching techniques and strategies. And two main specific objectives: first to shed light on the importance of Corpus Linguistics integration to language pedagogy. Second to familiarize teachers and learners of Dr. Moulay Tahar University of Saida with such electronic tools that are of a great support.

To accomplish the present study, we will highlight previous researches of some developed countries to present the advantages of integrating Corpora to pedagogy. And then we will guide the research by the following questions:

- How far is corpus technology used by learners in Academic Writing?
- What are the learners' attitudes towards corpus technology use in writing?
- What are the teachers' attitudes towards corpus technology use in writing?

The hypotheses we formulate are as follow:

- The appropriate use of corpus linguistics will help to raise the level of writing skill among students.
- If corpus linguistics takes place at Saida University, learners will improve their writing abilities.
- Teachers may have positive attitudes towards electronic corpora integration if they are provided with appropriate materials and training.

The present dissertation covers three (03) chapters: The first chapter will be concerned mainly with the related back ground of Corpus Linguistics and Electronic Corpora, relevant aspects concerning Corpora will be described. The second chapter will be devoted to some notions that concern Academic Writing in addition to the methodology followed to fulfill the research. The third and the last chapter will cover basically the practical side of the study where the findings will be analyzed.

# **Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora**

## **1.1 Introduction**

The study of corpus linguistics (CL) and electronic corpora is an attempt to develop the process of teaching/learning English Foreign Language (EFL) in general and to enhance academic writing in particular. Accordingly several investigations have been done. This first chapter covers basically the theoretical parts of corpora and corpus linguistics and highlights some relevant studies that have investigated the role of electronic corpora in developing the writing skills among learners.

## **1.2 Corpus Linguistics and Corpora**

Recently, corpus-based approach has gained paramount interest in linguistics and language education as well, especially from the 1990 when findings of corpus-based approach are increasingly applied to language pedagogy. Several investigations have been involved to develop corpus-informed syllabi, teaching materials, and classroom activities.

### **1.2.1 Corpus Linguistics:**

According to Richards and Schmidt (2002, P.127) corpus linguistics is:

“ An approach to investigating language structure and use through the analysis of large databases of real language examples stored on computer. Issues amenable to corpus linguistics include the meanings of words across registers, the distribution and function of grammatical forms and categories, the investigation of lexico-grammatical associations ( associations of specific words with particular grammatical constructions), the study of discourse characteristics, register variation, and (when learner corpora are available) issues in language acquisition and development.”

## Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

Richards & Schmidt (2002, p. 127) in Ghembaza (2016, PP. 68/69)

In recent years, corpus linguistics has become one of the most wide-spread methods of applied linguistic researches. Corpus linguistics refers to the systematic study and analysis of language based on a large collection of natural “real life” language data. This corpus-based study involves both quantitative and qualitative studies. Generally corpus linguists are concerned with written texts or even texts transcribed from oral discourses. This investigation aims at discovering new patterns in how language is used. In addition to how the meaning of words may change within different contexts and how frequently it appears in different sorts of texts, i.e., Corpus linguistics is the study of use rather than the study of structure.

Along similar lines Conrad (2000) defined Corpus linguistics as: “ *the empirical study of language relying on computer- assisted techniques to analyze large, principled database of naturally occurring language*” (P. 548).

Authenticity is highly required, the corpus linguist or the researcher should select a variety of accurate and natural languages that includes different sorts of language such as face to face conversation, phone conversation, TV speech, newspaper articles, novels, etc.

O’Keeffe et al (2011, P.6) maintain that:

“Most commonly refers to the study of machine-readable spoken and written language samples that have been assembled in a principled way for the purpose of linguistic research. At the heart of empirically- based linguistics and data-driven description of language, in is concerned with language use in real contexts.”

O’Keeffe et al (2011, p 6) in Ghembaza (2016, p 69)



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Corpus linguistics seeks to answer some particular questions such as:

- What are the most frequent words and phrases in English?
- What are the differences between spoken and written English?
- What tenses do people use most frequently?
- Which words are suitable for either formal or informal settings?
- How frequently idiomatic expressions are used?
- How many words must a learner know to participate in everyday conversation?
- How many different words do native speakers generally use in conversation?

(McCarthy, 2004, pp. 1-2) in (Bennett, 2010, p. 4)

### 1.2.2 Electronic Corpora

Corpora (singular corpus) have different meanings. As defined by several dictionaries, the term corpora generally refers to the body of a person or an animal especially dead, and from a linguistic viewpoint, it refers to a large or complete collection of writings (McEnery & Wilson, 2001).

Sinclair (1991) defined corpus as “*a collection of naturally-occurring language text, chosen to characterize a state or variety of a language*”( P. 171). Also defined as “*a collection of naturally occurring examples of language consisting of any form a few sentences to a set of written texts or tape recording which have been collected for linguistic study*”

(Hunston, 2000, P.2) in (Matti, 2013, P.3)

In short, corpus text consists of a large amount of words that are not collected randomly and usually stored on an electronic database to facilitate the accesses by means of a computer.

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### 1.3 How Have Corpora Evolved?

Corpora appeared before the computer age . The first corpus was collected, stored and analyzed manually around the 1921. It consists of 4.5 million words. Around the 1953 another corpus was created composed of 200 texts and each contained 5000 words.

According to Kennedy (1998), there were five main applications of these pre-electronic corpora:

- Biblical and literary studies from the 18<sup>TH</sup> century, based on manually produced concordances of content words.
- Lexicography investigations to provide literary examples for dictionaries such as the Dictionary of the English Language and the Oxford English Dictionary.
- Dialect studies in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to describe lexical variation.
- Foreign language education innovations such as the work of Thronthike in the 1920.
- Grammatical inquiries, such as the one by Fries in the U.S., and more recently Quirk's survey of English Usage ( SEU) corpus.

( Kennedy, 1998) in (Horvath , 2001, PP. 38-39)

In 1960s, corpus became fully electronic and the first electronic corpus of written language was launched in 1964 by Henry K, and Nelson F, at Brown University of America. It contains a million words of written American English. Around 1970s another corpus of spoken language was launched; it was the British equivalent of the Brown corpus following its same principles both the length and the sampling.

(Horvath , 2001 P.39)

## Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

In short, electronic corpus has passed through three stages:

- The first twenty years, c. 1960-80; learning how to build and maintain corpora of up to million works; no material available in electronic form, so everything has to be translated on a keyboard.
- The second twenty years 1980-2000; divisible into two decades:
  - The eighties, the decade of the scanner, where with even with the early scanners a target of twenty million words becomes realistic.
  - The nineties, the first serendipity, when text becomes available as the by-product of computer typesetting, allowing another order of magnitude to the target size of corpora.
- The new millennium, and the second serendipity, when text that never had existence as hard copy becomes available in unlimited quantities from the internet.

(Tognini B, & Sinclair, 2006, P.208) in ( O’keefee & McCarthy, 2010, P.17)

### 1.4 Types of Corpora:

There are considerably several types of corpora that can be used in different domains and mainly in teaching/learning process; it is impossible to list all of them. The core purpose of these types is to discover information about the target language.

The followings are believed to be the most common used:

#### 1.4.1 Generalized Corpora:

The aim of generalized corpus is to give a whole picture of a language covering all its patterns and features. More than 10 million words, this type is the

## **Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora**

largest one. The American National Corpus (ANC) and the British National Corpus (BNC) are samples of the broadest generalized corpora. These corpora contain both written and spoken transcript language.

### **1.4.2 Specialized Corpora:**

Designed to answer specific questions. Specialized corpus may be large or small. (MICASE) Michigan Corpus of American Spoken English is one example of this type. It contains only spoken language from a university setting. This type is often used in English for Specific Purposes (ESP).

### **1.4.3 Learner Corpora:**

International Corpus of Learner English (ICLE) is one example of this type launched in 2002. It contains essays and texts written by advanced learners of English who are not native speakers. The learners have different native languages.

### **1.4.4 Parallel Corpora:**

It is a combination of monolingual corpora. This type consists of collections of texts that are translated into one or more languages. Parallel corpus can be first, unidirectional which means that a text in a given language translated into another language. e.g. text in English translated into French. Second, it can be bidirectional which means a text in given language translated into another language and vice versa. e.g. text in English translated into French and vice versa. Finally, multidirectional which means a text in a given language translated into several languages. e.g. a text in English translated into French, Spanish, German and Arabic.

## Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

### 1.4.5 Comparable Corpora:

This type is closely related to parallel type with different sampling frames. Comparable corpus consists of a collection of texts in different languages and different varieties of language. These texts are similar in terms of sampling period, genre, domain and proportion. It is generally used in translation and contrastive studies. International Corpus of English (ICE) is one known and available comparable corpus.

The following table provides Some English corpora worth to mention with their size and date of publication:

**Table 1.1: Some Noteworthy Corpora**

Corpus	Size	Type of English	Time
Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA)	More than 560million	American spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers and academic.	1990-2017
British National Corpus (BNC)	100million	British spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers and academic.	1980-1993
European Parliament Proceedings Parallel Corpus	60million per language	21 European languages	1996-2011

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Business Letter Corpus (BLC)	1million	US and UK business letters	1990s
Quranic Corpus	The whole Quran	Arabic – English	2009-2017

### 1.5 Corpora and Pedagogy:

Corpora and corpus linguistics have been introduced to the Teaching/Learning process for more than a decade through different ways. According to many scholars corpora may either be introduced to language pedagogy directly; teaching about, teaching to exploit, exploiting to teach, or indirectly including syllabus design, material development, language testing and teacher development.

(McEnery and Richard, 2010, PP. 367-368)

Thanks to Sinclair's works on creating dictionaries and his leading works on corpus research (Sinclair 1987, 1991, 2004) have been the commencement for many corpus-based approaches to language teaching.

(Carmen et al 2010)

Previously corpus researches used to emphasize the development of dictionaries and grammar references. Whereas recent investigations are emphasizing the improvements of learners' academic writing and try to enhance their awareness of both contextualized grammar and the function of words in context. But it is still lacking empirical studies on how corpora can be integrated into writing classrooms. Among the investigations conducted at introducing corpora to ELT (eg, Conard, 1999, 2000; Flowerdew, 1998; Johns, 1991, 1994; McCay, 1980; Thurstun & Candlin, 1998; Tribble 1991).

