Communicative Language Assessment in L2 Writing

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ABSTRACT

Communicative Language Assessment in L2 Writing

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Despite communicative language teaching's popularity in many countries, including Canada and America, empirical studies that shed light on practical communicative language teaching and assessment (CLA) of L2 writing are scarce. Therefore, this study opted to contribute to teaching and assessing L2 writing literature from the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) perspective. First, a Writing Communicative Competence (WCC) rubric was developed drawing on Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) language testing model, and then, it was pilot tested following a concurrent triangulation mixed-methods design. Six teachers and six learners from a language school in Montreal rated two written samples using the rubric (quantitative component) and responded to an open-ended questionnaire that elicited their opinions about the rubric and their experiences using it. Following the recommendations of teachers and students, the WCC rubric was revised. Second, an intervention study was carried out to explore the effect of communicative competence strategy training using the WCC rubric on L2 writing performance. Twenty intermediate-level participants were divided into two groups: the control group (n = 10) and the experimental group (n = 10). The control group received regular instruction for eight weeks. In addition to regular instruction, the experimental group participated in four explicit strategy training sessions that targeted raising participant's awareness about writing communicative competence: 1) the teacher explained the components of

the WCC rubric and how to use it; 2) the teacher modeled how to apply the rubric to writing and how to assess essays using the rubric; 3) the learners, in pairs, analyzed written samples using the rubric; 4) the learners wrote their essays, assessed their peers' essays, and revised their essays using the rubric. Twenty-eight raters rated essays that were collected on the pre-test and the post-test and responded to a questionnaire. The results indicated that the WCC rubric is a reliable and useful teaching and assessment tool for L2 writing.

Keywords: communicative language instruction, communicative L2 writing assessment, international language schools, strategic competence, pragmatic competence, quantitative analysis, qualitative analysis, thematic analysis.

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GLOSSARY

Analytic rubric: An analytic rubric articulates different dimensions of performance and provides detailed ratings for each dimension. It is a useful tool to provide learners with detailed feedback.

Assessment as/for learning: Assessment for learning is a process by which teachers assess the acquired knowledge to measure learning progress and to adjust teaching decisions based on the results of the assessment. Assessment for learning can be used by learners to adjust their learning strategies. It is also known as formative assessment in student-centered approaches to assessment that "involves the active engagement of learners in setting goals for their learning and growth, monitoring their progress toward these goals, and determining how to address any gaps" (Andre, Huff & Brooke, 2012; Lee, 2017).

Canadian Language Benchmarks: Canadian language standards established and reinforced through sustained research, application, and consultation to inform the needs of Second Language training programs for adults and immigrants (Center for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2012).

Checklist: A set of concrete and observable behaviors that are organized in a logical sequence to serve as a reference or a reminder of the required elements in the assessment (Uzun, Alici, & Aktas 2019). Checklists usually offer yes/no format about specific criteria.

Competency: Demonstrable application of knowledge and skills by individual learners (Center of Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2012)

Competency-based instruction: Performance-based instruction through which language learners demonstrate mastery of the language associated with specific skills that are necessary to function proficiently in the society in which they live (Grognet & Crandall, 1982)

Communicative competence: An ability to use language code appropriately depending on the context (Educational Testing Service, 2011; Hymes, 1966).

Holistic assessment rubric: Holistic rubrics consist of a single scale by which the text is assessed. When assessing writing with a holistic rubric, the assessor evaluates a text against evaluation criteria set for the performance.

International students: Learners who left their country of origin and moved to another country to study.

Formative assessment: Ongoing evaluation of the instruction and performance provided by teachers to strengthen weak areas in learner's performance. See also assessment for/as learning

Portfolio assessments: Assessments based on a systematic collection of learners' writings including learners' various assessments, teacher's observations and comments over a period of time (Cole, Ryan & Kick, 2000).

Rating scales: Scoring categories of evaluative criteria that indicate the degree to which certain behaviors, skills, or strategies are displayed by an individual (Vagle, 2014).

Rubrics: Assessment tools that contain detailed explanations of each dimension of the trait to be measured (Uzun, Alici, & Aktas, 2019).

Task-based instruction: An approach to teaching a second/ foreign language that engages learners in authentic language use by having them perform a series of real-world tasks. (Ellis, 2003).

Washback effect: The influence of testing on teaching and learning (Bailey, 1996)

Chapter 1: Problem Statement

International students

Worldwide, international students make valuable educational and economic contributions to institutions where they pursue their studies and to their host country (Andrade, 2006; Paris & Biggs, 2018). In a world that increasingly reflects the effects of globalization, the need for intercultural education and understanding is critical (Paris & Biggs, 2018) to meet the growing demands of the marketplace (Gervais, 2016; Munoz & Araya, 2017). Workers need to synthesize large amounts of information from various sources and skillfully articulate the important pieces of information to their teams who nowadays represent a global and diverse community (National Research Council, 2001). Successful performance in diverse and multi-cultural society necessitates efficient and skillful communication among the team workers, especially if they are communicating in a second or third language. In addition to being an important revenue source, international students contribute to intercultural learning and an increased understanding of diversity and global issues in the host country (NAFSA, 2003; Paris & Biggs, 2018). They create international business and trade connections, become political allies (NAFSA, 2003) and promote foreign policy interests (Schneider, 2000) in the host country. In some cases, international students may remain in the country after graduation to fill positions for which few nationals are qualified (Gray, 2003).

The total increase in the number of international students reflects the overall increase in tertiary enrolment with various proportions worldwide. Europe is the favored destination for learners studying outside their countries, accounting for 41% of all international students worldwide. North America has 21% of all international students (OECD, 2013). While international students in Ireland represent only 2% of all learners enrolled in tertiary education

(International Institute of Education, 2005), other countries such as Australia, the UK, and Canada host international students in large numbers. The number of international students in Canada totaled 245,895 in 2017 (Statistics Canada, 2018).

International students in Canada

The number of international students studying in Canadian universities is a reflection of the Canadian national plans and comprehensive strategies (Schneider, 2000). First, Canada adopts multiculturalism and diversity as an official policy to compete internationally. Therefore, welcoming bright minds to Canada enriches the learning experience at university campuses, provides learners and faculty with international perspectives, and strengthens Canada's economic, political, and social ties with the rest of the world, while also promoting multiculturalism and diversity in Canada. Second, Canada's youth population is decreasing, so institutions prefer hiring international students after graduation to ensure that the country remains educationally and financially viable. International students are statistically shown to be among the best candidates for immigration due to their education that is recognized by Canadian employers, their experience working and living in Canada, and their high levels of language proficiency compared to immigrants (El-Assal, 2017; Johnstone & Lee, 2014).

International students in Language Schools in Canada

In addition to university-level international students, the Canadian government has set plans to attract international students who seek English language training in language schools. Language education in language schools is yet another sector that attracts the interest of the Canadian government because it is a lucrative trade for both language institutions and the country. Tuition and living expenses that language learners paid in 2017 generated a minimum of $1.6 billion in revenue for the Canadian economy and contributed $204 million in federal and

provincial tax revenue (Languages Canada Annual Survey Report, 2018). Canadian private language schools are running a profitable business that sells English language training as their services (Block & Cameron, 2002); therefore, whoever wants to seek language practice in Canada and is willing to pay for the English training services is welcome to apply to these private language schools. The application process is easy. What international students need to do is to get an admission letter from any language school to obtain their learners' visa. According to the annual survey report of Languages Canada (2018), the number of international students enrolled in private language schools reached 149,379 international students in 2017.

Moreover, international students in private language schools feed tertiary education. On the one hand, with the increasing number of international language learners, the demand for qualified English language teachers increases (Walker, 2001). Thus, universities promote teacher training programs that provide language schools with trained language teachers. Teaching in private language schools requires a minimum of TESL Canada Level One Professional certification, which is equivalent to a university degree, 100-hour of methodology, and a minimum of 20-hours practicum (Languages Canada, 2012).

To keep their business going, private schools promote themselves as "accredited by Languages Canada," which stands for high-quality instruction. Language schools in Canada need to undergo successful accreditation which requires meeting the standards for student services, teaching staff, curriculum, marketing and promotion, administration and student admissions (Languages Canada, 2012). Languages Canada is a national language education association that offers accreditation to private and public language schools, colleges, and universities to adhere to regulations and standards of quality (Languages Canada, 2019).

Regarding curriculum, Languages Canada draws on Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) standards that serve as a reference point for L2 educators, assessors, and curriculum designers (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2012). CLB standards are based on communicative language principles that refer to the ability to understand and communicate written and oral messages effectively and appropriately in various social contexts. Teachers' role in language schools is to provide communicative language instruction and assessment in relevant settings that are meaningful to their intended population.

Pedagogical Approaches in Language Schools

Due to the globalization in the 21st century that has reshaped knowledge and skills required in the workplace (Gervais, 2016; Munoz & Araya, 2017; Purpura, 2016) and due to the reform in the educational systems to better prepare learners to the workplace demands (Johnston & Soares, 2014), English as a second language (ESL) is shifting from traditional teaching approaches mainly presentation-practice-production (PPP) instructional model to the communicative teaching approaches such as task-based and competency-based approaches.

Presentation-practice-production (PPP) instructional model is the most common modern methodology employed by language schools around the world (Cook, 2008; Criado, 2013). However, researchers (Lewis, 1996; Scrivener, 1994) have criticized it for being not communicative enough to meet the requirements of the 21st century. Lewis (1996) argues that PPP mostly focuses on lexical and grammatical pre-teaching, which presupposes linear learning of various linguistic forms (Scrivener, 1994). However, this sequence does not guarantee the acquisition of knowledge because language forms need to be revisited and consolidated through practice (Criado, 2013). Pienemann (2007) stated that learners follow a natural acquisition

sequence that is not affected by the linear instruction of linguistic forms making grammar instruction not very effective.

In reaction to all the criticism of PPP, ESL instruction in accredited language schools in Canada is shifting its pedagogical practices from PPP to CLT that has become a framework for language education worldwide (Butler, 2005; Duff, 2014; Lee, 2014). Nowadays, language schools in Canada adhere to the guidelines of Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) that focus on communicative characteristics of instruction and assessment (e.g., task-based, experiential, real-world outcomes, learner-centered instructions). Equally, the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in Europe and the American Council on Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) align with CLB (Language Testing International, n.d). However, research has shown that the CLT application in schools is challenging (Carless, 2009; Marcellino, 2015; Tong, 2005).

Situated in the CLT paradigm, the present study seeks to advance communicative language assessment (CLA) that would be beneficial in language schools by developing a rubric, Writing Communicative Competence (WCC) rubric, for teaching and assessing writing. The second goal is to test the effectiveness of the WCC rubric at promoting the communicative efficiency of written texts. Chapter 2 presents communicative language teaching (CLT) principles and challenges. It also highlights the milestones of the development of the communicative language assessment (CLA), its core principles, and challenges before moving on to presenting how L2 writing is assessed in CLA. Chapter 3, which is Phase I of the study, evaluates existing communicative writing assessment tools against Bachman and Palmer's (2010) CLA model and pilot tests the usability of the WCC rubric that was designed for the study. Chapter 4, which is Phase II of the study, presents the method of the

intervention/exploratory study designed to test whether implementing communicative competence strategy training using the L2 writing assessment rubric would help international students in a language school produce adequate, effective, and communicative written texts. Table 1 presents an overview of the study.

Table 1

Study Design Overview (Phase I and II)

Phase I	Evaluate the textbook in light of Bachman and Palmer's model
	Develop a written communicative competence (WCC) rubric based on: - Bachman and Palmer's (2010) CLA model. - Writing assessment criteria used in a language school. - Writing assessment criteria used in standardized tests (IELTS and TOEFL iBT). - Writing assessment criteria used in CLA literature.
	Pilot test the rubric - Train teachers and students (N = 12) to use the rubric. - Rate two written samples using the rubric. - Interview teachers and students to get their perceptions about the rubric.
Phase II	Intervention Two groups: control and experimental. Control group: regular instruction Experimental group: Communicative competence strategy training - rubric introduction and explanation - student/teacher communicative assessment using the rubric - writing session using the rubric - student/student writing assessment
	Collect written texts with concept maps before and after the intervention.
	Raters rate written texts.
	Interview teachers, students, and raters to get their opinions about the rubric.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Origins of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) originated in Britain in the 1960s as a reform to Chomsky's Universal Grammar theory that presupposes that language learners have innate, genetic sets of universal language rules that are activated when exposed to a certain language. Language teaching at that time was rooted in the behaviorist theory and, therefore, focused on linguistic accuracy that was promoted through the grammar-translation method and structural approaches. With the flow of immigrants to Europe in the 1950s-1960s (Van Mol & De Valk, 2016) and teachers' complaints about learners' weak communicative abilities despite their vast linguistic repertoire, researchers started to attend to enhancing communicative skills (Murray & Christison, 2001). Campbell and Wales (1970) argued that Chomsky failed to consider the relationship between language and its social context and that he overlooked the value of communication in the learning process. Following Campbell and Wales, Hymes (1972) emphasized that Chomsky's assumptions of an ideal or optimal language learner who performed only correct sentences at the grammar level were unrealistic because people in real life have used the language according to their social norms and acceptance. Krashen and Terrell (1983) added to the argument that learners do not have time to consult their knowledge of language and grammar consciously during communication and interaction. Hence, the need to build communicative competence of language learners has become the central focus of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach.

To overcome the lack of communicative context in traditional approaches, many language researchers in the 1970s began advocating for functional syllabi (Wilkins, 1972). In the notional/functional design, educators suggested to assess and identify learners' communicative

needs and then design a syllabus based on these needs (Savignon, 1991). The designs that only focused on the communicative and functional aspects of language referred to what is known as a strong version of CLT (Howatt, 1984; McNamara, 1996). However, in practice, it turned out that ignoring grammar instruction at the expense of teaching communicative language in context did not guarantee successful language learning. Swain (1985) found that after five years of natural interactions in French immersion classes, learners' language did not improve, and their grammatical accuracy remained low. Thus, researchers started to attend to both grammatical and communicative competence in language teaching. This led research in CLT to develop designs that could allow a balance between language form and meaning (Nassaji & Fotos, 2011) which gave rise to the 'weak version' of CLT (Howatt, 1984) in which language instruction shifted from pure naturalistic to a hybrid instruction that focused on both meaning and form.

Pedagogical Practices in CLT

In CLT, language teachers have become facilitators who help learners become autonomous learners who are active listeners and speakers (Brown, 2004, 2008). Language teachers are participants like any other participants (learners) in a large learning group in the classroom (Breen & Cadlin, 1980). Communicative language teachers do not allow the use of L1 in their classes, considering that learners' first language will interfere with the learning process (Littlewood, 1981, 2013; Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Thus, communicative language teaching took a form of experiential learning in which learners negotiate and perform tasks in pairs and/or small groups. Teachers focus on fluency-based activities that encourage learners to develop their confidence through role-plays and games that elicit the targeted language structure. In CLT, teachers create activities that connect classroom learning to the student's everyday lives. Thus, teachers focus on activities that require learners to exchange information on their typical day

drawing on daily activities (Lee & Van Patten, 2003). In sum, the CTL approach has shifted the role of the instructor from being a lecturer and editor of learners' linguistic errors to the role of a facilitator and monitor who selects and uses activities that engage learners and increase their willingness to participate and practice foreign languages (Richards, 2006).

In CLT, classroom activities are designed to maximize learners' opportunities to use the target language in a communicative way for meaningful interaction. Using task-approach is among the means deployed in CLT to engage learners in authentic and meaningful conversations that elicit various language forms. Therefore, communicative syllabi emphasize the functions of language rather than the rules (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). Every teaching decision has to deal with construing meaningful exchange of information among language learners, which may explain the reason for not having prescribed communicative textbooks (Savignon, 2002) as various groups of learners have different linguistic needs. To conclude, CLT has become a broad approach to the language curriculum with various sub-approaches, including task-based language teaching (TBLT), content-based instruction, competency-based instruction, strategy-based instruction, and problem-based learning (Littlewood, 2013; Nunan, 2004) that favor meaningful communication in a social environment.

Core CLT Principles

As introduced in the previous section, the core principle of CLT is meaning-making (Savignon, 2002; Purpura, 2016) which is created through interactive tasks (Swain, 2005) that require communicative competence skills (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972; Bachman & Palmer, 1996, 2010; Purpura, 2014). Meaning-making entails interactive, learner-centered, and experiential learning that can be implemented by introducing tasks into the classrooms. Pyun (2013) asserts that tasks make learners focus on meaningful exchanges and promote their use of

language in the real world. Authentic tasks provide learners with opportunities to use language in naturalistic, communicative, and meaningful situations (Hadley, 2001; Nunan, 1991).

In addition to the association of meaning-making with tasks in communicative teaching approaches, meaning-making is also associated with communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1972). Several conceptual frameworks emerged, reinforcing the importance of communicative competence as a pillar of successful language learning. The most recent theoretical communicative competence model was proposed by Bachman and Palmer (2010). Their model comprises all the competencies that emerged in previous communicative competence models (Bachman, 1990; Canale & Swain, 1980; Canale, 1983; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1997; Hymes, 1972). The essence of these models is that language competence consists of grammatical, pragmatic, and strategic competence situated in a socio-cultural paradigm that stresses that language knowledge is bound by knowing the culture and its pragmatic nuances in a context (Berns, 1990).

In a nutshell, the basic CLT principles are summarized as the following: communication principle, task principle, and meaningful language principle. The 'communication' principle suggests that activities that involve real communication and interaction among learners should be applied to promote learning. The 'task' principle indicates that activities should emphasize carrying out meaningful tasks to promote learning. The 'meaningful language' principle suggests that language users use language that is meaningful to them to support the learning process. Despite the increasing number of educational institutions that implemented CLT programs (as many as 600 programs in the U.S as documented by Mitchell, 2015), plenty of published CLT discussions and debates have been mostly hypothetical/theoretical. Although language testers, teachers, and researchers postulated about the benefits of communicative-based instruction for

language learning (Gervais, 2016; Grus, Falender, Fouad, & Lavelle, 2016), its application is still problematic. The next section will present the main challenges of CLT.

CLT Challenges

The main challenge of CLT lies in the mismatch between theory and practice (Jeon, 2009; Wang, 2007). Unlike the audiolingual method, which was derived from behaviorism, no learning theory guides the practice of CLT (Dornyei, 2013). CLT is theoretically broad, which has resulted in many different interpretations of the meaning of CLT and how it would be implemented (Littlewood, 2013; Savignon, 2007). This limitation was confirmed by CLT studies that reported teachers' misconceptions of CLT. Thompson (1996) investigated teacher's perceptions of the CLT and found that teachers reject CLT because they believe that CLT means teaching speaking but not grammar. They also believe that their dominant role as teachers shifts from the knowledge transmitter to knowledge facilitator. The same findings were confirmed by Sato and Kleinsasser (1999) who added that the lack of pre-determined textbooks imposed a lot of preparation for teachers, which is time-consuming. Teacher's misconceptions suggest that they lack training on how to teach communicative competence (Ellis, 1996; Kumaravadivelu, 1993, 2006). Ellis (1996) and Li (1998) reported that teachers lack training in strategic and sociolinguistic competence; they also lack mastery level of English proficiency, making it difficult for them to speak English only all the time, especially that they frequently resort to their L1 in classes.

Lack of teacher training adheres to administrative decisions and schools' unwillingness to fund new educational approaches (Li, 1998). Schools' practices are rooted in grammar teaching instruction and assessment. Marcellino (2005, 2015) reported in his studies that five Indonesian schools have failed to implement communicative-supported instruction because of the lack of

funding that will necessitate changing the whole school structure from classroom design, classroom management, resources, grammar-oriented exam structures, to teachers' professional development. Teachers reported that even if they are willing to embrace CLT principles, they were influenced by many factors such as limited resources provided by the school, university entrance exams which test grammar knowledge, and predetermined textbooks to which teachers adhere to prepare their students to pass high-stakes exams (Gorsuch, 2000; Lewis & McCook, 2002, Mason & Payant, 2018).

Another limitation of CLT is its universal application. CLT is not an international approach and is not applicable in every culture (Ellis, 1996). For instance, the CLT application in Asia is challenging. In this regard, Butler (2011) identifies three factors behind the resistance in adopting CLT in the Asian context. First, CLT conflicts with traditional learning and teaching principles in Asia which, for example, do not focus on oral activities and group work. Second, CLT activities and materials are developed to practice the use of language in Western cultures with which the Eastern teachers are not familiar. Third, classroom factors played an important role in the application of CLT. Asian classes are large and are not designed for group or pair work.

CLT can be applicable only when there are linguistic and cultural similarities between the foreign language and the learners' native language because these similarities enhance learners' ability to communicate in a foreign language (Ohta, 2001). For example, it is easier for American learners to communicate and speak French because there are linguistic and structural similarities between French and English languages compared to Japanese trying to learn English. Gokcora and Eveyik-Aydin (2011) found that instructors of Arabic as a foreign language believe that CLT is not appropriate to teach Arabic due to cultural differences between Arabic and Turkish.

Genana (2012) also found that teaching languages that have complex morphological structures such as the Romanian language cannot be successfully achieved through communicative instruction.

Furthermore, social values and beliefs also restrict successful application of CLT. Gamal and Debra (2001) explored novice and experienced Egyptian teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards the communicative language approach in language teaching and learning. Novice teachers were more open to change than qualified teachers who were unwilling to change their ingrained practices. Moreover, in Egyptian cultural traditions, learners fear peer intimidation when they speak in a foreign language; therefore, group and pair work was less fruitful and motivating for learners.

In addition to all these challenges (teacher's misconceptions, lack of training, universal application, administrative, and social barriers), CLT, more importantly, provides little insight into how language can be communicatively assessed (Littlewood, 2014). Although the application of CLT is problematic, language programs are still relying on its principles in their pedagogical choices (Shrum & Glisan 2015). Littlewood (2013) suggested replacing the communicative language approach with a communicative-oriented teaching approach and seeing it as an umbrella that embraces several practices that aim to achieve successful language teaching.

With the spread of CLT, it is hard to ignore communicative norms in testing designs (Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Canale & Swain, 1980, 1981; Morrow, 1979; Fulcher, 2000, 2004, 2010). Nonetheless, CLT and CLA have not evolved hand in hand as most of the assessment in the CLT context was traditional: language tests assessed learners' knowledge of the acquired linguistic forms through communicative instruction. Since CLT is

still flourishing and little is known about CLA, which has become the dominant paradigm in modern language testing (Harding, 2014), it is essential to understand what CLA means and how it is implemented in educational contexts to advance the field. If a second language is taught from a communicative perspective, it should then be assessed accordingly by using tests that allow for the measurement of the communicative competence of the testees (Breen & Candlin, 1980; Canale & Swain, 1980; Carroll, 1982; Littlewood, 1981; Richards, 2006; Savignon, 1991, 2002). Therefore, in light of the importance of language assessment to CLT and with the lack of information on communicative assessment, the next section will highlight key core principles of CLA and its challenges.

Communicative Language Assessment (CLA)

Language assessment in CLT is shifting from the traditional assessment of language forms and structures to more communicative forms in which a communicative language testing system tests learners' ability to apply their linguistic knowledge to meaningful communicative situations (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). That is, language assessment in CLT is shifting from traditional assessment scales (e.g., multiple-choice, discrete-point assessments, summative assessments (Cheng & Fox, 2017; Lee, 2017) to language assessments that can cope with the demands of the educational reform and the workplace (Gervais, 2016; Johnston & Soares, 2014).

Modern L2 language assessment is taking the form of performance-based assessment (assessment of performance) such as task-based assessments, problem-based assessments, portfolio assessments, journal entries, reflections, teachers' observations (Bachman, 2000; Brown & Hudson, 1998; Cheng & Fox, 2017; Gencel, 2016; Lee, 2017; McNamara, 2003; Norris, 2002, 2016). These assessments account for the communicative demands of the workplace that requires authentic, real-world, socio-cultural, and effective pragmatic

communication. Put differently, for language assessment to be communicative, it should reflect real-world, authentic, and task-based assessment (Fulcher, 2000).

CLA Core Principles

Historically, both task-based assessment and competency-based assessment, which are descendants of CLA, contributed to the evolution/development of CLA in different ways. On the one hand, task-based instruction, for instance, provided CLA with means to create real-world and authentic contexts by incorporating tasks in assessment, which was challenging in CLA before the emergence of task-based instruction. Using tasks for assessment contextualizes prompts and helps learners connect linguistic structures with their function (Clark, 1972, 1978; McNamara, 1996, 2002; Skehan, 1998). Tasks also paved the way for assessing successful performance by drawing on standards of successful real-world performance (McNamara, 1996). Since task-based instruction perceives assessment as a learning opportunity, formative assessments performed by the teachers are more and more favored in CLA with less attention given to summative assessments.

On the other hand, competency-based instruction contributed to assessing various communicative competencies. Communicative competence is elicited through task performance. Since tasks and competencies do not necessarily transmit from one task to another, Scallon (2015) suggests that tasks or competencies are assessed based on what has been taught. Bachman (1990) and Bachman and Palmer (1989, 1996, 2010), who were inspired by Hymes (1972), Savignon (1983), Halliday (1973), Van Ek (1976), Canale and Swain (1980), developed a conceptual framework for CLA that consists of organizational, pragmatic, and strategic competence. All these models are based on the premise that breaking a language down into different elements and testing them separately afford testing objectivity (Pillar, 2011). To

conclude, CLA stands for assessing communicative competence elicited through tasks during assessments (formative or summative) (Harding, 2014). That is, three interconnected core principles are associated with CLA: 1) formative assessment, 2) task-based/competency-based assessment, and 3) communicative competence assessment that is aligned with communicative competence teaching.

CLA Challenges

Each of these three CLA trends has potent challenges for the implementation of CLA in practice. Regarding the first trend in CLA, CLAs are based on ongoing formative assessment as part of the instruction. CLA is mostly restricted to teachers providing their learners with ongoing feedback on learners' performance through quizzes or incorporation of checklists for self- and peer-assessment purposes. The purpose of ongoing formative assessment is to interact with learners through their learning process and scaffold them to ensure that learners are developing required communicative skills. Ongoing formative assessment can avoid unexpected complications during summative assessments (Boillos, 2018; Mariano, Hammonds, Chambers, & Spear, 2017; Ke, 2006; Scallon, 2015). During formative assessments, teachers provide constructive feedback resulted from observation, intervention, and regulation process that is complemented by peer- and self-assessment (Mariano et al., 2017). Designing communicative tasks early in the program makes it easier for teachers to infer the competencies of interest from the performance and to design and validate the assessment rubrics accordingly (Minas, 2017; Munoz & Araya, 2017; Scallon, 2015; Wigglesworth & Frost, 2017). However, since learners' language is assessed and scored based on summative assessment using various rubrics, some aspects of communicative assessment are overlooked (e.g., strategic competence). Furthermore, summative assessments are governed by regular high-stake tests that aim to measure learning

outcomes. This suggests that summative CLA does not differ from class-based regular evaluations, and therefore they are not communicative.

