

Motivational Changes and their Relationship to Academic Writing Development: A Longitudinal Study on a Sample of Cairo University Egyptian EFL Students^(*)

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Abstract

The aim of the present study is to examine the motivational changes of a sample consisting of 10 freshmen Egyptian EFL students over one academic year and to explore to what extent motivational changes predict L2 writing development. The ten students are of the same proficiency level (pre-intermediate to intermediate). They were enrolled in a class in the Department of English language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University. This research is a longitudinal multiple-case study. A mixed (both qualitative and quantitative) non-experimental exploratory design is adopted. Students' written essays were collected 11 times (twice a month) over one academic year (six months). The written essays were analyzed quantitatively in terms of fluency, accuracy, and complexity. Besides, a close-ended motivation questionnaire was administered 11 times (twice a month) over the academic year. Moreover, semi-structured individual interviews were conducted in the beginning and end of the academic year as a follow-up to support the quantitative findings of the motivation questionnaire. The results show that the ideal-L2-self is the students' stable strong motivator throughout the academic year. In addition to the ID, students turned out to be motivated by the Ought- to-L2 self by the end of the academic year. Attitudes towards the L2 experience proved not to be stable for 50% of the cases. The results suggest that motivational changes could predict the writing developmental paths of 70% only of the cases.

Keywords: Longitudinal multiple-case study, L2 writing development, motivational changes

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المخلص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى اكتشاف التغييرات التحفيزية وعلاقتها بعملية تطور الكتابة الأكاديمية لعينة تشتمل على ١٠ طلاب مصريين من جامعة القاهرة، كلية الآداب، قسم اللغة الإنجليزية. ينتمى طلاب العشر بنفس مستوى الكفاءة في اللغة الإنجليزية، وهو المستوى ما بين المتوسط وما قبل المتوسط. يعد هذا البحث دراسة طويلة لحالات متعددة اعتمدت الدراسة على المنهج المختلط الاستكشافي غير التجريبي. تم تجميع بيانات نوعية من مقالات يقوم الطلاب بكتابتها مرتين كل شهر (١١ مر) على مدى العام الأكاديمي حيث تم تحليل هذه المقالات كما من حيث ثلاثة معايير: الطلاقة والدقة والتعقيد اللغوي. تم تجميع بيانات كمية مرتين شهريا (١١ مر) على مدى العام الأكاديمي بواسطة استبيان يعمل على قياس الحافز بالطلاب. يحتوي هذا الاستبيان على أسئلة مغلقة النهايات. تم إجراء مقابلات شبه منظمة مع العشر طلاب في بداية ونهاية العام الأكاديمي كمتابعة وتدعيم للبيانات الكمية التي تم تجميعها بواسطة الاستبيان. أوضحت النتائج أن على مدى العام الأكاديمي، كانت الأسباب المحفزة للطلاب لإتقان الكتابة الأكاديمية باللغة الإنجليزية هي الوصول إلى الذات المرغوبة للفرد والتي يتمثل جزء منها في القدرة على الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية بشكل ممتاز. أما عن التغييرات التحفيزية التي حدثت للطلاب، فهي بالإضافة إلى الرغبة في الوصول للذات المرغوبة، كانت الذات المجتمعية التي يرغب المجتمع أن يرى الإنسان عليها هما الأسباب التحفيزية للطلاب لإتقان الكتابة الأكاديمية في نهاية العام. أوضحت النتائج أن مواقف الطلاب تجاه تجربة تعلم الكتابة الأكاديمية كانت متغيرة على مدى العام — ٠ % من الطلاب. وأظهرت النتائج أيضا أن التغييرات التحفيزية كان لها أثر على تطور الكتابة الأكاديمية — ٧٠ % فقط من الطلاب .

الكلمات المفتاحية: الدراسات الطولية متعددة الحالات، التغييرات التحفيزية، الكتابة باللغة الإنجليزية.

Motivation is one of the significant factors that influence the beginning as well as the sustainment of the L2 learning process (Farahani et al., 2020). Motivation is currently perceived as a dynamic construct that changes over time, that is from day to day, week to week, or even within a single classroom session (Dörnyei et al., 2014). The motivational system is dynamic and complex as a result of the interrelationships among its sub-components. For example, the demotivating or less enjoyable L2 experience may boost the students' anxiety which may cause the student's motivation to be externalized, that is, to be prevention focused. In other words, the student becomes motivated to study only for the sake of avoiding negative outcomes, such as fear of losing a good job opportunity or not passing exams. Furthermore, there are external risks outside the classroom which may de-motivate the student during the L2 learning process, such as lack of parents' support or encouragement to sustain learning, economical or psychological issues. These motivational changes may interact with the L2 proficiency over time causing fluctuation in the learners' L2 performance.

Very few longitudinal studies investigated motivational changes of learners on the individual level taking into consideration the unique nature of the motivational system (Li, 2017; Kim, 2013). This is considered a real gap in literature that needs to be filled. Additionally, most of the longitudinal previous studies focused on examining the variability of the motivational system without investigating the relationship between motivational changes and the L2 writing development (Farahani et al., 2020). Although a huge number of cross-sectional studies examined the relationship between motivation and achievement, longitudinal studies investigating this point are rare.

Accordingly, Saito et al. (2018) recommended future studies in different contexts to examine two aspects: how each individual learner's motivation changes over time and how motivational changes interact with L2 language development over time. As justified by Farahani et al. (2020), examining the relationship between the language system and the

motivational system will provide a comprehensive picture of L2 development.

The aim of the present study, therefore, is to investigate the motivational changes of the students over one academic year and to examine to what degree motivational changes can predict writing development.

1. How does motivation change and to what degree do motivational changes predict the L2 writing developmental paths for a sample of Cairo University Egyptian EFL students?

This main question is broken down into the following research sub-questions:

- a) Which of these factors (*ideal-L2-self, ought-to-L2 self, L2 learning experience*) motivated a sample of Cairo University Egyptian EFL students to master writing over one academic year?
- b) To what degree do motivational changes predict the writing developmental paths of a sample of Cairo University Egyptian EFL students?