(Yoon, 2008. p. 5)

# Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

## 1.5.1 Concordances

In English language , a single word can occur in different contexts resulting different meanings. According to Biber et al (1998 ) concordance is an “ *exhaustive list for the occurrences of the word in context*” . O’keefee et al (2007) point out that: “ *it simply means, using corpus software to find every occurrence of a particular word or phrase*” (P.8). When searching for a given word, this word appears in the centre of several lines of sentences representing its different contexts . This process is known as “key word in context” or kwic concordance. Concordances are being integrated and used in ELT because they provide many examples and are believed to enhance the learners’ vocabulary.

( Biber et al, 1998, P. 15) in ( Yoon, 2005, P. 13).

The screenshot shows the British National Corpus (BYU-BNC) interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs: SEARCH, FREQUENCY, CONTEXT (selected), and HELP. Below the tabs, there are search parameters: FIND SAMPLE: 100 200 500 1000 and PAGE: << < 1 / 105 > >>. The main area displays a list of concordance lines for the word "write". Each line consists of a row number, a corpus code (e.g., FJ4, FJ6, CH1), a genre code (e.g., W\_fict\_drama, W\_newsp\_tabloid), and a context string with the word "write" highlighted in green. The context strings show various uses of the word "write" in different contexts, such as "write home about", "write it down", "write your answer", and "write your answer on a postcard".

Row	Corpus Code	Genre Code	Context
1	FJ4	W_fict_drama	A B C I am not angry with you for writing such innocent letters as these. You <b>write</b> a very pretty hand and spell tolerably too. I see my mother's care
2	FJ6	W_fict_drama	A B C had never known anything like it. Two, he had never known anything to <b>write</b> home about. Three, it is nothing to write home about... Home...
3	FJ6	W_fict_drama	A B C had never known anything to write home about. Three, it is nothing to <b>write</b> home about... Home... What's the first thing you remember? ROG:
4	FJ6	W_fict_drama	A B C the word - " wife " - or " house " - because when you <b>write</b> it down you just can't remember ever having seen those letters in that order
5	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C , if Silence Of The Lambs is your choice for Rental Video Of The Year <b>write</b> : 1 - Silence Of The Lambs, and so on. It is NOT
6	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C exports - Kendal mint cake. FOR more information and details of where to stay <b>write</b> to: Cumbria Tourist Board, Ashleigh, Holly Road, Windermere, Cumbria,
7	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C enter simply answer this question: WHO was the leading actor/singer in The Commitments? <b>Write</b> your answer, name and address on a postcard and send (by Se
8	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C in a bid to become a director. She says: ' I have to <b>write</b> , produce and direct my own short film. Luckily, if it's really
9	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C n't really matter whether you're in power or out of it. You just <b>write</b> WORLD LEADER in your passport, charge a fortune to expound views rejected by your
10	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C , just unscramble this word to reveal a West Indian music style. # SPYCOAL <b>Write</b> your answer on a postcard, add your name and address and send the card
11	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C 's question is: What is the name of the famous French express train? <b>Write</b> the answers to both questions on a postcard and send it to: Plumrose contest
12	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C they should be taught to read. And a section on teaching children how to <b>write</b> did not offer a clear definition of basic writing skills, the grammatical knowledge
13	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C just unscramble this word to reveal what might be on the menu. # MOSNIAL <b>Write</b> your answer on a postcard, add your name and address and send the card
14	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C St.Lucia. Unscramble SPYCOAL. # 5 # Nights out at Springfields. Unscramble MOSNIAL. <b>Write</b> your answers on a postcard, add your name and address and send it
15	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C return flights, accommodation and travel insurance. Call free on 0800 414 383 or <b>write</b> to Sega Holidays Ltd, FREEPOST, Folkestone, Kent CT20 1BR. # OLD AND
16	CH1	W_newsp_tabloid	A B C answer this question: What is the name of Extreme's heart-throb lead guitarist? <b>Write</b> your answer, name and address, on a postcard, to: The Limit

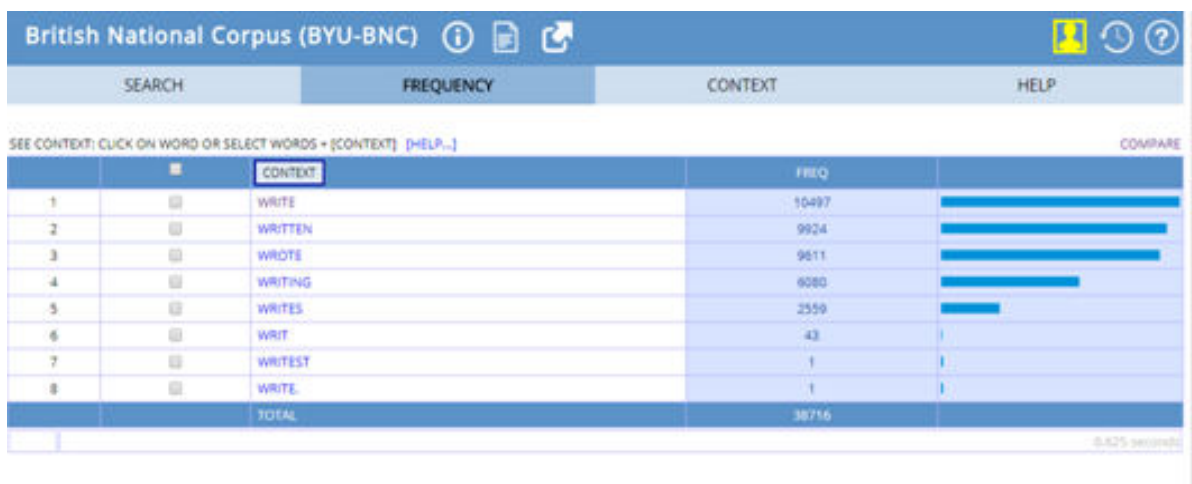
Figure 1.1 Concordance Lines for the Word “Write” in BNC

## Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

### 1.5.2 Frequency:

Known as word frequency or wordlists. It is a common software technique offered by corpora used to extremely and rapidly calculate the frequency of words in a particular language. O’keefee et al (2007) explain this technique as follow: “ *by running a word frequency list on your corpus, you can get a rank ordering of all the words in it in order of frequency. This function facilitates enquiry across different corpora, different languages varieties and different contexts of use*” (P.11).

(O’keefee et al,2007,P.11)



**Figure 1.2 : The Frequency of the Word “Write” in BNC**

In other cases we analyse a given word in different portions of corpus to see in which one the given word is more common. In English language some words seem to occur in speaking more than writing, thanks to corpora opportunities to analyze all language features are allowed.

The following table will provide information about how frequent are the adverbs of degree: very, really, exactly, quite, completely, too, thoroughly in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA). The numbers in the speak colon show how many time the adverbs are used in the spoken American language.



## Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

While the numbers in write colon show how many times the adverbs are used in the Written American Language.

**Table 1.2 Frequency Results per Million of Adverbs of Degree in COCA**

Word	Speak	Write	Total
Very	2.543	673	3.216
Really	1.637	392	2.216
Exactly	271	93	364
Quite	267	150	417
Completely	87	78	165
Too	656	699	1.355
Thoroughly	7	18	25
Total	5.468	2.103	7571

(Bennett, 2010, P. 6)

### 1.5.3 Collocations

Known as the co-occurrence of words. In English language some words when used in isolation result nearly no meaning but once used with another word (its collocation) the meaning will change according to the context. This collocation is present in different manner in the English language: Adjective + noun/ Verb + noun / preposition + noun.

The following figure is an example about adjectives with their most frequent collocations:

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DISTRIB	WORD/PHRASE	TOKENS REG1
<u>1</u>	PURE WHITE	104
<u>2</u>	COMPLETE NEW	29
<u>3</u>	SHEER HARD	25
<u>4</u>	PURE NEW	18
<u>5</u>	COMPLETE UNIFIED	17
<u>6</u>	SHEER PHYSICAL	17
<u>7</u>	PURE PUBLIC	12
<u>8</u>	ABSOLUTE BEST	11
<u>9</u>	COMPLETE SUPRACONAL	11
<u>10</u>	COMPLETE PHYSICAL	10
<u>11</u>	COMPLETE POLITICAL	9
<u>12</u>	COMPLETE SHORT	9
<u>13</u>	PURE ORAL	9
<u>14</u>	COMPLETE FINANCIAL	8
<u>15</u>	COMPLETE HUMAN	8
<u>16</u>	COMPLETE MENTAL	8
<u>17</u>	PURE ECONOMIC	8
<u>18</u>	ABSOLUTE MINIMUM	7
<u>19</u>	ABSOLUTE MORAL	7
<u>20</u>	COMPLETE MONETARY	7

**Figure 1.3: Adjectives with the Top 20th Most Frequent Collocations from (view.byu.edu )**

(Grazib, 2014)

### 1.6 The Integration of ICT in EFL Teaching

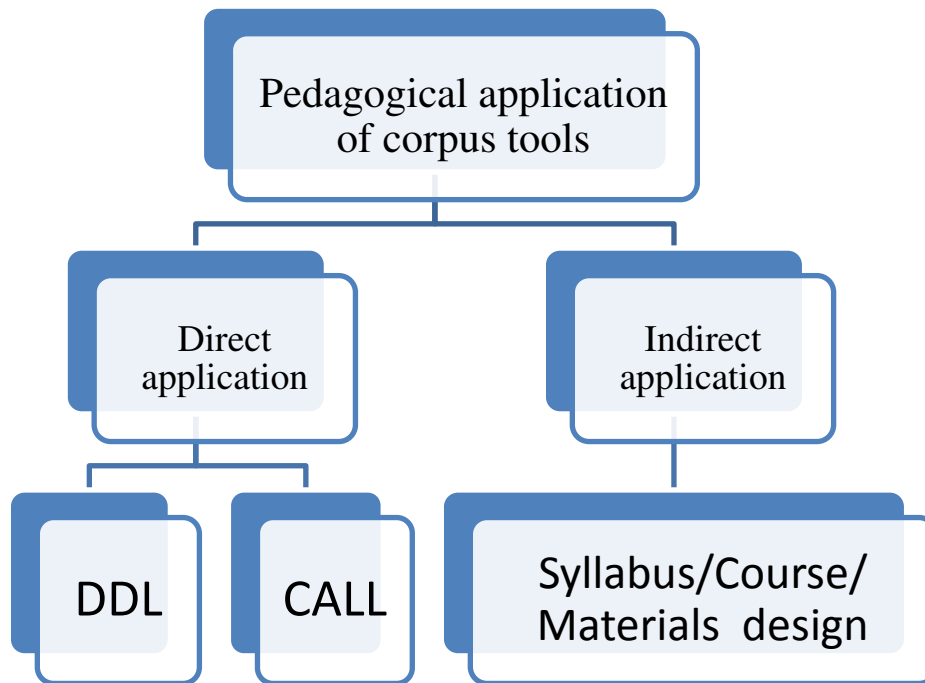
Information and communication technologies have been recently integrated to English language teaching. Such a transitive process seems successful and relevant for increasing students' learning. In Butler & Wiburg words as cited in (Chamorro, 2013, P.54) the implementation of ICT in teaching provides the following:

- It provides interaction, communicative activities, and real audiences.
- It supplies comprehensible input.
- It uses task-based and problem-solving activities.
- It facilitates focused development of English language skills.
- It uses multiple modalities to support various learning styles and strategies.

## Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

- It meets affective needs of students.
- It fosters understanding and appreciation of the target and native cultures.

(Chamorro, 2013, P.54)



**Figure 1.4: Pedagogical Application of Corpus Tools in EF**

### 1.6.1 Indirect Application of Corpora in Teaching/Learning EFL:

As shown by the figure above, corpus tools may be applied indirectly which is believed to facilitate the design of syllabus, course and materials. Several researches have been conducting: (Romer, 2011, 2006) and (Yvonne, 2010), (O’keefee et al, 2007). In the same context McEnery and Richards (2010, P.365) point out:

“The use of corpora in language teaching and learning has been more indirect than direct. This is perhaps because the direct use of corpora in language pedagogy is restricted by a number of factors including, for example, the level and

## Chapter One: Corpus Linguistics and Corpora

experience of learners, time constraints, curricular requirements, knowledge and skills required of teachers for corpus analysis and pedagogical mediation, and the access to resources, such as computers, and appropriate software tools and corpora, or a combination of these.”

Corpus tools are useful in different ways and even by people who do not know what do corpora mean.(Hunston,2002). A considerable amount of dictionaries are made by means of corpora to provide authentic data and simple examples, unlike traditional dictionaries that used to illustrate unsuitable and complex words and idioms for learners. According to Hunston (2002): “*corpora have so revolutionised the writing of dictionaries and grammar books for language learners*” (P.96). Another important pedagogical use is syllabus design and materials development. An increasing number of scholars are investigating textbooks in terms of grammatical structures, lexicography and whether or not the content is useful outside the classrooms. These scholars suggest that designing textbooks with the help of corpora will provide realistic texts that aim at facilitating the interaction with native speakers.

### 1.6.2 Direct Application of Corpora in Teaching/Learning EFL:

Before engaging learners on such situations where they are asked to directly exploit corpora by means of direct access to computers Grazib (2014) suggests the following 3steps:

1. *Initiating learners about corpora:* first of all, learners should know what is meant about corpus, how it is design, what does it contain and what functions does it provide to users.

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2. *Teaching and training learners:* once corpus is introduced to learners, the teacher have to teach them how to deal with it and how to extract concordances and frequencies in order to use them in academic context.
3. *Teacher as guider and facilitator:* in the last step Grazib (2014) suggest that teachers working with electronic corpora may move from knowledge and information providers towards guiders and facilitators.

(Grazib ,2014,P. 199)

### 1.6.2.1 Computer Assisted Language Learning

The first simple definition we may give is the application of computers in language teaching and learning. This application enable the use of word processing, presentation packages, guided drill and practice, tutor, simulation, problem solving, games, multimedia CD-ROM, and internet applications such as e-mail, chat and the World Wide Web (WWW) for language learning purposes.

According to previous researches CALL has been divided into three phases of development : Behavioristic CALL, Communicative CALL and Integrative CALL. The first phase seems to be the oldest and most primitive way of learning English Foreign Language, applied between 50s-60s. The application of CALL in this period was strongly based on drills and repetitions by means of specially designed computers composed of their own hardware and software launched in the early 50s. The second phase seems to be the more active method, learners highly interact with computers because they feel free and responsible of their own learning. The latter emphasizes the use of software, programs and games. The last and not the least phase believed to be the most important. It increasingly developed due to Internet and Multimedia.

(O'Sullivan,1999)

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### 1.6.2.2 Data Driven Learning

Tim Johns, the father of this direct, so-called ‘data-driven learning. DDL is an approach that focuses on learning rather than teaching. Defined as the direct application of using corpora; when the learners explore the corpus themselves. In Johns words: “*the attempt to cut out the middleman as far as possible and to give the learner direct access to the data*”

(Johns, 1991,P30) in (Boulton, 2009, P.2).

Such an approach engages learners in active roles where they are asked to analyze authentic language samples by means of corpus. O’Sullivan (2007) cited several cognitive skills liable to be refined through corpus use: “*predicting, observing, noticing, thinking, reasoning, analyzing, interpreting, reflecting, exploring, making inferences (inductively or deductively), focusing, guessing, comparing, differentiating, theorising, hypothesizing, and verifying*” (P.277).

O’Sullivan (2007, P. 277) in (Boulton A. 2009, P.85)

### 1.7 The Benefits of Students’ Use of Corpora and Corpus Tools in Writing

Writing on academic contexts produced by Non native speakers of English has gained a paramount interest and was subject of several studies. Researchers on this filed have investigated the implication of corpora in writing because of their tremendous importance. These investigations began around the 1980s focusing on providing a ready source of natural and authentic texts for language learning in order to improve syllabus designs and provide more effective materials and classroom activities. (Yasumasa, 2000), (Kyosung, 2006), (Norah,2016), (Yoon,2008),(Lynne, 2009), (Sedigheh, et al 2017) and (Horvath,2001).

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Kyosung (2006) conducted a research about “*Effects of Using Corpora and Online Reference Tools on Foreign Language Writing: a Study of Korean Learners of English as a Second Language.*” The researcher selected ten (10) Korean graduate students in order to paraphrase an English newspaper article. The findings of this investigation show that learners were able to see the most frequent words used with their patterns and collocations. In addition to a variety of everyday language which make them took more responsibility and gained confidence as L2 writers. The researcher added that the learners found corpora useful for sentence level composition and revision and led to an improvement in the accuracy of writing. Finally he argued that the opportunity to interact with authentic language makes the classes inductive and more learner-centered.

Kyosung, K. (2006)

Yoon (2008) in his study entitled “*The influence of Corpus Technology on L2 Academic Writing*” conducted a qualitative research that investigated the changes in students’ writings associated with corpus use over an extended period of time. Yoon has selected Six(6) L2 writers in EAP writing course to accomplish his study. The results revealed that corpus based activities are an important learning tool that has significant pedagogical potential in EAP writing contexts if well planned and presented. In Yoon (2008, P.1) words:

“corpus use not only had an immediate effect by helping the students solve immediate writing /language problems, but also promoted their perceptions of lexicogrammar and language awareness. Once the corpus approach was introduced to the writing process, the students assumed more responsibility for their writing and become more independent writers, and their confidence in writing increased.”

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This investigation confirms that the use of corpora may enhance learners' academic writing because electronic corpora provide a direct access to linguistic resources which makes learners able to solve their own writing problems and remedy their lacuna.

Yoon, H. (2008)

Sedigheh, et al (2017) investigated “*Online Corpus Tools in Scholarly Writing: a Case of EFL Postgraduate Student*” and explained how corpus tools provide a quality learning by investigating a non-English-major postgraduate student corpus consultation over five (5) months. The participant was doing his Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering. This qualitative case study found that corpus tools have the potential to assist EFL writers in proofreading and editing the surface levels of their writing. The researchers explained that consulting online corpora is useful cognitive tool for solving linguistic problems. Finally they pointed out that the results of their study are in agreement with previous studies (Yoon, 2008; Kennedy & Miceli, 2010; O’Sullivan & Chambers, 2006).

Sedigheh, et al (2017)

These mentioned researches resulted that the implication of corpora has positive impact on learners and explained that the targeted students became more responsible for their writings, more independent writers and more confident.

### 1.8 Conclusion

Increasingly, there have been discussions and experiments on developing corpora and more precisely on applying them to language teaching. A wide range of issues related to both corpora and language pedagogy has been discussed in this first chapter concluding that corpora and corpus linguistics deeply change the way we perceive EFL teaching.



## Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology

### Introduction

The present chapter deals with the history of writing in general and Academic Writing in particular. And then the methodology followed to accomplish the study: research questions/hypotheses, participants and research instruments.

#### 2.1.1 Academic Writing

In a linguistic viewpoint writing is a system of human communication by using symbols letters of the alphabet, punctuation and spaces to express thoughts and ideas in a readable form. The origin of writing developed through ancient civilizations over periods of time where the need for writing evolved. Writing has witnessed many changes, reforms and modifications over time, several types of writing have gained importance where emphasis was put on optimization of information, and a great emphasis was on Academic Writing. In this context Jacob et al (1981) argued: *“there is a growing awareness that learners need to develop proficiency not only in the more frequently emphasized skills of speaking, listening, and reading, but in writing as well”*.

(Jacob et al, 1981) in (Athina et al, 2017, P.10)

#### 2.1.2 The Beginning of Writing

In Cristopher (2010, P.15) words:

“The invention of writing and of a convenient system of records on paper has had a greater influence in uplifting the human race than any other intellectual achievement in the career of man. It was more important than all the battles ever fought and the constitutions ever devised.”

One of the most noticeable improvements of humans has been writing. This later is believed to be the most complex process. At the very beginning people used to

## Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology

draw and to paint on rocks and walls of caves. Before the invention of writing around 8000-4000 BC people had the need to record business transactions. These records were done by exchanging clay tokens that represent different objects such as sheep, grain and cattle.