Regarding the second trend, which was using 'tasks' as indicators of communicative assessment, tasks-based assessments jeopardize test authenticity because they do not allow teachers to test knowledge in creative ways (Newman, Brandt, & Wiggins, 1993). Teachers should present task-based skills during the instruction and should test these skills on tests (Scallon, 2015). In this way, teachers are not only creating a negative washback effect, but also restrict the learning process (Alderson & Chapman, & Wall, 1995; Bailey, 1996, Burrows, 2004; Cheng, 2005; Cheng & Curtis, 2004; Cezero, 2013; Messick, 1996; Singh, 2007; Shohamy, Donifsa-Schmidf, & Ferman, 1996). Nonetheless, with the increasing use of the 'assessment as learning' in formative assessments (Rea-Dickins, 2008) and with lack of evidence that skills transfer from one task type to another (Scallon, 2015), it has become pertinent to pre-teach skills and competencies required to accomplish a testing task. As a result, the washback effect has become positive in CLA (Green & Weir, 2002), which creates a need to align teaching and assessment in CLA. One of the ways to align teaching and assessment is to test the learners on the same skills or competencies that have been targeted during the instruction. It can be concluded that apart from the limited interaction between teachers and learners during the formative assessment, no communicative language assessment exists.

Regarding the third trend, which is CLA reliance on assessing 'communicative competence', it is not clear from the conceptual papers on CLA how its principles are applied in language assessment. Although Bachman and Palmer's (2010) model serves as a conceptual framework for many CLT programs (e.g., CLB descriptors are based on Bachman and Palmer's principles), researchers report that its application is difficult because it underrepresents the

complexity of communicative competence (Harding, 2014). From CLA perspective, organizational knowledge (grammatical knowledge (syntax, morphology, vocabulary) and textual knowledge (cohesion and rhetorical organization) has been assessed the most in research (Tagushi & Kim, 2018) because most of the CLA attention is directed towards the assessment of linguistic structures and how information is organized by drawing on integration/interaction of more than one skill to develop arguments (Leki & Carson,1997).

Although pragmatic knowledge has started to attract researchers' attention as stated by Tagushi and Kim (2018), researchers are still looking for ways to construct valid and reliable pragmatic assessment tools (Youn, 2014, 2018). Kuiken and Vedder (2014, 2017, 2018) have assessed written and oral tasks in terms of their pragmatic (functional) competence and reported that comprehensibility, task requirements, organization, cohesion, and coherence contribute to the validity of their assessment tool. Nonetheless, Kuiken and Vedder's rubric assesses only one constituent of communicative competence construct. Designing a rubric that can assess all components of the communicative competence can give a more global picture of how instruction and assessment are influenced by communicative competence and vice versa.

Although the third component of Bachman and Palmer (2010) communicative competence model, which is strategic competence, is the most essential communicative competence component because it requires putting, organizing, and coordinating all knowledge in a meaningful and organized manner (Schilperoord, 2001), it has not been implemented in CLA yet. Strategic competence instruction, also known as strategy-based instruction, strategy instruction, or metacognitive strategy training, is mostly researched in language teaching as a tool to raise learner's awareness of certain linguistic forms and structures through meta-cognitive instruction (Al-Jarrah, Mansor, Talafhah, & Al-Jarrah, 2018). Research has shown that strategy

instruction can help learners establish connections between form and meaning (Hillock, 1995; Gunning & Turner, 2018; Kuhn & Udell, 2003; Van Gelder, Bissett, & Cumming, 2004). It can be concluded that CLA applications are patchy and inconclusive and are mostly made in oral contexts, which brings us to the last limitation.

The last limitation of CLA is that CLA mostly addressed oral rather than written communicative competence (Harding, 2014; Kuiken & Vedder, 2014, 2018; Savignon, 2017; Vedder, 2017). This limitation is most obvious in standardized tests. Standardized tests, which are administered internationally, claim that they are based on the communicative language principles. International high-stakes tests such as TOEFL and IELTS and standardized language descriptors of the Common European Framework of Reference and the Canadian Language Benchmarks promote on their official webpages that they are communicative. However, these tests assess the communicative competency of speaking but not writing. TOEFL iBT, for example, tests the communicative competence of the testees in speaking part of the test (Educational Testing Service, 2011, p. 4). However, even the speaking component is not communicative because the examinees respond to an examiner's scripted questions rather than to a genuine conversation (Youn, 2018).

The Common European Framework of Reference also promotes communicative competence descriptors that can be used for assessment purposes (Council of Europe, 2001). Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) also points out the importance of assessing communicative competence (Center of Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2012), but CLB provides only descriptors that are suitable for teaching methodology rather than L2 assessment. Although CLA is characterized by introducing contextualized tasks to create authentic, real-world, and meaningful test prompts, the assessment itself is not communicative. Communicative

tests are often context-specific, but they fail to capture the complexity of the L2 writing process and are certainly not assessed communicatively. Moreover, in practice, communicative tests fail to reflect writers' communicative competence (Nguyen, 2011). In an empirical study by Nguyen and Le (2014), the authors evaluated 10 test writing papers, including five 45-minute tests and five end-of-term writing tests that claim that they adopt communicative language principles and concluded that language written tests do not always measure learners' communicative competence in the target language. The next section will highlight the orientation of the CLA studies in L2 writing.

Communicative Assessment of L2 Writing

Most written texts are assessed through checklists, rating scales, analytical, and holistic rubrics (Beck, Llosa, Black, & Trzeszkowski-Giese, 2015; Coombe, 2010; Lumley, 2002). Rating scales, rubrics, and checklists are not only beneficial tools to promote learning, when integrated with ongoing assessment, but also are reliable tools of assessment (East, 2009; Ene & Kosobucki, 2016; Jonsson & Svingby, 2007; Fraile, Panadero & Pardo, 2017; Rezaei & Lovorn, 2010; Uzun, Alici, & Aktas, 2019; Wind, Stager, & Patil, 2017).

Rubrics, analytic and holistic, are invaluable assessment tools in L2 writing assessment because they offer teachers and learners a set of descriptive criteria that learners can use as learning tools and guidelines to the requirements of the L2 writing (Brookhart & Nikto, 2008). Analytic rubrics are suitable for classroom instruction, and they are used for formative assessments. They provide learners with an opportunity to internalize various writing components at a time.

Holistic rubrics, however, are more suitable for summative assessments when teachers want to assess all written components together. Similarly, rating scales are important because

they guide teachers and learners in understanding what writing aspects were well addressed and which aspects need more attention (Becker, 2018). Like rubrics and rating scales, checklists can have a dramatic effect on learning. Checklists give teachers and learners visual goals/guidelines for a list of criteria that is expected from the learners to master. It can be used as a practice in learning-to-write and writing-to-learn approaches (Bromley, 2003; Hodgson & Bohning, 1997). All these assessment tools have descriptors or evaluation criteria in common. However, they differ in how the assessment criteria are weighed. Checklists indicate the presence or absence of the requirements. Rating scales indicate the degree of the displayed standards. Rubrics consist of fixed and detailed characteristics of the assessed criteria at each performance level.

Although these assessment tools have proven to be beneficial for assessment and learning, they are either not communicative enough or are not properly integrated into writing classes. For CLA to be communicative, it is not enough to assess communicative competence on rating scales as it is the case of most CLAs for writing; assessment tools should be implemented in a communicative way to be communicative. For example, assessment tools can be part of the writing process, and instruction, where writing objectives of the course are constantly and explicitly emphasized and reflected on in writing classes.

International tests such as IELTS and TOEFL that claim to be communicative still assess candidates' linguistic ability on rating rubric scales that elicit static and non-interactive linguistic responses in comparison to native norms (Jenkins & Leung, 2017). McNamara (2011, 2014) pointed out that even current communicative assessments are far from being communicative and that they should be reconsidered to better understand what communicative assessments are and how they can affect communicative interaction. In this regard, Hall (2014) proposed shifting English language assessment from testing how people use the language to test what they can do

with it. This call has been mirrored in high-stake tests, i.e., IELTS, TOEFL, and Canadian Academic English Language (CAEL), that elicit authentic university writing skills from test-takers through integrating information from source readings into writing (Payant, McDonough, Uludag, & Lindberg, 2019). Despite this critique, standardized tests are administered worldwide and determine the future of international students willing to pursue their education in English-medium universities without testing their written communicative competence.

Taken together, all these L2 writing assessment tools (rubrics, scales, and checklists) can be tailored to comply to CLT/CLA principles, i.e., CLA should be learner-centered, meaning-oriented, authentic, task-based oriented, competency-based, and aligned with teaching objectives. CLA should assess the communicative competence construct and not only part of it. Partial assessment of communicative competence (organizational or textual features of written texts) reduces the communicative value of teaching and assessing L2 writing, which is the case of CLA in L2 writing (Tagushi & Kim, 2018). Third, even if communicative competence is to be assessed as proposed by Bachman and Palmer (2010), little is known about its application in practice (Harding, 2014). The following section will present what was done so far regarding CLA for writing.

Bachman and Palmer's CLA and L2 writing

As mentioned previously, Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) communicative competence is a multidimensional construct that consists of organizational, pragmatic, and strategic competencies. The following sections will highlight the CLA of L2 writing from Bachman and Palmer's standpoint. Organizational competence, in writing, is reflected as an ability to structure, organize, and comprehend the role of the propositional content of the grammatical structures (Bachman, 1990). Most L2 writing research attends to the organizational

competence of L2 writers by engaging them in various writing approaches to help them organize their linguistic content into an understandable piece of writing.

The second component of communicative competence, pragmatic competence, is defined as writers' ability to subsume vocabulary, cohesion, and organization/coherence of the text to serve a communicative purpose of language users (Bachman & Palmer, 1982). Pragmatic meaning refers to the appropriateness, naturalness, acceptability, and conventionality of a written message (Purpura, 2004). Pragmatic meaning construction is a mutual interaction between the reader and the writer in a given context (Fetzer, 2004). Hence, pragmatic competence can be assessed by "understanding the meaningful functioning of language, i.e., to trace the dynamic construction of meaning in language use" (Verschueren, 1995). Timp Laughlin, Wain and Schmidgall (2015) propose to teach pragmatic competence through raising writers' awareness of the role of pragmatic competence in writing. Several researchers (e.g., Olshtain & Blum-Kulka, 1985; O'Keeffe et al., 2011) have suggested that it is crucial to raise writers' awareness, develop their noticing strategies through analyzing writing samples to improve their pragmatic competence. As it can be noted, most pragmatic competence assessment studies in writing are conceptual in nature, providing little guidance on how to assess the pragmatic competence of L2 writing in practice.

The only pragmatic competence tool to assess L2 writing that I am aware of is Kuiken and Vedder's (2014, 2018) pragmatic assessment rating scale. Their scale resulted in four categories: content, task requirements, comprehensibility, and coherence and cohesion that are based on the general CEFR descriptors (Council of Europe, 2001), the scale descriptors of the rating scale of De Jong, Steinel, Florijn, Schoonen, and Hulstijn (2012), and Grice's (1975) conversational maxims. However, the components of their rubric are general, which opens room

for inconsistent rating across the raters as they can attend to different subcomponents within each component of the rubric. General descriptors in rubrics lead to inconsistent ratings (Lumley, 2002, 2005; Smith, 2000; Youn, 2007, 2014). Their rubric also partially assesses communicative competence rather than its all components rendering partial results of the effect of communicative competence on language production. Most CLA studies in writing assessed pragmatic competence based on the implementation of linguistic forms that serve a pragmatic function such as email or letter writing, assessing degrees of formality in making requests, expressing opinions, discourse strategies, and politeness markers (Pattemore, 2017; Taguchi & Kim, 2018). That is, these pragmatic studies of writing focused on how linguistic forms serve communicative goals (pragma-linguistics as coined by Thomas, 1983).

Both competencies, organizational and pragmatic, are interrelated. To help L2 writers organize their content, researchers and practitioners have attended to focus L2 writers' attention on keeping the audience in mind to ensure its comprehensibility (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Hyland, 2015, 2018; Magnifico, 2010, Wong, 2005). Flower (1979) reported that the difference between experienced writers and novice writers was that experienced writers account for the readers; whereas, the novice writers were more text bound. Exploring the effect of meaning-making on text comprehensibility has attracted researchers' attention (Backtin, 1986; Nystrand, Greene, & Wiemelt, 1993). Considering readers and the purpose of writing have been addressed in research by illustrating how writing is used by social groups using various examples of written texts that show how different disciplines write texts differently (i.e., text genre variability across disciplines) (Cheng & Fox, 2017; Hyland, 2011). The written outcome was analyzed in terms of content organization, its cohesion, and coherence, and linguistic forms that are clear to the reader.

The third component of communicative competence, strategic competence, is defined as a set of metacognitive components or strategies which refer to higher-order executive processes that provide a cognitive management function in language use (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, 2010). L2 writing instruction cannot be complete without drawing writers' attention to explicit metacognitive strategies needed to perform and analyze writing. Through strategic competence, L2 writers can master the writing process. Therefore, it is essential to raise L2 writers' awareness by engaging them in communicative and interactive cycles of the writing process: planning, drafting, organizing, and editing (Flower & Hymes, 1980). As mentioned earlier, through formative peer- and self-assessment sessions accompanied by teacher's feedback (Gunning & Turner, 2018), L2 writers can negotiate linguistic content and its organization from the readers' standpoint and later go back and edit their work. With systematic practice, the strategies will be reinforced and applied in L2 writing (Dornyei, 2013; Dornyei & Thurrell, 1991; Tatsukawa, 2007).

The only form of strategic competence assessment can be found in portfolio assessments (Mokibelo, 2018) if learners reflect on their writing process. Portfolios are defined as collections of students work and their self-assessments (O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996). According to Santos (1997), portfolio should have a self-assessment and reflective component; otherwise portfolio will become just a resource file. Reflective component can be encouraged by subsequent revisions of drafts. Portfolio assessments are part of CLA because teachers provide feedback on written drafts, learners incorporate that feedback in their subsequent drafts or essays, and finally, learners reflect on the development of their writings. Lantolf, Thorne, and Poehner (2015) reported that portfolio assessments engage L2 writers in a cycle of strategic performance according to the following stages: a one-to-one writing conference with the teacher,

a peer-editing session in class that involved learners working in pairs or small groups to read and comment upon one another's work, and whole-class discussions of strategies employed and learned throughout the course. Process portfolios are considered authentic, valid, credible, and rich in the information they supply (Driessen et al., 2005). The importance of portfolio assessments lies in the fact that they reflect the interactive (pragmatic) and reflective (strategic) aspect of learning to write (Kroll, 2006; Lam, 2014). Despite the importance attached to reflection, teachers tend to exclude reflection element, which is the most essential part, from their portfolios and restrict L2 writing collections to self-assessments through checklists (Torrance, 1998).

Conclusion

In sum, it was presented so far that CLA can take the form of formative assessments, introduction of task-based prompts in written tests, and assessment of written communicative competence, either organizational or pragmatic. However, there is a scarcity of research on how to teach and assess L2 writing from the CLA perspective. Less is known on what the effect of communicative competence is, combining organizational, pragmatic, and strategic competence, on L2 writing performance. Drawing on Bachman and Palmers' (1996, 2010) framework, the present study is set to design the L2 writing assessment tool and explore its effect on teaching and assessing L2 writing of international students in a language school. Chapter 3 will present the development of writing communicative competence (WCC) rubric and its usability for teaching and assessing L2 writing.

Chapter 3

This chapter presents the development and usability testing of writing communicative competence (WCC) analytic rubric to teach and assess L2 writing in a language school in Montreal. The rubric was designed with the intention to be used by the language teachers and learners. The rubric was designed in light of the CLA principles stated in Chapter 2. In other words, the WCC rubric was designed to help teachers bridge teaching and assessment of communicative competence (teaching and assessing communicative competence) and to help students with peer and self-assessment (formative assessment). In competency-based assessments that stand for assessing competencies, it is crucial to assess competencies that have been taught in class using assessment tools familiar for the learners (Scallon, 2015). Rubrics are considered reliable and valid performance assessment tools (Brookhart, 2018; East, 2009; Ene & Kosobucki, 2016; Fraile, Panadero & Pardo, 2017). Examining 75 studies, Jonsson and Svingby (2007) reported that rubrics facilitate consistent scoring, increase the reliability of assessments, promote learning, and improve teaching assessments. Rubrics explicitly articulate expectations for learners and set expected standards (Andrade, 2000; Arter & Chappuis, 2006; Panadero & Jonsoon, 2013; Prins, de Kleijn, van Tartwijk, 2016). As a result, the learning outcomes of language courses determine the type of rubric that better serves realizing the learning objectives, general or task-specific (Arter & Chappuis, 2006; Brookhart, 2013, 2018).

However, research has documented some limitations for rubrics. Torrance (2007) stated that rubrics can be subjective and vague, and they can limit learners' learning. Rubrics can also limit creativity and serve as directions for learners to follow for an assignment (Brookhart, 2018). In CLA, rubrics have not been evaluated systematically, and little is known about their theoretical nature and how teachers implement them in classes. As stated by Tagushi and Kim

(2018), it is surprising that communicative language teaching approaches, including a task-based approach, that emphasize the pragmatic use of language during teaching and learning still focus on organizational competence. This observation is relevant to the assessments as well because, in CLA literature, most ESL writing assessment tools are generic. That is, they consist of general writing components: content and organization, accuracy, and mechanics. Less focus is made on pragmatic components of writing as stated by Tagushi and Kim (2018). Kuiken and Vedder (2014, 2018) attempted to develop an L2 writing assessment rubric that captures pragmatic competence. Therefore, the present study aims to develop an assessment tool that is theory-driven, research-oriented, practical for in-class use, and compatible with CLT principles, i.e., communicative, meaning-making oriented, aligned with teaching and assessment, formative and summative. The hypothesis set in this study is that it may be useful to design a rubric for L2 writing that is based on Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) CLA theoretical model, especially that there is a tendency to overemphasize organizational competence at the expense of pragmatic and strategic competencies. Empirical studies on CLA were reviewed to inform the development of the rubric for the present study. The next section will present the rationale for rubric development.

Phase I: Rubric Development

Phase I of this study, the focus of this chapter, presents the rationale for the rubric's design and its content and outlines the undertaken steps to test its usability in a language school in Montreal that encouraged the CLT approach in teaching and was willing to embrace CLA for writing. The theoretical framework that informed the development of the WCC rubric was derived from Bachman and Palmer's (2010) communicative competence model. The WCC rubric included all three subcategories of communicative competence (organizational, pragmatic,

and strategic). As stated in chapter 2, communicative competence does not consist of independent strategies that can be assessed separately. All categories of communicative competence interact together to result in what is knows as the writing process. For instance, linguistic forms and sentences are organized at the micro (sentence-level) and macro (paragraph-level) level of essay writing to result in comprehensible writing. Since writers write for a purpose, which in ESL contexts is responding to writing tasks, they need to consider the task requirements carefully to perform the task successfully. Task requirements determine the linguistic structures and their organization in a text (interaction between organizational and pragmatic competence). To organize and orchestrate the whole writing process from pre-planning to the final draft, writers need to know strategies that facilitate and effectively organize the writing process (strategic and organizational competencies). Since the overarching purpose of writing is to create a comprehensible text, writers need to be familiar with strategies to produce socially intelligible text through organizing linguistic structures (interaction between strategic, organizational and pragmatic competence). However, so far, the literature has not presented yet, to the best of my knowledge, steps to apply Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) model for assessing writing.

The next section presents the key strategies adapted from three sources to develop the WCC rubric. These sources are 1) task-based writing assessment checklists used in the language school; 2) writing assessment criteria implemented in standardized tests such as TOEFL and IELTS; 3) the assessment criteria of published communicative competence rubrics designed for L2 writing. The rubric criteria or descriptors provided in these three sources were analyzed in light of Bachman and Palmer's (2010) CLA model to develop an analytic assessment rubric for writing that can be communicatively integrated into L2 writing classes.

Key Strategies in the Writing Textbook Prescribed by the Language School

The first step in developing the rubric was analyzing the writing assessment descriptors used in the language school. The school provides teachers with a prescribed writing textbook, *NorthStar 5*, Fourth Edition (Cohen & Miller, 2015), that contains assessment checklists which teachers use for assessing writing. The textbook draws on task-based and communicative principles for L2 writing instruction (Cohen & Miller, 2015, pp. X - XI), and it is suitable for upper-intermediate level (B2, CEFR level), which is equivalent to level 5 in the language school. There are eight units in the textbook. Each unit has four reading texts and a writing component that ranges from sentence-level to paragraph-level (introductory and body paragraphs) to a well-developed essay instruction. Research has indicated that both reading and writing require learners to be actively involved in constructing meaning (Risemberg, 1996; Shen, 2009; Nelson & Calfee, 1998; Lee, 2000). When language learners read texts, they bring meaning to that text by comprehending, analyzing, and synthesizing source information based on prior knowledge and background experience (Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013). Language learners can rely on source readings to generate ideas that they can rewrite using their understanding and language (Asencion Delaney, 2008; Cumming, 2000, 2013; Gebril & Plakans, 2013; Shen, 2009).

Evaluating Bachman and Palmer's (2010) communicative competence implemented in the textbook's checklist criteria revealed that the allegedly task-based and communicative textbook focused on linguistic, lexical, and grammatical components in the writing checklists with less attention to pragmatic competence. The initial categorization of the checklist criteria into communicative competence components is presented in Appendix A. The quantitative analysis of the results indicated that only three out of eight chapters focused on pragmatic competence (including clear introductory paragraphs, setting the context of the essay, providing

sufficient details, and ensuring overall comprehensibility of the essay). The assessment checklist, to which teachers adhere in their assessments, mainly focuses on the presence or absence of organizational components (essay organization including cohesion and coherence) and linguistic competence (grammatical structures and lexicon) in the written texts. Less attention is given to pragmatic competence (clarity of the purpose and text's readability). The strategic competence is not reflected in the checklist criteria, but it can be assumed that the presence of the checklist in the textbook implies, but not spelled out explicitly, the importance of strategic competence in L2 writing instruction and assessment. Nonetheless, it is up to the teachers to encourage their learners to use the checklist to assess their writing. The reconstructed checklist criteria in light of Bachman and Palmer's (2010) CLA model and the number of chapters covering each assessment criterion are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

The Frequency of CLA Components per Total Number of Chapters in the NorthStar Textbook

Communicative Competence Assessment Components	Number of Chapters/8 chapters
A. Organizational Competence	
I. Content (essay structure)	
Clear introductory paragraph setting the context	3
Interesting hook	3
Clear thesis statement with a forecast on the body	1
paragraph	2
Clear and explicit topic sentences	2
One topic sentence per body paragraph	3
Sufficient supporting details	
II. Task requirements	
Register requirements	1
Grammar	8
Lexicon	8
Linguistic variety	1
Mechanics	1
B. Pragmatic Competence	
I. Comprehensibility	3
The purpose of the writing is clear	
II. Coherence and cohesion	
Use of Connectors	1

C. Strategic Competence	
The checklist is provided (implicit criterion)	8
The evidence of strategic competence implementation within the checklist	0

The preliminary analysis indicated that teachers mostly attend to the organizational competence drawing on the assessment criteria presented in the textbook to which teachers in the language school adhere during their writing assessments. Less attention is given to the pragmatic competence during the writing process as indicated by the checklist criteria analysis (it appeared in 3 out of eight chapters) with no explicit instruction in the textbook to implement the strategic competence (except for the fact that the checklist is present in each unit based on the unit's writing objectives). All the checklist criteria/descriptors in the *NorthStar* textbook served as a basis for the WCC rubric to which more components were added based on the analysis of other assessment sources (standardized tests and other communicative assessment rubrics for writing).

Since the purpose of teaching international students writing skills is to prepare them for academic writing, language teachers should be aware of the writing requirements in higher education (Sparks et al., 2014). As introduced in chapter 2, standardized tests (IELTS and TOEFL iBT) serve as gatekeepers to higher education for international students, and they are based on the CLA principles. Therefore, it is essential to draw language schools' attention to the importance of introducing assessment criteria used in the standardized tests to their learners. Hence, the assessment rubric criteria used in TOEFL and IELTS were analyzed in light of Bachman and Palmer's (2010) CLA model to add to the already established criteria of the WCC rubric descriptors. The analysis of TOEFL iBT and IELTS writing rubric criteria are discussed in the next section.

Key Components of Standardized Test Assessments

The assessment rubrics used in TOEFL iBT independent and integrated writing task and IELTS writing task one are designed to measure test-takers' ability to integrate reading and listening skills into writing (Cumming, Kantor, Powers, Santos, & Taylor, 2000; Cumming, 2014; Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013). Teaching integrated writing skills to prepare students to pass standardized high-stakes tests adds authenticity to academic writing (Weigle, 2002), creates a positive washback effect, and improves test-takers' writing abilities (Cumming et al., 2000). Integrated writing definitions vary from reading-to-write construct (Ascencion Delaney, 2008) to writing to display appropriate and meaningful uses of source evidence (Yang & Plakans, 2012). Source evidence can be presented conceptually in terms of presenting, apprehending, and synthesizing source ideas and textually in terms of stylistic conventions for presenting, citing, and acknowledging sources (Cumming et al., 2005; Cumming, 2013; Gebril & Plakans, 2013; Plakans, 2009). Similarly, IELTS integrating writing task incorporates graph writing, which is yet another form of integrated writing (Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013).

On the one hand, writing skills assessed in the TOEFL and IELTS tests do not entirely overlap with the writing skills that are targeted in language schools. On the other hand, integrated writing is considered an advanced writing task that is usually developed in higher education (Knoch & Sitajalabhorn, 2013; Sparkes et al., 2014). Therefore, the integrated writing component in Ascencion Delaney's (2008) terms, i.e., reading-to-write, was added to the WCC rubric criteria. First, the decision to include integrated writing criteria into the WCC rubric was made because learners in language schools are required to integrate readings into their writings as in the case of the *NorthStar* textbook that is divided into reading and writing components. Each chapter of the textbook consisted of four short reading texts and a writing task related to

these four readings. Therefore, these four reading sources were included in the rubric for grading. The more source readings are included in the written texts the higher score the writers can get on that category. However, the teachers in the language school do not assess the integrated writing skill and introduce reading and writing exams separately. Since teachers create their own midterm and final exams in coordination with the headteacher, it was possible to include an integrated writing component in the WCC rubric. Second, international students who plan to take standardized tests to study in English university would need, at least, an idea of how to write their essays integrating information from provided readings. In this way, language schools can make the first move towards bridging their writing assessment with the standardized writing assessment. Regarding the rest of the standardized assessment criteria such as task achievement, coherence and coherence, lexical resource, and grammatical range, they were already included in the WCC rubric based on the textbook analysis. The next section will present the rubric criteria proposed in Kuiken and Vedder (2018) and Sparks and his colleagues (2014) because both studies attempted to create L2 writing rubrics from a communicative competence standpoint.