Theoretical Background

The Complex Dynamic System Theory (CDST)

According to De Bot et al.'s (2007) CDST to second language acquisition (SLA), language development is dynamic. The language system is characterized by periods of stability and other periods of variability because the development of the language system is influenced by external non-linguistic systems. As stated by Farahani (2020), "systems are not self-contained but open to external systems and resources" (p. 83). Examples of these resources are memory, attention, motivation, learning styles, proficiency level, intelligence, aptitude, amount of exposure to L2 input and instruction, gender, and age (De Bot et al., 2007). These limited resources are always in flux for each individual learner (De Bot et al., 2007). As a result, the variability of the language system can be influenced by the variability of the motivational system (Farahani, 2020). The concept of motivation that is based on Gardner's (1985) *Socio-Educational Model* has gone through a

transformational phase because motivation is influenced by the CDST (Dörnyei et al., 2014).

Gardner's (1985) Socio-Educational Model

In Gardner's (1985) *Socio-Educational Model*, motivation was described in relation to the field of SLA in terms of two significant concepts. Gardner proposed the concept of *integrativeness*, which is the desire to achieve success in learning L2 in order to identify or integrate with the L2 community. He also introduced the *instrumentality* concept that is to learn L2 for academic and career purposes. However, according to Gardner, the strongest driving force that motivates learners to sustain L2 learning is the *integrative type of motivation*, i.e., a tendency to succeed in learning L2 in order to be similar to the other valued cultures or groups.

A shift occurred in the 1990s, and other conceptualizations for motivation emerged due to the insufficiency of Gardner's concept that is based on *integrativeness*. Gardner's concept did not deal with motivation from an L2 classroom perspective. Accordingly, the new conceptualization of motivation combined old variables of *integrativeness* with the new ones which are related to the L2 classroom. Moreover, the concept of *integrativeness* is no longer valid as identifying with a specific L2 culture or community is not possible in the age of globalization (Dörnyei, 2009 & Islam et al., 2013).

Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System Theory (L2MSST).

The most current notion of L2 motivation is represented in Dörnyei's (2009) *L2MSS* (Moorman, 2017). The *L2MSS* consists of three main components; namely, the *Ideal-self*, *Ought-to-self* and the *L2 learning experience* (Dörnyei, 2009). The *L2MSS* is based on Markus and Nurius (1986) *Possible Selves Theory* in which one's upcoming behavior is influenced by his diverse selves. Markus and Nurius (1986) define the individual possible selves as

the ideal selves that we would very much like to become. They are also the selves we could become, and the selves we are afraid of becoming. The possible selves that are hoped for might include the successful self, the creative self, the rich

self, the thin self, or the loved and admired self, whereas the dreaded possible selves could be the alone self, the depressed self, the incompetent self, the alcoholic self, the unemployed self, or the bag lady self. (p. 954)

The *L2MSS* is also based on Higgins's (1987) *Self-Discrepancy Theory*. According to Higgins's (1987) *Self-Discrepancy Theory*, the most important selves of any person are *the Ought-to-self* and *the Ideal-self*. The *ought-to-self* refers to the attributes that a person believes he ought to have to meet expectations of friends, parents, and other people in society in order to circumvent negative results. The *Ideal-Self* refers to the qualities that someone would ideally have in order to minimize the gap between his actual self and the ideal self he aspires to (Higgins, 1987).

When applied to L2 learning, the *Ought-to-L2 Self* can be described by the forced self that is the social pressure that individuals are put under to study the language to get approval from others (Dörnyei, 2009). *The ideal-L2-Self* can be the perfect image of the L2 user. In other words, the main idea of this model is that diminishing the variation between the learners' current and future selves motivates them to master the L2 (Dörnyei, 2009). According to Dörnyei (2009), if learners internalize the instrumental motives of learning English (finding a suitable job and being materially successful) because they regard them as meeting their own needs rather than just conforming to common social norms, the instrumental motives will become part of their ideal-L2-selves. In contrast, if learners do not internalize the instrumental purposes, these non-internalized instrumental motives with a prevention focus will be part of their ought-to-selves.

The third important component of the *L2MSS* model is the *L2 learning experience*. According to Dörnyei (2009), the *L2 learning experience* refers to the contextual and environmental aspects of the L2 learning process which may affect L2 motivation, such as the L2 teacher, the colleagues, the teaching materials/ curriculum, the L2 classroom atmosphere, and experience of success.

The uniqueness of the *L2MSS* lies in that it takes into consideration the role of English as a lingua franca (international

language) in which speakers of different languages use it to communicate with each other to be intelligible. It deals with motivation psychologically from a self-perspective (Li, 2017). The *L2MSS* approach to motivation is affected by the CDST. Recently, the motivational system of learners is viewed as being unique and non-predictable. Moreover, it cannot be generalized because learners are different as they possess different personal, cognitive, and affective characteristics which interconnect with each other for each individual resulting in a non-universal motivational system (Dörnyei, 2009). Recently, many researchers studied L2 learning motivation from the perspective of Dörnyei's (2009) *L2MSS* (Li, 2017; Moorman, 2017; Martinović, 2017; Roshandel, 2018; Tankó & Csizé, 2018; Kim, 2013). Hence, this model is validated from literature in the EFL contexts.

Taguchi et al. (2009) developed a questionnaire based on Dörnyei's *L2MSS* framework. This questionnaire includes the main components of Dörnyei's *L2MSS*, i.e., *ideal-L2-self*, *ought-L2-self*, *the L2 learning experience*, and the *Criterion measure* that is regarded or conceptualized in terms of the learners' effort intentions or overall motivation.

Methodology

Participants and Setting (See Table 1)

The participants of the study are 10 freshmen (first year) university Egyptian EFL students. The students were enrolled in a class in the Department of English language and Literature, Faculty of Arts, Cairo University. The class the researcher taught included around 40 students. The researcher administered the tasks for the whole class, but she chose 10 only to be included in the study. The number of participants in the sample (10) is sufficient since the aim of the study is not to study group averages but rather to focus on individual level analysis.

