

The Study of the Development of Writing Skill in the Textbooks of the Action-Oriented Approach, a Case of Iranian Learners of FFL

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Abstract

This paper analyses the written competence and corpus of Iranian learners of French at two levels (A1 and A2). The data were collected in a quantified and qualified manner with auto evaluation grids and narrative text writing to analyze the action-oriented approach textbooks' efficiency in writing. Basically the approach of the three manuals, *Alter ego*, *Echo* and *Connexions* advantaging of the implicit approach grammar teaching, calls into question their effectiveness regard to the written skill. The *Alter ego* manual is less effective in the teaching of writing skills and in return the *Echo* manual is more. This difference was especially remarkable about the Content of written productions of three groups of learners. In the Iranian context that we are the only inductive approach does not meet the student needs who are used to learn the traditional manner grammar.

Keywords: written production, action-oriented approach, Iranian learners of French, textbooks

1. Introduction

In recent decades, in the field of foreign language teaching and learning, we witnessed the acceptance of oral communication in spite of written communication. It was necessary to make the learners capable of speak and understand in oral and reflecting the separation between the oral and written communication skills. As Vivian Cook said, this has led to the unique skills of written language being undervalued and to the lack of attention to the demands that writing places on the learner in a second language (Cook, 2008)

However, a renewal of the writing begins to take place in the classroom, the difference between speech and writing has been accepted. The evolution and methodological changes have allowed to revalue the writing as a mean of communication and writing is no longer regarded as an isolated entity.

At the start of the twenty-first century, writing classrooms have achieved a more balanced perspective; consequently, new pedagogy has begun to develop: traditional teacher-centered courses and academic writing is viewed as communicative social act. (Carter & Nunan, 2001)

Now the theorists prefer to speak of an inter-relationship between the act of writing and the act of reading (Rahmatian, 2005). Furthermore teaching- learning of the written language has become as significant as the spoken language.

Currently, many researchers address written production from a perspective that integrates the theoretical contributions of cognitive psychology and situational language, we no longer talk of drafting class but production of writings (Jolibert, 1991).

The way of perceiving written production is linked to language and psychosocial conditions well defined.

2. What Skill Has the Priority?

Since modern approaches and textbooks of language teaching gave priority to oral, acquisition of writing was postponed at the end of "beginner" level and mostly, the time is spent on oral recitation.

Students learn to write what they say, from the moment they are fluent in phonological system. In many cases we find later stages as reading and reading comprehension, which takes over the writing, (Dabène, 1975).

Garcia-Debanc (1995) claims that the textbooks that are available to teachers show the models of how to teach writing, but rarely make the teachers of how to confront the problem of writing.

Recent work in the field of text analysis, consider that the morphological and syntactic traditional elements are not enough to explain the written productions and it would be appropriate to start checking the acquisition of knowledge by learners but by forgetting the conventions to which we are accustomed, and make the teacher and learners aware of the writing process concept.

Regarding to the pedagogical science, we must not forget that there is a difference in the approach to the study of writing in mother tongue and foreign language, the native person already knows his language when he enters school, he has a very valuable skill.

Non-native speakers often begin studying a foreign language already before they are older or adults, they then find themselves before two unknown systems, oral and written, not to mention the interference of their own language (Catach, 1988, p. 175). Weber (1993) believes that learning to write is a difficult act for a native learner as a foreign learner.

According to Allouche (1996), foreign students do not always need an interpretative style learning, it is true that there is a large demand for an improvement in written language and vocabulary learning. Writing in a foreign language, according to Moirand (1979) responds to the functional requirements, except in special cases.

In fact, producing oral and written form an inseparable couple. But as noted Courtillon (2003 cited by Rober 2008), if “in oral, the student can rely only on the phrases that he has memorized ... in writing these words are available.” It is apparent from this essential difference that the learner, paradoxically as it is easier to talk than to write, “is in a more favorable situation in writing than in oral.”

3. Actual Situation of Writing Teaching in Iranian Context

It is generally acknowledged that structural syllabuses including presentation-practice-production in which the elements of linguistic system were the basic units of analysis have failed to create opportunities for meaningful use of language and the engagement of more naturalistic acquisitional processes. In reaction to such linguistic syllabuses that are prevalent in Iran, there has been a paradigm shift within language teaching circles towards analytic syllabuses like action-oriented approaches to instruction. While the former set out a narrowly predetermined set of objectives and procedures for teachers, and are usually seen and discussed from teachers' points of views, the latter are based on learner-centered views of language teaching in which the need to transact tasks that have a clear pedagogic relationship to out-of-class language use engages implicit learning processes, with such implicit processing based on the task material driving forward underlying language development (Long & Crookes, 1991, 1993).

