

Hebron University
Faculty of Graduate Studies
English Department



**Evaluation of Assessment Practices in English Writing for High
School Palestinian Students: a Critical Study**

By:
Iqab Ali Al Sharawneh

Supervised By:
Dr. Riyad Zahida
Assistant Professor of Applied Linguistics

**This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts in Applied Linguistics and the Teaching of English**

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This thesis was successfully defended on the fifth of May 2012, and approved by:

Committee Members:-

Dr. Riyad Zahida

Dr. Ahmad Awad

Dr. Mohammad Farrah

Signature

Supervisor: Riyad Zahida

External Examiner: 

Internal Examiner: 

Declaration

I certify that this thesis is submitted for gaining the degree of Master and is the result of my own research. Additionally, it has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

Dedication

This work is dedicated

To the souls of my parents,

To my wife, sons and daughters,

To my dear brothers and sisters,

To my dear colleagues and friends,

And to my dear students.

Acknowledgment

First, I would like to thank my supervisor Dr. Riyad Zahida for his continuous support, cooperation and advice.

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Table of Contents

Declaration.....	III
Dedication.....	IV
Acknowledgment.....	V
Table of Contents.....	VI
List of Appendices.....	X
List of Tables.....	XI
Abstract.....	XIII

Chapter One

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. Importance of Writing Assessment.....	1
1.2. Writing in Palestine.....	4
1.3. Statement of the Problem.....	7
1.4. Significance of the Study.....	7
1.5. Objectives of the Study.....	8
1.6. Research Questions.....	8
1.7. Limitations of the Study.....	9
1.8. Variables of the Study.....	9
1.8.1. Dependent Variables	9
1.8.2. Independent Variables.....	10
1.9. Definitions and Abbreviations of Key Terms.....	10
1.10. Summary.....	13

Chapter Two

2. Literature Review.....	14
2.1. Assessment of ESL Students' Writing.....	14
2.2. Scoring Approaches.....	17
2.2.1. Holistic Scoring.....	18
2.2.1.1. Drawbacks of the Holistic Scoring Method.....	19
2.2.2. Analytical Scoring.....	20
2.2.2.1. Disadvantages of the Analytical Scoring Technique.....	21
2.2.3. Primary Trait Scoring.....	22
2.3. The Effects of Feedback and Evaluation of Writing.....	23
2.4. Rater Training and Background.....	27
2.5. Summary	30

Chapter Three

3. Methodology and Procedures.....	31
3.1. Population of the Study.....	31
3.1.1. Participants.....	32
3.2. Instrumentation.....	33
3.2.1. Questionnaire.....	33
3.2.1.1. Validity of the Questionnaire.....	34
3.2.1.2. Reliability of the Questionnaire.....	35
3.2.2. Document Analysis	36
3.2.2.1. Scoring Compositions	36
3.2.2.2. Checking Supervisors' Reports.....	36
3.2.3. Interviews.....	37

3.2.3.1. Interviews with High School English Teachers.....	37
3.2.3.2. Interviews with English Supervisors.....	37
3.3. Procedure.....	38
3.3.1. Administering the Questionnaire.....	38
3.3.2. Eliciting Documents.....	38
3.3.2.1. Eliciting and Scoring Compositions.....	39
3.3.2.2. Collecting Supervisors' Reports.....	39
3.3.3. Conducting Interviews.....	40
3.3.3.1. Conducting Interviews with High School English Teachers.....	40
3.3.3.2. Conducting Interviews with Supervisors of English.....	40
3.4. Analyzing Data.....	41
3.4.1. Analyzing Questionnaire.....	41
3.4.2. Analyzing Documents.....	41
3.4.2.1. Scoring Compositions.....	42
3.4.2.2. Supervisors' Reports.....	42
3.4.3. Analyzing Interviews.....	42
3.4.3.1. High School English Teachers	42
3.4.3.2. English Supervisors.....	42
3.5. Summary.....	43

Chapter Four

4. Results	44
4.1. Results of the Questionnaire.....	44
4.1.1. Results of the First Part of the Questionnaire.....	45
4.1.2. Results of the Second Part of the Questionnaire.....	53
4.2. Results of the Documents.....	60

4.2.1. Results of Scoring Compositions	60
4.2.2. Results of Supervisors' Reports	61
4.3. Results of Interviews.....	62
4.3.1. Results of Teachers' Interviews	62
4.3.2. Results of Supervisors' Interviews	65
4.4. Summary.....	70

Chapter Five

5. Discussion, Conclusion, Suggestions and Recommendations.....	71
5.1. Discussion.....	71
5.2. Conclusion.....	81
5.3. Suggestions and Recommendations.....	82
5.3.1. Teachers.....	83
5.3.2. Students.....	83
5.3.3. Decision makers.....	83
5.3.4. Parents.....	84
5.3.5. Further research.....	84
5.4. Summary.....	85
References.....	86
Appendices.....	95
Arabic Abstract.....	146

List of Appendices

No.	Appendices	Page
A	English Version of the Questionnaire	95
B	Samples of Teachers' Answers on the Open-end Questions	100
C	Arabic Version of the Questionnaire	112
D	The Ministry's Recommended Method of Scoring Writing	116
E	The Ministry's Scoring Criteria (2010-2011)	117
F	Gaudiani's Composition Scoring Scheme (1981)	118
G	Jacob's Writing Scoring Standard (1983)	120
H	Interview Questions for Supervisors and Samples of their Answers	121
I	The Ministry's Writing Exam (2010-2011)	126
J	Samples of Supervisors' Reports	127
K	Samples of Students' Written Work Gathered from Schools	131
L	Samples of Students' Scored Compositions	134
M	Permission for Distributing the Questionnaire and Conducting the Interviews	138
N	Mark Distribution of (30) Compositions Scored by (20) High School English Teachers Using Holistic Approach, Palestinian Approach and the Test of Written English as an Analytical Writing Scoring Approach.	143

List of Tables

No.	Tables	Pages
1	Distribution of the population of the study	31
2	Distribution of the participants according to (years of experience, gender, directorate, the classes being taught and the academic qualifications	32
3	Pearson correlation results for linkage matrix of the practices of high school teachers towards the assessment of writing and feedback.	34
4	Pearson correlation results for linkage matrix of the perceptions of high school teachers towards the assessment of writing and feedback	35
5	Results of Cronbach Alpha for the reliability of the two tools over the total degree	36
6	Correction Keys	45
7	Means and standard deviations of the English teachers' degree of practice in evaluating writing and giving feedback in the secondary stage in Palestine	46
8	Means and standard deviations of the items related to practices of high school English teachers in assessing writing and giving feedback arranged according to their degree of frequency	46
9	Means and standard deviations of high school English teachers' perceptions towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback	49
10	Means and standard deviations of the most frequent perceptions of high school English teachers towards the writing assessment and feedback, arranged according to their degree of frequency	50
11	Results of (Pearson Correlation) of the relationship between the means of teachers' practices and their perceptions regarding writing assessment and feedback.	53

12	Pearson Correlation between the Palestinian Writing Assessment Approach, the Holistic Approach and the Analytical Approach	60
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Abstract

This study is an empirical research that concentrates on the assessment of writing in English in the 11th grade and in the Tawjihi exam in Palestine. The study attempts to find out how English language teachers evaluate the writing section in the 11th grade and in the Tawjihi exam. It also investigates the practices and perceptions of high school English teachers towards evaluating the writing section in the 11th grade and in the Tawjihi exam. Moreover, it seeks to evaluate the Palestinian Ministry of Education Criteria for the assessment of writing for both the 11th and 12th grades. To achieve the above mentioned objectives, three instruments have been used to conduct the study; a two-part questionnaire, interviews with high school English teachers and English supervisors, scoring compositions and checking supervisors' reports. In general, the results show that the perceptions and practices of high school English teachers towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback are medium. The results also show that although the Ministry recognizes the importance of writing assessment, this recognition does not seem to be clear in the teachers' practices which means that organizing training courses on writing assessment and feedback has now become essential. It is hoped that teachers, supervisors, administrators, researchers, and curriculum designers can make use of the results of this research.

Chapter one

1. Introduction

This chapter attempts to shed light on the importance of writing assessment. Then it focuses on the situation of writing and writing assessment in Palestine. It also includes statement of the problem, significance of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, limitations and the variables of the study. The chapter ends up with some definitions and abbreviations of the key terms used in the study.

1.1. Importance of Writing Assessment

English has been internationally used as the most significant language in the world. This importance is attributed to the wide spread of new technologies. It, therefore, becomes very important for every one to be used as an effective means of daily communication in almost every aspect of life. In particular, the skills of writing become the most essential component of language all over the world. That is, more concentration should be directed to teaching and learning the writing skill as well as its assessment at the same time. This is because the writing skill contributes in opening the way for students to be successful in their future jobs mainly in this IT (Information Technology) world (Warschauer 2000; Warschauer & Ware 2006).

Both L1 and L2 teachers and students have always been affected by the results of the assessment of the writing ability. These results can be used for a number of administrative, instructional and research goals. Classroom teachers, in particular, make use of these results to improve, affect, organize and form their students acquired writing ability (Sheen & Lyster 2010).

Kuhs et. al. (2007) explained that the main aim of classroom assessment is to give students a clear picture about their levels and abilities. This information is beneficial to teachers, students and families. For teachers, such information can help them design new lessons according to the levels and needs of their students. They agreed that the evaluation of writing could help teachers to:

1-suggest new plans and strategies to simplify the writing teaching process.

2-know more about their students' progress.

3-gather more information about their students' grades and levels.

4- weigh the strengths of their teaching strategies and curricula.

5-get some feedback on students' progress for the purpose of promotion, retention, and suggest special and assistant programs to meet their needs.

Assessment of writing is very beneficial to students in two main ways. On the one hand, the results of the writing assessment may provide students with good feedback about their performance. When they receive the results of a writing test, they become aware of their mistakes and try to avoid them in future tasks. For example, if a student writes an essay with good content but with several grammatical errors, he will be motivated to avoid and reduce these errors in an attempt to get a higher grade in writing other essays in the future. On the other hand, assessment of writing may also encourage students to increase their practice on the writing skill at home, especially when they know that they are going to be evaluated. (Kuhs et al. , 2007).

As for families, writing assessment also provides good information to parents. This information helps them follow their children's progress. If they feel that their children's performance is poor or weak, they can encourage, assist, and arrange special lessons for them. This assessment also helps parents to form a clear picture about their children's school and teachers, either positively or negatively.

Now, it has become obvious that there is an urgent demand for valid and reliable methods for examining and assessing the writing ability in order to achieve academic success in the classroom . For all these reasons, it is essential for teachers to use and follow writing assessment practices that provide true information about high school students' learning and their progress.

English teachers, practitioners and researchers should be aware of the important role of assessment in general and the importance of the assessment of writing in particular. They should also be aware of all issues related to the evaluation of writing and feedback. There are a number of issues related to the skill of writing and its assessment. Several questions are asked in this field by many researchers and linguists. The researcher is going to mention samples of these questions so that the reader can form a clear picture about the possible issues that can be researched and discussed in the field of the assessment of writing. Weigle (2002), for example, stated some of these questions. These questions include the following:

1-What are testing? That is, how should the writing ability be defined, should teachers mainly focus on grammatical sentences (form) or on specific communication functions (meaning)?

2-what is the aim of testing the writing skill? What should be done with the results of the writing tests?

3-Who is supposed to score the writing tests, and what standards will be used? How can we make sure that raters follow and stick to them?

4-How much do assessment procedures influence students' writing performance?

5-What comments should be given to students on their writing?

6-Is it effective to train raters?

7-Do raters' perceptions and backgrounds influence their assessment of EFL writing? (Weigle, 2002: p.2).

As a high school teacher, the researcher is aware of all these questions. Since it is difficult to cover all the issues included in these questions, some of them will be excluded. However, he will concentrate on the questions or the issues related to teachers' practices and perceptions. In his study, he will also discuss issues related to the effectiveness of rater training and the scoring procedures that can be used in evaluating the writing skill.

1.2. Writing in Palestine

The Palestinian Ministry of Education considers these questions. It realizes the importance of all the English skills in general and the writing skill in particular. The syllabus designers of English for Palestine, the new Palestinian curriculum, say that English for Palestine is a modern, communicative course which has been specially written for schools in Palestine. The 11th and 12th grades systematically develop competence in the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and encourage students to become confident users of English.

In English for Palestine, especially the 11th and 12th grades, various writing tasks are included such as, summarizing texts, writing paragraphs, compositions, CVs, and letters. Therefore, students are required to be examined in all these tasks. 11th grade students are tested at school by their English teachers; whereas, 12th grade students are tested both at school and in the General Secondary Certificate Exam.

The Ministry of Education realizes the main objectives of any piece of writing that is to write clearly and communicate effectively. This means that, in whatever type of writing, the student should be able to convey his/her message and affect the reader using a good language.

The Ministry of Education does not also neglect the strong connection between both the objectives of writing and the assessment of the writing tasks. Therefore, it gives some explanations concerning the assessment of a written work for high school students. In the

teacher's book of both the 11th and 12th grades, syllabus designers focus on assessing extended writing such as, paragraphs and longer compositions in which there is no single 'right answer'.

To assess a piece of writing according to syllabus designers teachers must look at a number of factors:

1-Does it communicate meaning successfully? (clearly understandable)

2-Is it accurate? (correct grammar, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation)

3-Does it use a wide range of language? (only simple words and structures, or more sophisticated ones as well)

4-Is the language appropriate? (formal/informal, suitable for the context)

5-Is it reasonably fluent? (linked sentences, text not too short)

6-Is the text well- organized? (paragraphing, logical flow) (English for Palestine 12: Teacher's Book: 2006: 17).

They also stated a recommended method for the assessment of writing. This method includes the following items:

1-General communicative success

2-Accuracy of language, spelling and punctuation

3-Range and appropriacy of language

4-Fluency and text organization (for the distribution of marks, see Appendix D) (English for Palestine 12: Teacher's Book, 2006: 17).

Teachers are required to be careful about these factors and follow this recommended method in assessing their students' writing in the classroom.

As for the 12th grade, the assessment committee is given standards especially for scoring writing. The Ministry of Education introduces these standards every year to assess

12th grade writing in the GSCE. Teachers are required to follow every item in these standards. These standards include the following general points:-

- 1-The composition should be corrected out of 20 .
- 2-No full mark is given.
- 3-The highest grade is 19.
- 4-If a student writes only a title, he/she is given zero.
- 5-If the student writes the title with the composition, the title will be given 2 marks.
- 6-If ideas do not relate to the given topic, a student is also given zero.
- 7-Partly external subject is corrected out of 12 marks instead of 20.
- 8-Writing ideas without employing or expanding them deserves zero.

The criteria have three main items. These are the ideas, the style and the language (for the subdivisions of these items and for the distribution of marks, see Appendix E).

The assessment of writing is seen to be neglected in the Palestinian high schools and misused by raters in the GSCE in spite of the efforts the Ministry of Education exerts in this area. High school teachers need to know more about writing assessment practices, their importance and applications. Consequently, they are required to follow the writing assessment instructions mentioned in the teacher's book and the criteria given in the GSCE.

The broad aim of this study is to evaluate the assessment practices in English for high school Palestinian students. In particular, it tries to touch upon three major issues related to the assessment of the writing skill in the high schools in Palestine. First, it investigates the perceptions of high school teachers towards the assessment of the writing skill. Then, it tries to find how high school teachers evaluate the students' compositions at school and in GSCE. Finally, the study seeks to highlight the most appropriate guidelines for assessing writing and to find out to what extent the Palestinian recommended criteria is related to the widely-accepted analytical scoring approach of Jacobs' et al (1983) which is used in the Test of

Written English (see Appendix G). The researcher hopes that he can contribute by giving some suggestions and recommendations in an attempt to develop and improve the evaluation of the writing skill at high schools in Palestine.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Writing is a key skill in EFL and ESL and all teachers need to evaluate their students' writing abilities (Weigle, 2002). The issues surrounding the assessment of high school Palestinian students' writing abilities are becoming more and more relevant in the age of global communication. Evaluating their writing is considered as one of the most problematic issues in English language use in general and for Palestinian English teachers in particular. This is because teachers use different tools or styles in evaluating their written work since there is not a specific tool which may lead to objectivity, neutrality and reliability far away from personal impression. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, high school teachers in Palestine do not follow the writing guidelines and the recommended method of scoring writing provided by the assessment committee in the Ministry of Education (see Appendices D & E).

1.4. Significance of the Study

The present study is an attempt to investigate the perceptions and the assessment practices of high school English teachers concerning English writing for Palestinian secondary school students. It is hoped that this study will contribute in improving the teaching and the learning of the writing skill.

Since evaluating writing is a central issue, it provides valuable feedback on EFL writing to both students and teachers. Reliable assessment will also benefit practitioners and syllabus designers in guiding them to review their objectives and plans of teaching and scoring the writing skill in secondary schools. According to the researcher's knowledge, very few studies

have been conducted on both high school English perceptions, assessment practices and feedback of EFL writing in Palestine.

1.5. Objectives of the Study

The present study attempts to:

- investigate high school teachers' perceptions and practices towards the writing section.
- highlight the most appropriate approach or approaches of scoring high school students' writing.
- help teachers use the most suitable, reliable and effective scoring rubric in assessing their students' written work.
- emphasize the importance of using corrective feedback in writing.

1.6. Research questions

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

- 1-To what extent do high school English teachers practise assessing writing and give feedback for their students' written work?
- 2-What are the most frequent practices of high school English teachers in assessing writing and giving feedback?
- 3-What is the extent of high school English teachers' perceptions towards assessing writing and giving feedback?
- 4-What are the high school English teachers' perceptions in regard to the assessment of writing and the use of feedback?
- 5-What are the most appropriate guidelines for evaluating the writing skill of high school students in Palestine?

6-What comments do supervisors provide teachers in regard to their practices in assessing writing ?

7-What kind of writing corrective feedback is used by 11th and 12th grade teachers?

8-How often do high school English teachers receive training courses in assessing writing and giving feedback?

1.7. Limitations of the Study

The study is conducted to investigate the perceptions and practices of high school English teachers towards the writing assessment and feedback in Palestine. Thus, it is limited to high school level, that is, the investigation of the writing assessment and feedback does not cover all levels. The teachers who participated in this study are high school teachers in the second semester of (2011-2012). All of them are from Hebron District in Palestine. The students are from the 11th and 12th grades in the second semester of the academic year (2011-2012).

1.8. Variables of the Study

The study includes two dependent variables and five independent variables:

1.8.1. Dependent Variables

The dependent variables include the investigation of both the practices and the perceptions of high school teachers towards assessing writing and giving feedback. (20) Items are given for each variable in a two-part questionnaire for high school teachers to respond to. The aim after these Items is to investigate both high school teachers' practices and perceptions in relation to assessing writing and giving feedback in addition to the relationship between these variables.

1.8.2. Independent Variables

The independent variables include the years of experience, gender, directorate, the classes being taught and academic qualifications. The researcher uses these variables in order to show the variety of the participants of the study.

1.9. Definitions and abbreviations of key terms

The following list will include some definitions and abbreviations which are frequently used in this research.

Holistic Scoring: "it is the assessment of the overall proficiency of a given written text" (Perkins, 1983: 652).

Analytical Scoring: "it is a scoring technique which involves the separation of various features of a composition into components" (Jacob et al. 1983: 213).

Primary Trait Scoring: "it is an evaluation scheme. In this type, scores are assigned holistically based on a certain feature in the writing text" (Perkins 1983: 658).

Feedback: it is a frequent practice in the field of education and in learning in general. It typically involves a student receiving either formal or informal feedback on his or her performance on various tasks by the teacher (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

Local Errors: errors that do not go beyond the clause or sentence level. Examples of local errors include lack of agreements, misuse or missing articles, or verb phrase errors that do not impede comprehension" (Burt and Kiparsky 1974).

Global Errors: errors that can affect the comprehension of meaning by causing confusion in the relationships between the main parts of the discourse. The misuse of or absence of logical connectors, the lack of proper tense sequences, the misuse of pronouns, and errors involving other features of language that create cohesive and coherence discourse across sentences are good examples of global errors (Burt and Kiparsky, 1974).

English for Palestine: "a 12-year course in general English, was written specially for schools in Palestine to achieve the aims of the MEHE as described in detail in the Ministry's English Language Curriculum for Public Schools (1999). The course takes learners from the first level for beginners in Grade 1 to school-leaving in Grade 12" (Maraqa, W. 2010: 9).

General Secondary Certificate Exam(GSCE) Tawjihi: "it's an examination held by the MEHE at the end of the second secondary school year in all school subjects. Success in this exam is a requirement for all students to continue their university education" (Maraqa, W. 2010: 9).

MEHE: Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

English as a Second Language (ESL): "it is the language which has some specific functions within a multilingual society or minority groups, and is learnt after the mother tongue" (Al Mutawa, N. & Kailani, T . 1989: 2).

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): "it is the language which has no internal function in the learner's country. It is learnt in order to communicate with native speakers or interlanguage users of the foreign language" (Al Mutawa, N. & Kailani, T . 1989: 3).

Rubric: it is a scoring tool for subjective assessments. It is a set of criteria and standards linked to learning objectives that is used to assess a student's performance on papers, projects, essays, and other assignments. Rubrics allow for standardized evaluation according to specified criteria, making grading simpler and more transparent.