Regarding the proficiency level of the participants, students have to meet the Department entrance criteria in the first place; they have to get not less than 48/50 in English at high school. In addition, a proficiency admission exam, which is similar to the TOEFL Test in the design and criteria, was administered at the beginning of the academic year for all the students who were admitted to the English Department,

for the purpose of determining the students' level of proficiency. The test was out of 750. The students had to get not less than 500/750 to be able to join the department. The scores of the 10 students selected for the study ranged from 565 to 582 out of 750 in the proficiency test. The coefficient of variation (CV) for the scores of the ten students in the proficiency test was 1.1%, and the standard deviation is 6 indicating a low percentage of discrepancy in the scores among the cases which suggests that the proficiency level of the ten cases was relatively homogenous.

Table 1
Description of the Ten Cases of the Present Study

Codes for the Cases	Age	Gender	School	Reasons for Joining the English Department	Total score/750	Travelling abroad before & taking English courses
AD.KH	17	Male	Langu age school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in the English language • finding a suitable job 	565	NO
AY.FE	19	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in the English language • Finding a suitable job 	572	NO
SA.SA	18	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love for English language • Mastering English language • Finding a suitable job 	570	NO
SH.ME	19	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love for English • Mastering English language 	581	NO
ME.KA	17	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanweya Amma's score 	566	NO
NA.TA	18	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radwa Ashour is her role model, and she was a graduate of the English Department 	571	NO
HA.IS	18	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanweya Amma's score • Love for English 	575	NO

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Codes for the Cases	Age	Gender	School	Reasons for Joining the English Department	Total score/750	Travelling abroad before & taking English courses
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Her cousin lives in Canada, and he has encouraged her to master the English language • Her dream is teaching the English language. 		
HA.HO	18	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love for the English language • Achieving high proficiency in the English language 	568	NO
SE.RA	18	Female	Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanaweya Amma score 	580	NO
HAG.IB	18	Female	Langu age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving high proficiency 	582	NO

As seen in Table 1, students were given codes to avoid mentioning their names in the research for the sake of academic integrity. The researcher chose freshmen to be the sample of the study because the writing course is extended for one whole academic year for first year students in the English Department. Students took writing in both the first and second semesters. Thus, the researcher taught the same section in both semesters to be able to trace the motivational changes as well as the students' writing developmental paths over one academic year. At the same time, the writing tasks that were administered in class were part of the participants' curriculum (writing course). The students received six hours of writing instruction per week in the first semester: two sessions per week. In the second semester, they received four hours of writing instruction per week: two sessions per week for the writing course. Accordingly, the total number of hours they received over the academic year was about 110 hours.

The curriculum of the course was based on Oshima and Hogue's (2017) *Longman Academic Writing Series* book. The students were taught how to write a paragraph as well as an essay. The students were taught coherence in terms of consistent pronouns, transition signals,

logical order of ideas, sentence complexity, types of clauses and sentences, i.e., independent and dependent clauses, simple sentences, complex sentences, compound sentences and compound-complex sentences, sentence problems, i.e., word order, missing elements, such as missing prepositions or definite and indefinite articles, fragments, choppy sentences, i.e., non-coherent sentences, run on sentences and comma splices, parallel sentence structure, and stringy sentences, i.e., using many clauses (more than three) and coordinators in one sentence. They studied problems on the morphological level: wrong verb tense, faulty word form, subject verb agreement, and wrong plural nouns. They studied punctuation marks, such as the use of full stop, comma, quotation marks, colon, and semicolons.

Design

This research is considered a longitudinal multiple-case study. The design of the study is mixed, i.e., both qualitative and quantitative. It is (non-experimental) an exploratory design. Qualitative data, which are the students' written essays, were collected over one academic year (11 times) twice a month. Besides, quantitative data were collected (11 times) twice a month over the academic year using a close-ended motivation questionnaire. Moreover, semi-structured interviews were conducted in the beginning and end of the study as a follow-up in order to support the quantitative data of the motivation questionnaire.

Instruments/ Materials Used for Data Collection

A Close-Ended Questionnaire (adapted from Taguchi et al., 2009, p.90) based on the components of Dornyei's, 2009 *L2MSS* (See Appendix A)

The questionnaire includes 18 items/questions. These 18 items are divided into four sets of questions; each set of items covers one of the four categories under investigation, i.e., *ideal-L2-self*, *ought-to-L2 self*, *L2 learning experience*, and *criterion measure (intended effort/motivated learning behavior/overall motivation)*. In this questionnaire, the participants were asked to rate their motivation to learn the writing skill on a scale from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree) for each

question. 1 (strongly disagree) indicated the least score of motivation whereas 6 indicated the highest score for motivation.

The questionnaire was conducted in Arabic, the L1 of all the participants, to ensure optimal understanding among all students. Consequently, the questionnaire was translated by the researcher into Arabic for the participants. To check the appropriateness of the translation, its validity was ensured through back translation from Arabic into English.

The reliability coefficient (Cronbach Alpha) value for the items of each of the four motivation sub-components in the questionnaire was calculated for internal consistency/reliability using the Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS). Cronbach Alpha is considered adequate if it is above 0.60 (Islam et al., 2013). Therefore, in this study, Cronbach Alpha value was found to be acceptable and highly reliable for all the four motivational sub-categories. Accordingly, it is possible to conclude that the scales have operated successfully in the present research context.

- (1) Ideal-L2-self (Number of items: 4; $\alpha = 0.84$).
- (2) Ought to English self (Number of Items 3; $\alpha = 0.73$).
- (3) Criterion/intended effort measures/motivated learning behaviour (Number of items: 3; $\alpha = 0.873$)
- (4) L2 learning experience (Number of items; 8 $\alpha = 0.888$).

Semi-Structured Pre-Post Interviews and Mobile Phone as well as Zoom Application (adapted from Li, 2017; Kim, 2013; Taguchi et al, 2009, p.90) (See Appendix B)

Semi structured interviews were held with each and every individual learner at the beginning and end of the academic year to triangulate the data to support the quantitative findings of the close-ended motivation questionnaire. Unlike the interviews, the close-ended questionnaire helped the researcher to collect data multiple times throughout the academic year. On the contrary, the data of the interview were rich enough to go deeper in investigating the motivational changes of each individual learner.

