STUDY SKILLS

For 2nd Year EFL Student Teachers

Compiled By

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Assiut University

Study Skills for 2nd Year EFL Student Teachers

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PREFACE

Welcome to "Study Skills for 2nd Year EFL Student Teachers," a course meticulously designed to enhance your academic prowess and equip you as future educators with a comprehensive set of study skills. As an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Education, Assiut University, I have developed this book to seamlessly integrate theoretical insights with practical applications, ensuring that you are well-prepared to navigate the complexities of both the English language and the pedagogical content of your studies.

This course is crafted in response to the distinctive challenges you encounter as EFL student teachers, particularly in mastering the content delivered in English. The book is thus customized to provide strategies pertinent to the EFL learning and teaching context, fostering your development as proficient educators.

Structured to progressively build your competencies, each chapter of this book enhances your abilities in critical reading, effective vocabulary acquisition, composition skills and academic writing, writing a journal response, using WebQuest strategy, and test preparation. The strategies delineated herein are practical, evidence-based methods proven to be effective in academic environments. Engaging with this material will empower you to critically analyse texts, enrich your vocabulary, articulate your thoughts with precision, and tackle assessments with assurance.

Recognizing the pivotal role of technology in contemporary education, this course delves into the utilization of digital tools to augment your learning and teaching experiences. You will learn to integrate a variety of online resources and multimedia applications into your study routines, enriching your educational practices.

Embracing the diversity of learning styles, this book encourages you to engage in reflective practices, tailor the techniques to your individual needs, and formulate a personalized study plan. Through continuous self-assessment, you will monitor your progress and adapt your strategies to achieve sustained improvement.

As you commence this course, bear in mind that the study skills you acquire will not only facilitate your academic success but also prove invaluable in your teaching careers. These skills will prepare you to educate and inspire your future students, imparting the essence of efficient and impactful learning.

I invite you to embark on this course with a dedication to self-growth and an open mind. May your journey through these pages be as transformative as it is enlightening, laying the groundwork for a rewarding teaching career.

Dr Mahmoud M. S. Abdallah (July, 2024)

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Course Specifications

Study Skills

1- Course Details:		
Code: CUR216E1	**Course Title:** Study Skills	**Level:** 2nd year (1st Semester)
Major: Bachelor of Arts & Education (English Section)	**No. of Units: Theoretical lectures** (2 hours) **Credit hours**: 2 (along with 'Integrated Language Skills')	
Aims:	By the end of the course, EFL student teachers are expected to analyse and apply the major theories and principles behind the academic study skills, methods, techniques, and strategies that would help them to learn how to learn and study language aspects and educational content. This involves: 1. Acquainting EFL student teachers with knowledge and understanding of how to learn and study academic content in a way that fosters academic excellence and lifelong learning for a variety of English language teaching and learning purposes. 2. Expanding EFL student teachers' knowledge base in approaches, methods, strategies and techniques that are related to effective reading comprehension both online and offline. 3. Evaluating and making decisions about available academic resources to select the appropriate content by applying critical (and selective) reading skills. 4. Developing EFL student teachers Web-based new literacies (e.g. online communication and collaboration, working in an online community, critical reading skills, and locating data online). 5. Developing EFL student teachers' ability to study independently and be involved in modern literacy practices associated with modern	

	technologies (e.g. the Web and AI chatbots). 6. Developing EFL student teachers' proficiency in academic writing and technological literacy. 7. Increasing EFL student teachers' awareness of the current language learning needs and capability of maintaining up-to-date knowledge through a variety of appropriate sources. 8. Developing EFL student teachers' skills in vocabulary acquisition and use in a contextual and meaningful fashion while studying English as a foreign language. 9. Developing EFL student teachers' skills of journal writing and using annotations. 10. Developing EFL student teachers' skills of preparing for academic tests and exams. 11. Developing EFL student teachers' skills of skimming, scanning and searching the Web to perform a task, solve a problem or answer a question.

Contents:	Week	Topic	No. of Hours
	1	Chapter One: Introducing Study Skills (1)	2
	2	Chapter One: Introducing Study Skills (2)	2
	3	Chapter Two: Effective Reading Skills and Strategies (1)	2
	4	Chapter Two: Effective Reading Skills and Strategies (2)	2

	5	Chapter Three: Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Development	2
	6	Chapter Four: Developing Composition Skills and Academic Writing (1)	2
	7	**Midterm Test**	**2**
	8	Chapter Four: Developing Composition Skills and Academic Writing (2)	2
	9	Chapter Five: How to Write a Journal Response	2
	10	Chapter Six: WebQuest Strategy	2
	11	Chapter Seven: Test Preparation Strategies	2
	12	Chapter Eight: Conclusion and Final Remarks	2
	13	Practical applications	2
	14	Revision & Reflections	2
	15	Revision & Reflections	2
	16	**Final Exam**	**2**

Teaching and Learning Methods	Lecturing Discussion

	Micro-teaching and practical workshops Online learning
Teaching and Learning Methods for Low & Gifted Learners	Giving them special exercises and written assignment Discussing their mistakes privately after class Online learning (for gifted learners) Reflective learning (for gifted learners)
Evaluation:	
a) Tools	- Mid-term written test - Final- term written test - Oral presentations - Online reports
b) Time Schedule	-A lecture every week, with each chapter/topic being covered either in one lecture or in two successive lectures depending on the length of each chapter -The last 2 weeks are allocated for revision - Mid-term exam week 7 -Final exam week 16
c) Grading System	Semester work=30 Written exam=70 ***Total=100***
List of References:	
a- Course Notes	Notes in Study Skills: Abdallah, M. M. S. (2024). *Study Skills for 2nd Year EFL Student Teachers*. Faculty of Education, Assiut University, Egypt.
b- Required Books (Text Books)	- Abdallah, M. M. S. (2011). *Teaching English as a Foreign Language from a New Literacy Perspective: A Guide for Egyptian EFL Student Teachers*. VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, Saarbrücken, Germany. - Abdallah, M. (2019). *TESOL/TEFL Methodology 2: Advanced Language Teaching/Learning Strategies* (2nd ed). Faculty of Education, Assiut University, Egypt.

	- The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages. Cambridge University Press
c- Reference Books	Eagleton, M. B. & Dobler, E. (2007). *Reading the Web: Strategies for Internet inquiry*. The Guilford Press, New York
d- Periodicals	Computer-Assisted Language Learning; English Teaching Forum; Arab World English Journal (AWEJ); TESOL Quarterly

Dr Mahmoud Mohammad Sayed Abdallah

CHAPTER ONE

Introducing Study Skills

1.1 Introduction

Embarking on the journey of higher education, particularly in the field of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), requires a robust set of study skills that go beyond the traditional methods of learning. This introductory chapter lays the foundation for a transformative approach to studying, tailored specifically for you, the aspiring EFL educators. Here, we will explore the essence of study skills, understand their critical role in your academic and professional development, and preview the comprehensive skill set that this course will help you develop.

This course is designed not only to inform but also to **inspire**, encouraging you to embrace these skills as vital tools in your educational arsenal. As future educators, the ability to effectively impart knowledge is as crucial as the knowledge itself, and this course aims to equip you with the skills to do both with distinction. By understanding and applying the principles outlined here, you will be able to approach your studies with a renewed sense of purpose and efficiency, setting the stage for a fulfilling and impactful teaching career. Let this chapter – and the whole course - be the map that guides you through the terrain of academic challenges, leading you to the pinnacle of educational achievement and beyond.

Here, we will delve into the art and science of learning, exploring the various strategies, techniques, and approaches that can transform the way you assimilate and apply knowledge. From the critical analysis of texts to the nuanced acquisition of new vocabulary, from the meticulous planning of written assignments to the strategic preparation for examinations, this course will guide you through the multifaceted landscape of study skills.

This introductory chapter sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of study skills. It is designed to motivate, inform, and prepare you for the exciting journey ahead. As you turn each page, you will be building a foundation of skills that will not only enhance your academic performance but also shape you into an effective and inspiring EFL teacher. Welcome to a course that promises to be as rewarding as it is challenging, and may your journey through these pages lead to a lifetime of successful teaching and learning.

As future educators, the skills acquired here will extend beyond academia, equipping you to inspire your own students. Engage with an open mind, and let this course be the foundation for a successful teaching career. That being said, you should also interact with this course as a language learner and lifelong learner who needs to master the basic, intermediate and advanced cognitive and metacognitive skills required for effective study. Thus, you need to apply the skills and strategies tackled in this course to your own academic courses at Faculty of Education, and try to transfer them to your future students in order to achieve the optimal teaching/learning experience in your future career.

This chapter starts with defining study skills so as to make things clear to you before going any further, and then explains why these skills are important, especially as far as language learning contexts and EFL teacher preparation are concerned. After that, it will give you a metacognitive hint in the form of 'learn how to learn' account to help you approach the learning process from a deep perspective that involves meta-awareness. Then, it will provide a comprehensive list of those study skills that you need to develop in the course of your academic study at Faculty of Education. Finally, it will deal with a very important literacy aspect (i.e. web-based new literacies) which is closely relevant with both language and academic study while using new technologies. This section provides a comprehensive list of those new literacies, which includes many skills that you as students need to develop in order to properly use Web-based technologies effectively for self-study and research

purposes (e.g. locating data online, reading the web selectively and effectively, understanding how to find relevant data, evaluating online resources, being a member of the online community, and using the Web as an online rich library).

1.2 Defining Study Skills

Study skills are ***the tools and techniques that enable learners to absorb, process, and retain knowledge more effectively***. They are the building blocks of successful learning and teaching, allowing learners to navigate through complex information, make connections between concepts, and apply knowledge in practical teaching scenarios. As EFL student teachers, mastering these skills is paramount, as you will not only use them in your studies but also pass them on to your future students.

Study skills are defined as **"*any method used to facilitate the process of learning material, such as outlining, taking notes, underlining, or silent recitation*"** (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2018). These methods are essential for students to effectively assimilate and retain information. For instance, **outlining** helps in organizing thoughts and structuring the learning material in a coherent manner. **Taking notes** is crucial for remembering key points from lectures or reading materials. **Underlining** or **highlighting** can aid in emphasizing important concepts, while **silent recitation** reinforces memory retention. Each of these skills contributes to a comprehensive approach to studying, enabling students to learn faster and more efficiently.

1.3 Importance of Study Skills

The importance of study skills cannot be overstated, especially in the context of EFL education. As you delve into the intricacies of the English language and the methodologies of teaching it, you will find that efficient study habits can significantly enhance your comprehension and retention of material. These skills will empower you to study faster, with minimum effort, while achieving

maximum benefit—a crucial advantage in the fast-paced, ever-evolving field of language education.

Further, study skills are fundamental to academic success. Study skills are ***a set of strategies and techniques that aid in the effective acquisition and application of knowledge***. According to the American Psychological Association, study skills are crucial for students' learning and are directly linked to academic performance. These skills encompass a broad range of activities, from time management and organization to note-taking and test preparation. Effective study skills help students understand and retain information, promote self-directed learning, and foster critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

For example, **time management skills** allow students to plan and prioritize their academic tasks, ensuring that they can meet deadlines and allocate sufficient time for studying. Organization skills help students keep track of their coursework and materials, which is essential for maintaining a clear focus on their studies. **Note-taking skills** are vital for capturing the essence of the information presented during lectures or in reading materials, and they serve as a valuable study aid when reviewing for exams. **Test preparation skills**, including familiarity with test formats and practice tests, reduce anxiety and increase confidence, leading to better performance.

Furthermore, study skills are not only beneficial for academic pursuits but are also transferable to professional settings. Skills such as ***critical reading***, ***effective communication***, and ***analytical thinking*** are highly valued in the workplace. Therefore, developing strong study skills during one's academic career can have long-lasting benefits beyond the classroom.

This course is structured to provide you with a holistic understanding of study skills, starting with reading strategies that will enable you to extract the most value from texts. You will learn to skim for main ideas, scan for specific information, and critically analyse content to form your own teaching

perspectives. The course will also guide you in acquiring and using vocabulary effectively, an essential skill for any language teacher.

Planning skills for good writing are another focal point of this course. You will discover how to organize your thoughts, structure your writing, and convey your ideas with clarity and precision. These skills are not only vital for your academic assignments but also for developing lesson plans and teaching materials in your future classrooms.

Preparing for tests is an inevitable part of your academic journey, and this course will equip you with strategies to approach exams with confidence. From understanding different types of tests to effective revision techniques and time management, you will learn how to prepare thoroughly and perform at your best.

Lastly, this course will link the practical skills you acquire to the study conditions you encounter in other courses. By integrating these skills into your broader academic experience, you will create a cohesive and efficient approach to learning that will serve you throughout your education and into your teaching career.

As we progress through this course, you will be encouraged to actively engage with the material, apply the techniques to your current studies, and reflect on your learning process. This active engagement will ensure that the skills you develop are not only theoretical but also deeply ingrained in your approach to learning and teaching.

1.4 Learn How to Learn

Learning how to learn is a ***transformative*** process that empowers students to take control of their educational journey. It is not merely about acquiring information but developing the skills to critically analyse, synthesize, and apply knowledge effectively. This process begins with cultivating a ***growth mindset***, understanding that intelligence and abilities are not fixed traits but can be developed through dedication and hard work.

Effective learning strategies are at the heart of this course. They involve active reading techniques that go beyond mere comprehension to critical engagement with the text. Students will learn to annotate, summarize, and question as they read, building a deeper connection with the material. Vocabulary acquisition is another cornerstone, where students will not only expand their lexicon but also learn the nuances of word usage, ensuring they can communicate with precision and clarity.

Linking these skills to real-life study scenarios, the course will provide practical applications for each strategy, ensuring that students can adapt them to various subjects and contexts. By the end of this course, students will not only have a toolkit of study skills but also the ability to reflect on their learning process, continuously improving and adapting their approach to achieve academic excellence and beyond. This is the essence of 'learning how to learn' – a skill that will serve them throughout their lives, in academia and in any future endeavours they pursue.

Because we believe that there is no single method of teaching that will reach all learners at all times in all places, it is imperative that we help ourselves to learn how to learn so that we can adapt and extend our knowledge and strategies when we encounter new tasks in new contexts. Our philosophy of learning merges three highly compatible theories: constructivism (learning by

doing), socioculturalism (learning with others), and semiotics (learning through symbols). This combination leads to a definition of learning that reads: ***Humans construct and deconstruct meaning in socially situated contexts using multiple sign systems***. Put simply, we try to make sense of the world by communicating with others for authentic purposes. In this way, babies learn to talk, children learn to read, and people learn to navigate and comprehend on the Web (Eagleton & Dobler, 2007).

1.5 List of Study Skills

Here is a comprehensive list of those study skills that you need to develop in the context of your academic study in the pre-service language teacher education programme.

Being an EFL student teacher majoring in English Arts and Education requires a strong foundation in study skills. Here's a comprehensive list categorized for better understanding:

General Skills:

1. Time Management: Effectively plan study schedules, prioritize tasks, and meet deadlines considering cultural and religious holidays in Egypt.
2. Organization: Develop a system for keeping notes, textbooks, assignments, and references organized.
3. Active Learning: Move beyond passive reading and note-taking. Engage with the material through critical thinking, questioning, discussion, and self-reflection.
4. Metacognition: Be aware of your own learning strengths and weaknesses. Develop strategies to address knowledge gaps and improve learning efficiency.

Language Skills:

1. Advanced English Proficiency: Refine your overall English skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) focusing on academic language and register.
2. Vocabulary Development: Actively expand vocabulary by using techniques like flashcards, context clues, and categorized lists. Focus on subject-specific vocabulary relevant to English Arts and Education.
3. Grammar Accuracy: Solidify grammar understanding through practice exercises and self-correction.

4. Academic Writing: Develop skills in writing clear, concise, and well-structured essays, research papers, and lesson plans tailored to the Egyptian context.

Subject-Specific Skills:

1. Literary Analysis: Cultivate the ability to analyse literary texts (poetry, prose, drama) using various critical lenses.
2. Research Skills: Learn to effectively research academic topics, critically evaluate information sources, and properly cite references using appropriate styles (e.g., APA, MLA).
3. Lesson Planning: Develop the ability to create engaging and effective lesson plans for diverse learners in the Egyptian educational system.
4. Educational Theories & Practices: Grasp key educational theories and pedagogical practices relevant to teaching English in the Egyptian context.

Additional Skills:

1. Technology Integration: Learn to utilize technology effectively for research, learning activities, and classroom presentations.
2. Intercultural Communication: Develop sensitivity to different cultural perspectives and approaches to learning, considering the Egyptian context.
3. Presentation Skills: Practice delivering clear, engaging, and informative presentations on academic topics.
4. Collaboration: Develop effective communication and teamwork skills for collaborating with peers and instructors.