Assessment Criteria in Communicative Competence Rubrics

Two assessment tools developed by Kuiken and Vedder (204, 2018) and Sparks and his colleagues (2014) merit some discussion because these rubrics were based on a theoretical basis and informed by findings of previous research on L2 writing assessment. Kuiken and Vedder (2018) aimed to develop a pragmatic assessment rubric. Their rubric was derived from the general CEFR descriptors (Council of Europe, 2001), the scale descriptors of the rating scale of De Jong et al., (2012), and Grice's (1975) conversational maxims. Kuiken and Vedder's (2014, 2018) four rubric components consisted of content, task requirements, cohesion and coherence,

and comprehensibility. Task requirements component assesses the extent to which the instructions are covered in the response and whether the message transmitted is completed in accordance with the genre, register, and appropriate language choice in a social context. Comprehensibility refers to the amount of effort the reader exerts to understand the message. Cohesion and coherence dimensions focus on the adequacy of the message of the speaker/writer in terms of the occurrence of cohesive ties (presence or absence of deictic elements, anaphoric devices), conjunction use, and coherence breaks. However, the rubric is very general and has the potential for inconsistent rating across the raters as they can attend to different subcomponents within each dimension of the rubric. Nonetheless, Kuiken and Vedder's (2014, 2018) task requirements and comprehensibility were included in the WCC rubric criteria in the form of strategies that were required for successful pragmatic performance on written tasks and that were tailored to meet the requirements of the writing prompts of the textbook.

Another available writing assessment rubric that was situated in CLA that informed the development of the WCC rubric in the present study was Sparks and his colleagues' (2014) writing assessment framework. Sparks et al.'s (2014) framework consists of four categories: knowledge of rhetorical and social situations, knowledge of strategies, knowledge of language use and its conventions, and procedural knowledge. *Knowledge of Rhetorical and Social Situations* dimension referred to learners' ability to demonstrate skills in 1) writing for specific purposes, tasks, or contexts; and 2) audience awareness, which included writing for specific audience in mind (e.g., experts vs. general public). *Knowledge of Content Strategies* dimension referred to learners' ability to use content knowledge and support it using source readings and proper citations. *Knowledge of Language Use and Conventions* dimension referred to learners' ability to demonstrate an appropriate word choice, voice, and style during composing or revising

texts to enhance the clarity of meaning or to achieve a desired rhetorical effect. *The Procedural Knowledge* dimension included assessing drafting (learners' ability to compose fluent text) and revision (learners' ability to identify flaws and select appropriate modifications to existing texts). Sparks et al.'s (2014) rubric emphasized the importance of assessing pragmatic (audience, genre, and purpose of writing) and organizational content (citing, acknowledging the source and synthesizing across references). Their subcategories were regrouped in the WCC rubric to reflect Bachman and Palmer's (2010) CLA model.

Moreover, Sparks et al. 's (2014) rubric highlighted the importance of social and cognitive aspects of writing. Socio-cognitive and socio-cultural approaches converged on the notion that writing is purpose-driven and social (e.g., Graham & Perin, 2007; Zimmerman & Risemberg, 1997). That is, both approaches stressed that genre, audience, and the purpose of writing are keys to successful communication in writing. According to Bazerman (2004), social goals shape the writing organization and linguistic choices. The importance of considering readers and the purpose of writing has been acknowledged in research by illustrating how writing is used by social groups using various examples of written texts that show how different disciplines write texts differently (i.e., text genre variability across disciplines) (Cheng & Fox, 2017; Hyland, 2011).

Most importantly, Sparks et al. (2014) emphasized that procedural knowledge can not be developed without engaging learners in explicit, communicative, and interactive cycles of the writing process. The writing process consists of planning, drafting, organizing, and editing (Flower & Hymes, 1980; Kellogg, 1996). All these constituents of the writing process can inform teaching and assessing writing (Sparks et al., 2014). Researchers have reported that generating ideas using concept maps during planning activity leads to an improvement in L2

performance (Ojima, 2006; Sparks et al., 2014). Active revisions mediated by constructive peer and teacher's feedback has a positive impact on writing performance (Storch & Wigglesworth, 2010; Zhang & Hyland, 2018). However, previous research did not focus on how to teach and assess writing from the CLT standpoint (Savignon, 2017).

Taken together, the WCC rubric attempted to reflect a comprehensive set of writing strategies (strategic competence) spanning organizational (linguistic and rhetorical) and pragmatic competence (social and interactive), including knowledge of the writing process (planning, drafting, and revision). It also reflected the core principles of CLT and CLA addressed in Chapter 2 and attempted to address their limitations (misalignment between teaching and assessment, lack of CLA writing research). Therefore, the WCC rubric was designed to be used by teachers for teaching and assessing writing in formative and summative settings. The formative assessment involves portfolio assessment that in turn requires students' ability to peer and self-assess and reflect on their work. The sub-categories of communicative competence in the WCC rubric were synthesized from literature and the writing textbook in light of Bachman and Palmer's (2010) CLA model. Therefore, unlike Kuiken and Vedder's (2014, 2018) rubric, the WCC rubric reflected all components of communicative competence required to perform a written task successfully. "Successfully" is defined as readers' ability to understand the written text without effort. The WCC rubric is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

The WCC Rubric with the Grading Scale

	Very Competent (100% – 80%)		Competent (79% - 60%)	Needs work (< 59%)		
Scale	**Excellent 5**	**Very Good 4**	**Good 3**	**Satisfactory 2**	**Weak 1**	**Score 5-1**
Strategic Components						
I. Organizational Competence						
A. Idea Generation						
The writer generates ideas using one of the following: concept maps, webbing, freewriting, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre to achieve the purpose of writing, identifying the audience, using L1 to generate ideas.	The writer spends time planning for the writing activity by submitting a developed and diversified concept map integrated with various idea generation techniques such as webbing, freewriting, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre to	The writer spends time planning for the writing activity by submitting a developed concept map or any other sign of attempting to generate ideas using more than two strategies to generate ideas such as webbing,	The writer spends time planning for the writing activity by submitting a simple concept map in which at least one idea generation strategies is used such as concept maps, webbing, freewriting, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre to achieve the	The writer submits a very simple concept map in which few ideas are identified or provides a very simple outline or evidence of using only one of the idea generation techniques such as webbing,	The planning paper is not submitted or there is little evidence that the writer attempted to generate ideas using any of the following: concept maps, webbing, freewriting, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre	

	achieve the purpose of writing, identifying the audience	freewriting, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre to achieve the purpose of writing, identifying the audience	purpose of writing, identifying the audience	freewriting, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre to achieve the purpose of writing, identifying the audience	to achieve the purpose of writing, identifying the audience	
Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	
B. Content development and organization (essay structure)						
The writer sets a clear and a relevant context and provides a hook.	The writer provides an interesting, clear, and relevant context and a hook	The writer provides a relevant context and a hook	The writer provides either a clear and relevant context or an interesting hook	The writer provides a context with no hook	The writer provides unclear context and irrelevant hook Or does not provide any.	
The thesis statement is easy to identify, and it forecasts the topic sentences.	The thesis statement is easy to identify, and it forecasts the topic sentences	The thesis statement is identifiable, but it barely forecasts the topic sentences	The thesis statement is almost identifiable, but it barely forecasts the topic sentences	The thesis statement is difficult to identify, and it does not forecast the topic sentences	The thesis statement is unclear or not present.	

The writer provides one topic sentence per body paragraph	The writer provides one clear identifiable topic sentence for each body paragraph	The writer provides one topic sentence for two of three body paragraphs	The writer provides to some extent clear and identifiable topic sentence for at least two of the body paragraphs	The writer provides at least two clear and identifiable topic sentences in two of the body paragraphs	The writer does not provide clear identifiable topic sentences for body paragraphs. Or the text has only one topic sentence in the essay.	
The writer supports the topic sentence of each paragraph with relevant, extended and detailed ideas	The writer supports each topic sentence with 3 or more relevant, extended and detailed ideas	The writer supports each topic sentence with at least two extended and detailed ideas	The writer supports two of the topic sentences with relevant, extended and detailed ideas	The writer occasionally supports one or two topic sentences with some extended ideas	The writer occasionally supports the topic sentence with one extended or barely relevant ideas	
The writer integrates source readings to support the main argument	The writer integrates all 4 source readings to support the main argument	The writer integrates 3 of the source readings to support the main argument	The writer integrates only 2 source readings covered in the textbook to support the main argument	The writer integrates only one source reading covered in the textbook to support the main argument	The writer does not integrate source readings covered in the textbook	
The writer cites the source materials	The writer cites all of the 4 source materials	The writer cites 3 of the source materials	The writer cites 2 of the source materials	The writer cites only one of the source materials	The writer does not cite the source materials	

The writer closes the text with a clear conclusion	The writer closes the text with a clear conclusion that restates all the main points.	The writer closes the text with a clear conclusion that restates at least two of the main statements	The writer closes the text with a clear conclusion summarising at least one statement from the essay	The writer closes the text with conclusion that is not related to the essay	The writer does not provide a conclusion	
C. Cohesion and coherence						
Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	
The writer uses connectors to logically connect clauses and sentences	The writer uses connectors to create simple, compound and complex sentences and discourse markers to connect sentences and paragraphs	The writer uses connectors to create simple or compound sentences and some discourse markers to connect some sentences and paragraphs	The writer uses connectors to create simple and compound sentences with no discourse markers to connect sentences and paragraphs	The writer barely uses connectors to create simple and compound sentences and no discourse markers.	The writer uses only simple sentences with no connectors within and between sentences and paragraphs. connectors to	
The text exhibits unity and progression on the idea level	The writer provides 4 transition sentences throughout the essay	The writer provides 3 transition sentences throughout the essay	The writer provides two transition sentences from one paragraph to another	The writer provides only one transition sentence throughout the essay	The writer does not provide transition sentences from one paragraph to another	
II. Pragmatic Competence						

1. **Task requirements**						
Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	
The writer addresses the requirements of the task.	The writer fully addresses the requirements of the task in a clear way.	The writer most of the time addresses most of the requirements of the task in a clear way.	The writer addresses some of the requirements of the task in an adequate way.	The writer addresses the requirements of the topic but inadequately most of the time.	The writer does not address the requirements of the task.	
The writer uses an appropriate genre/register	The writer uses an appropriate genre/register. The essay is informative, and the writer's position is clear. The writer always emphasizes his/her opinion.	The writer's position is clear most of the time. The argument is present in at least 3 paragraphs. The writer emphasizes his/her opinion most of the time.	The writer's position is sometimes clear. The argument is present in body paragraphs only. The writer sometimes emphasizes his/her opinion.	The writer's position is stated only once in the essay. The argument presented in each paragraph is barely clear. The writer rarely emphasizes his/her opinion.	The writer's position is not stated. The argument presented in each paragraph is not clear. The writer does not emphasize his/her opinion.	
The writer uses various grammatical structures covered in the textbook to convey precise ideas.	The writer uses at least 4 grammatical structures and underlines all of them.	The writer uses 3 grammatical structures and underlines them.	The writer uses 3 grammatical structures but does not underline them.	The writer uses at least one grammatical structure and does not	The writer does not use the grammatical and does not	

				underline them.	underline them.	
The writer uses various lexicon targeted in the textbook in an appropriate way	The writer uses at least 5 vocabularies covered in the textbook and underlines all of them.	The writer uses at least 3 vocabularies covered in the textbook and underlines them.	The writer uses at least 3 vocabularies covered in the textbook but does not underline them.	The writer uses 1 or no vocabulary from the textbook and does not underline them.	The writer does not use vocabulary covered in the textbook and does not underline them.	
2. Comprehensibility						
Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	
The writer's purpose of the writing is clear	The purpose of the writing and of each paragraph is clear	The purpose of the writing in general and most of the paragraphs are clear	The purpose of the writing, in general, is clear, but the purpose of some paragraphs is not.	The purpose of the writing, in general, is not very clear and the purpose of each paragraph is not always clear	The purpose of the writing is not clear at all.	
The writer's essay is easy to understand	The writer's essay is very clear and easy to understand	The writer's essay is clear most of the time.	The writer's essay can be understood with some effort	The writer's essay is difficult to understand without some focus and rereading	The writer's essay is very difficult to understand	

The writer's choice of language structures and words is appropriate.	The writer's choice of language structures and words is always appropriate.	The writer's choice of language structures and words is appropriate most of the time.	The writer's choice of language structures or words is sometimes inappropriate	The writer's choice of language structures and words is not always appropriate.	The writer's choice of language structures and words is inappropriate most of the time.	
III. Editing and Revising						
Scale	**5**	**4**	**3**	**2**	**1**	
The writer revises the grammatical mistakes and reorganizes the text	There are several (more than 5) revisions (lexical, grammatical, mechanics) in the text indicated with another color. There is evidence that the writer reorganizes the ideas in a clear way The writer rephrases several sentences to convey precise meaning	There are several (at least four) revisions in the text indicated with another color. The writer clearly reorganizes some of the ideas using another color The writer rephrases some sentences to convey	There are some revisions in the text indicated with another color. There is evidence that the writer reorganizes at least one idea. The writer rephrases at least 3 sentences to convey precise meaning The writer fixes some of the grammatical mistakes,	There are barely revisions in the text as indicated with another color. There is barely evidence that the writer reorganizes the ideas The writer rephrases at least one sentence to convey precise meaning	There is no evidence that the writer revises the text. There is no evidence that the writer reorganizes the ideas. There is no evidence that the writer rephrases sentences to convey precise meaning	

	The writer fixes almost all grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling by many corrections using another color.	precise meaning The writer fixes most of the grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling as indicated by another color.	punctuation, and spelling using another color.	The writer barely fixes any of the grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling using another color.	The writer does not fix any of the grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling errors.	

Pilot Testing Rubric Usability

Research Questions

To ensure that the rubric, which was based on theoretical premises, also reflected actual teachers' practices and was clear enough to be used by learners, the following research questions were set.

1) How do teachers define, teach, and assess written communicative competence?
2) How do teachers and learners perceive the WCC rubric?
3) Can the rubric be implemented reliably?

Method

Participants

To test the rubric's usability, six teachers (three males and three females, mean age = 36.57, SD = 3.43) and six learners (five females and one male, mean age = 33.28, SD = 8.60) from the language school participated in the study. Three native English teachers and three non-native teachers had advanced degrees in TESL and Applied Linguistics with at least four years of experience teaching L2 writing in the same language school. Learners (three Koreans, two Colombians, and one Tunisian) were taking advanced-level English classes, and they had been in the language school for at least six months.

Procedure

To explore the usability of the WCC rubric for teaching and assessing writing classes, learners and teachers in the language school were consulted. Teachers and learners' opinions about the rubric can bring invaluable insights on how to improve the rubric as it is intended to be used for teaching and assessing L2 writing. Teachers and learners were interviewed several times separately.

Teachers' interview. Teachers were interviewed to elicit information about how they define, teach, and assess written communicative competence and to gather their opinions about the utility and clarity of the rubric for teaching and assessment. A semi-structured interview that guided the discussion is presented in Appendix B (teacher's part). After a brief discussion about teachers' opinions about teaching communicative competence during which the researcher was taking notes, the WCC rubric was administered. Teachers read the rubric, asked questions about the rubric, read the source readings, and graded two fictitious essay samples that corresponded to high-quality essay (success) and low-quality essay (music) according to the rubric as manipulated by the researcher. The only problematic assessment component in the WCC rubric was assessing integrated source readings as teachers typically do not assess this skill in their classes except for independent summary and paraphrasing activities. To ensure that the teachers can assess student's usage of source readings in their essays, three reading references were added to one of the essays. The rest of the components in the rubric can be assessed because they are usually instructed in the writing class, with various emphasis and various degrees of explicitness. A discussion about their experience/challenges grading essays followed and the interview ended up with distributing a questionnaire (part 2, section 1, Appendix B) that teachers filled in at home and returned back to the researcher. One week later, during the lunch break, teachers met again, read the revised rubric and the evaluation grid, and gave their opinions. The researcher took notes and recorded the interview, but it was not transcribed because there was not much said. Teachers and learners silently read the revised rubric focusing on the feedback form and gave few commentaries that were limited to "Yeah, it is better now".

Student's interview. The day after the teachers' initial interview, learners who volunteered to participate in the study were interviewed. Since the rubric will be later used by

learners in the writing class (in Chapter 4), it was important to ensure that the rubric is simple and clear enough to be used by the learners. The researcher explained to the learners how the rubric works. The learners read the source readings and graded the same essay samples graded by the teachers. At the end of the training session, the researcher explained the questionnaire (part 2, section 2, Appendix B). The following day, the learners returned the questionnaire to the researcher. One week later, the researcher met with the learners again, showed them the revised rubric, asked their opinions about the new changes in the rubric, and took notes. Table 4 presents a summary of the initial interview and the follow-up interview procedure.

Table 4

General Interview Session Outline

	Interview Session	Participants: Teachers (T) Learners (S)	Duration (in minutes)
1)	Discussion (prior knowledge about teaching and assessing written communicative competence)	T	20
2)	Explanation & discussion of the WCC rubric	T & S	20
3)	Rating of two samples	T & S	30
4)	Follow-up questions after grading and distributing a questionnaire	T & S	30
5)	Discussion about the revised rubric	T & S	15

Note: Teachers and learners were interviewed separately

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using a concurrent triangulation mixed-method design proposed by Creswell (2003, 2017). In other words, the rubric was tested for its usability drawing on the qualitative and quantitative resources collected at the same time. The qualitative (open-ended questionnaire data and notes taken on the follow-up interviews) and quantitative data (rating scores on written samples using the rubric) were analyzed separately to cross-validate the findings (Creswell, 2017). For the qualitative component, a thematic analysis was applied to answer RQ1 and RQ2 (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Charmaz & Belgrave, 2018). First, data obtained

from notes taken by the researcher and the questionnaire answers were coded; i.e., coding means assigning a brief description to each quote. Then, codes were transformed into themes, which are broader than codes and involve active interpretation of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Another researcher reviewed the codes and agreed that codes represented the data. Finally, themes were assigned, and then the data was reviewed, keeping the themes in mind to ensure that the analysis covers all quotes/notes. First, separate themes were generated based on negative and positive codes, but since it was challenging to create a comprehensive narrative that explains all themes, negative and positive codes were combined and reanalyzed to come up with new themes that were checked against the data. For the quantitative component of data analysis, numeric values (scores obtained from the ratings) were analyzed in SPSS for internal consistency. The results of the analysis are presented in the next section.

Results

Research Question 1: How Teachers define, teach, and Assess Communicative Competence

The first research question asked how teachers define, teach, and assess written communicative competence. When teachers were asked how they define communicative competence in writing, the researcher noted down teachers' initial reactions to the question. Six teachers seemed unsure about the term and either asked for clarification or just reported how they teach writing, ignoring communicative competence. The theme that emerged from teachers' reactions and answers was avoidance. Teachers were not feeling secure about the term (i.e., how they define communicative competence in writing), and thus, they either avoided the answer or responded by providing an example of how they teach writing in general. For example, two teachers said,

‘Not sure what you mean. Do you mean the activities used to teach the writing? I have learners work in groups to construct paragraphs from cut-up sentences and then label the part of the paragraph, its function. I have groups peer edit each other’s essays. It is not an easy task. Writing is such an individual activity at a higher level’ (T2).

‘I provide learners with the ‘skeleton’ upon which they can build the flesh of their essay. I will have them read a simple essay plan I have constructed, and then have them read a short essay based upon that plan, expanding out each sub-idea into paragraphs with their own supporting sub-ideas. I try to impress upon students that an essay is usually a way of condensing complex information into a relatively short chunk of writing’ (T1).

The second theme that emerged was misalignment between teaching and assessment. When teachers were asked how they teach and then how they assess communicative competence, teachers’ answers indicated that teachers do not necessarily assess what they teach. Teachers have their students write essays following certain models and then assess them either impressionistically (subjective grading) or using available rubrics such as the checklist in the textbook or any other rubric. Teachers’ behaviors indicated that they teach organizational competence, which is only one component of communicative competence in writing, without attending to pragmatic and strategic competence teaching. Only one teacher referred to pragmatic competence in his answer as it was covered in the rubric he uses. Teachers’ answers on how they teach and assess L2 writing and thematic coding of their answers are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Thematic Analysis of How Teachers Teach Communicative Competence

Participants	How do you teach communicative competence in writing?	How do you assess communicative competence in writing?	Codes	Themes
T1	I generally focus on logical flow. I provide learners with the 'skeleton' upon which they can build the flesh of their essay. I will have them read a simple essay plan I have constructed, and then have them read a short essay based upon that plan, expanding out each sub-idea into paragraphs with their own supporting sub-ideas. I try to impress upon learners that an essay is usually a way of condensing complex information into a (relatively) short chunk of writing. So, they are only to add the fat onto their essays – the minutiae and particular phrases and sentences – once the overall structure is solid.	'I assess on a scale of 1 to 5: successful communication, logical structure, clarity and concision, how interesting it is to read, and the student's incorporation of target grammar and vocabulary'**.**	**Teaching:** Logical flow Build and model essay writing Support ideas Organization **Assessment:** Language Clarity Engagement Organization and flow	Organizational competence
T2	I teach learners organization (introduction, main body, conclusion), linking phrases, grammar, and spelling.	I assess content: how well the candidate has fulfilled the task and communicative achievement: how appropriate the writing is for the task, and whether the candidate has used the appropriate register. I also assess the organisation. This	**Teaching:** Organization Language **Assessment:** TOEFL writing assessment rubric **mainly response to the task,**	Organizational and pragmatic competence

		focuses on the way the candidate puts together the piece of writing, in other words, if it is logical and ordered. Finally, I assess language: vocabulary and grammar. Language includes the range of language as well as how accurate it is.	**genre**, organization, and language	
T3	I focus on teaching learners how to structure their essays in a way that enables them to communicate their messages more clearly and effectively.	I use various grading rubrics that focus on grammar, style, paragraph structure, and ideas. Also, the one in the textbook	**Teaching:** Clear communication **Assessment:** Available rubrics Including checklists Organization Language	Organizational and pragmatic competence
T4	I teach learners how to start, develop, and end their essays.	I assess the connection of the ideas, how logical it is, correct grammar, and most importantly, organization.	**Teaching:** Essay development **Assessment:** Flow and logic of ideas language	Organizational competence
T5	I just teach learners how to develop their ideas logically.	I assess various grammatical structures, organization of the essay into paragraphs, and its coherence.	**Teaching:** Essay development Flow of ideas **Assessment:** Language Organization flow	Organizational competence
T6	I am not familiar with communicative competence in writing. I just teach learners to develop their ideas in an organized way (introduction, body, and conclusion).	I assess organization of the essay, grammar, and logical flow of ideas.	**Teaching:** Unclear concept in mind. Essay development **Assessment:** Language Organization	Organizational competence

			flow	

Research Question 2: How Teachers and Students perceive the WCC Rubric

The second research question asked how teachers and students perceive the WCC rubric. The raw data is presented in Appendix C. Teachers and students' opinions were classified into positive and negative codes. To illustrate the coding process, a matrix of codes, accompanied with suggestions to improve the rubric, was created. The matrix analysis is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

Coding Matrix for How Teachers and Learners Perceive the Rubric

		Positive Codes	**Negative Codes**	**Suggestions to improve the rubric**
Teachers	T1	Keep organizational components	Very long Difficult to use More difficult to rate with many essays	Keep as a guide and create a shorter version
	T2	Self-explanatory Easy to understand how to use it	Long Time-consuming Takes effort to grade Multi-dimensional Hard to count when the structures are not underlined	Shorten the rubric. Reduce wordiness.
	T3	Multi-dimensional aspects of writing	Time-consuming in large classes The scale starts with 1	Replace “1” with “0”
	T4	Representative of a writing process Explicit Good example of communicative competence Ready to try it in classes (open to change)		
	T5	Presence of source reading category to grade	Very long Multi-dimensional	Shorten the rubric.
	T6		Holistic rubrics are easier to use (resistant to change). Multi-dimensional Grammatical structures and vocabulary are hard to count.	Give examples of covered grammatical structures in the rubric.

			Difficult to capture editing	
Learners	S1		Difficult to use Long Does not like following rules	
	S2		Scary Difficult to use Does not like following rules Prefer impressionistic grading by teachers Unwilling to use it in the writing classes (resistant to change)	
	S3		Difficult to use Long Many aspects to grade Scary Complex Unwilling to use it	Reduce redundant categories and reduce wordiness.
	S4	Enthusiastic to learn and to use the rubric Appreciates its multi-dimensionality		
	S5	Helpful Not difficult to use Clear Willing to try		
	S6	Structured Provides clear instruction Clear		

Positive and negative codes were further analyzed into themes. The first theme that emerged from the data was the amount of time needed to rate essays. Teachers and learners found the rubric lengthy, time-consuming, and multi-dimensional so they did not want to use it in their classes.

> The rubric is not user-friendly. It is very long and difficult to rate as I found myself flipping from one page to another (T1).

> How could you correct multiple written texts in a school year if each copy took 15 minutes? (T3).

> The rubric is very long, and it contains so many aspects to assess (T5).

> I think it is a bit long, there are 19 aspects to assess with 5 different scores and descriptors (T6).

> It is long (S1).

> It is difficult to use and have too many words and a lot of work for me (S2).

> It is many pages. too many things to look at (S3).

On the other hand, some teachers and learners appreciated its length considering that it served as a guide through the writing process and unfolded components to which they could attend to during the teaching/learning and assessment process.

> It is like a manual. It is cool. I know what teacher want….uh and I know what to write then…. (S6).

The second theme was the amount of cognitive demands imposed on the raters to rate essays, i.e., rubric's complexity. That is, the rubric imposed high-thinking demands on some of

its users. Some teachers and learners reported that they had to keep in mind so many aspects at a time and that they flipped back and forth between the rubric and the essays, which made the rating process complicated.

> It is difficult to use and overly complex (S2).
>
> It was difficult to use but now ok (S3).
>
> It is very long and difficult to rate (T1)
>
> The rubric is uh difficult to use (S1)

Others reported that it was easy to use, clear, and structured, suggesting that they did not find it difficult to use, and therefore, they did not complain about high cognitive demands.

The third theme that emerged was the level of experience and willingness to develop professionally. Teachers and learners with less experience teaching L2 writing/ L2 writing were more open to change and eager to learn than teachers and learners with more teaching/writing experience. Teachers and learners with less experience were willing to try the rubric in their classes and found the rubric helpful and useful in guiding them through the grading process. Teachers and learners with more experience did not see any additional value in using/implementing the rubric in their classes. However, teachers and learners with more experience who resisted change opted for holistic and more simplistic methods of grading because they save time and effort. Moreover, teachers with less experience were open to training and professional development and students with less experience in writing were open to learning opportunities. The summary of the emerged themes is presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Emerged Themes from the Thematic Analysis

Negative Codes	Positive Codes	Themes
Time-consuming, long	Step-by-step guide	Time management factor
multi-dimensional, the scale starts at 1 instead of 0, structure counting,	Helpful, representative of a writing process, a good example of communicative competence, self-explanatory, structured, easy to apply, clear	Practicality (Rubric design)
Complex, takes effort, difficult to use, difficult to grade, scary, unwilling to use		High cognitive demand
Prefer impressionistic rubrics, holistic rubric is better, writing is a creative process so no need to follow writing rules	Clear rubric, step-by-step guide	Experience level Resistant to change

In brief, the rubric solicited negative and positive opinions, and the opinions between teachers and learners were consistent in general. Most participants agreed on the fact that the rubric is long, complex, multi-dimensional, difficult to apply because it is challenging to keep track of all the evaluated criteria when grading. Some teachers mentioned that some elements in the rubric are redundant and difficult to grade as in task requirements category and the cohesion and coherence category. The participants considered some categories such as counting the number of lexical and grammatical structures vague as they were not familiar with the structures covered in the class.