The interview questions are adapted from two longitudinal case studies (Li, 2017; Kim, 2013) because these studies investigated motivational changes qualitatively based on the *L2MSS*. The interview questions of the present study are also adapted from the *L2MSS* close-ended questionnaire. The yes/no questions of the close ended questionnaire were converted into WH-questions for the interviews. For example, the statement *I get nervous and confused when writing in my English class* was changed by the researcher into the question: *What do you feel when your teacher assigns you a topic to write on?* Another example is the statement *I like the atmosphere of my writing classes* was converted into the question: *What do you think of the L2 writing classroom atmosphere, the book, curriculum, teacher, feedback, and tasks?*

The questions of the post interviews were similar to those of the pre-interviews, but with some minor changes. Similar to the close-ended questionnaire, the interviews were conducted in Arabic. To check the appropriateness of the translation, its validity was ensured through back translation from Arabic into English. The researcher's mobile phone was used to record the face-to-face interviews in the first semester. Zoom Application was used in the second semester because at that time, it was not possible to meet the students face to face in the faculty because of the quarantine due to Covid-19-pandemic. Accordingly, the semi-structured interviews were conducted online using Zoom Application.

Writing Topics (See Appendix C)

11 expository as well as compare and contrast topics were used for the data collection process. The rationale for choosing expository as well as compare and contrast topics is that these genres are part of the course because in the first year, students in the English Department take these two genres. The topics were taken from the course book as well as the internet. The topics were agreed upon by the six teachers (the researcher's colleagues) who teach the six sections of the First-year writing course in the English department. The teachers chose topics which elicit data from students with no demand for background knowledge because the topics are of interest to them, relevant to their

lives, experience, and age.

Data Collection Procedures

Procedures administered in the present study lasted for one academic year (six months). Procedures started in September 2019 and ended in April 2020. Data were collected twice a month over the academic year. Accordingly, over the six months, the written texts and the questionnaire were collected 11 times over the academic year.

Table 2

The Time Frame of the Writing Topics, Motivation Questionnaire, and the Interviews

Months	writing Topics	Motivational changes	Interviews
OCT	T1	Motivation questionnaire	pre-interviews
OCT	T2	Motivation questionnaire	pre-interviews
NOV	T3	Motivation questionnaire	
NOV	T4	Motivation questionnaire	
DEC	T5	Motivation questionnaire	
FEB	T61	Motivation questionnaire	
FEB	T7	Motivation questionnaire	
MAR	T8	Motivation questionnaire	
MAR	T9	Motivation questionnaire	
APR	T10	Motivation questionnaire	post-interviews
APR	T11	Motivation questionnaire	post-interviews

First Semester

- The teacher and the researcher are the same person.
- Paragraphs and questionnaires were collected twice a month (11 times) over the academic year to leave a chance for variability in their written performance and motivation and for the researcher to be given enough time to grade the texts and give the students feedback.

- Students were given 20 minutes to write an expository paragraph and from 5 to 10 minutes to fill in the motivation questionnaire within the classroom. They were not allowed to use a dictionary while writing.
- The researcher took one week to grade the students' paragraphs each time of collecting data. Therefore, students' paragraphs were returned with feedback before writing on the following topic.
- Students' consciousness was raised with regard to their grammatical mistakes in the paragraphs, i.e., stringy sentences, fragments, parallelism in structure. See the section on participants for more details.
- Semi-structured pre-interviews were conducted face to face outside the classroom in the researcher's office hours in the English Department starting from October.
- The individual interviews were recorded using the researcher's mobile phone. The interviews took around 15 minutes with each student.
- Students were informed that interviews were audio recorded. They were also told that these voice samples are part of a research study. They were not informed about the purpose of the research in order to avoid subjectivity.

Second Semester

- The second semester started in the second week of February. In the second semester, 60 minutes were given to write a four-five paragraph essay and fill in the motivation questionnaire.
- The essays as well as the close-ended questionnaire were collected online from the students beginning from the middle of March because during that time (Covid-19 pandemic), in 2020, classes were held online till the end of the academic year. As a result, the researcher asked the students to perform the tasks online. Students were asked to send their written texts to the researcher's email or WhatsApp after the time allotted (60 minutes).
- The students were given the same duration of the physical class to accomplish the writing task as well as the questionnaire.
- The researcher, thus, tried to equate the conditions of the physical

classroom to those of the online one by asking the students at the end of the online session to take 60 minutes to send the essay as well as the questionnaire.

- The researcher also asked the students to write the texts manually to avoid the automatic correction of the Microsoft Word. Hence, the students wrote the texts manually and photocopied them with the mobile camera, and then sent them to the researcher.
- The researcher gave feedback online in many ways: zoom meetings, sending voice messages via WhatsApp, and photocopying the written feedback and sending it.
- Semi-structured pre-interviews were held via zoom application (quarantine) (Covid-19).

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis procedures were conducted for the written texts, the students' answers in the closed-ended questionnaire, and the student's responses in the semi-structured pre-post interviews.

The Quantitative Analysis of the Participants' Written Output

The total number of the collected texts is 110. The participants' written texts were analyzed quantitatively in terms of syntactic complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Foster and Skehan (1999) defined accuracy in terms of "the ability to avoid error in performance, possibly reflecting higher levels of control in the language" (p. 96). In this study, accuracy is operationalized in terms of the number of errors subtracted from the total number of words divided by the total number of words. For example, if the student writes 200 words and makes 30 errors, his accuracy will be calculated as follows: $200-30=170/200=0.85$. His writing accuracy will be 0.85, which means that 85% of the text is correct, that is, error free.

Complexity is defined as "progressively more elaborate language and a greater variety of syntactic patterning" (Foster & Skehan, 1996, p. 303). It means producing complex or advanced language that is represented in the percentage of subordinate clauses in the text. Hence, in this study, syntactic complexity is operationalized in terms of the ratio of

clauses to T-units. If the student writes a total of 20 independent and dependent clauses and a total of 10 T-units, then his writing complexity will be calculated as follows: $20/10=2$.

Fluency is defined as “the number of words a writer is able to include in their writing within a particular period of time” (Wolfe-Quintero et al., 1998, p. 14). In this study, fluency is operationalized in terms of the number of words produced per minute. For example, if the students are expected to write 200 words in 20 minutes, then their fluency will be calculated as $200/20=10$.