The rubric is an attempt to delineate consistent assessment criteria for grading. Because the criteria are public, a rubric allows teachers and students alike to evaluate criteria, which can be complex and subjective. Rubrics also provide a basis for self-evaluation, reflection, and peer review. It is aimed at accurate and fair assessment, fostering understanding and indicating the way to proceed with subsequent learning/teaching. This integration of performance and feedback is called "ongoing assessment (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

Portfolio Assessment: "a portfolio can be defined as a collection of students written texts written for different purposes over a period of time" (Northwest Evaluation Association, 1991: 4, cited in Weigle, 2002: 198).

Reliable Assessment: "a reliable assessment provides consistent results, no matter who conducts the assessment. Because writing assessment often involves more than one rater scoring student performances, it can also involve interrater reliability, a measure of the degree of consistency from one rater judgment to another. A student's score thus might depend upon the bias of the reader rather than upon the document or product being assessed. Attention to reliability is an integral part of any judgment to another. A student's score thus might depend upon the bias of the reader rather than upon the document or product being assessed. Attention to reliability is an integral part of an responsible validity argument" (American Educational Research Association, 1999: 12).

Inter-reliability (agreement between raters): "it refers to the tendency of different raters to give the same score to the same scripts" (Weigle, 2002: 134-135).

Intra-reliability (self-consistency): it refers to the tendency of a rater to give the same score to the same script on different occasions" (Weigle, 2002: 134-135).

Cohesion: the unity and consistency of thought, logic and structure (Troike, 2006).

Coherence: "reasonable connection or relation between ideas, agreements and statements" (Longman, 1997: 204).

Experienced: "possessing skills or knowledge because you have done something often or for a long time" (Longman, 1997: 383).

TWE: a required component of the computer-based TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia).

1.10. Summary

This chapter started by shedding light on the significance of the writing skill in general and the writing assessment in particular. Then, it focused on writing and writing assessment in Palestine. The researcher also stated the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the objectives of the study, the research questions, the limitations and the variables of the study. The chapter ended up with some important definitions and abbreviations of key terms. The following chapter will include the most relevant studies to the present thesis.

Chapter Two

2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature on writing assessment and feedback. The review will include linguists points of view on both the writing assessment and feedback, in addition to several studies on the subject that may also provide a good background. The literature will include the following issues: the assessment of EFL students' writing, scoring procedures, the effects of feedback, rater training and background.

2.1. Assessment of ESL Students' Writing

A big research has been recently seen on the writing skill, especially, in the field of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001) cited in Baik, 2008: 2. This research is due to the natural growth of English not just as a global language used in trade and commerce among countries, but as a significant language used officially in academic institutions such as schools and universities (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002:1). In general, the main aim of this research has been to know about what type of writing students are supposed to do, their writing obstacles, and how students' writing is evaluated by their teachers (Hamp-Lyons, 1991). The results of these studies have benefited school teachers, curriculum developers, test-designers and university lecturers (Casanave & Hubbard, 1992) cited in Baik, 2008: 2.

Most of the studies have concentrated on the errors non-native students make in their writing and teachers' attitudes towards them. Many other studies have focused on teachers' points of view concerning ESL students' writing and their literacy skills (e.g. Jenkins et. al., 1993 & Zhu, 2002) cited in Baik, 2008: 2. Other studies have investigated teachers' reactions to grammar errors and language use (e.g. Santos, 1988; Janopoulos, 1992; Vann et al. ,

1984,1991). For instance, the interviewed teachers in Santos's (1988) study identified many 'weaknesses' related to 'academic illiteracy' including: the choice of limited vocabulary, lack of appropriate examples related to the concepts, and the absence of objectivity.

Zhu (2004) also conducted some interviews with teachers. She asked them about their thoughts concerning NNS students' writing. The results of her study showed that teachers gave more importance to content and accuracy of information. However, the majority of the interviewees said that their students suffered from several problems related to grammar and language use.

A lot of studies also focus on both the teachers' reactions to certain features of ESL students' compositions, and investigate how teachers make their decisions while assessing ESL compositions (e.g. Vaughan, 1992; Cumming et al., 2002). Cumming et al's (2002) considered the decisions that teachers make while assessing writing.

Vaughan (1991) also examined what exactly goes on in trained teachers' minds while they were assessing essays using the holistic approach. The subjects of her study taught at the same university and with a big experience in applying the holistic scoring. She asked them to read and grade six written essays. Two of them were written by native English-speaking (NS) students, and the other four were written by NNS who came from 4 different language backgrounds (Chinese, Hebrew, French, Spanish). All of them had been in the United States for about 3.5 to 6 years. As mentioned in (Baik 2008: 3) the results of her study showed that in spite of their similar experience, the teachers had individual approaches in reading essays and that they focused on different essay features. Some raters concentrated on 'handwriting' and considered it as a problem while others looked at an essay to examine the use of metaphor and so on (Vaughan, 1991:121).

Concerning content, it has been found in literature that it is the main concern in ESL students' writing. It has also been found that NS students are differently evaluated to ESL/NNS students.

Sheehan (2002) in her study, presented some results which revealed that most of the teachers were interested in issues of reliable scoring and using similar standards. Many of her colleagues reported that they evaluated the writing skill for both NS and NNS students using similar standards. They were looking for 'error free prose' which is grammatically correct. Some of them stated that they generally graded or assessed the writing of NNS students less firmly than the work of NS (Sheehan, 2002:16). Some other teachers in her study commented that they concentrated on knowledge (content) in NNS students' essays where as they focused on standard written English (form) while evaluating NS students' essays.

Jenkins et al (1993) studied the state of the writing assessment practices of some teachers in an engineering program. The study attempted to investigate the degree of using standards with students from different backgrounds. The results of the study showed that 36% of the teachers said that they did not use the same standards when assessing the written work of NS and NNS graduate students. 25% of the teachers said that they focused on the sentence level features such as grammar, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling and these features were assessed less firmly. About (21%) said that they did not use the same standards for evaluating the general writing ability of NNS students. This means that they used more flexible standards when evaluating generally the overall features of the written text .

Baik (2008) conducted a study on teachers' beliefs and practices in assessing the academic writing of their students' written work. In general, the study aimed to find how teachers assess their students' academic writing. It specifically addressed two questions: What factors inform or influence teachers' assessment of students' written work? How tolerant are teachers to their students' writing errors? Issues to do with reliability and bias were discussed.

The results of the study revealed that there were tensions conflicts between what teachers believe about writing assessment and how they actually do in grading and marking their students' written work. Teachers were influenced by a range of factors in assessing writing such as background, age, years of teaching and academic positions. At the end, the researcher suggested that research on assessment practices is important in developing appropriate writing assessment polices.

The previous discussion of the studies about the assessment of writing has shown different results and points of view concerning this central issue. Still, there is other aspects that can also be discussed in relation to the scoring approaches teachers use in assessing the writing skill.

2.2. Scoring approaches

One of the most significant issues in limiting a appropriate system for scoring is the kind of the writing scale that should be followed. In other words, do we need to give a single mark for each essay, or do we have to focus on several aspects in scoring our students' essays? This issue has gained a very big concern in the research and the discussion over the past three decades (Kroll, 2003).

A number of scoring approaches can be used to focus on either the general quality of a text or a specific feature or construct within a text, such as a linguistic accuracy or syntactic complexity. Some researchers look at an aspect of the lexicon, content, mechanics, or coherence and discourse features Kroll, (2003). Choosing the best measure is not usually straightforward. Researchers who want to limit the quality of a complete text may choose from a range of holistic standards, which give one overall score to an essay, such as the Test of Written English Scale, used for example, in the study by Engber (1995) on lexical proficiency. Another choice is a composite score which can be taken from the sum of scores

assigned for various features of a text in what so called the analytical scale. Thus, teachers' response to students' written compositions has generally taken two forms, holistically and analytically:-

1- The first is by giving corrective feedback on the microlevel. Various kinds of qualitative feedback can be given to students through teacher commentary, peer-editing, and self- editing using guidelines, codes, or checklists.

2- The second is by giving an overall evaluation in the form of a grade. This type of assessment can be given using a variety of scoring schemes and objective techniques.

Perkins (1983) has outlined the following assumptions, procedures, and consequences of using three types of scoring in the assessment of writing:-

2.2.1. Holistic Scoring

When teachers try to evaluate the general ability or proficiency of their students' written work, holistic scoring will be the best (Perkins, 1983). In this kind of scoring procedure, one or more teachers give a single grade to a text based on an overall impression. According to him, the standards used in giving this general impression might include some of the following:

a-The clarity of the topic and how it is stated, developed, and supported.

b-The effectiveness with which an issue has been raised, treated, and resolved.

c-Enough support and development of the topic for the reader.

d-The extent to which the writer has considered the needs of his readers.

e-The degree of grammatical and lexical cohesion and overall coherence of the piece.

f-The degree and effectiveness of the use of rhetorical devices. (Perkins, 1983: 652)

2.2.1.1. Drawbacks of the holistic scoring method

Perkins (1983) explained the following shortcomings for the holistic scoring approach:

a-Holistic evaluation is done quickly relying mostly on personal impressions.

b-It is highly subjective.

c-Familiarity with the student, and changing standards from one paper to another may affect the scoring and lead to unreliability.

d-Subjectivity resulted from this kind of scoring may become clearer, especially when compositions are scored by more than one teacher. If judges show different weights to the scoring standards, then it becomes difficult to receive reliable scores.

But the best way to overcome the problem of subjectivity is by giving more emphasis on teacher's competence, training and practice. If teachers are given specific and common standards with practical applications to these standards and with a variety of writing samples, success in using the holistic approach will be possible.

Weigle (2002), on one hand, states that holistic scoring has been widely implemented in writing assessment in the last 25 years. She indicates that this approach has some positive features. Practically, holistic scoring is faster and therefore does not need a lot of time in reading a paper. Teachers do not need to read several times, each time looking for different features of the writing. On the other hand, White (1985) points out that holistic scoring is supposed to focus the reader's attention on the positive points of the writing, not on its negative points. He also argues that holistic scoring is more valid than analytical scoring approaches since it reflects most closely the authentic, personal reaction of a reader to a piece of writing.

2.2.2. Analytical Scoring

This method deals with "the separation of the various features of a composition into components for scoring goals" Gaudiani (1981) and Jacobs et al. (1983) cited in Al Mutawa (1989: 343). That is, scoring compositions is based on several aspects of writing or criteria rather than a single score. One of the advantages of dealing with scoring features separately, is that more accurate diagnostic feedback can be given to the student. This is because teachers' standards are more focused, and so grading tends to be more reliable as well. That is why the analytical scoring approach is preferred over the holistic approach by many writing specialists, (like Jacobs et al :1983, Weigle: 2002, and Kroll: 1990).

One of the best and most widely used analytic scales in ESL was created by Jacobs' et al. (1983) (see Appendix G). In Jacobs' et al. scale, scripts are rated on five aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, language use, and mechanics. The five aspects are differentially weighed. The highest score is given first to content (30 points), and then language use (25 points), with organization and vocabulary weighted equally (20 points) and mechanics receiving very little emphasis (5 points) (Weigle, 2002).

Another well-known analytical scoring schemes was introduced by Gaudiani (1981) (see Appendix F). In Gaudiani's analytical scale, scripts are scored on four aspects of writing: grammar and vocabulary, style, organization and content. Unlike Jacobs' et al scale, each aspect is given a symbol (A, B, C, D, or F) to show the level of the student.

Weigle (2002) found out that analytical scoring has a number of advantages over the other scoring approaches. First, some research suggests that analytical scoring is more useful in rater training, as inexperienced raters can more easily understand and apply the criteria in separate scales than in holistic scales. Second, analytical scoring can be more reliable than holistic scoring because reliability tends to increase when further items are added. So, a scoring scheme in which multiple scores are given to each script tends to improve reliability.

Finally, using an analytical scoring guide rather than a holistic one can have beneficial effects as it provides more information about the strengths and weaknesses of students and may allow teachers and curriculum designers to modify instructions more closely in an attempt match their students' needs.

Kroll (1990) preferred and supported analytical approaches, especially Jacobs' et al. She stated that: *"The best-known scoring procedure for ESL writing is the ESL composition Profile (Jacobs' et al. 1983), which uses scale with four steps to judge five different traits, each trait being differentially weighed, with scores reported both separated and in combination". (Kroll, 1990:87)*

2.2.2.1. Disadvantages of the analytical scoring technique

Perkins (1983) states that analytical scoring techniques may have several disadvantages:-

a-A piece of writing is more than the sum of its parts, and analytical scoring may separate the aspects of the writing from their general context.

b-The highest score on any given feature may represent a standard that is too much to expect from writers at a given level of proficiency.

c-Scoring weights ought to be adjusted, to reflect the type of discourse, since scales with equal weights are not sensitive to variations in goals, writer's role, or conception of the reader.

d-The procedure is relatively time consuming.

The teachers who use analytical scoring techniques may want to keep these features in mind and adjust their grading procedures from time to time.

2.2.3. Primary Trait Scoring

"Primary trait scoring is most closely associated with the work of Lloyd-Jones (1977) for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), a large- scale testing program for schools in the US" (Weigle, 2002: 110).

In this type of assessment, scores are given holistically in which emphasis is directed to a certain aspect of writing, such as the organization or the structure, the vocabulary or the style. Teachers are required to decide to what extent the writing sample matches certain characteristics (primary traits) that are important to fulfill a given writing goal. For instance, if a student's essay aimed at convincing others to adopt a certain point or issue, the grade might be based on the number of reasons given in the support of his argument, the elaboration of those reasons, the authorities to whom he appealed, and other features of the discourse related to the function of persuasion (Perkins, 1983).

One clear advantage of this type of scoring is that it concentrates on the purpose of writing task directly. However, Perkins (1983) stated two drawbacks for this grading procedure:-

- a-It neglects other features of writing which are also important in the composing process.
- b-This kind of scoring lacks objectivity and can be time consuming.

Because of this, primary trait scoring has not been generally used by many assessment programs although it may provide some rich information about student's abilities in certain features.

Weigle (2002) points out that in second-language writing assessment, primary trait assessment is not widely adopted, and she adds that little information has existed on how primary trait scoring might be applied in second-language testing.

However, Hamp-Lyons (2004) points out, primary trait scoring may in particular have a great value for second-language learners in a school context. That is why parents who are not

proficient in the language of the school can make use of the description of what their children are capable of doing with certain language features.

2.3. The effects of feedback and evaluation of writing

On the one hand, Semke (1984), Zamel (1985), and Cohen (1987) conducted several empirical studies on the effects of feedback and evaluation in ESL and EFL writing. These studies indicated that corrective feedback on form was not beneficial and the results concerning this point were also contradictory.

In Semke's study (1984), German students who were given no corrective feedback on form and were scored only on the amount of communication, responded more positively to that type of treatment than students who were graded on accuracy alone and had obtained some kind of corrective feedback from the teacher in class. However, it was possible that the effects of grading and feedback strategy were beneficial. This was because the group of students who obtained no corrective feedback were rewarded for the amount of writing only and the others who were given corrective feedback were rewarded only for accuracy. Students in the no-feedback condition were also asked to write twice as much for students in the other groups.

Zamel's (1985) in his study, revealed similar results. He found that teachers' feedback on advanced ESL compositions was often inconsistent and contradictory and that might lead to ineffectiveness in error correction.

Cohen (1987) also investigated a number of students' responses to feedback on their compositions. He found that teachers' comments were often confusing, vague, and inconsistent and that most comments concentrated exclusively on form. Moreover, most of the students in his study were not asked to write a second draft after receiving the teacher's comments. He recommended that teachers should focus more on process in their comments

and use multi draft assignments. Students should also be taught how to use feedback to enhance their writing skills.

On the other hand, the studies carried out by Lalande (1982), Fathman and Whalley (1985;1990) and Rieken (1991) have shown beneficial results from teachers corrective feedback on compositions of second and foreign language learners.

Lalande (1982) investigated the effects of self-correction compared with teacher correction on compositions of collage German classes. The students in the control group were corrected by their teachers and asked to rewrite their compositions. Students in the experimental group received error codes and charts indicating where they had committed errors and where asked to depend on self-correction using their aids. Self-correction in this second condition was done in class, with students involved in problem-solving using the codes, their texts, and teacher or peer assistance if necessary. The self-correcting group had statistically fewer errors from those who received teacher correction. Lalande concluded that the combination of awareness of one's errors and rewriting with problem solving techniques was significantly beneficial for developing writing skills.

Fathman and Whaley (1990) found that when teachers underlined grammatical errors in their students' texts, students made fewer grammatical errors in rewriting their essays than when such feedback was provided. Their study also showed that grammatical and content feedback can beneficially be given at the same time without making any kind of discouragement for the students. At the end, the authors concluded that feedback on grammar and content, whether given alone or in group, affect rewriting positively. They also found that feedback on grammar had affected the correction of errors more than feedback on content especially, when students tried to improve the content of the second draft.

Rieken (1991) studied the possibility that there could be an interaction between feedback type and cognitive style. She investigated three various levels of feedback on the writing of

high school students of French who were different in the cognitive–style dimension. She tested the effects of 1-no corrective feedback 2-indirect correction through real comments in which corrections were coded, and 3-direct correction of errors on students frequency and accuracy. All students received positive evaluative comments on their composition and were asked to rewrite them. She found that students who had direct and clear correction were more accurate. When accuracy was calculated on the number of verbs uses. She found that there were no significant differences among groups on frequency of use of the past tense. She also found no differences among groups on a post treatment cloze test except among students with low field-independence (FI). Low FI students who had had direct and clear correction wrote more accurately on the cloze test than low FI students in the other feedback situations. The results suggest that various correction strategies may be differently affected students depending on their cognitive style.

She also found a significant teacher effect, a direction that is neglected in several empirical studies. There are new dimensions such as the teacher's perception toward correction, how it is offered to students and their own feelings about teachers in general. These are some of the significant factors that may affect the correction strategies.

Chandler (2003) had also given several significant ideas in relation to the correction of students' errors in writing. The following points can best summarize these ideas:

1- It is important to distinguish between serious and minor errors. This will indeed be the right guide in correcting and dealing with their students' errors.

2-Teachers should give priorities to what they are correcting or scoring. They do not need to concentrate on form because they may think that it is the most important thing in writing.

Most teachers focus on surface errors, and so deal with their students' compositions as if they are "series of separate sentences or even clauses, rather than as a whole unit of discourse."

(Zamel, 1985: p.86)

3-Low level students will find it difficult to find the suitable word, and so they need more models. Correct vocabulary choices should also be given by teachers.

4-It is preferable to distinguish between students who have attempted to write and students who have not. Students should not be judged only for their mistakes in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

5-Teachers ought to use consistent and specific approaches to indicate to their students the type of errors and their positions. It is useful to use symbols if teachers train their students on what they actually mean.

6-Consistency in writing comments on content is always important. Teachers must avoid using interdict comments. Instead, they should use a set of clear and direct comments including both positive and negative areas of the student's paper.

7- It has been found that direct correction is more beneficial for low level students rather than indirect correction. Again, symbols should be used and the place of errors should also be specified.

8-It has also been found that students who receive feedback and self correct their mistakes are more likely to develop their linguistic competence than those who receive no feedback.

9- Finally, in giving corrective feedback, it is advisable to use pink pens and put smiling faces as a kind of encouragement. If our goal is to win the student instead of discouraging him, teachers should always think and look for ways of giving feedback without losing the student.

Chastain (1990) investigated the effects of grading compositions on the quality of the students' composition. His study focused on the compositions of 14 advanced undergraduate Spanish students. Most of them were majors in their third or fourth year and who were characterized by the researcher as having "good" language skills and highly motivated. The course emphasized 'process' over 'product' and students were supposed to write second drafts before giving their final drafts to be graded. Compositions in this study were written in groups

of three, the first two of which were ungraded and the third one graded. Near the end of the semester, Chastain examined only one composition from each group in the class. The results showed that students wrote significantly more for the graded composition than for the ungraded and used significantly longer and more complex sentences. He also found no similar results in the two compositions concerning the errors of content and organization. Chastain finally noted that the percentage of errors to total words was very low (less than 5% in the whole class) (p.11).

Ruetten (1994) investigated holistically-scored writing proficiency exams, comparing ESL students and native English speakers. Her results showed that large number of ESL students fail this exam. She then explains the benefits of portfolio assessment for all students, as it better reflects the complex nature of the writing process. She suggested that teachers should be trained in evaluating ESL errors in order to avoid overemphasis on surface errors which should not be given much concern.

Hamp-Lyons (1991) also pointed to strong deep reactions to the low-level surface errors of ESL students by raters in university writing exams, and in a later work (Hamp-Lyons, 2004) warns of the discouragement that the holistic scoring may do to ESL students in particular.

2.4. Rater training and background

In an attempt to reduce or even eradicate the variability in teachers' scores and therefore, increase the reliability of subjective scorings, emphasis has been made to improve certain aspects of the scoring process, most notably via rater training (McIntyre, 1993; Weigle, 1994).

Rater training refers to the process in which judges are re-introduced to the assessment standards and then needed to rate a number of compositions according to these standards in

order to achieve a common explanation of their meaning. Various representative writing models at a range of proficiency levels are always chosen, including some which are problematic in terms of their performance at one or other level. Rater training serves to change rater predictions of the writing task demands and the writer's characteristics and to verify the different features of the rating scale, so that levels of rater variability can be decreased.

