

Investigating Effective Techniques for Teaching Sudanese EFL Learners Writing Skill

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ABSTRACT :

This study aims at investigating the effect of using of visual aids (graphics) and classroom interaction (i.e. pair work and small group discussion) techniques for teaching writing skill. And it also examined the quality and adequacy of writing activities provided in SPINE Series. The study employed the experimental and descriptive research methods where the researcher used visual aids in the experimental group to help to get ideas to write about and to help explain how different pieces of information are connected, while visual aids were not used at all in the control group. A random sample composed of three hundred (300) male and female students in 3rd year at Mussa Aldow secondary school for boys and Omdurman secondary school for girls (Omdurman locality). The study included a random sampling composed of forty (40) male and female EFL teachers. The researcher used pre and post-test, a questionnaire, textbooks analyses and classroom observation as tools for data collecting, and also used Statistical package for Social Science (SPSS) computer program for data analysis.

The following are the most important findings which came out of the research:

- Classroom interaction via pair work and small group discussion of writing activities motivate students to write.
- Poor and inadequate writing activities in the textbooks.
- A marked improvement in the writing performance of students who were taught by using visual aids.
- A variety of teaching methods should be included.
- There is a need for further reviewing of the writing activities in SPINE and incorporation of authentic materials particularly material for developing writing skills.
- More time should be allocated for teaching writing skill at secondary schools.
- Break down large classes into smaller ones.

Keywords: *visual aids, classroom interaction, writing skill*

المستخلص:

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى بحث استخدام اساليب الوسائل البصرية وتفاعل الطلاب بالعمل في المجموعات الصغيرة داخل الفصل في تدريس مهارة الكتابة لطلاب اللغة الانجليزية كلغة اجنبية. استخدمت الدراسة البحث التجريبي والوصفي، حيث قامت الباحثة باستخدام الوسائل البصرية في المجموعة التجريبية وذلك للمساعدة قولفهم وربط المعلومات مع بعضها عند الحاجة الي ذلك ولم تستخدم الوسائل البصرية في المجموعة الضابطة.

أجريت هذه الدراسة على عينة عشوائية تتكون من (300) طالبا و طالبة من الدارسين بالصف الثالث ثانوي بمدرسة موسى الضو الثانوية بنين ومدرسة ام درمان الثانوية بنات (محلية ام در مان).

شملت الدراسة عينة من المعلمين بلغ عددهم (40) معلماً ومعلمة تم اختيارهم بطريقة عشوائية. استخدمت الباحثة كلاً من الاختبار والاستبانة وتحليل المقرر الدراسي و الملاحظة الصفية كأدوات لجمع المعلومات من عينة الدراسة، كما أستخدم برامج الحزم الإحصائية الاجتماعية SPSS لتحليل البيانات .

ومن أهم النتائج التي توصلت اليها الباحثة ما يلي:

العمل في مجموعات صغيرة داخل الفصل يدفع الطلاب ويثير اهتمامهم بالكتابة .

ضعف وقلة أنشطة الكتابة في المقرر وعدم وجود مواد مأخوذة من بيئة التلاميذ لتدريس الكتابة.

الطلبة اللذين تم تدريسهم باستخدام الوسائل البصرية قد تفوقوا في التحصيل على نظرائهم اللذين تم تدريسهم بدون الوسائل البصرية.

ومن أهم التوصيات:

تتوع اساليب وطرق تدريس مهارة الكتابة.

إجراء بعض التعديلات في أنشطة الكتابة في سلسلة SPINE وذلك بإدخال مواد من بيئة التلاميذ على تطوير

مهارة الكتابة. إعطاء زمن كافي لتدريس مهارة الكتابة في المدارس الثانوية. تصغير الفصول الكبيرة الي صغيرة.