Raters and Inter-rater Reliability

In order to ensure reliability in coding the data, the researcher asked two independent raters, who are PhD candidates, to score the 30% of the written texts (30 texts). Inter-rater reliability was calculated for fluency, accuracy, and syntactic complexity using the intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC). The ICC was used rather than ordinary correlation as more than two raters were included in rating the same data: the researcher and another two independent raters. The ICC was 0.98 for writing fluency and 0.97 for both accuracy and syntactic complexity. Accordingly, there is a positive correlation among the three raters and no significant difference was found among them. In case of discrepancy among the raters which occurred very little, the researcher took the average of the three scores given by the three raters by adding each of them and dividing the total sum by three.

Statistical Analysis Procedures to Answer Research Question 1A (Motivational Changes)

The Coefficient of Variation (CV) was calculated for measuring variability or dispersion in the motivational data to identify motivational changes of the cases. For example, if the student's scores are 4, 4, 4, 6, 5, 3.5, 3.5, 5, 6, 4, 3, 4 in the ideal-L2-self component in the 11 times of data collection, then both the mean as well as the standard deviation are calculated for this set of scores. The mean is 4.7. The standard deviation is 0.92. The CV is measured in terms of the ratio of the standard deviation to the mean. In this example, the CV is 0.2 (2%). The CV was calculated for each individual student and for each motivation sub-

component.

The lower the percentage of the CV, the more stable the motivator is, which indicates that the students are motivated by this motivator throughout. The high percentage of the CV designates that the students are motivated by this factor during some months but not during others. Therefore, the cases' motivators in October were compared with theirs in November, December, and so on until April (the last month) to investigate the motivational changes of each individual. Comparing the motivational changes of each participant, similarities and differences were observed.

Qualitative Analyses of the Interview Responses

As for the responses of the pre-post interviews, they were first transcribed, i.e., converted into written texts on Microsoft Word by the researcher. The students' responses/excerpts were translated by the researcher from Arabic into English to be prepared for qualitative analysis by coding the excerpts in terms of four motivational categories. The motivational factors of the questionnaire were identified as codes that are defined prior to the analysis.

Table 3

Examples from the Participants' Responses in the Interviews on the Eight Motivational Sub-Components (Translated by the researcher)

Motivational sub-components/sub-categories	Examples from the data (participants' responses) (Translated by the researcher from Arabic into English)
Ideal –L2-self	I imagine myself writing effectively in my future. I imagine myself writing similarly to native speakers.
Ought-to-L2 self	I want to achieve success in writing because I am afraid of being viewed as a weak learner, by people, by native speakers, or by employers when I apply for a job.

Motivational sub-components/sub-categories	Examples from the data (participants' responses) (Translated by the researcher from Arabic into English)
L2 learning experience	The book and the curriculum are great. The teacher was always supportive. She cared a lot about each and every one's mistakes in writing. The teacher's feedback was valuable, and she was capable of delivering information easily and beautifully. The assignments as well as the classroom tasks were very beneficial.
Criterion measure (intended effort/motivated learning behaviour/)	I intend to exert efforts by writing more paragraphs than those assigned by the teacher and ask for the teacher's feedback until final exams.

Statistical Analysis Procedures to Answer Research Question 1b: The Relationship between Motivational Changes and Development of Writing

Multiple Regression Analyses were run using the SPSS program in the Institute of Statistics at Cairo University to examine the relationship between motivational changes and the development of writing. The Multiple Regression Analysis is a statistical test that is used to analyze the relationship between several independent variables and several dependent variables. In this study, changes in the four motivational components were considered the independent variables while complexity, accuracy, and fluency were regarded as dependent variables.

Unlike correlation, the Multiple Regression controls the effect of the mediating variables and examine the predictive power of motivational changes of the students in accounting for their writing development. The three writing components (complexity, accuracy, and fluency) were regressed on the four motivational components (ID, OU, L2 EXP, and CRI/intended effort) for each of the ten cases. Hence, ten regression models were performed; one was performed for each case. However, commonalities and differences were highlighted and general findings were presented.

Results

In this research, the four motivational factors will be referred to by acronyms:

ID	Ideal-L2- Self
OU	Ought-to-L2 Self
L2 Exp	L2 experience
CRI	Criterion/ intended effort

Motivational Changes of the Ten Cases of the Study

The cases were motivated right through by the ID; however, OU has become an additional strong factor for them by the end of the academic year. This is emphasized by the low percentages of the CV for the ID. They ranged from 0 to 7 % only which suggested that the ID was a strong motivator all through the six months for all the cases. For the OU, the percentages are 12.6%, 13.5%, 22.3%, and 18.5% suggesting that students were not motivated by OU throughout.

The cases had positive attitudes towards the style of teaching, the classroom tasks, the curriculum, and the book all the way through as reflected in the low percentages of their CVs. It ranged from 0% to 7% for five cases (50%) out of 10. This indicates stability in the cases' attitudes towards the L2 EXP. On the contrary, attitudes towards the L2 EXP were changeable for the other five cases (AD.KH, AY.FE, HA.IS, HAG.IB, and SE.RA), as indicated by the high percentages of their CVs (11.3%, 12.2%, 17.4%, 16.8%, and 24%).

Results of the Relationship between Motivational Changes and L2 Writing Development

The results indicated that for three cases (30%) (ME.KA, HA.IS, and SE.RA) out of the 10 in the present study, motivational changes did not predict writing development. For 7 cases (70%) (AD.KH, AY.FE, SA.SA, SH.ME, HA.HO, HAG.IB, and NA.TA), the overall regression models were found to be statistically significant suggesting that motivational changes predicted L2 writing development for these seven cases in terms of accuracy and complexity only. The results of the Multiple Regression Analyses did not predict the development of writing fluency for any of the cases.

As shown in Table 4, the overall regression models indicated that motivational changes explained 50% for HAG.IB ($R^2 = 0.50$, $F(1, 9) = 8.91$, $P = .015 < 0.05$) and 71% for SA.SA ($R^2 = 0.71$, ($F(2, 8) = 10.03$, $P = .007 < 0.05$).