**Figure 2.1 Multiple Origins Clay Tokens<sup>1</sup>**

The pioneers of writing were Sumerians and Egyptians around the fourth millennium . First the Sumerians who developed the clay tablets where pictographs were drawn down, then later became wedge-shaped cuneiform used as an aid to record economic data. After that the Egyptians who created the Hieroglyphic writing that was syllabic symbols representing single sounds.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.google.dz/search?q=clay+tokens&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi-lfW779fZAhWCXROKH0CBpoQ\\_AUICigB&biw=1366&bih=637#imgrc=cOwGNnyJHeIWsm:](https://www.google.dz/search?q=clay+tokens&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwi-lfW779fZAhWCXROKH0CBpoQ_AUICigB&biw=1366&bih=637#imgrc=cOwGNnyJHeIWsm:)



## Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology



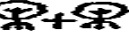









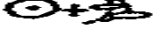







Early Forms	Modern Character	Meaning
 → 	木	tree, wood
 → 	林	woods
 → 	森	forest
 → 	本	root, origin
 → 	日	sun
 → 	月	moon
 → 	明	bright
 → 	山	mountain
 → 	鳥	bird
 → 	島	island

Figure 2.4: The Evolution of the Chinese Writing System <sup>4</sup>

### 2.1.3 Academic Writing Vs Personal Writing

“Student academic writing is at the heart of teaching and learning in higher education. Students are assessed largely by what they write, and need to learn both general academic conventions as well as disciplinary writing requirements in order to be successful in higher education. Writing for school is different from writing for pleasure”.

(Caroline et al, 2003, P.3)

Academic Writing requires planning and organizational skills i.e.; good writing skills allow communicating with clarity and ease. In addition, it has its own set of rules and practices because it is regarded as the most important medium by which pupils communicate their ideas. However, personal writing vastly differs and does not require technical vocabulary because it expresses personal feelings that are not going to be assessed, and then the writer is the provider of information unlike academic writing that requires a range of reliable sources.

<sup>4</sup>[https://www.google.dz/search?biw=1366&bih=637&tbn=isch&sa=1&ej=wKKeWsbACoWuUYXVsfAH&q=evolution+of+the+Chinese+writing+system&oq=evolution+of+the+Chinese+writing+system&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3...5651.10283.0.11480.2.2.0.0.0.0.3367.3367.9-1.1.0...0...1c.1j2.64.psy-ab..1.0.0...0.BiM5PTMbLw0](https://www.google.dz/search?biw=1366&bih=637&tbn=isch&sa=1&ej=wKKeWsbACoWuUYXVsfAH&q=evolution+of+the+Chinese+writing+system&oq=evolution+of+the+Chinese+writing+system&gs_l=psy-ab.3...5651.10283.0.11480.2.2.0.0.0.0.3367.3367.9-1.1.0...0...1c.1j2.64.psy-ab..1.0.0...0.BiM5PTMbLw0)

## Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology

**Table 2.1 Academic Vs Personal Writing**

	personal writing	Academic writing
Contractions	Don't, isn't	Do not, is not
Phrasal verbs	Go up / went up	Increase
Idioms	He was A1	He was excellent
Slang	Kids	Children
Pronouns	You can see from the graph	The graph shows
Negative form	It isn't positive	It is negative
Punctuation	Free punctuation	APA/ MLA style
Vague language	A lot, a bit, kind of	Considerable
Personal opinion	I think, I believe	According to researchers+ the reference

(Rebecca, 2015)

### 2.1.4 Teaching Academic Writing

Writing is an integral and necessary skill when learning a second language as well as all the other skills. Reading, writing, speaking and listening should not be taught independently because they are interrelated. As a rebuttal to this point Brand (1998) argued that: “*writing is not at the core of the curriculum. Thinking is, and writing makes thinking visible*” (P.30).

However, teaching academic writing in particular is of a great importance because it is impossible for any writer to produce faultless draft on the first attempt. The writing process occurs in three stages regardless the approach adopted. First of all prewriting, it includes generation of ideas or what is known as brainstorming, discussion of the purpose/format etc., use of organizational skills, emphasis placed on the idea rather than the structure. Secondly developing and composing the idea, means the creation of outline, selection tense, style, etc. and restructuring. Lastly

## Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology

revising and editing, which means revising the style / grammar / structure, check for consistency errors, clarity and support of arguments.

### 2.1.4.1 Prewriting

According to Brand (1998) : “*what students need to do is to learn the facts, then learn to work with them (that is, think about them, analyze and synthesize them, interpret them, and then perhaps, but not always, come up with some original ideas)*”. (P30).

pre-writing activities generate ideas, encourage a free flow of thoughts and help student construct understanding about what they want to say and then they will express it on a paper. A pre-writing course should be as follow:

- discussing the type of writing to be attempted by student ( description, narration, and exposition).
- Working on a writing model.
- Analyzing the model’s organization and style.
- Considering the reader’s and the writer’s purposes.
- Doing a series of exercises that focus on both organizational devices and topics appropriate to that writing function.

(Brand 1998)

### 2.1.4.2 Developing and Composing

Also known as the drafting phase, this stage focuses mainly on organizational and mechanical consideration to make the writing more precise and easier to understand. Such process includes the following steps:

- writing preliminary outlines and answering a series of questions within and organizational framework.

## **Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology**

- Making ongoing decisions about every aspect of writing. From vocabulary choice to syntax, style, and organization.
  - Reviewing, reading, and anticipating what will come next.
  - Reformulating and adjusting parts of the manuscript as it evolves.
- (Anne, 2009)

### **2.1.4.3 Revision and Editing**

In its general sense revising means seeing again. Academically speaking revision is a generative process that can be taught and learnt because it is of a great importance. Revising deeply makes students think critically. Brand (1998) suggested the following questions to consider while revising:

- What is your purpose? What is the most important thing you are saying in this draft? What main question does this draft try to answer? Is there any point you have made that deserves to be central?
- Are there ideas you need to add, after, or omit? What haven't you said yet that you really need to say?
- Do you need to make any large changes in the paper's overall arrangement?
- Who is your audience? List the things your readers are likely to know about your topic.
- List the things your readers probably don't know but will need to know in order to understand your paper. How did you decide what your audience did or did not know? How do you want readers to think or act? What will likely be the most interesting or significant part to your readers?
- How aware do you need to be of mechanics, surface features?

(Brand, 1998, P. 53)

## Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology

### 2.1.5 Academic Writing Skills

Good writing in any field requires skills and strategies in order to convey the understanding into objective, comprehensible and readable productions. Academic writing as well focuses strongly on techniques used and style adopted. In this context Harmer (1998) pointed out: “ *The reasons for teaching writing to students of English as a foreign language include reinforcement, language development, learning style, and most importantly, writing as a skill in its own right*” (p.79). Such process emphasizes two key areas that seem to define the writing skills: strong writing and excellent grammar. In other words, mastering writing skills means to be proficient in dealing with grammar, vocabulary, and punctuation.

(Harmer, 1998, P79)

#### 2.1.5.1 Strong Writing

Hall (1998) says : “*Readers of scientific papers do not read them to assess them; they read them to learn from them . . . . What is needed is more simplicity, not more sophistication!*” Aim “*to inform, not to impress*” (P.32).

(Hall, 1998, P.32) in (Carolyn, 2016,P.3)

Researchers specialized in academic writing advise writers to write in many short and simple sentences instead of long and ambiguous ones. In English language each paragraph should develop one idea and this idea should not be repeated over the coming paragraphs. Over writing results when the writer has nothing to say.

The following tables illustrate some examples of what has been explained by (Carolyn, 2016):



## Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology

**Table 2.2: *How to Refer to Previously Mentioned Items***

Ambiguous	Specific
This	This research
These	These parameters
It	Such a process

**Table 2.3: *Formal Vs Informal Expressions***

Informal	Formal
If	Whether (or not)
Like	Such as
A lot of, lots of, plenty	Many, several
Big	Great, large
Too	As well, also

### 2.1.5.2 Excellent Grammar

Faultless production is highly recommended in English academic writing; academic writers should express themselves appropriately and correctly which requires the mastery of grammar rules. This later evolves punctuation, the adequate use of tenses and passive/active voice, types of sentences, use of models and connectors ... etc. In this context Tony and Kenneth, (2013) defined grammar as follow: “*Grammar for Academic Writing provides a selective overview of the key areas of English grammar that you need to master, in order to express yourself correctly and appropriately in academic writing*” (P.4).

## **Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology**

### **2.1.6 Traditional Methods and Approaches**

Teaching academic writing is considered as an effective means to develop learners' communication abilities in English. To achieve this effectiveness three influential approaches have been developed as pointed out by (Caroline et al,2013): *“there are three influential approaches to the teaching of student writing that it is useful to consider. We refer to these approaches in the following way: writing as text, writing as process and writing as social practice”* (PP.9-11).

#### **2.1.6.1 The Traditional Textual Method (Text Approach)**

Practitioners of this approach engage learners on reading sample texts, and then writing essays. Such an approach seems to kill creativity because it is strongly based on imitation. The main focus is on specific features of the written texts, for example, spelling, text structure, vocabulary, style. In addition, little attention is typically paid to the process of writing.

#### **2.1.6.2 The Process Approach**

In the last quarter of the last century, the process approach has been developed as an alternative to the first mentioned approach. Attention in this approach is paid to the steps and stages writers typically go through in producing texts: brainstorming, planning, drafting, revision and composing. This approach seems to be learner centered Approach, learners' needs, expectations, goals, learning styles, skills and knowledge are taken into consideration.

#### **2.1.6.3 The Genre Approach**

Learners are engaged on analyzing communicative purposes of sample texts: essays, research reports and dissertations in order to make learners focus on

## **Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology**

language and discourse features of the texts in addition to the context. The approach seems to develop the best efficient methods of teaching academic writing. It has taken place all over the world thanks to its different underlying goals.

(John and Matthew, 2001, pp. 57-58)

### **2.2 Research Methodology**

In this part the research describes the methodology that guided him in order to fulfill the present study.

#### **2.2.1 Research Questions**

The following research questions have been asked to guide the present investigation:

*Q1:* How far is corpus technology used by learners in Academic Writing?

*Q2:* What are the learners' attitudes towards corpus technology use in writing?

*Q3:* What are the teachers' attitudes towards corpus technology use in writing?

#### **2.2.2 Research Hypotheses**

The researcher has suggested the following hypotheses:

1. The appropriate use of corpus linguistics will help to raise the level of writing skill among students.
2. If corpus linguistics takes place at the universities, learners will improve their writing abilities.
3. Teachers may have positive attitudes towards electronic corpora integration if they are provided with appropriate materials and training.