INTRODUCTION :

Writing skill represents a critical and crucial issue in mastering English language the fact behind that , people of different walks of life communicate in different written formats on a regular basis to negotiate over a price , enroll to education institute maintain a social relationship , apply for a job , advertise products and services , deliver speech , convey feelings attitudes , believesetc.In recent years, secondary school student's performance in writing English has been questioned. Evidence of this is obviously noticed in their examination answer sheets in the secondary school certificate; many students' writing performance is not satisfactory.In addition to, drills and exercise of writing provided in their textbooks were not enough to help students to develop their writing. This led to the choice of the

secondary schools in Khartoum State, Omdurman locality as population of this study. These secondary schools are governmental schools (both model schools and geographical schools).Writing is an important skill for English language learnersit is the skill that most probably all students should take care of because the exam depends mainly on writing ability. Student find it difficult to cope with this important skill, especially those in the third year secondary level.,The main issue which this study discusses is to investigate the best techniques which are used for teaching Sudanese EFL learners writing skill at secondary schools. These students face many difficulties in writing which can be attributed to many reasons such as the way English language is taught, teaching materials in Sudanese

schools and students themselves. However, the researcher believes that the English language teachers should focus on using the best techniques for teaching writing skill at secondary schools level in order to help students to develop their writing. This study is set out to answer the following questions:

- Is performance of the students in writing EFL at secondary level satisfactory?
- Do EFL teachers adopt classroom interaction techniques for teaching writing skill at secondary schools?
- To what extent dose the SPINE series provide adequate activities to develop writing at this stage?
- To what extent can the use of visual aids help to improve students' writing?

For the purpose of investigating this study questions, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- Performance of students in writing EFL at Sudanese secondary schools is not satisfactory.
- Teacher of EFL do not apply adequate techniques like classroom interaction for teaching writing.
- The activities of writing offered in SPINE series are not adequate to develop students' writing.
- The use of visual aids can effectively help improve students' writing.

Objectives of the studyThe primary goals are:

To improve secondary schools students' writing performance.

To highlight the use of classroom interaction among teachers and students

to promote writing process. Find out whether SPINE series provided learners with basics of writing.

To find evidence to support whether the using of visual aids improve students' writing.

Theoretical Background

Hedage (1988 P. 302) Mentioned that in order to produce coherent and well organized written work students should be exposed to a variety of techniques and strategies which are basically oriented towards developing the area of language appropriateness style, content, organization and grammar, The process of writing is seen as a result of employing different strategies to manage the composing process of which is one the gradual development at a text. It involves a number of activities such as setting goals, generating ideas, organizing information, selecting appropriate language and making drafts; reading, reviewing and editing them. This mean designing such activities should be graded like all educational processes. If we follow this we may reach the ultimate goal. Hatim (2009:P.53 -54) indicated that in writing students are asked to write paragraphs, stories, letters, or events. Most of these events are written as compositions or essays. In testing the skills of written there should be a problem which stimulates students to write. Therefore, the best way of testing students writing skills is to let them determine their own problem. Thus testing specific problem in writing requires the following three criteria: First: We have set our writing tasks properly of the population of tasks

we expect our students to produce. Second: The tasks should elicit samples of writing which truly represent the students' ability. Third: The sample of writing can and should be scored reliably.

Writing Techniques

Many authors define the techniques and they are follows Archer (1979:9) defined techniques. "Away of working with methods functions and code commands to create the offer all response from the computer when the code is run also he define it as a general set of method used to create the offer all illusion of since" Anthony (1972:2) Define Technique "A particular trick stratagem used to accomplish and mediate of adjective (a technique is there for implemental that which actually takes places in the classroom and must be in harmony with method and the approach adapted)" The techniques in planning the class .Choosing classroom techniques are everyday business of every teacher (Jone, 1982). Raimes (1983) states these questions that help us choose techniques. First: How can writing help my student learn their L2 better? When students complain as they often do about how difficult is to write in a second language, they are talking not only about the difficulty of finding the right words and using the correct grammar, but about the difficulty of finding and expressing ideas in a new language for them. Second: How can I find enough topics? One useful source that is often overlooked is the students themselves and their interest such as notes and letters to a friend. The first thing we should consider is not which one assignment will be best, but