Training has been found to minimize the differences between raters in terms of severity, to raise the self-consistency of individual raters by decreasing random error and also to counteract individual troubles related to the various aspects of the rating situation (i.e. task, scale and student) (McIntyre, 1993; Weigle, 1994: 1998).

Nevertheless, the benefits of training raters has been questioned by a number of researchers. It has been argued, for instance, that motivating raters to achieve agreement may make them depend on their own experiences and personal impressions in judging writing (Barritt et al., 1986; Huot, 1990). However, a study by Weigle (1994) questioned this claim. She pointed out that reaching agreement is not always the only concern for teachers.

Another criticism for rater training programmes is that they may lead raters to focus on some certain features of the composition. To avoid this, (Charney, 1984) included a wide description for the rating scale in an attempt to reduce teachers' emphasis on form, content and overall communicative effectiveness of the text.

Weigle (1994, 1999) also made a comparison between the rating patterns of both inexperienced and experienced raters of ESL writing both before and after training. Her results showed that the essays were equally scored before training by both groups of raters. The inexperienced untrained raters were more accurate and harder in their rating than experienced raters.

In one line of research, analysis has been used to study the process of scoring writing in order to limit what features of writing are given more by raters, frequently as a means of studying the differences between experienced and inexperienced raters.

Hout (1988) found that both experienced and inexperienced raters focused on content in scoring L1 composition, although the experienced raters had more coherent rating strategies than the inexperienced raters. Both Cumming (1989) and Corner and Carrell (1993) reached similar findings that raters tended to centralize all their attention to content, or gist.

Vaughan (1992), also looked at raters of L2 writing, experimentally identified many approaches to holistic assessment, for example, the 'first impression dominates approach' or the 'grammar-oriented rater'. He suggested that, while raters can agree on many writing tasks based on the guidelines for holistic assessment, they may fall on their individual rating style for compositions which do not obviously suit the descriptors of the scale.

Recently, several researchers have also started to concentrate on factors that may affect raters in assessing their students' writing. It has been found that composition teaching or scoring experience are the variables that have received the most attention.

Keech and McNelly (1982) compared the holistic ratings of high school students, inexperienced teachers, and experienced teachers on 114 L1 students' compositions. They found that inexperienced teachers gave students lower scores than experienced ones. On the other hand, Sweedler-Brown (1990) found that training raters was harsher in their scorings of L2 writing than less experienced teachers. Similar results were reported by Cumming (1990) and Weigle (1994, 1999).

In second-language writing, comparisons between ESL specialists and other raters (e.g. English faculty or other content area faculty) have indicated that raters from various disciplines apply different standards to non-native English writing (Mendelsohn and

Cumming, 1989; Brown, 1991; Santos, 1988; Sweedler-Brown, 1993). They highlighted the role of rater background experience in giving scores to students' compositions.

Training raters seems to be another important variable that has been investigated, particularly in L2 research. Shomay et al. (1992) found that rater training was a more significant variable than experience concerning rater reliability, although they did not report any differences in relation to severity.

Weigle (1994, 1998) found that rater training plays a big role in improving the reliability of raters' scores. However, training did not completely stop individual impressions to be severe or lenient in rating.

Diederich (1974) found that higher scores were given to the same L1 essays when teachers were told that the compositions were written by high level students than when they were told the compositions were written by average students. Recent studies of L1 handwritten versus word-processed essays. In part because the expectations of formatting, grammatical and spelling accuracy are higher in word-processed essays and errors are thus easily noticed in these essays (Powers et al., 1994).

To add to the small body of existing research on the practices and the perceptions of teachers who respond to EFL students' writing, this study aimed to examine the practices and perceptions of high school English teachers in Palestine regarding the writing assessment and feedback. The study thus aimed to answer the questions mentioned in chapter one.

2.5. Summary

This chapter summarizes some of the literature on writing assessment and feedback practices. It also presents a review of the writing scoring approaches with the advantages and the disadvantages for each. The chapter ends up with some review on the importance of rater training and background, and the effects of feedback and the evaluation of writing. The following chapter will include the methodology and the procedures of the study.

Chapter Three

3. Methodology and Procedures

The purpose of this study is to investigate the assessment practices and perceptions of high school English teachers towards evaluating the writing skill for high school Palestinian students. To achieve this goal, the researcher collected data from five different instruments. These instruments include a two- part questionnaire, analyzing documents and interviews with both high school English teachers and English supervisors. The procedures for conducting and analyzing the instruments were also presented.

3.1. Population of the Study

The population of the study consists of high school English teachers in Palestine who teach at the schools which belong to Hebron directorates. According to the statistics of the directorates in Hebron district (south, middle and north), the number of English high school teachers is (214) males and females. These teachers are distributed over (52) high schools. The following table shows the distribution of the original population according to the variables of gender and directorate.

Table (1): Distribution of the Population of the Study.

No.	Directorate	Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
1	Middle Hebron	22	32	54
2	South Hebron	46	57	103
3	North Hebron	27	30	57
Total		95	119	214

3.1.1. Participants

The study consisted of (107) participants. They are all Palestinian EFL teachers of grades 11 and 12 in the second semester of the academic year (2011-2012). They represented almost (50%) of the population of the study. The researcher collected (106) copies of the questionnaire, (3) of them were excluded because they were not completely answered. Thus, only (103) copies remained to be statistically analyzed at the end. The following table shows the distribution of the participants according to years of experience, gender, directorate, the classes being taught and the academic qualifications.

Table (2): The distribution of the participants according to years of experience, gender, directorate, the classes being taught and the academic qualifications.

The Variable		No.	Percentage	Total
Years of experience	Below 6 years	22	21.3	103
	From 6-14 years	36	35.0	
	From 15 years and above	45	43.7	
Gender	Male	39	37.9	103
	Female	64	62.1	
Directorate	Middle Hebron	30	29.1	103
	South Hebron	38	36.9	
	North Hebron	35	34.0	
Classes	11 th Grade	22	21.4	103
	12 th Grade	20	19.4	
	11 th grade & 12 th Grade	61	59.2	
Academic Qualifications	BA	81	78.6	103
	MA	22	21.4	

3.2. Instrumentation

In this study, both qualitative and quantitative data were used to explore and investigate the perceptions and practices of high school teachers in Palestine towards the assessment of English writing and feedback. For this purpose, the following instruments were used:

3.2.1. Questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed to investigate the perceptions and practices of Palestinian high school English teachers towards the writing assessment and feedback. In particular, the questionnaire aimed at answering research questions (1-4) presented in the introduction.

The questionnaire was reviewed by (5) experts and professors in applied linguistics and the teaching of English. They decided to reduce the number of items from (50-40) in order to make it more specific and limited to the goals of the study. Some items were also modified such as Item (27) and (28).

This questionnaire consisted of two major parts (see Appendix A). The first part of the questionnaire consisted of two sections. The first section included (20) items which all focused on the practices of high school teachers concerning the assessment of writing and feedback. The second section also included (20) items which focused on the teachers' perceptions towards writing assessment and feedback.

The items of the questionnaire were mainly chosen according to the goals of the study. Besides, several items were selected from different sources of the reviewed literature related to writing assessment and feedback.

Teachers, in the first part of the questionnaire, were required to respond to a five-point scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree). They were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with each point. This scale was adapted by Gardner and Lambert (1972).

The second section of the questionnaire included 5 open-end questions on both the assessment of writing and feedback. (103) high school English teachers were asked to answer these questions. The aim of these questions was to collect more information so that the researcher could get further understanding about the practices and perceptions of teachers regarding the assessment of writing. The researcher ended these questions by asking teachers to write their suggestions and recommendations for improving the writing assessment process. It should be stated here that the teachers who answered these questions were the same teachers who responded to the questionnaire (for the questionnaire see Appendix A and for samples of teachers' answers, see Appendix B).

3.2.1.1. Validity of the Questionnaire

So as to establish the validity of the questionnaire, (5) experts in the field of applied linguistics were asked to evaluate and modify it. All their suggestions were taken into consideration. Moreover, the questionnaire validity was tested by Person correlation with total degree for each of the questionnaire items as shown in Tables (3) and (4).

Table (3): Pearson Correlation results for linkage matrix of the practices of high English school teachers towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback.

Items	Value of (R)	Significance	Item	Value of(R)	Significance
1	0.396**	0.000	11	0.458**	0.000
2	0.241*	0.014	12	0.580**	0.004
3	0.336**	0.001	13	0.232*	0.019
4	0.464**	0.000	14	0.349**	0.000
5	0.594**	0.000	15	0.341**	0.000
6	0.296	0.002	16	0.345**	0.000
7	0.370**	0.000	17	0.466**	0.000
8	0.466**	0.000	18	0.323**	0.001
9	0.295**	0.003	19	0.341**	0.000
10	0.396**	0.000	20	0.202*	0.041

Table (4): Pearson Correlation results for linkage matrix of the perceptions of high school English teachers towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback.

Items	Value of (R)	Significance	Items	Value of (R)	Significance
21	0.242*	0.014	31	0.376**	0.000
22	0.522**	0.000	32	0.439**	0.000
23	0.333**	0.001	33	0.286**	0.003
24	0.402**	0.000	34	0.350**	0.000
25	0.554**	0.000	35	0.337**	0.000
26	0.531**	0.000	36	0.358**	0.000
27	0.460**	0.000	37	0.284**	0.004
28	0.376**	0.000	38	0.361**	0.000
29	0.380**	0.000	39	0.426**	0.000
30	0.360**	0.000	40	0.234*	0.017

Tables (3) and (4) show that the R Value of all the items has a significant correlation with the total degree of the tool. This means that there is a high validity of the tool of measuring the practices and the perceptions of high school teachers toward the assessment of writing and feedback.

3.2.1.2. Reliability of the Questionnaire

To emphasize the reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach Alpha factor was calculated to check the internal correlation. Table (5) shows the results of Cronbach Alpha Test for both the practices and the perceptions of high school English teachers towards the assessment of writing and feedback.

Table (5): Results of Cronbach Alpha for the reliability of practices and perceptions over the total degree.

Tool	Cronbach Alpha
Evaluation of Practices	0.69
Evaluation of Perceptions	0.72

Table (5) shows that the value reliability for the practices is 0.69 and the value reliability for the perceptions is 0.72. This indicates that the two parts of the questionnaire are of high value of reliability.

3.2.2. Document Analysis

There were two kinds of documents used in this study.

3.2.2.1. Scoring Compositions

In the second stage, the researcher decided to evaluate both the scoring procedures in general and the Palestinian writing assessment criteria in particular. The specific aim behind scoring the compositions was to answer research question number (5): What are the most appropriate guidelines for evaluating the writing skill of high school students in Palestine? It also aims to investigate the degree of correlation between the Palestinian writing assessment criteria with the analytical and the holistic approaches.

3.2.2.2. Checking Supervisors' Reports

This stage included the investigation of the supervisors' reports. The aim of this stage was to emphasize or verify the collected data gathered from the supervisors' interviews. It also aimed at investigating what comments were involved in the reports given to teachers concerning the writing assessment and feedback. In particular, the purpose of checking these

reports was to try to answer research question (6): What comments on teachers' practices do supervisors give regarding the writing assessment?

3.2.3. Interviews

Two kinds of interviews were carried out. The first was with high school English teachers and the second was with English supervisors.

3.2.3.1. Interviews with High School English Teachers

The aim of the interviews was to verify and confirm the results obtained from the questionnaire and to collect samples of the students' scored papers. The researcher is trying to explore the real practices of high school English teachers in regard to the assessment of writing and giving feedback. In particular, the main aim of these interviews was to answer research question number (7) : What kind of corrective feedback is used by Tawjihi and 11th grade teachers?

In the third stage of the study, interviews were conducted with (10) school high English teachers to represent the three directorates in Hebron district. (5) of them were from the south, (3) were from the middle and (2) were from the north. The researcher decided to conduct these interviews with those teachers who had answered the questionnaire before. The questions focused on the teachers' practices and perceptions regarding the assessment of writing. They were also asked about the supervisors' visits, their reports, and the training courses of writing and writing assessment.

3.2.3.2. Interviews with English Supervisors

Finally, interviews were also conducted with English supervisors in Hebron directorates (south, middle and north). The general aim of these interviews was to explore the practices of

high school English teachers concerning writing assessment and feedback. Specifically, the supervisors' interviews aimed at answering research question number (8): How often do high school English teachers receive training courses in assessing writing and giving feedback? It should be indicated that there were (12) English supervisors in Hebron district, (6) in the south, (3) in the middle and (3) in the north. (9) of them showed their willingness and readiness for the interviews, (2) of them were not available and the other was busy. Interviews were conducted in the second semester of the academic year (2011). Interviewees were asked several questions which focused on the assessment and the feedback of writing. The questions were also examined by (3) experts who approved them (for the questions and the supervisors' responses, see Appendix H).

3.3. Procedure

Here are the procedures by which each instrument is carried out:

3.3.1. Administering the Questionnaire

When the questionnaire was finally written and approved by (5) experts in the field of applied linguistics and the teaching of English, it was distributed among high school teachers in Hebron. The questionnaire was distributed among the targeted population by hand in the academic year (2011-2012) and most of the participants responded by the presence of the researcher. The questionnaire was written in English, so there was no need to translate it into Arabic since it was given to teachers of English. However, the researcher was always ready to negotiate or give any explanation for any item.

3.3.2. Eliciting Documents

Here are the procedures used in eliciting the documents in the present study:

3.3.2.1. Eliciting and Scoring Compositions

(100) Tawjihi students were given a writing task about ' My favorite place'. This task was the writing question given to Tawjihi students in GSCE in the academic year (2010-2011) (see Appendix I). The students chosen for the writing task were from the three directorates, south, middle and north Hebron. The teachers were asked to let students write about this topic. Teachers gave them enough time (60 minutes) for writing, putting them under similar conditions as the Tawjihi students in the GSCE.

When the compositions were collected, they were classified into (3) levels (high, middle and low). This classification was done holistically by a number of high school teachers of English. Then, (10) compositions were chosen from each level to have (30) papers at the end. The papers were given to (20) high school English teachers from south Hebron to be scored in (3) stages in different periods.

First, teachers were asked to score the papers using the holistic approach. Then, after a week, they were asked to score the papers using the Palestinian Ministry of Education standards in the academic year (2010-2011). In the third stage, teachers used the analytical approach of (Jacobs, 1983) (see Appendix G). Teachers were provided with tables to fill their scores in each stage.

3.3.2.2. Collecting Supervisors' Reports

In order to collect some reports written by English supervisors, the researcher arranged some visits to the directorates in Hebron district. But unfortunately, he was informed by the head of the supervision section that using or investigating any of these reports was not possible even if it were for research purposes. According to him, he said that only the Ministry of Education could ask for such a thing.

Therefore, the researcher arranged some visits to his colleagues at schools. Explaining the purpose behind looking at these reports, (3) of them accepted to show him their reports. In addition to that, the researcher investigated his own reports to see what comments supervisors wrote concerning the writing assessment and feedback. It should be indicated that the total number of the reports investigated was (60) (for samples of these reports see Appendix J).

3.3.3. Conducting Interviews

Here are the procedures of conducting the interviews in the study:

3.3.3.1. Conducting Interviews with High School English Teachers

Interviews were conducted with (10) high school English teachers. (5) teachers were from South Hebron, (3) teachers were from Middle Hebron and (2) teachers from North Hebron. Before visiting schools, a permit was taken from each directorate for conducting these interviews for research purposes only (see Appendix M). Before conducting the interviews, the researcher explained their importance, and interviewees showed their willingness and indicated that this subject is of great importance.

On average, each interview lasted approximately (25-30) minutes. The teachers were asked the interview questions orally, and the researcher wrote down their answers.

3.3.3.2 Conducting Interviews with Supervisors of English

In order to conduct interviews with English supervisors, the researcher carried out the following procedures:

1-Permit for conducting the interviews was requested and received from the Ministry of Education (see Appendix M).

2-Visits were organized according to supervisors' free time.

3-Supervisors were asked if they could respond to such interviews.

4-Supervisors showed their willingness and their complete agreement for these interviews saying that they would give confident and honest answers.

5-Each supervisor was interviewed individually.

6-On average, each interview lasted between (30-35) minutes.

7-The supervisors answers for each question were transcribed and coded (see Appendix H).

3.4. Analyzing Data

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze the instruments.

3.4.1. Analyzing Questionnaire

The necessary statistical analysis for the questionnaire were conducted. Descriptive statistics were used to compute figures, percentages, means and standard deviations. Statistical tests such as (Pearson correlation) and (Cronbach Alpha) were also used to examine the correlation between the writing scoring approaches. The statistical analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). As for the open-end questions (the second part of the questionnaire), the collected data were analyzed qualitatively by the researcher.

3.4.2. Analyzing Documents

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in analyzing the documents in this study.

3.4.2.1. Scoring Compositions

As for analyzing the scored compositions, the necessary statistical analysis were conducted. Descriptive statistics were used to compute figures, percentages, means and standard deviations.

3.4.2.2. Supervisors' Reports

The gathered reports were analyzed qualitatively by the researcher. He read all the reports taking notes related to the supervisors' comments. Particularly, he focused on the comments which are related to writing assessment and feedback.

3.4.3. Analyzing Interviews

Qualitative methods were used to analyze the interviews in this study.

3.4.3.1. High School English Teachers

Interviews with high school English teachers were analyzed qualitatively by the researcher. The answers of the interviews were coded. Then the researcher studied them carefully. The answers were also classified according to their agreement or disagreement about a certain point so that, it could be easier for the researcher to discuss them in the following stages.

3.4.3.2. English Supervisors

The answers of the interview questions of English supervisors were also analyzed qualitatively. The researcher copied all the questions of the interview. Answers were put under each question so that they could be easily discussed and analyzed. The researcher also quoted some of the supervisors' answers concerning some significant points.

3.5. Summary

This chapter presented the population and the participants of the study. It also included the instruments the researcher used in this study. The chapter then presented the procedures by which the instruments of the study were conducted. The chapter ended up with the procedures used in analyzing the collected data. The following chapter will include the results of the study.

Chapter Four

4. Results

This chapter includes the results of the present research. Three types of instruments are used in this study, a two-part questionnaire, interviews and investigating documents. The findings will be presented in the light of these instruments and the questions presented in chapter one.

4.1. Results of the Questionnaire

After examining the previous literature related to this study, the researcher developed a questionnaire which aims at investigating the extent to which high school English teachers in Palestine practise the assessment of writing, the use of feedback and their perceptions towards them.

In order to answer questions (1-4) about high school English teachers' assessment practices and perceptions, statistical analysis for the first part of the questionnaire was carried out. The researcher also used descriptive statistics to compute figures, means and standard deviations. As for the second part of the questionnaire, the collected data of the open-end questions were analyzed qualitatively by the researcher.

The items of the questionnaire were divided positively and negatively according to Likert's (1972) five-point scale as follows:

Strongly disagree: 1 point

Disagree: 2 points

Undecided: 3 points

Agree: 4 points

Strongly agree: 5 points

Likert Scale was used to determine high school English teachers' responses to the questionnaire items in the light of their degree of agreement or disagreement. The degree was limited by giving different scales for the teachers to response to. To limit the length of the 5-point questionnaire, higher or lower degrees, the scope (5-1=4) has been measured and then divided by (5) to get the right length of the cell (4/5=0.8.). Then this value was added to the lowest value in the questionnaire (the proper number 1) to limit the highest degree of the cell. Table (6) shows the correction keys and their degrees:

Table(6): Correction Keys

No.	Level	Degree
1	1 - 1.79	Very low (Strongly Disagree)
2	1.80 - 2.59	Low (Disagree)
3	2.60 – 3.39	Medium (Undecided)
4	3.40 – 4.19	High (Agree)
5	4.20 – 5	Very high (Strongly agree)

4.1.1. Results of the First Part of the Questionnaire

Here are the questions and their results:

Question (1): To what extent do high school English teachers practice assessing writing and give feedback for their students' written work?

To answer the first question, descriptive statistics were used to calculate means and standard deviations. Means and standard deviations for the extent of English teachers' practice of the assessment and the use of feedback are drawn out in Table (7).

Table (7): Means and standard deviations of the extent of high school English teachers' practice in Palestine in evaluating writing and giving feedback:

Variable	No. of Items	No.	Mean	Std Deviation	Degree
Practice degree in assessing writing and giving feedback	20	103	2.98	0.2783	Medium (Undecided)

Table (7) shows that the mean of teachers' practice in assessing and giving feedback for their students' written work is 2.98 with a standard deviation of 0.28. This means that the teachers' practice in regard to the assessment of writing and the use of feedback is medium.

Question (2): What are the most frequent practices of high school English teachers in assessing writing and giving feedback?

To answer the second question, descriptive statistics were used to calculate means and standard deviations of the most frequent items of practices of high school English teachers in assessing writing and giving feedback. Practices were arranged from the most frequent (No.20) to the least frequent (No.1) as they appear in Table (8).

Table (8): Means and standard deviations of the items related to practices of high school English teachers in assessing writing and giving feedback arranged according to their degree of frequency.