## **Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology**

### **2.2.3 Research Participants**

The participants for this study are students of third year English foreign language (EFL) at Moulay Tahar University of Saida. This level has been selected in purpose because the use of Corpora requires advanced level learners. They are males and females between 18 and 23 years old. All the Learners have been learning English from the first year middle school. In addition to 15 teachers of English at the Department of Letters and English at the same University. All teachers have been teaching more than 5 years at university and teach different modules. Some teachers have been teaching English in secondary schools before being recruited at Saida University. Some other teachers do not live in Saida.

### **2.2.4 Research Tools**

Because of the importance of the present subject and its importance on learning English Foreign language and for the investigation to be relevant, two research tools have been adopted.

#### **2.2.4.1 Interview**

The researcher has interviewed the 15 targeted teachers in order to understand the place that occupies corpus technology in their teaching process mainly in teaching writing skill. A structured interview has been adopted in which the interviewer has asked predetermined questions about the targeted topic following specific order. The same questions have been asked to all the participants.

#### **2.2.4.2 Questionnaire**

The second research instrument the researcher adopted is a semi structured questionnaire distributed to 3<sup>rd</sup> year LMD students with the aim to test their

## **Chapter Two: Academic Writing and Methodology**

willingness in using Electronic Corpora and to collect relevant information for the purpose of research.

### **2.2.5 Research Procedure**

The present study has been based on observing previous researches of some developed countries that investigated nearly the same issue, three studies have been mentioned on the first chapter. And then the findings have been presented to both teachers and learners in order to raise their awareness about the effectiveness of electronic corpora in developing writing skills in particular and providing quality learning in general.

### **Conclusion**

The importance of academic writing incites many researches to investigate this important skill and to develop different methods and approaches that may provide an effective teaching process.

In this part the researcher has briefly explained some notions related to Academic Writing and has described how he has organized the present study. In the following chapter findings will be analyzed.

## Chapter Three: Data Analysis and interpretation

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter represents the practical side of the study. It summarizes the findings obtained by both questionnaire and interview in order to know what are the teachers' and the learners' attitudes towards ICT and Corpus Linguistics. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be explained.

### 3.2 Data Analysis and Discussion

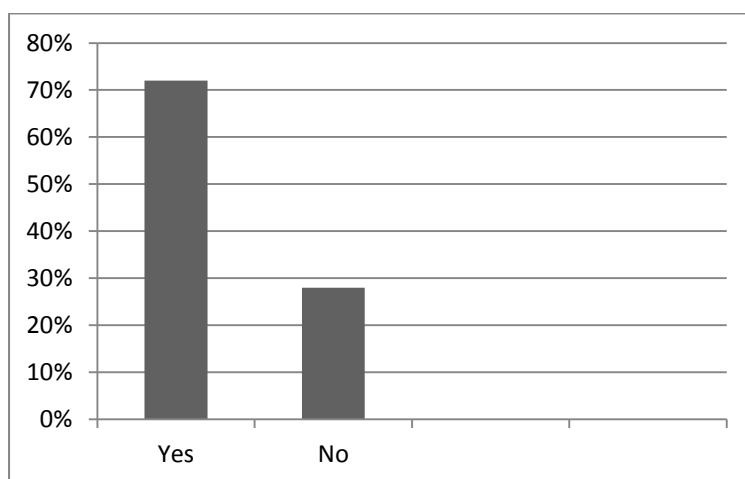
#### 3.2.1 Learners' Questionnaires

Ten (10) questions have been asked to the learners in order to know how they perceive writing in general and the use of ICT in learning writing in particular. These questions are as follow:

##### Question 3.2.1.1: Do you enjoy writing in general?

**Table 3.2.1.1: Students' Motivation towards Writing**

Yes	No
72%	28%



**Diagram 3.2.1.1: Students' Motivation towards Writing**

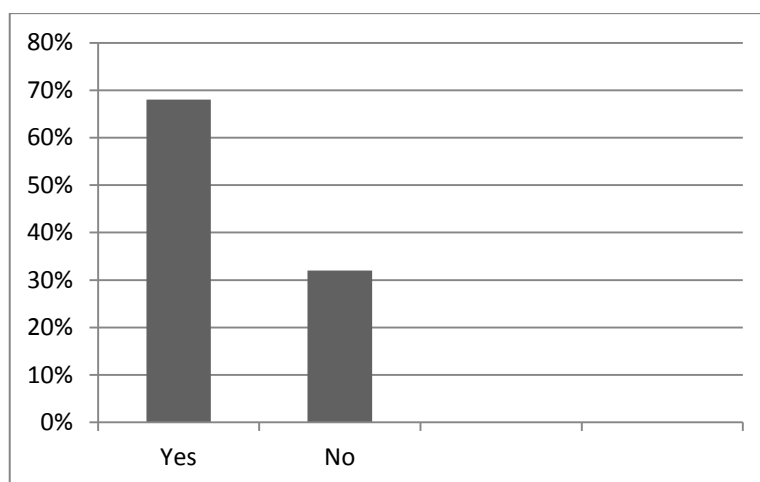
## Chapter Three: Data Analysis and interpretation

The aim of this question was to know whether or not the following answers will be objective, because sometimes when the learners do not like a given thing they blame the teachers. In contrary to the expectation, the majority of the learners enjoy writing. This high percentage was not expected because when interviewing the teachers, they have stressed that learners enjoy and have a good performance in oral activities rather than written ones.

### Question 3.2.1.2: Do you enjoy written expression module?

**Table 3.2.1.2: Students' Enjoyment of Written Expression Module**

Yes	No
68%	32%



**Diagram 3.2.1.2: Students' Enjoyment of Written Expression Module**

As the first answer, we did not expect such high percentage and we feel like this answer is not relevant since the teachers when interviewed said that their learners are not engaged in learning written expression.

## Chapter Three: Data Analysis and interpretation

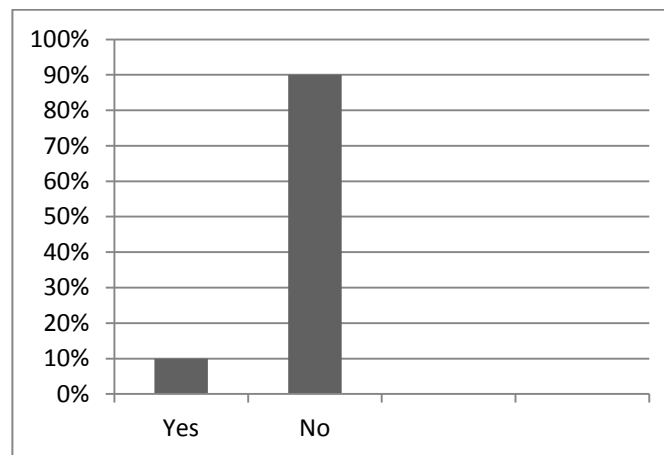
### Question 3.2.1.2.1 If not why?

In this question the answers were different. Some learners (08%) completely neglected and those who have answered gave different arguments. Some learners dislike the module as well as the teacher. Some others dislike the university. Others feel bored and said that they need some new stuff to enjoy. Another argument blaming the teacher saying that: “the teacher makes it difficult”. One learner blames himself saying that he has not a good style of writing and prefers to express himself orally. The final argument that attracted my attention and which seems the most logical was as follow: *“I cannot focus fully on whatever piece I’m writing. The process of writing requires a quiet place, and it cannot be done under pressure. I can’t write something because someone- be it a teacher- tells me to do so”*. We can deduce that this writing course is noisy.

**Question 3.2.1.3: Does your teacher present the course with the help of technological aids?**

**Table 3.2.1.3: Teachers’ Use of Technological Aids**

Yes	No
10%	90%



**Diagram 3.2.1.3: Teachers’ Use of Technological Aids**



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The majority said No and we fully agree with them. We have been studying at the same university and we have never been learning this module with the help of any technological tool.

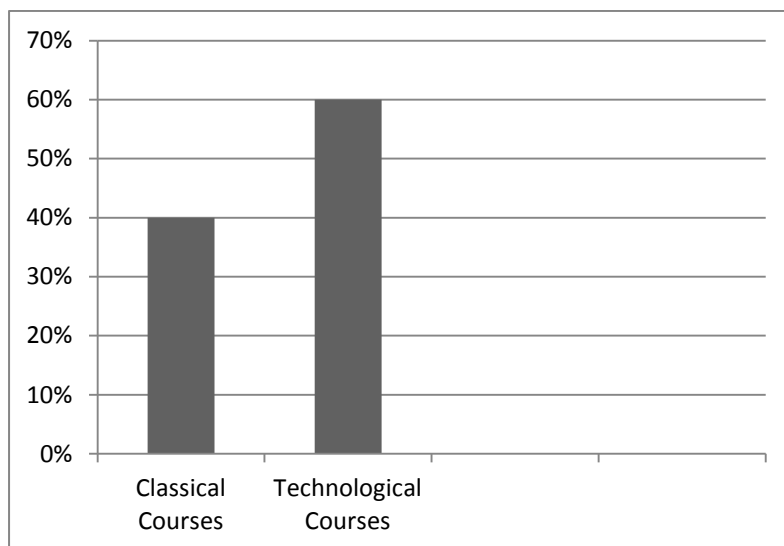
### Question 3.2.1.3.1 If yes what are these?

Those who said yes, they all said that the teacher uses the Data show. Presenting slides with the Data show instead of giving handouts is not sufficient. Teachers need to work with more sophisticated tools.

### Question 3.2.1.4: Do you prefer which of the following?

**Table 3.2.1.4: Students' Attitudes towards Classical/ Technological Courses**

Classical courses	Technological courses
40%	60%



**Diagram 3.2.1.4: Students' Attitudes towards Classical/ Technological Courses**

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As expected, learners who prefer technological courses are more than those who prefer classical ones. It is obvious because this generation is used to technology and masters different technological tools. It is time to break the routine and develop new and innovative ways of teaching.

### Question 3.2.1.4.1 Why?

Learners who said classical courses neglected this question expect one learner who said: *“I prefer classical courses because we are used to this method”*.