how many assignment we can develop, so that our students can explore the subject as fully as possible. Third: How can I help to make the subject matter meaningful? When we read our pupil's composition we will not be very interested in what they are writing, but rather in how they are writing and their spelling and grammar accurate? It is easy to make the same type of task much more interesting and meaningful, because the reader certainly needs to find subject matter of a piece of writing interest i.e. needs a purpose rather than just language written. Fourth: How much time should give my pupils for their writing? Obviously a lot of language activities and group work take more time than the usual writing assignment. Before we can assess how much time to allow for writing task, we have to examine what writes actually do when they write. Hence are activities that a lot of writers say they do (Raimes, 1983). They identify why and how they are writing and identify who they are writing. They gather material through observation, brainstorming, making notes, and lists, talking to others and reading. They plan how to go about the task and how to organize the materials. They write the drafts and revise. They prepare more drafts and then the final version. And they proof read for errors. Vocabulary Instruction Techniques Ur (1996) suggests the following techniques for vocabulary instruction. Ostensive techniques: This technique involves vocabulary presentation through normally visual presentations or the use of physical objects. This involves the use of rails, pictures, drawings, body expressions and

movements. Verbal techniques. Word sets: Word sets are also a means of presenting vocabulary. There are very effective because a group or family of words that share a relationship help the learner to remember the words

Interaction techniques

Interaction has been defined by many educationists as any kind of give and take process that takes place between teacher and learners or among learners themselves inside the classroom, Hubbard et al, (1983:200) defines interaction as “the result of any communicative situation in which two speakers converse” whereas Stubbs and Delmont (1979:26) define as situations where individuals come to a common definition of situation by drawing on similar commonsense knowledge, and make common assessments of appropriate action. Importance of interaction in Language Learning Situations: Interaction is considered as important factors in language learning process, it enables students to acquire different aspects of languages. Rivers (1974:4) points out that: “Through interaction students can increase their language store as they listen to or read authentic linguistic material, or even the output of their fellow student in discussions. Skits, joint problem solving tasks, or dialogue journals. In interaction students can all possess the language, all they have learned or casually absorbed – in real life – exchanges where expressing their real meaning is important to them. They thus, have experience in creating messages from what they hear, since comprehension is a process of creation, and in creating discourse that conveys

their intentions. Elements of interaction in the Classroom According to Rivers (1987:4) “Interaction is seen as a collaborative activity involving the establishment of a triangular relationship between the senders. The receiver and the context of situation”. Malamah Thomas (1987:13) supports the same view that: “Teachers and learner are not the only participants in classroom interaction. A textbook written is seen as a transmitter of a message”. Through the ideas laid down in text books, writers are communicating indirectly with the teacher and learners in classroom interaction. Teacher’s role in Creating and establishing interaction inside the Classroom: Clements and Martian (1981) mention that: teachers establish rules for classroom, group work, seat work, translations and interpretation, use of materials and equipment, and beginning and ending the period or the day ideally, the class should establish these rules and procedures through discussion mutual consent by teacher and students teachers can also exhibit appropriate levels of dominance by providing clarity the content and expectations of an upcoming instructional unit. Provide flexible learning goals teacher can convey appropriate levels of cooperation by providing flexible learning goals. Giving students the opportunity to set their own objectives or asking students what they would like to write conveys a sense of cooperation this kind of choice increases their understanding of the topic and tries to accommodate students’ interest. Take a personal interest in student Probably the most obvious way to communicate appropriate levels of cooperation is to take a personal interest in each student in

the class, allow and encourage all students to participate in class discussions and interactions. Teacher learner interaction Teachers always centered most of activates inside classroom, addition to teacher as organizer, conductor, designer also learner considered as effectives participant in classroom and teacher many create various activities to make interaction process more successful. Lynch (1996:105) mentions that teacher is interact with learners by asking questions and getting answers patterns of interaction in classroom vary from place to place, influenced by local education norms, and also from time to time, as methodological fashions come and go. The level and age of the class also make a difference; the purpose of current learning activity is another influence on interaction patterns. Learner- Learner interaction: Learners' role inside the classroom interaction in not only participation and communicative with their teacher, it also extended to create activities within their pairs is group. Lynch (1996:106) states that: we need to provide for negotiation of meaning between learners through writing tasks involving pairs or smalls groups. The idea of group work (including pair work) is not new, of course. The usual reasons given for using it are that simultaneous group work maximizes each learner's opportunity to speak and write and that practicing in a mall group the psychological burden of public performance". Chaudron (1988:100) Adds That "Several features of learner behavior examined thus for ultimately involve interaction in the classroom. The