Item No.	Item	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree
20	I often explain the writing standards for my students so that they become aware of them and consequently avoid making mistakes.	103	4.21	0.84	Very High

11	I sometimes feel that I lose my ability to remain consistent after reading some of the students' papers.	103	4.17	0.73	High
5	I give students all the writing exercises included in the textbook.	103	3.92	0.77	High
12	I often underline the students' error and correct it.	103	3.88	0.85	High
4	In their reports, supervisors usually write comments on writing assessment and feedback.	103	3.86	0.88	High
3	In assessing my students' papers, I am usually affected by my overall general impression.	103	3.82	0.86	High
7	I use assessment standards as effective guidelines to plan writing instruction and adjust assessment practices.	103	3.79	1.03	High
19	I am interested in teaching the writing skill rather than being busy with the assessment approaches of writing.	103	3.67	1.12	High
8	Teachers usually focus on the mechanics rather than the other aspects of language.	103	3.62	1.04	High
13	After reading about 15 essays, I tend to read selectively (not reading each and every sentence).	103	3.39	0.88	Medium
9	I have tolerance for grammar errors in the students' essays.	103	3.33	1.24	Medium
2	When scoring students' writing, I usually refer to the assessment criteria.	103	3.31	1.67	Medium
10	I frequently refer to the other essays I have read whenever possible for maintaining consistency in my assessment.	103	2.97	1.73	Medium

18	I assess my students' writing according to my supervisors' notes.	103	2.96	1.24	Medium
6	I usually give oral comments in addition to written ones on the students' papers.	103	2.42	0.13	Low
14	In assessing my students' writing, I only give the mark in addition to words like good, very good, excellent...etc.	103	2.39	1.14	Low
16	In assessing my students' writing, I don't give grammar much importance because grammar has already been evaluated in other sections in the exam.	103	2.34	0.83	Low
17	In assessing my students' writing, I frequently refer to their errors by underlining the errors without correcting them.	103	2.01	1.01	Low
15	The writing assessment criteria I use at school is similar to the criteria given by the Ministry of Education.	103	1.97	0.85	Low
1	Teachers are not given training courses in assessing writing.	103	1.82	1.07	Low

Table (8) shows that the most frequent practice for high school English teachers is represented by Item (20) which comes at the first position with a very high degree. The mean for this Item was (4.21) with a standard deviation of (0.84). This means that teachers strongly agree that they often explain the writing standards for their students, so that they become aware of them and consequently avoid making mistakes. Item (11) comes in the second position with a high degree. The mean for this Item is (4.17) with a standard deviation of

(0.73). This means that teachers agree that they sometimes feel that they lose their ability to be consistent after reading some of their students' papers. Item (1), on the other hand, comes in the last position with a low degree. The mean for this Item was (1.82) with a standard deviation of (1.07). This means that teachers agree that they are not given training courses in assessing writing. Item (15) also comes after Item (1) with a low degree. The mean for this Item is (1.97) with a standard deviation of (0.85). Teachers in this Item disagree that the writing assessment criteria they use at school are similar to the criteria given by the Ministry of Education.

Question (3): What is the extent of high school English teachers' perceptions towards assessing writing and using feedback?

To answer the third question, descriptive statistics was used to calculate means and standard deviations of the English teachers' perceptions towards the writing assessment and feedback as shown in Table (9).

Table (9): Means and standard deviations of high school English teachers' perceptions towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback:

Variable	No. of Items	No.	Mean	Std. Deviation	Degree
Perceptions towards writing assessment and feedback	20	103	3.10	0.33	Medium

Table (9) shows that high school English teachers' perceptions towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback was medium. The mean of this degree on the total degree of the tool was (3.10) with a standard deviation of (0.33). This also means that teachers are unable to decide on the Items of the questionnaire.

Question (4): What are the high school English teachers' perceptions in regard to the assessment of writing and the use of feedback?

To answer the fourth question, descriptive statistics was used to calculate means and standard deviations of the perceptions of high school English teachers. Perceptions are arranged from the highest frequent (No.12) to the lowest frequent (No.19) as shown in Table (10).

Table (10): Means and standard deviations of the perceptions of high school English teachers towards the writing assessment and feedback, arranged according to their degree of frequency.

Item No.	Item	No.	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree
32	Effective writing assessment and effective teaching are integrated.	103	3.94	0.91	High
26	A good assessment approach focuses on global errors (i.e. errors of content and organization) that impede communication of meaning.	103	3.94	0.95	High
40	High school teachers should be given the chance to participate in designing the writing assessment criteria.	103	3.93	0.88	High
25	The criteria used to assess writing are derived from the purpose of writing.	103	3.72	1.21	High
27	The assessment approach tends to focus on all language features such as grammar, style, organization, content, coherence and mechanics.	103	3.55	0.93	High
35	The teachers' impressions, experience and training play a	103	3.37	1.06	Medium

	considerable role in the writing assessment.				
30	The writing exercises included in the textbook are not sufficient for high school students.	103	3.22	1.12	Medium
37	Inexperienced teachers usually give unreliable scores and take more time to assess writing.	103	3.18	1.10	Medium
33	The assessment scoring standards help bridge the gap between experienced raters' scores and inexperienced raters' scores.	103	3.13	1.12	Medium
22	The criteria used to assess writing are clear, consistent and easy to be applied and so, teachers always stick to them.	103	3.09	0.91	Medium
23	The results of the writing assessment can help teachers revise their practices in teaching writing.	103	3.08	1.39	Medium
28	The assessment criteria enable teachers to provide accurate evaluation..	103	2.99	1.08	Medium
24	Writing assessment should be based on well known reliable standards.	103	2.87	1.10	Medium
36	Teachers avoid using the analytical approach in assessing writing because it is time consuming.	103	2.85	1.14	Medium
38	Scoring students' papers at school is different from scoring their papers in the General Secondary Certificate Examination	103	2.79	1.02	Medium
31	Writing assessment is useful as it gives good feedback for both students and teachers.	103	2.65	0.98	Medium
29	Evaluating coherence (unity of thought, logic and structure) and cohesion (connection of ideas, arguments	103	2.52	1.09	Low

	and statements) is difficult.				
21	Teachers must be given training and practice in writing assessment.	103	2.44	0.93	Low
34	Working for long hours scoring students' papers may affect the accuracy of the assessment.	103	2.42	1.31	Low
39	Good assessment standards should reflect the Ministry's objectives and the goals of the Palestinian curriculum.	103	2.37	0.99	Low

Table (10) shows that the most predominant and frequent perception of high school English teachers towards the assessment of writing and feedback is represented by Item (32) which comes in the first position with a high degree. The mean of this Item is (3.94) with a standard deviation (0.91). This Item indicates that teachers agree that effective writing assessment and effective teaching are integrated. Item (26) which is similar to Item (32) in its mean and standard deviation comes in the second position with a high degree. This Item shows that teachers believe that a good writing approach focuses on global errors that impede communication of meaning. Item (39) comes in the last position with a low degree. Its mean is (2.37) with a standard deviation of (0.99). This Item shows that teachers disbelieve that good assessment standards should reflect the Ministry's objectives and goals of the Palestinian curriculum. Item (34) comes after Item (39) with a low degree. Its mean is (2.42) and with a standard deviation of (1.31). This Item shows that teachers disagree that working for long hours scoring students' papers may affect the accuracy of the assessment.

To investigate the relationship between the means of high school teachers' practices and perceptions, (Pearson Correlation) has been used as shown in Table (11).

Table (11): Results of (Pearson Correlation) of the relationship between the means of teachers' practices and their perceptions regarding writing assessment and feedback.

Variable	Practices	Perceptions
Practice extent of evaluating writing and giving feedback	1.000	0.454**
		0.001

**very high degree statistical function

Table (11) shows that there is a positive significance relationship at ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) between both the means of high school teachers' practices and their perceptions regarding the assessment of writing and feedback in Palestine. This means that the higher the degree of practice is, the higher the attitudes towards it are, and vice versa.

4.1.2. Results of the Second Part of the Questionnaire

(103) high English teachers responded to the second part of the questionnaire of the open-ended questions (see Appendix A Part two). Most of them gave their views and attitudes when evaluating their students compositions, whether they follow the instructions mentioned in the teacher's book; or whether they focus on form or meaning in their students' written work. They expressed their opinions about the assessment of writing of high school students on school level and Ministry level. At the end, they gave some suggestions, recommendations and comments that may help improve the writing assessment process.

A- What scoring approach or approaches do you usually use when evaluating your students' compositions? In other words, how do you evaluate your students' compositions?

In response to the first question concerning the approach or approaches English teachers usually used when evaluating their students' compositions, teachers gave different views. A

significant number of teachers (34) said that they focused on the main points, punctuation marks, supporting details, linking words and spelling mistakes. (16) teachers said that they focused on meaning, style, coherence, cohesion and the design of the subject. Another group of teachers (20) said that they concentrated on the layout, and the ideas rather than on grammatical mistakes. They believed that conveying convincing ideas was more important than language mistakes. This means that they concentrated on the content and the mechanics of language rather than on form.

Teachers' responses concerning grammar were very limited. Only two teachers said that they focused on grammar while assessing their students' written work. Another teacher said that he evaluated his students' written work according to a specific criteria which included good handwriting, neatness, punctuation marks, coherence, cohesion, grammar and vocabulary.

Regarding the teachers' approaches they followed in assessing their students' written work and using feedback, there were differences in their responses. The following points summarized their practices:

1-Four teachers said that they used symbols when identifying their students' mistakes, e.g , ('sp', for spelling, 'pp' for prepositions, and 'wo' for word order). Others used 'C' for capitalization and 'P' for punctuation to draw their students' attention to their errors and make them avoid these errors in their future written work.

2-Two teachers said that they wrote (pass or fail) on their students' written work without identifying any type of error.

3-One teacher said that he classified his students into two categories: high level and low level. In the case of high level students, he focused analytically on every single component such as language, content, unity, coherence, topic sentences, conclusion, body and related ideas. But in the case of low level students, he focused on just content without paying attention to the

language and the other features of writing. He gave only a general impression on the style and the layout.

4-Two teachers said that they circled their students' mistakes concerning grammar, spelling and punctuation and gave them the correct form.

5-Six teachers had no answer to this question.

B- Do you follow the instructions mentioned in the teacher's book?

In response to the second question, (34) teachers said that they followed the instructions in the teacher's book regarding the writing assessment and the distribution of marks, but they often found them useless since these instructions were given to high level students and so they did not fit the weakness of their students. Instead, they used other methods that were more suitable to the theme and to the level of their students. Two teachers said that they followed the teacher's book especially when they needed to give marks for certain writing or when they wanted to give their students the model answer.

(28) teachers said that they used these instructions, but sometimes they used their own ways and added some new criteria depending on their own experience. For example, some asked students to give an outline or starter sentences other than those mentioned in the teacher's book. They sometimes helped their students to introduce the first paragraph, then they gave them a chance to select information from the provided ideas and the given notes. (30) teachers said that they did not use them at all. Another (12) teachers said that they never followed the instructions because following them might impede students performance in producing compositions.

C- When evaluating your students' compositions, do you focus on form or on meaning?

Teachers were also asked whether they focused on form or meaning in evaluating their students' written work. The following points showed their various responses:

1-The majority of the teachers (70) said that they focused on both form and meaning because the connection of thoughts was very important in order to give a good idea. And if students focused only on form without taking the meaning into account, they would not understand what they were writing about. For example, one of them said, *'We should focus on both sides because form and meaning are integrated components and complete each other.'*

2- Few number of teachers (3) interpreted 'form' as something related to the layout and organization. Form , according to them, meant the students' organization for their writing. They said, *'Students, especially those who are in the commercial stream, are supposed to organize their business letters in a special form'.*

3-(28) teachers said that they focused on meaning rather than on form because they believed that meaning was more important and it should come in the first place in spite of the importance of form which should be given a lot of care.

4- Only (2) teachers said that they sometimes focused on both with more emphasis on form because form sometimes affect meaning.

D-What is your opinion about the assessment of writing of high school students on both levels, the school level and the Ministry level?

Concerning this question, a significant number of teachers (20) said that the assessment of writing of high school students on both levels was not good in general. (4) other teachers said that both levels were incomprehensive, inconsistent and insufficient. (6) teachers said that students should be aware of assessment techniques, so that they could excel their writing.

(32) teachers said that they had no ideas about the difference between them, and so they did not show any response.

(10) teachers said that school level was more accurate and reliable than Ministry's level because teachers used limited assessment criteria which ended up with a corrective feedback to their students. On the other hand, (16) teachers commented that the criteria in the Ministry's level were more accurate. Teachers had to stick to them when assessing writing of high school students. However, these criteria were not flexible since they did not cope up with students' ability in writing compositions. As a result, the marks did not really reflect the level of students because the criteria placed by the Ministry of Education did not take individual differences into consideration.

On the other hand, (8) teachers said that the assessment of writing on the Ministry's level was more flexible than that of the school's. (14) teachers preferred to evaluate both levels in the same way. One of them said, *"I think the same teacher must follow the same way of assessment on both levels, school level and Ministry level"*.

Finally, (4) teachers suggested that both levels had to be adjusted and modified to suit the level of students because their writing was very poor and needs improvement. So, the Ministry's level had to be simplified according to the students' level since both of them had the same difficulty.

E- What are your suggestions and recommendations for improving the writing assessment process?

Regarding this question, (16) teachers suggested holding more courses to improve the writing assessment and they recommended attending some model lessons with some experienced teachers. (4) teachers said that they should give importance to the writing skill itself in the early stages without focusing too much on grammar. One of them stated, *" I think*

that students at school level should be encouraged to write whatever occurs to their minds without attending importance to grammar mistakes. Grammar will gradually and spontaneously be okay."

(20) teachers did not express their opinions, and so they did not suggest any recommendations for improving the writing assessment process. (16) teachers suggested more practice by the students in writing was necessary. If students were given additional writing, their style of writing would be improved. They believed, "*The more you write, the more you will be a good writer*".

(4) teachers said that the Ministry should specify a separate chapter for writing skills including all the instructions related to the rules of writing, and having the students write in the classroom as they wrote in an exam. (4) teachers said that LCD should be used to show students their mistakes in front of the whole class. (8) teachers said that teachers should be given training assessment courses on writing assessment and this should be theoretical and practical. (4) other teachers suggested holding workshops for teachers from time to time and encouraged or motivated students by granting them grades and positive feedback expressions. (2) teachers said that a good reader is a good writer, i.e. the more you read, the better writer you would be. "*Reading is the origin of writing, so students must read a lot.*"

Two other teachers suggested a variation of writing exercises (guided and free compositions).

F- Additional Comments:

When teachers were asked to comment on the enquiries given to them, they gave various comments. (10) teachers said that students should be encouraged to learn new words. Students' disability to write free compositions was due to the shortage of their vocabulary and to the ignorance of grammatical rules. They added, "*Students' semantic and grammatical*

errors should be corrected by the teacher directly; the errors should be orally explained to the students."

Another teacher said that students should be encouraged to read extra stories and summarize them using their own language. (4) other teachers commented that teachers must motivate their students to write by writing encouraging comments on their written work as a kind of writing reinforcement. (8) teachers recommended the organization of the textbooks given to the students because they thought that they did not fit with their students' abilities, and that was why they should be changed. (4) teachers said that the writing skill was ignored in schools especially in primary ones. They commented, " *We cannot talk about the assessment of writing since most schools do not practise ."*

One teacher said that he had noticed that most of the female teachers assessed, evaluated and corrected the composition topics much better than male teachers who neglected this skill and excluded it in many schools. (4) teachers commented that the most important issue was that their students did not like the English language as a second language. As a result, they did not learn enough vocabulary which might help them build their writing. (4) other teachers suggested that they should be given the chance to participate in designing the writing assessment criteria that might fit with the level of their students.

(10) teachers recommended that this productive skill must take more attention and consideration from both teachers and students because the output and the main goal of learning English is how to express your opinions, views and feelings orally and in writing without any type of mistake. Finally, it was noticed that (58) teachers did not give any comment.

4.2. Results of the Documents

4.2.1. Results of Scoring Compositions

To verify the validity of the Palestinian writing assessment criteria, Pearson correlation was used to calculate high school teachers' evaluations and the writing scoring approaches. It should be indicated that 20 high school teachers were involved in the assessment process. They assessed (30) compositions using the holistic approach, the Palestinian approach and the analytical approach of Jacob's et al (1983). The Palestinian approach was compared with both the holistic and the analytical approaches to investigate the degree of correlation between them. Table (12) shows the Pearson correlation between the three writing assessment approaches.

Table (12): Pearson Correlation between the Palestinian Writing Assessment Approach, the Holistic Approach and the Analytical Approach.

	Palestinian	Analytical	Holistic
P Pearson correlation	1	904**	881**
Sig.(2-tailed)	600	000	000
N		600	600

**very high degree statistical function

Table (12) shows that Pearson Correlation between the Palestinian approach and the analytical approach reached 0.90 whereas Pearson correlation between the Palestinian approach and the holistic approach reached only 0.88. This means that it is statistically significant. Since the value of Pearson Correlation between the Palestinian approach and the analytical approach is higher, this means that the Palestinian approach is closer to the analytical approach of Jacob's et al (1983).

4.2.2. Results of Supervisors' Reports

60 reports were checked in order to investigate the supervisors' comments on high school English teachers' practices towards the assessment of writing for their students. The aim after investigating these reports was to find out what comments supervisors included in their reports concerning the assessment of writing and the use of feedback. The following points summarized the main results for investigation:

1-Most of the supervisors concentrated their comments on the lesson they attended. In other words, they focused on what so called in-class supervision.

2-Supervisors' comments or feedback on writing and writing assessment were rarely found or mentioned in their reports, (see Appendix J).

3-Very few number of supervisors commented in their 'non-class supervision' on the writing skill in general. An example of this, one supervisor said in his report that the teacher was following the students' tasks and compositions.

4-In their recommendation to their teachers, supervisors neglected any kind of comments or suggestions on writing assessment and feedback.

It was found that there were three kinds of supervision reports (for the three kinds of reports, see Appendix J). The Ministry of Education modifies these reports from time to time. The first kind of these reports is divided into two parts, 'non-class supervision' and 'in-class supervision'. The first part includes the annual plan, daily plan, students' written work, exams, marks file and the professional development of the teacher. The second part, on the other hand, includes the teaching procedure, the class administration, teaching sources, the appropriateness of language and information, the evaluation and the objectives of the lesson. The second kind of reports includes the educational content, the teaching strategies, the evaluation strategies and the values and the perceptions of the teacher. The third kind of

reports, which is the most recent, includes the most important positive points, the most important points which need development and the students' achievement.

4.3. Results of Interviews

4.3.1. Results of Teachers' Interviews

(10) high school English teachers were asked several questions concerning the assessment of writing and feedback. Most of the questions were derived from the items of the questionnaire to make sure of the consistency of the teachers' answers. The questions of the interview mostly concentrated on teachers' practices regarding the assessment of writing and the use of feedback. Their responses were written down and then analyzed by the researcher in an attempt to explore teachers' practices in assessing the writing skill. The most frequent responses could be summarized in the following points:

- 1-Feedback and the strategies used in dealing with students' errors.
- 2-Number of compositions given to students.
- 3-Supervisors' comments and training courses on writing.
- 4-Scoring approaches used in assessing writing.
- 5-Samples of assessed compositions.

First, teachers had several responses concerning feedback and the strategies used in assessing students' compositions. A significant number of teachers (7) indicated that they concentrated on global errors whereas local errors were underlined or even neglected. One of them said that he omitted global errors and wrote their correction instead. Another teacher added that in assessing students' written work, more emphasis should be given to content. He said, *'In assessing students' writing, we should concentrate on content rather than form (grammar). This is because our students are given several exams in grammar.'*

Two teachers explained the way they used in assessing writing. They said that they assessed their students' written work according to their students' level. Teacher (1) said, *'With students in the scientific stream, I only put a question mark where the error exists, but with students in the literary stream, I underline and correct the error'*. The other said, *'I look for errors in high level students' papers, and I look for good things in low level students' papers'*.

In terms of teachers' comments, they stated that they used two kinds of feedback oral and written. As for the written comments, they said that they used the following positive comments: 'You can do better.', 'May God bless you', 'Nice', 'You can add more ideas', 'Why', 'What is this', and 'Seen'. One of them added that she wrote the date in addition to these comments. Another one suggested that negative comments should be minimized because they might have some bad effects on students. He said, *'We should avoid writing a big number of red marks on students' papers because these marks are discouraging'*.

As for the oral feedback, one teacher indicated that he commented orally on students' papers while distributing papers in class. Another teacher said that he read samples of his students' written work in front of the whole class.

The second point was related to the number of compositions given to high school students. High school students were expected to be given about (10) compositions yearly. When teachers were asked about the number of compositions they gave to their students, they expressed different responses. (9) of the teachers mentioned that they gave 12 compositions yearly. One of them said that he did not give writing much interest because of time. This teacher justified his answer by saying, *'We do not have much time for teaching and assessing writing because the syllabus is very extended, and most of the time is given to grammar, reading and literature'*.

As for the supervisors' comments and the training courses on writing, teachers had a big agreement concerning this point. All the interviewed teachers said that they were not given

any training courses for teachers and supervisors never commented on writing in their visits. They said, *'Supervisors rarely talk, ask or comment on students' written compositions'*.

Teachers were also asked about the scoring approaches or standards they applied in assessing the written work of their students. Approximately (8) of the teachers indicated that they used the holistic approach in assessing their students' writing. Two teachers stated that they sometimes used the analytical approach with students' papers in the scientific stream only. They said, *'we use the analytical approach with high level students, but we use the holistic approach with low level students. The analytical approach is good with students in the scientific stream whereas the holistic approach is more suitable for students in the literary stream.'*

The majority of the teachers said that they avoided using the analytical approach because it was time consuming. Another teacher said that she avoided participating in assessing writing in the GSCE because the standards used were unfair and objectivity is impossible.