1.6 Web-based New Literacies

'New literacies' is a broad term with a multiple nature which indicates that technology and literacy are quickly converging (Kapitzke, 2001; Leu, 2000b). In addition to being multiple, new literacies are always changing because every day, innovations come to the fore requiring certain literacies, and

therefore, after some time, today's literacies will become obsolete (Leu, 2000a). This makes the concept wide and vague, and hence, if we use 'new literacies' without linking it to a specific reference, it can refer to all innovations and technologies. Hence, if the Web is the main technology in focus, **'Web-based new literacies'** will be the appropriate term to use (Abdallah, 2010b).

Drawing on their cognitive-psycholinguistic background to literacy, Leu (2002: Online) and Leu et al (2004: Online) define new literacies based on the Internet as:

> *The knowledge, skills, strategies, competencies and insights that allow us to effectively use the Internet and other ICTs to identify problems, locate information, analyse the usefulness of that information, synthesise information to solve problems, and communicate the solutions to others.*

Though comprehensive, this definition needs to be adapted in order to achieve a balance between cognitive approaches and social approaches to literacy, enabling it to function within my context and purposes.

I therefore suggest the following definition for **'Web-based new literacies'** in the context of TESOL and pre-service EFL teacher education:

> *The Web-associated knowledge, insights, skills, strategies and competencies that EFL student teachers need for an effective employment of the Web in language learning* (Abdallah, 2010b: p5).

Web-based facilities

Web-based applications and services have recently increased in scope, especially with the development of Web 2.0 which has recently fostered social networking, collaborative knowledge construction, publication of any Web-based content, and sharing many types of files online (O'Reily, 2005; Richardson, 2009). Hence, I need to use a comprehensive term like 'Web-based facilities' to describe all these tools that can be useful within a language learning context. Therefore, I perceive Web-based facilities as:

All those available Web-based applications, features, resources, and services that the Web provides for education in general and for ELT/ELL in particular, and which can be used as spaces for learning and language practice.

Table 1: List of Web-based New Literacies

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
1-Online Communication and Collaboration	**1.1 Membership of online communities and the knowledge society:** 1.1.1 Students should be able to employ appropriate Web-based communication tools. 1.1.2 Students should be able to utilise the diverse modes of Web-based communication (e.g. synchronous/asynchronous and online/offline modes) appropriately. 1.1.3 Students should be able to communicate cross-culturally (i.e. communicate with others from diverse cultures and geographical locations). 1.1.4 Students should show respect and consideration to others during online interactions (i.e. netiquette). 1.1.5 Students should be able to practice roles and responsibilities effectively in an online collaborative learning community (e.g. being critical online readers, creative online writers, constructors of knowledge, effective online communicators, active participants and negotiators). 1.1.6 Students should participate effectively in online boards and forums (e.g. bulletin boards, discussion forums, and/or listserv discussions).

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	1.1.7 Students should join online email discussion groups (e.g. Yahoo Groups and Google Groups).
	1.2 Composing and writing online: 1.2.1 Students should be able to understand and identify ways of composing, revising, and editing online, using a word processor (e.g. Microsoft Word). 1.2.2 Students should be aware of the interactive relationship between many components while composing an online message: the audience, their purpose of writing, the medium, and their message. 1.2.3 Students should show some consideration for their online audience while they are writing (e.g. considering their interests, age, cultural background, educational level, and availability). 1.2.4 Students should be able to reflect on the quality of their own writing and the language they use while using online writing tools (e.g. they should use a formal style when they approach academic staff through email). 1.2.5 Students should be able to employ a range of online writing tools, whether synchronous (e.g. real-time chat) or asynchronous (e.g. email), for creative writing. 1.2.6 Students should be selective of sources during online writing (e.g. choosing the online documents and resources which sound appropriate to the writing purpose, and adapting them properly to the task at hand).

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	1.2.7 Students should be able to express in their own words new knowledge derived from online resources to convey to others their personal understanding. 1.2.8 Students should be able to share ideas with specialists and attain feedback from them (e.g. through email communication). 1.2.9 Students should be able to practice cooperative, functional writing online (i.e. having purpose and objectives while writing to others) to promote the exchange of ideas, viewpoints and perspectives. 1.2.10 Students should be able to employ online tools of written communication (e.g. email and blogs) to practice online writing activities (e.g. answering others' questions, making new postings, and/or responding to others' postings). 1.2.11 Students should be able to compose and send effective online messages to influence, convince, and/or orient others. 1.2.12 Students should be able to embed some visual, hyper-textual, and/or multimodal elements (e.g. smileys and links) in their messages.
	1.3 Meaning negotiation and idea sharing: 1.3.1 Students should be able to employ the web as a publishing vehicle to express ideas and to share viewpoints as well as reflections with others.

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	1.3.2 Students should be able to transfer meaning across the different multi-dimensional systems made possible by the Web (e.g. hypertext, sound, and video). 1.3.3 Students should be able to investigate Web-based conversations and attract collaborators to construct ideas and valuable knowledge (e.g. by reviewing others' online contributions in blogs and wikis and commenting on them). 1.3.4 Students should engage themselves in discussions with experts in the field of English language teaching/learning. 1.3.5 Students should be able to exchange ideas and negotiate meaning through online collaboration with others by providing and receiving feedback. 1.3.6 Students should be able to engage themselves in an online open dialogue by using free online question/answer services (e.g. Yahoo Answers) to share their experiences with others and make use of others' experiences.
	1.4 Online language practice 1.4.1 Students should be able to use English for realistic, purposeful communication with people all over the world through Web-based communication tools and facilities. 1.4.2 Students should employ Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) to increase their language use and practice, and to supplement face-to-face language learning.

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	1.4.3 Students should critique and respond to the language input provided by others. 1.4.4 Students should be able to use reflective Web-based tools that foster learning English as a foreign language (e.g. blogs and wikis).
2-Online Information Management and Knowledge Construction	**2.1 Surfing the Web and locating information** 2.1.1 Students should understand the structure and organisation of the Web and how information is displayed on it. 2.1.2 Students should understand the advanced features, facilities and services enabled by search engines (e.g. Google translation, Google books, videos, and images). 2.1.3 Students should be able to identify an information need or a learning need and decide which online resources to use to address that need. 2.1.4 Students should be able to use a variety of search tools and strategies to find information that is appropriate to the task at hand. 2.1.5 Students should be able to effectively surf the web to locate relevant and useful information using prominent search engines (e.g. Yahoo, Google, and Altavista). 2.1.6 Students should be able to use effective techniques for organising keywords (e.g. using Boolean operators like AND, OR, and "+" to indicate relationships, and using quotation marks for locating exact phrases).

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	2.1.7 Students should be able to deal effectively with searches (e.g. by rapidly selecting the most relevant results and navigating to the most reliable information resource). 2.1.8 Students should be able to make rapid navigational decisions as to whether to read the current page of information, pursue links internal or external to the page, or perform another search. 2.1.9 Students should be able to employ strategies for finding the most important or useful information within a website (e.g. using the "find on this page" option to locate specific keywords, and reviewing coloured words and hyperlinks). 2.1.10 Students should be able to explore new search approaches and alternative strategies when a previous strategy has not worked (e.g. switching topics, visiting new websites, and trying new keywords).
	2.2 Online reading comprehension: 2.2.1 Students should understand the features of online texts represented in the range of symbols, cueing systems, and multiple-media formats (e.g. icons and animated symbols). 2.2.2 Students should understand the nature of hypertext that entails new screen-based interactions between word, image and sound. 2.2.3 Students should look for and work out the overall meaning of an online message that has been formulated in a complicated digital context.

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	2.2.4 Students should focus on a particular question/problem/query to guide the online reading process. 2.2.5 Students should try to activate their prior knowledge and make use of their background information while dealing with new online texts. 2.2.6 Students should be able to read across an evolving range of online texts through skimming and scanning websites. 2.2.7 Students should be able to navigate through links and connected pages to construct meanings that meet goals and/or answer questions. 2.2.8 Students should be able to employ new reasoning and comprehension strategies to deal with nonlinear, interactive online texts. 2.2.9 Students should be able to read purposefully, selectively and pragmatically within an online environment to accomplish their objectives (e.g. by selecting relevant information). 2.2.10 Students should be able to make use of cues (e.g. captions, icons, hyperlinks, and interactive graphics) to identify relevant and important ideas.
	2.3 Critical Literacy Skills: 2.3.1 Students should understand some important facts about websites that relate to reliability (e.g. the fact that each website has its own agenda, perspective, and bias).

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	2.3.2 Students should be able to identify a website's form (e.g. blog, forum, or advertisement) and general purpose (e.g. entertainment, educational, or commercial) in order to evaluate the reliability of online sources. 2.3.3 Students should be able to identify the type of webpage content (e.g. a book, an article, a brochure, and an archive). 2.3.4 Students should be critical and reflective by going beyond the simple decoding and comprehension of the online text. 2.3.5 Students should be able to employ critical thinking skills and strategies while investigating web-based information to discover its accuracy, validity, reliability, and appropriateness to the task at hand. 2.3.6 Students should make use of their background knowledge to evaluate what they read online and to question the relevant social, political, and ideological elements. 2.3.7 Students should make critical, informed judgments about online information, which include: recognising bias, identifying the authors and their purposes, and distinguishing the commercial content from the academic one. 2.3.8 Students should be able to use clues on a webpage that help with evaluating it as an information source (e.g. clues in a URL or web address that help with determining a website location and type).

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	2.3.9 Students should be able to ask and answer evaluative questions such as: Is the information accurate? Is the author an authority on the subject? Is the information current and timely? 2.3.10 Students should be able to compare and contrast the reliability of the information they find by investigating multiple sources on the same topic.
	2.4 Synthesising information and constructing knowledge: 2.4.1 Students should be able to engage in a self-directed text construction process (i.e. building texts based on personal motivation and direction) to construct meaning from unrelated and disparate online texts. 2.4.2 Students should be able to transform disconnected pieces of information into an original text. 2.4.3 Students should be able to use a variety of tools and techniques to analyse, synthesise, translate, and manipulate digital content from the web in order to add value to the information. 2.4.4 Students should be able to participate in and contribute to ongoing content-building conversations over the web. 2.4.5 Students should be able to generate new perspectives and viewpoints by integrating information and synthesising ideas while they employ multiple online resources. 2.4.6 Students should be able to make use of various Web-based electronic formats (e.g. WebPages, email, blogs, audio sources,

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	interactive diagrams, and discussion boards) and unlimited resources to synthesise information and construct knowledge.
3-Acessing Web-based English Resources and Materials	**3.1 Making use of the Internet as an online library for English learning:** 3.1.1 Students should be aware of the potential of the Internet for EFL learners to access resources to support and reinforce their learning (e.g. traditional, face-to-face learning as well as independent learning). 3.1.2 Students should be able to access Web-based English language teaching/learning resources (e.g. EFL/TEFL/TESOL websites and forums and the Internet TESL Journal). 3.1.3 Students should be able to evaluate useful types and forms of online English resources.
	3.2 Accessing authentic English material: 3.2.1 Students should be able to access online authentic language materials and employ them to the task at hand. 3.2.2 Students should be able to locate and utilise useful language teaching/learning websites devoted to TEFL (e.g. www.bbcarabic.com). 3.2.3 Students should be able to access professional material, contacts, and resources to employ them in their learning and professional development.

Main Categories	Specific Literacies
	3.2.4 Students should be able to download different types of resources related to the English language and TEFL (e.g. articles, audio and video materials).

CHAPTER TWO

Effective Reading Skills and Strategies

2.1 Overview of Reading Skills

Reading is an integral skill that goes beyond mere word recognition. It involves a complex array of sub-skills that enable us to extract meaning from text. Understanding the types of reading can help develop proficiency in this valuable skill.

Reading is a multifaceted skill that involves various techniques tailored to different purposes and content. Skimming is a strategic, rapid reading method for getting the gist of the material, often used for previewing or reviewing texts. Scanning, on the other hand, is a targeted reading approach, used to locate specific information within a text quickly. Intensive reading is a thorough, detailed reading style, focusing on understanding and analyzing every word and sentence, typically used for complex texts where comprehension of each part is crucial. Extensive reading involves reading longer texts for pleasure and general understanding, which can enhance language acquisition and fluency.

Types of Reading

Skimming is a rapid reading technique used to get a general overview of the material. You read the title, subtitles, and the first few sentences of each paragraph to get the gist of the content. It's like flying over the text at a high level.

Scanning is a reading technique for finding specific information quickly. For instance, scanning a text to find a particular name or date. It's a bit like using a metal detector on a beach to find a lost ring.

Intensive Reading involves careful reading of a small amount of text, with a focus on understanding the details. It's often used when studying a complex subject or learning a foreign language.

Extensive Reading is reading large amounts of text, usually for pleasure. The goal is to understand the overall meaning rather than focusing on the specific details.

2.2 Active Reading Techniques

Active reading transforms passive absorption of words into an engaging dialogue with the text. The SQ3R Method, encompassing Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review, is a systematic approach to understanding and retaining information. Surveying allows readers to preview the structure and main points of the text. Questioning turns titles, headings, and subheadings into queries that guide focused reading. The reading phase involves in-depth engagement with the text, followed by recitation to reinforce memory and understanding. Reviewing consolidates the material, ensuring long-term retention. Annotating and note-taking are instrumental practices that complement active reading, allowing readers to mark significant points and summarize concepts in their own words, thus reinforcing learning and comprehension.

Active reading involves engaging with the text to improve comprehension and retention. This can be achieved through the SQ3R method and annotating and note-taking.

SQ3R Method

SQ3R stands for Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review.

- *Survey*: Skim the text to get a general idea of the content. Look at headings, subheadings, and highlighted words.

- *Question*: Formulate questions based on your survey. These questions will guide your reading.

- *Read*: Read the text carefully with the aim of answering the questions you formulated.

- *Recite*: Summarize the text in your own words. This will help cement the information in your memory.

- *Review*: Review the material after a few hours or days to reinforce your memory.

Annotating and Note-Taking

Annotating involves highlighting, underlining, or making notes directly on the text. This helps to focus your attention and aids in remembering the material. Note-taking, on the other hand, is the practice of writing down information from the text in your own words.

2.3 Reading for Comprehension

Reading for comprehension involves understanding the text at a deeper level. Comprehension is the core of reading, necessitating the identification of main ideas and supporting details. This involves discerning the central thesis or argument of the text and the evidence or explanations that bolster it. Understanding text structures, such as cause and effect, comparison and contrast, or problem and solution, is vital for interpreting the author's message and intent. Recognizing these patterns aids in predicting content and organizing information logically in one's mind.

Identifying Main Ideas and Supporting Details

The main idea is the central point that the author is trying to convey. Supporting details provide evidence or examples to back up the main idea. Identifying these components can help you understand the text's message.

Understanding Text Structures

Texts can be organized in different ways: chronologically, by cause and effect, comparison and contrast, problem and solution, etc. Recognizing these structures can enhance your comprehension.

2.4 Online Reading

Although they share some common features and strategies, such as activating prior knowledge and synthesising information (Eagleton & Dobler, 2007: p36), print-based reading and Web-based reading are not the same. From a new literacies perspective, the skills and strategies associated with traditional, print-based reading are still necessary to read and learn online, but are not sufficient alone since the nature of online reading comprehension is different (Coiro & Dobler, 2007).

Online reading is a complicated process that requires knowledge about new things such as how search engines work and how information is organised within websites (Coiro, 2005: p30). Thus, those who master the skills and competencies necessary to read books are not necessarily competent online readers. Empirically, Coiro (2005: p30) noticed that some students already skilled at reading books were struggling with finding information online wasting much time without reaching their target. For example, they were lost on the Web moving from one webpage to another without locating the information they needed to complete their assignments, a conclusion also reached by my pilot study (Abdallah, 2011b).

By the same token, Leu et al (2007) conclude that video recordings for some adolescent readers while reading online suggest that readers who struggle with offline materials may not struggle with online materials to the same degree as long as they have the skills and/or strategies essential for online reading comprehension. They conclude that isomorphism does not exist between offline and online reading comprehension because if they were the same, high-achieving offline readers would always be high-achieving online readers and vice versa.

Consequently, it is essential to understand the differences between online reading and offline or print-based reading which usually revolve around: (1) environment or medium; (2) nature; (3) types of the cognitive processes involved; (4) the complex nature of the texts readers interact with; (5) the additional new skills and/or strategies that online readers need in the Web environment.

The environment, medium, and ways of navigation of print and hypertext are completely different. While both environments typically provide supportive navigational features (e.g., a table of contents), the actual content of hypertext is hidden beneath multiple layers of information not viewable with traditional previewing procedures such as rapidly going through the pages of a printed book (Coiro & Dobler, 2007). Besides, the Web itself provides many features, such as hyperlinks, which facilitate the navigation process to the readers.

The construction of meaning as a cognitive process is another source of difference. Online readers have choices as they navigate through many websites and media, and therefore, they personally construct their own meaning and understanding out of this navigation process. Offline readers, on the other hand, read the texts already constructed for them. Thus, the construction of meaning during online reading comprehension is much more complex than it is the case with offline reading comprehension (Leu, et al, 2009).