In effect, as Richards and Renandya (2002) put it, applying tasks that serve to facilitate communication and interaction lie at the heart of various proposals for action-oriented instruction. As one of the task activities, being able to have written communication, the concern of the present study, constitutes the development of writing skill during the course of action-oriented textbook. Various studies have investigated the impact of applying an action-oriented approach.

4. Action-oriented Teaching of Writing

As Grabe and Kaplan (1996) and Johns (1997) mention, the text produced by foreign language writers is always, as in any other writing situation, the product of a socio-cognitive process requiring complex cognitive abilities, as well as linguistic and cultural competence.

To develop such competence, as Cabral (2004) points out, the teacher should assume a non-traditional role in classroom, which implies his/her ability to problematize and to facilitate collaborative construction of knowledge. The teacher also needs to know the sociocultural needs of the students to be able to challenge them and to promote their involvement with the task presented (e.g., writing a letter asking for/giving advice). This writing task was designed in accordance with methodological principles of the TBLT: it provided time for negotiation between the teacher and the students, and among the students themselves; it included real communicative language activities; it allowed the students to think about topics that interest them and also to share their opinions on these same topics.

To empirically examine task-based writing instruction, Bantis (2008), in his thesis, focused on meaning with an occasional shift to grammar. Therefore, after the end of the writing conference held by the teacher, the students were required to compare their rough drafts and the final draft created by the teacher so as to notice differences between their interlanguage and Standard English. Doing so, he found that task-based writing instruction can be a useful vehicle for differentiated instruction and it represents a teaching strategy that is consistent with principles of second language acquisition to address the diverse needs of second language learners.

It is worth adding that, in the process of writing under learner-centered approaches to language teaching, editing is one of the key stages in which learners need to have a good degree of autonomy. In this regard, Ferris' (2002) study revealed that teacher involvement in editing student work is treated as a temporary support that should be phased out as the second language learner is taught to independently self-edit and self-correct writing pieces.

It can be concluded that what is missing in previous studies of the effects of action-oriented language teaching (TBLT) on learners' general writing ability was a comparative study of efficacy of action-oriented approach while an Iranian FLE context was concerned. Moreover, a need was felt to double check the intermediate learners' overall writing ability when they were involved in completing personal and decision-making task types.

5. Objectives of the Present Study

Since action-oriented teaching of FLE writing is left rather untouched, the present study attempts to investigate the role that task-based writing can play in language acquisition of Iranian FLE learners. More specifically, this study aims at examining the effects that completing personal and decision-making tasks under the conditions of individual, pair, group and no planning can have on FLE learners' writing ability. Consequently, by observing 3 different action-oriented approach textbooks and analyzing the writings of the learners, the present study seeks to bridge the gap existing in previous studies concerning the clear effects of task-based writing on the participants' writing ability while comparing the initiatives of 3 textbooks. The formulated research questions follow:

#1 What is the efficiency of the action-oriented approach textbooks to the development of writing skills of Iranian learners of FLE?

#2 Among the textbooks chosen for this research, what are the most efficient for a homogeneous learning of 4 skills?

#3 What are the most common problems, and challenges caused by the FLE textbooks in the development of writing skill of FLE Iranian learners?

6. The Development of Writing Skill in the Three Textbooks: *Connexions*, *Alter Ego* & *Echo*

Certainly, in this research, it is a question of reflection on the space destined to the written skill and its components to set up a better suited education to the Iranian context of the FLE.

A question possibly arises is why we chose textbooks to address the subject of the written skill? In answer we can say that despite the debates in the world of education on the use of textbooks in the foreign language course, "the textbook is dead or alive textbook" (Piccardo & Yaiche, 2005, p. 1) teachers of our country including the institutes are forced to teach from the textbooks chosen by the institutes, which serves as their main medium.

Also adopting the ideas of Courtyllon (2003), we can take a stand and say that having a textbook in the class could be necessary because it helps to know where one starts and where it reaches and follow a certain path.

As for the public of institutes in Iran, it is generally made up of young students, or those who intend to go to France, Canada and other French-speaking countries. The teaching of writing skills must meet their needs.