Table 4

Results of Multiple Regressions with Accuracy as a Dependent Variable

Predictors	Cases	Adjusted R^2	F	P
OU	SA.SA	0.71	10.03	.007
ID and CRI	HAG.IB	0.50	8.91	.015

As shown in Table 5, the overall regression models indicated that motivational changes explained 68 % for AD.KH ($R^2 = 0.68$, $F(3, 7) = 4.93$, $P = 0.038 < 0.05$), 71% of the development of writing complexity for AY.FE ($R^2 = 0.71$, $F(1, 9) = 22.54$, $p = .001 < 0.05$), 82% for SH.ME ($F(3, 7) = 10.39$, $P = .006$, $R^2 = 0.82$), 81% for HA.HO ($R^2 = 0.81$, $F(1, 9) = 37.18$, $P = .001 < 0.05$), and 45% for NA.TA ($R^2 = 0.45$, $F(1, 9) = 7.32$, $p = .024 < 0.05$).

Table 5

Results of Multiple Regressions with Complexity as a Dependent Variable

Predictors	Cases	Adjusted R^2	F	P
L2 EXP	AD.KH	0.68	4.93	0.038
L2 EXP	AY.FE	0.71	22.54	.001
OU, L2 EXP	SH.ME	0.82	10.39	.006

L2 EXP and ID	NA.TA	0.45	7.32	.024
CRI	HA.HO	0.81	37.18	.001

The first strongest predictor of the L2 writing development was the positive L2 EXP ($t = -3.32$, $\beta = -1.8$, $p = 0.01 < 0.05$). Positive L2 EXP predicted the development of L2 writing in terms of complexity for 40% of the cases (AD.KH, AY.FE, SH.ME, & NA.TA). It hindered the development of L2 writing complexity for 3 cases (30%) ($t = -3.32$, $\beta = -1.8$, $p = 0.01 < 0.05$), ($t = -2.7$, $\beta = -0.67$, $p = 0.02 < 0.05$) & ($t = -4.74$, $\beta = -0.84$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$); conversely, it enhanced the development of L2 writing complexity for 1 (10%) case only (SH.ME) ($t = -4.5$, $\beta = 1.05$, $P = 0.002 < 0.05$).

The second predictor of L2 writing development was the OU. OU (forced self) predicted the development of L2 writing for 20% of the cases (SA.SA and SH.ME). It enhanced the development of L2 writing accuracy for 1 case (10%) (SA.SA) ($t = 4.46$, $\beta = 1.4$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$). However, it hindered the development of L2 writing complexity for 1 (10%) case only (SH.ME) ($t = -4.52$, $\beta = -1.6$, $p = 0.002 < 0.05$).

ID proved to be a significant factor of L2 writing development for 20% of the cases (HAG.IB and NA.TA). It enhanced the development of L2 writing accuracy for (HAG.IB) ($t = -2.4$, $\beta = 0.86$, $p = 0.04 < 0.05$) while enhanced complexity for NA.TA ($t = 2.7$, $\beta = 0.66$, $p = 0.02 < 0.05$).

CRI/intended effort proved to be a significant factor of L2 writing development for 20% of the cases (HAG.IB and HA.HO). It enhanced the development of L2 writing accuracy for HAG.IB ($t = 2.98$, $\beta = 0.71$, $p = 0.02 < 0.05$), and it hindered writing complexity for HA.HO ($t = -6.09$, $\beta = -0.89$, $p = 0.0002 < 0.05$).

Discussion

The ID was the students' main motivator all through which is consistent with the results of the previous longitudinal studies (Kim, 2013 & Li, 2017). The cases were motivated by the desire to eliminate the gap between their current writing proficiency level and the ideal proficiency level that they aspire to reach in the future. They were aware of the idea that mastering the English language is part of an individual's

positive self-image. The students realized the importance of English to face their future challenges. This was evident in the students' answers in both the pre- and post- interviews:

AY.FE

Pre-interview: *I imagine myself as a good translator in the future, which motivates me to master L2 writing. I expect my writing proficiency to be very good.*

Post interview: *I imagine myself writing in English as if I am a native speaker. I expect myself to be an exquisite translator.*

Most of the cases had positive attitudes towards the L2 EXP throughout the academic year. They justified in the pre-post interviews their positive attitude towards the L2 EXP with the role played by the teacher in the learning process and the feedback given to improve their writing skill.

For five cases (50%) (AD.KH, AY. FE, HAG.IB, HA.IS, and SE.RA), the attitude towards the L2 EXP was changeable which agrees with Li (2017). The L2 EXP was enjoyable during some months and less enjoyable during others. For example, for AY. FE, the L2 EXP was less enjoyable in March. This could be possibly interpreted by the fact that classes shifted in March to the online mode of learning during COVID-19 pandemic. Students were not accustomed to this mode of learning. This is depicted in the following post-interview excerpt by AY.FE: *One disadvantage of online learning is the absence of social interaction.* Nonetheless, the L2 EXP turned out to be enjoyable again in April for AY.FE, which motivated her to maintain learning again. In contrast to AYFE, for SH.ME and ME.KA, the L2 EXP was a strong motivator in March. These cases, however, enjoyed the online learning EXP as depicted in the following interview excerpt: *Online education saves more time because we do not have to go from one place to another or travel miles to learn.*

Concerning AD.KH, HA.IS, SE.RA, and HAG.IB, their attitude towards the L2 EXP was not positive in the middle of the academic year (February). The curriculum including the other courses might have

become harder for them. The negative feedback they got on their written texts might have elevated their anxiety which might have shifted the attitude towards the L2 EXP from positive into negative. Another possible reason could be that the continuous assessment and the repeated tasks of assigning topics in the classroom might have put them under stress which might have changed their perception towards the L2 EXP. This is supported in the following post-interview excerpt: *I do not feel comfortable when the teacher assigns a topic to write on. I do not have enough ideas to write.*

By the end of the academic year, students were motivated by the OU which partially agrees with Kim (2013). The reason might be that April, the last month of the academic year, is the time of the final exams. At this time, the students' fears increase. The idea of getting bad grades usually controls their minds at that time. Another possible interpretation is that OU does not only motivate students to learn, but these factors push them to study and exert actual efforts to be translated into actual achievement that is represented in getting good grades. This is depicted in the following post-interview excerpt:

Not mastering the writing skill will lead to getting low scores in the exams, and I do not want to be considered a weak learner. I want to master writing to satisfy my parents as they always urge me to study a lot and exert efforts. I want to look prestigious by being able to write properly in English.