Reading on the Web therefore adds layers of complexity to an already complex process (Kern, 2000: p223). This complexity is caused by the fact that comprehension on the Web requires the orchestrating of a number of additional cueing systems (e.g. operational, organisational, and multimedia cues) plus knowledge of informational text structures placing a heavier cognitive load on learners (Eagleton & Dobler, 2007: p31). This is shown by studies of how textual differences influence comprehension, which indicate that both children and adults have more difficulty reading informational texts

than reading narrative texts (e.g., Biancarosa & Snow, 2004). The difficulty posed by informational texts becomes more challenging when readers are to define a specific task, search for information, and select the resources themselves.

The nature of the text itself is different as online texts are more complicated than linear, printed texts. Online texts appear in types new to the readers, which Coiro (2003a/b) identifies as nonlinear, multiple-media, and interactive texts, to clarify the message transferred. Readers online are provided with options like clicking a hyperlink to access further details on a particular word or item. Now that online texts involve new forms and ways of arranging and structuring textual material introducing new challenges for readers, especially second and foreign language readers (Anderson, 2003: p4), higher levels of inferential reasoning and comprehension monitoring strategies are demanded.

There are many new skills and strategies needed within an online reading context. Leu et al. (2008: pp322-37) detail some of these skills and strategies as follows: (1) Online reading is usually initiated by a pre-reading question or query that guides the reading process, something not necessarily needed within a print-based reading context; (2) locating information online is another aspect of online reading comprehension that requires new skills (e.g., using a search engine, reviewing returned results, and quickly reading a webpage to locate links to required data). Locating information may create a bottleneck for the subsequent skills of online reading comprehension in the sense that those who possess those online skills necessary to locate information can continue to read and solve their problem, while those who do not possess them cannot; (3) During critical evaluation, a unique set of skills are required. Whereas critical evaluation is important when reading offline, it is perhaps more important while reading the Web where anyone can publish anything. Therefore, it is vital to identify to what extent the online information is reliable. The unique nature of the Web, as a source of information that differs from traditional resources, has

been thoroughly explored, mostly by librarians, who have highlighted the need for greater critical evaluation of Web-based resources (see Barker, 2004 and Kirk, 1996, for examples of evaluative schemes).

Reading online is a complicated process that is not simply defined around the encoding of online texts, or just the purpose, task, and context. Instead, as Leu, et al (2008: pp332-36) argue, online reading comprehension is also defined by a process of self-directed text construction that occurs as readers navigate on their own through an infinite informational space to construct their own versions of texts encountered online.

With the dominance of the Internet as a teaching/learning medium and the subsequent result that information gathering has become, perhaps, the most widely used application of the Web, it is surprising that there is still a lack of a research-based understanding of the strategies needed to successfully understand and read information online (Coiro, 2009; Coiro & Dobler, 2007). Some few studies were conducted to examine online reading (e.g., Coiro, 2007; Coiro & Dobler, 2007; Leu, 2007). New literacies required for dealing with information and material available online still need further investigation.

Many new reading sub-skills and strategies have emerged to express the new online processes. In this context, Leu (2002) suggests that developing more critical reading skills within networked ICT will be an important aspect of the new literacies to face the challenge ahead. Clarifying the nature of the challenge we have today, Eagleton and Dobler (2007) suggest that in order to be Web literate, we should meet the demands of the Web, which are associated with reading by acquiring new skills and strategies.

Skills of online reading comprehension:

2.2.1 Students should understand the features of online texts represented in the range of symbols, cueing systems, and multiple-media formats (e.g. icons and animated symbols).

2.2.2 Students should understand the nature of hypertext that entails new screen-based interactions between word, image and sound.

2.2.3 Students should look for and work out the overall meaning of an online message that has been formulated in a complicated digital context.

2.2.4 Students should focus on a particular question/problem/query to guide the online reading process.

2.2.5 Students should try to activate their prior knowledge and make use of their background information while dealing with new online texts.

2.2.6 Students should be able to read across an evolving range of online texts through skimming and scanning websites.

2.2.7 Students should be able to navigate through links and connected pages to construct meanings that meet goals and/or answer questions.

2.2.8 Students should be able to employ new reasoning and comprehension strategies to deal with nonlinear, interactive online texts.

2.2.9 Students should be able to read purposefully, selectively and pragmatically within an online environment to accomplish their objectives (e.g. by selecting relevant information).

2.2.10 Students should be able to make use of cues (e.g. captions, icons, hyperlinks, and interactive graphics) to identify relevant and important ideas.

2.5 Critical Reading

Critical reading goes a step further than comprehension. It involves assessing the credibility and value of the text. Critical reading goes beyond mere comprehension to involve a deeper analysis of the text. It requires evaluating the strength of arguments and the credibility of evidence presented. This level of reading challenges readers to assess the validity of the information, considering the context and the author's purpose. Recognizing bias and perspective is also crucial; it involves understanding the author's stance and how it shapes the presentation of facts and opinions. By questioning the reliability and objectivity of the text, readers develop the ability to think critically and read discerningly.

Evaluating Arguments and Evidence

An argument is a claim supported by evidence. Evaluating arguments involves assessing the logic of the claim and the reliability of the evidence provided.

Recognizing Bias and Perspective

Every author has a perspective that can influence how information is presented. Recognizing bias involves identifying any partiality or prejudice in the text. Recognizing perspective involves understanding the author's viewpoint or stance on the issue.

***Critical literacy skills*:**

2.3.1 Students should understand some important facts about websites that relate to reliability (e.g. the fact that each website has its own agenda, perspective, and bias).

2.3.2 Students should be able to identify a website's form (e.g. blog, forum, or advertisement) and general purpose (e.g. entertainment, educational, or commercial) in order to evaluate the reliability of online sources.

2.3.3 Students should be able to identify the type of webpage content (e.g. a book, an article, a brochure, and an archive).

2.3.4 Students should be critical and reflective by going beyond the simple decoding and comprehension of the online text.

2.3.5 Students should be able to employ critical thinking skills and strategies while investigating web-based information to discover its accuracy, validity, reliability, and appropriateness to the task at hand.

2.3.6 Students should make use of their background knowledge to evaluate what they read online and to question the relevant social, political, and ideological elements.

2.3.7 Students should make critical, informed judgments about online information, which include: recognising bias, identifying the authors and their purposes, and distinguishing the commercial content from the academic one.

2.3.8 Students should be able to use clues on a webpage that help with evaluating it as an information source (e.g. clues in a URL or web address that help with determining a website location and type).

2.3.9 Students should be able to ask and answer evaluative questions such as: Is the information accurate? Is the author an authority on the subject? Is the information current and timely?

2.3.10 Students should be able to compare and contrast the reliability of the information they find by investigating multiple sources on the same topic.

2.6 SEARCH Framework for Locating Data Online

Henry (2006: p618) suggests a framework called SEARCH for the essential search skills needed for reading and locating information on the Web. ***SEARCH*** stands for six steps:

1. **S**et a purpose for searching;
2. **E**mploy effective search strategies;
3. **A**nalyse search engine results;
4. **R**ead critically and synthesize information;
5. **C**ite your sources;
6. **H**ow successful was your search? (Evaluating your search).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter aims to equip student teachers with the necessary skills to navigate diverse reading demands effectively. By mastering these strategies, they can enhance their understanding, critical thinking, and overall teaching proficiency in English language education. Through the application of these techniques, student teachers will be prepared to foster a similar depth of reading comprehension and analytical skills in their future classrooms.

In conclusion, effective reading strategies are essential for academic success. They help you understand, remember, and critically evaluate the information you read. By mastering these strategies, you can become a more efficient and effective reader.

CHAPTER THREE

Vocabulary Acquisition, Use and Development

3.1 Introduction

The journey of vocabulary acquisition begins with exposure. Students must immerse themselves in the language through varied and rich experiences, such as reading diverse texts, engaging in conversations, and listening to spoken language in different contexts. This exposure lays the groundwork for incidental learning, where students pick up new words without explicit instruction, a natural and powerful way to expand one's vocabulary.

Vocabulary acquisition and use is a fundamental aspect of language learning that involves far more than just memorizing lists of words. It is a dynamic process that enables students to unlock the full potential of language in communication, comprehension, and expression. This chapter delves into the multifaceted nature of vocabulary learning, exploring effective strategies for acquiring new words and integrating them into everyday use. Ultimately, the goal of this chapter is to equip students with the skills and strategies necessary for effective vocabulary acquisition and use, fostering a lifelong interest in words and their power to communicate complex ideas and emotions. By mastering vocabulary, students enhance their overall language proficiency, opening doors to deeper understanding and more meaningful interactions in English.

Rivers (1983: p125) argue that the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary is essential for successful second/foreign language use, and that vocabulary expansion becomes easier as one matures; the more one's vocabulary develops, the easier it is to add new words. Usually, the first few words in a new language are quite hard to acquire, but as the learner accumulates more words and get familiar with the target language, vocabulary acquisition becomes much easier than before.

There are many arguments as to the best way to ***grade*** or order vocabulary in a language syllabus. Some scholars suggest that vocabulary should be graded in terms of ***frequency*** (i.e. the most frequent words should precede the less frequent ones). Proponents of general purpose English, for example, argue that learners should be taught a 'common

core' of high frequency items rather than items specific to a particular domain (Nunan, 1991). Others suggest that vocabulary should be graded in terms of ***difficulty*** (i.e. easy words should precede difficult ones). Some others divide vocabulary into ***active*** words and ***passive*** words suggesting that active words should be introduced first. Active words refer to those words that language learners need to ***understand***, learn, and master very well so as to ***use*** the target language properly, while passive words refer to those that learners need to only understand, with no obligation to use them. It should be noted that the same passive vocabulary can become active at a later stage of learning (see also: *http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/knowledge-wiki/passive-vocabulary*).

The nature of the English language as a language that has been subject to many influences from other languages makes the issue of teaching new vocabulary of a special concern. Although linguists have tried to facilitate the learning of English vocabulary by creating some rules and generalisations, the irregularities in spelling have made learning English words a problematic issue. Compared with Arabic, for example, English sounds much more irregular and complicated in terms of spelling, and therefore, Arab learners who study English as a foreign language usually struggle with learning new vocabulary.

3.2 Why is Learning New Vocabulary so Important within the Egyptian Context?

Learning new vocabulary is an important issue as far as teaching/learning English as a foreign language is concerned, especially within the Egyptian context. This importance, in my opinion, can be attributed to the nature of the English language itself and how the words are spelled. Unlike Arabic and many other Western languages, writing/spelling in English is a problematic issue. Tracing the history of the English language, it can be noted that English was the subject of many foreign influences (e.g., the Norman invasion, and subsequently the French language and the Latin language). These influences created discrepancies in English spelling and writing, which led sometimes to mismatch between the pronunciation of a word on the one hand, and the orthographical representation (i.e. the written shape of it as it appears on paper) on the other.

These irregularities in spelling made it difficult to devise comprehensive rough rules that can help foreign learners to predict how any new word should be written, without seeing it before. For example, suppose that a learner is required to write a word like 'right' without seeing it before…Just based on dictation. How on earth will s/he be able to write it? Will s/he (as an Arab learner) write it as: 'right', 'rite', 'write', 'rait', or 'rayet'? Similarly, if s/he has not seen the word 'photograph' before, will s/he write it as: 'photograph', 'fotograf', or 'photograf'? The same applies to a word like: 'feast' which, when only heard, holds many possible written forms (many of which are not English at all!) such as: 'feest', fiest', 'feist', 'fist', 'pheast'; also 'see', which can be otherwise written as: 'sea', 'cea', 'cee', 'si', 'sie'; 'tyre', which can also be written as 'tire' and 'tyer'. A famous example of a complicated word is 'psychology' which, if not seen before, can be written as: 'sychology', 'saikologi', 'psaicology', 'sikologie', 'saickology', etc. Another similar standard example of this irregularity is the word 'psalm' (pronounced: /sa:m/), and which can be written as: 'sam', 'salm', or 'psam'…and so on and so forth!

The point I am making is that it is extremely hard for Arab learners in general and Egyptian ones in particular, to learn new English words without practising them. This calls for adequate ways that teachers should use to present new English words. Moreover, there is a need to explain to learners the spelling difficulties in these words by, for example, comparing these new words with previously learned ones. This way, learners can internally create linguistic patterns and/or conceptual frameworks that might help them to envisage certain rules. Gradually, they might be able to easily grasp some regularities and irregularities. Though there are some spelling rules in English, a great number of exceptions exist as well. For example, I learned in the past that when the letter 'g' is followed by any of the letters 'e', 'i', and 'y', it is pronounced /j/; otherwise, it is pronounced /g/. But what about words like 'give', 'gear', 'begin', 'anger', 'monger', and 'eager'? Why the 'g' in them is pronounced /g/, and not /j/?

3.3 Effective Ways/Techniques for Acquiring and Retaining Vocabulary

Try to learn how to develop effective ways for retaining new vocabulary such as creating semantic networks. ***A semantic network*** consists of words which share certain semantic features or components (e.g., being mass media components, being members of the family, being tools used in the classroom, being Internet-related stuff, etc.). A famous activity related to semantic networks is 'Find/Spot the odd one out!' in which a group of similar words belonging to the same category are given and which includes ONE word that is different in a sense. Learners are asked to identify this word and indicate the reason why it is different.

Also try to create and use a Word Journal. A ***word journal*** is a collection of learned words which learners can organise/classify under some main categories, such as: school, street, home, relatives, fruits, vegetables, games, people, etc. The idea was suggested in the 'Hello!' series for teaching English as a foreign language in Egypt: 'Hello! 3' for preparatory-one students in 1996 (Dallas & Gomm, 1998). This is closely relevant to the semantic network. Moreover, ***intentional learning*** plays a crucial role as well. This involves deliberate strategies such as creating personal word lists, using flashcards, and employing mnemonic devices to aid retention. The use of a vocabulary journal can be particularly effective, allowing students to record new words along with their meanings, synonyms, antonyms, and example sentences, thus deepening their understanding and ability to recall the words.

Students can learn related vocabulary through activities like reading articles, watching documentaries, and engaging in class discussions, thereby cementing these terms in a meaningful context.

Furthermore, the use of ***mnemonics*** and ***word-association games*** can make learning more enjoyable and memorable. For example, associating the word 'ubiquitous' with the image of smartphones, which are seen everywhere, can help students remember the meaning of this word more easily.

Peer teaching is another powerful tool in the EFL vocabulary learning process. By teaching new words to their peers, student teachers reinforce their own understanding and ability to use these words accurately. Role-playing and simulation exercises can also be beneficial, as they allow students to use new vocabulary in simulated real-life scenarios, thus improving their communicative competence.

Additionally, incorporating ***technology***, such as language learning apps and online resources, can provide interactive and engaging ways to learn new vocabulary. For example, using flashcard apps like Anki or Quizlet can help in spaced repetition, a technique proven to enhance long-term memorization of words.

Try to connect new vocabulary with ***real objects*** (realia). This is the direct technique that any teacher/learner, if appropriate and applicable, should think of as the first option. According to Edger Dale's Cone of Experience (see Dale, 1969), direct experience or doing/viewing the real thing is the most effective aid for remembering, learning, and comprehension.

Think about the ***outside environment*** (surroundings): This is another level of real objects that involves pointing to visible surroundings existing outside the classroom or school (e.g., playground, headmaster's office, tree, street, flag, factory, farm, people, car, bus, bus stop, etc.)

When you encounter a new complex word, think about its definition which you can easily access online. ***Definitions*** are the dictionary-like accounts that a learner can refer to in order to understand what a word means. I think that all or most of the words used in a definition should be familiar to learners. Otherwise, the technique will not be fruitful. A learner can consult an English-English dictionary or an encyclopaedia for accurate definitions; or s/he can simply check it online using Google definitions, a technique that personally has been so useful for me enabling one to access all the definitions available online. All what s/he should do is to go to www.google.com, and then write in the search bar 'define', followed immediately by a colon, and then the target word/term (e.g., define:cloning). I have just done it and got many definitions, the first of which is: Cloning:

a general term for the research activity that creates a copy of some biological entity (a gene or organism or cell).

You might see examples that show how this new word is used in real contexts. ***Examples***, especially when concrete and realistic, help with clarifying the meaning of a new word. The more these examples are simple, short, direct, and relevant to learners' lives, the more influential they will be.

You might need to see ***context*** (in which the new word appears). This technique is quite close to 'examples', since examples are intended to contextualise the target word to make it meaningful. Learning new words in isolation is not effective as learners are likely to forget them. Experiencing the word in a proper, relevant context gives it more significance. Besides, contextual learning is effective since students learn best when they can associate new vocabulary with specific situations or topics. By learning words in context, students can better grasp nuances of meaning and usage, making it easier to remember and apply the vocabulary accurately. Role-playing, discussions, and thematic projects are excellent ways to reinforce this contextual approach.