It should be noted that the context of learning/teaching of FLE in IRAN is an exolingual context, therefore learners have little direct contact with Francophones.

6.1 Overview of the Three Textbooks

Connexions is a training package on three levels that caters to adults and teenager beginners. It covers 100-120 hours of teaching-learning level.

Echo after "*le Nouveau sans Frontières*", "*Panorama*" and "*Campus*" is the new textbook of Jacky Girardet, intended for older teenagers/adults on four levels, designed in 2010.

Echo is based on an action-oriented approach and prepares the objectives described by the CECRL DELF A1 both collectively and individually.

This textbook organizes learning in a succession of situational contexts to which the learner will have to adapt. These contexts determine the tasks that the student will have to perform. Each context is a unit of the textbook, this unit representing between 30-40 hours of instruction. (Girardet, 2011, p. 8).

Alter ego for its part is a French textbook on four levels for adults or older teenager learners. It covers levels A1 to B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CECRL).

The summary table of document type, listening type and Types of questions in 3 textbooks.

Textbook of FLE	Document type used for activities of written comprehension	Type of listening activities in the written understanding	Types of questions for the activities of written comprehension
<i>Connexions</i>	manufactured dialogue email Authentic document (press, magazine, recipe etc.)	overall listening selective listening	Complete/Write open Questions replace Find Read/Reread Discussion based on the text Presentation like the text
<i>Écho</i>	manufactured dialogue authentic document non authentic email	overall listening selective listening Precise listening (transcribing)	complete note read Associate/Sort
<i>Alter égo</i>	manufactured dialogue pedagogical text B. D.	overall listening selective listening	Transform/Reconstruct Complete/Find Read/Reread

The following table summarizes what is explained on the activities of the written production in three textbooks:

Textbook of FLE	The triggers for written production	Types of written production activities
<i>Connexions</i>	Written production based on the texts Transcription of speech acts	rewrite Write based on the given elements
<i>Écho</i>	Written production based on the visual material Written production based on the texts (authentic or manufactured) Transcription of speech acts	Imagining end of the story Write in small group Imaginary interactive writing Write in and for the context of native country
<i>Alter égo</i>	Written production based on the visual material Written production based on the texts (authentic or manufactured) Transcription of speech acts	Imagining end of the story Write in small group Imaginary interactive writing

6.2 The Highlights and Critical Points of the Three Textbooks

As for the Highlights we can say that some textbooks are not very recent, the French offered to learners is a neutral language without functional variety (Dumont, 1986, p. 69), whereas in the textbooks already mentioned, the French proposed to learners is a language with functional varieties.

The three textbooks have considered in their objectives, writing skill as required even in A1, A2 levels. The

activities are not limited to two people in the class; they are performed among at least three people. According to Puren, one of the differences of the communicative approach and action-oriented approach is that in the communicative approach centration is on the learner and inter-individual dimension, i.e. the group by two, while in the action-oriented approach centration is on the group and the collective dimension, i.e. the larger group (2008.9).

In the Echo, reading comprehension is an individual activity, while written production, it is a collective activity accompanied with fun activities.

As to critical points it is propitious to mention them to improve our teaching/learning of the written skill in these textbooks in IRAN. The first remark is that there are no equilibrium between the numbers of exercises devoted to each skill. The following table appoints by means, the number of activities per unit:

textbook	Oral comprehension	Oral production	Written comprehension	Written production
Connexions (par unité)	7 activities	3 activities	6 activities	1 activity
Alter égo (par unité)	2	4	3	2
Écho (par unité)	7	5	4	3

The number of activities focused on the four skills is more balanced in Alter ego and Echo textbooks.

Another point on which we can criticize the *Connexions* textbook is that the production activities are mainly considered essential to pass the exams like DELF and not as one of the language needs of the learner. While in the other two textbooks, learners from the beginning of his educational process are somehow in contact with the written production/expression in a context near everyday life.

As for creativity/imagination, some of the proposed activities in *Alter ego* and *Echo* textbook are not shown enough creative. In fact, learners are not expected to be creative or do some research to ensure the validity of the facts presented in the required contexts, however they are persuaded about the main text in the same way or repeat the text elements.

Collective reflection does not appear in a timely manner in three textbooks: only the Echo textbook is based on a collaborative reflection through written production. This requires an active participation of learners and wider efforts made to ensure that the group project will be successful. In this manual, collaborative work requires first and foremost spoken for the development of written scenarios which are subsequently practiced in the classroom in the form of role playing.