The inconsistency between the present study's findings and those of Kim (2013) stems from the second case in Kim (2013) because he focused on the negative consequences of not learning English. He wanted to learn English as a result of being afraid of not passing exams. In the present study, students were strongly motivated by the OU (forced self) by the end of the academic year only, but their internal motivation remained stable. A possible reason is that in the present study, the student's future selves meet societal obligations. In other words, the better selves that the students want to become agree with what others expect them to be.

For 30% of the cases of the present study, the results indicated

that motivational changes did not predict writing development. This indicates that the statistical analysis that is based on averaging of the whole sample of participants does not reveal the real truth because it does not take into account individual differences that are included in the sample.

Motivational changes could predict students' learning intentions; however, these intentions may not be necessarily translated into actual achievement for some students (Moskovsky et al., 2016). Motivation to study needs to be combined with other resources in order to be translated into actual success (Moskovsky et al., 2016; Subekti, 2018). According to Subekti (2018), motivation might not have a direct influence on L2 achievement. Students need more than motivation for their performance to progress.

The results also revealed a negative relationship between motivational changes and writing development in that the positive L2 EXP was found to hinder writing complexity for three cases (30%) in the present study (NA.TA, AY.FE, and AD.KH) which designates that the more positive the attitude of the student towards the classroom experience, writing activities, teaching style, teacher's feedback, and curriculum is, the less complex is his L2 writing.

This is a surprising as well as an unexpected finding because the teacher's feedback on the complexity of the written texts of the students in addition to the chapter being explained in the classroom on the types of sentences as well as the exercises given on joining simple sentences using subordinators are supposed to help in enhancing the student's writing complexity; nonetheless, this was not the case for the participants of the present study, which could be explained by the fact that "achievement is a function of a multitude of different learner internal and external variables" (Moskovsky et al., 2016, p.11). The positive L2 EXP may not be sufficient for the written performance to improve. Unless an enjoyable classroom EXP is coupled with definite goals to achieve and strong strategies to rely on, written performance will regress.

Another possible justification for this finding is that the positive attitude towards the L2 EXP may have led some students to relax, and thus pay less care or exert less effort. Some students depend entirely on

the teacher's explanation and tasks in the classroom only without working hard on their writing skill outside the classroom. On the contrary, the L2 EXP was found to enhance writing complexity for SH.ME only. The justification for this variation in the results among the cases could be that SH.ME might have worked hard on her writing skill. She might have succeeded in translating intentions and positive attitudes towards the L2 EXP into organized plans and actual outcomes. Accordingly, the effect of motivation is specific and unique for each individual learner.

Another surprising finding is that CRI/ effort intention was found to hinder writing complexity for one case (HA.HO). This can be justified by the same idea that intentions are not productive in themselves, and they do not guarantee success. In contrast, for the other case (HAG.IB), CRI was found to enhance writing accuracy; nevertheless, for HAG.IB, CRI was not found to be the only predictor of writing accuracy, but the ID, too, was found to enhance accuracy for HAG.IB. This implies that, similar to HA.HO, intended learning efforts in themselves need to be associated with intrinsic motivation. Students need to have specific goals not only intentions to achieve success.

The second predictor of L2 writing development was the OU. Similar to CRI, OU (forced self) enhanced the development of L2 writing accuracy for 1 case (10%) (SA.SA). However, it hindered the development of L2 writing complexity for another one (10%) (SH.ME). The external pressure that is represented in obligations and duties to study because of the students' fear of failing others' expectations have led one case to take a positive action and improve her written performance. Fear has led the case to focus more and revise his grammatical errors which might have improved his writing accuracy. This suggests that inner motivation has to be combined with external one for actual achievement to occur. Despite the idea that motivation has to come from the inside of the learner for the sake of his professional advancement and his self-satisfaction, external motivation may lead to successful outcomes and actual achievement.

On the contrary, the relationship was negative between OU and writing complexity for another case (SH.ME). Fear of failure might have led this case to write fewer complex sentences in order to

avoid making sentence structure errors. This could be justified by Skehan's (1996) *tradeoff effect*, i.e., losing one aspect in return for gain in the other ones. In other words, OU hindered writing complexity for one case and enhanced accuracy for another one. This might be, possibly, due to the students limited attentional capacity resources. Students might have been unable to concentrate on complexity and accuracy simultaneously. Accordingly, a trade off effect might have occurred in the sense that one component might have gone at the expense of the other; progression in one component might have led to the regression of the other. The student's act of taking risks by producing many complex sentences may have created sentence structure errors. Examples from the cases' essay samples to support the tradeoff effect are the following:

- *I consider him one of the most effective people in life who should everyone respect.* (Word order: who should be respected by everyone /who/whom everyone should respect)
- *I have seen a lot of families living in dirty places how they treat their children.* (Word order: I have seen how a lot of families living in dirty places treat their children)

Another justification could be that the effect of motivation on writing development may vary across individuals because of the variation among the cases in terms of the different limited resources that are at their disposal and which they allocate to the three components of L2 writing (fluency, accuracy, and complexity) (de Bot et al., 2007; Skehan, 1996; Zhang et al., 2022). In other words, some distribute more cognitive resources to accuracy while others allocate more to fluency and complexity. Some allot motivation and aptitude to performance whereas others allocate intelligence, and so on. Accordingly, these findings did not agree with Farahani et al. (2020). In Farahani et al's, motivation hindered accuracy, but enhanced fluency and complexity.

Motivational changes were not found to predict writing fluency for any of the cases. A possible interpretation might be that fluency is strongly associated with topic familiarity or knowledge as well as the ability to express one's ideas smoothly. Accordingly, students might have

been knowledgeable about some topics but not about others which has nothing to do with motivation.

Conclusion

ID is found to be a principal motivator for students to sustain learning in the long run. It can be concluded that changes are more likely to occur in attitudes towards the L2 EXP than for ID. Moreover, for students to keep motivated all through, internal factors, such as the ID, should be promoted by the external factors, such as OU. It is also concluded that both ID and OU together are essential for enhancing the students' written performance; accordingly, students should be both internally and externally motivated to be pushed to exert actual efforts. Positive attitudes towards the L2 EXP and intended efforts of the students do not necessarily enhance the students' written performance because they have to be combined with intrinsic motivation, actual efforts and organized plans to be converted into successful achievement. Although motivation plays an essential role in the learning process, it is only one of many variables contributing to the development of L2 proficiency, not the only one.