> One aspect that I found overwhelming is counting the number of sentences that the learners underline because they could be corrections, grammar points, or lexical items.

> The fact that the learners did not underline the requested points does not mean that the learners did not correct or use the structures and vocabulary in the book. (T2).

Nonetheless, some participants appreciated its informative value by considering that it is detailed enough to be used as a reference/guide to learn how to write and assess written texts. The participants also noticed that the rubric covered a range of competencies that are worthy of teaching.

> The rubric certainly covers elements of the writing process. I liked that it explicitly addresses various competencies that learners will need to master to become better writers. I've never thought of teaching communicative competence in writing, although it is a familiar concept in speaking (T4).

> Now it is all clear in my head. I can see how I can start my topic and develop it. It is like a manual. It is cool. I know what teacher want and I know what to write then…. useful… useful I find (S6).

Research Question 3: The Rubric's Reliability

The third research question asked whether the rubric can be implemented reliably. Twelve raters (six teachers and six learners) rated two essays. The scores from 1 to 5 on each category in the rubric were obtained for two essay samples. The low-quality essay sample (about music) received lower grades than the high-quality essay sample (about success). In general, learners provided higher scores for all categories in the rubric than teachers. The mean score for each category in the rubric is represented in Table 8.

Table 8

Mean Scores of Essay Samples

		Mean (*SD*)			
	Essay	Music (low-quality essay)		Success (high-quality essay)	
Competence		Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher
Organization					
	Idea generation	1 (.00)	1 (.00)	4.83 (0.27)	5 (0.00)
	Content and development	3.38 (0.53)	2.21 (0.87)	4.30 (0.52)	3.88 (0.58)
	Coherence and cohesion	3.75 (0.66)	3.16 (.55)	4.00 (0.33)	3.5 (.50)
Pragmatics					
	Task requirements	2.66 (0.44)	2.22 (0.43)	4.12 (0.65)	3.12 (.97)
	Comprehensibility	2.72 (0.56)	1.94 (0.41)	2.88 (0.59)	2.44 (.49)
Editing and reviewing					
	Revision	1 (.00)	1 (.00)	1(0.00)	1.5 (0.50)
Mean score out of 100		58.16% (4.07)	44.6% (3.07	78.5% (1.64)	70.16% (2.78)
Competency Range		Needs work	Needs work	competent	competent

Interrater reliability was calculated and Cronbach's alpha (α) was as the following: content and development (α = .92); coherence and cohesion (α = .73), task requirements (α = .84); comprehensibility (α = .94). Cronbach's alpha (α) equivalent to .70 and above is considered an acceptable value (George & Mallery, 2003; Haier et al. 2010; Nunnally, 1978). Although learners rated essays higher than the teachers, both teachers and learners' mean scores fell within the same range of competency (as shown in Table 8 above). That is, teachers and learners, rated the "Music" essay (low-quality sample) within the "needs work" range (essays that receive less than 69/%). "Success" essay (high-quality sample) was classified within the "competent" range. To conclude, teachers and learners rated the sample essays consistently although the learners tended to score the essays higher than the teachers. Looking further into how teachers scored the

essays compared to the learners, it was noticed that students were not consistent in rating the cohesion and coherence category. Although ratings on cohesion and coherence category were internally consistent ($\alpha = .73$), dividing both groups revealed that teachers rated this category consistently ($\alpha = .89$); whereas, students' ratings were not consistent ($\alpha = .32$). It seems that students' proficiency level and their knowledge about cohesion and coherence affected how they perceived both terms.

Discussion

Research Question 1: How Teachers Define, Teach, and Assess Communicative Competence

The first research question asked how teachers define, teach, and assess communicative competence in writing. As data showed, L2 language teachers are not necessarily familiar with the application and assessment of communicative competence in L2 writing. Teachers avoided using the "communicative competence" term and focused on their in-class practices. They provided examples of how they teach writing in general. Teachers' practices regarding writing are restricted to teaching organizational competence at the expense of pragmatic and strategic competence, which are all together form communicative competence (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). Strategic and pragmatic competencies are considered crucial components for effective and successful writing (Flower & Hayes, 1980; Kuiken & Vedder, 2014, 2018). Within language school that promotes language learning from a communicative language teaching perspective, it is interesting that L2 writing is still instructed using the PPP instructional model based on structural syllabi that prioritize grammar instruction at the expense of communicative outcomes (Fulcher & Davidson, 2007). That is, the writing process is presented, grammatical structures are

practiced, and writing is a production activity that focuses on organizing grammatical structures in a context (Al-jarrah, Mansor, Talafhah, & Al-jarrah, 2018).

Although strategic competence is an important communicative competence component, it was not assessed in CLA, to the best of my knowledge, in general, and it is not assessed in the language school as well. Strategic competence is important because it requires putting, organizing, and coordinating all knowledge in a meaningful and organized manner (Schilperoord, 2001; Al-Jarrah et al., 2018). Therefore, learners learned and practiced applying writing strategies to develop and organize the content of their essays in a clear, concise, and organized manner. Once the writing process is internalized by enhancing writing strategies, L2 writers can become more creative in their non-academic writing. However, for academic purposes, learners are required to follow more rigid structures to fulfill the requirements of the task. To improve L2 writing skills, it may be useful for teachers to incorporate metacognitive discussions and awareness-raising activities about L2 writing strategies and assess them to ensure that L2 writers are implementing them in their L2 writing. As a result, the WCC was introduced to teachers and learners to get their perceptions/concerns/queries about the rubric (RQ2).

Research Question 2: How Teachers and Students in the Language School perceive the WCC Rubric

The second research question asked how teachers and students in the language school perceived the WCC rubric. The thematic analysis revealed that opinions about the rubric ranged from negative (very long, difficult to apply, and time-consuming because it is multi-dimensional) to positive (detailed, structured, easy to apply, organized). The negative opinions mostly fell under the experience level/professional development theme because teachers prefer to use

holistic and impressionistic rubrics because they are time-saving and easy to use. Teachers in the language school have been teaching there for a minimum of four years, and they are used to their assessment methods. It is not surprising that they did not want to implement what they called a "time-consuming" and "long" rubric. Similar findings were reported by Gamal and Debra (2001) who found that experienced teachers tend to resist change. It is possible that teachers feel more secure teaching the way they used to teach without introducing any changes. Teachers are also always busy preparing, delivering lessons, and grading learners' performance with little time left to consider alternative teaching and assessment methods.

It is not surprising that teachers stated that they preferred holistic and impressionistic rubrics. Although the rubric is time-consuming and long, it was kept analytic because research confirms that analytic rubrics are more reliable, fair, and provide better learning outcomes when used for ongoing assessment (Becker, 2018; Uzun, Alici, & Aktas, 2019). Holistic rubrics are general and can lead to inconsistent ratings across teachers as different teachers can attend to different subcomponents within each component of the rubric (Lumley, 2002, 2005; Smith, 2000; Youn, 2007, 2014). If language schools want to change teaching practices or implement new approaches, they should provide training, support, and needed materials to ease teachers' transition from one teaching method to another. Language schools focus on promoting language learning from the CLT perspective that applies only to speaking at the expense of writing. Teachers and learners' comments were used to revising the rubric, and the changes are presented in the following section.

Rubric Revisions

Taking into consideration the practicality theme that emerged from the analysis, the first change that was made was revising 'vague' components that teachers pointed out. First, teachers indicated that counting grammatical and lexical structures was difficult. Although they were provided with a list of grammatical structures and a list of the vocabulary covered in the class, grammatical structures were included in the revised rubric to facilitate the rating process in the second phase of the study. However, the vocabulary range category was removed due to its complexity for non-teacher raters. It would not be a difficult category to manage for teachers in their classes because they know what they teach and can easily recognize target grammatical and lexical structures in learners' writings, but it is not the case for non-teachers who did not teach the class.

The second source of difficulty or vagueness was distinguishing between "the writer's choice of language structures and words is appropriate" component and "the writer uses appropriate genre/register." Two teachers agreed that if learners choose appropriate genre, then they automatically will use appropriate expressions. To clarify teachers' point, if writers are trying to persuade the reader, they will probably use expressions such as *with this in mind, as a result of, because of this, for this reason, so, due to, since, additionally, besides that, equally as important, similarly, otherwise, however,* etc. However, the rubric tried to capture the fact that learners may not necessarily align genre with genre-appropriate expressions. That is, learners may write an argumentative text without using persuading expressions mentioned above. Nonetheless, to avoid confusion, "the writer's choice of language structures and words is appropriate" component was removed from the rubric for two reasons. First, it was enough to grade texts based on whether the register/genre choice was appropriate to answer the writing

prompt. Second, discourse markers and conjunctions can be captured in the cohesion component that focuses on those linguistic cues.

The third source of difficulty was distinguishing between cohesion and coherence components. As results indicated, students did not rate this category consistently and even some of the teachers expressed their concern distinguishing both terms. As one of the teachers stated, 'the two criteria in 'coherence and cohesion' are a bit redundant, as they deal with connections between paragraphs. Although this category seemed problematic, a decision to keep it in the rubric and clearly explain the difference between the two terms was made. This decision was made for two reasons. First, the 'cohesion and coherence' component is an important component in Kuiken and Vedder (2014, 2018) and IELTS writing task 2 band descriptors. Second, this problem was addressed by adding an explanatory sentence to the rubric to help future raters to distinguish both terms and to direct them to what they should focus on in each category. A text which contains cohesive devices is not necessarily a coherent one (Carrell, 1982). To clarify, cohesion refers to the connection of the ideas at the sentence and paragraph level. It focuses on the grammatical aspects of writing, i.e., connections between clauses. Cohesion generally refers to the presence or absence of linguistic cues in the text that allows the reader to make connections between the ideas in the text (Crossley, Kyle & McNamara, 2016). Coherence means the connection of the ideas on the idea level, i.e., what and how information is presented. Crossley and McNamara (2010) define coherence as understanding that the reader derives from the text (i.e., the coherence of the text in the mind of the reader). The final measure that was taken to ensure that the participants in the study reported in Chapter 4 would rate this category consistently was clearly explaining the difference between both terms to the participants during the training sessions.

Another change that was made regarding cohesion and coherence category was moving it from organizational competence to pragmatic competence. In traditional writing assessment rubrics, cohesion, and coherence were considered part of the organizational competence as it deals with grammatical components and how they are organized. However, since cohesion and coherence function at the communicative level of the text and affect the understanding of the text, it is considered by many researchers as part of the pragmatic competence (Fetzer, 2004, Kuiken & Vedder, 2014, 2018; Purpura, 2004).

Going back to teachers' comments, one of the teachers stated that some components are redundant, giving the following justification:

> I think that there are places where learners are unfairly penalized more than once. For example, the rubric is the requirements for the text. So learners that do not follow the requirements get a lower mark. But then, there is the descriptors related to did the student follow the requirements. If they have been getting low marks all along, they will get another low mark here. It is redundant.

This comment was taken into consideration by removing 'the writer addresses the requirements of the task' component under the task requirements section as it sounded redundant upon revision. The initial thought behind including this category was to capture whether writers respond to the task of properly answering the question, using grammatical and lexical structures covered in the textbook, and citing source readings. Since all these task requirements were addressed in the rubric, the component of 'the writer addresses the requirements of the task' was removed from the rubric.

Another redundant component was keeping source-reading integration and citing sources separately. If L2 writers cited sources, it means that they integrated the source readings in their writing. As a result, both components were merged under "the writer acknowledges the source ideas by citing the source reading," but a distinction between whether learners use sources and cite them or use sources without citing them was made in the rubric. In addition to training international students to use source information to support ideas, the purpose of source citing was to help learners generate ideas to write texts, source citing category was moved to idea generation category. At this stage, it was not the purpose of the rubric to hold writers responsible for the texts. It was enough for them to choose any information in the text that supports their ideas.

Moreover, source citing in the rubric is task-specific criteria that are required in the curriculum. Learners are required to interact with readings by providing a written response and to summarize the content. One of the ways to achieve these objectives was to integrate the source reading component into the rubric to remind both teachers and learners of its importance.

Although teachers in the language school do not encourage source citing practice in their classes, they liked its presence in the rubric because it serves as an indicator of how well learners respond to the requirements of the task. Moreover, integrating and acknowledging source readings is a common practice in universities, and it is a category that is used in TOEFL writing assessment. As mentioned in Chapter 2, international students are required to pass standardized tests (such as IELTS and TOEFL iBT) that serve as gatekeepers to higher education. Therefore, it was important to provide learners with an opportunity to support their arguments with external information and to remind teachers and writers about its importance for academic writing.

Another change that was based on teachers' comments was scale distribution. One of the teachers objected starting the scale from 1 to 5 (this scale distribution was based on Kuiken and Vedder's (2014, 2018) scale distribution. One of the teachers said,

> 'I do not understand why learners were given one mark for doing nothing. If they did not cite any source materials, they get one mark. Why not zero?'

Starting the scale with one was problematic for some teachers as they perceived the scale as a grade. Since all scale numbers were added at the end to get a final score, it was fine to include this change in the rubric and range the scale from zero to four.

Another point raised by one of the teachers was questioning the utility of revising and editing component in the rubric. One of the teachers stated that learners may make mistakes on purpose to get higher marks as illustrated in the following example:

> From my experience, if you ask learners to show their revisions to have a good mark, they make mistakes on purpose and then revise them in order to get marks.

Regarding, the strategic component in the rubric, revisions made, it was not difficult for teachers to locate revisions and the type of revisions made as they were indicated in a different font color for the raters, but teachers were skeptical about its pedagogical utility as it is evident in the above example. As the rubric was intended to be used in-class for ongoing assessments, for self- and peer-review, and for subsequent draft revisions and because it was part of the strategies that L2 writers need to learn, i.e., how to revise texts by adding, modifying, or deleting information, this category was kept in the rubric. To add, multiple revisions and reflections made during the revision process are part of the portfolio assessment, which belongs to CLA. Portfolio assessment studies have shown that multiple revisions of drafts help L2 writers produce better texts (Poehner, 2008; Poehner & Lantolf, 2005) and boosts strategic competence. In writing,

revising written texts is a self-regulation strategy that leads to improved written skills (Mason, Harris & Graham, 2011). Kroll (2006) points out the importance of encouraging learners to develop the strategy of revising their drafts based on personal opinions and suggestions from teachers and peers.

To avoid learners making mistakes on purpose, quality and variety of the revisions was reinforced in the rubric. To help students build strategic competence, teachers can train students how to revise subsequent drafts by playing around with sentence structure, i.e., combining two simple sentences into compound or complex sentences with the help of coordinators or subordinators. Revising various aspects of writing such as mechanics, spelling, and structure can be another way to avoid superficial revisions. All the revisions documented above are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Revised WCC Rubric

	Emerged Competence (100% - 80%)		Emerging Competence (79% - 60%)	Underdeveloped Competence (< 59%)	
Scale **Strategic Components**	4	3	2	1	0
I. Organizational Competence					
A. Idea Generation					
1) The writer generates ideas using **any** of the following techniques: concept maps, webbing, free writing, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre to achieve the purpose of writing, identifying the audience, using L1 to generate ideas.	The writer spends time planning for the writing activity by submitting a developed and diversified concept map integrated with various idea generation techniques.	The writer spends time planning for the writing activity by submitting a developed concept map or any other sign of attempting to generate ideas using more than two strategies to generate ideas.	The writer spends time planning for the writing activity by submitting a simple concept map in which at least one idea generation strategy is used.	The writer submits a very simple concept map in which few ideas are identified or provides a very simple outline or evidence of using only one of the idea generation techniques.	The planning paper is not submitted or there is little evidence that the writer attempted to generate ideas using the provided techniques.

2) The writer refers to source readings to generate/support ideas/arguments and integrates them in their essays when relevant.	The writer integrates and acknowledges all 4 source readings to support the main argument.	The writer integrates and acknowledges 3 of the source readings to support the main argument.	The writer integrates and acknowledges only 2 source readings covered in the textbook to support the main argument.	The writer integrates and acknowledges only one source reading covered in the textbook to support the main argument.	The writer does not integrate source readings covered in the textbook at all and/or does not acknowledge the sources used.
B. Content development and organization (essay structure)					
3) The writer sets a clear and relevant context and transitions smoothly to the thesis statement.	The writer provides an interesting context and a smooth transition sentence.	The writer provides a relevant context but does not transition to the thesis statement.	The writer provides a clear and relevant context that does not requires transitioning to the thesis statement.	The writer provides a context with no transition and suddenly jumps to a thesis statement.	The writer provides unclear context and an irrelevant transition sentence Or does not provide any.
4) The thesis statement is easy to identify, and it forecasts the topic sentences.	The thesis statement is easy to identify, and it forecasts the topic sentences.	The thesis statement is identifiable, but it barely forecasts the topic sentences.	The thesis statement is almost identifiable, but it barely forecasts the topic sentences	The thesis statement is difficult to identify, and it does not forecast the topic sentences.	The thesis statement is unclear or not present.
5) The writer provides one topic sentence per body paragraph	The writer provides one clear identifiable	The writer provides one topic sentence for two of three	The writer provides to some extent, a clear and identifiable topic	The writer provides at least two clear and identifiable topic	The writer does not provide clear identifiable topic sentences for body

	topic sentence for each body paragraph.	body paragraphs.	sentence for at least two of the body paragraphs.	sentences in two of the body paragraphs.	paragraphs. Or, the text has only one topic sentence in the essay.
6) The writer **supports** the topic sentence of each paragraph with relevant, extended, and detailed ideas drawing either on their own ideas or ideas from the readings.	The writer supports each topic sentence with 3 or more relevant, extended, and detailed ideas.	The writer supports each topic sentence with at least two extended and detailed ideas.	The writer supports two of the topic sentences with relevant, extended, and detailed ideas.	The writer occasionally supports one or two topic sentences with some extended ideas.	The writer occasionally supports the topic sentence with one extended or barely relevant ideas.
7) The writer acknowledges the source ideas by citing the source readings.	The writer cites 4 different source materials.	The writer cites 3 different source materials.	The writer cites 2 source materials.	The writer cites 1 source material.	The writer does not cite the source materials even if ideas from the readings are present in the essay.
8) The writer closes the text with a clear conclusion.	The writer closes the text with a clear conclusion that restates all the main points.	The writer closes the text by restating at least two of the main statements.	The writer closes the text summarising at least one statement from the essay	The writer closes the text with a conclusion that is not related to the essay.	The writer does not provide a conclusion
II. Pragmatic Competence					

C. Coherence and cohesion					
9) The writer **uses connectors** to connect sentences and paragraphs.	The writer constantly uses connectors to connect phrases and sentences within a paragraph.	The writer uses connectors most of the time to connect phrases and sentences within a paragraph.	The writer uses 2-3 connectors to connect sentences within a paragraph.	The writer's use of connectors is limited within a paragraph.	The writer uses no connectors. Most of the sentences are simple.
10) The text exhibits logical progression from one idea to another.	The writer provides clear transitions throughout the essay.	The writer provides 3 transition sentences throughout the essay.	The writer provides two transition sentences from one paragraph to another.	The writer provides only one transition sentence throughout the essay	The writer does not provide transition sentences from one paragraph to another
D. Task requirements					
11) The writer uses an appropriate genre/register. (e.g., the text is argumentative rather than narrative or informative)	The essay provides clear arguments that are evident throughout the text.	The writer's argument is present in at least 3 paragraphs.	The writer sometimes emphasizes his/her argument/position in the text and reminds the reader about his/her position.	The writer's position is stated only once in the essay and is not emphasized throughout the text.	The writer's position is not stated and the writer does not respond to the task.
12) The writer uses various grammatical structures covered in the textbook to convey precise ideas (if clauses, relative pronouns,	The writer uses at least 5 grammatical structures and	The writer uses 4 grammatical structures and underlines them.	The writer uses 3 grammatical structures but	The writer uses at least one grammatical structure and does	The writer does not use the grammatical

passive/active voice, modal verbs, coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, discourse markers, various verb tenses).	underlines all of them.		does not underline them.	not underline them.	structure and does not underline them.
E. Comprehensibility					
13) The writer's **purpose** for writing is easy to identify throughout the essay.	The purpose of the writing and of each paragraph is clear.	The purpose of the writing in general and most of the paragraphs are clear.	The purpose of the writing, in general, is clear, but the purpose of some paragraphs is not.	The purpose of the writing/paragraphs is not very clear.	The purpose of the writing is not clear at all.
14) The writer's essay is easy to understand (easy to read in general).	The writer's essay flows well. It is obvious and easy to understand.	The writer's essay flows well, and the intended message is clear most of the time.	The writer's message in each paragraph can be understood with some effort.	The writer's essay is difficult to understand without some focus and rereading.	The writer's essay is difficult to process. The message is not clear.
III. Strategic Competence					
F. Editing and Revising					
15) The writer attempts to revise the essay by deleting, adding, or modifying sentences (no points are granted for spelling changes). The revisions are indicated in green font.	There are various (more than 5) modifications, additions, deletions of ideas (lexical	There are several (at least four) revisions in the text (modifications, addition, deletion of	There are some revisions in the text (modification, addition, deletion of ideas) indicated in a different color.	There are barely revisions or modifications in the text as indicated in a different color.	There is no evidence that the writer revises the text. There is no evidence that the

	use, grammatical structures, mechanics) in the text indicated in different color. Various phrase, clause, and sentence types are used	ideas) indicated in a different color. The writer fixes several grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling as indicated by another color. Various linguistic structures are used.	There is evidence that the writer reorganizes some of the idea. The writer rephrases at least 3 sentences to convey precise meaning The writer fixes some of the grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling using another color. The linguistic structures are not diverse.	There is barely evidence that the writer reorganizes the ideas The writer rephrases at least one sentence to convey precise meaning The writer barely fixes any of the grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling using another color. The sentences are of similar nature: no variety in sentence length.	writer reorganizes the ideas. There is no evidence that the writer rephrases sentences to convey precise meaning The writer does not fix any of the grammatical mistakes, punctuation, and spelling errors. The sentences are simple most of the time.

The last change to improve the usability of the WCC rubric was creating a feedback form for assessment purposes. That is, the rubric would be used for teaching and training; whereas, the feedback form would be used for assessment to assign a grade for the written text. The grades serve as indicators for areas that need revision on the subsequent drafts. The feedback form can be used for peer and self assessment. The students can revise each others' essays, assign a score that can be used for revision and reflection purposes. Reflecting on the writing process and how to improve it is documented to be one of the CLA ways in writing. Moreover, the feedback form was designed to be used as an assessment tool that teachers can use for formative assessment (teacher feedback and students' feedback), and later, for summative assessments (final writing evaluation tool) as recommended in CLA literature, i.e., assess the same competencies that have been taught during the term using predetermined assessment tools. The feedback form is presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10

Student's Feedback Form

	Student Number	
	Essay title	**Score 0 to 4**
Organizational Competence	**Strategic Competence components**	
	I. Organizational Competence	
	A. Idea Generation	
	1) The writer generates ideas using **any** of the following techniques: concept maps, webbing, freewriting, outlining, source reading, identifying the relevant genre to achieve the purpose of writing, identifying the audience, using L1 to generate ideas.	
	2) The writer refers to source readings to generate/support ideas/arguments and integrates them in their essays when relevant.	

	B. **Content development and organization (essay structure)**	
	3) The writer sets a clear and relevant context and provides a hook.	
	4) The thesis statement is easy to identify, and it forecasts the topic sentences.	
	5) The writer provides one topic sentence per body paragraph	
	6) The writer **supports** the topic sentence of each paragraph with relevant, extended and detailed ideas drawing either on their own ideas or ideas from the readings.	
	7) The writer acknowledges the source ideas by citing the source readings.	
Pragmatic Competence	8) The writer closes the text with a clear conclusion.	
	C. **Coherence and cohesion**	
	9) The writer **uses connectors** to connect sentences and paragraphs.	
	10) The text exhibits logical progression from one idea to another.	
	II. Pragmatic Competence	
	D. **Task requirements**	
	11) The writer uses an appropriate genre/register. (e.g., the text is argumentative rather than narrative or informative)	
	12) The writer uses various grammatical structures covered in the textbook to convey precise ideas (if clauses, relative pronouns, passive/active voice, modal verbs, coordinating and subordinating conjunctions, discourse markers, various verb tenses).	
	E. **Comprehensibility**	
	13) The writer's **purpose** of the writing is clear throughout the essay.	
	14) The writer's essay is easy to understand (easy to read in general/flows smoothly).	
	III. Strategic Competence	
	F. **Editing and Revising**	
	15) The writer attempts to revise the essay by adding, modifying, or deleting ideas/sentences. Various linguistic structures are used. The revisions should be indicated in a different font color.	

When teachers and learners were asked about their opinion regarding the revised rubric and the evaluation grid, teachers and learners affirmed that the feedback form is user-friendly,

easy to use, and compact. Teachers reported that they would use the revised rubric for formative assessment, i.e., to teach students how to use it for writing and peer- and self-assessment. However, for summative assessment, they would use the feedback form.

Another comment that is worthy of acknowledgment was teachers and learners' preference for holistic, impressionistic rubrics. According to Young (2013), various rubrics serve various purposes. Young (2013) found that complex rubrics are more useful for learning than holistic rubrics; however, holistic rubrics are easier to use once the learning has occurred. In this regard, Brookhart (2018) suggested that different degrees of rubric complexity might be useful for different stages of learning. Writing assessment rubrics that situate themselves in CLA are rare. The only empirically validated communicative language assessment rubric for writing, to the best of my knowledge, was Kuiken and Vedder's (2010, 2017) rubric. The results showed that Kuiken and Vedder's (2010) scale on which the rubric in the present study is based was a reliable assessment tool as assessed by seven raters. Their rubric was implemented in Kuiken and Vedder's (2014, 2018) follow-up studies and they reported that the rubric is a valid assessment tool for pragmatic competence in writing. The raters in Kuiken and Vedder's (2014) study were native speakers of the target language (English and Dutch) and experienced teachers who underwent training sessions on how to use the rubric. The raters in Kuiken and Vedder (2017, 2018) were external or non-expert raters who did not have any experience rating written texts. They received two training sessions on how to use the rubric.

Similarly, the findings in the present chapter indicated that the WCC rubric is also a reliable assessment tool. The internal consistency of the rubric was high for all components. Although ratings on the cohesion and coherence category were internally consistent ($\alpha = .73$), it received the lowest value. Analyzing the data further revealed that teachers rated this category

consistently (α = .89); however, learners' ratings were not consistent (α = .32). It seems that learners' proficiency level affected how they perceived cohesion and coherence in the text and perhaps it is the category with which they struggled the most. They may not be aware of the differences between both categories and thus scored this category arbitrarily. Teacher's task to teach writing is not an easy task. Writing is a very complex activity and simplifying it to a set of logically-presented sentences does not capture the whole process. Learners should experiment with writing by producing a series of subsequent drafts. Each draft can test specific strategies and notions. To ensure that all terms/concepts are clear in the rubric, explanatory sentences were added in the rubric and the feedback form.