In sum, within the identified textbooks, we found that the diversity of the written competency activities is not large enough, and that none of selected textbooks incorporates all the criteria identified in a motivational writing.

7. Case Study

Our field study focuses on the written production of Iranian learners working with the three aforementioned textbooks. Indeed, the corpus of this research consists of 3 groups with 10 learners of the two institutes in Qom. Our study focuses to level A2 CEFR. So we have 10 students for each manual. Several factors were taken into consideration in the constitution of our corpus: age, level, sex of learners but the main factor is the use of one of the manuals listed as the main support base of the class.

7.1 Implementation and Outcomes

Regarding the self-assessment questions, they are drawn from the standards of the written authority of the Common European Framework Reference for Languages. In this part, students were expected to answer our questions. Written productions are analyzed with a view to measure the writing skills of Iranian learners in the usage of the French language. The main test duration is 60 minutes. The main test of written production consists of a single written production task: Writing a narrative text.

The image and data analysis and correction criteria are retrieved from the test and researches in the FFL

Department at the University of Alberta in Canada.

Constructors of this test list different types of criteria, including the message contents, the organization of the message and the use, and these criteria are analyzed in our research.

We have taken into consideration in the analysis of written productions of learners, the parameters that are summarized in the following paragraphs: it should be noted that the evaluation of these parameters is already offered by many educationalists as Widdowson, Cuq, etc.

7.2 Message Content

Noting the “Message Content”, we have considered what is appropriate for a learner of A2 level of the curriculum, as well as the complexity and length of the story. We considered how the student:

- writes a story from a given situation;
- writes sentences presenting the action of the story;
- writes sentences to conclude his story;
- selects words and phrases according to the desired direction.

7.3 Organization Message

Noting “the Organization of the message,” we considered the following measures according to which the student:

- constructs affirmative sentences in the order of the sentence (Group of the subject + Group of the verb + complement or attribute), including the following sequences of words determinant + noun + adjective, determinant + adjective + noun;
- organizes its sentences to communicate his thoughts (logic).

7.4 Usage

Noting the Usage, we have considered what is appropriate for a learner of A2 level of the curriculum, as well as the complexity and length of the story. We considered how the learner:

- respects the spelling of words by consulting reference tools;
- uses the capital letter and the point in simple sentences.

After collecting the self-assessment grids and after correcting the written productions of learners, we analyzed our data with SPSS software by using the tests like the Chi-Square test, PCA (Principal components analysis), Varimax rotation, Kendall correlation, Pearson Correlation and one way ANOVA.

8. Data Analysis

8.1 Chi-Square Test

Table 1. Analysis of the influence of three manuals on the learner’s final score

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
PASS	22	15.0	7.0
FAIL	8	15.0	-7.0
Total	30		

Table 2. Test statistics

	FINAL
Chi-Square	6.533 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.011

As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the teaching of writing skill with the 3 textbooks from the action-oriented approach has a significant influence on the notes of the narratives of learners (the average difference is significant at the

0.05 level (sig<0.05)).

This shows that the three textbooks have influenced the development of writing skills of learners.

In Figure 1 (next page) the data collected and analyzed with SPSS, showed that 73.33% of learners were able to pass the exam and 26.67% had unsatisfactory marks to pass.

And this figure illustrates that textbooks selected in this research not only have a significant influence on the writing skills of learners, but also 73% of them have an acceptable level of written proficiency.

The following figure shows the influence of three manuals on the final note of learners: passing or failure

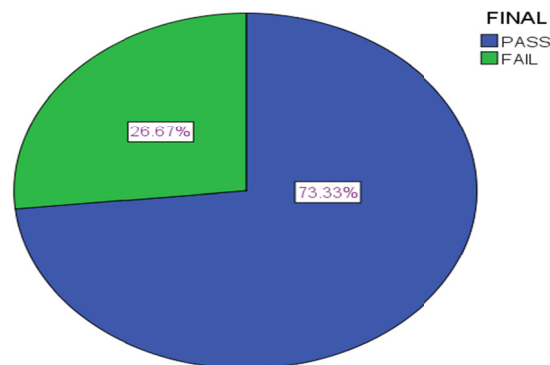


Figure 1.