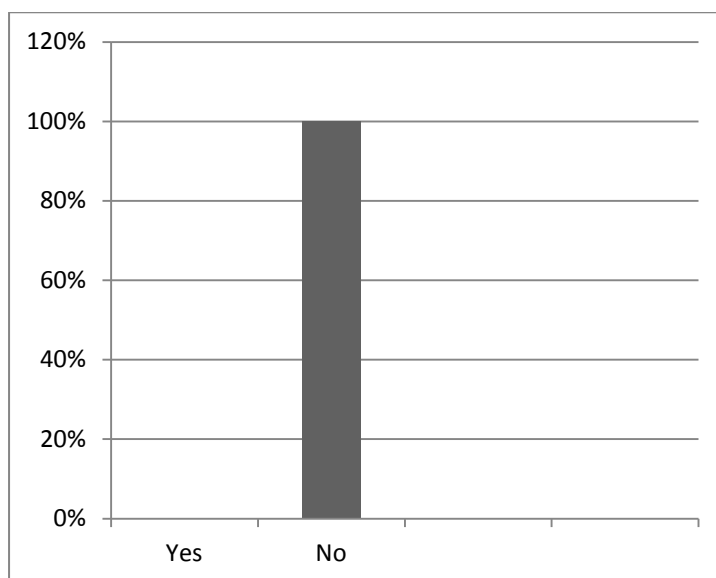
The others who said technological courses gave nearly the same answers. They think that the help of technology facilitates the understanding and makes the course easier. Others think that it is obvious to teach using technology since we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Teachers may vary between the two suggestions to engage their learners on the lectures.

### Question 3.2.1.5: Do you have any idea about corpus linguistics (CL) and electronic corpora?

**Table 3.2.1.5: Students' Knowledge about Corpus Linguistics and Corpora**

Yes	No
0%	100%

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**Diagram 3.2.1.5: Students' Knowledge about Corpus Linguistics and Corpora**

This question makes us astonished. Corpus linguistics is revolutionizing the world and as Algerian learners we are out of the blue and we have no idea about this serendipity. Even the major of the promotion does not know CL. The learners do not consider themselves as researchers. They still rely on the teacher to provide them with new information.

### **Question 3.2.1.5.1 If yes what is the idea?**

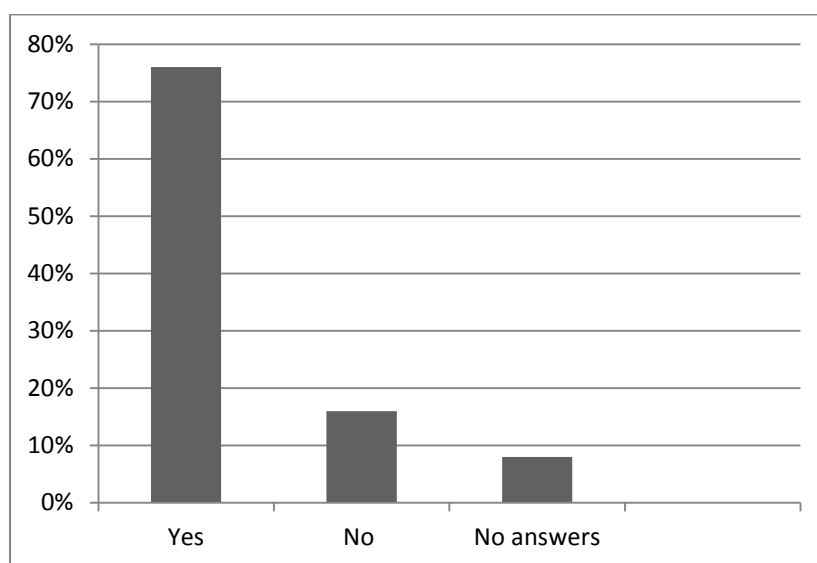
No answers for this question since all the targeted learners do not know neither Corpus Linguistics nor Electronic Corpora.

**Question 3.2.1.6: Do you use information and communication technology (ict) by your own when you write essays? (digital/online dictionaries, electronic corpora....).**

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**Table 3.2.1.6: Students' use of Information and Communication Technology**

Yes	No	No answer
76%	16%	08%



**Diagram 3.2.1.6: Students' use of Information and Communication Technology**

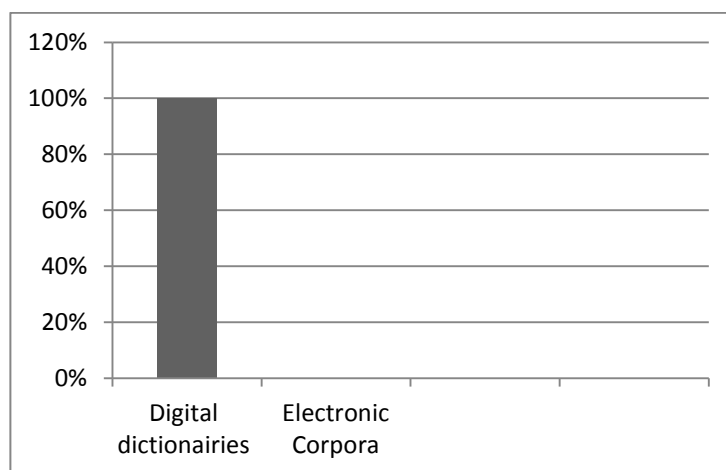
More than 50% of the learners use ICT when writing essays. This is a good thing to enhance writing and develop a quality production. But the problem is on how they use ICT and what technological tools they use.

### Question 3.2.1.6.1: If yes, what do you use?

**Table 3.2.1.6.1: Students' use of Digital Dictionaries and Corpora**

Digital dictionaries	Electronic Corpora
100%	0%

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**Diagram 3.2.1.6.1: Students' use of Digital Dictionaries and Corpora**

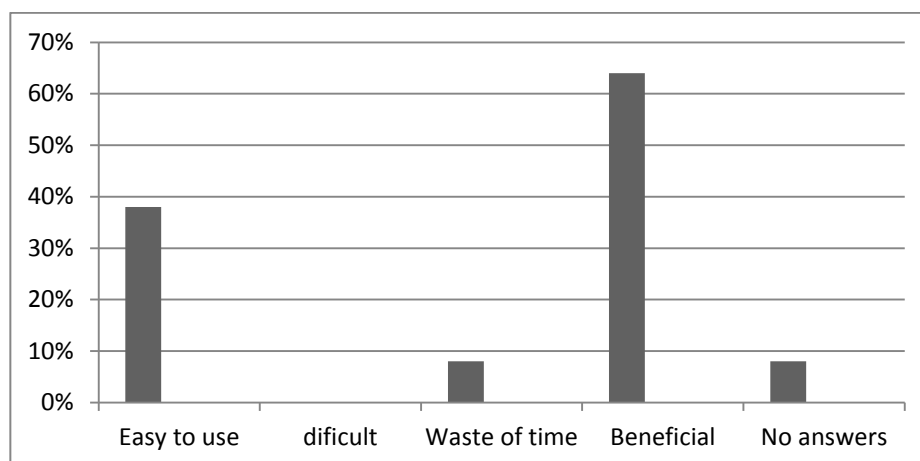
Unfortunately, the learners use only online dictionaries. We expected that they refer to other online essays and read published journals to enrich their vocabulary. In addition to online courses on YouTube where different teachers from all the Glob do teach writing in different ways and adopting several methods and approaches.

### Question 3.2.1.7: What do you think about the electronic tool you use?

**Table 3.2.1.7: Students' Viewpoint about the Electronic Tool They Use**

Easy to use	Difficult	Waste of time	Beneficial	No answer
38%	0%	08%	64%	08%

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**Diagram 3.2.1.7: Students' Viewpoint about the Electronic Tool They Use**

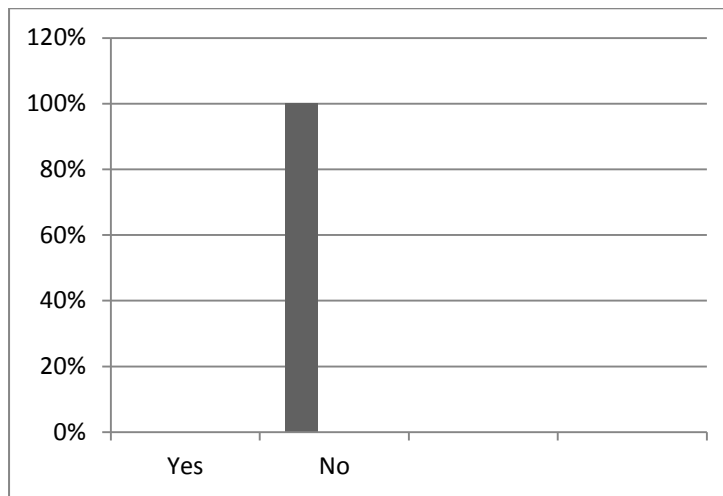
The majority of learners find the digital dictionaries beneficial and easy to use. We share the same opinion, it is easy to use digital dictionaries, but we think they are not sufficient. Learners need to refer to other tools. Technology is not only about digital dictionaries and Data show. We are not even sure we can call data projection a technology anymore.

**Question 3.2.1.8: Have you been learning written expression using Data Driven Learning (DDL)?**

**Table 3.2.1.8: students' use of DDL**

Yes	No
00%	100%

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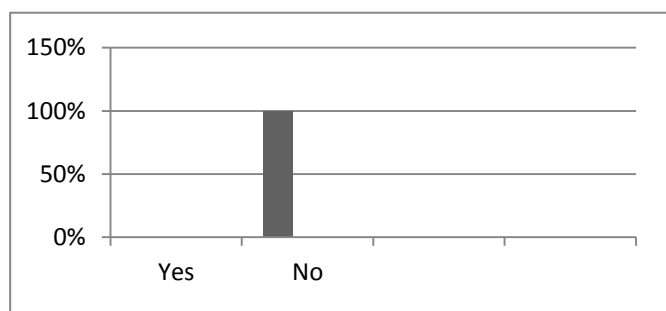
**Diagram 3.2.1.8: students' use of DDL in Learning Written Expression**

No other answers are expected since the University still lacks materials and adequate laboratories and equipments.

**Question 3.2.1.9: Have you been learning written expression using Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)?**

**Table 3.2.1.9: Students' Use of CALL in Learning Written Expression**

Yes	No
00%	100%



**Diagram 3.2.1.9: Students' Use of CALL in Learning Written Expression**

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It is not evident to adopt this method having over crowded classes and no available materials. Teachers are still fighting on classes and on the only Data show the department possesses.