You might see ***synonyms/antonyms***: A 'synonym' stands for the word/phrase which is equivalent in meaning, while an 'antonym' stands for the word/phrase which is opposite in meaning. What is particular about this technique is that it builds on the learner's knowledge base or his previously known vocabulary. Therefore, a web of connected words can be gradually formed and enhanced within the learner's mind. However, it is an essential requirement that you should be 100% that you have already studied the words you are building on and/or referring to. Otherwise, the technique will do harm rather than good. Examples include: convenient = suitable; sibling = a person's brother or sister; white ≠ black; sad ≠ happy. But, a teacher should always ensure accuracy by presenting the appropriate synonym/antonym to the target word. As I noticed, the English language, unlike the Arabic language, does not entail clear-cut boundaries or what I can definitely call a 'sharp contrast' between words. For example, here in England, when I ask an English person: 'How are you?', s/he always replies: 'Not so bad, Mahmoud!' This answer is not roughly equal to: 'I'm fine', 'I'm happy', or 'I'm doing very well!'. Similarly, 'not so hard' is NOT the same as 'easy'; 'cheerful' or 'pleased' is not EXACTLY the same as 'happy'; 'bring'

is not the same thing as 'fetch'; and 'sad' is NOT roughly the same as 'unhappy' or 'disappointed'.

You can think about looking at relevant pictures or images. ***Pictures*** would save time and effort for the teacher as they are already there. Nowadays, it is easy to locate any pictures online using the Google Image service (http://www.google.co.uk/imghp?hl=en&tab=wi). If a computer and/or Internet connection are not available in the classroom, you can use instead traditional paper-based pictures already there, for example, in books, magazines, wall charts, and newspaper. Sometimes pictures are very effective as they might show clearly some needed complicated and necessary details.

Finally***, Arabic translation*** is a good technique, but should not be the first one to use. This is a technique that is mostly resorted to when previous techniques fail or become inappropriate. Usually, Arabic translation is used to understand the meaning of abstract and complicated English words such as: policy, honesty, pragmatism, stressful, and meaningful. Sometimes, the meaning of a word becomes clearer and more precise when conveyed in the native language, especially for beginners. At advanced levels and when learners have mastered a great number of words and developed a sense of the English language, using English to present the meaning of such words might be much more appropriate and useful.

3.3 Vocabulary Use and Development

The active use of new vocabulary is essential for cementing knowledge. Students should be encouraged to incorporate newly learned words into their speaking and writing as often as possible. This not only improves retention but also builds confidence in using the language. Peer collaboration and feedback can further enhance this process, as students learn from each other and develop a more nuanced understanding of word usage.

In addition to that, it is important to understand word formation, including roots, prefixes, and suffixes, which empowers you (as students) to decipher unfamiliar words and expand your vocabulary independently. The role of technology in vocabulary learning is important, especially in terms of how digital tools and resources can support and enrich the vocabulary acquisition process.

Assessment of vocabulary knowledge should be ongoing and formative, providing students with regular feedback on their progress and areas for improvement. This can be achieved through quizzes, presentations, and writing assignments that specifically target vocabulary usage.

Focusing on vocabulary usage, it is essential for you as EFL student teachers to understand that the mere acquisition of vocabulary is not enough; the ability to use these words effectively in communication is key. This involves a deep understanding of word connotations, collocations, and idiomatic expressions. For instance, learning the word 'austere' should go beyond its definition to include its usage in phrases like 'austere measures' or 'austere lifestyle,' which can be practiced through sentence formation exercises.

Active usage of vocabulary in writing and speaking activities is also crucial. You as students could engage in writing tasks that require the use of newly learned vocabulary in various contexts, such as composing emails, essays, or reports. Peer review of these writings can provide feedback on the appropriateness and accuracy of vocabulary usage.

Speaking activities, such as debates, presentations, and storytelling, can further reinforce vocabulary usage. These activities compel students to retrieve words from memory and use them spontaneously, which can significantly improve fluency and recall. For example, during a debate on technology, students would have to use relevant vocabulary like 'innovate,' 'cybersecurity,' and 'artificial intelligence' in context, thereby solidifying their understanding and ability to use these terms.

Role-playing is another effective strategy for practicing vocabulary usage. By simulating real-life scenarios, students can practice using specific vocabulary sets in appropriate contexts. For example, role-playing a job interview can help students practice business-related vocabulary in a setting where it would naturally occur.

Moreover, error correction exercises are vital. Teachers can create activities where students have to identify and correct vocabulary errors in written passages. This not only

helps in understanding correct usage but also in recognizing common mistakes that can be avoided.

Additionally, the use of corpora and other language databases can provide students with examples of how words are used in real-life contexts. Analyzing language patterns and frequency of word usage in these databases can offer insights into how native speakers use certain words and phrases, which can be emulated by the learners.

Incorporating vocabulary self-assessment tools can also aid students in monitoring their progress in vocabulary usage. Tools like vocabulary journals, where students reflect on their learning and usage of words, can provide a personal and introspective approach to vocabulary development.

Lastly, consistent exposure to the target language through various mediums such as books, movies, podcasts, and conversations with native speakers can immensely boost a student's ability to use vocabulary naturally and fluently. For example, watching English movies not only exposes students to new vocabulary but also to the pronunciation and intonation used by native speakers, which is crucial for effective communication.

In summary, for EFL student teachers, the mastery of vocabulary usage is a multifaceted process that requires active engagement with the language in both written and spoken forms. Through a combination of contextual learning, practical application, and continuous exposure, students can develop the skills necessary to use English vocabulary effectively in their teaching and beyond.

CHAPTER FOUR

Developing Composition Skills and Academic Writing

4.1 Introduction

Generally, writing is a language skill, an everyday practice, a form of literacy, a communicative activity, and sometimes a means through which learners can be assessed, especially within the Egyptian context. As a method of communication, for example, writing can be used to establish and maintain contact with others, transmit information, express thoughts, feelings, and reactions, entertain, and persuade. As a personal or private activity, it can be a powerful tool for learning and remembering. It can be used to explore and refine ideas, organise thoughts, and record information. At school, learners are usually asked to use writing to display what they know, and thus, writing becomes the medium through which pupil learning is measured (Browne, 1999: p2).

Therefore, people write for different reasons and in a wide range of contexts. They normally write in order to:

- Get their message across;
- Convey important information and facts to others;
- Communicate their own intentions and purposes;
- Help and support others;
- Prove that they have mastered something;
- Put ideas on paper so that they are not lost;
- Plan for doing something by creating a schedule or timetable;
- Guide and direct others;
- Succeed in life and pass tests;
- Modify and re-draft something;
- Make money and earn living;
- Express themselves;
- Socialise and participate in different events;

- Organise ideas and say what one cannot communicate orally;
- Share ideas and experiences with others;
- State reflections and jot down personal diaries;
- Teach/Train others and provide them with feedback;
- Learn and internalise some linguistic aspects (e.g., vocabulary and grammar); and
- Simplify something.

According to Harmer (2007), composing or writing in a foreign language is always a demanding process where language learners need to employ many skills and strategies. As a productive skill, writing draws on other language skills such as listening and reading. That is why language teachers usually delay it until their students have done a great deal of listening and reading in the target language.

In its simplest form, writing may take the form of notation: copying in conventional graphic form something already written, or reproducing in written form something that has been read or heard. This act hardly involves anything more than the ability to use the writing system of the language. Writing in the language becomes more complicated when it involves writing meaningful segments of language which might be used in specific circumstances by native speakers. This is the type of writing involved in things like grammatical exercises, the construction of simple dialogues, and dictation. In its most highly developed form, writing refers to the conveying of information or the expression of original ideas in the target language. These distinctions among the types of writing activities reflect the major areas of learning involved in the writing process. Students must learn the graphic system and be able to spell according to the conventions of language. They must learn to control the structure according the canons of good writing. They must learn to select from among possible combinations of words and phrases those which will convey the meaning they have in mind (Rivers, 1981).

Furthermore, it is important to be aware of the differences between spoken and written language. When people speak, they normally seem more relaxed and less formal. They are likely to express themselves in a simple language which is full of hesitations, pauses, repetitions, etc. In this regard, Holliday (1985) and Nunan (1991) state some of the features that distinguish spoken from written texts:

- Spoken language sounds simpler than written language; Transcriptions of spoken language look less structured because they represent 'unedited' language. The lexical density of written texts (i.e. the number of lexical or content words per clause) makes writing seem more complex;
- Spoken forms are in a sense more basic than the written forms; in writing, we have normally altered the normal state of events;
- Compared with speech, writing is often de-contextualised; in communicating a message, writers are usually distant in time and place from the person(s) with whom they wish to communicate. Because of this lack of direct contact with the reader, they are unable to make use of feedback from others to adjust their message;
- People usually exert more effort during writing as they do their best to clarify their message. This absence of the physical and paralinguistic features that the speaker uses to support his/her utterance adds burdens to the writer.

'Academic writing' always refers to this ***serious***, ***scholarly*** type of writing that is intended for ***academic*** purposes. Simply put, academic writing is writing done by ***scholars*** for other scholars—and that includes you. As a college student, you are engaged in activities that scholars have been engaged in for centuries: you will read about, think about, argue about, and write about great ideas. Of course, being a scholar requires that you read,

think, argue, and write in certain ways. You will need to ***make*** and ***support*** your ***claims*** according to the expectations of the academic community.

4.2 Development of Ideas and Paragraphs

In composition, ***development*** refers to the process of **adding** informative and illustrative **details** to support the main idea in a paragraph or essay. Depending on the writing genre and type of composition, I think that there are many ways through which body paragraphs can develop the theme or main idea (i.e. topic sentence): (1) developing the theme through **examples**; (2) developing the theme through **description;** (3) developing the theme through **contrast**; (4) developing the idea through **comparison**; and (5) developing the essay through **narration**.

I think that the main idea here is that the ***topic*** sentence alone is ***not sufficient*** to provide a complete argument. The reader might need to see more details which would definitely explore the topic more to clarify it. This ***elaboration*** might take the form of examples, description, contrast, etc.

A-Paragraph development by examples

Sometimes a paragraph is ***developed by examples.*** The example paragraph is a kind of **list paragraph**, in which ***example sentences*** closely **support** the topic sentence. According to Rosa & Eschholz (2012), illustration is the use of ***examples*** to make ideas more concrete and to make generalizations more specific and detailed. **Examples** enable writers not just to tell but to show what they mean.

Examine the following paragraphs:

- **Example 1:**

Effective Writing: A Must in Universities

*The **ability to write** well organised, concise paragraphs is **essential** to a student's success in almost all university courses. In preparing scientific reports of laboratory experiments, a student must present his findings in a **logical order** and **clear language** in order to receive a favourable evaluation of his work. To write successful answers to essay questions on history or anthropology examinations, a student must arrange the relevant facts and opinions according to some accepted pattern of paragraph structure. And certainly when a student writes a book report for English, or a critique for political studies, or a term paper for sociology, style and organisation are often as important as content. Clearly skill in expository writing is crucial to successful achievement in most university subjects.*

The key words or ideas in the first two sentences of the paragraph are in **bold**.

- **Example 2 (a paragraph written by a student):**

My Morbid Imagination

*My family is convinced **that I inherited my imagination from Edgar Allan Poe**. For example, when I was in kindergarten, I dreamed that my sister killed people with a television antenna and disposed of their bodies in the woods across the street from my house. For three weeks after that dream I stayed with my grandparents until they finally convinced me that my sister was harmless. Not long afterward, my grandfather died, and that sparked new fears. I was so terrified that his ghost would visit me that I put two brooms across the doorway of my bedroom at night. Fortunately, my little trick worked. He never*

came back. More recently, I was terribly frightened after staying up late one night to watch The Ring. I lay awake until dawn clutching my cell phone, ready to dial 911 the moment that spooky little girl stepped out of my TV. Just thinking about it now gives me goose bumps.

Example 3 (a model essay developed by examples):

The Successful Interview

To be successful in a job interview (or for that matter in almost any interview situation), you should demonstrate certain personal and professional qualities. You need to create a good image in the limited time available, usually from 30 to 45 minutes. Furthermore, you must make a positive impression which the interviewer will remember while he interviews other applicants. At all times, you should present your most attractive qualities during an interview.

You should, for example, take care to appear well-groomed and modestly dressed, avoiding the extremes of too elaborate or too casual attire. On the positive side, clothes may be a good leveller, putting you on a par with other applicants and requiring the interviewer to consider more important qualifications. On the other hand, clothes which are too informal may convey the impression that you are not serious about the job or that you may be casual about your work as well as your dress. Clothes which are too elaborate, too colourful, or too expensive suggest that you do not understand what behaviour is appropriate for the job or that you are snobbish or frivolous. The right clothes worn at the right time, however, gain the respect of the interviewer and his confidence in your judgement. It may not be true that 'clothes make the man,' but the first and often lasting impression of you is determined by the clothes you wear.

Besides care for personal appearance, you should pay close attention to your manner of speaking. Since speech is a reflection of personality, you should reflect confidence by speaking in a clear voice, loud enough to be heard without being aggressive or overpowering. Your speech should not call attention to itself, but it should reveal the individuality and ability of the speaker. Obviously, you must speak without grammatical or dialect differences for which you might be criticised or which might cause embarrassment to the employer. Although there are cultural differences with respect to the formality of the job interview, your speech must show you to be a friendly and pleasant person.

Speaking without a subject worth talking about will not impress anyone. You should be prepared to talk knowledgeably about the requirement of the position for which you are applying in relation to your own professional experiences and interests. Knowing something about the position enables you ask intelligent questions about the work and the requirements for the job. The interviewer can decide from the questions asked whether you are genuinely interested or knowledgeable. You can comment on your own training, experience, and other qualifications in relation to the specific tasks of the position. The interviewer can determine whether your background and potential seem to fit the position. The position for which you are applying is not only the safest topic for discussion, it is essential that you demonstrate your understanding of the requirements and your abilities in meeting these requirements.

Finally, to be really impressive, you must convey a sense of self-confidence and enthusiasm for work. As already indicated, you demonstrate self-confidence by your manner of speech and dress. You further show it by being prepared for the interview with information and questions about the position. In addition, the way you enter the room, sit, look at the interviewer, and fill out application

forms and other papers may express self-confidence. The eagerness with which you discuss the job rather than the salary may reveal your enthusiasm for work. You may express it also through your questions and comments about working conditions and facilities. And, of course, your previous experiences and success will tell the interviewer about your enthusiasm for work. Both of these qualities – self-confidence and enthusiasm for work – are valued highly by all interviewers.

The appropriately dressed job applicant indicates his sound judgement. His manner of speaking suggests his friendliness and competence. His curiosity and information about the position he is seeking demonstrate his sincerity and potential in the job. He exhibits self-confidence through his knowledge, and he shows his enthusiasm for work. If you display these characteristics, with just a little luck, you will certainly succeed in the typical personnel interview.

Outline & Analysis

The Successful Interview

Important personal and professional qualities

A good image in a short time — **TP**

A lasting impression

Attractive qualities

Well-groomed and modestly dressed

Not too elaborate — **EP1**

Not too casual

Right clothes gain respect

Manner of speaking

Clear and loud enough

Without grammatical or dialect differences } **EP2**

Friendly and pleasant

Know something about the job

Requirements for the position } **EP3**

Experience and knowledge

Self-confidence and enthusiasm

Be prepared for the interview } **EP4**

Show your interest in the job

Dress

Speech

Sincerity } **RP**

Self-confidence

(Succeeding in the interview)

Abbreviations: **TS** (Topic Sentence); **TP** (Topic Paragraph); **EP** (Example Paragraph); and **RP** (Restatement Paragraph).

B-Paragraph development by comparison

A comparison paragraph, as its name indicates, compares similar aspects or qualities of two subjects. Two different procedures are followed while writing down comparison paragraphs:

1. An example related to one subject (A) alternates with an example related to another subject (B);
2. All examples of subject A are listed together, followed by all examples of subject B.

In addition to the topic sentence (TP), the example sentence (E), and the restatement sentence (RS), additional sentence types may be used in writing comparison paragraphs:

1. A **topic introducer** (**TI**) might be used, followed by TS that states more specifically the basis of comparison;
2. **Transition sentences** (**Tr**) may be used to change from one point of view to another; from one set of ideas to another; or from one subject to another

- **Example 1: (1st procedure: alternating examples of A & B)**

From Paragraph to Essay

Despite their obvious differences in length, the paragraph and the essay are quite similar structurally. For example, the paragraph is introduced by either a topic sentence or a topic introducer followed by a topic sentence. In the essay, the first paragraph provides introductory material and establishes the topic focus. Next, the sentences in the body of a paragraph

develop the topic sentence. Similarly, the body of an essay consist of a number of paragraphs that expand and support the ideas presented in the introductory paragraph. Finally, a terminator – whether a restatement, conclusion, or observation – ends the paragraph. The essay, too, has a device which brings the ideas to a logically and psychologically satisfying completion: the concluding paragraph. Although exceptions to these generalisations may be observed in modern creative writing, most well written expository paragraphs and essays are comparable in structure.