8.2 The Test P.C.A

Table 3. Principal component analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.851
	Approx. Chi-Square	175.395
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	df	55
	Sig.	.000

The first output of this test is the Table 3, which represent two indices: KMO and Bartlett test. As presented in this table, the results indicate that our data are adequate for this test. The greater the amount of KMO is near figure 1, more data are proportionate and Bartlett's test is significant. Also because the Sig. (P values) is 0.000 so the result is significant at 99%.

Thus, the number of components of the self-assessment grid issues is reduced. This means that with the PCA test questions that we used in the self-assessment grid, are divided into two groups (or components, statistically speaking).

Some questions are more important and some have less importance. We will discuss these two groups in the paragraphs that follow.

Table 4. Anti-Image correlation to measure the KM for each question of the grid

Anti-image Correlation	Q1	.812 ^a	-.335	-.134	-.035	.138	.267	-.140	-.126	.133	-.260	-.019
	Q2	-.335	.830 ^a	-.345	.092	-.356	-.177	-.081	.253	-.123	.121	-.091
	Q3	-.134	-.345	.892 ^a	-.002	.217	-.260	-.243	.110	-.079	-.101	-.144
	Q4	-.035	.092	-.002	.874 ^a	-.147	-.135	-.120	.228	-.158	-.092	-.014
	Q6	.138	-.356	.217	-.147	.780 ^a	-.058	-.134	-.406	.192	.040	-.147
	Q7	.267	-.177	-.260	-.135	-.058	.832 ^a	-.342	-.384	.253	.055	-.262
	Q8	-.140	-.081	-.243	-.120	-.134	-.342	.911 ^a	-.010	-.242	-.102	.192
	Q9	-.126	.253	.110	.228	-.406	-.384	-.010	.807 ^a	-.337	-.275	-.035
	Q10	.133	-.123	-.079	-.158	.192	.253	-.242	-.337	.829 ^a	-.444	-.243
	Q11	-.260	.121	-.101	-.092	.040	.055	-.102	-.275	-.444	.872 ^a	.066
	Q13	-.019	-.091	-.144	-.014	-.147	-.262	.192	-.035	-.243	.066	.906 ^a

By analyzing the table number 4, we understand that the questions in the grid, with a quantity of less than 0.5, were systematically eliminated. Questions number 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 13 have thus remained. The questions 5, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17 were removed. It could be mentioned that the test P.C.A. eliminates questions that do not have a sufficient quantity to be analyzed.

Eliminated questions concerned the competence of reading, which is a component of the written competence. Because questions are taken from CECERL, and the CECERL has devoted much of the writing competence of learners in reading, the writing skill is almost overlooked.

Table 5. Total variance explained

Les composants	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			<u>Rotation</u> Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total % of Variance	Cumulative%		Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative%
1	5.787	52.612	52.612	5.787	52.612	52.612	3.476	31.601	31.601
2	1.158	10.529	63.142	1.158	10.529	63.142	3.469	31.541	63.142
3	.990	9.004	72.146						
4	.821	7.462	79.608						
5	.607	5.515	85.122						
6	.510	4.637	89.759						
7	.349	3.177	92.935						
8	.225	2.048	94.983						
9	.220	2.004	96.987						
10	.195	1.774	98.761						
11	.136	1.239	100.000						

As indicated in Table 5, each component comprises one percent of variance, therefore all the components are thus all of the variance. This test of SPSS reduced all the questions in two components and the two components together constitute 63% of our data (>50%).

The rotation test is performed to provide much distinguished results:

First Component: 31.601%

Second Component: 31.541%

Table 6. Rotated component matrix

	Component	
	A	B
Q1	.760	.048
Q2	.410	.630
Q3	.623	.520
Q4	.402	.301
Q6	.015	.832
Q7	.295	.834
Q8	.647	.585
Q9	.502	.580
Q10	.792	.325
Q11	.844	.225
Q13	.286	.697

With the table number 6 we realize that the questions of the two components are distinguished, questions number 1, 3, 4, 8, 10 and 11 thus belong to component A and the questions 2, 6, 7, 9 and 13 belong to the component B.

By looking at the Questions of both Group A and B we realize that the questions of group A are among the primitive conditions of the written competence at A2 level of French language learning, like “write very simple and very short messages”, “pay attention to the conjugations of regular verbs” etc. and the questions of group B are matters of more advanced order as “check writing homonyms”, “use prepositions, conjunctions, conjunctions of subordination” etc..