In the last stage of the teachers' interview, the researcher asked teachers to fetch some samples of evaluated written work. Teachers varied in their responses to the researcher's request. (4) of them apologized by saying that they gave the assessed compositions to their students. Two other teachers said that these compositions were special and no one could see them apart from their teachers. Four teachers, on the other hand, agreed to show the researcher some samples. When the researcher observed these samples, he found that there was a big contradiction with what they mentioned in their responses above. The researcher found that there was only one written and assessed composition in the students' writing copybooks although the interview was conducted in the end of the second semester of the academic year 2011-2012. The researcher also noticed that written feedback is not enough.

The only comments noticed were the mark, *seen* and sometimes the date, (for samples, see Appendix K).

4.3.2. Results of Supervisors' Interviews

The interviews with (9) English supervisors were carried out, so that the researcher could find out answers about high school English teachers' practices regarding the assessment of writing and giving feedback. Here are the interview questions and their answers:

1- In visiting your teachers, indicate acceptable and unacceptable practices concerning the writing assessment and feedback?

Supervisors had different views concerning the acceptable and unacceptable practices of teachers in relation to writing assessment and feedback. Some supervisors said that during their visits to schools, they noticed some acceptable practices. Others said that they did not notice any acceptable practices.

(5) supervisors noticed some acceptable practices for teachers in their visits concerning the teaching and the assessment of writing. One of them said, '*Some teachers write a model on the board and ask students to write a similar composition after cleaning the board.*'

One supervisor said that some teachers personalized the topics to facilitate the way of writing and to make sure that their students understand how to write the model of writing. In other words, they gave them guided compositions. Two of them said that some teachers gave samples and writing instructions to clarify what students were supposed to do. This was because if the learner understood the nature of the writing activity, he could write properly. Some teachers allowed their students to conduct error self-correction, i.e. students corrected their own mistakes to implant confidence in them and to help them avoid these mistakes in the future.

Concerning the unacceptable practices, two supervisors stated that some teachers corrected written compositions carelessly because they felt bored and hurried to correct their students' mistakes without any concentration. Another group of teachers concentrated on guided compositions and they did not give students an opportunity to expand their ideas or to express their own views regarding the topic about which they were writing. By doing this, they ignored the students, overemphasizing the teachers' role concerning the writing activities. Students had to stick to what so called 'guided writing' not to 'free composition'. So, students felt that they were restricted to certain and limited scope of writing and thus became unable to express their own ideas.

Five supervisors said that teachers usually avoided presenting writing activities because they did not feel confident of their teaching procedures as well as the assessment approaches they used. They did not follow a clear standard assessment approach and consequently they did not give accurate and effective feedback. The result was that students were given rough marks on their writing work. Thus, the subjectivity of the teacher intervened since the students' writings were not the same. That was why individual differences should be taken into consideration when scoring students' written work. One of them said, *'Teachers put their marks without writing any comments concerning the topic and the language mistakes.'*

One supervisor said that teachers dealt differently concerning the feedback on the mistakes of their students. Some teachers wrote the composition on the board and asked students to copy it without understanding what they were writing.

On the other hand, some teachers dealt only with some mistakes. They focused only on grammatical mistakes leaving content and united ideas without any correction or comment. So, the evaluation of the students' writing was not precise and did not cover all aspects of writing. Some teachers focused on punctuation; others on content or coherence and so on. Consequently, the assessment depended on individual work since only high level students

were involved in the writing activities, and low level students were neglected and their writing work was ignored. Another group of teachers wrote vague terms like 'seen' as a corrective feedback. They did not give meaningful remarks that might direct students in their future writings or comments that helped students to know their mistakes and how to avoid them in the future. In other words, they did not point out their weaknesses and strengths. Therefore, the students' scores were rough and not precise. Some low level students got high marks and some brilliant students got low marks. Thus, it should be agreed upon some good and fair criteria for assessing writing and teachers must stick to these criteria.

2- What is your opinion towards the criteria for the assessment of writing adopted by the Ministry of Education?

Regarding this question, seven supervisors commented that there were no criteria which were given to teachers at the school level. One of them said, *'I taught English for more than eighteen years. There were no criteria for the writing assessment'*.

So how the marks should be fair while the scores standards were not found. Six supervisors expressed their opinions towards the scoring criteria in the GSCE. One of them said that the criteria were good, but they did not focus on fluency. Instead, they only focused on content and grammar. Another supervisor said that in the GSCE, the Ministry of Education only gave teachers the distribution of marks to be given for the writing skill, but teachers did not apply it. He said, *'It is an arbitrary one and lacks the main components of acceptable criteria'*.

The majority of the supervisors interviewed said that the assessment criteria adopted by the Ministry of Education should be modified to be fair enough.

3- Do teachers follow the scoring standards given to them?

Most of the teachers did not follow the scoring standards given to them. According to (8) of the supervisors, teachers ignored these standards and invented their own scoring criteria instead. Hence, the subjectivity of teachers intervened in the evaluation of the students' compositions. Consequently, their marks were arbitrary because of the lack of criteria for writing evaluation.

In addition, the standards given to teachers did not reflect the reality of the students' ability in the writing because they did not diagnose the strengths and the weaknesses of the students in the writing skill. Thus, these standards affected students' writing and gave them inaccurate marks. One supervisor said, '*Teachers rarely follow these standards because the personal side often comes to the scene*'.

4- Why do you choose standard/s in particular?

Regarding the fourth question, two supervisors said that they chose these standards in particular because they covered most of the writing difficulties. On the other hand, five supervisors said that these standards were not chosen and not negotiated because they were imposed by the Ministry of Education. The rest of the interviewed supervisors believed that:

a-The standards were clear and effective because they were the most suitable and helpful for the distribution of scores.

b-These standards helped teachers to identify individual differences between students.

c-When students at school were familiar with these standards, they helped them practice self-correction and peer-correction.

5-Do you use the same standards every year? Why?

Concerning the fifth question, four supervisors said that they used the same standards every year for the following reasons:

a-They were not free to choose their own.

b-They had common understanding.

c-They were mostly known and realistic.

On the other hand, three supervisors gave no answer for this question.

6- Have you ever given teachers any training courses in assessing writing and giving feedback? If yes, how often?

Concerning the sixth question, six supervisors said that they did not give teachers any training courses in assessing writing and giving feedback. However, they were planning to give them such courses in the future. On the other hand, one supervisor said that he had given novice teachers training courses in evaluation and measurement in general. Another supervisor said that he gave teachers training courses about how to teach writing, not how to assess it. A third supervisor said that he usually gave instructions about assessing writing in individual meetings with his teachers.

7- When writing your teachers' reports, do you usually write comments on assessing writing and giving feedback? Give samples of these comments?

In answering this question, supervisors were divided into two groups. The first group said that they usually wrote comments when the lesson they attended was about writing. In this case, they wrote comments such as: *'You should read and assess your students written work well. You should underline the errors and ask students to correct them'*.

The second group said that they did not write any comment about assessing writing and giving feedback. One supervisor from this group said, *'I have never observed a writing lesson. Writing is a forgotten or neglected skill'*.

Most of the teachers tried to avoid teaching writing in the presence of the supervisors because it was a productive skill and students faced great difficulty in dealing with it.

4.4. Summary

This chapter presented the results of the study. It included the results of the two parts of the questionnaire, the results of the documents, and the results of the interviews. The following chapter will include the discussion of the results, the conclusion, the suggestions and the recommendations.

Chapter Five

5. Discussion, conclusion, suggestions and recommendations

This chapter includes the discussion of the results. Suggestions and recommendations to teachers, students, parents, decision makers and researchers for further research.

5.1 Discussion

Here is the discussion of the results:

Question (1): To what extent do high school English teachers practice assessing writing and giving feedback for their students' written work?

Research on this question shows that the mean score of high school English teachers' practices in assessing writing and giving feedback is (2.98) which means that the teachers' practice regarding the assessment of writing and giving feedback is medium. It also means that writing assessment is not highly emphasized by high school English teachers. This finding could be attributed to the weakness of the students in the writing skill. This weakness is also reflected in Bright and Mc Gregor (1977) who point out that teachers from all over the world talk about high school pupils who can't put three words together, and can not even write the simplest sentences. This result could also show that high school teachers did not give much importance to teaching and assessing writing. The writing skill holds only 13.3% from the total mark of English in high schools. It should be indicated here that the total mark for English is (150) both in school and the GSCE. The mark is distributed as follows: 20 marks for writing, (13.3 %), 35 marks for language (23.4%), 40 marks for reading (26.6%), 20 marks for literature (13.3%) and 35 marks for vocabulary (23.4%). The researcher believes that the Ministry of Education needs to raise the portion of marks to the writing skill.

Question (2): What are the most frequent practices of high school English teachers in assessing writing and giving feedback?

Results concerning the most frequent practices of high school English teachers in assessing writing and giving feedback show different responses. The teachers' responses regarding the (20) Items of the first part of the questionnaire on practices show (4) levels: very high, high, medium and low. On the one hand, the most frequent practice with a mean score of (4.21) is represented by Item (20) (see Appendix A): *I often explain the writing standards for my students so that they become aware of them and consequently avoid making mistakes.* This Item comes at the first position with a very high degree. Second, Item (11): *I sometimes feel that I lose my ability to remain consistent after reading some of the students' papers,* comes in the second position with a high degree and with a mean score of (4.17).

The above mentioned results reveal the teachers' recognition of the importance of assessing their students' writing according to specific writing standards. They strongly agree that their students are to be informed about these standards before assessing them. This positive practice is beneficial for both teachers and students. As for teachers, it helps them to be consistent and therefore give reliable scores. As for students, being aware of the standards may greatly help them avoid making mistakes.

But this finding seems to be contrasting with teachers' response to Item (11) mentioned above. Losing the ability to remain consistent can only happen when teachers assess their students' written work without relying on specific standards. This explanation is also supported by the teachers' response in the open-ended questions and in the interviews. About (34) of the teachers confirm that they did not use the assessment instructions mentioned in the teacher's book. Another (12) teachers said that they did not use any standards because the

Ministry of Education had never given these standards, and if they did, using these standards might impede their students' performance in producing free compositions.

On the other hand, the items which come in the last position with a low degree are represented by Items (15) and (1). Item (15): *The writing assessment criteria I use at school are similar to the criteria given by the Ministry of Education*, has a mean score of (1.97). Item (1): *Teachers are not given training courses in assessing writing*, comes in the last position with a low degree and with a mean score of (1.82).

The preceding results show that the criteria used at schools are not similar to those given by the Ministry of Education in the GSCE. This means that this is a very clear defect in the Ministry's practices regarding the assessment criteria either given to teachers at schools or in the GSCE. The writing standards are supposed to be the same, so that teachers and students would become aware of them in both levels.

Teachers also show their dissatisfaction with the absence of training courses for assessing writing. They strongly agree that they are not given such courses. This result shows teachers' awareness of the importance of these courses.

In sum, teachers seem to have clear contrasting responses in regard to their assessment practices. There seem to be tension and conflict between their beliefs and their assessment practices. This result is similar to the results of the study conducted by Baik (2008) in Australia which also reveals teachers' tension and conflict in their assessment practices.

Question (3): What is the extent of high school English teachers' perceptions towards assessing writing and giving feedback?

The research findings show that the mean score of high school English teachers' perceptions towards the assessment of writing and giving feedback is 3.10 which means that the teachers' perceptions towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback is

medium. This finding could be attributed to the same reasons mentioned in the discussion of question (1) above.

Question (4): What are the high school English teachers' perceptions in regard to the assessment of writing and the use of feedback?

Results concerning the most common perceptions of high school teachers concerning the assessment of writing and the use of feedback were various. The teachers' responses regarding the (20) Items of the second section of the first part of the questionnaire on perceptions show (3) levels: high, medium and low. Items 32, 26, 40, 25 and 27 represent the high level of perceptions. The statements which show the medium level of perceptions are represented by Items 35, 30, 37, 33, 22, 23, 28, 24, 36, 38 and 31. The Items which come in the last position with a low degree are represented by statements 29, 21, 34 and 39.

As we can see above, the majority of the items are medium. Only (5) items are given a high degree and (4) Items come in the last position with a low degree. In order to give clearer picture of the results on this question, the researcher is going to discuss two items for each level.

First, teachers highly agree on Items (32) and (26). The mean score of Item (32) is (3.94) with a standard deviation of (0.91). Teachers believe that effective writing and effective teaching are integrated. This means that teachers have a positive attitude in response to this statement. They agree that there is a big relation between effective teaching for the writing skill and its assessment. In other words, the more we effectively teach writing, the more we effectively assess it. Item (26) comes in the second position. This Item has a mean of (3.94) and with a standard deviation of (0.95). Teachers show their agreement on this Item. They believe in concentrating on global errors that impede communication rather than local

errors. The result seems to be in contradiction with Jacobs' et al (1983) standards which focus on both global and local errors (see Appendix G).

Second, teachers are uncertain and are unable to decide on Items (35) and (30). The mean score of Item (35): teachers' impressions, experience, and training play a considerable role in the writing assessment, is (3.37) with a standard deviation of (1.06). The mean score of Item (30): the writing exercises included in the textbook are not sufficient for high school students, is (3.22) and with a standard deviation of (1.12). The result of both Item (35) and Item (32) seems to be surprising. Teachers show that they do not recognize the importance of experience and training in the writing assessment process. They do not also have the ability to decide whether the number of writing exercises included in their students' textbooks are enough or not.

More surprising results are shown in items (9) and (1). The mean score of item (9): *evaluating coherence and cohesion is difficult*, is (3.52) with a standard deviation of (1.09). The mean score of Item (1): teachers must be given training and practice on writing assessment, is (2.44) with a standard deviation of (0.93). Teachers do not agree that evaluating cohesion and coherence is difficult. Similar to Item (35) above, teachers underestimate the importance of training and practice in writing assessment.

In sum, teachers show unexpected responses concerning their perceptions on writing assessment and feedback. On the one hand, they were not able to decide on clear statements concerning the assessment writing process. On the other hand, they expressed their disagreement on positive statements which were approved by several linguists as shown in the literature.

The researcher believes that this result concerning the teachers' perceptions could be attributed to the following reasons:

1-Teachers did not seriously answer the items of the questionnaire. They answered the items of the questionnaire randomly and without accurate concentration on each item.

2-The absence of the effective writing teaching strategies made teachers unable to make their decisions on the statements of the questionnaire.

3-Teachers' concentration on teaching grammar neglecting the writing skill and its evaluation was another reason for this result.

4-The limited role of the Ministry of Education in organizing workshops and compulsory training courses on teaching and assessing the writing skill was yet another considerable reason.

Question (5): What are the most appropriate guidelines for evaluating the writing skill of high school students in Palestine?

In response to this question, teachers showed various contrasting opinions which could be outlined as follows:

1-Some teachers focused on content and the mechanics of the language. They believe that conveying ideas is more important than worrying about grammatical mistakes.

2-Other teachers thought that students' written work should be evaluated according to specific criteria which include good handwriting, neatness, mechanics, cohesion, coherence, grammar and vocabulary.

3-Others said that they avoided using the analytical approach because it is "time consuming" (Perkins 1983, Weigle 2002)

4-Some teachers said that the appropriate guidelines or approaches were determined according to the level of the students. With high school level students, the analytical approach is the most appropriate whereas they prefer to use the holistic approach with low level students or with students in the literary stream.

5-A big number of teachers assure that any writing assessment approach should focus on both form and meaning because they are integrated.

These controversial points of view of teachers towards the approach that should be used in assessing high school students' written work are due to the following reasons:

- 1-Lack of experience and training for the teachers.
- 2-Lack of clear criteria for assessing writing at schools.
- 3-Lack of supervision on the writing skill.
- 4-Ignorance of the writing skill by several teachers.

In sum, teaching and assessing the writing skill seem to be a problematic area for EFL teachers. It is ignored by many teachers who are rarely trained or given clear instruction or guidance on how to teach and assess the writing of their students.

The researcher believes that the most appropriate approach for evaluating writing is the analytical approach of Jacob (1983) which is considered as one of the best known and widely used scale in EFL. (Francis, (1977), Adams,(1981), Weigle, (2002).

Question (6): What comments do supervisors provide teachers in regard to their practices in assessing writing ?

Research on this question shows controversial results. In response to Item (4) of the questionnaire about practices (In their reports, supervisors usually write comments on writing assessment and feedback), teachers show a high degree of agreement on this Item with a mean score of 3.86. In contrast, (9) of the teachers interviewed confirmed that supervisors never commented on writing in their visits to teachers. One of them said: "*Supervisors rarely talk, ask or comment on students' written compositions.*"

Furthermore, when supervisors were asked the question (When writing your teachers' reports, do you usually write comments on writing assessment and feedback?), they

confirmed that they did not write any comments about writing assessment and feedback. This is because according to them, they never observed a writing lesson and writing is a forgotten and neglected skill.

In order to achieve a clear answer for this question, the researcher investigated (60) reports written by English supervisors. The findings of this investigation showed that there were no comments noticed in relation to writing.

This conclusion could be attributed to the following reasons:

- 1-Teachers avoided teaching writing in the presence of their supervisors.
- 2-Teachers were confident and sure of the approaches they used in teaching this skill.
- 3-Many teachers and supervisors confirmed that the writing skill is neglected especially at primary level.
- 4-Most teachers prioritized the teaching of reading comprehension and language rather than the writing skill.
- 5-Supervisors focused their comments only on the lesson they attend.

To summarize, it becomes obvious that there are lack or even rare comments from the English supervisors side on writing and writing assessment. The researcher believes that it is unfair to neglect this central skill in our schools. Therefore, teachers, supervisors and the Ministry of Education hold part of the responsibility on regard to this neglect. Teachers who did not focus much on this skill, should pay more attention and awareness towards it. Supervisors also hold another part of the responsibility of asking teachers about the written work of their students. At the end, the Ministry of Education is not excluded from holding part of responsibility by providing supervisors with beneficial instructions concerning the evaluation of writing in an attempt to solve all the problems of this significant skill.

Question (7): What kind of writing corrective feedback is used by 11th and 12th grade teachers?

In response to this question, teachers showed different contrasting reactions. These reactions can be summarized as follows:

1-The mean score of teachers' response on Item (6) (I usually give written comments in addition to oral ones on students' papers) is 2.42 which means that teachers' comments on students' written work is low. A similar result is also found on teachers' response on Item (14) (In assessing my students writing, I only give the mark in addition to words like good, very good, excellent...etc. The mean score for this Item is 2.39. This result could be attributed to the general ignorance of the writing skill. It could also be due to the fact that assessing and giving feedback for writing is time consuming. Sommers (1982) cited in Ferris (2009) found that written commentary on students papers "consumes the largest proportion of teachers' time".

2-In response to the open-ended questions of the questionnaire, two teachers said that they concentrated on general comments avoiding writing specifically about the problematic areas of their students. The result matched with Sommers cited in Ferris (2009) who said that "teachers' comments were largely generic, rather than text-specific".

3-Some teachers said that they commented on their students' written work by writing symbols. They identify their students' errors by writing 'sp' for spelling 'pp' for prepositions 'wo' for word order and so on. The idea of using symbols is supported by Chandler (2003).

4-In the teachers' interview, some teachers said that they used written and oral comments. As for the written comments, they said that they used positive comments like: 'nice', 'you can do better', 'add more ideas'.....and so on. As for the oral feedback, some of them said that they discuss their students' papers while distributing them in the class.

5-In the supervisors' interview, most of them confirmed that there was a big neglect of using feedback among high school English teachers. One of them said: *"Teachers do not follow clear assessment standards and consequently, they don't give accurate and effective feedback"*.

Question (8):How often do high school English teachers receive training courses in assessing writing and feedback?

Results on this question showed that the mean score of Item (1) on practices (Teachers are not given training courses in assessing writing) is (1.82) which means that the majority of teachers strongly agreed that have received no training courses in assessing writing. As for the teachers' response to Item (21) of the perceptions (teachers must be given training and practice in assessing writing), the mean score for this Item is (2.44) which means that about 50% agree on the importance in training in the assessment of writing. This finding agrees with (McIntyre, 1993, Weigle, 1994, 1998, Wigglesworth, 1993) who emphasize the importance of training in minimizing the differences between raters and in increasing self-consistency.

Results from the teachers' interview show that all teachers confirmed that they received little or no training courses on writing assessment. In response to the question in the supervisors interview (Have you ever given teachers any training courses on writing assessment?), supervisors said that they did not give teachers any training courses on the assessment of writing. Two of them said, *'we give novice teachers training courses in evaluation and measurement in general'*.

It now becomes clear that there are different responses in regard to the training courses for writing assessment. On the one hand, teachers assured the importance of holding training courses, and on the other hand, they strongly confirmed that they never received such courses.

Supervisors who could not carry out such courses independently supported teachers in their point of view.

As a matter of fairness, the researcher and his colleagues experienced some training in assessing writing. Teachers who evaluate writing in the GSCE are chosen according to their experience. Before they start the assessment process, they are given about an hour training on how to assess students' papers. It should be indicated here that (20) high school English teachers are involved in this training. Each one of them is supposed to assess (20) compositions. When they finish, they write their scores with their names and the number of papers on the blackboard. In the final stage, teachers with the help of the supervisor and the head of the assessment committee open a discussion of the results in an attempt to achieve reliable scores.