Now that the rubric and feedback form are ready to be used for in-class instruction and assessment, Chapter 3 ends. Chapter 3 presented the stage of rubric creation, development, and usability testing that was pilot tested on twelve participants (six teachers and six learners). The rubric was created to be used by teachers for teaching and assessment and for L2 writers to regulate their learning by engaging them in self-assessment and reflection in light of CLT principles. The next chapter, Chapter 4, reports on the second phase of the study, which is an intervention study that explored the effect of communicative competence strategy training using the revised WCC rubric on the writing development of the international students in a language school in Montreal, Canada.

Chapter 4: Phase II: Intervention Study

Strategic Competence and L2 Writing

As stated in previous chapters, Chapters 2 and 3, most SLA studies have been concerned with linguistic dimensions of L2 performance with less emphasis on the communicative dimension of L2 (De Jang et al., 2012; Kuiken & Vedder, 2017; Pallotti, 2009). Little is known about how to implement communicative competence components in L2 writing assessment. There are some attempts to develop a pragmatic competence assessment rubric for writing (Kuiken & Vedder, 2014, 2017, 2018) and even less attempts to teach and assess strategic competence (Wilson & Bai, 2010). The present chapter will present the importance of implementing strategy-based instruction and assessment to develop communicative competence in L2 writing teaching/assessment and will propose a theoretical-based approach to implement it in classroom settings.

L2 writing research has been concerned about finding out ways to help learners become effective and skillful writers (Barkaoui, 2007; Diaz, 2013). Bachman and Palmer's (2010) communicative competence assessment (CLA) model can be a useful starting point to assess the adequacy of communicative performance because it draws on many competencies (organizational, pragmatic, and strategic), oral and written. The advantage of Bachman and Palmer's (2010) model is that it is based on well-established learning/teaching theories that have been applied in L2 writing instruction. For instance, the premises of socio-cognitive theory are reflected in pragmatic competence components in Bachman and Palmer's (2010) model. The socio-cognitive or constructivist theory, in which this study is situated, stresses on the importance of teaching writers how to think as readers when they write rather than thinking about readers as a strategy to reformulate ideas in a comprehensible way for the readers

(Barkaoui, 2007; Hyland, 2002, 2003). Writing experience is co-constructed with lived experiences, teamwork, and collaboration. Attempting to design a learning experience that is based on enhancing/developing multiple competencies is challenging because it requires a lot of cognitive effort to attend to multiple competencies at a time. As stated by Hussain (2017) and Barkaoui (2007), L2 writing is challenging because it requires attending to multiple competencies including attending to the audience, purpose of writing, and genre.

Another relevant theoretical framework that has greatly impacted L2 writing instruction is the cognitive perspective. From the cognitive perspective, writers are encouraged to be aware of cognitive processes that mediate the writing process (Flower, 1979). The cognitive learning/teaching theory components can be identified in Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) strategic competence. Research has shown that raising learners' awareness about metacognitive and cognitive strategies (strategic competence) in writing has a positive effect on L2 writing (Al-jarrah et al., 2018; Barkaoui, 2017; Lv & Chen, 2007; Xiao, 2007). Learners need instruction (scaffolding) about how to proceed with various L2 registers to produce effective written texts (Flower & Hayes, 1980), and consequently achieve their writing goals (Lavelle & Bushrow, 2007).

Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) model can serve as a comprehensible framework that encompasses various theoretical writing approaches. In Barkaoui's (2007) review on how to teach L2 writing in an effective and practical way, the author identified three approaches to L2 writing: text-oriented, process oriented, and socio-cognitive. In his review, Barkaoui concluded that in addition to providing carefully structured materials, useful feedback, and encouragement, teachers should raise learners' awareness about L2 linguistic and textual conventions and successful writing processes, L2 reader expectations, meaningful contexts to practice writing,

and promote learner autonomy in L2 writing classes, text modeling that sets high standard expectation emphasizing specific learning goals. Rearranging Barkaoui's list of recommendations according to Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) model, raising learners' awareness about L2 linguistic, textual conventions, and successful writing processes fall under organizational competence category. L2 reader expectations, meaningful contexts to practice writing, and promoting learner's autonomy in L2 writing classes fall under the pragmatic competence category. Text modeling that sets high standard expectation emphasizing specific learning goals fall under the strategic competence category. It can be concluded that successful writing learning/instruction should draw on all communicative competence components.

Although all communicative competence (organizational, pragmatic, and strategic) components are important, perhaps strategic competence is the most important component because it orchestrates the function of organizational and pragmatic competence. Without strategic competence language users will not be able to achieve communicative language goals (Bachman & Palmer, 1996, 2010; Xiao, 2007). This is true because strategic competence requires higher-order thinking and attention to executive processes to manage comprehensible language use and other cognitive activities (Bachman, 1990). Nonetheless, teachers tend to exclude strategic competence and reflections from their assessment tools restricting the learning process to optional self-assessments through checklists (Torrance, 1998) that are not consolidated during the writing sessions in classrooms. Most of what is known about strategic competence in writing comes from assessing the impact of strategy-based instruction on L2 writing performance, but none of the studies reported on combining effect of implementing organizational, pragmatic, and strategic competence instruction on L2 writing performance from CLA perspective. The following section will present the main findings of strategy-based

instruction on L2 writing and then will explain how all communicative competence components in Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) model will be implemented in L2 writing and assessment in a communicative way.

Strategy-based Instruction and L2 Writing

Research has shown that learners do not necessarily use or become aware of the strategies even if a teacher explicitly explains them in the classroom (Cohen, 2014; Goctu, 2017). Implementing strategies is not a natural inclination for L2 writers (Schraw, 1998), so it is important to raise learners' awareness about these strategies. For example, Goctu (2017) investigated whether fifteen freshmen learners at the Faculty of Computer Technologies and Engineering at International Black Sea University (Tbilisi, Georgia) use metacognitive learning strategies (MLS) in their academic writing. The responses to the interview questions revealed that less than half of the participants used and were aware of learning strategies, although teachers mentioned these strategies during the instruction. Another study with similar findings was Surat, Ramadan, Mahamod, and Kummin (2014) study. Surat et al. reported that learners practically had no idea how the writing process should be organized and what the suitable strategies were to employ during writing.

When learners' awareness about how to use writing strategies was raised, research studies (Al-Jarrah et al., 2018; Lv & Chen, 2010) reported a positive correlation between improved writing skills and cognitive and metacognitive awareness. Lv and Chen (2010) explored the effects of strategy instruction on L2 writing of Chinese Vocational College writers. The experimental group (44 participants) received strategy-based instruction on the writing strategies planning, monitoring, and evaluating. The control group (42 learners) received ordinary writing instruction type based on the product approach. A pre-test and two post-tests

were administered in class. The participants were given fifty minutes to plan, write, and revise 120-words texts. The participants were instructed to refer to a provided strategy card and think about that strategy while writing. The experimental group received higher scores on the post-tests than on the pre-test; whereas, the control group showed no difference in scores on the pre-test and the post-tests.

Strategy-based instruction leads to greater strategy use, self-directed learning, and autonomy (Diaz, 2013). Diaz (2013) explored the effect of explicit strategy teaching on the use of metacognitive writing skills and writing performance. Strategy-based instruction on how to plan, monitor, and evaluate writing was integrated in regular English language classes in an English Teacher Training College in Argentina. A quasi-experimental design was adopted following a single group pre-test/post-test/ delayed post test design. Self-report questionnaires, diary entry tasks, a survey, and writing tests were administered to collect data. She used Michigan Writing Assessment Scoring Guide as the scoring rubric to grade learners' writings. The scoring system assessed ideas and arguments, rhetorical features, and language control. The findings indicated that after metacognitive instruction, the participants began to employ a greater number of metacognitive writing strategies, and they were able to focus on both global and local writing features when monitoring and evaluating their compositions. The findings indicated that teaching writing strategies had positive effect on using metacognitive writing strategies and self-directed learning, but not on ESL learners' writing development as there was no improvement in learners' writing performance on the post-tests.

Strategy-based instruction also reduces writing anxiety and raises self efficacy. Stewart, Seifert, and Rolheiser (2015) conducted research with 795 Canadian undergraduate learners to explore the relationship between student writing anxiety and self-efficacy on undergraduate

learners' self-reported use of writing strategies. To assess writing anxiety and self-efficacy, they used anxiety rating scale and self-efficacy writing scales. To assess metacognitive writing skills, Stewart et al (2015) used Levelle's (1993) inventory that included 1) considering the purpose of the writing assignment and intended audience; 2) generating ideas and developing organization and thesis statements; and 3) recognizing writing as a process. They found that knowing metacognitive writing strategies has led to reduced anxiety and increased self-efficacy. Their study also suggested that writing interventions that seek to reduce anxiety and increase undergraduate learners' self-efficacy with respect to writing may positively enhance learners' use of metacognitive writing strategies, and ultimately improve student writing outcomes.

Although strategy-based instruction is beneficial for learners' learning development (Ardasheva, Wang, Adesope, & Valentine, 2017), little is known about teachers' knowledge about strategic competence instruction and to what extent they implement it as a teaching strategy in their classes (Hiver & Whitehead 2018). Strategic competence instruction is not widespread in classrooms and teachers limit metacognitive instruction to explaining the strategy and then testing learners' comprehension of the course material in general rather than teaching learners how to orchestrate and actively apply various strategies to various contexts (Wilson & Bai, 2010). In this regard, Haukas (2012) investigated language teachers' perceptions about the importance of spending time on raising learners' awareness about language learning processes. The results suggested that 145 Norwegian teachers find it important to teach learners how to reflect on their learning processes. However, Wilson and Bai (2010) study showed that teachers are not prepared to teach metacognitive strategies to language learners. More than half of the teachers reported that they need to learn more about enhancing learners' strategic competence

about language learning and how to teach these strategies before spending time on strategic competence instruction in classes.

Not only teachers need to learn more about how to enhance learners' strategic competence, but also, they need to find ways to assess how well learners have mastered these strategies and their transfer to various written texts. Teachers rely on general assessment models that assess linguistic competence of L2 writing with less focus on communicative competence and argumentation in argumentative essays (Nimehchisalem, 2018). One way of assessing communicative competence is designing rubrics that assess various components of communicative competence. However, the problem with general rubrics is that they may not capture the targeted communicative competence in writing classes; therefore, task-specific rubrics may be needed (Brookhart, 2018), which suggests that teachers should develop awareness of what writing competencies they target and ways to assess them, i.e., designing/modifying L2 writing rubrics, early in their classes.

Regarding strategic competence assessment, the only form of strategic competence assessment can be found in portfolio assessments (Mokibelo, 2018) if learners reflect on their writing process. Portfolio assessments are part of CLA because teachers provide feedback on written drafts, learners incorporate that feedback in their subsequent drafts or essays, and finally, learners reflect on the development of their writings. That is, through multiple revisions on the drafts, learners learn to reflect on their writing and develop self-assessment and self-regulation skills (Lantolf, Thorne, & Poehner, 2015). Strategic competence involves regulating one's learning process. In writing, revising written texts is a self-regulation strategy that leads to improved written skills (Mason, Harris & Graham, 2011). Kroll (2006) points out the importance of encouraging learners to develop the strategy of revising their drafts based on personal

opinions and suggestions from teachers and peers. Finally, the importance of portfolio assessments lies in the fact that they reflect the interactive (pragmatic) and reflective (strategic) aspect of learning to write (Lam, 2014). Despite the importance attached to reflection that can be enhanced through multiple draft revisions, teachers tend to exclude multiple revisions and reflections from portfolios (Torrance, 1998).

The literature provides a resourceful pool of assessment tools that can be used by teachers. For example, various online and offline assessment methods have been used to assess strategic competence (Van Hout-Wolters, 2000). Online methods included assessing learners' real-time cognitive processes using think-aloud protocols, interviews, and observation of behavior. Offline methods included using rubrics, questionnaire, surveys, stimulated recall interviews, and portfolios. These tools are not only suitable for research purposes but also as resources to experiment in the classrooms, to find out what works best for learners. Regarding strategic competence, classroom-based studies assessed strategic competence using portfolio assessments, diaries, and interviews (Diaz, 2013; Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, and Ansari 2010; Poehner, 2008; Romova & Andrew, 2011). Pragmatic competence was assessed using rubrics (Kuiken & Vedder, 2014, 2017, 2018). The present study will use the WCC rubric that was pilot tested in Chapter 3 to explore how bridging teaching and assessment of communicative competence components (organizational, pragmatic, and strategic) would affect L2 writing performance of the international students.

To conclude, implementing strategy-based instruction that requires students to think about internal writing process is not a natural inclination for L2 writers (Schraw, 1998), but when these strategies are learned, L2 writing performance had better chances to improve (Barkaoui, 2007; Khaki & Hessamy, 2013). For strategy-based instruction to be beneficial,

teachers should invest time in developing L2 writers' strategic competence that can be strengthened by raising L2 writers' awareness about strategies available to them. This can be achieved by engaging L2 writers in reflective, critical, active, and explicit thinking during the writing process (Chisholm, 2001; Gencel, 2016; Goctu, 2017; Hussain, 2017; Lantolf & Poehner, 2005; Livingston, 1997; Stahle & Mitchell,1993). However, research has shown that teachers do not necessarily know how to teach or assess students' abilities to use strategies (Wilson & Bai, 2010). Moreover, assessment tools not only have to align with instruction, but they also should be reliable. To fill this gap in the literature, the present study was set to propose a comprehensive model that integrates communicative competence training in L2 writing instruction as a form of assessment for learning (for summative assessment) and assessment as learning (ongoing formative assessment). This objective is achieved by implementing the WCC rubric in L2 writing teaching and assessment.

The hypothesis that was set for this study was that implementing the same rubric for teaching and assessment may lead to improved writing performance of international students in the language school. On the one hand, through interactive and active use of the WCC rubric that combined organizational, pragmatic, and strategic competence components, learners may reflect on the difficulties they have faced during the writing process starting from planning and ending with self- or peer-evaluation of the written product (Calfee & Perfumo, 1992; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996), which may enhance their critical thinking (Martines, 2005) and consolidate their communicative competence needed for successful writing. On the other hand, to ensure that the instruction was efficient and effective, it was important to test learners' knowledge about communicative competence and at the same time ensure the validity of the testing tool. The research questions that guided the study were as the following:

1. Does communicative competence strategy training using the WCC rubric lead to improved written performance as measured by the WCC rubric and IELTS writing rubric?
2. How do students perceive the WCC rubric for teaching and assessment purposes?
3. How do raters (teachers and students) perceive the WCC rubric after rating the written texts?

Justification of Study Design

An interpretive case study design was selected for the present study because it occurred in the context of teaching and assessing L2 writing in its real place, a language school in Montreal, Canada. It was interpretive in scope because the data was supported and explained in light of the Bachman and Palmer's (2010) communicative competence model. This case study was situated in a Constructivist Paradigm (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018), with the aim of understanding the phenomenon, in this case the effect of the communicative competence strategy training on L2 writing performance, from multiple perspectives such as learners, teachers, and rater's experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The study followed a concurrent transformative mixed-methods design, a design which was a mix of quantitative and qualitative empirical materials in a single study (Creswell, 2003, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2011) guided by a theoretical perspective (Creswell, 2003). Thus, this case study design drew on concurrent qualitative and quantitative data collection methods guided by a theoretical perspective: using the WCC rubric that was based on Bachman and Palmer's (2010) framework for the assessment would lead to an improvement in L2 writing performance.

The quantitative component of the study adopted a within (pre-test/post-test) and between (control vs. intervention) groups mixed-method design to answer research questions 1 and 2. The independent variable was communicative competence strategy training that was measured by the

presence or absence of the WCC rubric assessment as learning and for learning. The dependent variable was writing performance measured by idea generation, content, comprehensibility, task requirements, and editing and revision (see Table 10). The illustration of the study design is presented in Figure 1.

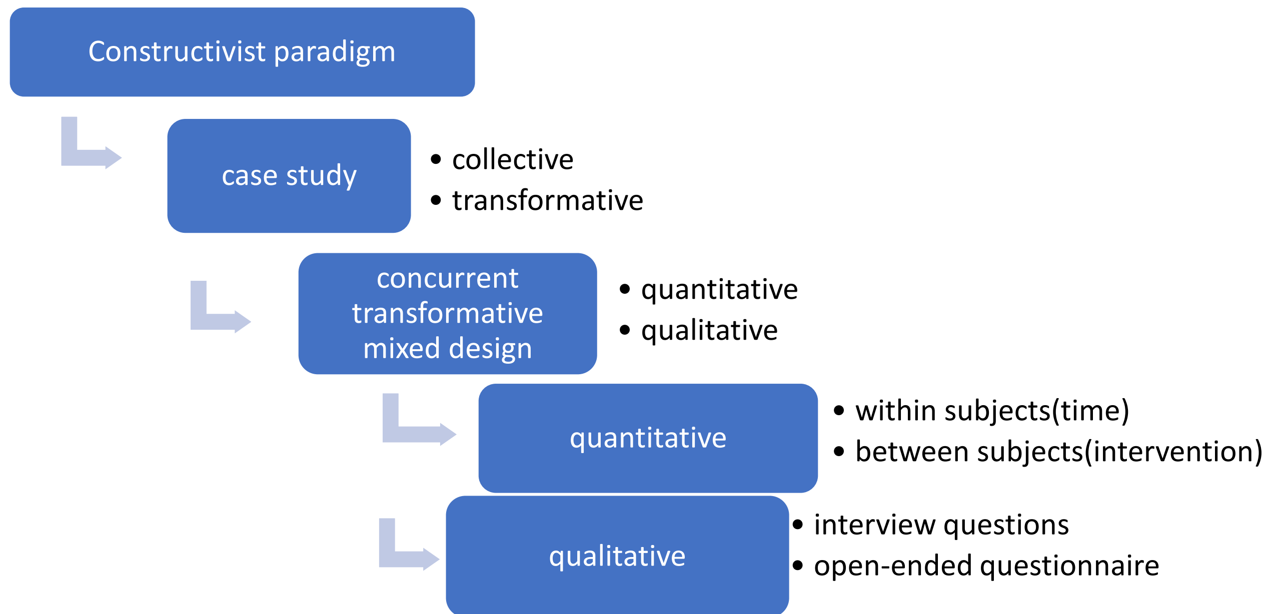

Figure 1. Study Design

Justification of Including Multiple Raters

As mentioned earlier, the goal of the present study was to explore the effect of explicit communicative competence strategy training on the L2 writing performance of international students in a language school, intermediate level. This goal was achieved by using the WCC rubric that was specifically designed for the present study drawing on the course objectives, Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) theoretical framework of language testing, and learning theories framed under metacognitive strategy instruction. In addition to exploring the effect of the instruction, the second objective was to ensure that the WCC rubric can be used reliably. Therefore, methodological justifications that guided the present study are presented in the following section.

In-class writing assessment tools should be reliable and valid (Bachman, 1990; Bachman and Palmer, 1996; Kuiken & Vedder, 2014, 2017, 2018). The reliability of the pragmatic competence assessment tool in Kuiken and Vedder (2014, 2017, 2018) was established by calculating the inter-rater reliability of the scores obtained from a group of non-expert raters (four Dutch and four Italian raters). Diaz (2013) did not create a study-specific assessment tool, but she explored the effect of the metacognitive instruction on L2 writing performance by grading essays using the Michigan Writing Assessment rubric. Soleymanzadeh and Gholami (2014) evaluated written essays of upper-intermediate university-level learners in Iran using IELTS writing assessment rubric and thematic pattern analysis tools that they designed for their study. They have chosen the IELTS writing assessment rubric because it is a reliable assessment tool (Official IELTS Practice Materials, 2009). Nonetheless, Soleymanzadeh and Gholami (2014) reported that the IELTS scoring system overlooks the thematic progression component of the essay. To summarize, to ensure the reliability of the assessment tools for L2 writing, L2 writing studies either report inter-rater reliability of the assessment tool or utilize standard assessment rubrics such as IELTS, TOEFL, or Michigan Writing assessment rubric.

In addition to validating assessment tools using (supplementary) standard assessment forms and calculating inter-rater reliability measures, multiple raters can be employed to ensure the validity of the assessment tools (Hamp-Lyons, 1991). However, multiple raters' scores should be analyzed with caution because raters' judgments are prone to various sources of bias and error that can undermine rating quality (Knoch, Read, & Von Randow, 2007; Uzun et al., 2019). For instance, raters can be influenced by the linguistic quality of texts, scoring procedures, time and place of scoring, number and length of the scored texts (Brown, 2010; Hamp-Lyons, 1991; Uzun et al., 2019) and raters' background (Alemi & Tajeddin, 2013;

Tagushi, 2011; Youn, 2007). Research findings on the role of raters' background are not consistent: some researchers (e.g., Chalhoub-Deville, 1996) found that teaching experience can affect raters' judgments, but others (e.g., Royal-Dawson & Baird, 2009) reported that teaching experience did not affect the scores of written essays.

Method

Participants

The study had sixty-one participants distributed as the following: twenty learners from the language school in the intervention study; twelve internal raters, i.e., the same six teachers and six learners who participated in the pilot testing study reported in Chapter 3; and twenty-eight external raters who are not familiar with the instructional setting and the learning objectives of the language school. The participants did not receive any compensation for their participation. Their participation in the study was completely voluntary. The researcher/teacher got students' consent forms and the essays from the school after submitting the grades. The raters contacted the researcher/teacher in response to a recruitment posting posted in school, on social media and via TESL Canada official email to its members. The raters in exchange for their participation received a free training on how to use the rubric and they got the rubric.

Students. The twenty learners were taking academic English classes, level 5 (equivalent to the B2 intermediate level in CEFR descriptors) in the language school described previously. The data was collected in two consecutive semesters with ten learners per semester due to summer vacation. Learners in the first semester served as a control group and learners in the second semester were assigned to the intervention group. Across both rounds of data collection, they were mostly Koreans (n = 17), sixteen females and one male, one Turkish male, and two Colombians, one male and one female. The mean age of the participants was 28.71 (SD = 5.39).

All learners in the language school passed a placement test administered by the administration upon their arrival to the school and leveled up every eight weeks upon successful completion of the term. They were tested on midterms and final exams. The participants started learning in the school at level 3 but they had experience learning English in their home countries (M = 16. 36, SD = 4.74). The learners in both groups were taught by the same teacher who was also a researcher and who conducted a case study in the language school to explore the effect of communicative competence strategy training on L2 writing performance.

Teacher. The teacher was a Ph.D. candidate in a Canadian English medium university who conducted her thesis study in a language school she was teaching at. The teacher was teaching three periods per day, four days a week. Each day, the teacher taught functional grammar and communication, reading and writing, and listening and speaking periods. The study took place during the second period, reading and writing. The teacher trained the students participants to use the WCC rubric for writing and trained the raters to use the rubric for rating the written texts produced by the students in the language school. Being a teacher and a researcher at the same time enabled the researcher to design a study that bridged theory and practice by conducting a study in a classroom setting based that aimed to fill a gap in literature. Thus, the teacher/researcher was aware of the dual role, i.e., conducting research to address the lack of CLT/CLA writing research in literature, and at the same time, teaching the class respecting the requirements of the course and students' needs. Planning to match the research agenda with teaching agenda happened outside the class. The teacher/researcher planned the lesson according to the research objectives and modified the available resources accordingly. In the classroom, the teacher/researcher focused on the teaching objectives and students' learning needs. After each class, the teacher/researcher reflected on the teaching practice to ensure that

teaching practices and the research objectives were met. As a designer of a research, the teacher is at the advantage of using the required activities in such a way to supplement the research agenda (Impedovo & Khatoon Malik, 2016; Tabach, 2011). The only disadvantage of the teacher/researcher dual role was that the teacher could not collect data (take notes, observe teaching and learning while explaining) in class while teaching if no recording is allowed. To address this challenge, students were interviewed to get their opinions on the instruction.

To ensure that the teacher was not influenced by the students' decision to participate in the study, the signed consent forms and the essays were only made available to the teacher/researcher after final grades for the course were submitted to the school. Since the study took place during the regular writing class and since the teacher designed the study to be compatible with the content of the course, no compensation was offered for the students. The teacher met with the raters either in person or virtually to ensure that the raters can use the rubric.

Raters. A total of forty raters participated in the study. They were classified into internal raters (N = 12) and external raters (N = 28). The internal raters, further classified into teachers and students, were familiar with the program, course content, and instruction, and had participated in the pilot testing of the rubric reported in Chapter 3. Internal raters participated in essay rating for two reasons. First, they contributed to the development of the rubric, received face-to-face training, and rated sample essays. Second, they were used as a baseline for comparison between internal and external ratings. The external raters, who were also classified into teachers and students, were unfamiliar with the language school, the content of the course, or instructional orientation. They were ten TESL Canada Federation members (M = 37. 41, SD = 7.68) with a minimum of two years teaching English experience, one part-time faculty member in an English university medium, eight ESL undergraduate students (M = 40.35, SD = 5.65)

taking English courses in English medium university, and nine graduate students (M = 30.55, SD = 6.45) taking evaluation course in the department of education in an English medium university. Twenty-five raters, internal and external rated essays using the WCC rubric, eight raters rated essays using IELTS standard rubric, and seven raters rated essays using both rubrics.

Instructional Context

The daily language program in the language school was divided into three periods. The first period was grammar and speaking, the second period was reading and writing, and the third period was dynamic conversations and listening. Each period lasted ninety minutes. The study took place during the second period, reading and writing period. In general, learners in level 5 start with writing paragraphs and progress to writing opinion and argumentative essays. In this class, a standard essay format consisting of an introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion was taught. The learners read the readings in the textbook, *NorthStar 5*, Fourth Edition (Cohen & Miller, 2015), that is adopted by the language school in Montreal. As stated in Chapter 3, the textbook adopts a task-based approach to teach writing (Cohen & Miller, 2015, pp. X - XI) and it was suitable for the intermediate level (B2, CEFR level). The textbook is divided into eight units; each unit had four readings with a writing prompt related to the readings. Each unit is covered in one week. See Appendix A for writing prompts in each unit.

Data Collection

The materials that were used to answer the research questions consisted of written prompts that elicited written texts collected on the midterm and the final exam, rating rubrics, learners' interview questions, and raters' questionnaire.

Writing Prompts. The writing prompts were taken from the readings in the textbook and they elicited argumentative essays from the learners. The focus of the textbook was to present arguments and support their position with examples and evidence. The writing prompts are presented in Appendix A. Essays 4 and 8 in the Appendix were the mid-term (pre-test) and the final writing exam (post-test). Writing prompts elicited written essays that were used to measure learners' communicative competence.