8.3 Nonparametric Correlations: Kendall Correlation

Table 7. Analysis of correlations between the component A grid Questions, learner responses and final marks

		TOTAL	Q1	Q3	Q4	Q8	Q10	Q11	
Kendall's tau_b	TOTAL	Coefficient Correlation	1.000	.033	-.367 *	-.145	-.308	-.184	-.159
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.832	.014	.351	.051	.242	.313
		N	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Table 8. Analysis of correlations between the B component issues of the grid, learner responses and final marks

		TOTAL	Q2	Q6	Q7	Q9	Q13	
Kendall's tau_b	TOTAL	Coefficient Correlation	1.000	-.442**	-.538**	-.519**	-.390**	-.411**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.003	.000	.001	.010	.009
		N	30	30	30	30	30	30

As shown in Table 7, by analyzing the components of group A, all correlations are reduced and this phenomenon proves our hypothesis—if the learner rather answered “No” to questions grid, it will get a failing grade in his written production; all correlations are very low and also not significant.

With regard to data analysis issues of component B, as shown in Table 8, trade-offs are repeated but this time they have much increased. All correlations are significant in this case, the reliability is 99%.

In conclusion this test shows that learners who mostly have chosen number 3 of the questionnaire have obtained

unsatisfactory marks and learners who have chosen the higher the number 1 of the questionnaire obtained acceptable and excellent marks.

So the correlation Kendall confirms that the groups divided by the PCA test were right and proper. The correlation between the answers to the questions is negative, the correlation of the questions of group A is low and the correlation of questions of group B is very high, which confirms the test.

8.4 Pearson Correlation

Table 9. Correlation analysis between the scores of 3 parts Contents/Organization/Use and the final mark

		TOTAL	Contents	Organization	Use
TOTAL	Pearson Corrélation	1	.775**	.734**	.736**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	30	30	30	30
Contents	Pearson Corrélation	.775**	1	.230	.250
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.222	.183
	N	30	30	30	30
Organization	Pearson Corrélation	.734**	.230	1	.660**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.222		.000
	N	30	30	30	30
Use	Pearson Corrélation	.736**	.250	.660**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.183	.000	
	N	30	30	30	30

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As shown in Table 9, there is a significant correlation between the notes.

Correlations between the scores of 3 parts Contents/Organization/use are very close to each other: 0.775 - 0.734 - 0.736 and have reliability 99%.

About correlations between the 3 parts Contents/Organization/Use only the organization and use have a significant correlation.

8.5 Oneway

Comparing notes with learners trained with *Alter égo, Connexion, Écho*.

Table 10. ANOVA-analyzing variances between the notes of “Content/Organization/Use” and the final note in the 3 manuals

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
TOTAL	Between Groups	26.867	2	13.433	2.166	.134
	Within Groups	167.475	27	6.203		
	Total	194.342	29			
Content among learners of 3 manuals	Between Groups	13.867	2	6.933	3.367	.049
	Within Groups	55.600	27	2.059		
	Total	69.467	29			
Organization among learners of 3 manuals	Between Groups	2.917	2	1.458	1.716	.199
	Within Groups	22.950	27	.850		
	Total	25.867	29			
Use among learners of 3 manuals	Between Groups	1.850	2	.925	1.205	.315
	Within Groups	20.725	27	.768		
	Total	22.575	29			

As presented in Table 10, there is a difference between the notes of learners formed with 3 different action-oriented approach manuals, only in the “Content”. In other words, among the 3 groups of learner’s notes, their “Message Content” is significantly different.

Table 11. The notes of “use” and “Organization” of their text have no significant difference

The average of notes/manual	Alter égo	Connexions	Écho
Message Content	7 out of 10	8 out of 10	9.5 out of 10

With the Table 11 we showed how notes of the “Message Content”.

The writing skills of learners who have learned FFL (French as Foreign Language) with *Echo* at the “Message Content” is higher than in other two groups of learners. And written competence of learners who have learned FFL with *Alter ego* is lower than the other two groups.

Then it should be noted that all three manuals provide roughly the same degree of development of the written competency levels of “Message Organization” and “use”.

8.6 Post Hoc Tests

To compare these means from the 3 manual we used the test of Duncan, the results are shown in the following table:

Table 12. Duncan

Méthodes	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Alter égo	10	7.8000	
Connexions	10	8.2000	8.2000
Écho	10		9.4000
Sig.		.538	.072

As shown in Table 12, there is a significant difference between the results of the Echo textbook and Alter ego textbook.