No one can deny that this kind of training is beneficial. However, this training is insufficient and it does not include and benefit all the teachers. Consequently, the researcher believes that it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education to organize training courses by the help of experts in this area and for all the English teachers.

5.2. Conclusion

The study discussed in this paper examined high school English teachers' perceptions and assessment practices for the writing skill in Palestine. The findings the study however, shed some light on issues concerning the assessment of high school academic writing. In general, the findings show that there are tensions and conflicts between what teachers believe about their assessment of their students' written work and how they actually do in the process of grading and marking the writing skill. The study could be concluded in the following points:

1-Teachers' practice regarding the assessment of writing and giving feedback was medium. It was below the level expected by the Palestinian Ministry of Education.

2-Teachers' writing assessment practices were controversial.

3-High school English teachers' perceptions towards the assessment of writing and the use of feedback was also medium which meant that teachers were unable to decide on the Items of the questionnaire.

4-Significant relationship between both the means of high school English teachers' practices and their perceptions regarding the assessment of writing and giving feedback was noticed. This meant that the higher the degree of practice was, the higher the attitude towards was, and vice versa.

5-The most appropriate approach for evaluating the writing skill of high school students in Palestine was the analytical approach. It was also seen that the Palestinian writing guidelines are closer to the analytical approach of Jacobs' et al (1983). However, some of the Palestinian guidelines needed some modification.

6-Supervisors' reports rarely included comments on teachers' practices concerning writing assessment and giving feedback.

7-Very few comments were given by high school English teachers as a corrective feedback on their students' written work in the school level in particular.

8-Teachers were not given any kind of training courses on assessing writing and using feedback by the Ministry of Education.

5.3. Suggestions and recommendations

Based on the results of the study and the above- mentioned discussion, the following points are recommended and suggested to teachers, students, decision makers, parents and further research.

5.3.1. Teachers

1-Teachers should explain to their students the criteria which are going to be used in assessing their essays.

2-Teachers should not use discouraging comments such as bad, careless and be more careful.

3-Teachers should be aware of the important role of assessing their students' writing.

5.3.2. Students

1-Students should not worry too much about their mistakes because mistakes are inevitable and one can learn from these mistakes.

2-Students should realize the importance of practice as it helps in making ones writing perfect.

3-Students should realize the important role of reading which can be considered as a vital key for good writing.

4-Students should learn how to evaluate their own written work (self-correction).

5.3.3. Decision makers

1-Decision makers should organize training courses and workshops and make teachers' attendance compulsory.

2-The ministry should, with the help of high school teachers and supervisors, create a more reliable analytical standards for the writing assessment at school and in the GSCE.

3-More emphasis should be given to teaching writing as well as its evaluation.

4-More grades should be given to writing skills.

5-Supervisors are supposed to investigate the teachers' practices in writing and to comment on them no matter the lesson they attend is.

6-Teachers should train their students on pair assessment and self assessment.

7-Training courses for both English supervisors and teachers should be held to train them on the use of the writing assessment standards and giving effective feedback.

8-High school teachers should be given the chance to participate in designing the writing assessment criteria.

5.3.4. Parents

1-Parents should follow their children's progress in writing by intensifying their visits to school.

2-Their encouragement and continuous assistance may help their sons and daughters overcome the difficulty of writing.

3-Parents may help their children by organizing or offering special courses on writing. These courses may help in improving their children's writing.

5.3.5. Further Research

Finally, the researcher would like to suggest the following issues for further research:

1-Further research can investigate the techniques used in teaching the writing skill in Palestine.

2-The characteristics of a good writer and the qualities of a good piece of writing.

3-The investigation of the techniques that should be used in responding to students' writing.

4-The investigation of the intra-reliability for the same teacher's scores and the inter-reliability for all the teachers' scores.

5-The investigation of the effectiveness of giving writing feedback.

6-The variables that may affect the teaching and the evaluation of writing.

5.4. Summary

This chapter presents the discussion of the results in the light of the research questions. It also includes some suggestions and recommendations for teachers, students, decision makers, parents and further research. Finally, the researcher hopes that this work will contribute in away or another in revising and reconsidering the process of teaching writing and its evaluation in the Palestinian high schools.

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Appendices

Appendix A Questionnaire

Dear colleagues,

This questionnaire will be used for an MA thesis at Hebron University. It is designed to investigate the perceptions and the practices of Palestinian high school English teachers towards the writing assessment and feedback .

You don't need to write your name, and your answers will be confidentially kept and will be used for research purposes only. Therefore, you are kindly requested to respond sincerely, honestly and thoughtfully.

Please, read the following statements and indicate on the scale from (1-5) how much you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate number in the box.

1- Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Uncertain (no opinion) 4-Agree 5- Strongly Agree

Thank you for your cooperation.

Student: عقاب علي عبد ربه الشراونه-

Part One: Practices and Perceptions

1- Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Uncertain (no opinion) 4-Agree 5- Strongly Agree

The First Section: Practices

N.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	Teachers are not given training courses in assessing writing.	1	2	3	4	5
2	When scoring students' writing, I usually refer to the assessment criteria.	1	2	3	4	5
3	In assessing my students' papers, I am usually affected by my overall general impression.	1	2	3	4	5
4	In their reports, supervisors usually write comments on writing assessment and feedback.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I give students all the writing exercises included in the textbook.	1	2	3	4	5
6	I usually give oral comments in addition to written ones on the students' papers.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I use assessment standards as effective guidelines to plan writing instruction and adjust assessment practices.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Teachers usually focus on the mechanics rather than the other aspects of language.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I have tolerance for grammar errors in the students' essays.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I frequently refer to the other essays I have read whenever possible for maintaining consistency in my assessment.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I sometimes feel that I lose my ability to remain consistent after reading some of the students' papers.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I often underline the students' error and correct it.	1	2	3	4	5
13	After reading about 15 essays, I tend to read selectively (not reading each and every sentence) .	1	2	3	4	5
14	In assessing my students' writing, I only give the mark in addition to words like good, very good, excellent...etc.	1	2	3	4	5
15	The writing assessment criteria I use at school is similar to the criteria given by the Ministry of Education.	1	2	3	4	5
16	In assessing my students' writing, I don't give grammar much importance because grammar has already been evaluated in other sections in the exam.	1	2	3	4	5
17	In assessing my students' writing, I frequently refer to their errors by underlining the errors without correcting them.	1	2	3	4	5
18	I assess my students' writing according to my supervisors' notes.	1	2	3	4	5
19	I am interested in teaching the writing skill rather than being busy with the assessment approaches of writing.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I often explain the writing standards for my students so that they become aware of them and consequently avoid making mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5

The Second Section: Perceptions

1- Strongly Disagree 2-Disagree 3-Uncertain (no opinion) 4-Agree 5- Strongly Agree

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
21	Teachers must be given training and practice in writing assessment.	1	2	3	4	5
22	The criteria used to assess writing are clear, consistent and easy to be applied and so, teachers always stick to them.	1	2	3	4	5
23	The results of the writing assessment can help teachers revise their practices in teaching writing.	1	2	3	4	5
24	Writing assessment should be based on well known reliable standards.	1	2	3	4	5
25	The criteria used to assess writing are derived from the purpose of writing.	1	2	3	4	5
26	A good assessment approach focuses on global errors (i.e. errors of content and organization) that impede communication of meaning.	1	2	3	4	5
27	The assessment approach tends to focus on all language features such as grammar, style, organization, content, coherence and mechanics	1	2	3	4	5
28	The assessment criteria enable teachers to provide accurate evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5
29	Evaluating coherence (unity of thought, logic and structure) and cohesion (connection of ideas, arguments and statements) is difficult.	1	2	3	4	5
30	The writing exercises included in the textbook are not sufficient for high school students.	1	2	3	4	5
31	Writing assessment is useful as it gives good feedback for both students and teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
32	Effective writing assessment and effective teaching are integrated.	1	2	3	4	5
33	The assessment scoring standards help bridge the gap between experienced raters' scores and inexperienced raters' scores.	1	2	3	4	5
34	Working for long hours scoring students' papers may affect the accuracy of the assessment.	1	2	3	4	5
35	The teachers' impressions, experience and training play a considerable role in the writing assessment.	1	2	3	4	5
36	Teachers avoid using the analytical approach in assessing writing because it is time consuming.	1	2	3	4	5
37	Inexperienced teachers usually give unreliable scores and take more time to assess writing.	1	2	3	4	5
38	Scoring students' papers at school is different from scoring their papers in the General Secondary Certificate Examination	1	2	3	4	5

39	Standards should reflect the Ministry's' goals.	1	2	3	4	5
40	High school teachers should be given the chance to participate in designing the writing assessment criteria.	1	2	3	4	5

Part Two: Open-end questions for teachers

1-What scoring approach or approaches do you usually use when evaluating your students compositions? In other words, how do you evaluate your students' compositions

2-Do you follow the instructions mentioned in the teachers book

3-When evaluating your students' compositions, do you focus on form or meaning?

4-What is your opinion about the assessment of writing of high school students on both levels, the school level and the ministry's level?

5-What are your suggestions and recommendations for improving the writing assessment process?

Please, add any other important comments:

Appendix B

Samples of teachers' answers on the open-end questions

A – What scoring approach or approaches do you usually use when evaluating your students compositions? In other words, how do you evaluate your student' compositions?

1. The main points and ideas, punctuation mark, spelling and grammatical mistakes.
2. I usually evaluate my student's compositions according to some criteria, such as form, meaning, style, coherence and cohesion.
3. When evaluating my students' compositions, I usually focus on the general design of the whole paper.
4. The standard.
5. I correct their errors and put marks.
6. Well, meaning-based assessment. If the writing conveys convincing ideas, it's ok.
7. I put grades (A, B, C.....)
8. By circling mistakes concerning grammar, spelling and structure, then giving them the correct form.
9. According to the form, style focusing on language and the meaning of the essay.
10. It depends on the grades. 12th grades differ from other.
11. According to the cohesion of the text, (i.e.) the grammar, style of the text, vocabulary. All parts of the composition should be connected together.
12. No answer.
13. No answer.
14. I follow the grade criteria, sentence construction, using connectors, relevant ideas, supporting details.
15. When I usually score the writing activities, I focus on grammar, content, coherence.
16. I usually read every sentence in the essay. I mark and correct serious mistakes.
17. I should read the students' writing; correct the wrong form or meaning. Be sure there were no grammatical mistakes.
18. I usually give overall general important impression when evaluating my students composition. But if the grammatical errors, coherence, unity... etc. are too many, I take that into account.
19. I concentrate on the mechanics and the content.
20. I used the symbols of writing (e.g.) pp, sp, ww, and I focus on the idea rather than the grammatical errors.

21. In general, I use the analytical approach; I take it in consideration every thing that relates to writing.
22. I have my own way of dealing with writing.
23. I generally focus on meaning, i.e. as long as meaning is communicated; I consider a student's writing acceptable.
24. I focus on the outline of the essay and the correct ideas with correct punctuation marks.
25. Teachers correct student's mistakes, students re-write their compositions again. Student's compositions should include general ideas, correct sentences, etc.
26. I focus on the meaning of the sentences with correct punctuation marks.
27. I usually focus on the language, essay body and key words.
28. I divided students into two types, good and bad – in the case of good students I focus on all things, but in the case of bad students, I focus on just writing.
29. I pay attention to the unity of the topic, structure and thoughts (coherence and the form of the topic as well as coherence).
30. I usually refer to the assessment criteria.
31. There is no composition in the elementary classes.
32. Depending on many things; such as the ideas, the lay out, the structure of sentences, grammar, punctuation... etc.
33. How dose the pupil divide the paragraph. How to write topic sentence correctly and how all the paragraph corresponds with topic.
34. I look for the frame, appearance, introduction, body paragraphs, main ideas, supporting ideas conclusion, connectors and grammar.
35. By writing notes and marking.
36. Depend on ideas, structure, punctuation lay out of sentences.
37. It depends on the level and the topic. In some compositions, it is necessary to evaluate the writing as a whole. In others, we have to correct the grammar mistakes, spelling ... etc.
38. I underline the area of difficulty with correcting the errors and give feedback to the Ss.
39. I evaluate their compositions according to the unity of the subject, grammatical mistakes, spelling mistakes and structure.
40. Reading their papers, underling the errors, correcting them.
41. Reading the writing, underline the errors, put or write initials for some common words like C. for capitalization / P for punctuation and so on...
42. It depends on what is required from the composition.
43. I usually have an overall view, and then I do care for language/ grammar mistakes... language organization.../ content and form.

44. When I evaluate my students, I usually focus on the general lay out, theme topic, content, punctuation marks, spelling and structural mistakes and so on.
45. Focus on the meaning and the form.
46. We focus on the form and the meaning.
47. Just pass or failure.
48. In evaluating my students' composition I usually correct spelling as well as grammar mistakes by using symbols refer to each item.
49. No answer.
50. According to a list of evaluation that includes good handwriting, neatness, punctuation marks, coherence and cohesion, grammar and vocabulary used.
51. According to their ideas, then according to coherence and cohesion.
52. Through using student self assessment, Teacher correction and sometimes depends on the level the students.

B – Do you follow the instructions mentioned in the teacher's book?

- 1- Sometimes.
- 2- Yes, I do. So I ask my students to give me an outline or starter sentences in order to introduce the first paragraph, then I give them a chance to select information from the provided ideas and write notes and I pay attention to correct their spelling....
- 3- No, I don't.
- 4- Sometimes.
- 5- Sometimes I follow the instructions, but I often find them useless.
- 6- Never.
- 7- Sometimes.
- 8- Sometimes, I follow them but in general I use other methods that are suitable to the subject and kind of students we have.
- 9- Yes, I do
- 10- Sometimes I follow the teacher's book especially when I want to give marks for certain writing.
- 11- Sure, instruction in the teacher's book is the guideline that teachers always follow in explaining lessons.
- 12- No answer.
- 13- Sometimes.
- 14- Hardly do me.
- 15- I don't follow these instructions exactly. I have to take the students level into consideration.
- 16- No, I don't. I don't read them at all.
- 17- Yes, I do.

- 18- No, I don't often follow them because, as teachers, we don't usually teach the students this instruction.
- 19- Not really.
- 20- Sometimes yes and sometimes no.
- 21- I rarely use the instructions in the TB. I usually depend on the topic it and me try to take the ideas from the students themselves.
- 22- Not always.
- 23- No, I never follow them because following them may impede student's performance in producing composition.
- 24- Sometimes.
- 25- Sometimes.
- 26- Sometimes.
- 27- Sometimes.
- 28- No.
- 29- I do, but usually I don't because, can't apply these instructions on all levels of students "levels are vary".
- 30- Yes, I do.
- 31- Sometimes.
- 32- Not exactly, some points may be considered and others may be left.
- 33- Not always.
- 34- I often follow them.
- 35- Sometimes.
- 36- Not always. It depends on the level of the class.
- 37- According to the writing itself and its topic.
- 38- Yes, I do.
- 39- Yes, I do but sometimes I should use other ways.
- 40- Of course.
- 41- Yes, of course
- 42- Yes, I do.
- 43- Not all the time, depending on the specific objectives and the level of the students.
- 44- Yes, I sometimes follow the instructions mentioned in the teacher's book and I add my own criteria. I think the teacher should be creative.
- 45- Yes.
- 46- Yes.
- 47- Yes.
- 48- Not always, I sometimes use the instructions and other times, I use my own assessment.
- 49- Yes.
- 50- Yes, I do. I add it them from my enrichment material.
- 51- Sometimes.
- 52- Not always, but I make use of the points mentioned in it.

C- When evaluating your students' compositions, do you focus on form or meaning?

- 1- Sometimes.
- 2- In general, when I evaluate my students' compositions, I always focus on both the form of the composition and the meaning of the whole paragraph.
- 3- I only focus on meaning.
- 4- Both.
- 5- I focus on both of them.
- 6- Just meaning.
- 7- On both.
- 8- I focus on meaning rather than form though form is also important and sometimes it affects meaning.
- 9- Both, form and meaning.
- 10- I often focus on both, especially with commercial students (e.g.) letters, CV... Etc...
- 11- We focus on both the form and the meaning, both complete each other.
- 12- No answer.
- 13- on form.
- 14- on both form and meaning.
- 15- I usually focus on both form and meaning because they are interlocking with each other.
- 16- I usually focus on both.
- 17- On form and meaning.
- 18- I focus on both form and meaning because if the student focus on form without accounting the meaning it means he doesn't understand what is he writing, and the form means that the student is organizing his writing.
- 19- Both with more emphasis on form.
- 20- I focus on meaning than the form.
- 21- I usually focus on both form and meaning but I sometimes ignore the form because I focus on form on language lesson.
- 22- On both, but I gave more attention to meaning.
- 23- I focus on meaning in the first place. I give little important to form.
- 24- on the meaning.
- 25- I focus on meaning and in some cases the form.
- 26- Meaning.
- 27- on the meaning.
- 28- Meaning.
- 29- Actually I focus on both, but I give meaning a little bit more concentration.
- 30- I focus on meaning.
- 31- on form.
- 32- on both.
- 33- Both of them.
- 34- Yes, I do. The connection in ideas is very important in order to give a good

idea.

35- I usually focus on form and meaning.

36- Both.

37-both of them but the meaning is more important in some topics.

38-form and meaning.

39- Form.

40- Meaning is the 1st step then the form.

41- I focus on the form as well as meaning.

42- I focus on form and meaning.

43- Meaning, ideas, theme, and then the form that is inter-reliant.

44- When I evaluate my students, I usually focus on both form and meaning.

45- Both.

46- Both.

47- Both.

48- I focus on form and meaning, because focusing on form teaches students to be organized and tidy. Also meaning is essential in developing writing skills.

49- I usually focus on meaning.

50- On both but meaning to me is more important.

51- Form is important and meaning, but form is taking a lot of care.

52- I usually focus on both, I can't rely on one side, and each completes the other.

D- What is your opinion about the assessment of writing of high school students on both levels, the school level and the ministry level?-

1. The level is not good in general.
2. I have no ideas about the difference between them.
3. Not comprehensive.
4. Consistent.
5. No answer.
6. First students should be aware of assessment techniques, so that they could excel their writing. Secondly, the ministry should adopt one technique or another. No they here no ideas.
7. I think they are insufficient.
8. On the ministry level, we are more accurate because we have certain points to consider and we also have specific criteria.
9. No opinion.
10. At schools, teachers tend to be more accurate in assessment than ministry level.
11. I have no ideas.
12. No answer.
13. No answer.
14. The school level is more reliable than ministry.

15. I don't agree with this idea, students should be assessed at one level only.
16. Both of them are equal. Because I follow nearly the same criteria.
17. Students need to improve their writing, work hard to develop their writing skills.
18. I think both of them have the same difficulty, but the problem here is the weak level of the students.
19. Don't know.
20. I prefer to evaluate both levels in the same way.
21. The assessment of writing on the ministry's level is more flexible than the school one.
22. No answer
23. I think the same teacher follow the same way of assessment on both levels- school level and ministry's level. I don't like that way of assessment.
24. There is similarity on the criteria if outline and meaning.
25. No answer.
26. Focus on the meaning and the outline of the compositions.
27. School level is more accurate than ministry's level.
28. No answer.
29. I think in the school level the teachers should focus on assessment more and to suit feed back to students, while in the ministry' level we shouldn't follow analytical approach.
30. It needs to focus on.
31. No answer.
32. I think both are similar, I'm the same teacher who teaches and corrects at school or at tawjihi
33. There is no difference.
34. We do the ministry's level as simple as the school one in order to make it easy for students as possible.
35. Their writing is very poor and need to improve it.
36. No answer.
37. I think the guided writing that gives to students makes the lack of experiences that we face; the students have not the ability to write by themselves.
38. They are the same.
39. They are the same.
40. There is no gap between the evaluations.
41. I see that it is not evaluated correctly.
42. It should be changed.
43. It's not accurate and consistent. Each time the ministry concentrates on different criteria and these criteria are not provided to school teacher.

44. I think it is good but it needs improvement.
45. We use the standard used in ministry's level of education.
46. We use the standard used in the ministry's level.
47. Average.
48. I think it is not sativa because teachers do not stick to these instructions of assessment, they use their own assessment.
49. It's applicable.
50. Both are traditional and based on the correctors impressions and feelings.
51. It doesn't affect both levels.
52. The school level should go on with the ministry's level.

E- What are your suggestions and recommendations for improving the writing assessment process?

1. Students showed incense, their vocabulary and write short paragraph.
2. I think that we should give the students a chance to write about general topics away from the topics on their textbook.
3. The ministry with the help of English experienced teachers, supervisors and administrative should cooperate in designing more comprehensive writing standards.
4. Giving much more attention in lower levels.
5. I think students should write about general topics and write freely.
6. Writing in English is as bad as writing in Arabic, students should be taught writing in early ages. Thus, they should start learning about assessment intermediate levels. In secondary schools they will be better.
7. No answer.
8. Encouraging high school students to read. Because I believe that who reads a lot will be a good writer. I also believe that students should be encouraged to express themselves orally.
9. Using simple topic.
10. Courses in assessment should be given especially for novice teachers. Supervisors have to include their comments with notes in assessment of writing.
11. I suggest that teachers can give students simple topics other than those in the text book.
12. No answer.
13. No answer.