Now discuss this: **Does this paragraph include the necessary parts discussed – topic sentence, developers, and terminator? Identify them!**

- **Example 2: (2nd procedure: listing all examples of A followed by those of B**)

The Objective Test and the Essay Exam

In college and university courses, the objective test and the essay exam are two contrasting methods of evaluation commonly used to measure a student's grasp of subject matter. The objective test usually consists of a large number of unrelated questions that require the student to demonstrate mastery of details. It often leads to rote memorisation of isolated facts during the pre-test period of study. Since the questions on the objective test are presented in true-false or multiple choice form, the student may be encouraged to guess answers for which he has no accurate knowledge. The essay exam, on the other hand, usually consists of a few broadly stated questions that require the student to organise his response in essay form. Such questions force the student to give proof of his ability to handle general concepts. This type of exam also relies on factual information, but there is far greater necessity for the student to

demonstrate analytical and compositional skills. Mere guessing at answers is reduced to a minimum. Although the objective test and the essay exam have similar goals – the assessment of a student's academic achievement – the techniques (and very often the results) of the two types of examination differ significantly.

C-Paragraph development by contrast

Unlike the **comparison** paragraph, which compares **similar** aspects of two subjects, the **contrast** paragraph compares **dissimilar** aspects of two subjects. **Like** the **comparison paragraph**, however, the **two procedures** may be followed in writing the contrast paragraph. The first method **alternates** examples of **subject A** with examples of **subject B**; the contrasts may be in the **same** sentence, or they may be in **consecutive** sentences. The other method presents **all** subject A **examples *together***, then all subject B **examples *together***.

In writing **comparison** paragraphs, **transitional** words such as ***similarly, also, too, both*** are used. For contrast paragraphs, however, other transitional words and phrases are employed: ***unlike, on the other hand, in contrast***, etc.

- **Example**

Where to Study

One major decision which faces the American student ready to begin higher education is the choice of attending a large university or a small college. The large university provides a wide range of specialised departments, as well as numerous courses within such departments. The small college, however, generally provides a limited number of courses and specialisations but offers a

better student-faculty ratio, thus permitting individualised attention to students. Because of its large, cosmopolitan student body (often exceeding 20,000) the university exposes its students to many different cultural, social, and extra-curricular programmes. On the other hand, the smaller, more homogeneous student body of the small college affords greater opportunities for direct involvement and individual participation in such activities. Finally, the university closely approximates the real world; it provides a relaxed, impersonal, and sometimes anonymous existence. In contrast, the intimate atmosphere of the small college allows the student four years of structured living in which s/he contemplates and prepares for the real world. In making his choice among educational institutions, the student must, therefore, consider many factors.

D-Paragraph development by narration and specific details

Sometimes, a paragraph is developed by narration; this means telling more - in the form of a story – to clarify and support the topic sentence. Past events and specific details sometimes elaborate on a specific idea to strengthen it. For example, a story might emphasise the idea that someone is careless or strange, like in the example below:

My friend Jones is not a very practical person*. Driving along a main way one dark night, he suddenly had a flat tyre. Even worse, he discovered that he did not have a spare wheel in his car trunk! Jones waved to passing cars and lorries, but none of them stopped. Half an hour later, he was almost in despair. At last, he waved to a car just like his own. To his surprise, the car actually stopped and a well-dressed young woman got out. Jones was terribly disappointed: How could a person like this possibly help him? The lady, however, offered him her own spare wheel, but Jones had to explain that he had*

never changed a wheel in his life! She set to work at once and fitted the wheel in a few minutes while Jones looked on in admiration.

4.3 Good Presentation of Ideas

Having decided on what to say (or write), say it ***neatly*** (precisely or adequately), clearly, simply, coherently, and consistently. Presentation is very important as it makes reading faster and easier. It shows concern for the reader and it always pays to take the trouble.

A-Write neatly

Try to be as much legible as you can! Neatness is particularly important when filling in forms or writing job application letters. The way you write such documents will make a better impression on a prospective employer than a messy one. Also, neatness of presentation matters a great deal in examinations. Neatness is not a substitute of knowledge, but a messy presentation can lower the marks which the answers (e.g. written essays) receive.

B-Write clearly

Clarity is very important; so, keep sentences short and try your best to avoid complicated constructions with unnecessary subordinate clauses. It is far better to cut long sentences into short ones by the use of punctuation. The following example taken from a Government publication illustrates the case of a very long sentence which could be written better:

"In turn, India is exporting increased quantities of non-traditional goods like engineering products, machinery, components, equipment, electronic goods, etc for which there is a growing demand among the non-aligned countries, and which India offers not only at a competitive

price, but on comparatively easier financial terms and with facilities of after-sale service."

It would be much better to write it this way:

"India is exporting increased quantities of non-traditional goods like engineering products, machinery, components, equipment, electronic goods, etc. There is a growing demand for such goods among the non-aligned countries. India offers competitive prices, comparatively easier financial terms and facilities for after-sale service."

Thus, **one** long sentence has been cut into **THREE**, and made simpler and clearer.

C-Plan your paragraphs

Paragraphs are key aids to clarity:

- Paragraphs break the text into units, and this makes reading and understanding easier;
- There should be only one theme (topic) per paragraph. Therefore, paragraphs help the organisation of one's thoughts;
- Each paragraph has to contain a topic sentence; that is a sentence stating the theme of the paragraph. This sums up for the reader what the writer is trying to say;
- Each paragraph should end on a transition which introduces the next paragraph. This helps the reader to follow the reasoning structure.

Paragraphs can have many sentences, so long as the unity of the theme is preserved. There should be only one theme per paragraph. If the paragraph is a long one, it may be desirable to put the topic sentence at the beginning.

However, there is no hard or fast rule; the topic sentence can go wherever it fits.

D-Avoid long and unnecessary words

It is a golden piece of advice to avoid long and unnecessary words. Long words interrupt the flow of thought and the reader may not understand them. Here are a few examples of long words, each followed by a short word which would be better to use: *abbreviated/short; necessitate/need; prevaricate/quibble; desiccate/dry-up; circumscribe/limit; multi-faceted/many-sided;* and *tendermindedness/tenderness*.

However, in some cases, the long word is better because it describes the meaning more accurately. Moreover, there are occasions when long words are called for, because they either add to the meaning or improve the rhythm of the sentence. For example: ***"The moon-landing was a significantly memorable achievement"*** is stronger than: ***"The moon-landing was a great feat to remember"***.

Unnecessary words are those words which add nothing to the meaning of the sentence. Sometimes, we – as English learners – add some empty or unnecessary words that would add nothing to the meaning of the sentence. Some of us, for example, would prefer to start writing, especially when introducing a topic, with specific phrases or starters, such as: 'As a matter of fact……', 'There is no doubt that …….', 'Generally speaking ……', and 'Needless to say…..'. Those starters can be removed or replaced by shorter ones (or just a single word) to convey the same meaning. Sometimes, we repeat ourselves by writing many synonyms (Don't panic! All of us – as Arabic speakers – did this!). For example, we might write down a sentence like this: *The Maths test was so* ***hard, difficult, complicated and tricky!*** Perhaps, just one of the above adjectives is sufficient to do the job.

E-Be coherent and consistent

To be ***coherent*** is to make sense, and to be easy to follow and understand. More specifically, it means:

- Putting the words of each sentence in the right place;
- Putting the sentences in the right order; and
- Avoiding ambiguity.

In other words, the basic unit for the written expression of thought is the **sentence**. To be complete and meaningful, the sentence must have at least ***one verb*** and ***one subject***; the subject, however, can be implied.

Naturally, as the sentences become more complicated, the **order of words** becomes more important. For example: *"I am wearing the dress my mother made for my birthday"* does not mean the same thing as *"I am wearing for my birthday the dress my mother made"*! The **difference** in meaning comes from the place of 'for my birthday'. ***Keep together*** the words which belong together; failure to do so may yield some very odd results:

"He took out his gun, blew his nose, wiped it clean, put it in his pocket and wondered whether it would go off"!

The sentence was not meant to be funny; its author simply forgot to keep together the words which belonged together. It was **the gun** he wiped clean, not his nose; the sentence ought to run like this: ***"He blew his nose: took out his gun, wiped it clean, put it in his pocket and wondered whether it would go off."***

With sentences, as with words, it is very important to keep to the **logical order**. It is equally important to use short, simple sentences with ***one thought*** per sentence.

Avoid ambiguity: Ambiguity is not lack of coherence, but obscurity. ***Faulty construction*** can lead to misunderstanding or to nonsense. See this: ***"I will eat at my home which is in London on Sunday"***. As if home was not in London during the week. Had the words which ***belonged together*** been ***kept together***, there would have been no ambiguity! So, see this modified one: "***On Sunday, I will eat at my home which is in London"*** or ***"I will eat on Sunday at my home which is in London"***.

Nothing is more irritating than to find the same word spelt in different ways. If one spells 'Muslim' with a 'u' and an 'i', one must not switch to 'Moselm' with an 'o' and an 'e'. The same applies to Koran/Quran, and to English words like cheque/check, through/thru, and rhyme/rime.

F-Consider 'register' (suitable language & tone)

Writing well involves presenting your material in a **tone appropriate** to your audience and to the task in hand. You would use different styles of language for a business letter, a newspaper report, a letter to a friend or a short story. It is important to develop a **suitable tone**, or register, for your written work.

A university essay is a **formal document** and requires a **formal register**. Students often struggle to find a balance between formal, intellectual language and open, accessible English. Many reputable scholars struggle with this too, which is why some academic books are so hard to understand. However, even the most complicated ideas can be articulated clearly. Your marker will be delighted to see complex thought presented in plain English. They will also notice if you dress up

weak thinking in flowery language. Pay attention to the register of your writing and remember who will read your work.

Pay attention to the way academic writers, for example, use language. If it seems too dense and formal then do not copy their style. However, if you find a book that is lucid, interesting and readable, try to work out what makes it so clear.

Avoid being too personal: Your name appears on the front of your essay, therefore your marker already knows that everything in the essay is your opinion. **Do not keep saying 'in my opinion'** or 'it seems to me that' etc. Have the courage of your convictions and state what you think. If you can back up your views with evidence from sources, there is no need to apologise or hesitate. You do not need to fear the first person, but don't overdo it. Present your work as a piece of cohesive thought rather than as collection of your own responses. Avoid using phrases such as, 'I want to look at' – just get on with it.

Avoid being too clever: Some of the worst grammatical errors are caused by trying to write long, complex sentences. A short sentence is the most powerful way to make a cogent point. However, one short declarative after another quickly rings wooden. Similarly, do not use words that you *think* you understand. If in doubt, look them up instead of leaving them out.

Avoid slang: This does not just cover words and phrases. It also applies to informal expressions and sentence constructions. Do not say, 'Cicourel's analysis of juvenile delinquency blew me away. You know what I mean?' You can express the same idea by saying, 'Cicourel's analysis is vivid and engaging,' or, 'Cicourel's observational research

demands a strong response from the reader.' Avoid using 'you' or 'us' for the reader of the text. 'One' sounds formal in everyday speech, but it is very useful in this setting.

Tenses: Use the past tense for anything that happened in the past. If you use the present tense to refer to an author's argument ('Bruce says x, y. Brewer argues that …') then stick with that consistently. The present tense may be the most appropriate for certain generalizations ('Social stratification exists in every known society.'), but make sure that they really do apply to the present day.

G-Watch your grammar

If you want to express interesting ideas, then a sound **grasp of grammar** is essential. Your understanding of grammar may be more developed than you realise. If you have studied a foreign language, you may have a very sophisticated knowledge of how it works. Most speakers use grammar well without knowing all the terms for the techniques they are using. This is fine when it works, but it can help to stop and think about what you are doing. Markers tend to use technical, grammatical terms when pointing out problems in your work, which is not much use to you if you do not know what they are talking about.

This section will point out a few common problems, and offer definitions of some terms that may crop up in your markers' comments. If you have serious problems with the English grammar used in academic writing, you have to work hard to solve them. If your markers consistently complain about your ***syntax***, sentence structure, tenses, pronouns and the like, you probably need some help from specialised sources on syntax and grammar.

Syntax is the order of elements. English is an 'SVO' language, which means the normal order of elements is subject-verb-object. 'The man bit the dog,' is clear in its meaning, if weird. Problems can develop, however, when a writer starts to pile various modifying elements (subordinate clauses, temporal phrases, etc.) at the beginning of a sentence. Then it is possible to lose track of the subject, the verb, and the object (complement).

H-Watch your punctuation

Punctuation is very important; without it, words would follow each other in an endless stream and the meaning would be lost. The role of punctuation is to make meaning clear. I remember a funny famous example (perhaps it was a joke about what male students wrote, and what female students in the same classroom wrote) that shows the importance of punctuation:

A woman without her man is nothing! (without punctuation). If left as it is, the sentence would bear two contrasted interpretations:

1. A woman: without her, man is nothing.
2. A woman, without her man, is nothing.

A **full-stop** (.) is needed to end the sentence, when a complete meaning has been reached. However, **three** full-stops (…) placed one after the other mean that words have been left out in a quotation; *'Let me tell you … I hope you agree.'* Or to indicate that the sentence has been left unfinished deliberately, *'I could go on and on…'*

The **colon** is used to introduce the words which follow it. ***'My shopping list reads:*** 12 eggs, 1 lb butter, 2 lbs sugar…' To introduce direct speech or a quotation. ***Then he said: 'After all …'***

The **semi-colon** is very useful, especially because it is less final than a full-stop. It can be used between sentences which are complete in themselves, to indicate that there is a connection between their meaning: ***'I disliked her at first sight; she looked sloppy in her jeans and her kinky hair dyed green was unkempt'***. A full-stop after **'sight'** would cut off the trend of thought while the insertion of 'because' would weaken the meaning.

Because the **semi-colon** is less than a **full-stop**, but more than a **comma,** it is useful to break up long sentences which already have commas in them. Here is an example taken from Samuel Johnson:

'The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early had been kind; but it has been delayed until I am indifferent, and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it'.

If Samuel Johnson had used full-stops instead of semi-colons, he would have destroyed the dignity of this passage my making it jerky. Instead, by using semi-colons, he adds weight to each of his reasons.

The **comma** is a useful stop, especially when reading out loud; it gives you time to breathe. There are as many different ways of using commas as there are styles of writing. However, here are 9 different cases when commas must be used:

- **Before and after speech**: 'I must ask you to repeat these words,' said the priest, 'before I can pronounce you man and wife.'
- **When listing things,** qualities, ideas or clauses: 'Fear, love, hate, hunger and death are man's lot'. 'His dedication to office, his endless energy, his honesty and his generosity will long be remembered.'
- **To separate words of *the same* part of speech:** Look at these examples:

1. 'He advanced slowly, steadily, silently.' (adverbs)
2. 'He is tall, dark, fat yet handsome.' (adjectives)
3. 'He lied, stole, killed and fled.' (verbs)
4. 'in walked the sailor, the soldier, the pilot…' (nouns)

- **To separate** from the rest of the sentence **qualifying words** not essential to its meaning: 'Napoleon, the French Emperor, was defeated at Waterloo.'
- **To separate** from the rest of the sentence a **non-defining clause**: 'The battle of Waterloo, which you have read about, is one of the most important events in history.'
- **Between words repeated for *emphasis:*** 'It was much, much too hot.'
- **Instead of '*or*' and '*and':*** For example: 'Give me apples, pears and prunes.' (I want all three) – 'Give me apples, pears or prunes.' (I want only one of them)
- **Usually after and around '*however':*** 'However, you must forgive him.' – 'Let us look at the facts, however, lest we do him an injustice.'

Moreover, there are many ***other punctuation marks*** can be used for different purposes. These include:

- **Question marks (?)**
- **Inverted commas** (which are commonly used to single out words or letters, or to indicate that the words between them are a quotation, part of speech, title of a book, etc.)
- **Brackets** (which are sometimes used to introduce words which do not affect the meaning of the text; or to set out numbers or letters of the alphabet used to enumerate lists; e.g. (i), (ii), (a), (b), (c), etc.)

- **Hyphens** (which are mainly used to make ***compound words*** 'vice-president', 'son-in-law', and 'know-how'; to unite two or more words in order to make them into an adjective: '***never-to-be-forgotten*** event'; after certain Latin prefixes: 'anti-English', 'ex-Prime Minster', etc.
- **Dashes** (which are used to: (1) summarise a list already given; and (2) emphasise the end of a sentence.
- **Exclamation marks (!)**

4.4 Editing and Revising Paragraphs and Essays

It should be clear that getting your thoughts down on paper is not the final stage of writing a good paragraph or essay. There remains the rewriting of the first draft so as to shape your ideas into a carefully styled composition. Nowadays, computers and other electronic devices and software have made the editing and redrafting process even easier and more manageable. Ordinarily, editing involves changes at three points: between sentences, within sentences, and in individual words.

At the word level, spelling and capitalisation are checked, but more creatively, words are often changed. A different word may be substituted for the original word because it is easier to understand, is more colourful, gives a more precise meaning, or provides variety.

At the sentence level, phrases may be put in a different order, structures of modification revises, different verb structures selected, or the length of phrases or whole sentences may be altered.

Finally, for smoothness and balance, changes are made between sentences or paragraphs. Such changes, designed to clarify relationships between

ideas, are often accomplished by punctuating more adequately, by introducing more effective transitional devices, or by restating or removing awkward phrases and sentences. Editing then – the self-conscious appraisal and revision of your own work – usually makes the difference between a merely acceptable and a truly superior piece of writing.