Rating rubrics. Two rating rubrics were used to score written essays on the pre-test and the post-test. The first rubric was the WCC rubric, which is a process-oriented teaching and assessment tool, because it can assess all target competencies during the instruction and assessment. Framed by CLT principles, teaching and assessment tools should be the same because instruction should target the same family of competencies/tasks that will be assessed (Scallon, 2015). Therefore, it is important to use the same rubric for the instruction and evaluation to capture how instruction affected learning. All information about the WCC rubric was presented in Chapter 3. The second rubric was IELTS rubric. The role of the IELTS rubric was to ensure that the experimental group has indeed improved in writing and that the gains were not only due to using the same rubric for instruction and evaluation. That is, the IELTS rubric was used to ensure the concurrent validity of the scores obtained on the WCC rubric. IELTS consisted of four components: task response, cohesion and coherence, vocabulary range, and grammar and accuracy. IELTS rubric had a scoring range from 0 to 9. IELTS evaluation grid and IELTS rubric descriptors are presented in Appendix D.

Feedback form. To assign marks, ranging from 0 to 4, for the written texts on each category in the WCC rubric, a feedback form was distributed to the raters along with the WCC rubric, which the raters used to score each written text. The feedback form was created based on

the recommendations of the teachers in the pilot testing study, Chapter 3. The advantage of the feedback form is that it provides feedback, in the form of a score, on each category in the WCC rubric. The scores on each subcategory were calculated to end up with a total score for each written text.

Learners' interview. The semi-structured interview was based on Rabionet (2011) and Brown and Danaher's (2017) suggestions on how to construct semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews should contain demographic information, open-ended questions, and follow-up questions based on what the participants would add (Brown & Danaher, 2017). Therefore, the semi-structured interview questions consisted of three parts: demographic information section, open-ended questions about the rubric and the writing process (10 questions) followed by the follow-up questions, and a section about the peer-review activity in which learners were asked about their opinions providing feedback to their peers using the rubric. The semi-structured interview protocol is presented in Appendix F, section 1. Twenty learners were interviewed at the end of the session to get insight about their learning experience focusing on writing; the control group was asked about their experience using the textbook checklists and the intervention group was asked about their experience using the WCC rubric as a learning and an assessment tool. Learners in the control group were asked up till question 4 in the semi-structured interview protocol. The interview was audio-recorded and transcribed.

Raters' questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: demographic information, general information about the raters, and rubric-specific open-ended questions. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix E, section 2. External raters filled in the questionnaire and returned it to the researcher by email.

Procedure

This section describes the regular instruction and the intervention. The study took place over a period of four months, which is equivalent to two semesters in the language school, four days per week for ninety minutes per day. Because the number of international students registered in each class was small, due to summer vacation, the data was collected over two semesters.

Regular instruction: Control group. Learners received writing instruction four days per week from Monday to Thursday in the language school. Each writing class lasted ninety minutes. Every week, the learners read the readings, answered comprehension questions, and wrote one essay. The writing prompts for each lesson/week are presented in Appendix A. In each writing class, the teacher explained some writing concepts, e.g., transition sentences, thesis statement, topic sentence, concluding paragraph; modeled how to apply them; and monitored the writing process. During the first week of the semester, the teacher stated that using writing strategies can help learners improve the clarity of their texts and explained how to write an essay: paragraph by paragraph. That is, on Monday, learners read the readings and answered the comprehension questions. On Tuesday, the teacher explained and modeled how to brainstorm and organize ideas and write an introductory paragraph. The learners individually wrote the introductory paragraphs and then exchanged them with peers to check the clarity of the paragraph and its components. On Wednesday, the teacher explained and modeled how to write topic sentences and supporting details, how to cite source readings, and the learners practiced writing body paragraphs. That is, each day, the learners continued writing the essay parts they started on the previous day individually and later revised them in pairs. On Thursday, the teacher gave an example of a conclusion paragraph, the learners added the conclusion paragraphs to their essays, revised in

pairs, and submitted them to the teacher. The following week, the teacher returned the drafts with feedback using the checklist provided in the textbook. The learners revised their essays, returned them to the teacher who kept them in portfolios that consisted of written essays, checklists from peers, the teacher, and a revised draft. In week 2, when learners learned how to write essays, they started writing their essays in class. Each day they wrote part of the essay, exchanged what they have written with peers and submitted the revised essay to the teacher who provided feedback and returned the essays to the learners. Every week the same pattern repeated till the end of the semester.

Explicit strategy training: Experimental group. The instruction provided to the experimental group was identical to the control group until the first lesson after the midterm exam. The intervention study started in the second half of the semester, after the mid-term exam. The intervention consisted of four strategy training sessions, a total of six hours, that aimed to raise learners' awareness about communicative competence in writing. Strategy training sessions using the WCC rubric were designed based on Mariani's (1994) cyclic approach to strategy training: experience exposure, observation exploration, experience practice, and observation evaluation and Anderson's (2008) recommendations on how to teach metacognitive strategies to learners.

In the first strategy training session about communicative competence (90 minutes), the teacher introduced the WCC rubric, the learners read it individually first, checked their comprehension of each component in groups of three, and shared examples where they apply these categories in their writing. The teacher was taking notes during group discussions. Then, the teacher checked the comprehension of the rubric components by randomly selecting a student to explain one of the categories and give examples on how they apply it until all categories were

covered. The purpose of this session was to make sure that learners understood the rubric and to engage them in a meta-analytical thinking about the rubric.

In the second session (90 minutes), the learners got a sample text from their textbook and in pairs they evaluated it in terms of the rubric, and finally justified their ratings to each other. The purpose of this session was to make learners analyze a unified text based on the rubric components to raise their awareness of how ideas in the text were communicated to the reader. It was not the purpose of the rubric at this stage to ensure that the ratings were consistent as much as to ensure that they can justify their answers using metacognitive thinking.

In the third session (90 minutes), the teacher and the learners collaboratively wrote an essay (essay lesson 5 in the Appendix A) on the board following the categories in the WCC rubric. That is, the first component in the WCC rubric was to generate ideas by creating a concept map and including information from source readings. The white board was divided into two parts. On one section of the board the teacher wrote learners' ideas after reading the source readings and organized them in the form of the concept map. Based on the concept map, each student wrote one sentence on the board following the second category in the rubric which was writing an introduction setting the context, transition sentence (hook), and a thesis statement and so on until all categories were applied. When the essay was composed, learners and the teacher revised it by combining sentences, deleting irrelevant sentences and so on. The result of applying the categories of the WCC in writing was a complete essay that was created through the process of planning, drafting an essay, and revising it. The purpose of this session was to model to learners how an essay can be written applying the strategies in the rubric.

In the fourth session (90 minutes), each student wrote an essay (essay of lesson 6) individually using the rubric's categories as a step-by-step guide on how to proceed with writing. After they finished composing and revising their essays, they exchanged essays and provided feedback to each other by providing scores on the feedback form. At home, they revised their essays based on the peer feedback and submitted the revised essays to the teacher, who also provided scores on the feedback form and returned the essays to the students for the revision. The result was a portfolio that consisted of a written essay, WCC feedback form from the teacher, peers, self-assessed scores, and a revised draft. After the training sessions, the learners were reminded to keep using the WCC rubric to compose their essays and seek feedback from each other. The summary of the procedure is presented in Table 11.

Table 11

Intervention Study Procedure

		Monday (90 minutes)	Tuesday (90 minutes)	Wednesday (90 minutes)	Thursday (90 minutes)
Regular Instruction (both groups)	Week 1 (Lesson 1)	Reading the texts in the textbook. Checking comprehension	Teaching brainstorming techniques to write an essay	How to write a basic paragraph: teaching, modeling, and application. Citing references	How to write an introductory paragraph (setting the context, hook and thesis statement: teaching and applying
	Week 2 (Lesson 2)	Reading the texts in the textbook. Checking comprehension	Writing introductory paragraph + peer/self review using the checklist	Writing body paragraphs + peer/self review using the checklist	Writing conclusion + peer/self review using the checklist Submit the essay to the teacher

	Week 3 (Lesson 3)	Reading the texts in the textbook. Checking comprehension	Brainstorming and writing introductory paragraph + peer/self review using the checklist	Writing body paragraphs, Peer/self review using the checklist	Finalizing the essay, revising it. Exchange essays with peers.
	Week 4: Midterm exam (Lesson 4)	Mid-term exam: Grammar and listening exam	Mid-term exam (pre-test) Students read the readings and wrote an essay from lesson 4 for the midterm-exam	Midterm exam: Presentations	Exam correction day
Intervention (experimental group only)	Week 5 (Lesson 5)	CC training 1: the WCC rubric was introduced	CC training 2: Evaluating and analyzing a text sample using the WCC rubric	CC training 3: The whole class planned, developed, and revised an essay on the board using the rubric.	CC training 4: Students wrote an essay individually responding to a writing prompt in lesson 5
	Week 6 (Lesson 6)	Reading the texts in the textbook. Checking comprehension	Brainstorming and writing, peer review with the aid of the feedback form that was used as a checklist	Writing: body paragraphs and conclusion with the aid of the feedback form that was used as a checklist	Peer review in which peers scored each other's essays using the feedback form Submitting the essay to the teacher
	Week 7 (Lesson 7)	Reading the texts in the textbook. Checking comprehension	Brainstorming and starting writing, peer review	Writing: body paragraphs and conclusion	Peer review in which peers scored each other's essays using the feedback form

					Submitting the essay to the teacher
	Week 8 Exams week (Lesson 8)	Final exam (post-test) Reading exam and Writing exam	Final exam Grammar, listening, and speaking	Talent show in the school	One-on-one interview with the teacher

Note: Unlike the intervention group, the control group continued practicing writing as in week 3 for the rest of the term.

In the last week of classes, learners received feedback on their performance during the semester and they had a chance to reflect on their learning as well. This happened during a one-on-one interview between the teacher and a student. The teacher, in both groups, used the collected portfolios to help learners reflect on what they have learned during the semester. The questions in the semi-structured interviews were used to guide the discussion. The discussions were audio-recorded and transcribed. This interview also served as a communicative assessment of communicative competence development in learners' writing.

Raters' training. The external raters received an individual one-hour training session online. During this session, the researcher explained to the participants the purpose of the study, how the rubric was designed and what each item on the rubric means. The participants were informed that they are free to withdraw their participation at any time. Then, the raters practiced rating two essay samples using the WCC rubric. The raters assigned marks for each category of the WCC rubric on the feedback form. The training session ended with responding to any questions the raters had. The raters were informed that they could email the researcher for any follow-up questions.

Data analysis

The present study aimed to assess the effect of communicative competence training on L2 writing performance. The written essays, along with the concept maps and the revisions indicated in a different font color, obtained on the pre-test and the post-test were typed in a Word document for reading clarity purposes. Another researcher verified the typed documents to ensure that there were no missing revisions. Internal and external raters rated the pre-test/post-test essays using the WCC rubric. Hence, L2 writing performance was operationalized as scores from 0 to 4 obtained on the WCC rubric components that were classified into organizational, pragmatic, and strategic competence. The organizational competence was operationalized as idea generation and content development and their subcomponents. The pragmatic competence was operationalized as cohesion and coherence, task requirements, and comprehensibility and their subcomponents. The strategic competence was evaluated in two stages: on the pre-test/post-test, in the form of the number and quality of the attempted revisions as indicated in different color and second, the frequency of the transcribed communicative competence subcomponents in the transcribed interviews as suggested in Mokibelo (2018). Each communicative competence subcomponent was counted once, for a total of various communicative competence subcomponents.

Because CLT principles are based on teaching and assessment alignment, it was important to evaluate students' writing performance using the same rubric that was used for teaching writing in addition to another standardized writing assessment rubric (IELTS rubric). In other words, data for quantitative analysis that aimed to answer RQ1, what the effect of the communicative competence strategy training in writing was on the written performance, came from forty raters, twelve internal and twenty-eight external raters, who rated forty essays, which

were all the pre-tests and post-tests from the 20 participants, using either the WCC rubric (n = 25), or IELTS rubric (n = 8), or both rubrics (n = 7). Each WCC rubric component could receive a score from 0 to 4, where 0 falls under "needs practice" range and 4 stands for "competent" range. The highest score that can be obtained on the essay was 60. The passing score for writing was 30/60, which is a total score that is obtained if scored 2 (an average performance score) on all rubric descriptors. It was up to the teacher to decide the passing score for the writing component. Interrater reliability calculated by Cronbach's alpha (α) for the WCC rubric was as the following: idea generation (α = .80), content (α = .77), task requirements (α = .68), comprehensibility (α = .84), revision and editing (α =73). Cronbach's alpha (α) equivalent to .70 and above is considered an acceptable value (George & Mallery, 2003; Haier et al. 2010; Nunnally, 1978). The IELTS rubric, however, was divided into four components: 1) task response, 2) cohesion and coherence, 3) vocabulary range, and 4) grammar and accuracy. Each component in the IELTS rubric can receive a score from 0-9. The interrater reliability for IELTS rubric was as the following: task response (α = .88), cohesion and coherence (α = .76), vocabulary range (α = .70), grammar and accuracy (α = .69).

Data for qualitative analysis that aimed to answer RQ 2 and 3 (how the learners and the raters perceived the WCC rubric) came from the semi-structured interview questions learners in control and intervention groups and external raters' answers on a semi-structured questionnaire. Learners and raters' answers on the semi-structured interview were analyzed following thematic analysis (as was done in Chapter 3) based on the recommendations of Charmaz (2018) and Charmaz, Thornberg, and Keane (2017) and Braun & Clarke (2006). That is, all answers on each category were coded by identifying recurrent words/expressions/concepts (focus coding) that were later combined into larger themes/labels. To make sure that the themes explained the data,

the data was reanalyzed with a new understanding of the data. Another researcher in the Ph.D. program in the department of Education checked the themes to ensure that the themes explained the data. Another rater grouped the themes slightly differently. The themes that resulted with another rater were as the following: willing to try the rubric, willing to change. Upon discussion, both researchers agreed to replace these themes by professional development as it covered both themes together. The rest of the themes such as time management, cognitive load, rubric features were similar. The coder attempted to divide them into positive and negative codes, the same as the researcher tried to do, but the data did not fit into that category, so both researchers agreed to keep positive and negative codes combined.

In conclusion, the present chapter presented the method of the study and the next chapter will present the results of the intervention study.

Chapter 5: Results

Research Question 1: The Effect of Communicative competence strategy training on L2 Writing Performance

The present chapter presents the results of the intervention study. The first research question asked whether communicative competence strategy training led to an improvement in L2 writing performance. The descriptive statistics indicated that learners in both groups benefitted from instruction. On the pre-test, the intervention group scored less than the control group on the written essays. However, the intervention group outperformed the control group on the post-test. Table 12 presents score means and standard deviations on each component in the rubric per time (pre-test and post-test) and group (control and intervention). The rubric subcomponents were kept separate to capture any possible changes on each of the subcomponents.

Table 12

Means and Standard Deviations for Scores by Time and Group

		Pre-test		Post-test	
		Control	Experimental	Control	Experimental
Idea	Generating concept map	.36 (.48)	.51 (.78)	1.62 (1.50)	3.31(1.30)
	Using external sources	.31 (.71)	.13 (.50)	2.47(1.25)	3.07 (1.25)
Content	Relevant context	1.78 (.76)	1.88 (.82)	2.22 (.97)	3.09 (.66)
	Presence of thesis statement	2.09 (.44)	2.07 (.44)	2.47 (.91)	3.02 (.69)
	Topic sentence/paragraph	1.73 (.71)	1.84 (.70)	2.47 (1.07)	3.38 (.74)
	Supporting ideas	2.13 (.75)	2.07 (.68)	2.53 (1.12)	3.18 (.57)
	Acknowledges the source	.51 (.90)	.27 (.65)	2.29 (1.30)	3.16 (1.08)
	Clear conclusion	1.91 (.58)	1.80 (.83)	2.51 (.81)	2.91 (.92)
Coherence	Good use of connectors	2.00 (1.4)	1.71 (.54)	2.40 (.93)	2.93 (.72)
	Logical progression	2.27 (.65)	2.24 (.60)	2.53 (.84)	3.20 (.54)
Task requirements	Appropriate genre is used	1.40 (.68)	1.67 (.70)	2.56 (.81)	3.04 (.70)
	Range of vocabulary and grammar	2.18 (98)	1.82 (.83)	2.42 (.78)	3.00 (.76)

Comprehensibility	The overall purpose is clear	1.96 (.73)	1.61 (.71)	2.62 (.61)	3.04 (.82)
	Good flow and easy to read	1.78 (.95)	1.69 (.70)	2.30 (.59)	3.07 (.63)
Revision	Revision and editing	.73 (.90)	.22 (.60)	1.78 (.99)	2.69 (.90)
	Total WCC Score (out of 60)	23.17(7.26)	21.48(4.72)	35.31 (9.89)	46.04(6.85)
	Total IELTS Score (out of 90)	30.94 (3.4)	32.22 (2.1)	55.05 (4.3)	66.18 (3.1)

A two-way repeated-measures MANOVA was run to determine the effect of communicative competence training using the WCC rubric over time (pre-test compared to post-test) on writing performance as measured by scores on the WCC feedback form. Analysis of the studentized residuals showed that there was no normality as assessed by the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality ($p < .001$) on all measures. Field (2013) recommends using robust tests, transforming data and winsorizing outliers to render robust results. Since transformed data yielded similar results as the original data and because MANOVA is a robust test to deviations from normality, the tests were run on the original data. Outliers were winsorized. Mauchly's test of sphericity indicated that the assumption of sphericity was not met for the two-way interaction, $\chi 2(2) = 1194.51$, $p = .001$. There was a significant main effect for time, $F(1, 838) = 1360.71$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .79$ and group, $F(1, 838) = 56.98$, $p = .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .13$. There was also a statistically significant interaction between group and time on scores, $F(1, 838) = 155.99$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .30$. Post-hoc tests with Bonferroni corrections were run to determine where the significance lies. Post-hoc tests' results indicated that both groups significantly improved from pre-test to post-test with medium to large effect size as indicated in Table 13 below except for using external sources, topic sentence/per paragraph, coherence and cohesion, and range for vocabulary and grammar for pre-test to post-test scores in the control group. Cohen's d is small when $d = .4$, medium, $d = .7$, and large, $d = 1.00$ (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014).

Table 13
Post-hoc Results for Group by Time

	Measure	Control		Experimental	
		Sig.	Cohen's *d*	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Idea	Generating concept map	.000	1.13	.000	2.61
	External sources	.157	2.12	.000	3.08
Content	Relevant context	.006	.50	.000	1.62
	Presence of thesis statement	.012	.53	.000	1.64
	Topic sentence/paragraph	.177	.81	.000	1.69
	Supporting and detailed ideas	.001	.42	.000	1.76
	Acknowledges the source	.025	1.59	.000	3.24
	Clear conclusion	.001	.85	.000	1.26
Coherence	Good use of connectors	.051	.33	.001	1.91
	Logical progression	.078	.34	.000	1.68
Task requirements	Appropriate genre is used	.000	1.55	.000	1.95
	Range of vocabulary and grammar	.137	.27	.000	1.47
Comprehensibility	The overall purpose is clear	.000	1.10	.000	1.86

Note: Cohen's d is small, *d* = .4, medium, *d* = .7, and large, *d* = 1.00 (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014)

Regarding groups at both points in time, post hoc tests indicated that there was no statistical difference between groups on the mid-term exam (the pre-test) on all measures except for the purpose of writing component (p = .03). However, there was a statistically significant difference in groups on the post-test on all measures with a large effect size (see Table 13). The experimental group outperformed the control group on the post-test, as indicated by descriptive statistics in Table 14.

Table 14

Post-hoc Comparisons for Time by Group

		Pre-test		Post-test	
		Sig.	Cohen's *d*	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Idea	Generating concept map	.26	.00	.00	1.20
	Using external sources	.09	.02	.02	.50
Content	Relevant context	.80	.12	.00	1.04

	Presence of thesis statement	.85	.04	.00	.70
	Topic sentence/paragraph	.42	.15	.00	.99
	Supporting ideas	.66	.08	.00	.74
	Acknowledges the source	.17	.30	.00	.73
	Clear conclusion	.47	.15	.02	.51
Coherence	Good use of connectors	.10	.27	.00	.64
	Logical progression	.86	.04	.00	.95
Task requirements	Appropriate genre is used	.07	.39	.00	.90
	Range of vocabulary and grammar	.06	.40	.00	.76
Comprehensibility	The overall purpose is clear	.03	.48	.00	.60
	Good flow and easy to read	.66	.20	.00	1.26
Revision	Revision and editing	.06	.66	.00	.96

Note: Cohen's d is small, *d* = .4, medium, *d* = .7, and large, *d* = 1.00 (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014)

To ensure that the gains in scores in the experimental group were due to the instruction rather than the use of the WCC rubric that was used by the participants in the experimental group, the results were crosschecked by comparing the WCC scores to the scores obtained on IELTS in two groups. As stated in the Data Analysis section, the raters could consistently rate the essays using IELTS rubric – task response ($\alpha = .88$), cohesion and coherence ($\alpha = .76$), vocabulary range ($\alpha = .70$), grammar and accuracy ($\alpha = .69$). Total IELTS score and total WCC score strongly correlated on pre-test of both groups ($r = .89$, $p = .007$) and post-test of both groups ($r = .82$, $p = .012$) suggesting that the scores obtained on both rubrics were consistent. Repeated-measures MANOVA was also run on the IELTS scores to detect any interesting patterns. The obtained results were consistent with the WCC results. There was time*group interaction effect $F = 13.03$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .66$), main effect for time $F = 304.69$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .97$, and main effect for group $F = 9.34$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .59$. There was no statistical difference between the IELTS scores on the pre-test with a small effect size ($p = .18$, $d = .40$). However, there was a statistical difference for the IELTS scores between groups on the post-test with a large effect size ($p = .003$, $d = 1.95$). The experimental group scored higher on

the post-test than the control group with a large effect size (see Table 12 for the IELTS overall score in the last row).

Research Question 2: How Do the Participants Perceive the WCC Rubric for teaching and assessment?

Regarding the second research question that asked how the participants in the study perceived the writing instruction, the analysis of the participants' answers revealed that the participants in the experimental group benefited more from the instruction than the control group. The participants' answers were organized into themes by groups. The themes that emerged from the experimental group were as the following: the emergence of metacognitive thinking about the communicative competence in writing, more acceptance of English essay structure for the Korean participants, lower anxiety during the assessment, and a shift from focus on form to focus on meaning in the experimental group. The only common theme between the control and the experimental group was an improvement in organizational ability.

Regarding metacognitive thinking and new beliefs about writing, on the one hand, when the participants in the control group were asked about their writing experience, they restricted their answers to that they have become better writers and that they have learned to revise their essays. When they were asked about the checklist, nine out of ten learners reported that they did not refer to the checklist to write their essays; they referred to the checklist only to evaluate their peer's essay. Only one student reported that she used the checklist as a reference to make sure that she responded to task requirements during the writing process. On the other hand, the interview answers of the participants in the experimental group indicated that metacognitive thinking has started to emerge in their responses. The participants were able to explain better in which areas they have improved. The answers referred to various communicative competence

components: pragmatic, strategic, and organizational. Here are some examples from the experimental group:

> When I read other papers I understand other positions, I learn how to think differently. I look at my paper as if it is not mine and I start seeing ways to improve it (S9).

> It is so hard to write but after using the rubric it is much easy to write. I am so happy I can write and people can understand what I write. I know how to use the concept map, use other information, organize my ideas. I need to practice to write (S7).

> Sometimes I end up writing an essay that does not answer the question before when I write I don't think about answering the question or convincing the reader. I end up with a tree full of brunches that are not connected. Now I know how to structure my essay (S5).

> Topic sentence, supporting sentence. It is hard to think. Before I write I need to think about the kind of structure but with rubric I can think of each point at a time. I am not a creative person. Writing is difficult to me but it is easier now because I write an outline it makes me think more. I did not use these techniques before (S8).

Regarding cultural differences in writing structure, the answers of the Korean participants in both groups suggested that they struggled with the cultural differences in writing. They reported that they did not follow any specific structure in writing. They perceived writing as a creative process. The Korean participants in the control group reported that they did not like following rules in writing, unlike the Koreans in the experimental group whose answers were more lenient. The Turkish and the Colombian learners did not report any struggle with the essay structure. Here are some examples from the participants in both groups.

I did not use these techniques before. We do not write much in Korea. We do not follow rules. Writing is a creative process and we put our ideas as we like (S4, control group).

'It is hard to follow point by point method. I need to reorganize my thoughts again. There is a different structure between essay structure in Korea and Canada. I can't explain it but when I hear about a topic, all ideas pop up in my mind. I can't organize all that on paper. (S2, control group).

I needed time to think but now it is easier to draw my ideas on a map. When I brainstorm ideas and draw arrows for the concept map, I can then fill the holes in my ideas. It makes writing easier. I think about readers more what they will understand. Reading texts to write also helped me come up with new ideas' (S2, experimental group).

Thesis statement is difficult. Why it is in the introduction. I don't get it. Now I understand. I tell the reader my message and then give an example. In Korea, no thesis sentence (S7, experimental group).

Regarding anxiety level, students in the experimental group reported that they felt secure during writing assessment. Being exposed to the explicit strategy training using the WCC rubric helped the participants in the experimental group gain confidence during the writing process. Here are some examples from the participants in the experimental group.

> Writing is difficult. I think it is easier for me to write now because I know what you (the teacher) look for in the assessment. (S4, experimental).
>
> It is the first time my teacher grade me on what we do in class when we write. Teachers give you score on what you write, put many red marks on grammar

mistake. I like that we worked on how to make people, reader understand my messages. I can write and write now (S7, experimental).

I was afraid to write. I don't write in English. Now it is better I think. I will keep writing, diaries maybe, I don't know (S1, experimental).

Regarding shifting the focus from form to meaning theme, only the participants in the experimental group answered that they became more aware about the reader, clarity of the ideas, task requirements, and logical flow, which suggested that there was a shift of attention from form to meaning. Some learners reported that they used to focus on correct grammatical structures rather than the message of their essays in their previous writing classes. The participants in the control group did not have much to say apart from they improved in writing or writing was still difficult for them. The participants in the experimental group provided more elaborate answers than the control group. Here are some examples from the participants in the experimental group:

Before I focused on writing right structure from the start. It took me a long time just to come up with correct sentences I did not focus on meaning. I did not revise my essays before and it is hard for me to write an outline or concept map but now it is easier. I can see more mistakes and I can correct them better now. I focus more on ideas when I write. On the second round, I revise my essay for grammar (S6, experimental).

Working with a partner also showed me how to think about my paper from a different angle (S10, experimental).

I am thinking about the readers now. I also use ideas from another readings to support my topic sentence. I think less about correct structure now but I revise again later (S2, experimental).

> Using grammatical structures and underlining them was very useful. I started using words and structures that I did not use before when I revise my essay. I connected to other classes as well. I mean grammar, reading, and listening classes (S1, experimental).

The only theme that was similar between the two groups was organizing ideas on paper. The participants' answers indicated that they struggled with the organization of the ideas. Both groups reported in the interview session that they learned how to generate, organize, and then logically connect the ideas. Here are some examples:

> I forget what I write about. Focusing on essay structure helped a lot. (S4, control group).