### **Question 3.2.1.10: Give any comment about ICT use in teaching/learning EFL.**

Not all the learners gave their comments about the ICT use. The few who answered said ICT is helpful and beneficial.

### **3.2.2 Teachers' Interviews**

Sixteen (16) questions have been asked to 15 teachers at Saida University to know what they know about Corpus Linguistics and how they use Electronic Corpora. The interview was divided into two (02) sections: teacher profile information which consists of three (03) questions. The first question was about their ages in order to see if old teachers perceive the integration of technology to the teaching process the same as young teachers. The second question was asked to know their speciality of teaching. At saida University we have Few teachers who teach writing which makes me refer to other teachers to gather enough information. The last question was about the experience because it is relevant factor that affect deeply the quality of teaching. The second section: learners and teaching process information. This section consists of thirteen (13) open-ended questions aiming at knowing to what extent teachers believe that technology mainly Corpus Linguistics enhance the writing process. These questions are as follow:

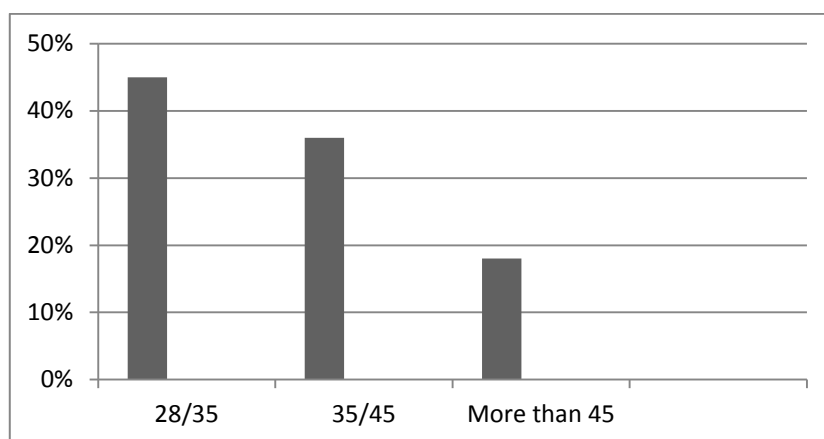


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### Question 3.2.2.1: What is your age?

**Table 3.2.2.1: Teachers' Age**

28/35	35/45	More Than 45
45%	36%	18%



**Diagram 3.2.2.1: Teachers' Age**

The interviewed teachers were of different ages. The majority were young teachers. Old teachers do not strongly agree on the integration of ICT and believe that traditional methods are more fruitful. This is exactly what has been expected because old people generally but not always are technophobes.

### Question 3.2.2.2: What is your field of specialism?

EFL, Didactics, Literature, ESP, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and oral expression were the main specialties. Some teachers have never been teaching written expression module which makes them give limited and neutral answers about some questions that need specialized teachers.

## Chapter Three: Data Analysis and interpretation

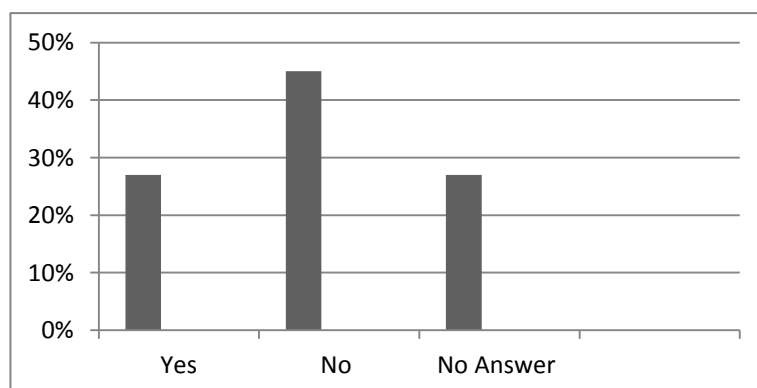
### Question 3.2.2.3: How long have you been teaching?

Experienced and novice teachers have been interviewed in order to gather relevant information about the outcomes of ICT and the limitations of its incorporation. Some teachers have been teaching 18 years. The other interviewed teachers have been teaching 05, 06, 12, and 16 years.

### Question 3.2.2.4: Do you find your learners engaged in learning written expression?

**Table 3.2.2.2: Learner's Motivation towards Writing according to Teachers**

Yes	No	No answer
27%	45%	27%



**Diagram 3.2.2.2: Learner's Motivation towards Writing according to Teachers**

The majority of teachers do not find their learners engaged and motivated to learn written expression. Some teachers argued that even with the technological aids learners do not enjoy this module.

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### **Question 3.2.2.5: How do you rate their performance?**

All the interviewed teachers gave the same answer to this question except two teachers that did not give exact answer because they do not teach the module. All the others rate their learners' performance average and below average. Some teachers added that written assignments are a major handicap for learners, which is not the case in oral activities. The teachers believe that their students' oral skills are better than their writing skills.

### **Question 3.2.2.6: What teaching aids do you use?**

Handouts, videos and Data show were the major answers. Only few teachers use the technological tools while the majority prefer the handouts because most of the rooms are not suitable for projection.

### **Question 3.2.2.7: Where do you use technological aids?**

Ordinary classes was the only answer provided by all teachers since the University lacks functional laboratories.

### **Question 3.2.2.8: What are your learners' attitudes towards Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use?**

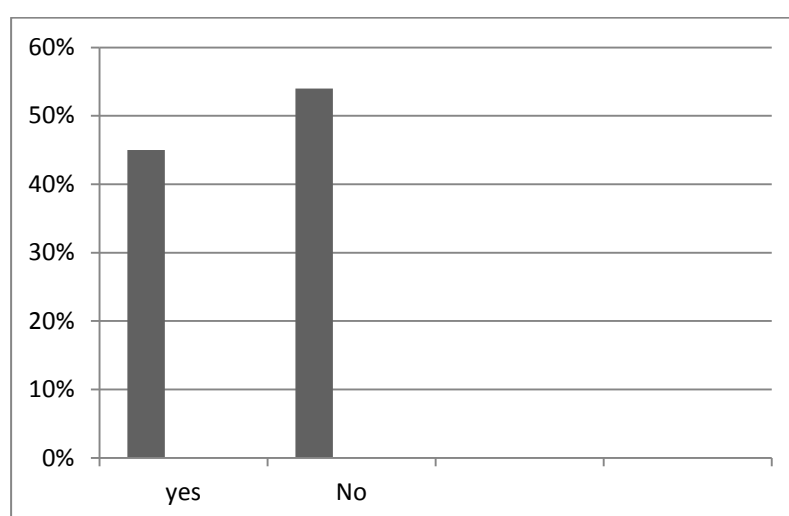
Some teachers argued that their learners enjoy ICT and show more interest to the lecture. Other teachers completely disagree and believe that the learners use ICT either for gaming or communication but when it comes to studying they regard the use of ICT unnecessary extra burden; they explained that learners focus on the tool and neglect the content.

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**Question 3.2.2.9: Do you have any idea about corpus linguistics (CL) and electronic corpora?**

**Table 3.2.2.3: Teachers' Knowledge about Corpus Linguistics and Corpora**

Yes	No
45%	54%



**Diagram 3.2.2.3: Teachers' Knowledge about Corpus Linguistics and Corpora**

Not all the teachers are knowledgeable about Corpus Linguistics which is unbelievable. Corpus linguistics appeared around the 1960s.

**Question 3.2.2.10 Have you dealt with any Electronic Corpus or corpus tools before?**

Not all the teachers how are knowledgeable about CL have dealt with Corpus Tools. Some of them argued that they have only basic notions about the term. Some others have dealt with Corpora for personal use, to conduct their researches.

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**Question 3.2.2.11: Do you refer to Electronic Corpora to design a syllabus/course?**

Some teachers said that they would love to refer to Corpora in designing syllabus but it is difficult because we don't have the culture of such serendipity. In addition, Electronic Corpora do not provide free access. The British National Corpus for example offers a limited free access. The full version of any Electronic Corpus should cost around 245 Euro.

**Question 3.2.2.12: Do you use Electronic Corpora as a course material?**

Only one teacher said yes. The others said that it is impossible because we have not adequate materials.

**Question 3.2.2.13: Do you prefer engaging learners in Data Driven Learning (DDL) or Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)?**

Only few teachers said yes because they think that it is high time to cope with new technological tools to attract the learners' interest. The others prefer traditional methods because of the lack of materials and the learners' level. These teachers believe that some learners lack concentration, methodology and do not know how to master some tools.

**Question 3.2.2.14: would you like to integrate Corpus Linguistics within the existing modules?**

All teachers even those who have no idea about the term said yes but not in the actual situation. The majority said it seems impossible in the two or three coming years because the University has serious problems in providing materials and ameliorating the circumstances.

**Question 3.2.2.15: What hamper the integration of Corpus Linguistics (CL) and the use of Electronic corpora in your opinion?**

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Several reasons hamper the incorporation of CL. According to the interviewed teachers, the main obstacles are: lack of materials, teachers' unfamiliarity with such methods and tools, teachers' and learner's low ICT skills and the administration.

### **Question 3.2.2.16: Any other comments about Corpora and Corpus Linguistics.**

The majority of teachers neglected this question. The only comments obtained are about the teachers' training. Some teachers said that it will be a failure if we integrate Corpus Linguistics without training the teachers and raising their awareness about the use of such methods and tools.

### **3.3 Recommendations**

The availability of Electronic Corpora offers numerous ways to use the authentic electronic language in different contexts: vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics... As a recommendation we may propose the following corpus-based activities samples:

#### **Activity one:**

The learners may work in groups or pairs and analyze for example 5 texts retrieved from any given corpus in order to extract the top 20 words used in the target language. From a linguistic viewpoint, this analysis is known as word frequency.