behavior which considered here include speech or write that are contingent on previous utterances and that is some way negotiate meaning by reacting to the preceding discourse. Clarifying, modifying, repeating, and asking for clarification and so on. Here, learners are not merely interacting they are interacting to clarity meaning and ideas". Pair and Group Work Since 1930s however, there has been an increasing interest in interactions between teachers and smaller groups, varying in size from three to fifteen persons. This movement, provides the basis for an emphasis on group work as a more efficient way of teaching as subject matter and will open up for them possibilities of interaction which are not normally available in whole class approach. Pair work and group occur more frequently in many English lessons class, they are regard as good patterns in classroom, so well planned group and pair work activities can assist in developing interaction process. (Chaudron, 1988). Nunan (1996:142) mentions that. "Pair and group work, can greatly increase the amount of active speaking and writing under taken by all students in the class. It also maximizes opportunities to write". Richards (1994:152) States "It has been emphasizes that without other kinds of interaction, students are deprived of may useful and motivating opportunities for using and learning the new languages various alternatives have been proposed which emphasized use of pair and group work in classroom".

Visual Aids Techniques

Visual aids are very important in teaching writing skill. Visual aids enable

the learners to understand the main ideas of the lesson and they carry a message in themselves. Various types of visual aids demonstrate different message to the learners that draw their attention and motivate them in learning process. Scrivener (2005:333) States Flashcards is ELT jargon for pictures that can show to students. They are very useful teaching aid. They are also useful for handing out as part of various activities. Flashcards are very useful techniques for teaching writing and can be uses for: To quickly show the meaning of lexical item, e.g. to iron; and picture of computer. To illustrate presentations of language for example by giving a visual image to an imaginary character e.g. 'This is Marilyn'. Every day she gets up at six o'clock, ... ect; To tell a story, providing occasional images to give students something tangible to look at and help their understanding, e.g. '... and then a large green lorry turned around the corner and drove towards them'; As prompts to remind them of a specific grammar point or typical error, e.g. a flashcard with the word past on it to quickly remind students to make verbs in the past form, As seeds for student- base storytelling activates, e.g. handling out a small selection of pictures to groups of students and asking them to write a story that incorporates all those mages; As prompts for guessing games, definition games, description games, etc. for example, one person in a team has a picture of a person, which they describe the other students are shown a pile of seven pictures (including the original one) and have to work out which picture was described.

Picture Stories

Scrivener (2005:334-335) States pictures and picture stories can be in a book or handout, drawn on the board or OHP, on flashcards or on posters. Traditionally they have been used a starting point for writing exercises, but they are useful techniques for focusing on specific language point or as material for writing activities. Most picture stories seem inevitably practice of the past simple and past progressive. This material could approach in a variety of ways such as: Accuracy to Fluency :in this approach students start by looking at this language involved in this story and work on getting this understood and correct before they move on to work on telling the story Writing exercise. Pictures and picture stories encourage students to talk by asking questions such as 'what's he doing' to focus on the picture and 'why is he doing it? To invite ideas about motive, intentions, feeling, etc. Specific language could be focused on (e.g. modal verbs for speculation- he might be ..., he could be..., he must be ..., etc.) when it seems appropriate ask for predictions about what is work with that. When students have had enough opportunities to talk through the story, put them into pairs and ask them to tell the complete story to each other. Finally still working in pairs, they write it out. The focus on accurate use of language prepares students for an opportunity to use the language correctly, Moreover, Oral preparation ensures that students are more familiar with the grammar and lexis, and are thus better prepared for the inevitably tricky task for writing a good story.