4.5 Academic Document Types

There are many types of academic documents, which do not look like such informal and/or personal documents like newspaper, magazines, and personal diaries. These include:

- ***Books***, in many types and varieties.
- ***Book reports***.
- ***Conference papers***.
- ***Dissertation***; usually between 6,000 and 20,000 words in length.
- ***Essay***; usually short, between 1,500 and 6,000 words in length.
- ***Explication***; usually a short factual note explaining some obscure part of a particular work; e.g. its terminology, dialect, allusions or coded references.
- ***Research Article***.
- ***Research Paper***; longer essay involving library research, 3000 to 6000 words in length.
- ***Technical report***.
- ***Thesis***; completed over a number of years, often in excess of 20,000 words in length.
- ***Translation***.

4.6 Features of Academic Writing

Academic writing in English is ***linear***, which means it has ***one central point or theme*** with every part contributing to the main line of argument, without digressions or repetitions. Its objective is to ***inform*** rather than entertain. As well as this it is in the ***standard*** written form of the language. There are eight main features of academic writing that are often discussed. Academic writing is to some extent: complex, formal, objective, explicit, hedged, and responsible. It uses language precisely and accurately.

a) ***Complexity***

Written language is relatively ***more complex*** than spoken language. Written language has longer words, it is lexically more dense and it has a more varied vocabulary. It uses more noun-based phrases than verb-based phrases. Written texts are ***shorter*** and the language has more grammatical complexity, including more subordinate clauses and more passives.

b) ***Formality***

Academic writing is relatively ***formal***. In general this means that in an essay you should ***avoid colloquial*** words and expressions. In general this means in an essay that you should avoid:

1. colloquial words and expressions: "stuff", "a lot of", "thing", "sort of".
2. abbreviated forms: "can't", "doesn't", "shouldn't"
3. two word verbs: "put off", "bring up"
4. sub-headings, numbering and bullet-points in formal essays - but use them in reports.
5. asking questions.

c) ***Precision***

In academic writing, facts and figures are given precisely. In academic writing you need to be precise when you use information, dates or figures. Do not use "*a lot of people*" when you can say "*50 million people*".

d) ***Objectivity***

Written language is in general ***objective*** rather than personal. It therefore has fewer words that refer to the writer or the reader. This means that the ***main emphasis*** should be on the ***information*** that you want to give and the arguments you want to make, rather than you. For that reason, academic writing tends to ***use nouns*** (and adjectives), rather than verbs (and adverbs). This is related to the basic nature of academic study and academic writing, in particular. Nobody really wants to know what you "think" or "believe". They want to know what you have studied and learned and how this has led you to your various conclusions. The thoughts and beliefs should be based on your lectures, reading, discussion and research and it is important to make this clear.

-Compare these two paragraphs:

The question of what constitutes "language proficiency" and the nature of its cross-lingual dimensions is also at the core of many hotly debated issues in the areas of bilingual education and second language pedagogy and testing. Researchers have suggested ways of making second language teaching and testing more "communicative" (e.g., Canale and Swain, 1980; Oller, 1979b) on the grounds that a communicative approach better reflects the nature of language proficiency than one which emphasizes the acquisition of discrete language skills.

We don't really know what language proficiency is but many people have talked about it for a long time. Some researchers have tried to find ways for us to make teaching and testing more communicative because that is how

language works. I think that language is something we use for communicating, not an object for us to study and we remember that when we teach and test it.

Which is the most objective?

-In general, avoid words like "I", "me", "myself".

A reader will normally assume that any idea not referenced is your own. It is therefore unnecessary to make this explicit.

> Don't write: "*In my opinion, this a very interesting study*."
>
> Write: "*This is a very interesting study*."

Avoid "***you***" to refer to the reader or people in general.

> Don't write: "*You can easily forget how different life was 50 years ago*."
>
> Write: "*It is easy to forget how difficult life was 50 years ago*."

e) ***Explicitness***

Academic writing is explicit in several ways:

1. It is explicit in its ***signposting*** of the organisation of the ideas in the text. As a writer of academic English, it is your responsibility to make it clear to your reader how various parts of the text are related. These connections can be made explicit by the use of different signalling words.

For example, if you want to tell your reader that your ***line of argument is going to change***, make it clear.

> *The Bristol 167 was to be Britain's great new advance on American types such as the Lockheed Constellation and Douglas DC-6, which did not*

have the range to fly the Atlantic non-stop. It was also to be the largest aircraft ever built in Britain. However, even by the end of the war, the design had run into serious difficulties.

If you think that one sentence ***gives reasons*** for something in another sentence, make it explicit.

While an earlier generation of writers had noted this feature of the period, it was not until the recent work of Cairncross that the significance of this outflow was realized. Partly this was because the current account deficit appears much smaller in current (1980s) data than it was thought to be by contemporaries.

If you think ***two ideas are almost the same***, say so.

Marx referred throughout his work to other systems than the capitalist system, especially those which he knew from the history of Europe to have preceded capitalism; systems such as feudalism, where the relation of production was characterized by the personal relation of the feudal lord and his serf and a relation of subordination which came from the lord's control of the land. Similarly, Marx was interested in slavery and in the classical Indian and Chinese social systems, or in those systems where the ties of local community are all important.

If you intend your sentence to give extra information, make it clear.

He is born into a family, he marries into a family, and he becomes the husband and father of his own family. In addition, he has a definite place of origin and more relatives than he knows what to do with, and he receives a rudimentary education at the Canadian Mission School.

If you are ***giving examples***, do it explicitly.

This has sometimes led to disputes between religious and secular clergy, between orders and bishops. For example, in the Northern context, the previous bishop of Down and Connor, Dr Philbin, refused for most of his period of leadership in Belfast to have Jesuits visiting or residing in his diocese.

2. It is explicit in its ***acknowledgment*** of the ***sources*** of the ideas in the text.

If you know the source of the ideas you are presenting, acknowledge it.

Do THIS in academic writing

McGreil (1977: 363-408) has shown that though Dubliners find the English more acceptable than the Northern Irish, Dubliners still seek a solution to the Northern problem within an all-Ireland state.

NOT

Although Dubliners find the English more acceptable than the Northern Irish, Dubliners still seek a solution to the Northern problem within an all-Ireland state.

NOT

Researchers have shown that though Dubliners find the English more acceptable than the Northern Irish, Dubliners still seek a solution to the Northern problem within an all-Ireland state.

e) ***Accuracy***

In academic writing you need to be ***accurate*** in your use of ***vocabulary***. Do not confuse, for example, "*phonetics*" and "*phonology*" or "*grammar*" with "*syntax*".

Choose the correct word, for example, "meeting", "assembly", "gathering" or "conference".

Or from: "money", "cash", "currency", "capital" or "funds".

4.7 The Process of Academic Writing: Writing an Academic Essay

Writing down an academic article/essay is a common practice which you, as a university student, always do at the undergraduate stage. As an English major, you are always required to produce your answers to essay questions in most English and literature courses (e.g. Novel, Drama, and Poetry) in the form of coherent ***academic*** essays that reflect your understanding. Regardless of the accuracy of any information/ideas you include in this essay, the way you plan, write, organize, and signpost what you are writing is ***extremely*** important. After all, the course instructor would expect you to produce an ***academic*** piece of writing.

Some students do not get high scores in these courses, not mainly because they are not well-informed in the subject or do not have much knowledge, but simply because they are not able to ***compose*** an academic essay! An academic essay, as the table below indicates, should be characterized by:

1. being centred around ***one*** main topic that should involve some ***minor topics***;
2. having: (1) ***an introduction*** (in which the learner/writer should introduce the topic at hand). This includes setting the scene and stating the main topic/thesis/claims that the writer wants to defend; (2) ***a body,*** which is composed of some paragraphs (usually three or more), that usually develop an idea with some details, examples, illustrations, etc. This involves arguing about something, and supporting the main argument logically and coherently; (3) ***a conclusion*** that usually summarises the main argument and gives a

final note to the reader. This might include mentioning briefly the main ideas;

3. going through a ***provisional*** and ***developmental*** process of: mapping, brainstorming, planning, drafting, re-drafting, revising, editing, and writing a final draft;
4. requiring many skills, such as: (1) ***Composition & linguistic skills***: These include things like: how to utilize vocabulary and grammatical competence to produce accurate words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs; the ability to properly express oneself; the ability to develop an idea using supporting examples and details; the ability to create shifts and transitions between ideas/points; the ability to summarize a section by, for example, removing unnecessary details; the ability to use punctuation marks accurately and functionally; the ability to move certain sentences back and forward as required; (2) ***Research skills:*** These skills involve: how to choose and search for a topic; how to identify the appropriate resources and references needed for getting information about the topic (e.g. books, articles, websites, and research papers); (3) ***Organizational skills***: These relate to organizing ideas, taking notes, suggesting a time frame, and employing time and resources efficiently; (4) ***Reading skills***: These include things like reviewing academic and relevant resources and skimming and/or scanning some texts (both online and offline); (5) ***Computer and electronic skills***: These include the skills of employing computer and the Internet for composing the essay (e.g. using keyboard for composing the essay, copying and pasting texts, editing and saving the document, and sharing the document online with others).

The following procedure is useful when writing an extended essay or assignment: Available: http://www.uefap.com/writing/writfram.htm

	Task	Skills Needed	Product
1.	Read the question or brief and understand what you are required to do. Think about the subject, the purpose and the audience.	thinking academically	Subject.
2.	Think about what you know about the subject. Write it down in some way.	Brainstorming	Diagrams or notes.
3.	Go to the library and find relevant books or articles.	library/research skills	Reading list.
4.	Find the books on your reading list - if you have one - and study them.	reading skills: skimming and scanning	List of materials studied.
5.	Make notes on these books and articles. Record full details of the materials you use.	reading in detail selecting & note-taking paraphrasing/summarising	Notes.

	Task	Skills Needed	Product
6.	Organise your piece of work.	Planning Organisation	Plan.
7.	Type or write your first draft.	writing from notes synthesis writing paragraphs typing/word-processing	First draft.
8.	Discuss your first draft informally with friends, other members of your class and your lecturer if possible.	speaking skills listening skills discussion skills	List of revisions/changes.
9.	Revise your first draft, bearing in mind any comments that were made in your discussions. Go back to 2. if necessary Produce your second draft.	use of dictionaries & reference books writing introduction & conclusion quoting/writing a list of references	Second draft.
10.	Proofread your draft.	checking for spelling mistakes checking punctuation and grammar checking vocabulary use	Writing with changes marked.

	Task	Skills Needed	Product
		checking style checking organisation, references etc. checking for plagiarism	
11.	Produce a final typed version.	typing/word-processing writing title/contents page	Final piece of work.
12.	Check everything.	final check	Hand in.

4.8 Real Samples

Sample 1:

Excerpt from my PhD study:

Abdallah, M. M. S. (2011). *Web-based new literacies and EFL curriculum design in teacher education: A design study for expanding EFL student teachers' language-related literacy practices in an Egyptian pre-service teacher education programme*. PhD Thesis. Graduate School of Education, College of Social Sciences and International Studies, University of Exeter, England, UK.

Globally speaking, current advances in modern technologies have created a need for reconceptualising old notions of literacy centred on the ability to read, write, and comprehend printed texts, especially within language learning contexts (Buckingham, 2007; Pahl & Rowsell, 2005). The Internet or the Web, in particular, calls for new forms of reading, writing, and communication (Leu et al, 2005: p2) in this information age which, as Jewitt (2006: p13) notes,

marks a shift from page to screen. More specifically, the development of Web 2.0, a new generation of the Web that has been enabling new functions and possibilities for learning such as social networking, easy publishing online, and collaborative construction of knowledge (Alexander, 2006; Parker & Chao, 2007), imposes a new reality for language learning and practice.

Today, literate individuals should know how to gather, analyse, and use information resources to solve problems and accomplish certain goals (Kasper, 2000). This has become crucial within English language learning (ELL) contexts where learners are required to use English for a variety of communicative and functional purposes. As language learners are increasingly involved in electronic environments, they need new strategies because the ability to communicate through information resources necessitates new literacy skills (Karchmer, 2001). As a result, education and language learning demand a major restructuring based on these new literacies and curricula (Kellner, 2002) to understand the new competencies required by the Web (especially Web 2.0 technologies) along with a wide range of functional, cultural, critical, and technological aspects deemed vital for language learning.

As far as language teacher education is concerned, new literacies have become of great concern in educational institutions (Kellner, 2002; Leu et al., 2004). Internationally, there is a growing trend towards equipping prospective teachers in general and language teachers in particular with competencies to cope with new developments and innovations that necessitate expanding the concept of literacy itself to encompass current changes. This necessitates always reviewing and updating teacher education programmes themselves to be able to develop strategies that help prospective teachers to understand the new forms of literacy and be prepared to use technology for their professional growth and teach in ways that connect to students' lives (Kellner, 2002).

At the onset of their undergraduate preparation programme, EFL student teachers experience a transitional stage that involves some psychological

tensions caused by new academic requirements (Roberts, 1998: p72). This applies to the Egyptian context, especially AUCOE, where EFL student teachers spend some time struggling with new academic demands such as independent study, using the library, and coming to grips with the English language as both the content and means of instruction (Undergraduate Study, 2008). They should master the required knowledge base that involves some general educational competencies, lifelong learning skills, and specific academic skills related to English and literacy (Freeman, 1983; Johnston & Goettsch, 2000; Richards, 1998; Shulman, 1987).

The systematic pre-service EFL teacher education programmes provided by universities are, more than any time before, necessary and important. However, their components need to be updated to address the new literacy practices related to both the Web and EFL, which may foster lifelong learning skills and strategies necessary for student teachers' continuous professional development.

Nowadays, teachers in the field face many challenges related to technology and literacy. They are challenged not only to integrate technology into traditional aspects of literacy instruction (e.g., book reading), but also to engage students in emerging new literacies (e.g., online reading and writing) (Leu et al, 2005), which can be regarded as natural extensions of the traditional linguistic aspects. Research points to the pressing need for a strategic, organised instruction dealing with these new literacies along with a meaningful, effective integration of the Web in the learning context (e.g., Asselin & Moayeri, 2008; Coiro & Dobler, 2007).

Teacher education is the means through which new literacies can be integrated (Cornu, 1997: p321). As far as EFL teacher education is concerned, Cavanaugh (2005), Kamhi-Stein (2000), and McPherson et al (2007: p24) argue that EFL teacher education programmes should be updated to encompass new technological concepts and literacy practices, which have become essential for surviving in a digital networked environment, and which should

therefore be part of any pre-service teacher education programme (Leu, 2000c; Loethe, 1997). However, how best to help future teachers to learn about the Web and other ICTs has constantly been a challenge for teacher educators (Zhao, 2003), especially when it comes to TEFL or TESOL. Consequently, a revision of the programme contents, through redesigning its curricula to address such new aspects, is needed.

The Web and other new technologies should be perceived, not merely as products, but also as literacy tools (Coiro et al., 2008) and means towards improving educational practices. Hence, Van Braak (2001) proposes 'technical innovativeness' as a key component in influencing how individuals would enhance their practices based on technology use.

Sample 2:

Excerpt from: How to write a standard research article. By Caroline Coffin and Rupert Wegerif

What is an Introduction?

Much work has already been published on the structure of the introduction sections of IMRD research articles. Swales (1990, 1994) in particular presents a comprehensive account. In this section we make use of his CARS (Create a Research Space) Model This model illustrates how an introduction is typically shaped by its purpose of 'creating a research space'. Swales uses an ecological metaphor to suggest that research articles are all competing for 'space'. Thus introductions have to start by establishing the significance of the research field ('establishing a territory'); then provide a rationale for their research in terms of that significance ('establishing a niche'); and finally show how the paper will occupy and defend the ecological niche that has been carved out ('occupying the niche').

Computers are becoming an established part of education in schools throughout the developed world (Plomp and Pelgrum, 1991; Crook, 1994, p 1).

However, despite the growing expectation that computers will be available in classrooms, there remains considerable uncertainty and debate over how best to use them. Underwood and Underwood report that even in well-resourced schools computers are often underused because, apparently, teachers claim that they 'don't know what to with them' (1990, p 16). Crook's review of the evidence on the impact of computers in school education suggests that computers are often used in a way 'decoupled from the mainstream of classroom life' (1994, p 29). Crook and others (e.g. Fisher, 1993) argue that the limited use of computers in classrooms stems partly from the inadequate way their educational role is often conceptualised. This paper joins the debate about how best to integrate the use of computers into classroom education. A socio-cultural approach is adopted, based on the claim that education is essentially a discursive process (Edwards and Mercer 1997), and from this approach it is argued that computers can be used most effectively as a resource for group work and for the support of the teaching and learning of language skills. These arguments were made by Crook (1994) but this paper also argues that the educational implications of a socio-cultural analysis go further: to be used effectively, computers must be integrated into the curriculum-based culture of schooling.