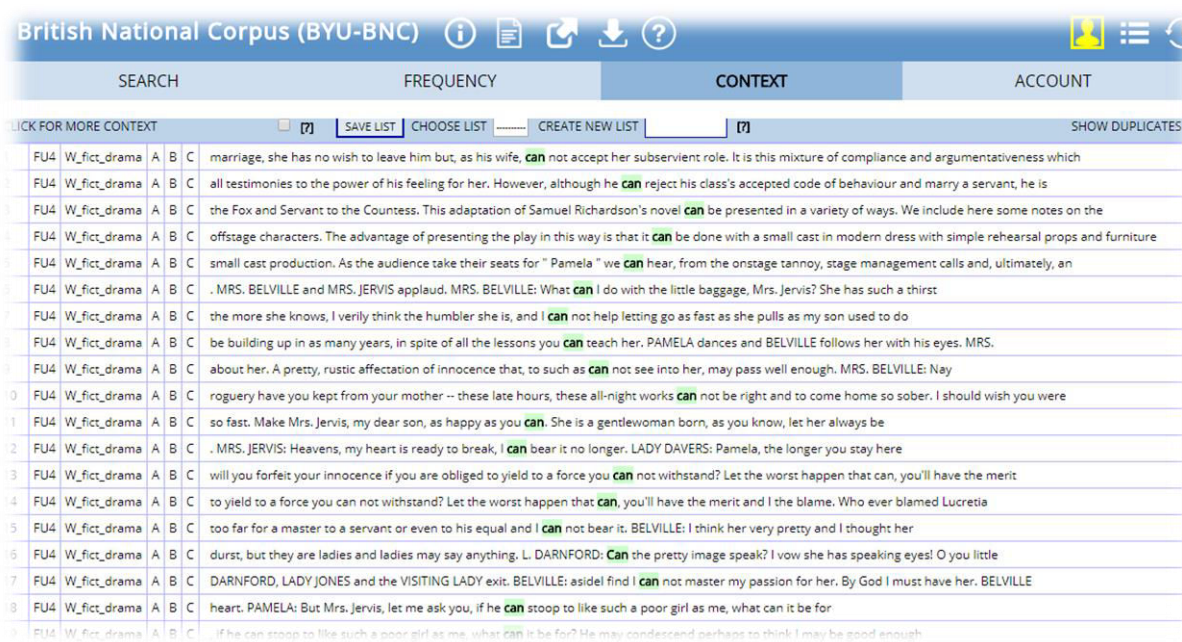
#### **Activity two:**

In order to be familiar with the language collocations, learners may analyze written texts and retrieve by their own all the words that typically go together.

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### Activity Three:

Instead of presenting a readymade information to learners about the use of the modal “Can”, the teacher may engage his learners in studying the following contexts of the modal “Can” offered by BNC and ask them to identify the different uses.



The screenshot shows the British National Corpus (BYU-BNC) interface. The top navigation bar includes 'SEARCH', 'FREQUENCY', 'CONTEXT', and 'ACCOUNT'. Below this, there are options to 'CLICK FOR MORE CONTEXT', 'SAVE LIST', 'CHOOSE LIST', 'CREATE NEW LIST', and 'SHOW DUPLICATES'. The main table displays search results for the modal 'can' in the context of 'W\_fict\_drama'. The table has columns for ID, Corpus, Part, and Text. The text in the 'Text' column shows various uses of 'can' in different contexts, such as 'marriage, she has no wish to leave him but, as his wife, can not accept her subservient role.', 'all testimonies to the power of his feeling for her. However, although he can reject his class's accepted code of behaviour and marry a servant, he is', 'the Fox and Servant to the Countess. This adaptation of Samuel Richardson's novel can be presented in a variety of ways. We include here some notes on the', 'offstage characters. The advantage of presenting the play in this way is that it can be done with a small cast in modern dress with simple rehearsal props and furniture', 'small cast production. As the audience take their seats for " Pamela " we can hear, from the onstage tannoy, stage management calls and, ultimately, an', 'MRS. BELVILLE and MRS. JERVIS applaud. MRS. BELVILLE: What can I do with the little baggage, Mrs. Jervis? She has such a thirst', 'the more she knows, I verily think the humbler she is, and I can not help letting go as fast as she pulls as my son used to do', 'be building up in as many years, in spite of all the lessons you can teach her. PAMELA dances and BELVILLE follows her with his eyes. MRS.', 'about her. A pretty, rustic affectation of innocence that, to such as can not see into her, may pass well enough. MRS. BELVILLE: Nay', 'roguey have you kept from your mother -- these late hours, these all-night works can not be right and to come home so sober. I should wish you were', 'so fast. Make Mrs. Jervis, my dear son, as happy as you can. She is a gentlewoman born, as you know, let her always be', 'MRS. JERVIS: Heavens, my heart is ready to break, I can bear it no longer. LADY DAVERS: Pamela, the longer you stay here', 'will you forfeit your innocence if you are obliged to yield to a force you can not withstand? Let the worst happen that can, you'll have the merit', 'to yield to a force you can not withstand? Let the worst happen that can, you'll have the merit and I the blame. Who ever blamed Lucretia', 'too far for a master to a servant or even to his equal and I can not bear it. BELVILLE: I think her very pretty and I thought her', 'durst, but they are ladies and ladies may say anything. L. DARNFORD: Can the pretty image speak? I vow she has speaking eyes! O you little', 'DARNFORD, LADY JONES and the VISITING LADY exit. BELVILLE: asidel find I can not master my passion for her. By God I must have her. BELVILLE', 'heart. PAMELA: But Mrs. Jervis, let me ask you, if he can stoop to like such a poor girl as me, what can it be for', 'if he can stoop to like such a poor girl as me, what can it be for? He may condescend perhaps to think I may be good enough

Figure 3.3.1: The Context of the Modal “Can” in BNC

### 3.4 Conclusion

The results revealed that the majority of teachers and all learners are still not knowledgeable about Corpus Linguistics and Corpus tools. Concerning the learners, it may be because of their lack of motivation in learning EFL. The learners are blaming the teachers and prefer technological methods. In addition, they support learner-centred methods and learner’s autonomy. In the other hand teachers are blaming learners and believe that this latter do not show responsibility and interest.

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Teachers believe that their students do not work seriously on their proficiency and do not take profit from technology in studying. The majority of learners waste their time using technology only to communicate.

The incorporation of Corpus Linguistics is far away to be done at Saida University especially in these coming years. The mastery of Corpus tools requires advanced level and adequate materials.



The present Master dissertation is an investigation carried out to highlight the importance of Electronic Corpora in supporting English foreign language pedagogy. The study was descriptive rather than experimental research because learners and teachers of Saida University are still unfamiliar with Corpora and Corpus linguistics.

Electronic Corpora are said to play an important role in computational linguistics. Nowadays, with the uses of these Corpora both qualitative and quantitative analyses of language are possible. Another known benefit of corpora is the authenticity of language they provide; the varieties of written texts are originally gathered from magazines, books, letters and newspapers. However, the spoken varieties are mainly the formal and informal recorded conversations. This authenticity is regarded as a tool that raises the learners' awareness.

Language pedagogy and linguistics as well have coped with this technology era. Electronic corpora are believed to assist both teachers and learners in the teaching/ learning process. The mentioned benefits of corpora in enhancing the writing skills in the actual study are only drops from an ocean. The finding of previous experiences done in the developed countries revealed that learners took more responsibility for their writings when using corpora and they became more confident and independent writers.

The two main limitations of this study were its duration and teachers' and learners' ignorance of corpus Linguistics and corpora. First of all, it is obvious that five (05) months are neither sufficient to teach learners who ignore Corpus linguistics and corpus tools about the major concepts of corpora and how they can get access to them effectively, nor to design syllabus using corpus tools in order to teach them writing. Second, some electronic corpora do not provide a free access and the University cannot ensure this access.

## General Conclusion

The lack of materials and equipment is basically the main obstacle that hampers the integration of Corpus Linguistics according to the interviewed teachers. However, the targeted learners argued that they are fed up with the traditional teaching methods and do support corpus incorporation even though they have no idea about it.

This present study actually cannot have a conclusion. In contrast we hope that it will be an introduction for further experimental investigations in corpus linguistics context.

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## Teachers' Interview

**This Interview is part of “Master” research project which is an attempt to shed light on the importance of corpora to enhance Academic Writing in a direct way by engaging learners on Data Driven Learning (DDL) and Computer Assisted Language Learning(CALL), and indirectly by designing syllabus/course and providing materials. Thank you in advance.**

### **A-Teacher profile information:**

1- What is your age?

28/35

35/45

more than 45

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2- What is your field of specialism?

3- How long have you been teaching?

### **B- Learners and teaching process information:**

4- Do you find your learners engaged in learning written expression?.

5- How do you rate their performance?

6- What teaching aids do you use?

7- Where do you use technological aids?

8- What are your learners' attitudes towards Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use?

9- Do you have an idea about Corpus Linguistics (CL) and Electronic Corpora? Have you dealt with any Electronic Corpus or Corpus tools before?

10-Do you refer to Electronic Corpora to design a syllabus/course?

11-Do you use Electronic Corpora as a course material?

- 12-**Do you prefer engaging learners in Data Driven Learning (DDL)/ Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)?
- 13-** Would you like to integrate Corpus Linguistics ( CL) within the existing modules?
- 14-**What hamper the integration of Corpus Linguistics (CL) and the use of Electronic Corpora in your opinion?
- 15-**Any other comments about Corpora and Corpus Linguistics?

**Thank you very much**

## Students' questionnaire

**You are invited to fill in this questionnaire which is part of “Master” research project which is an attempt to shed light on the importance of corpora to enhance Academic Writing in a direct way by engaging learners on Data Driven Learning (DDL)/Computer Assisted Language Learning(CALL), and indirectly by designing syllabus/course and providing materials. Thank you in advance.**

Please tick where appropriate and provide answers where necessary.

1. Do you enjoy writing in general?

Yes

No

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2. Do you enjoy written expression module?

Yes

No

--	--

If not why ?

.....

.....

3. Does your teacher present the course with the help of technological tools?

Yes

No

--	--

If yes what are these?

.....

.....

4. Do you prefer which of the following?

Classical courses

Technological courses

--	--

Why?

.....  
.....

5. Do you have any idea about Corpus Linguistics (CL) and Electronic Corpora?

Yes

No

--	--

If yes what is the idea?

.....  
.....

6. Do you use Information and communication technology (ICT) by your own when you write essays? (Digital / Online Dictionaries, Electronic Corpora...).

.....  
.....

7. What do you think about the electronic tool you use?

Easy to use

Difficult to use

Waste of time

Beneficial

--	--	--	--

8. Have you been learning written expression using Data Driven Learning (DDL)?

Yes

No

--	--

9. Have you been learning written expression using Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)?

Yes

No

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10. Give any comment about ICT use in teaching/ learning EFL?

.....  
.....  
.....

**Thank you**