Variations There basic recipes for picture – story lessons are easy to adopt. A little thought will reveal many ways of doing each of the stages differently, or not doing one of stages at all, or doing them in a different order, or doing something completely different with the pictures. For example: Introducing the topic: setup a ‘TV debate ‘on UFOS with role cards. Written work: instead of getting student to write out the whole story, give them a text that you have written earlier. Students have to decide on missing words and fill in blank spaces, or perhaps put jumbled – up sentences in the correct order.

.Planning works with a picture story decide what lexis is going to be essential or useful for students to know if they are to tell the story. Decide on a grammatical item that you could focus on at same points, in the story. Devise a communicative activity devise a writing exercise that involves the whole class working or writing out a single text Scrivener (2005:336).

Previous Studies

Hamad (2011) studied Developing Effective Techniques in Teaching English Language in Overcrowded Classes at Secondary Schools. He used questionnaires in his study, and the results showed that pair work is useful technique in teaching learning English language in overcrowded class. Found out also, there is noticeable shortage in visual aids used in teaching learning English in overcrowded classroom .And training is essential for teaching staff at the faculties of educations in order to promote and facilitate their teaching techniques .Amira (2007) studied the

effect of introducing Traditional story-telling Techniques in Teaching English language for the University students. She used a questionnaire and tests in her study, and found that implementing story- telling techniques will improve English language standard in four skills. Al kabbashi (2007) Evaluated of Sudanese Secondary Schools Pupils’ Standards in Reading and Writing after the Application of SPINE Series. He used questionnaires and test. The results showed that the writing techniques used in the textbooks are in sufficient for constructing sentences, paragraph development, and for composition. This study also, showed that Pupils, standard in writing are weak and incompetent. Aisha (2005) Utilization of short- story techniques for teaching of EFL Lexis. She used a questionnaire. Found out that using short story context for teaching EFL lexis promotes EFL learners’ lexis knowledge in term of synagmatic paradigmatic aspects. In conclusion, the findings presented in this study indicate that the use of visual aids in the classroom can be effective, and is perhaps necessary in certain situations. This study is a form of empirical research where the findings could have a direct impact on the use of visual aids in writing skill in the classroom.

Methodology of the study

The researcher adopted empirical and analytical research method in order to study, investigate and assess the pupils’ writing performance.

Population of the study

Population of this study was teachers of EFL at secondary schools Omdurman

locality and students in 3rd year at MussaAldow secondary school for boys and Omdurman secondary school for girls Omdurman locality.

Sample of the study

The sample of the study composed of three hundred (300) male and female students in 3rd year at MussaAldow secondary school for boys and Omdurman secondary school for girls Omdurman locality and forty (40) male and female EFL teachers Omdurman locality.

Tools of data collection

This study requires the use of different types of tools and techniques for collecting data. However, the tools of this study have been selected, piloted, and then modified. These tools include: Teachers' questionnaire, two tests for students, textbooks analysis and classroom observation.

Results The tests analysis

Study experiment There were actually two classes in this study. The first one was the experimental group while the other one was the control group. They all studied English for the same amount of time, and used the same textbooks. The pupils in the two groups were taught writing skills from their textbook for one month. The main difference between the classes, in terms of how they studied, was that the researcher used visual aids; graphic organizer i.e. clustering for teaching writing. The aims are to get ideas to write about and to help explain how different pieces of information are connected to each other, to quickly

clarify new vocabulary or phrases for the experiment group, while visual aids were not used at all in the control group. Both classes took a pre-test prior to the instruction program and a post-test after the program.

3-5 Reliability and Validity of the tools

The tests are believed to have content validity as they aimed at assessing the students' achievement in writing skill. The tasks required in the tests were comparable to those covered in the book and practiced in class. In addition, the tests instructions were written clearly in English and the examinee's task required was defined.

Validity

The tests were validated by a group of experts who suggested some valuable remarks about the tests and the researcher responded to that.

Reliability

The study used the test-retest method: The test-retest method of estimating the test reliability involves administering the test to the same group of people at least twice. Then the first set of scores is correlated with the second set of scores. Correlations range between 0 (low reliability) and 1 (high reliability) (high unlikely they will be negative). The coefficient correlation formula was used to calculate the correlation:

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

The results showed that there was strong positive correlation between the pre-test and post-test:

Pre-test: . 878

Post-test: . 757

Furthermore, to increase the validity and reliability of the test, the researcher gave two tests as pre-test and post-test at different intervals of time. Taking more than one sample of students' work, according to Weir²⁹ "can help reduce the variation in performance that might occur from one task to task". Thus, I decided to take at least two samples.