14. Give more practice for writing, increase number of lessons to each class and teachers should have given training for writing skills.
15. To give students more and more practice inside and outside the classroom and focus on free writing.
16. My suggestion is to focus on the ideas and meaning more than grammar.
17. Students need more practice, and the supervision of their teachers. Students should work on writing with their teachers at first not alone.
18. I think the ministry should specify a separate chapter for writing skills including all the instructions related to the rules of writing, and having the students write in the classroom as they write an exam.
19. Giving training to teachers.
20. I suggest to use the notes in assessment and to focus on the new ideas.
21. I recommend holding more courses to improve the writing assessment. Moreover, I recommend attending some perfect lesson for some experienced teachers.
22. We should give importance to the skills itself in the early stages. There should be single reliable assessment criteria. I think that students at school level should be encouraged to write whatever occurs to their minds without attaching importance to grammar mistakes. Grammar will gradually and spontaneously be okay.
23. I think that students at school level should be encouraged to write whatever occurs to their minds without attending importance to grammar mistakes. Grammar will gradually and spontaneously be okay.
24. To correct with the whole class by using LCD.
25. As I notice literary stream students aren't able to write compositions. They should be given only gaps to fill-simple words to add. Their assessment of writing should be parallel and equal to the assessment of other branches.
26. To use project and LCD in order to correct their compositions.
27. The more you write the more you will be a good writer.
28. No answer.
29. To give teachers training courses on assessment writing.
30. No answer.
31. No answer.
32. I think more practicing by the students of writing. Giving them additional writing. Besides, giving the teachers ways and methods of how to teach writing to their students.

33. The teacher should give additional practicing for writing.
34. I see that the main problem in writing is the student's weakness in the writing skills and in learning vocabularies, not in the method of teaching.
35. No answer.
36. Additional practicing of writing.
37. First the writing exercises must be presented in the earlier levels, (grades), avoiding the guided writing in every exercise, choosing topics more interesting to students.
38. Teachers must be given training and practice in writing.
39. Reading is the origin of writing so students must read.
40. No answer.
41. The teachers are to give importance to writing skill.
42. Variation of exercises guided and not guided.
43. The ministry should distribute the good criteria for assessment, and teachers should be followed up by their supervisors.
44. To do so, I think that teachers should be given training assessment on writing assessment and this should be theoretical and practical.
45. No answer.
46. No answer.
47. To follow certain criteria.
48. It is necessary to train students in elementary levels to the instruction of correcting mistakes. Train teachers to use a standard style in correcting mistakes.
49. Students should read a lot and write a lot.
50. Holding workshops for teacher in service from time to time. Encouraging students by grades and assessment expressing.
51. To make less topic, e.g. in al-tawjihi (four topics). The teacher should do it at classrooms and check, read some student's work.
52. To improve students abilities in writing and built their awareness towards the way of correction or the criteria used in evaluation.

F- Additional comments:

1. Teachers shown encourage students to learn new words and to develop their language.
2. No comment.

3. Writing should be giving more attention. This important skill is totally neglected at school.
4. To consider the methods of teaching writing in the lower levels.
5. No comment.
6. Dear friend, this is a great subject. But not easy. Take care and good luck man.
7. No comment.
8. Writing is greatly neglected in our schools because teachers find it difficult to deal with it. For this reason we hardly find students who have the ability to write so they tend to cheat in Al-tawjihi Exam. I recommended that teachers should focus on writing from the very beginning even in the first stages.
9. No comment.
10. With my best wishes for you to pass and succeed. God may help in assessing your MA thesis. I hope that your supervisor. I follow your approach in assessing in Al-tawjihi.
11. No comment.
12. No comment.
13. No comment.
14. No comment.
15. No comment.
16. Writing skills should be more organized in the textbooks.
17. No comment.
18. I think the organization of the text books given to the students doesn't fit with our student's abilities, that's why it should be changed.
19. No comment.
20. The students have a big weakness in writing and expressing their ideas in writing composition.
21. In general writing is ignored in schools especially on primary school.
22. We can't talk about the assessment of writing since most schools do not practice writing at all.
23. Students semantic and grammar errors should be corrected by the teacher directly; the errors should be orally explained to the students.
24. Encourage student to read extra stories to be summarized by their own language.
25. No comment.
26. No comment.
27. No comment.
28. No comment.
29. I think teachers should be given more time to assess writing.
30. No comment.
31. No comment.

32. I hope you will be able to have the MA degree and you will benefit both teachers and students of how to develop English writing at our schools.
33. No comment.
34. No comment.
35. No comment.
36. No comment.
37. The most important issue is that our students don't like English Language as a second language. As a result, they don't have enough vocabulary which helps them to build their writing.
38. High school teachers should be given the chance to participate in designing the writing assessment criteria.
39. I think we should have get students to be familiar with "stories" in order to try to write as good as possible. Teachers must have courses in teaching writing. Writing is the most complicated part of teaching and also it is the most complicated form for students also.
40. No comment.
41. No comment.
42. No comment.
43. I've noticed that most of the women teachers assess, evaluate and correct the composition topics much better than male teachers who neglect this skill and exclude it in many schools.
44. No comment.
45. No comment.
46. No comment.
47. No comment.
48. I think writing is the most difficult skill concerning teaching and assessing. Therefore, I hope that God will help you in completing this difficult project.
49. No comment.
50. I hope that this skill must take more attention and consideration from both teachers and students.
51. It's not important, that the writing should be related to units.
52. No comment.

Appendix C

Questionnaire: Arabic Version

استبيان

أعزائي المعلمين:

هذا الاستبيان سيستعمل لرسالة ماجستير في جامعة الخليل. تم تصميمه لكي يقوم بفحص وجهات نظر وممارسات معلمي اللغة الانجليزية للمرحلة الثانوية في فلسطين اتجاه تقييم الكتابه والتغذية الراجعة.

علما بأنه لا داعي لكتابة الاسم وستحفظ الإجابات لإغراض البحث فقط. ولهذا يرجى الاجابه بصدق وتمعن.

اقرأ العبارات التالية ثم اختار الأرقام (1-5) لكي تبين كم أنت متفق أو غير متفق مع كل بند بوضع دائرة حول الرقم المناسب.

وشكرا على تعاونكم

الباحث: عقاب علي عبد ربه الشراونه

1-غير موافق بشده 2-غير موافق 3-غير متأكد(لا رأي) 4-موافق 5-موافق بشده

الجزء الأول: الممارسات وجهات النظر

1-غير موافق بشده 2-غير موافق 3-غير متأكد(لا رأي) 4-موافق 5-موافق بشده

ا:الممارسات

الرقم	البند	1	2	3	4	5
1	لا يعطى المعلمون أية دورات تدريب في عملية تقييم الكتابه.	1	2	3	4	5
2	عند تقييم كتابه الطلبة ارجع عادة إلى معايير التقييم.	1	2	3	4	5
3	عند تقييم أوراق الطلبة اتاثر بالانطباع والنظرة العامة للموضوع.	1	2	3	4	5
4	يكتب المشرفون في تقاريرهم تعليقات على طريقة التقييم والتغذية الراجعة.	1	2	3	4	5
5	أعطي الطلبة كل تمارين الكتابه الموجودة في الكتاب.	1	2	3	4	5
6	أعطي عادة تعليقات كتابية وشفوية على كتابات الطلبة.	1	2	3	4	5
7	استعمل معايير التقييم كوسيلة تساعدني في التخطيط وتعديل الممارسات الخاطئة في التقييم.	1	2	3	4	5
8	يركز المعلمون عل الميكانيكيات أكثر من جوانب اللغة الأخرى.	1	2	3	4	5
9	اصبر على أخطاء الطلبة في القواعد الموجودة في كتابات الطلبة.	1	2	3	4	5
10	ارجع دائما إلى الأوراق التي تم تصحيحها لكي أحقق الثبات في عملية التقييم.	1	2	3	4	5
11	اشعر أحيانا إنني افقد القدرة على الاستمرارية في الثبات بعد قراءة عدد من أوراق الطلبة.	1	2	3	4	5
12	عادة ما أضع خط تحت الخطأ ثم أقوم بتصحيحه.	1	2	3	4	5
13	عند قراءة خمسة عشر موضوعا تقريبا إميل إلى القراءة الانتقائية بمعنى إنني لا أقوم بقراءة كل جملة.	1	2	3	4	5
14	عند تقييم أوراق الطلبة أضع العلامة ثم عبارات مثل جيد وجيد جدا وممتاز.	1	2	3	4	5
15	المعايير المتبعة لتقييم الإنشاء في المدرسة تشبه تلك المعمول بها في الوزارة.	1	2	3	4	5
16	لا أعطي القواعد اهتماما كبيرا لأنه يوجد هنالك امتحان خاص بالقواعد.	1	2	3	4	5
17	عند تقييم الطلبة أضع خطأ تحت الخطأ ولا أقوم بتصحيحه.	1	2	3	4	5
18	أقيم الطلبة في الكتابه بناء على تعليمات المشرفين.	1	2	3	4	5
19	اهتم بتدريس بمهارة الإنشاء أكثر من الانشغال بطرق التقييم وتعقيده.	1	2	3	4	5
20	عادة ما اشرح للطلبة معايير الكتابه حتى يكونوا مدركين لها وبالتالي يتجنبون الوقوع في الأخطاء.	1	2	3	4	5

ب: وجهات النظر

الرقم	البند	1	2	3	4	5
21	يجب أن يعطى المعلمون تدريبا وممارسة بما يتعلق بتقييم الكتابه	1	2	3	4	5
22	المعايير المستعملة في تقييم الكتابه واضحه, ثابتة وسهله التطبيق ولهذا يلتزم المعلمون بها دائما.	1	2	3	4	5
23	نتائج تقييم الكتابه تساعد المعلمين في مراجعة ممارساتهم فيما يتعلق بتدريس الكتابه.	1	2	3	4	5
24	تقييم الكتابه يجب أن يعتمد على معايير معتمده و معروفه.	1	2	3	4	5
25	المعايير المستعملة في تقييم الكتابه مشتقه من الهدف من الكتابه.	1	2	3	4	5
26	طريقة التقييم الجيدة تركز على الأخطاء الكبيرة التي تؤثر في المعنى.	1	2	3	4	5
27	أفضل الطرق هي التي تركز على كل جوانب اللغة مثل القواعد والترتيب والأسلوب والمحتوى والترابط واستعمال الميكانيكيات.	1	2	3	4	5
28	اشعر بان استعمال معايير التقييم تجعل من عملية التقييم أكثر دقة.	1	2	3	4	5
29	تقييم عملية ربط الأفكار صعبه.	1	2	3	4	5
30	تمارين الكتابه الموجودة في الكتاب ليست كافيه لطلاب المرحلة الثانوية.	1	2	3	4	5
31	تقييم الكتابه مفيد لأنه يزود المعلمين والطلاب بالتغذية الراجعة ويساهم في تحسين عملية تعلم وتعليم الكتابه.	1	2	3	4	5
32	تقييم الكتابه الفعال مرتبط ارتباطا قويا بتعليم الكتابه.	1	2	3	4	5
33	معايير تقييم الكتابه تجسر الهوة بين العلامات التي يضعها المعلمون ذوو الخبرة والمعلمون الأقل خبره.	1	2	3	4	5
34	العمل ساعات طويلة في تقييم كتابه الطلبة قد يؤثر في دقة التقييم.	1	2	3	4	5
35	خبرة المعلمين وانطباعهم وتدريبهم يلعب دورا كبيرا في عملية التقييم.	1	2	3	4	5
36	يتجنب المعلمون استعمال الطريقة التحليلية في تقييم الكتابه لأنها تستغرق وقتا طويلا.	1	2	3	4	5
37	المعلمون الذين ليس لديهم خبره في تقييم الكتابه يستغرقون وقتا طويلا في عملية التقييم ولا يعطون علامات معتمده أو دقيقه	1	2	3	4	5
38	عملية التقييم داخل المدرسة تختلف عن عملية التقييم في الوزاره(امتحان دراسة الثانوية العامة)	1	2	3	4	5
39	معايير التقييم الجيدة تعكس أهداف الوزاره وأهداف المنهاج الفلسطيني.	1	2	3	4	5
40	يجب أن تعطى الفرصة لمعلمي المرحلة الثانوية للمشاركة في عملية تصميم معايير تقييم الكتابه.	1	2	3	4	5

الجزء الثاني :أسأله موجهه للمعلمين

1-ما هي الطريقة أو الطرق التي تستعملها عادة عند تقييم مواضيع الإنشاء؟ بعبارة أخرى كيف تقييم كتابة

الطلبه؟

2-هل تتبع التعليمات المذكورة في كتاب المعلم؟

3-عند تقييم مواضيع الإنشاء للطلبة هل تركز على المعنى ام على التركيب؟

4-ما رأيك في تقييم الإنشاء للمرحلة الثانوية (1ث /2ث) على مستوى المدرسة وعلى مستوى الوزارة؟

5-ما هي توصياتك واقتراحاتك لتحسين عملية تقييم الكتابه؟

يرجى إضافة أية تعليقات أخرى.

Appendix D

Recommended Method , English for Palestine, Ministry of Education & Higher

Education(2005)

No.	Criteria	Level The overall mark(20)
1-	General communicative success	Between 1 and 5
2-	Accuracy of language, spelling and punctuation	Between 1 and 5
3-	Range and appropriacy of language	Between 1 and 5
4-	Fluency and text organization	Between 1 and 5
		Total

Appendix E

Scoring Criteria, Ministry of Education & Higher Education, (2010)

No. Of main items	Subdivision	Mark (total mark 20)
A-Ideas	1-correct ideas	2
	2-the sequence and the connection of ideas	2
	3-the connection of ideas with the subject	2
	4-paragraphing	2
B-Style	1-choosing the appropriate vocabulary	4
C-Language	1-follow the grammatical rules	3
	2- spelling	3
	3-Punctuation	2
		Total (20)

Appendix F

Composition scoring scheme and sample grades (Gaudiani 1981)

(1) Grammar/vocabulary:

A=fluent with moments of elegance, few errors

B=comprehensible, some errors

C=substantial and significant errors

D=one or more blocks to communication

F=unintelligible

(2) Stylistic technique:

A=skilled use of syntax in terms of content, variation in syntax

B=clear, appropriate, and sophisticated syntax

C=errors, but attempts at sophistication and appropriateness

D=errors and/ or inappropriate syntax

F=garbled syntax

(3) Organization:

A=well-organized paragraphs, use of clear topic and summary sentences, convincing, easy to follow

B=good evidence of structuring of paragraphs(perhaps an unwieldy use of patterns use of patterns of organization)

C=some attempts at organization, but few topic, development, summary sequences

D=hard to follow, organization undermines intelligibility

F= no evidence of planning in structure of paragraphs

(4) content:

A=significant, interesting, appropriate, well thought out, appropriate to assignment

B=generally good work, but facts may be unsupported, or repetitions or clichés may be apparent

C=careless development of data relevant to content

D=no effort to work to make content significant to composition

F=incoherent or widely inappropriate content

A well written but poorly organized composition will be graded, for instance, as follows:

Grammar/vocabulary B=3

Style A=4

Organization C=2

Content B=3

$12 \div 4 = 3$ or B

Or, a student who writes unsophisticated syntax in perfect Spanish with little thought about organization or content may receive a poor grade despite "perfect" grammar.

Grammar/vocabulary A=4

Style D=1

Organization D=1

Content F=0

$6 \div 4 = 1.5$ or D+

On the other hand, students who tried hard to write sophisticated sentences, use logical connectives, and organize a well thought out content intelligently may make grammar/vocabulary errors.

Grammar/vocabulary C=2

Style B=3

Organization B=3

Content A=4

$12 \div 4 = 3$ or B

Gaudiani (1981) pp20-21

Appendix G

Source: J.B. Hughey, D.R. Wormuth, V.F. Hartfiel, and H. L. Jacobs. Testing ESL

Composition: Principles and Techniques. Rowley, MA: Newbury House 1983, pp. 213-14

ESL COMPOSITION PROFILE			
STUDENT	DATE	TOPIC	
SCORE	LEVEL	CRITERIA	COMMENTS
CONTENT	30-27	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: knowledgeable. Substantive. Thorough development of thesis. Relevant to assigned topic.	
	26-22	GOOD TO AVERAGE: some knowledge of the subject, adequate range, limited development of the thesis, mostly relevant to the topic, but lacks details.	
	21-17	FAIR TO POOR: limited knowledge of subject, little substance, inadequate development of the topic.	
	16-13	VERY POOR: does not show knowledge of subject, non-substantive, not pertinent, or not enough to evaluate.	
ORGANIZATION	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: fluent expression, ideas clearly stated/ supported, succinct, well organized, logical sequencing, cohesive.	
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: somewhat choppy, loosely organized but main ideas stand out. Limited support. Logical but incomplete sequencing.	
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: non-fluent, ideas confused or disconnected, lacks logical sequencing and development.	
	9-7	VERY POOR: does not communicate, no organization, or not enough to evaluate.	
VOCABULARY	20-18	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: sophisticated range, effective word/ idiom choice and range, word from mastery, appropriate register.	
	17-14	GOOD TO AVERAGE: adequate range, occasional errors of word idiom/ choice and usage but meaning not obscured.	
	13-10	FAIR TO POOR: limited range, frequent errors of word/ idiom form, choice, usage. Meaning confused or obscured.	
	9-7	VERY POOR: essentially translation. Little knowledge of English vocabulary, idioms, word form, or not enough to evaluate.	
LANGUAGE USE	25-22	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: effective complex constructions. Few errors of agreement. Tense, number. Word order/function. Articles. Pronouns and prepositions.	
	21-18	GOOD TO AVERAGE: effective but simple constructions, minor problems in complex constructions, several errors in agreement, tense, number, word order/ function, articles, pronouns, prepositions but meaning seldom obscured.	
	17-11	FAIR TO POOR: major problems in simple/ complex constructions. Frequent errors in negation, agreement, tense, number, word order/ function articles, pronouns, prepositions, and or fragments, run-ons deletions, meaning confused or obscured.	
	10-5	VERY POOR: virtually no mastery of sentence construction rules, dominated by errors, does not communicate or not enough to evaluate.	
MECHANICS	5	EXCELLENT TO VERY GOOD: demonstrates mastery of conventions. Few errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization and paragraphing.	
	4	GOOD TO AVERAGE: occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing but meaning not obscured.	
	3	FAIR TO POOR: frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. Poor hand writing, meaning confused or obscured.	
	2	VERY POOR: no mastery of conventions, dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, handwriting illegible, or not enough to evaluate.	

Appendix H

Interview Questions Given to Supervisors and their Answers

1-In visiting your teachers, indicate acceptable and unacceptable practices concerning the writing assessment and feedback?

A-Acceptable practices:-

- 1- a-Teachers give students enough time to write before assessing.
b-Teachers give students a control role in writing activities.
- 2-No acceptable practices.
- 3-Teachers identify some errors.
- 4-a-Some teachers write a model on the board and ask students to write a similar composition after cleaning the board.
b-Some teachers personalize the topics, that is if the topic is about the Italian food, some teachers ask students to write about Palestinian food.
- 5-They neglect assessing coherence and cohesion.
- 6-Some teachers give writing samples and writing instructions.
- 7-No acceptable practices at all. Most practices are unacceptable.
- 8-a-Giving students writing samples.
b-Peer correction is sometimes used.
- 9-No acceptable practices.

B-Unacceptable practices:-

- 1-a-Teachers correct written compositions blindly.
b-Teachers concentrate on guided composition only.
c-Teachers ignore the writing activities.
d-They ignore the students' role. Writing activities are teacher-centered not student-centered.
- 2-a-In general, teachers avoid presenting writing activities when supervisors visit them because they don't feel confident of their teaching procedures as well as their assessment approaches.

b-When teachers assess writing, they don't usually follow a clear assessment approach and they don't give effective feedback.

3-a-Teachers give general writing comments.

b-Teachers write their marks without writing any comment concerning the topic and the language mistakes.

4-Some teachers just write the composition on the board, and ask students to copy only.

5- a-Teachers deal only with some mistakes.

b- They focus on grammatical errors and mechanics.

c-They ignore content.

6-a-Teachers write the writing samples to avoid checking or assessing.

b-If they evaluate students' writing, their assessment will not be precise.

c-In writing, teachers depend on individual work. In other words, only good students are involved in the writing activities.

7-a-We rarely find teachers who are interested in the writing skill.

b-Teachers focus the sentence and the paragraph level rather than the essay level.

c-Real writing practice is not enough.

d-Answers are given to students by writing them on the board. So, teachers assess their own answers.

e-Most students copy the writing task from the guides at home.

8-a-Teachers write vague terms like "seen" as a corrective feedback.

b-Some teachers fill students' papers with red marks.

9-Teachers write only "seen" as a corrective feedback.

2-What is your opinion towards the criteria for the assessment of writing adopted by the Ministry of Education?

1-Unclear answer.

2-Generally speaking, the assessment of writing which is adopted by the Ministry is good and effective.

3-They need to be modified to be fair enough.

4-I taught English for more than eighteen years. There was no criteria for the assessment of writing.

5-Unclear instructions are given to the teachers. So, teachers behave differently. No follow up activities to remedy students' weakness in writing.

6-It is an arbitrary one and lacks main components of acceptable criteria.

7- The Ministry of education only gives us the distribution of marks to be given for the writing skill. The criteria given in Tawjihi is not applied by the teachers.

8- The criteria don't focus on fluency.

9- The criteria are good.

3-Do teachers follow the scoring standards given to them?