> I am good at organization now. (S7, control group).

> Writing is still difficult for me. I learned things. (S1, control group)

> The rubric was really helpful. Writing is complicated. Concept map and hook and organizing ideas are better now. It becomes easy to write when you use the rubric. It was hard to use it. I learned to paraphrase sentences. Before I copied sentences but now I think about my ideas before writing them (S1, experimental group).

> Learning strategies to write was really useful and good for me. It makes writing more organized. I remove irrelevant ideas to the topic when I brainstorm. I also learned how to say what other people said in my own words (S10, experimental group).

> My writing skills are getting better. I will keep trying to organize better and try to persuade readers about my essay and I try to use different words that I did not use before to make my writer better. When I revise at home I think how to change ideas that I feel not clear or weird (S8, experimental group).

Taking the analysis further, the interview data was further analyzed by counting the instances that refer to the communicative competence indicators in the learners' responses on how they understood writing process. i.e., the number of references to the categories on the WCC rubric. A linear regression was run to understand the effect of task understanding, taking task as a unit of analysis, on written performance. To assess linearity, a scatterplot of task understanding measured by the number of instances that refer to the communicative competence indicators, against writing scores on the post-test. Visual inspection of these two plots indicated a linear relationship between the variables. There was homoscedasticity and normality of the residuals. The bootstrapped prediction equation was: writing performance = 8.03 + 5.54*number of communicative competence indicators. That is, if a student would use 12 communicative competence indicators, the predicted writing score would be 74.50%. The results were bootstrapped to account for the small sample size (N = 20 participants). In other words, the more students were able to reflect on their writing experience using language that refers to communicative competence, the higher scores they would get, $F(1, 88) = 376.16$, $p < .001$, accounting for 81% of the variation in writing scores with adjusted $R^2 = 80\%$, a large effect size according to Plonsky and Oswald (2014). It can be concluded that task understanding accounts for 80% of the predicted score on the writing performance.

Research Question 3: How Do Raters Experience Rating Using the WCC Rubric?

The third research question investigated how internal and external raters experienced essay rating using the WCC rubric. As indicated in Chapter 4, the raters rated the rubric consistently. The interrater reliability for the WCC rubric was as the following: idea generation ($\alpha = .80$), content ($\alpha = .77$), task requirements ($\alpha = .68$), comprehensibility ($\alpha = .84$), revision and editing ($\alpha =73$). The questionnaire answers for internal raters' did not result in any worth-

mentioning themes. They found it clear, usable, and practical. They did not provide any suggestions in the questionnaire. However, the external raters' answers resulted in several themes: rubric feasibility, rater's teaching experience in ESL/EFL context, and rubric dependency.

Regarding the rubric's feasibility, raters' answers showed that twenty-five out of twenty-eight external raters found the rubric easy to apply, clear, straightforward, but time-consuming. Here are some examples:

> I worked as an IELTS writing examiner and I found that this rubric has similar components to the IELTS rubric which I also used to grade your scripts. It is just more detailed and covers more aspects. I would say, it is a good rubric but tedious (R23).

> It became clear after several ratings (R11).

> It is clear and easy to use tool. It assesses the quality of the writing and covers needed components for successful writing (R24).

> It gives clear guidance about what to expect and grade (R 15).

> I think that the rubric covers all of the important aspects of the writing process and it assesses communicative competencies (R4).

> I believe it is good as a writing assessment tool. However, I would add a few more specific criteria, such as number of grammatical errors. I would also provide feedback along my grading (R 33).

Regarding the rater's experience with ESL/EFL teaching, the results suggested that the raters' experience influenced their ratings. Raters with no ESL teaching experience and raters who indicated that they use holistic rubrics reported that they prefer using holistic rubrics and suggested adding components such as a number of mistakes, and creativity level. The answers of these raters suggested that they advocate impressionistic qualitative assessment that reflects their opinions about the essay rather than quantifying rubrics, which may result in a subjective rating.

> The rubric is good in general. I believe there should be a criterion on the quality of the writing as well (R23).

Regarding the rater's dependency on the rubric, while grading, some of the raters evaluated the WCC rubric based on their dependency on it during rating. One of the criteria that affected raters' experience was the extent to which they could grade essays without referring to the descriptors.

> It is a good rubric. It assesses the quality of the text by looking at several communicative competencies. Communicative competence makes the text readable and clear. After rating three essays, it becomes more familiar and easier to remember (R21).

> I actually found the rubric somewhat hard to use. I think one of the problems I have was that I had to constantly refer to the rubric itself while I was using the evaluation grid. Because of the page setup, the printed version did not work and I had to use my computer for the rubric. I never became competent enough not to use it to score the essays. I am wondering if you could merge the two documents, the rubric and the evaluation grid. For me it would be easier to use (R 40).

The rubric is ok overall. I was not sure what the scores meant. I was unclear about how the final score is tabulated. If I were to use it with my learners, is the total mark the final score? Are all the parts equally weighted? (R14).

Conclusion

The present chapter presented the results of the intervention study. As stated earlier, both groups benefited from the instruction, as indicated by the increase in scores from the pre-test to the post-test. However, the experimental group yielded statistically significant improvement on the post-test compared to the scores of the control group on the post-test suggesting that metacognitive training of communicative competence has a positive impact on L2 writing. The quantitative data was supplemented with student's answers on the interview that resulted in several themes such as the emergence of communicative competence thinking in writing, more acceptance of cultural differences in writing, shifting the focus from form to meaning. These themes emerged in the experimental group only. Both groups shared that they became more capable of organizing their ideas in writing. The raters who participated in the study had positive opinions about the rubric. They stated that it is relatively straightforward, easy to use, multi-dimensional, and a useful tool for teaching and evaluation. This chapter also presented how the WCC rubric can be used by teachers for communicative writing teaching and assessments; formal (teacher, peer, and self assessment) and summative (pre-test/post-test and think-aloud reflection during one-on-one interview). It also presented how students can use it to generate their essays and provide peer and self feedback. Table 15 presents a summary of the findings. With the summary of the findings, this chapter ends. The next chapter will discuss the findings in more detail

Table 15

Summary of Findings

RQ	Findings
RQ1: the efficiency of the WCC rubric	The WCC rubric is reliable, easy to use, and efficient for teaching and assessment The experimental group outperformed the control group on the post-test.
RQ2: students' perception of the rubric	The participants in the experimental group gained: 1- metacognitive thinking about communicative competence in writing. 2- more open to differences in the essay structure 3- self-confidence and less anxiety during the assessment 4- the ability to focus more on the meaning The participants in both groups gained: 1-ability to organize written texts.
RQ3: raters' perception of the WCC rubric	The raters found the WCC rubric clear, usable, practical, but time-consuming. Less experienced raters with assessing writing were rubric dependent. They could not use the feedback form without relying on the rubric descriptors.

Chapter 6: Discussion

Research Question 1: The Effect of Communicative Competence Strategy Training on L2 Writing Performance

The present chapter will discuss the results obtained in Chapter 5, link them to the previous research, and will present the implications, limitations, and avenues for future research. The first research question asked whether communicative competence strategy training led to an improvement in L2 writing performance. Strategy-based instruction was reflected in the WCC rubric that attempted to measure organizational, pragmatic, and strategic competence of L2 writing. The WCC rubric was also used to bridge teaching and assessment, formative and summative. As the data show, there was no difference in performance between the two groups on the pre-test. However, the experimental group improved on all dimensions in the WCC rubric on the post-test. That is, the control group improved on the post-test on all measures except on using external sources, topic sentence/per paragraph, coherence and cohesion, and range for vocabulary and grammar. However, the experimental group improved on all measures of the WCC rubric on the post-test. In terms of score differences on the post-test between two groups, the experimental group outperformed the control group on all dimensions of the WCC rubric on the post-test with medium to large effect size suggesting that the metacognitive training of communicative competence is much better than the regular instruction used in the language school.

The findings of the present study are in line with Lv and Chen (2010) who reported that communicative competence instruction based on strategy training leads to improvement in L2 writing performance. The participants in Lv and Chen (2010) received strategy-based instruction on the metacognitive writing strategies planning, monitoring, and evaluating and received higher

scores on the post-test compared to the control group that did not receive a strategy-based instruction on the metacognitive writing. Although learners in the control group also benefitted from the metacognitive instruction as was reflected in their scores on the post-test compared to the pre-test, they did not benefit as much as the learners in the intervention group did on the post-test in both studies. Although both groups received explicit metacognitive instruction, the experimental group that had more chances to practice and internalize the strategies available to them yielded better results on the post-test. The participants' answers further supported this finding in the present study during the one-on-one interview in the language school.

On the one hand, the participants in the control group did not have much to say during the interview except that their writing improved in terms of essay organization. First, their answers lacked metacognitive thinking as they only referred to improvement in their ability to better organize their writing. Second, the Korean participants were still reluctant about following the regular essay structure even after two months of a regular writing class that they have taken. That is, the Korean participants in the control group were not convinced that they should follow "rules" when they write. On the other hand, the participants in the experimental group were satisfied with the improvement they observed in writing. As presented in the results section, the participants in the experimental group could use metacognitive language to explain in which areas their writing improved unlike the participants in the control group. They also referred to the use of various communicative competence components and to shift in their focus while writing from form to meaning. These findings that emerged from both groups were consistent with Cohen (2014), Goctu (2017), and Surat, Ramadan, Mahamod, and Kummin (2014), who reported that learners do not necessarily use or become aware of the metacognitive strategies even if a teacher explains them in the classroom, as what was seen in the control group. More specifically,

the participants in the control group did not use source readings, and they did not provide one topic sentence/paragraph, and they did not improve in the vocabulary and grammar on the post-test. However, the participants in the experimental group that practiced applying metacognitive strategies systematically in their writings obtained higher scores than the control group on the post-test. These texts were not judged by the course instructor but by forty raters from various backgrounds, which added to the validity of the results.

However, the findings of the present study were not consistent with Diaz (2013), who reported that metacognitive instruction on how to plan, monitor, and evaluate writing did not yield any effect on the written performance. On the one hand, Diaz (2013) did not target in her intervention writing performance. Her main research questions focused on exploring whether her ten participants applied and transferred the learned strategies to other classes. Her intervention was of general nature asking the participants to tick the box that represents a strategy that they remembered using when writing without instructing them how to improve writing performance by using these strategies. Her post-tests consisted of collecting diaries about which strategies they think they used after writing an assignment and a checklist containing planning, monitoring, and evaluation strategies. To answer the research question of whether participants' strategic repertoire correlates with writing performance, Diaz correlated the scores on the three paragraphs written at home with the scores obtained on the strategy use questionnaire. First, the paragraphs that served as a writing performance measure was very basic in general as she elicited descriptive paragraphs on the following topics: lifestyle, ideal house, and a definition of a profession. Second, the scoring rubric that was used may not be able to capture targeted components in one paragraph only. She used a Michigan Writing Assessment guide that targeted ideas and arguments, rhetorical features, and language control. On the other hand, the present

study focused on improving the quality of writing by training the participants to attend to the communicative value of writing by practicing applying these strategies on essays. As cited in Diaz (2013), Ochoa Angrino et al. (2007) stated, it is not enough to instruct students that planning, monitoring, and evaluating strategies exist but to teach them how to apply these strategies to specific actions to give them a clear sense of how these strategies are applied in action.

Research Question 2: How Students Perceived the WCC Rubric for Writing Instruction and Assessment

The second research question asked how students perceived the WCC rubric for writing instruction and assessment. The results indicated that the participants in the experimental group found the WCC rubric useful for improving writing and assessment. The WCC provided the students with a step-by-step guide to refer to when composing essays, i.e., planning, drafting, and revising strategies. It served as a tool for peer- and self-assessment of the written essays and, at the same time, the students knew what they would be graded on in their essays and during the oral assessment (during the one-on-one interview). As the data showed, the students in the experimental group were more capable of expressing their task understanding by referring to components on the WCC rubric, reported lower anxiety during writing, accepted more the essay structure, and started to think more about their message. These themes did not emerge in the control group. In fact, the participants in the control group had much less to say. Their comments were very basic and restricted to simple sentences. ‘I feel I write better now’, ‘writing is difficult for me’, ‘I don’t like to write but to speak in English’, I can better organize my essay into introduction, body, and conclusion.

Their comments suggested that although both groups received strategy-based instruction with various degrees of emphasis, it is only the experimental group that showed more gains in scores on the post-test as indicated by the rater's scores and task understanding as unit of analysis. Students' answers in the interview also confirmed this finding. As stated by Cohen (1998) and Cohen and Macaro (2007), strategy training provides learners with an opportunity to experiment with various strategies and become more aware of what makes them learn better. This is also consistent with Ochoa Angrino et al. (2007), as cited in Diaz (2013), who stated that strategy instruction should provide practice opportunities that ingrain the strategies into practice. The findings are also consistent with Stewart et al. (2015) who reported that metacognitive instruction reduces anxiety and increases self-efficacy. Moreover, using task understanding as a unit of analysis indicated that the more students can refer verbalize/reflect on their task understanding, the writing process in this case, the more likely their writing scores can be predicted.

Strategy-based instruction that targeted writing communicative competence was integrated into teaching, formative assessment and summative assessment by using the WCC rubric. The teacher created several occasions for students to practice applying strategies learned, and therefore provided opportunities to consolidate learning by experimenting with strategies on several occasions. This observation is in line with O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Wilson and Bai (2010) who stated that integrating strategy training in regular instruction leads to better transfer of strategies from one task to another and to enhanced strategy use over time. The participants in the experimental group performed better than the participants in the control group on the post-test, suggesting that learners in the experimental group were capable of transferring the learned strategies to their writing even when they did not have the rubric on their tests. This

finding was in line with Diaz (2013) who found that training learners to use metacognitive strategies resulted in greater strategy use over time.

Research Question 3: How Raters Perceived the WCC Rubric as an Assessment Tool

The third research question asked how raters (external teachers and learners) perceived the WCC rubric after rating the written texts. The qualitative data analysis resulted in three themes: rubric feasibility, rater's teaching experience in ESL/EFL context, and rubric dependency while rating.

Regarding the rubric's feasibility, raters' answers showed that twenty-five out of twenty-eight external raters found the rubric easy to apply, clear, straightforward, but time-consuming. They perceived it as a useful teaching and assessment tool, which was confirmed by the consistent ratings on the rubric. Consistent ratings were not surprising because the rubric was very detailed. It was also inspired by components taken from reliable instruments such as IELTS, TOEFL, Kuiken & Vedder's (2014, 2017, 2018), and Sparks et al.'s (2014) writing rating scale. In addition to including standard evaluation criteria, it can be added that the WCC rubric can capture additional components of the writing process such as progression and development of the text by accounting for the thesis statement and topic sentences of each paragraph, logical progression of ideas, and overall readability of the text. As reported by Soleymanzadeh and Gholami (2014), the IELTS scoring system failed to capture the thematic development of written texts. Therefore, it can be concluded that the WCC rubric has the potential to account for additional components that are not covered in the standardized assessments such as pragmatic and strategic competence and thematic progression of the text.

Regarding the rater's experience with ESL/EFL teaching and prior knowledge about communicative competence, the results indicated that their prior practices influenced how they perceived the WCC rubric. Raters with no ESL teaching experience and raters who were used to the holistic forms of assessments reported that they prefer using holistic rubrics and suggested adding components such as a number of mistakes, and creativity level. The answers of these raters suggested that they advocate impressionistic qualitative assessment that reflects their opinions about the essay rather than quantifying rubrics, which may result in a subjective rating. Impressionistic or holistic rubrics open room for inconsistent ratings and favoritism. Teachers tend to be more lenient with students they like the most, or with more beautiful handwriting. Adult ESL learners need to rebuild writing schemata in their minds that conform with the L2 writing conventions, enrich a range of vocabulary and grammar, organize them in a logical and organized way before expecting them to come up with creative essays. Creative writing is different from academic writing that is more standardized, organized, and formatted (Wade, 2011). International students in the language school are taking academic writing classes and are expected to follow writing rules and learn L2 writing conventions. Nonetheless, the students are free to present their ideas creatively. Therefore, the WCC rubric is not restricting learners from being creative, but it provides them with guidelines to perform at the expected level and beyond.

Some raters proposed removing integrated writing components from the rubric, stating that it did not add any value to measuring the quality of the text. Although these raters questioned the role of integrating source readings into the rubric considering that it was not relevant to communicative competence, literature review suggested that one way of integrating communicative competence into writing was to integrate source readings under the rationale that L2 writers get a chance to communicate ideas of others in a clear, authentic, and comprehensible

way (Chen, 2009; Sparks et al., 2014). Source citing and referring to source reading also served as an activity to practice summarizing and paraphrasing content, which was among the objectives of the writing course in the language school. The textbook itself was divided into reading and writing activities as explained in Chapter 3. Moreover, integrating reading information into writing is a component that is tested in standardized tests such as TOEFL, and as such, it is essential to prepare international students in language schools to properly integrate this category. For all these reasons, it can be considered that integrating source information and acknowledging sources were important components in the WCC rubric.

Teachers need training on how to teach and assess communicative competence in L2 writing especially that CLA for writing is still under-researched area and there is a limited number of recommendations on how to apply its principles in writing. This is in line with Wilson and Bai (2010) and Hiver and Whitehead (2018) who concluded that, although teachers are aware of the importance of metacognitive instruction, it is not taken for granted that teachers know how to apply it in their teaching and know how to teach it or assess it.

Regarding the rater's dependency on the rubric, while grading, some of the raters evaluated the WCC rubric based on their dependency on it during rating. One of the criteria that affected raters' experience was the extent to which they could grade essays without referring to the descriptors, i.e., referring to the feedback form only. The raters received a one-hour training during which the rubric was introduced, and the raters practiced rating two essays using the feedback form to grade the written texts. Afterwards, they were ready to rate the essays. Internal and external teachers with more experience and ESL students reported that they were able to use the feedback form independently from the rubric with descriptors. It seems that the dependency on the rubric is experience with ESL grading dependent. The rubric was designed to be an

analytical assessment tool to promote reliable grading among the raters. Therefore, the raters are encouraged to use the rubric at the beginning. With time and experience using the rubric the raters can switch to the feedback form in case it is easier for them. Nonetheless, the average time needed to grade each essay using the rubric was 12 minutes, as indicated in the questionnaire answers. Some raters who reported that they were able to use the feedback form for grading indicated that it took them 7 minutes on average to rate an essay. Whether the raters feel more comfortable with the rubric or the feedback form, twelve minutes per essay is a realistic time frame to grade an essay given the amount of feedback the learners would receive on their drafts. What matters is that the grading is consistent and that it evaluates the various dimensions of the communicative competence regardless raters' preferences.

To conclude, the present chapter presented the intervention study, which consisted of integrating communicative competence strategy training using the WCC rubric for teaching and assessment. Overall, the communicative competence strategy training using the WCC rubric yielded positive results on L2 writing performance. The participants in the experimental group needed six hours of training to get ready to use the rubric independently. Although the participants reported that they have struggled with the rubric application at the beginning, eventually, they were satisfied with the results. The participants also developed an ability to use metacognitive language and their answers drew on various communicative competence components. Most of the raters found the rubric usable and straightforward. Some raters objected quantifying the WCC rubric categories and insisted on preferring giving qualitative feedback to learners: the purpose of quantifying the WCC rubric components was to make it as objective as possible.

A broader Picture: Connecting the Discussion to Chapter 2

The main advantage of implementing communicative competence instruction using the WCC rubric was addressing the challenges presented in Chapter 2. The strategy-based instruction that promoted communicative competence training using the WCC rubric adhered to the CLT principles and addressed the challenges raised in CLA literature, as presented in Chapter 2. The main principle of CLT was meaning making. Meaning-making was incorporated into the metacognitive training and application in the experimental group by creating authentic opportunities for teacher-students and students-students interaction about the purpose/meaning of their writing. Students were encouraged to read each others' paragraphs and then essays for clarity and then discuss ideas and how they were presented, which created a learner-centered and communicative environment for teaching writing (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hadley, 2001; Hymes, 2001; Nunan, 1991; Purpura, 2014).

CLT Challenges

One of the limitations of CLT mentioned in Chapter 2 was that CLT principles were not applicable in practice. The pedagogical value of implementing the WCC rubric, which represents communicative competence strategy training, lies in the fact that it can promote CLT principles outlined in Chapter 2, and thus bridge theory with practice. The WCC rubric was used as a pedagogical tool that promoted meaningful, learner-centered, and communicative interaction among the learners as described in the Instructional Context section. The metacognitive instruction using the WCC rubric attempted to capture the writing process, not from teachers' perspective, or teacher's judgment on the written text as a product, but as an interactive learner-centered tool used for self- and peer-assessment. The teacher's role was to monitor the application of writing strategies in writing and to render texts comprehensible. The learners were

provided with a tool to assess their own work and even if their essays did not sound native-like in terms of the language command and vocabulary range they were granted points for being able to engage in, apply, and verbalize their cognitive thinking in writing, rather than for following teacher's instruction. It was not the purpose of the rubric to capture grammatical mistakes, although the purpose of the revision component was to rearrange the ideas logically and to reduce mistakes.

It was stated in Chapter 2 that CLT is not suitable for all cultures (Butler, 2011; Ellis, 1996; Gokcora & Eveyik-Aydin, 2011). It was true for the Korean participants in the present study who reported that it was difficult for them to follow a topic sentence-supporting details structure for paragraph writing. However, peer discussion along with text revisions made the writers realize the difference it made in text comprehensibility for other writers from other cultures (e.g., Colombians and Turkish).

CLA Challenges

Moving to the CLA challenges presented in Chapter 2, the first challenge, i.e., CLA could be used communicatively for formative assessment and not for summative assessment, the WCC rubric was not only used for formative assessment in which peers provided feedback to each other using the rubric, and the teacher provided feedback using the same feedback form, but also it was used for the summative assessment. The summative evaluation in the present study consisted of two parts. The first part was providing learners with scores on each area of the rubric. Second, the rubric was used as a source for student's self-evaluation on the one-on-one interview between the teacher and the learners, which provided the teacher with an opportunity to test student's knowledge about communicative competence. This is in line with the researchers' recommendations that teaching communicative competence should go hand in hand

with assessment (e.g., Breen & Candlin, 1980; Canale & Swain, 1980; Carroll, 1982; Littlewood, 1981; Richards, 2006; Savignon, 1991, 2002).

The second challenge of CLA was that communicative language assessment could only assess pre-taught tasks because task skills are transferable only to similar task types; therefore, it is suggested to create a washback effect for assessment methods (Green & Weir, 2002; Scallon, 2015). These scholars believe that communicative assessment should take the form of tasks that need to be pre-taught to learners before being assessed on similar tasks. The results of the present study indicated that the participants in the experimental group were able to apply writing strategies on the post-test better than the control group did. Students' ability to engage in discussions about the pre-taught communicative competence strategies during the one-on-one interview and analyzing task understanding as a unit of analysis also confirmed that students were able to transfer communicative competence notions they received during instruction to their writing and to the summative assessment. In other words, the evidence suggested that strategy-based instruction that was reinforced with the use of the WCC rubric may have led to strategy-use transfer from the instruction to assessment.

The third challenge of CLA was that not all communicative competence components are targeted in the assessment studies. To the best of my knowledge, the WCC rubric is the only rubric that attempted to combine Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) components of communicative competence for L2 writing assessment purposes. As stated, in Chapter 2, Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) language assessment model was in turn based on previous communicative competence models documented in the literature (e.g., models proposed by Hymes, 1972; Canale & Swain, 1980; Bachman, 1990; Celce-Murcia, Dornyei, & Thurrell, 1997). As there is scarcity of research about L2 writing in CLT in general and since little is

known about how to teach metacognitive strategies to learners (Hiver & Whitehead 2018; Wilson and Bai, 2010), the WCC rubric and the methodology provided in this study may serve as a starting point to look more into ways to combine L2 writing teaching and assessment based on the strategy-based instruction of communicative competence. The rubric was pilot-tested, and it was improved based on the recommendations provided by teachers and learners in the language school as documented in Chapter 3.

The last challenge was applying CLA to L2 writing. As stated in Chapter 2, research has mainly focused on the oral component of language assessment with less focus on the written component (Savignon, 2017). Although CLA is characterized by introducing contextualized tasks to create authentic, real-world, and meaningful test prompts, the standard tests that promote themselves as being communicative (IELTS and TOEFL) have failed to capture the complexity of the L2 writing process and it is not assessed in a communicative way (Jenkins & Leung, 2017; McNamara, 2011, 2014; Nguyen, 2011; Soleymanzadeh & Gholami, 2014). All in all, the communicative competence training reinforced by the WCC rubric was used to teach and assess communicative competence in L2 writing, and it seems that the results are promising given all the challenges documented in the literature regarding CLT and CLA.

Not only using the WCC rubric for teaching and assessment rendered positive results on writing performance, but it also introduced a way to implement assessment in a communicative way. That is, the WCC rubric that was used for formative (teacher, peer, and self feedback) and summative assessments (pre-test and post-test) tested communicative competence of the learners, which is one of the communicative assessment ways mentioned in Chapter 2. Another communicative assessment method used in the study was demonstrated by engaging the learners in a reflective evaluation of their own learning or explicit elaboration on the learners' task

understanding during one-on-one interview that provided the learners to express their understanding of the writing process that elicited their knowledge of communicative competence.

Pedagogical Implications

Based on the results of the present study, it is suggested that teachers implement strategy-based instruction of communicative competence in L2 writing classes; and should explicitly show and train learners how different strategies work and provide them with sufficient practice opportunities that consolidate meaning creation, discussions among peers, self- and peer-evaluation to allow the transfer of these strategies into practice on subsequent drafts as part of the strategic competence development. It is not enough to teach and introduce writing strategies and discussions about these strategies. Teachers should show students how to apply them on several occasions to allow for these strategies to get internalized and become part of their writing practices. It is true that strategy training does not guarantee magical results as learners may not be able to control all factors that intervene with the writing process due to several reasons such as the complexity of the writing task, limited linguistic knowledge, lack of writing practice (Diaz, 2013), but at least, it will provide the learners with tools to enhance their writing ability (Al-Jarrah et al., 2018). Therefore, it is recommended to encourage students to reflect on the role of communicative competence in writing and to evaluate students' ability to articulate competencies that they have gained during the course, i.e., test learners' task understanding. Students cannot articulate/describe the role of communicative competence in their writing unless they understand, apply, and analyze the rubric components. Once these strategies are internalized in their heads with explicit focus on how to implement them in writing, they will be able to

describe their learning and express their task understanding in a form of a reflection that was elicited from the students during one-on-one interview.

Teachers' awareness about the importance of combining L2 writing teaching and assessment using strategy-based instruction should be raised. As Wilson and Bai (2010) and Hiver and Whitehead (2018) mentioned, teachers may not know how to teach and assess these strategies in writing context, and therefore, teachers should be trained on how to teach and assess these strategies effectively with their students. Research has shown that teachers may be aware of the importance of strategy-based instruction, but they may not be prepared to teach strategies in class, provide suitable training environment, and productively assess strategy-learning outcomes (Wilson & Bai, 2010).