Results and discussion

The analysis of the experiment will focus on answering an important question: To what extent can the using of the visual aids help to improve students' writing? To answer this question, computed the mean, standard deviation, standard error and ranges for the pre-test- and post test of both experimental and control groups. To find out whether the group had any progress as a direct result of instruction, T-test group was computed for each group using the pre-test and post-test mean scores of each group.

Table (4-1) Distribution of pre-test and post-test Scores.

Group		Mean	SD	SE of Mean
Experimental group	Pre-test	28.7000	20.9244	3.5062
	Post-test	38.6000	20.9244	3.8201
Control group	Pre-test	32.000	19.2057	2.6847
	Post-test	32.4333	20.2057	3.5066

Table (4-2) T-test comparing the results of the two groups.

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	t-observed	Df	Sig.(2-tailed)
Experimental	30	6.966	2.0620	.3821	18.233	29	.000
Control group	30	6.300	1.3169	.2402	26.202	29	.000

Table 4-1 clearly shows that when the visual aids in teaching writing skill was used within the experimental group, it scored higher than those in the control group on the post-test (mean = 38 and 28 respectively) with similar variations among students in the experimental and controls (SD = 20. 93 and 20. 20 respectively). Since both the experimental and control groups were equal in size, no significant differences existed between the groups on basis of their pre-test mean scores previously at the beginning of the program. Results of the T-test in Table 4-2 shows that the mean scores of both control and experimental groups were (6. 966) and (6. 300) respectively, as shown in Table 4-2 Comparison of mean scores for the groups yielded a difference of (+0.668) between experimental and control. Further, the results of the T- test yield at the .001 level ($p < .001^{***}$) meaning that the difference between the experiment and control scores were statistically significant. This suggests that

a student writing performance within the experimental group improved significantly as a result of introducing the visual aids in the classroom. Through observations, we can state that the results within table 4-1 show that while all the classes improved, the results of the experimental group improved more than the control group. The control group's improvement was not expected though, as the pupils studied intensely for a period of one month, and may have applied their own skills. Both groups show improvements but the experimental group showed a marked improvement with the highest scores when compared to the slight improvements achieved by the control group. These results clearly illustrate the strongest evidence we have found in experiment, and supports our original hypothesis: The use of visual aids can effectively help improve students' writing."

Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

The teachers' questionnaire consists of four interrelated statements concerning the process of writing skill. They are

about students' writing performance, classroom interaction, syllabus and visual aids.

Table (4 – 3) Teachers' Responses to Questions about the students' writing performance

Statement		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Dis agree	Strongly disagree
1. Poor stock of vocabulary hinders students' writing ability.	Freq.	33	22	00	00	00
	(%)	60	40	00	00	00
2. Pupils think first in Arabic then transfer their ideas into English.	Freq.	31	23	1	00	00
	(%)	56.4	41.8	1.8	00	00
3. Writing material hasn't got enough practices that help students assimilate mechanics.	Freq.	16	33	1	5	00
	(%)	29.1	60	1.8	9.1	00
4. Teachers are unaware of the sources of the students writing problems.	Freq.	7	21	3	18	6
	(%)	12.7	38.2	5.5	32.7	10.9

Table (4 –4) Teachers Responses to the questions about the classroom interaction

Statement		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Dis agree	Strongly disagree
5. Students should be exposed to meaningful interaction in a realistic task of writing.	Freq.	26	24	4	1	00
	(%)	47.3	43.6	7.3	00	00
6. Pair work and small group discussion help students to generate new vocabulary.	Freq.	32	22	1	00	00
	(%)	58.2	40	1.8	00	00
7. Discussion activities inside classroom motivate students to write.	Freq.	31	22	00	2	00
	(%)	56.4	40	00	3.6	00
8. Few students are ready to take part in classroom interaction activities of writing.	Freq.	17	27	2	9	00
	(%)	30.9	49.1	3.6	16	00