1-No, the weakness of the students in this skill may affect teachers' scoring.

2-Most of the teachers don't follow the scoring standards given to them.

3-Most of them don't follow the scoring standards, except for some distinguished male teachers and some female women teachers.

4-No answer.

5-Most of them don't follow the scoring standards given to them. They prefer to assess holistically.

6-The standards given don't reflect the reality of the students ability in writing.(They don't diagnose the strengths and the weaknesses of the students in the writing skill).

7-Teachers don't give attention to the whole skill.

8-The rarely follow these standards because the personal side often comes to the scene.

9-Yes.

4-Why do you choose this or these standards in particular?

1-Because they cover most of the writing difficulties.

2-From my experience, I found that using clear standards is very effective and fair because I find them suitable.

3-Standards are not chosen. They are given by the Ministry. They are not negotiated.

4-No answer is given.

5-They think that these standards are the main points to emphasize on.

6-So as to identify individual differences between the students.

7-To make all teachers stick to similar standards.

8- They focus on accuracy.

9- Because these standards may lead students to self correction.

5-Do you use the same standards every year? Why?

1-No, because students levels change.

2-No, I usually try to use the standards that suit the level of students, but I stick to the main points.

3-Sometimes, I use the same. When I feel the students still have weakness in certain points. Sometimes I tell the teachers to change.

4-No answer is given.

5-Generally, the same standards are used.

6-Yes, because they are mostly known and common.

7-Yes, because I am not free to choose my own.

8-Yes, we use them because they have a common understanding.

9-Yes, in order to be realistic.

6-Have you ever given teachers any training courses in writing assessment and feedback? If yes, how often?

1-No.

2-Yes, once, especially novice teachers.

3-I used to tell them about that in visits.

4-No, I haven't but I am planning to give them about such a topic in the future.

5-Yes, but rarely.

6-Yes, in evaluation and measurement training courses. His happens occasionally and mainly to novice teachers.

7-Yes, once a year. We give them training courses about how to teach writing not how to assess it.

8-Very often especially in individual meetings.

9-Yes, every year for a one day training course.

7-When writing your teachers' reports, do you usually write comments on writing assessment and feedback? Give samples of these comments?

1-Yes, we usually do that. For example, you should read and assess your students work well. You should underline the errors and ask students to repeat them.

2-Yes, I do. I try to give comments on writing especially when I find that the teachers don't give suitable feedback to their students.

3-Yes, comments are very important in order to guide the student.

4-Yes, comments about spelling.

5-Yes, only comments about spelling, ideas and unity.

6-Most of the teachers avoid teaching writing in front of the supervisors because it is a productive skill and students find great difficulty in writing. Some teachers skip this skill.

7-I have never observed a writing lesson. Writing is a forgotten skill.

8-Only if the lesson is on writing.

9-Sometimes , especially when I attend a writing lesson.

Appendix I

The Ministry's Writing Exam (2010-2011)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ
Writing Exam(2010-2011)

Composition:- (20 points)

Write about 120 words about *One* of the following topics.

1-Write a short essay of three paragraphs about "**My favorite place**".

Follow the following patterns and make use of the given ideas:

Paragraph one: introduce the place and say where it is.

Paragraph two: describe the place, use positive adjectives and phrases
(interesting, fascinating, unusual, good, the best, pleasant, enjoyable, relaxing
friendly, quiet, exciting, lively, beautiful, famous, wonderful.

Paragraph three: why you like it, how it is different from other places.

2-Write a letter to the Ford Company Manager, Mr Munir, PO Box 551,
Tulkarm, applying for the post of mechanic engineer, advertised in Al-Quds
Daily Newspaper. Your name is Khalid Ali and you live at 40al-wehda Street,
Al-Remal, Gaza.

(Talk about your experience, languages, qualifications and other skills)

Appendix J
Samples of Supervisors' Reports

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

سلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي الإدارة العامة للإشراف والتأهيل التربوي		مديرية التربية والتعليم: جنوب الخليل المدرسة: - ذ. بيت عوارث رقمها الوطني ٢٧١١٢٠٦٤
---	---	--

تقرير الزيارة الإشرافية رقم (١)

المعلم: خالد محمد السويطي	رقم الهوية: 983 023 086	تاريخ التعيين: 1/8/1999
المؤهل العلمي: B.A	التخصص: E	المبعت: E

الصف: الثالث علوم إنشائية	الشعبة: (ب)	الموضوع: Modal Verbs	الحصة: (٤)
---------------------------	-------------	----------------------	------------

أهم الأمور الإيجابية

مراجعة الدرس السابق . استخدام أوراق العمل لتعزيز الفاهيم المختلفة . استخدام التقويم التكويني .
--

أهم الأمور التي تحتاج إلى تطوير

إعطاء مزيد من الأمثلة لتوضيح المادة العلمية المقررة . الابتعاد عن الكتابة باللقطة العربية على السبورة .
--

تحصيل الطلبة

هنالك ضعف تراكمي لدى الطلاب .

الإجراءات التي يتفق المشرف والمعلم على تنفيذها

إسراء الطلاب الأقل تحصيلًا في مغالبات الحصة .

توصيات المشرف التربوي لمدير/ة المدرسة

متابعة تنفيذ البنود السابق .

التاريخ: ٢٠٠٩/٣/٢٥	اسم المشرف وتوقيعه: غير لثاني حيايم	اسم راعي الإشراف وتوقيعه: مصطفى مدير التربية والتعليم
--------------------	-------------------------------------	---

السلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية
وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي
الإدارة العامة للإشراف والتأهيل التربوي



مديرية التربية والتعليم: جنوب الخليل
المدرسة: ذكور بيت عوا الثانوية
رقمها الوطني: ٢٧١١٢٠٦٤

تقرير زيارة إشرافية (خاص بالمشرف التربوي)

اسم المعلم/ة	رقم الهوية	المؤهل العلمي	التخصص	تاريخ التعيين	
عقاب علي عبد ربه الشراونه	٩٧٢٢٢٤٢٠	بكالوريوس	انجليزي	١٩٩٧-٠٨-٢٥	
تاريخ الزيارة	رقم الزيارة	المبحث	الموضوع	الصف	الشعبة
٢٠١٠-٠٩-٠٨	١	انجليزي	Unit Four /conditional sentences	الثاني الابدئي	ب

وصف مجريات الزيارة:

المحتوى التعليمي (صحة المادة العلمية، سلامة اللغة ومناسبتها، التسلسل في عرض المادة، عرض المعلم محتوى الحصة ٣ conditional sentences Type من خلال امثلة على السبورة وشرح القواعد اللازمة للحل المليم. استخدم المعلم لغة صفية مناسبة.

استراتيجيات التدريس (استدعاء الخبرات السابقة للطالب و ربط المحتوى التعليمي بالحياة العملية وإدارة الموقف التعليمي...)

ركز المعلم على الاعداد والتكرار لبعض الاساسيات اللازمة لفهم الدرس . نوع المعلم في الجمل المستخدمة لتشمل كافة الاشكال المتوقعة.

استراتيجيات التقويم (التنوع في التقويم وأدواته...)

وظف المعلم التقويم التكويني وصحح اخطاء الطلاب اولا باول . نوع في الاسئلة الصفية المستخدمة. مستوى الطلاب متدني في المادة وكذلك في اساسيات اللغة.

القيم والاتجاهات (اتجاهات المعلم نحو المهنة، علاقته بزملائه في المبحث والمدرسة وعلاقته مع الطلبة...)

حرص المعلم على اشراك اكبر عدد ممكن من الطلاب بالحصة ولكن الضعف المنفتح لدى الطلاب حال دون المشاركة المطلوبة.

امور أخرى (الاعمال الكتابية، ميلارات ابداعية، الدورات والايام الدراسية...)

المزيد من الاهتمام بالتحضير اليومي.

التوصيات للمعلم:

الحرص على استمرار مراجعة اساسيات اللغة مع الطلاب لتحسين مستواهم والارتقاء بهم الى مستوى المادة. عمل المزيد من اوراق العمل الخاصة بموضوع الدرس وما شابهه من مواضيع اساسية اخرى.

التوصيات لمدير/ة المدرسة

التركيز على طلاب هذا الصف وملاحظة مدى التحسن لديهم.



اسم ر.ق. الاشراف وتوقيعه
أ. محمد رصرص
التاريخ: 2010/12/14

اسم المشرف وتوقيعه
د. محمود طمیزی
التاريخ: ٢٠١٠-٠٩-٠٨

Appendix K

Samples of Students' Written Work Gathered from Schools

5

I am writing in response to both ^{Mari}
an Ahmad
recent letters about choosing an Arab city
as a host to the Olympic Game.
The Arab country I haven't held to Palestine
and I haven't because here not famous Palestine
I also ability of From City and he didn't
young children or you'd no play possibilities
of problem and effects of Palestine from
the ^{however} evacuation of Jews on the From day
you go to the Olympic in the Greece
I am not sure in Olympic game of Palestine

Bad writing

while

he closed

she

Writing
Almaged

Almaged is a small town near Dwar city (he have a ~~two~~ three schools and three mosques and many markets and ~~two~~ two meny market (he ~~has~~ has a good land to built in and he have a production of olive he have a oil machine and a major street he set in the middle of many towns in 1999 he cant have two mosque but after that he have mosque in 2002 he cant have three schools he was have two schools the Boy & schools and girls schools 7

the people in Almaged is good and have many science and technology man he loved his career and like his town



Writing Topic:-

The town of Al-Majd has had a long and important history. In ancient times, there were a few houses that did not exceed the twentieth house does not exceed the number of population at that time dozens of where he was Taash several families together in a house or a cave and this one speech before about thirty years old at most, where the majority of the population working in agriculture, where Kanu move on Animals (donkeys) and did not know the other subject for mobility.

3/5/2011

In the present, the situation changed because of science defined for the people has increased the number of population and houses where people become dependent on movement of the cars as they were working in the character variety and those who work in agriculture, a small percentage of the past, with one family owns more than a house and this indicates that the expansion

Appendix L
Samples of Students' Scored Compositions

«By The Name of God»

«Palestine»

My favorite place is Palestine, This land of great beauty and geographical variety lies at the crossroad of Asia and Africa and has therefore always been the meeting point of different societies and cultures. Remains are mainly from Canaanite, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic times, and they are found everywhere - in the lively but ancient cities, and at archaeological sites across the land.

• Palestine contain many cities like Jerusalem which the jewel of it, holy to the great monotheistic religions - Islam, Christianity and Judaism. At the heart of the famous old city with its high walls is the Dome of the Rock. This was built where Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) ascended to Heaven at night (Al-Isra' and Al-Miraj). The great, golden dome was built by the Umayyad Caliph Abdul Malik Ibn Marwan in AD 692. It ~~is~~ decorated abt of inscriptions and blue tiles, and most beautiful architectural treasures, this holy place has been visited by million over the-years. Although this advantage of it, Palestine occupied before about one century from the beginning is England, and secondary from the Israel, which made the Palestinians in diaspora ~~and~~ outside and put them in a many camps like Gan EL'helwa and Yarmok - etc, First intifada and second became a strang event which killed the palestines (Martyrs) and Prisoners,

We hope to come amon Binlar Salah - Etelin Liberated the land and ~~to~~ bring back the rights of we.

In short, Palestine is a wonderful destination for both tourists and pilgrims. It is not a large country.

Santiago Bernabéu

Santiago Bernabéu is the best place for me, which is lies in Spain particularly in the city of Madrid, and it is the stadium of Real Madrid club for play football, and I love it because it is a great place, and it is the most famous stadium.

Santiago Bernabéu is a huge place and it can be seen from above, and it can include places for 80,000 viewers, and when you enter you can see the big screen in the end of stadium, and it is more wonderful than any place, and I hope to visit it to try an unusual situation that includes interesting, exciting and enjoyable, and I expect if I visit it I will be pleased, and I must stop at this point that includes the ~~Dream~~ Dream Team (Real ^{now} Madrid) is the best team in the world it includes famous players one of them the best player he is Cristiano Ronaldo and I hope to meet him.

In the end I advise every body to visit Santiago Bernabéu to watch game to Real Madrid team, and the big hope some day watch game between Real Madrid and ~~Barcelona~~ Barcelona club, and in the important point that why I talk about Santiago Bernabéu? and I can answer this question because it is my favorite place.

My favorite place

L

My favorite place

My favorite place is Jerusalem

It spreads for us and it's lie in the central of west bank, and north of Bethlehem, south of Ramallah. It represents the capital ~~and~~ of Palestine and will be always.

Jerusalem has ably holy places for muslims such as. It also mosque and Dom of the rock, and for christians also for example church of sepulture and for Jerusalem like walling and there are many visitors.

~~Game~~

Appendix M

Permission of Distributing the Questionnaire and Conducting the Interviews

Ref.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الرقم: ٢٣ / ١١٤ / ٢٠١١

Date

التاريخ: ٢٠١١ / ٢ / ٦

السيد / مدير التربية والتعليم / وسط الخليل / المحترم

الموضوع: إجراء مقابلات مع معلمين وتوزيع استبيان

تحية طيبة وبعد،،،

أرجو من حضرتكم مساعدة الطالب "عقاب علي عبد ربه الشراونة"
لإجراء مقابلات مع معلمين ومعلمات وتوزيع استبيان في مدارسكم الموقرة. علماً بأن
هذا الإجراء هو أحد الأساسيات المبنية عليه رسالة الماجستير في برنامج الدراسات
العليا. (اللغويات التطبيقية).

وتجدر الإشارة بأن المقابلات والاستبانة ستستخدم لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط.

وشكراً على تعاونكم،،،

مهيب كلية الآداب


د. سلام الشروف

Ref.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الرقم: ٢٣ / ١١٦ / ٢٠١١
التاريخ: ٢٦ / ١١ / ٢٠١١

Date

السيد/ مدير التربية والتعليم / شمال الخليل /المحترم

الموضوع: إجراء مقابلات مع معلمين وتوزيع استبيان

تحية طيبة وبعد،،،

أرجو من حضرتكم مساعدة الطالب "عقاب علي عبد ربه الشراونة"
لإجراء مقابلات مع معلمين ومعلمات وتوزيع استبيان في مدارسكم الموقرة. علماً بأن
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العلوية، (اللغويات التطبيقية).

وتجدر الإشارة بأن المقابلات والاستبانة ستستخدم لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط.

وشكراً على تعاونكم،،،

عميد كلية الآداب

د. صلاح الشروف



الرقم: ت.خ./٣٠/٢٤/٧٦٩
التاريخ: ١٦ ربيع الثاني، ١٤٣٢
الموافق: الإثنين، ٢١ آذار، ٢٠١١

حضرة مديرة مدرسة المحترم/ة
تحية طيبة وبعد،،،

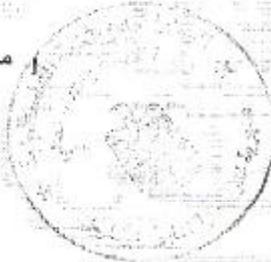
الموضوع: تسهيل مهمة

نهدىكم أطيب تحياتنا ونرجو تسهيل مهمة الدارس (عقاب علي عبد ربه الشراونة) والقادم من جامعة الخليل تخصص اللغة الانجليزية ومساعدته في إجراء مقابلات مع المعلمين/ المعلمات في مدرستكم وتوزيع استبانته المرفقة وهي بخصوص التطبيقات اللغوية في اللغة الانجليزية على أن يكون ذلك خارج نطاق الحصص الدراسية، وان لا يؤثر ذلك على سير العملية التعليمية.

مع الاحترام

أ. نسرين ياسر عمرو

مديرة التربية والتعليم



إحداثيات التعليم العام

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Palestinian National Authority
Ministry of Education & Higher Education

Directorate of Education
Southern Hebron



المسلطة الوطنية الفلسطينية
وزارة التربية والتعليم العالي
مديرية التربية والتعليم
جنوب الخليل

التاريخ: ٢٠١١/٣/٧م

الرقم: ج خ / ٤٨ / ٤٠٢

حضرات مديري ومديرات المدارس الثانوية المحترمين

المبحث: الدراسة الميدانية

الإشارة: كتاب جامعة الخليل رقم (م خ / ١٥ / ٢٠١١) بتاريخ (٢٠١١/٣/٦)

بعد التحية،،،

لا مانع لدي من توزيع استبانات الباحث "عقاب علي عبد ربه الشراونة" وتعبئتها من قبل معلمي اللغة الانجليزية في مدرستكم، بعنوان "تقييم الكتابة الانجليزية للمرحلة الثانوية من وجهة نظر المعلمين".

مع الأمل في تعاونكم

مدير التربية والتعليم
أبو هليل



توقيع الباحث:

قسم التعليم العام

م. ق. ج. ع. / ٢٢٨٣٣٦٦ / ١١٨

Appendix N

Mark distribution of 30 compositions scored by 20 high school English teachers using the holistic scoring approach, the Palestinian scoring approach and the TWE analytical scoring approach.

10			9			8			7			6			5			4			3			2			1			No.
A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	A	P	H	
13	10	15	4	5	7	12	14	15	12	16	16	7	16	12	5	4	8	16	17	10	16	18	17	6	4	10	8	10	12	1
14	15	17	4	3	5	10	9	16	12	11	12	13	12	10	5	3	10	14	12	13	16	16	18	6	4	10	11	10	14	2
10	13	11	5	4	7	11	14	13	11	9	11	11	13	8	6	5	7	13	11	16	17	16	18	5	4	7	14	10	16	3
16	17	16	3	6	10	16	17	18	17	18	19	15	16	17	5	6	8	10	10	13	19	19	19	6	8	12	13	15	17	4
12	10	15	4	6	8	12	13	14	10	15	16	6	15	11	5	4	9	16	16	10	15	18	16	5	3	9	7	9	11	5
14	15	16	5	6	8	17	16	17	15	16	16	15	16	16	7	9	10	14	15	16	17	17	18	4	7	10	14	10	15	6
15	15	17	5	6	6	13	14	15	16	17	18	14	15	16	8	8	9	13	14	15	18	18	19	6	9	13	11	9	12	7
12	12	14	4	5	6	17	16	16	15	15	16	15	16	8	8	6	7	12	12	16	18	18	17	5	4	7	8	16	16	8
11	13	11	6	4	7	16	16	17	16	16	19	14	15	16	4	5	9	12	12	13	18	18	18	5	7	12	10	15	16	9
15	17	16	4	6	6	16	15	13	15	15	10	12	14	14	5	5	8	13	13	16	17	18	19	4	9	11	8	10	12	10
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12	16	16	5	5	7	17	17	18	18	18	16	10	12	16	5	6	7	11	12	13	17	18	19	5	6	9	9	10	10	12
13	15	14	4	5	5	12	10	16	15	17	18	15	16	17	6	5	7	11	11	16	19	17	18	7	9	12	11	14	15	13
12	16	17	6	7	8	13	13	14	17	18	19	12	13	8	5	6	8	14	13	13	18	19	19	4	8	10	13	14	15	14
14	18	18	9	9	10	16	16	16	15	15	12	10	10	12	3	5	10	13	15	14	18	18	18	5	8	12	8	10	13	15
12	16	16	4	8	9	11	14	13	17	17	16	10	10	10	6	6	8	12	13	16	19	18	17	4	7	10	7	9	12	16
11	10	15	5	7	7	15	14	14	16	15	16	12	16	15	5	6	8	16	16	10	19	19	18	5	8	12	7	8	10	17
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14	15	17	4	8	7	16	16	18	17	17	18	14	14	18	4	6	6	15	18	16	16	18	19	4	6	9	10	12	12	20

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Arabic Abstract

ملخص باللغة العربية

دراسة ممارسات تقييم الكتابة لطلاب المرحلة الثانوية في فلسطين: دراسة نقدية

هذه الدراسة هي بحث تجريبي يركز على تقييم مهارة الكتابة في اللغة الانجليزية، بما يخص امتحان التوجيهي وطلاب الأول الثانوي في فلسطين. تحاول الدراسة أن تبين كيفية تقييم الكتابة من قبل معلمي اللغة الانجليزية. كما تحققت الدراسة من ممارسات ووجهات نظر معلمي المرحلة الثانوية بما يخص تقييم الكتابة لكل من طلاب الأول الثانوي والثاني الثانوي. وتهدف الدراسة أيضا إلى دراسة معايير وزارة التربية والتعليم لتقييم الكتابة للصفين المذكورين. هذا ويأمل الباحث أن يستفيد المهنيون الذين يعملون في مجال اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية كالمعلمين والمشرفين والإداريين والباحثين وواضعي المناهج من نتائج هذه الدراسة. ولإجراء هذه الدراسة، تم استخدام ثلاث أدوات، تضمنت استبيانًا يتكون من جزأين، وإجراء مقابلات مع بعض معلمي ومشرفي اللغة الانجليزية، وتقييم بعض مواضيع الإنشاء إضافة إلى التحقق من تقارير بعض المشرفين. وبشكل عام، أظهرت النتائج أن وجهات نظر المعلمين وممارساتهم اتجاه تقييم الكتابة واستعمال التغذية الراجعة كانت متوسطة. وتشير النتائج أيضا انه بالرغم من إدراك وزارة التربية والتعليم لأهمية تقييم الكتابة، إلا أن هذا الإدراك يبدو غير واضح في ممارسات المعلمين مما يعني انه بات من الضروري تنظيم دورات تدريبية لتقييم الكتابة والتغذية الراجعة.