Although it was not within the scope of this study to investigate integrated writing, it should be noted that integrating source reading and verifying the accuracy of the information should be included in teaching writing classes. Several raters have pointed out that integrated writing was not a relevant component in the rubric, and thus it should be removed as it did not contribute to the quality of the written texts. Teachers in the language school also do not test the students on their ability to integrate source readings. However, research has shown that reading and writing share similar processes and kinds of knowledge (Stosky, 1983; Quinn, 1995; Lindsey, 1996; Risemberg, 1996; RuizFunes, 1999; Abadiano & Turner, 2002). Reading and writing require learners to actively construct meaning (Risemberg, 1996; Nelson & Calfee, 1998; Lee, 2000). Integrated writing is a form of connecting reading with writing to build communicative competence (Sparks et al., 2007), and it is also an approach used in task-based textbooks, as in the example of the textbook used at the language school. Therefore, teachers should be encouraged to integrate reading with writing practices (Shen, 2009).

Limitations and Future Research

Although explicit communicative competence strategy training in writing has yielded positive results in its context, in a language school in Montreal, the results of the intervention study should be interpreted in light of its limitations. One of the limitations of the study was the sample size in both phases, rubric pilot-testing and the intervention study. Because the study took place during the summer term, the classroom size was small, as many international students go on vacation in summer. This negatively impacted the study; the rubric was pilot tested on twelve participants and only twenty students participated in the intervention study. Nonetheless, regarding pilot-testing the rubric, in the intervention phase, forty raters rated the essays and were, more or less, consistent in their rating, which added to the credibility of the WCC rubric. Moreover, the rubric was designed based on reliable rubrics such as IELTS and TOEFL writing assessment rubrics and Kuiken and Vedder's (2014, 2017, 2018) pragmatic competence rating scale. Also, the results of the rating were crosschecked by scores obtained on the IELTS rubric.

The results of this study may not be generalizable to a larger population of international students due to its sample size, but the study was intended, in the first place, to be a case study bound by regular instruction in a language school. Therefore, the results were reflective of the impact of explicit communicative competence strategy training on the population that participated in the study. Nonetheless, the present study contributed to the CLA research and attempted to widen the scope of the research in the area of teaching writing and assessment. Second, the effect size ranged from medium to large. According to Plonsky and Oswald (2014), a large effect size is more important than the significant p-values as p-values are sample size

dependent. Nonetheless, a replication study with larger sample sizes may be an avenue for future research.

Only the internal raters were trained to use the rubric in one location as explained in Chapter 3. However, the external raters were not combined in one place and they did not receive regular and collective training. However, they received individualized online training via Skype. During the virtual meetings, twenty-eight external raters received an explanation on how to use the rubric and what each component meant, then the raters rated one essay with the researcher. Any follow-up questions were emailed to the researcher, and the researcher answered those questions regarding the rating process. Nonetheless, future research may bring the raters into one location to receive training and to rate the essays in several sessions. On the other hand, because raters for the study were recruited using online means and were given freedom to rate essays and answer the questionnaire, the data received was collected from participants who had experience grading IELTS writing exams and language testing, which added value to the analysis of the results. Participating in the study was time-consuming; it took an average of four hours, so giving the participants time to digest the material and rate essays turned into an advantage for this study rather than a disadvantage.

The study was conducted at one level only, the intermediate level. It is not known whether various proficiency levels would render similar results or not. It is claimed that better writers are writers who employ various writing strategies (Al-Jarrah et al., 2018; Barkaoui, 2017). However, it is not known to which degree the writers are aware of the strategies they use. It would be interesting to investigate how various proficiency-level learners, ranging from beginners to advanced, benefit from the strategy-based instruction focusing on communicative competence. Perhaps with lower levels, the main concern of the teacher should be teaching

writers how to transmit written messages clearly within the range of their current linguistic repertoire. Widening vocabulary range and grammatical accuracy and variety could be targeted at higher levels when the L2 writers would be capable of attending more to the linguistic structures.

The intervention study adopted pre-test/post-test design: no delayed post-test was administered due to the length of the session. Delayed post-test could shed light on the effect of intervention over time. However, in the future research, it is possible to design a follow-up study in which the post-test would be administered at the mid-term and the delayed post-test at the end of the session.

The essays written during the intervention were collected but were not rated by the raters. However, they were used to engage the students in self-reflection during the one-on-one interview. The collected essays also underwent several rounds of peer-, teacher, and self-assessments. Therefore, analyzing the essays written by the students in both groups may shed more light on how L2 writing and strategy application evolved. Because the administration of the school did not allow audio- or video-recording in regular classes, it was difficult for the researcher, who is the teacher, to teach the class, take notes during the explanation, and keep track of all details, yet the researcher managed to take some notes during group discussions. These notes helped with the analysis of the questionnaire answers. To account for the dual teacher/researcher role, the collected data for the analysis was triangulated from several sources; teachers and students' audio-recorded interviews and ratings on the written texts by internal and external raters. The one-on-one interviews during the intervention study and teacher's and students' interviews during the pilot-testing study were audio-recorded because they did not intervene with the regular classroom instruction. Would the study be replicated, it would be

interesting to audio-record students' interaction during peer assessment and group work to get more insight into what strategies they did or did not attend to during the intervention which could supplement more the collected data for the analysis.

Finally, the present study did not correlate writing performance with complexity, accuracy, and fluency (CAF) measures that are usually targeted in writing assessment studies to see how linguistic competence would improve as a result of metacognitive strategy instruction and application to written texts. A follow-up study can address this point and explore how linguistic performance was affected by strategy training using the WCC rubric.

Conclusion

Language schools in Canada promote CLT principles in language teaching; however, research has shown that the CLT application in schools is still challenging (Carless, 2009; Marcellino, 2015; Tong, 2005). Although language schools in Canada adhere to the guidelines of Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) that focus on communicative competence in teaching and assessment (e.g., task-based, experiential, real-world outcomes, learner-centered), language schools are still trapped in the phase of Presentation-Practice-Production (PPP) instructional model (Cook, 2008; Criado, 2013).

As there is little empirical research on how to effectively teach and assess L2 writing from CLT/CLA perspective (Savignon, 2017), this dissertation attempted to shed light on the efficiency of teaching and assessing writing from communicative competence perspective. This objective was achieved by creating opportunities to practice implementing communicative competence in writing classes in a language school in Montreal, Canada. The CLA framework that was guided by Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) language assessment model introduced

an approach to teaching and assessing writing based on CLT principles. CLT approach is the most used approach in language teaching nowadays. Therefore, some research can be dedicated to exploring the role of CLT in writing. Although the results of this case study are promising, to better understand the usefulness of CLA framework, future research can explore the effectiveness of CLT on writing on a larger scale including various proficiency levels. Nonetheless, it is confirmed by research that task-based, i.e., communicative, strategy instruction can lead to positive learning outcomes (Gunning & Turner, 2018). The strategy training using the WCC rubric may serve as an effective approach to teach and assess L2 writing not only for international students in language schools, but for all L2 writers. Language teachers can use the WCC rubric which reflects the writing process as a teaching resource. L2 writers can also use it as a writing resource to organize, revise, and reflect on their writing. Finally, the present paper presented a way to teach and assess writing from a CLT perspective using the WCC rubric that draws on Bachman and Palmer's (1996, 2010) communicative competence assessment model. The present study attempted to fill the gap of lack of writing research from CLT approach, the dominating teaching approach nowadays.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Writing Prompts, Textbook Checklists, and their Corresponding Communicative Competence Components

The writing tasks are adapted from the NorthStar textbook. The left column represents the checklists provided in each chapter of the textbook. The right column represents the communicative competence components based on Bachman and Palmer (2010) to which each checklist criterion belongs.

Writing tasks

Lesson 1
Every person has someone who inspired them to become who they are today. Do you agree/disagree with this statement? Support your arguments and provide examples using the readings in Lesson 1.

Final Draft Checklist in the NorthStar	Corresponding Communicative Competence Component
☐ Does your text give a clear picture of the situation?	Comprehensibility (the purpose of the writing is clear)
☐ Are the narrative elements properly addressed?	Task requirements (register)
☐ Do you use correct punctuation for the direct quotations that are included?	Task requirements (punctuation)
☐ Did you use unreal conditional?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Have you used vocabulary from the unit?	Task requirements (lexical)

Lesson 2

High school learners should be taught everything, whether good or bad, about their country's history. Do you agree/disagree with the statement? Justify your response using the readings in Lesson 2 (NorthStar p. 59). Use the checklist on page 58 to revise your introductory paragraph.

Final draft checklist	
☐ Does the introductory paragraph have a hook and go from general to specific, ending with a thesis statement?	Content (introductory paragraph)
☐ Is it clear from the thesis statement what the focus will be in the body paragraphs?	Content (clear thesis statement)

☐ Have you used double comparative to pinpoint the main issues of an argument?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Have you used the vocabulary and expressions in the essay?	Task requirements (lexical)

Lesson 3

In describing what is meant to be "transplanted" from his Belgian roots in order to live a life in the United States, Luc Sante writes in" Living in Tongues" that he had become "permanently other" because he had "to construct an identity in response to a double set of demands, one from his background and one from his environment. This feeling of being "other" can be felt by all immigrants who end up living in a place that was not originally theirs. Not only must they get used to their new physical "environment" – that of "another" – but they must also learn to speak a language that was nor originally theirs, while learning to meet the expectation of a culture that was not originally theirs.

Do you agree/disagree with Luc Sante? Refer to the readings to support your arguments.

Final draft checklist	
☐ Does your essay have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion?	Content (general essay components)
☐ Does your introductory paragraph have a hook and a thesis statement that prepares the reader for the topics of the body paragraphs?	Content (clear introductory paragraph)
☐ Does each body paragraph begin with an appropriate topic sentence and include sufficient support?	Content (topic sentence and supporting details)
☐ Are the identifying and nonidentifying adjective clauses, hyphenated adjectives, comparison and contract words and phrases in the essay used correctly?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Have you used new vocabulary and expressions in the essay?	Task requirements (lexical)
☐ Does the writing have good sentence variety?	Task requirements (linguistic variety)

Lesson 4 (mid-term exam)

"I have learned that success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by obstacles which one has had to overcome while trying to succeed."

\- Booker Washington

Do you agree/disagree with Booker's quote? Refer to the readings to support your arguments (four short readings from the textbook will be provided).

Final draft checklist	
☐ Is your essay divided into clear paragraphs with one main point in each paragraph?	Content (one topic sentence per body paragraph)
☐ Are the main points written in topic sentences?	Content (clear topic sentence)
☐ Are all the main ideas well supported through proper illustration?	Content (sufficient supporting details)
☐ Are the identifying and nonidentifying adjective clauses and hyphenated adjectives used to define, describe, and add information?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Have you used new vocabulary and expressions in the essay?	Task requirements (lexical)

Lesson 5

It is better to work for several different companies than for only one company during the course of one's career. Do you agree/disagree with this claim? Refer to the readings to support your arguments. Use the provided rubric to guide you through the writing process.

Final draft checklist	
☐ Does your essay have an effective introduction, three or more body paragraphs, and a strong conclusion?	Content (general essay components)
☐ Is it obvious from the thesis statement whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages?	Content (clear thesis statement)
☐ Does the thesis statement forecast the specific topics that are to be covered in the body paragraphs of the essay?	Content (clear thesis statement with clear topics to be covered)
☐ Are the gerunds and infinitives used correctly?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Have you used new vocabulary and expressions in the essay?	Task requirements (lexical)

Lesson 6

Critics of social networking state that people who spend so many hours a day communicating with their online friends seem not to be fulfilling an important human need – to be in the

presence of other people. Do you agree or disagree with this claim? Refer to the readings to support your arguments. Use the provided rubric to guide you through the writing process.

Final draft checklist	
Does your thesis statement prepare the reader adequately for the focus of the essay, the positive or the negative effects?	Content (clarity of the thesis statement)
Does the thesis statement give the reader a clear idea of the topics that will be described in the body paragraphs in support of the thesis?	Content (thesis statement that forecasts the topics to be covered in the essay)
Do your body paragraphs provide the reader with sufficient supporting details?	Content (sufficient supporting details)
Are the adverb clauses, discourse connectors expressing cause and effect are used correctly?	Task requirements (grammatical)
Have you used new vocabulary and expressions in the essay?	Task requirements (lexical)

Lesson 7

"If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich."

– John F. Kennedy, President of the U.S.

Do you agree or disagree with this quote? Refer to the readings about poverty in lesson 7 to support your arguments. Use the provided rubric to guide you through the writing process.

Final draft checklist	
Does your introduction give the necessary background information and thesis statement?	Content (quality)
Does the thesis statement clearly reflect the writer's stand on the issue?	Comprehensibility (the purpose of the writing is clear)
Does the conclusion restate the thesis and offer the reader other ways to consider the problem?	Content (quality)
Did you use noun clauses and noun clauses in apposition effectively in this essay?	Task requirements (grammatical)
Is the passive voice used to report ideas and facts?	Task requirements (grammatical)

☐ Have you used new vocabulary and expressions in your essay?	Task requirements (lexical)

Lesson 8 (final-exam)

Music is a source of comfort in difficult times. Do you agree/disagree with this statement? Refer to the provided readings to support your arguments.

Final draft checklist	
☐ Does the introduction of your essay set the scene in an interesting and effective way?	Content (quality of the introductory idea units)
☐ Is there a logical connection between the introduction and the body?	Coherence (logical connection)
☐ Is the role of music in your essay clear to the readers?	Comprehensibility (the purpose of the writing is clear)
☐ Are the elements of descriptive language – parallel structures, varied sentence structures, adjective and adverbial clauses– correctly integrated into the essay?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Is the passive voice used to report ideas and facts?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Are -ed and -ing adjectives used correctly?	Task requirements (grammatical)
☐ Have you used new vocabulary learned in the unit?	Task requirements (lexical)

Appendix B: Protocol for the semi-structured interview/questionnaire (Chapter 3)

Protocol for the semi-structured interview

Section 1. Teachers only

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. Your answers will help me better understand how teachers perceive communicative competence in writing and to test the usability of a communicative competence rubric. I will ask you some questions about your teaching practices for writing. You will get familiar with the communicative competence rubric and you will be asked to grade two essays. You will get a questionnaire to answer at home and bring it back to me.

Part 1: Before rating the written samples

Name:

Gender:

Age:

Native Language:

Years of English language teaching experience:

Years of teaching English writing classes:

1. How do you teach writing in your classes?
2. When you teach learners how to write essays what writing components do you focus on the most? What skills are you trying to teach your learners?
3. What is role of the written communicative competence in your writing teaching? And in your assessment?
4. Have you ever assessed your learners' writing in a communicative way? How?
5. If you were asked to assess learners' writing in a communicative way, how would you do it?
6. Do you assess learners' pragmatic skills in writing? How?
7. Do you teach your learners writing strategies?
8. What are the writing strategies that you teach?

9. Do you assess these strategies? If yes, how?

10. Do you use any grading rubrics? If yes, what writing components are included in the rubric?

11. Do you ask learners to edit their essays? If yes, according to

    which criteria? If not, why?

12. Do you engage your learners in peer review sessions?

13. Do you encourage your learners to revise their essays, their exam essays? Do you adjust the grade accordingly?

14. What do you find challenging in **teaching** your learners' writing?

15. What do you find challenging in **assessing** your learners' writing?

Part 2.

1. Do you think the rubric assesses communicative competence? Why do you think so?
2. Do you think that the rubric reflects well the writing process? Explain.
3. Was it easy to use the rubric?
4. How long did it take you to grade each essay on average?
5. Which descriptors in the rubric did you find the most relevant/irrelevant for evaluating writing competency? Why?
6. Do you think that the rubric scores fairly reflected the quality of the written texts? Why?
7. Do you think that the rubric is a good writing assessment tool? Explain.
8. Would you use this rubric to assess learners' writing? Why?
9. Do you have any suggestions to improve the rubric?
10. Are there any concerns, questions, unclear statements/descriptors that you would like to talk about?
11. Do you have any recommendations to improve the rubric?

<u>Section 2: Learners</u>

Part 1

Name:

Gender:

Age:

Native Language:

Years of studying English language:

Do you consider yourself a proficient English writer?

Is it easy for you to write in English? Explain.

Part 2:

1. Was it easy to use the rubric? Explain.
2. Which descriptors in the rubric did you find difficult to understand?
3. Would you use this rubric as a writing guideline in your writing classes? Why?
4. Do you have any suggestions to improve the rubric?

Appendix C: Raw Data for Teachers and Students' Perception of the WCC rubric

T1

The rubric is not user-friendly. It is very long and difficult to rate as I found myself flipping from one page to another. If I have many essays to correct, I do not want to be flipping sheets on the rubric. However, I would keep organization, flow, and structure components. Maybe it is a good idea to keep this rubric as a guide and create a shorthand for the rubric to be used for grading.

T2

Understanding it (the rubric) was not an issue. However, it contained so many aspects to evaluate that it is a little hard to keep track of everything. The rater might need to go back to it several times to make sure that the grading is accurate. One aspect that might be a little hard is counting the number of sentences that the learners underline because they could be corrections, grammar points or lexical items. The fact that the learners did not underline the requested points does not mean that the learners did not correct or use the structures and vocabulary in the book.

T3

I think it is fine to use a multi-dimensional rubric with so many aspects to grade for our learners in the school, but I don't think it will be suitable for larger classes in schools especially in Quebec. A full-time teacher in Quebec would have 240 learners a year. How could you correct multiple written texts in a school year if each copy took 15 minutes?

I don't get why one point is given for something that is not present in the paper, why not "0"

T4

The rubric certainly covers elements of the writing process. I liked that it explicitly addresses various competencies that learners will need to master to become better writers. I've never thought of teaching communicative competence in writing although it is a familiar concept in speaking. From this rubric and our discussion, I can imagine how communicative competence can be addressed in writing classes apart from interactive activities I use for teaching writing classes. I might use this rubric in one of my classes to see how it goes.

T5

The rubric is very long, and it contains so many aspects to assess. I don't think that teachers need all the descriptors for each scale. It unnecessarily complicates grading. There is a lot of reading even before the grading starts, which I do not appreciate in the assessment tools. Another point I want to mention is that teachers know their material and they can tailor the categories in the rubric for their classes. It sounds weird to grade grammatical and vocabulary structures based on their occurrence in the essay. I might want my learners to use more or less than 5 structures to give them a full grade on that aspect, but I think this is flexible and based on individual preferences. The same is for the vocabulary component. Moreover, the descriptor that says "the writer's choice of language structures and words is appropriate" sounds vague. I am not sure how to grade this aspect. However, I found citing source reading category interesting because I do not

ask my learners to reference their sources as long as they develop their essays. It is good to give learners idea of what will be expected from them in the university. I also liked the way structure and organization of the essay is simplified in the rubric.

T6

I think it is a bit long, there are 19 aspects to assess with 5 different scores and descriptors. At some point, the rater might trust in their teacher's judgement and not in the rubric. Also, the numbers depend on whether the writers underline or not the grammar focus, vocabulary or editing. However, as mentioned before, if a writer does not underline their paragraph, the rater might mistakenly assume that the structures or lexical item in the book were not used or that there was no editing. Maybe the writer did, it's just that they did not underline the structures.

Learners' responses

S1

The rubric is uh difficult to use. It is … it is …. long. I don't like following rules. Writing is um um creative process, you know.

S2

It looks scary. I don't like rigid rules to follow when I write. I trust my teacher for grade. It is difficult to use uh too many words …. and a lot of work for me. I don't want to use it in my class.

S3

It was difficult to use but now ok. It is many pages … too many things to look at. I prefer something more simple. I am afraid to use it in my class ….my grade will be low. I can't think of all that when I write.

S4

I did not know that the teacher looks at so many aspects. I like to learn what teacher look in my text. I can see a separate grade for each skill in this sheet and I know what to ameliorate. I like use a guide to write.

S5

I like it. I can use it to help my daughter when she writes in school. Now I don't find it difficult anymore to use. It is clear … uh but at first it was very difficult now better … easy. Can I keep it (the rubric)?

S6

Now it is all clear in my head. I can see how I can start my topic and develop it. It is like a manual. It is cool. I know what teacher want ….uh and I know what to write then…. useful… useful I find.

Appendix D: IELTS Scoring Sheet

IELTS Scoring Sheet per Group

Student number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Essay										
Task Response (0-9)										

Cohesion and coherence (0-9)										
Lexical resources (0-9)										
Grammatical range (0-9)										
Mean Score = Total score/4										

0-3 weak, 4-5 acceptable, 6-7 very good, 8-9 excellent

IELTS™

WRITING TASK 2: Band Descriptors (public version)

Band	Task response	Coherence and cohesion	Lexical resource	Grammatical range and accuracy
9	• fully addresses all parts of the task • presents a fully developed position in answer to the question with relevant, fully extended and well supported ideas	• uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention • skilfully manages paragraphing	• uses a wide range of vocabulary with very natural and sophisticated control of lexical features; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'	• uses a wide range of structures with full flexibility and accuracy; rare minor errors occur only as 'slips'
8	• sufficiently addresses all parts of the task • presents a well-developed response to the question with relevant, extended and supported ideas	• sequences information and ideas logically • manages all aspects of cohesion well • uses paragraphing sufficiently and appropriately	• uses a wide range of vocabulary fluently and flexibly to convey precise meanings • skilfully uses uncommon lexical items but there may be occasional inaccuracies in word choice and collocation • produces rare errors in spelling and/or word formation	• uses a wide range of structures • the majority of sentences are error-free • makes only very occasional errors or inappropriacies
7	• addresses all parts of the task • presents a clear position throughout the response • presents, extends and supports main ideas, but there may be a tendency to over-generalise and/or supporting ideas may lack focus	• logically organises information and ideas; there is clear progression throughout • uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use • presents a clear central topic within each paragraph	• uses a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision • uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation • may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling and/or word formation	• uses a variety of complex structures • produces frequent error-free sentences • has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors
6	• addresses all parts of the task although some parts may be more fully covered than others • presents a relevant position although the conclusions may become unclear or repetitive • presents relevant main ideas but some may be inadequately developed/unclear	• arranges information and ideas coherently and there is a clear overall progression • uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical • may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately • uses paragraphing, but not always logically	• uses an adequate range of vocabulary for the task • attempts to use less common vocabulary but with some inaccuracy • makes some errors in spelling and/or word formation, but they do not impede communication	• uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms • makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication
5	• addresses the task only partially; the format may be inappropriate in places • expresses a position but the development is not always clear and there may be no conclusions drawn • presents some main ideas but these are limited and not sufficiently developed; there may be irrelevant detail	• presents information with some organisation but there may be a lack of overall progression • makes inadequate, inaccurate or over-use of cohesive devices • may be repetitive because of lack of referencing and substitution • may not write in paragraphs, or paragraphing may be inadequate	• uses a limited range of vocabulary, but this is minimally adequate for the task • may make noticeable errors in spelling and/or word formation that may cause some difficulty for the reader	• uses only a limited range of structures • attempts complex sentences but these tend to be less accurate than simple sentences • may make frequent grammatical errors and punctuation may be faulty; errors can cause some difficulty for the reader
4	• responds to the task only in a minimal way or the answer is tangential; the format may be inappropriate • presents a position but this is unclear • presents some main ideas but these are difficult to identify and may be repetitive, irrelevant or not well supported	• presents information and ideas but these are not arranged coherently and there is no clear progression in the response • uses some basic cohesive devices but these may be inaccurate or repetitive • may not write in paragraphs or their use may be confusing	• uses only basic vocabulary which may be used repetitively or which may be inappropriate for the task • has limited control of word formation and/or spelling; errors may cause strain for the reader	• uses only a very limited range of structures with only rare use of subordinate clauses • some structures are accurate but errors predominate, and punctuation is often faulty
3	• does not adequately address any part of the task • does not express a clear position • presents few ideas, which are largely undeveloped or irrelevant	• does not organise ideas logically • may use a very limited range of cohesive devices, and those used may not indicate a logical relationship between ideas	• uses only a very limited range of words and expressions with very limited control of word formation and/or spelling • errors may severely distort the message	• attempts sentence forms but errors in grammar and punctuation predominate and distort the meaning
2	• barely responds to the task • does not express a position • may attempt to present one or two ideas but there is no development	• has very little control of organisational features	• uses an extremely limited range of vocabulary; essentially no control of word formation and/or spelling	• cannot use sentence forms except in memorised phrases
1	• answer is completely unrelated to the task	• fails to communicate any message	• can only use a few isolated words	• cannot use sentence forms at all
0	• does not attend • does not attempt the task in any way • writes a totally memorised response			

Appendix E: Semi-structured Interview Protocol and Questionnaires for Chapter 4

Section 1: Learners' interview in the intervention group

Part 1

Name:

Gender:

Age:

Native Language:

Educational Background:

When did you arrive in Canada?

How many years you have been studying English?

How would you rate your speaking, reading, writing, and listening abilities in English on a scale from 1 to 10?

Part 2.

1. Do you feel that it is easier for you to write essays now? Why?
2. On a scale from 1 to 10 (much better), how much do you think your writing has become better?
3. Did you use the rubric we used in class (or the checklist) to write your essays?
4. Was it easy or difficult to use the rubric/checklist for writing?
5. Did you like the writing activities using the rubric/checklist that you had in class?
6. Will you use the rubric/checklist in your writing in the future?
7. What have you learned from the rubric about writing?
8. Would you like to be assessed in the same way for your writing in the future? Why?
9. Do you want to add anything else?
10. Was it difficult to rate others' essays using the rubric?
11. Did you like peer-review activity using the rubric? What did you learn from this activity?

12. Do you want to add anything?

Section 2. Raters' Questionnaire

Part 1:

Name:

Gender:

Age:

Educational Background:

Native Language:

Please answer the following questions:

Part 2:

1) Do you consider yourself a proficient English speaker or reader?
2) What is your level of English (on a scale from 1 to 10)?
3) Are you an English language teacher/student? Have you taught/taken English writing classes before?
4) For how many years have you been teaching/studying English?

Part 3:

1) Do you like reading?
2) How often do you read books, novels, newspapers?
3) What do you consider a 'good' text?
4) Have you read essays written by language learners before?
5) What do you think makes a good essay?
6) How do you understand communication in writing?
7) How do you define communicative competence?
8) Do you see any connection between the quality of a text and a communicative competence? Explain.
9) Was it easy to use the rubric?
10) How long did it take you to grade each essay on average?
11) Do you think that the rubric reflects the writing process? Explain.
12) Do you think the rubric assesses communicative competence? Why do you think so?
13) Which descriptors in the rubric did you find the most relevant/irrelevant for evaluating writing competency? Why?
14) Do you think that the rubric scores fairly reflected the quality of the written texts? Why?
15) Do you think that the rubric is a good writing assessment tool? Explain.
16) Would you use this rubric in your future writing classes for academic purposes as a teacher or a student? Why?

17) Do you have any suggestions to improve the rubric?
18) How would you teach essay writing in a communicative way?
19) Feel free to add any comments. All comments are appreciated.