The first part of the paper develops an educational strategy for the use of more directive `tutorial' software which can be incorporated by teachers into curriculum-based classroom activities. This strategy is based upon coaching 'exploratory talk' and then encouraging 'exploratory talk' in group work around computers within different curriculum subject areas. 'Exploratory talk' is defined, through the findings of a survey of research on collaborative learning, as that kind of interaction which best supports group problem-solving and group learning. The second part of the paper reports on the implementation and evaluation of an intervention programme which applied the proposed strategy in primary classroom. The intervention programme was designed to explore three research questions which arose from the educational strategy:

• Can the quality of children's interactions when working together at computers be improved by coaching exploratory talk?

• Can computers be used effectively to support the teaching and learning of exploratory talk?

• Can computer supported collaborative learning integrate peer learning with directive teaching?

Sample 3:

Excerpt from: Teaching with Wikis: Toward a Networked Pedagogy. By Rebecca Wilson Lundin

Abstract

Computers and writing scholarship is increasingly turning towards the network as a potential pedagogical model, one in which writing is intimately connected to its social contexts. The use of wikis in first-year composition classes can support this networked pedagogy. More specifically, due to unique features such as editability and detailed page histories, wikis can challenge a number of traditional pedagogical assumptions about the teaching of writing. This article shows how wikis can challenge assumptions in four categories of interest to composition studies: new media composition, collaborative writing, critical interaction, and online authority. The analysis demonstrates that wikis, while not automatically revolutionary to composition pedagogy, hold significant potential to help facilitate pedagogical changes.

For the past decade, the field of computers and writing has focused on literal and metaphoric networks as possible pedagogical models. Networks can socialize the writing process, readily

providing real audiences for student writing and emphasizing the situatedness of each piece of rhetoric among a constellation of others. By viewing writing as a networked activity, students focus on the connectivity and complexity of rhetorical situations rather than understanding writing as the de-contextualized product of a single, isolated worker. By viewing teaching as a networked activity, we focus on the collaborative nature of our professional work and on reciprocal relationships with our students. Given these apparent benefits, our hopes for composition are increasingly turning towards the network. Rice **(2006)** summarized this direction succinctly: Asking "What should college English be?" Rice answered, simply, "The network" (p. 133).

Our increasing focus on networks coincides with a growth in the pedagogical technologies that support such interactions. In growing numbers, rhetoric and composition teachers are using blogs, listservs, discussion boards, and web sites. Simultaneously, we are providing critical rationales and frameworks for the incorporation of these technologies in teaching, explaining how and why to use networked technology in the composition classroom **(see, for example, Barton, 2005; Lunsford, 2006; Wickliff & Yancey, 2001)**. Fundamentally, these pieces ask how, or whether, networked technologies can help us teach more effectively. A second approach to the study of technology in the classroom is to focus on the challenges that new technologies present to established pedagogical methods (see, for example, DeWitt & Dickson, 2003; Eldred & Toner, 2003; Moxley & Meehan, 2007). This type of work encourages teachers to

reexamine and redefine their goals for the classroom, asking and demonstrating how established teaching practices can be stretched and strained with the introduction of new technological practices. Though there is clear overlap between these two approaches to researching classroom technologies, this article primarily participates in the second. Like Eldred & Toner (2003), DeWitt & Dickson (2003), and Moxley & Meehan (2007), I begin with the premise that new technologies challenge, often in productive ways, long-held assumptions in the field of computers and writing. The increasing perception of a "networked" pedagogy as a productive possibility can and should encourage us to re-examine the goals and beliefs under which we operate, even as we discuss how new technologies may help meet those goals.

Such re-examination gives us an opportunity to make visible, and subsequently re-evaluate, the received wisdom of our field concerning the definition of writing, models of authorship, classroom authority, and more.

Wikis are a particularly productive site for this examination for a number of reasons. First, as a web-based technology they clearly participate in network culture. Wikis have steeply increased in popularity since their initial application as spaces in which computer programmers could collaboratively develop and share code. Now such web sites as Wikipedia and WikiHow have put the technology to a variety of literacy uses, developing massive, and popular, resources of collective information, aggregating copious amounts of text as well as a variety of multimedia elements. As Purdy (in press) observed, the online presence of Wikipedia is nearly inescapable (Wikipedia sites often appear first on Google searches for a wide range of issues) and serves as a testament to the growing popularity of wikis. Despite this popularity, academia often lags behind, both in its acceptance of resources

such as Wikipedia and in its use of wiki software (see, for example, Cohen, 2007; Purdy, in press). Given the drastic break between popular network culture's acceptance of these online writing environments and academia's resistance to them, analysing the challenges that wikis present to traditional methods of teaching promises to provide a constructive tension. This is particularly clear when we examine new modes of composition, which can broaden significantly in the new media environment provided by wikis, and when we explore the critical interaction that can occur in wiki communication between students.

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4.9 Reflections and Ideas for Workshops

- Discuss with your instructor the ***samples*** above and try to infer the main features of ACADEMIC WRITING that are evident there; then, work in groups to ***collaboratively*** write **similar pieces** on any topics of your choice.
- Review with the Assistant this section: **"2.2 Academic Document Types"** above, and try to come out, through group discussions, with as many examples of those documents as you can, stating the ***main features*** that distinguish each type.

- Discuss with the Assistant **"The main features of academic writing"** above, and try to give examples/illustrations of your own to clarify each of these features (**Note**: You might employ the Web, if available, to help you with this activity).

- Review with the Assistant this section on **"The process of academic writing and how to write an academic essay"** , then start to work in groups to write down an academic essay (**Note**: You might employ the Web, if available, to help you with this activity, and continue working on the same activity in the next workshop).

CHAPTER FIVE

How to Write a Journal Response

5.1 Introduction

Journaling is a great way to process what you've read and develop your understanding of the text. Many teachers give response journal assignments to help students clarify what's read, solidify their reactions to and opinions on the text, and organize their thoughts before working on a larger assignment. As such, to write a journal response to a book, you'll need to engage with the text as you read it and write out your thoughts on that text in a cohesive, thorough manner. By practicing careful reading and writing habits, you will be able to write a thoughtful response that can help launch a term paper or extended essay on a given reading.

5.2 Steps of writing a journal

1-Summarize the reading

The first half of any journal response should involve a concise summary and analysis of the book and any main points the author seems to make. The summary section of your journal should be thorough enough that you could read through your journal response and be able to write a short paper on the book.

- Address what the main thesis is for the reading. What is the reading about, and why did the author write the text?
- Acknowledge any conclusions or commentary/arguments the author arrives at. If the book is about something, like the social and political happenings of the author's time, what does the author ultimately think and how do you know this?
- Incorporate one or two important quotes that are representative of the rest of the text.

- Respond to the reading with your own commentary. The second half of a journal response should be your commentary on the text. This part of the journal is your subjective opinion of the book and any arguments or conclusions you believe are present in the text. While the summary focuses on the "what" of the reading, your commentary should focus on the "why."
- Don't be afraid to make connections between the book and your own life; if there is a theme or character that speaks to you, write about why.
- Address and evaluate the author's arguments and conclusions, which should have been detailed in the summary part of your journal.
- Think of the commentary as either supporting or rejecting (what you consider) the author's main points.
- Justify your opinions in the commentary. Agreeing or disagreeing is only the first step; for a thorough response, you'll need to analyze your own opinions and arrive at a reason why you had that reaction.
- Develop your ideas over time. The goal of a reading response journal is to give yourself a semi-private space to reflect on the text and develop your thoughts and opinions. You don't need to have it all figured out right from the start, but your journal should help you figure it out along the way.
- Allow yourself to explore a topic covered in the summary. Think about why you believe the author addressed certain subjects, as well as what you think about those subjects and the author's depiction.
- Analyze your opinions. Don't just write that you liked or disliked something, or that you agreed or disagreed with it - dig deeper and figure out why.
- Ask yourself: How far can I run with a given idea, and how can I make sense of it? Think of your journal as a place to make sense of both the academic and personal experience of reading a given book.
- As your journal progresses over the course of the semester or school year, your responses should become longer and more complex. You should

be able to chart the development of your thoughts within each individual response and across the journal as a whole.

- Organize your response journal. At the very least, your journal entries should be dated. You may also want to use headings and titles so that you can easily identify a given response to a particular text
- Remember, the point of a response journal is to be able to track your own progress with that book and to better understand your experience of reading it.
- Consider using clear and descriptive headings in your journal. It will help you more easily find your thoughts and insights as you read through your journal at a later date.
- It's okay if the actual journal entries wander a bit while exploring the subject - in fact, this can be very helpful, the goal is to organize your journal as a whole so that you can make sense of your entries and track your progress.

2-Engaging with the Text

- Read the text critically. Critical analysis of a text may require more than one reading. Try to absorb the general ideas during the first reading, then come back to the particular ideas and concepts while you re-read (if you have time to do a second reading). At the very least, reading critically should require you to think about what you're reading and engage with the text every step of the way.
- Contextualize the text in terms of its historical, biographical, and cultural significance.
- Ask questions about the text. Don't just passively read the book; analyze what's being said and have an "argument" in your notes when you disagree with the author.
- Be aware of your personal response to the text. What shaped your beliefs on that subject, and how might your beliefs be similar to or different from the author's (or a reader of his or her time)?

- Identify the main thesis of the text and try to trace how it develops over the course of the book.
- Annotate the text. Writing notes in the margins of a text is called annotating the text. When you annotate, you jot down your initial thoughts and impressions, your reactions, and any questions that you're left with as you read through the text. Annotations don't have to be eloquent. They can be half-formed thoughts and impressions, or even exclamations.
- Reread your annotations several times. Once you've finished the reading and annotated the text, you should take some time to read your notes. Your annotations are essentially a note to yourself. Read through your notes and try to process the thoughts you laid out on the page before you attempt to write a response to the text
- Evaluate your notes, both in the text and in your journal. After critically reading the text, annotating its pages, and freewriting or making a story map/web, you'll have a lot of information about the reading to work with. Some notes will be more useful than others, and evaluating those notes can help you decide what information is vital to the summary and commentary of your journal response.
- Highlight or draw a star next to the 10 or so notes, comments, or passages that you identify as being somewhat significant.
- Underline or put a second star next to the five notes/comments/passages that you think are most significant. They can be significant to the plot, to your understanding of the plot, or to the argument you hope to support in your response.

3-Gathering Your Thoughts for the Journal

- Consider making a story map or web. Story mapping and webbing can help you recognize patterns in the book, clarify the relationships between characters, and chart the overall plot of the story. Some critical readers may not need this step or find it helpful, while others may find

that story maps/webs can be a valuable tool when it comes time to write a response.

- Free write about the text. Free writing can be helpful if you're not sure how to begin a journal entry or if you haven't figured out what you thought about the reading. It is unstructured and informal, which makes it a great opportunity to ramble on the page. Free writing allows you to explore your thoughts until you figure out where to begin your commentary on the text.
- Try not to copy your free writing word for word into your journal. Instead, pull out a few key thoughts and phrases, then try to expand on them to develop your ideas for the journal entry.
- Consider prewriting your response to the text. If you're still not sure where to begin your journal response, prewriting may help. Prewriting involves listing your responses or reactions to various elements of the book. For example, you might write out "I see in chapter two that __," or "I felt that ____." Think of prewriting as a step between free writing and composing the actual journal response.
- Try not to restrict or limit yourself while prewriting. Let yourself explore the thoughts and opinions you had as you read the text and trace those thoughts to their logical conclusions.

5.3 Annotation of an article

Annotation of an article is to write down your ideas of a text. As a student, your annotation goes throughout a variety of tasks and activities such as adding markings, notes, comments, explanations, criticisms or questions pertaining to the text you are reading.

There are three ways to annotate an article:

1. **Recognize why you should annotate**. Annotating, or interacting with an article can help you understand the piece, highlight important concepts.

2. **Mark down the source information**. At the top of the document or annotation page, write down all of the citation information. If you know the citation of the source, write it down.
3. **Understand your reading goals**. If you are reading for your own personal work, then focus on finding information connected to your research goals.

The steps to make an annotation include:

- Summarizing key points
- Circling the key concepts and phrases
- Writing brief comments and questions in the margins
- Using abbreviations and symbols
- Highlighting /underlining
- Using comment and highlight features built into pdfs, online/digital textbooks, or other apps and browser add-ons.

Annotation of an article in class requires mastering certain skills:

1. Identifying the big idea is a key skill to summarizing the text to set up a suitable annotation. It is also a fundamental skill to determine the topic sentences or main ideas of the text. In addition to connecting ideas with arrows. Ask questions. Add personal notes. Define technical words.
2. Data discussion is one of the most common academic writing tasks. The data is often displayed in a table, graph, figure, or some other kind of non-verbal illustration that researchers need to comment on/ interpret. Data-focused writing sub-tasks are called data commentaries.
3. Writing data commentaries includes dangers and opportunities. The writer is at risk of danger when he offers description rather than actual commentary or interpretation. Another danger is drawing conclusions which are not well supported. The opportunity of the commentary is to figure out the right strength of the claim in discussing the data and then

to organize the statements in some relevant way which may involve moving in a general-specific direction.

Data commentary involves several of these purposes that the researcher needs to put into consideration as follows:

1. Highlight the results of research.
2. Use the data to support a point or make an argument in your paper.
3. Assess theory, common beliefs, or general practice in light of the given data.
4. Compare and evaluate different data sets.
5. Assess the reliability of the data in terms of the methodology that produced it.
6. Discuss the implications of the data.
7. Make recommendations.

Data commentaries usually have these elements in the following order:

1. Location elements and/or summary statement to direct readers to view important information in a table, chart, graph, or other figures.
2. There are two types of location statement: a) Indicative statement that summarizes what kind of research was done, and b) Informative statement that highlights something interesting about the data.
3. Highlighting statements.
4. Discussions of implications, problems, exceptions, recommendations, or other interesting aspects of the data.

Which writing style should I use in the annotations?

The most important thing to understand is that entries should be brief. Only directly significant details will be mentioned and any information apparent in the title can be omitted from the annotation. In addition, background

materials and references to previous work by the same author usually are not included.

Listed below are three writing styles used in annotated bibliographies:

1-Telegraphic

(phrases, non-sentences)

Get the information out, quickly and concisely. Be clear, but complete and grammatically correct sentences are unnecessary.

2-Complete sentences

In this style you must always use complete sentences. The length of the sentences varies. Subjects and conjunctions are not eliminated even though the tone may be terse. Avoid long and complex sentences.

2-Paragraph

When using this form of annotation, you must write a full, coherent paragraph. Sometimes this can be similar to the form of a bibliographic essay. It goes without saying that you need to use complete sentences.

CHAPTER SIX

WebQuest Strategy

6.1 Introduction

The dominance of the Web in education and language learning has motivated many scholars, researchers and language learning to develop educational models that effectively employ the Web (and its facilities) to foster students' understanding, acquisition and learning. In other words, the increasing use of the Web as a main information resource has motivated researchers to create instructional models that employ the Web to improve students' learning and enquiry skills. A prominent Web-based model that was devised for helping teachers to incorporate Web-based resources into classroom practices is the WebQuest model.

The use of this model was empirically investigated in many studies (e.g., In science education, Gaskill et al, 2006 conducted two experiments in an American rural high-school setting to compare learning using WebQuests versus conventional instruction; Ikpeze and Boyd, 2007 used WebQuests for facilitating thoughtful literacy for 6 middle-class European American students in an elementary school in a small middle-income sub-urban neighbourhood in the US; and Mekheimer, 2005 who investigated the effect of using WebQuests on developing essay writing skills for EFL student teachers within the Egyptian context). They identified WebQuest as ideal for teaching students how to use the Web effectively and access resources to answer specific questions or solve problems. According to these studies, tasks based on the model helped students to improve their learning and motivation (Abdallah, 2011b).

WebQuest was developed in the early 1995's at San Diego State University by Bernie Dodge with Tom March. Dodge (1997) defines a WebQuest as "*an inquiry-oriented lesson format in which most or all the information that learners work with come from resources on the Internet*". He also presented the

concept of two types of WebQuests: short-term and long-term ones. The major differences between them are: the instructional goals and the duration of WebQuest.

An instructional goal of a short-term WebQuest is related to knowledge acquisition and integration, whereas an instructional goal of a long-term WebQuest is related to extending and refining knowledge. A short-term WebQuest is designed to be completed in 1-3 class periods, while a long-term one typically takes between 1-4 weeks in a classroom setting.

March (2003. 43) also defines a WebQuest as

> *a scaffolded learning structure that uses links to essential resources on the World Wide Web and an authentic task to motivate students' investigation of a central, open-ended question, development of individual expertise and participation in a final group process that attempts to transform newly acquired information into a more sophisticated understanding. The best WebQuests do this in a way that inspires students to see richer thematic relationships, facilitate a contribution to the real world of learning and reflect on their own metacognitive processes*".

Laborda (2009, 8) indicates that a WebQuest's design is based on a constructivist philosophy, and it promotes cooperative learning and scaffolding of instruction. It allows students to construct their knowledge of the language through exploring structured web resources on their own.