Writing performance

When asked about whether poor stock of vocabulary hinders the students' writing ability, (60%) of teachers strongly agreed, (40%) of them agreed with the point (see table 4-3). In response to a question about the fact that pupils think first in Arabic then transfer their ideas into English, it was found that more than half (56.4%) of the respondents strongly

agreed, (41.8%) of them agreed with the idea 1.8% not sure. Concerning whether writing materials have not enough practices that help students assimilate mechanics, table (4-3) shows that about (80%) of teachers strongly agree with the idea and 1.8% are not sure while only 9.1% of them disagree with that idea. When asked about sources of the

students writing problems, it was found that more than half (51%) of the teachers strongly agree with this point, 5.5% are not sure while (32.7%) of them disagree and 10.9% strongly disagree with the idea. The following table (4-4) shows teachers responses to questions about the classroom interaction.

Classroom interaction

Table (4-4) shows that about (91%) of the respondents believed that students should be exposed to meaningful interaction in a realistic task of writing, 7.3% are not sure whereas only 1.8% of the teachers said they disagree with the idea. Concerning pair work and small group discussion helping students to generate new vocabulary, it was found

that more than half (58.2%) of the teachers strongly agree that pair work and small group discussion help students generate new vocabulary, (40%) of the respondents agreed with that idea, and 1.8% of them are not sure. In response to a question about whether discussion activities inside the classroom motivate students' abilities to write, the majority of teachers agree with the idea while, only 3.6% of them disagree with the idea (see table 4-4). Whether few students are ready to take part in classroom interaction activities of writing, Thirty percent of the respondents strongly agree with that point, (49.1%) of the them agree with the idea, 3.6% are not sure, (16.4%) disagree with that point.

table (4 -5) Teachers' Responses to Questions about Syllabus

Statement		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Dis agree	Strongly disagree
9. The textbook lacks separate work sheet for self- editing and peer editing.	Freq.	28	20	5	00	2
	(%)	50.9	36.4	9.1	00	3.6
10. SPINE (4, 5 and 6) lack reinforcement in writing.	Freq.	13	28	00	14	00
	(%)	23.6	50.9	00	25.5	00
11. Teaching writing at secondary schools requires more emphasis than other skills of	Freq.	15	34	3	3	00
	(%)	27.3	61.8	5.5	5.5	00

language.						
12. The time allocated for teaching writing at the secondary level is insufficient.	Freq.	22	27	1	3	2
	(%)	40	49.1	1.8	5.5	3.6

Table (4 – 6) Teachers' Responses to Questions about Visual aids

Statement		Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Dis agree	Strongly disagree
13. Using graphic organizers helps students to see how different pieces of information are connected.	Freq.	24	25	4	2	00
	(%)	43.6	45.5	7.3	3.6	00
14. Flash cards can be used for practicing sentence structure.	Freq.	26	22	4	3	00
	(%)	47.3	40	7.3	5.5	00
15. Using real objects motivates students to generate vocabulary with word families.	Freq.	35	19	1	00	00
	(%)	63.6	34.5	1.8	00	00
16. Using clustering helps students to get ideas to write about.	Freq.	22	30	2	1	00
	(%)	40	54.5	3.6	1.8	00

Syllabus

In response to some questions about the syllabus, the result showed that (50.9%) of the teachers said that the textbook lacks separate work sheets for self-editing and peer editing,(36.4%) of them agree with the idea, (9.1%) are not sure while, only 3.6% of the teachers strongly disagree with that point (see table 4-5).Table (4-5) shows that (75%) of the respondents strongly agreed or agreed that SPINE (4, 5 and 6) lack reinforcement in writing, whereas (25, 5%) disagree with that idea.When asked about whether teaching writing at