Pedagogical Implications

Teachers should encourage learners to have specific goals and create clear images of their future selves with regard to L2 writing proficiency. Pedagogical intervention should interfere to help students develop complexity, accuracy, and fluency concurrently. Teachers should encourage students to use complex language without fear of making linguistic errors to be able to overcome the tradeoff effect.

Teachers should administer quizzes and exams to motivate students to exert actual efforts. Moreover, organized actions have to be set up in order to translate learners' positive attitudes towards the L2 EXP and learning intentions into successful actual outcomes, i.e., better written performance.

Teachers should take into consideration the dynamic nature of motivation. Teachers should handle this problem with care by making the L2 classroom environment engaging, interesting, and comfortable which may help students internalize reasons for achieving success. Teachers should take into consideration the external factors which may demotivate students outside the classroom by making up for the lack of parents' encouragement and support, especially that OU was found to

enhance students' L2 written performance.

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Although case studies give detailed findings by taking into consideration individual differences among cases, these results are generalizable to specific settings and subjects. Factors affecting L2 writing or speaking development, such as L1, aptitude, intelligence, learning styles, proficiency level, gender, age, and personality traits can be investigated to explain the variability as well as the variation in the language developmental paths. Accordingly, the study can be replicated on cases of different proficiency levels, ages, and specialties to examine other external factors in relation to writing or speaking developmental patterns. Samples including a larger number of cases are needed for conducting longitudinal studies over longer periods of time to provide a more thorough and inclusive analysis.

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Appendices

Appendix A

A Close-Ended Quantitative Questionnaire (adapted from Taguchi et al., 2009, p.90) based on the components of Dorneyi's (2009) L2MSS

Name:.....

Gender:.....

Age:

School:

Reasons for joining the English Department.....

Have you travelled abroad before?.....Have you taken English courses before?.....

In this questionnaire, I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statements by simply circling a number from 1 to 6. Please do not leave out any items.

Scales:

Table with 6 columns: Strongly disagree, Disagree, Slightly disagree, Slightly agree, agree, Strongly agree. Below the table are numbers 1 through 6 corresponding to each column.

Criterion Measures/ Intended Effort

- 1. If an English writing course was offered at university or somewhere else in the future, I would like to take it.
2. If my teacher would give the class an optional writing assignment, I would certainly volunteer to do it.
3. I think that I am doing my best to learn English writing.

Ideal-L2-Self	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself writing in English effectively.						
5. I can imagine myself living abroad and using English effectively in writing for communicating with the locals.						
6. I can imagine myself writing English emails/letters fluently.						
7. I can imagine myself writing English in the future as if I were a native speaker of English.						

Ought-to-L2 Self	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my peers/teachers/family/boss, and other people I respect because they expect me to do so.						
9. If I fail to learn English, I'll be letting other people down.						
10. Studying English writing is important to me because an educated person is supposed to be able to write in English.						

L2 Learning Experience	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I like the atmosphere of my English writing classes.						
12. I find learning English writing really interesting.						
13. I think that time passes faster while studying English writing.						

14. I find the topics covered in my English writing course book interesting.
 15. I would like to have more English writing classes at university.
 16. I volunteer answers in my English writing classes.
 17. I consider that your teacher motivates you to write in English.
 18. I like to have more alternative activities in my English writing classes (e.g., group writing activities).
-

Appendix B

Interview Questions

Interview Questions (At the beginning of the academic year)

(adapted from Li, 2017; Kim, 2013; Taguchi et al, 2009, p.90)

1. Why did you join the English Department?
2. Do you have a sort of vision in the future with regard to your writing proficiency? (*Ideal L2 self*)
3. Does your family (parents/relatives), friends, or people urge you to join the English Department? Did you join it only to satisfy them? Why? (*Ought-to-self*)
4. How are you going to exert effort to attain a better level of writing proficiency? (*Intended effort*)
5. How would you describe your participation in the writing classes? (*L2 learning experience*)
6. What do you think of the L2 writing classroom atmosphere, the book, curriculum, teacher, feedback, and tasks? (*L2 learning experience*)

Interview Questions (At the end of the academic year) (adapted from Li, 2017; Kim, 2013; Taguchi et al, 2009, p.90)

- 1) Have your reasons for joining the English Department changed? If yes? Why?
- 2) What are your future expectations with regard to your writing proficiency? Does it affect your motivation? How? (*Ideal L2 self*)
- 3) Does your family (parents/relatives), friends, or people whom you know still urge you to study English? Do you want to study to only satisfy them? Are you afraid of not satisfying them if you do not master English writing (depending on what students had stated earlier)? Why? (*Ought-to-self*)
- 4) How will you exert efforts in learning how to write in English? (*Intended effort*)
- 5) What did you particularly find motivating/ demotivating in the writing classes? (*L2 learning experience*) To what factors would you attribute that the class is going well or not? (*L2 learning experience*) Is there anything within the classroom environment that could be done to change your motivation? (*L2 learning experience*)
- 6) How would you evaluate the book, curriculum, teacher's influence, feedback, and tasks?? (*L2 learning experience*)

Appendix C

The Writing Prompts

First Semester

Students will have 20 minutes to write a paragraph of 150-200 words on the following writing topic:

1. Who is your role model and why do you consider him your role model?
2. Why is romantic love considered a poor basis for marriage?
3. Why should universities require every student to study a Foreign Language?
4. How can childhood shape adulthood?
5. What are the social negative consequences of obesity?

Second Semester

Students will have 60 minutes to write a four to five paragraph Essay on the following writing topic. The essay should contain from 400 to 1000 words:

6. How to minimize the negative effects of social media on people's lives?
7. Compare and contrast private and public universities/schools.
8. Compare and contrast rural and urban life.
9. Compare and contrast texting to talking to friends.
10. Compare and contrast teachers now and in the past.
11. Compare and contrast online and traditional education.