Also there is a significant difference between *Alter ego* textbook and the *Connexions*. So the *Echo* has more influence on the writing skills while *Alter ego* is less. This is shown in the following figure:

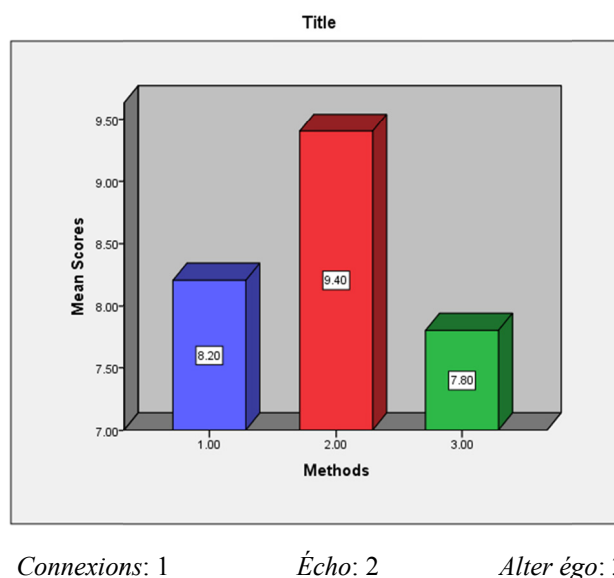


Figure 2.

As we have said, of the three manual from the action-oriented approach, the influence of the *Echo* on the written competence and especially the content of the written work of pupils is outstanding and we attest a significant difference between the results tests.

9. Discussion

The teaching/learning of writing skills in FFL has been the subject of numerous studies and we have given, in this research, the conductive lines of this area to improve the situation of teaching written competence in Iran. The ultimate goal of this research was to contribute to the development of writing skills and its increase with Iranian learners of FFL by identifying problems of Iranian students.

The pedagogical approaches in language teaching, as elsewhere advocated by policy makers in education policy unilaterally imposed, cannot consistently provide a satisfactory answer for all age groups and all contexts.

The action-oriented approach teaching textbooks are import (mainly Anglo-Saxon inspiration) that may be relevant, but their applications must be reflected, furnished, adapted to different educational contexts. For that, it requires time, means to achieve the best results in training.

10. Conclusion

The main objective of our research was to identify whether the textbooks from the action-oriented approach are effective for the development of writing skills at A2 level, what is the most effective manual, what are the errors of the written production of Iranian FFL learners and especially their causes.

The results showed that the three textbooks from the action-oriented approach studied in this research, have a positive role in the development of writing skills because 73.33% of the three groups of students were able to pass the exam written production.

But the difference between the scores of each group report that the three manuals are not similar in writing skills teaching. The results obtained by the Echo manual are considerably higher than the two other manuals.

By examining the results of the examination of learners we have testified that there is a significant difference between the results of the Echo manual and the other two manuals. Indeed the three manuals from the same approach do not have equal share in the learning of the written competency.

Among the three groups of learners, 56.25% have syntactical errors types, which is common in the approach of the three manuals. But we noticed that the group 1 and 2 learners who learned FFL with *Connexions* and *Alter ego* manuals respectively have more lexical problems than the learners of group 3. The Echo Manual, devoting more written production activities in each unit, gives therefore a more effective writing skill.

Returning to the basic hypothesis of this research, and the results of our field research, we must claim that the first hypothesis is more or less denied, because the manuals of the action-oriented approach, although the priority is given to oral competence, do not neglect written competence. But it should be noted that according to the table on page 5 and 6, the development of the components of the latter is neither balanced nor comprehensive.

Basically the approach of the three manuals, advantaging of the implicit approach grammar teaching, calls into question their effectiveness regard to the written skill.

The second hypothesis is confirmed, the *Alter ego* manual is less effective in the teaching of writing skills and in return the Echo manual is more. This difference was especially remarkable about the Content of written productions of three groups of learners.

The third hypothesis, the error, specifically the syntax error was recurrent in the written productions of the students. There are often the same types of errors written production to another; this proves the role of manual and approach in this weak point in our learners. The inductive grammar, which is one of the principles of action-oriented approach, does not work as it should in the development of writing skills of Iranian learners of FFL. At least in the Iranian context that we are the only inductive approach does not meet the student needs who are used to learn the traditional manner grammar.

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