6.2 Importance and Reasons for Using WebQuest

Using WebQuest strategy is significantly important because it can help to create the distinguished teacher of the future. For students, it might help with: (1) improving student' motivation to learning; (2) developing thinking skills and problem solving; (3) encouraging cooperative learning; and (4) supporting their language learning.

There are many reasons for using WebQuest as a learning strategy since it: (1) creates effective learning; (2) is an attractive strategy of learning; (3)

accommodates students' needs;(4) is an organized source;(5) saves time and effort;(6) saves time and effort; and (7) promotes problem solving skills.

According to Hockly (2008) there are some reasons for using WebQuest in the language classroom, they: (1) integrate between the internet and language classroom; (2) afford cooperative learning;(3) motivate learners; (4) encourage critical thinking skills;(5) can be used as a linguistic tool. While according to March (1998, 12), WebQuest (1) increases student 'motivation. Students face an authentic task and work with real resources; (2) develops students´ thinking skills; and (3) fosters cooperative learning.

In a nutshell, and according to Halat (2008), the following points represent the strengths of WebQuest: (1) being "an alternative teaching technique that enhances students' motivation in class; (2) serving as an alternative assessment tool of student's learning; gives teachers an idea of the students' knowledge acquisition degree of and implementation of the knowledge; (3) providing teachers with an opportunity to see and assess students' ability in using technology for learning; (4) enhancing teachers' creativity in thinking and writing, such as finding interesting and funny stories or scenarios and combining these with math or other subjects; (5) enhancing teachers' higher-order thinking skills, such as finding a topic-related websites and examining and selecting professional, well-prepared, and reliable websites; (6) requiring students to be active learners; and (7) allowing students to use the Internet as a vital tool (Abdelghafar, 2018).

There are many criteria and standards that would guide effective use of WebQuest; Dodge (2001) identifies five: (1) defining specific sites; (2) organizing or harmonizing your learners and resources; (3) Using medium;(4) Stimulating learners' abilities to think; and (5) Scaffolding high expectations.

6.3 WebQuest Structure

Many WebQuests developed by many teachers in different subject areas are available online (Young & Wilson, 2002). Thus, teachers may choose to incorporate ones developed by others, or develop their own as a way to get their students reasoning at higher levels. In spite of the many forms and variations a WebQuest might take, generally the structure of a WebQuest always encompasses (see Figure 1 below) five main sections (Dudeney, 2003; Smith & Barber, 2005):

1) *Introduction*. At this stage, the teacher should set the scene for his/her WebQuest by arousing learners' curiosity and motivation to do the task. S/he should also introduce the overall theme of the WebQuest that involves giving background information on the topic and, in language learning contexts, introducing key vocabulary and/or concepts that learners should understand in order to complete the task.
2) *Task*. This section explains clearly and precisely what the learners should do as they work their way through the WebQuest. The task should be highly motivating, interesting, and firmly anchored in a real-life situation. At this stage, students should know the required output (e.g., a presentation, a report, or a summary).
3) *Resources*. Usually these resources are Web-based and are normally given to learners in advance to use during the task.
4) *Process*. This is the stage where the teacher outlines what the learners will go through to accomplish the task, including the resources they will use, and guides them through a set of activities using some pre-defined Web-based resources. In a language-based WebQuest, the process stage may introduce (or recycle) lexical areas or grammatical points essential to the task. It will usually have one product or more that learners should eventually present.
5) *Conclusion*. This is the evaluation stage that can involve learners in self-evaluation, comparing and contrasting what they have produced with

other learners and giving feedback on what they feel they have learned or achieved. It should bring closure and encourage reflection (Abdallah, 2011b).

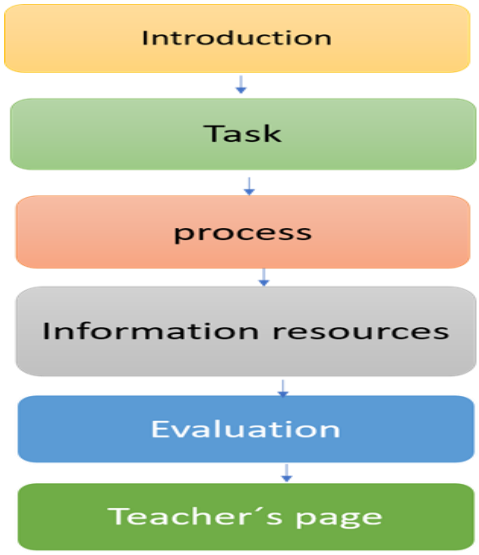

Figure 6.1: WebQuest Components

Table 6.1: Teacher's and learners' roles in WebQuest stages

Components	***Teacher's role***	***Learners' role***
Introduction	Designing and formulating the task based on curricular goals and students' prior knowledge. Reviewing and filtering Internet sources.	
Task	Presenting and explaining the task to students using students' prior knowledge	
Process	Providing procedural guidance and cognitive tools to complete the task	Collaboratively and/or cooperatively negotiating the processes to complete the task
Information resources	Placing reviewed and filtered Internet sources onto a webpage or in print form	Use procedural guidance and cognitive tools to synthesize information from

		reviewed and filtered Internet sources
Evaluation	Designs and uses a rubric to assess students' completed task	Collaboratively and/or cooperatively using a rubric to complete and self-assess task requirements
Conclusion	Reflects on completed task in reference to curricular goals, students' prior knowledge, and their newly constructed knowledge and plans for further activities	Presenting their completed tasks. Reflecting on the significance of the completed task in reference to curricular goals, their prior knowledge, and their newly constructed knowledge
Teacher's page	Designing WebQuests for other lessons.	Asking some questions or sending any comments

CHAPTER SEVEN

Test Preparation Strategies

7.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a quick guide to mastering test preparation strategies, tailored specifically for second-year EFL student teachers. By understanding test formats, employing effective study techniques, utilizing memory aids, and managing test anxiety, students can enhance their academic performance and approach tests with confidence.

7.2 Understanding Test Formats

Types of Tests include Multiple Choice, Essay, Short Answer. Understanding the format of a test is crucial to performing well. Different types of tests require different strategies and skills.

Multiple Choice Tests often assess your ability to recognize correct information among a set of options. They require a broad understanding of the course material and the ability to distinguish between closely related concepts or facts. Strategies for multiple-choice tests include:

- Reading the question carefully before looking at the answer choices.
- Eliminating obviously incorrect answers.
- Making an educated guess if you are unsure, as some exams do not penalize for incorrect answers.

Essay Tests measure your ability to organize and express your thoughts in a clear and concise manner. They often require a deep understanding of the course material and the ability to apply concepts to specific scenarios or questions. Writing is a very important skill that should be mastered properly by university students, especially pre-service language teachers (e.g. EFL student teachers). Strategies for essay tests include:

- Reading the prompt carefully to understand what is being asked.
- Planning your answer with a brief outline before you start writing.
- Ensuring that your essay has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.

Short Answer Tests typically require concise responses to direct questions. They often test your understanding of key concepts, definitions, or processes. Strategies for short answer tests include:

- Focusing on key terms and concepts.
- Practicing with flashcards to enhance quick recall.
- Being concise and to the point in your answers.

7.3 Time Management During Tests

Time management is a critical skill during tests. It's important to allocate your time wisely to ensure that you have enough time to answer all questions. Time management during tests is a vital skill, which involves allocating appropriate amounts of time to different sections and questions, ensuring that you have enough time to answer all questions to the best of your ability. Start by quickly scanning the entire test to get a sense of its length and difficulty. Then, prioritize answering questions you are confident about before moving on to more challenging ones. Keep track of time and adjust your pace as needed to ensure you complete the test within the allotted time.

Before the Test:

- Review the entire test to gauge the number of questions and their formats.
- Allocate time based on the weight of each section or question.
- Prioritize sections or questions that carry the most points or seem easiest to you.

During the Test:

- Keep an eye on the clock but avoid constant checking, which can be distracting.
- Move on if you get stuck on a question and return to it later if time permits.
- Ensure you leave time at the end to review your answers.

7.4 Study Techniques for Test Preparation

7.4.1 Creating a study schedule

Creating a **study schedule** can help you manage your time and workload efficiently, breaking down your study material into manageable sections and assigning time slots to each. A well-structured study schedule can greatly enhance your test preparation. Start by identifying all the topics that will be covered in the test. Then, allocate specific time slots for studying each topic. Be sure to include breaks to avoid burnout and enhance retention. Regular review sessions should also be included in your schedule to reinforce what you have learned.

A well-organized study schedule can enhance your test preparation significantly. Here's how to create one:

1. ***Assess Your Current Schedule***: Identify the time slots available for studying each day.
2. ***Set Priorities***: Focus on subjects or topics that you find most challenging or that are heavily weighted in your tests.
3. ***Break Down Study Sessions***: Divide your study time into manageable chunks with regular breaks to maintain focus and prevent burnout.
4. ***Use a Planner***: Write down your study sessions in a planner or digital calendar to keep track of your progress and stay committed to your schedule.

7.4.2 Using study groups effectively

Study groups can be an effective way to prepare for tests. They provide opportunities for discussion, clarification of doubts, and learning from peers. However, to be effective, study groups should be well-organized and focused. Set clear objectives for each session and ensure that all members come prepared.

7.5 Memory Aids and Techniques

7.5.1 Mnemonics, mind maps, and flashcards

Memory aids can be very helpful in retaining information. **Mnemonics** are techniques for remembering information by associating them with easy-to-remember constructs. **Mind Maps** are visual diagrams that represent relationships between concepts, ideal for visual learners. **Flashcards** are a tried-and-true method for memorizing facts or definitions. They promote active recall, a cognitive process proven to be highly effective for memorization.

7.5.2 Visualization and association

Visualization and association are powerful techniques for memory enhancement. **Visualization** involves creating mental images of the information you are trying to remember. **Association** involves linking new information to something you already know. Both techniques can make abstract or complex information more concrete and easier to recall.

7.6 Dealing with Test Anxiety

7.6.1 Relaxation techniques

Test anxiety can negatively impact performance. Relaxation techniques can help manage this anxiety. Deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and mindfulness meditation are all effective methods for reducing anxiety and promoting relaxation.

7.6.2 Positive Visualization and Affirmations

Positive visualization involves picturing yourself succeeding in the test environment. This can boost confidence and reduce anxiety. Affirmations are positive statements that you repeat to yourself to combat negative thoughts

and feelings. Both techniques can help create a positive mindset for test-taking.

Remember, effective test preparation involves understanding the test format, using effective study techniques, employing memory aids, and managing test anxiety. With these strategies, you can approach your tests with confidence and perform to the best of your ability.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion and Final Remarks

8.1 Introduction

The book "Study Skills for 2nd Year EFL Student Teachers" is designed to enhance academic skills and prepare educators for teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It serves as a comprehensive guide for EFL student teachers, fostering their development as proficient educators and lifelong learners.

It focuses on critical reading, vocabulary acquisition, academic writing, test preparation, and the use of digital tools in education. The course encourages reflective practices and the formulation of a personalized study plan, adapting strategies for individual needs. Emphasis is placed on integrating online resources and multimedia applications to enrich the learning and teaching experience.

Comprehensive Skillset: The book equips EFL student teachers with essential study skills, integrating theoretical knowledge with practical applications for academic success and future teaching endeavours.

Digital Literacy: It emphasizes the importance of technology in education, guiding readers through digital tools and online resources to enhance learning and teaching experiences.

Personalized Learning: Encourages reflective practices, allowing readers to tailor techniques to their individual needs and develop a personalized study plan for continuous improvement.

Educator Preparation: The skills acquired prepare readers not only for academic excellence but also for inspiring and educating future students, highlighting the transformative power of effective study habits.

8.2 Linking Theory to Practice

Here are the key points on linking theory to practice by applying the tackled study skills in academic study for you as EFL student teachers:

1. **Active Engagement**: Apply active reading techniques and critical analysis to deeply engage with texts, enhancing comprehension and retention of pedagogical content.

2. **Practical Application**: Utilize strategies like the SEARCH Framework for locating data online to integrate digital tools and resources into study routines, enriching educational practices.
3. **Reflective Practices**: Engage in continuous self-assessment and adapt strategies to individual learning styles, formulating a personalized study plan for sustained improvement.
4. **Technology Integration**: Embrace the role of technology in education by learning to use online resources and multimedia applications effectively in teaching and learning experiences.

These approaches help bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, preparing EFL student teachers for a successful academic and teaching career.

8.3 Key Points of Chapters:

Chapter One

Here's a summary of Chapter One:

- Study Skills Definition: It outlines the tools and techniques that aid learners in absorbing, processing, and retaining knowledge effectively.
- Importance of Study Skills: Emphasizes the significance of these skills in enhancing academic performance and shaping effective EFL teachers.
- Learning to Learn: Encourages a deep approach to learning, equipping students with metacognitive skills for effective study.
- Study Skills: Includes a comprehensive list of those study skills needed by EFL student teacher organised in some categories.
- Web-based New Literacies: Discusses the relevance of digital literacy in language learning and academic study using new technologies.

Chapter Two

Here is a summary of Chapter Two:

- Active Reading Techniques: The chapter emphasizes the importance of active reading strategies for comprehension, including techniques to engage with the text critically.
- Critical Reading: It discusses critical reading skills necessary for analysing texts and forming teaching perspectives.
- SEARCH Framework: Introduces the SEARCH framework for locating and evaluating online information effectively.
- Reading Comprehension: Aims to prepare student teachers to enhance their reading comprehension and analytical skills in English language education.

Chapter Three

This chapter aims to equip students with the necessary skills for effective vocabulary acquisition and use, enhancing their language proficiency and teaching capabilities. Here's a summary of Chapter Three from the web page:

- Vocabulary Acquisition: Explores strategies for learning new words, emphasizing the dynamic process of vocabulary learning for effective communication and comprehension.
- Importance in Egyptian Context: Discusses the unique challenges faced by Egyptian learners due to English spelling irregularities, highlighting the importance of practice in vocabulary acquisition.
- Learning Strategies: Details various methods for acquiring and retaining vocabulary, including exposure to language and understanding the significance of vocabulary within the learning context.
- Vocabulary Grading: Examines different approaches to grading vocabulary, such as frequency and difficulty, and the distinction between active and passive vocabulary for learners.

Chapter Four

Here is a summary of Chapter Four:

- Introducing writing as a skills: This includes the nature of composition or writing, the reasons why we write, and the main elements of our writing. Academic Writing: Discusses the nature of academic writing, its purpose, and the scholarly approach required for academic purposes.
- Developing ideas and paragraphs: This includes the meaning of development, and paragraph development by examples, comparison, contras, and by narration and specific details.
- Good presentation of ideas: This includes practical topics on how to present your writing properly. This includes writing neatly, writing clearly, planning your paragraphs, avoiding long and unnecessary words, being coherent and consistent, considering register (suitable language and tone), watching your grammar, and watching your punctuation.
- Editing and revising paragraphs and essays: This includes how we can edit and revise written products to polish them and make them as much strong and coherent as possible.
- Document Types: Outlines various types of academic documents, such as essays, research papers, and dissertations, highlighting their distinct features.
- Writing Features: Details the characteristics of academic writing, including complexity, formality, precision, and objectivity.
- Process & Samples: Provides insights into the process of academic writing and includes sample texts to illustrate key points.

Chapter Five

This chapter aims to help students clarify their thoughts on a text and organize them effectively before working on larger assignments. Here's a summary of Chapter Five:

- Journal Response Writing: Outlines the process of writing a journal response to a book, emphasizing critical engagement with the text.
- Summary and Analysis: Advises starting with a concise summary and analysis of the book, including the main thesis and key points.

- Personal Commentary: Encourages adding personal commentary, evaluating the author's arguments, and developing one's own insights.
- Organizational Tips: Suggests organizing the journal with clear headings and dates for easy tracking of progress and thoughts.

Chapter Six

The sixth chapter focuses on the WebQuest strategy, which is an educational model that utilizes the web to enhance students' learning and inquiry skills. This chapter emphasizes the significance of integrating WebQuests into educational practices to foster student engagement and enhance the learning process. Here are the key points:

- WebQuest Definition: It is an inquiry-oriented lesson format mostly using internet resources to motivate students' investigation of a central question.
- Importance: WebQuests are important for creating effective learning experiences, improving motivation, and developing thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Structure: Differentiates between short-term and long-term WebQuests, with varying instructional goals and durations.
- Benefits: Encourages cooperative learning, supports language learning, and promotes critical thinking skills.

Chapter Seven

This chapter aims to provide EFL student teachers with practical strategies to approach tests with assurance and achieve better outcomes. Here's a summary of Chapter Seven:

- Test Formats & Time Management: It discusses the importance of understanding different test formats and effective time management during tests.
- Study Techniques: Outlines strategies for creating a study schedule and using study groups effectively.

- Memory Aids & Anxiety Management: Offers techniques for using memory aids and managing test anxiety to improve test performance.
- Test Preparation: Emphasizes the significance of comprehensive test preparation to enhance academic success and confidence.

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