Visual Aids

Concerning visual aids, table (4-6) shows that (43.6%) of the respondents strongly agree that using visual aids (graphic organizers helps students to see how different pieces of information are connected) and (45.5%) of them agree with the idea, 7.3% are not sure. Whereas, only 3.6% of the teachers disagree with the point.Whether flashcards can be used for practicing sentence structure, (47.3%) of the respondents strongly agree with the point, forty percent of the teachers agree with the idea, 7.3% are not sure, while, only 5.55 of the teachers disagree with that point.As shown in the table (4—6), (63.6%0) of the teachers affirmed that using real objects motivates students use of new vocabulary within word families, (34.5%) of them agree with the idea and (1.8%) are not sure.In response to a question about whether using clustering helps students to get ideas to write about, forty percent of the teachers strongly agree with that point, and more than half (54,5%) of them agreed with the idea,

secondary schools requires more emphasis than other skills of language,(61.8%) of the respondents agree with the point.(27.3%) of them strongly agree while, only 5.5% are not sure. The same number (5.5%) disagreed with the idea.Whether time allocated for teaching writing at the secondary level is insufficient, 40% of the teachers strongly agree, with the point, (49%) of them agree with the idea. 1.8% are not sure, 5.5% disagree while, only 3.6% said they disagree with that point.

3.6% are not sure, while only 1.85 said they disagree with that point.

Textbook analysis

The textbook analysis included three books in SPINE series. They are book 4, 5 and book 6 of secondary level.A survey of the content of SPIEN units in the teachers' book revealed that the course teachers both form and function not as isolated lists of language elements, but as means to integrate the four skills of language.The survey of the syllabus showed that the objectives of teaching the different skills are ambiguous and not explicitly stated. There must be a purpose or reason for writing, in real life writing is usually carried out for a purpose. Similarly in communicative drills the students should be given a reason to communicate.Furthermore, writing activities in SPINE emphasized repetition and accuracy. Ultimately, they did not help pupils to achieve writing competence in the target language. In

addition, the use of the language and these may lead to pupils' boredom. There is no role-play, information gap activities, challengers, which are core features in any writing syllabus. These is supported what Ishraga (2001) found out for she conclude that the SPINE syllabus was not the ideal one for developing writing. Thus, it came as no surprise that pupils' competence in writing is very poor.

Classroom Observations

The researcher attended six different English classes in first, second and third year at MussaAldow Secondary School for boys and Omdurman Secondary School for girls and talked to a number of teachers regarding writing activities. So, shecom out to the following points:

1. Classroom organization (pairs and group work, size of the class and seating arrangements. (i.e. overcrowded classes, short time and traditional seating or the way that they are arranged) is the factors affected the process of learning, particularly writing activities.

2. The use of motivation and interest. On the other words it is an important part of teacher's job to motivate learners. So, learners who have succeeded in past tasks of writing will be more willing to engage with the next one, more confident in their chances of succeeding and more likely to persevere in their efforts and this led teacher to reward pupils. Moreover, interesting form of writing should be relevant to the life of the learners such as boys are interested in football activities...ect.

3. The use of visual aids especially (graphic organizers i.e. clusters) are of greater helps to the teaching of writing,. Although visual aids are known to make teaching of writing interesting as well as effective, there is a noticeable shortage in visual aids used in teaching and learning writing skill. These visual aids may not prove that effective especially that we are in the modern age of technology where view graphs, TVS, VCRS, Overhead projectors, ...ect, are a available. But these current visual aids could be attributed to lack of financial resources. Thus, the following can be said:

- Teachers never used motivation and interest to enable their pupils to write. However, they can motivate pupils by engage them in pairs and group work activities, so teacher should choice topics that interest the pupils.

-Teachers never use authentic materials to encourage interaction among the pupils, and this is clear from the pupils' performance the written work.

.-Teachers never use visual aids (graphics organizer) to help pupils to see how different pieces of information are connected.Also they are not rewarding their pupils so as to make them like to write. Moreover, the class size ranged between 70-75 pupils and this a real obstacle that affected the process of learning, especially writing activates. Only a few teachers divided their students into pairs and small groups, and sometimes used the organization of (circular or U – shape) to facilitate teaching writing activities.

CONCLUSION :

This study tried to find out whether the using of visual aids improves students' writing or not. As hypothesized: The use of visual aids improves students' writing Performance. The results of this study

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