

Exploiting Authentic Materials for Developing Writing Skills at Secondary Level –An Experimental Study

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DEDICATION

To my Parents,

my Teachers,

my Friends,

and all good souls around the world who loves to seek and spread knowledge. It is their inspiration, prayers, support and love that consecrated my heart and soul to undertake this arduous journey. God may make it advantageous to others.

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Abstract

The present study intends to scrutinize the efficacy of authentic materials for enhancing writing skills of the second language assimilators at secondary level in Pakistan. Authentic materials are very interesting, absorbing and motivating. Change and variety is something very important for human development and upbringing. Authentic materials can serve this purpose very well.

Moreover, authentic materials are diverse in nature and have a range of things to offer. There is a great diversity of materials available in newspapers, broadcasts, magazines etc in the form of advertisements, cartoons, bulletins, horoscopes, weather reports etc. Such materials will acquaint them not only with the language but also with the culture and value system of the country concerned.

The objectives of the research would be to improve the writing skills, arouse the element of curiosity, make them more motivated to learn the language skills, bring something of the everyday world into the classroom and to remove the monotony of the contrived texts.

Various data collection techniques employed during the course of the study would be class observations, practical teaching to a group of students and through a teacher's questionnaire. The researcher strongly believes that this study would strengthen the belief in the use of authentic materials for developing writing skills and would have lasting implications on the writing classroom.

Keywords: Authentic materials, writing skills, second language

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Global Status of English Language

All animals communicate, some by sight some by sounds. Only humans have language. Language is the highest achievement of human mind and has the powerful effects. It is the basis of all thought and the highest intellectual activity we practice. Different languages like Greek, Latin, Persian and Arabic, dominated the world's stage at different periods of history. Today English is reigning supreme at this planet of ours. Hasman (2000) highlights the use of English throughout the world today, as "The global spread of English over the last 40 years is remarkable. It is unprecedented in several ways: by the increasing number of users of the language; by its depth of penetration into societies; by its range of functions. English is used for more purposes than ever before. Vocabularies, grammatical forms and ways of speaking and writing have emerged influenced by technological and scientific developments, economics and management, literature and entertainment genres. What began some 1500 years ago as a reed language, originally spoken by obscure Germanic tribes who invaded English, now encompasses the globe" (p.3).

Never before in the history of the world has a language been as dominant as English is now. In every corner of the world, people realized that their chances to play on the big stage, to make money, have choices, travel, all depend on learning English. In fact English is a gateway to the world of knowledge and learning. It is a universally spoken language and the biggest source of communication among the people from different countries, castes and creeds. It is being used as an international language of industry, commerce, science, technology, medicine, aviation, diplomacy and many other fields. English newspapers and magazines are dominant in the world, major train and subway routes have English signs, restaurants have English menus, all major hotels have English-speaking staff, announcements in trains and planes are being made in English. One third of the world's newspapers are published in English dominant countries. 80% of the electronically stored information is in English. The CNN and BBC are in English. 180 nations of the world have adopted the recommendations of the civil aviation organization about English technology. Advertising is in English. Most top advertising agencies are US-owned. Between 80-85% films are in English. Most of the pop groups worked in English. Maximum research in the world is in English language. Hasman (2000) says, believes that "By 2010, the number of people who speak English as a second or foreign language will exceed the number of native speakers. This trend will certainly affect the language" (p.3).

Hundreds of thousands of young people from all over the world rushed each year for studies to United States, Australia and England. Guess what language they have to learn before they go. English is a route to a wider world. It enlarges one's ability to deal with the rest of the world. Countries like Japan, China, Germany and France who were too proud of their languages and culture are compelled to make their people learn English. Today Tokyo has four English language daily newspapers- more than most American cities-plus several magazines. Students applying for university admission must pass tests in English. Even the

bullet train makes its announcements both in Japanese and English. The night time T.V news broadcasts now come in bilingual version-you push a button on your set to switch from Japanese to English. This is the glory and enhancement of English in today's world.

1.2 Status of English Language in Pakistan

Language is the potent force in the promotion of nationalism and national cohesion. It is the most important aspect of culture and a force, which determine nationality and ethnicity. It differentiates the people from others and binds them together. We the Pakistanis are very unfortunate people in terms of national language. We liberated ourselves from the British but not from their language and culture. After the 1857 uprising, when the British got total control over India and peace was enforced in the country, the government introduced a number of reforms. The most important and equally controversial were the changes in the educational system. The Hindus readily accepted them and benefited from them but the Muslims opposed the educational reforms tooth and nail. Decrees were issued declaring the learning of English as un-Islamic. Lord Macaulay insisted on the adoption of English and the closure of Arabic and Sanskrit colleges to divert the students to English schools.

As a result of the rejection of the new educational system by the Muslims, they found all avenues of public life closed to them. This worried Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and he was quick to realize that unless the Muslims changed their attitude and accepted the reforms wholeheartedly, the Muslims and Islam were both doomed to perish from India. He founded the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in 1877 at Aligarh and from here on the Muslims of India started to learn English, which is still very robustly going with us even after independence. It is very strongly placed in Pakistan and is the official language of this wonderful country. Urdu, although is the national language of Pakistan but its status is much less than that of English because it is a powerless language and is nowhere to be found in the domains of power. If someone is interested to rise high in Pakistan he is suppose to learn English otherwise he is certain to stay low in life. All the examination and interviews leading to high offices of power are taken in English. All the official correspondence is in English. The language of courts is English. Like Urdu, the regional languages, Punjabi, Pashto, Sindhi, and Balochi are completely oppressed.

English is being taught as a compulsory subject from grade six in all government educational institutions and is the medium of instructions from grade eleven.. In elite class schools it is being taught from kindergarten and is also the medium of instructions right from the beginning. Education in all the military colleges and academies is in English medium. All scientific and professional post secondary examinations are mainly in English. Students and parents have come to realize that it is almost impossible to get a white-collar job without learning English. One may be brilliant in Urdu but cannot get an executive job in government sector unless fluent in English. The top bureaucracy is almost entirely drawn from the English medium schools and colleges. The first class students of Urdu-medium schools and colleges are languishing as low grade teachers or clerks. Entrance examination for professional colleges is also conducted in English, which give an edge to English medium students. That is why now the students and parents are investing their time, energy, money

and mind power in learning English. Almost all the private schools are English medium. Parents are paying high fees to private schools because they want their children to get educated in English, so that they can find some good and lucrative jobs. Government schools by switching over to Urdu are preventing their students from competing on equal terms with English-medium students. The work in all government departments and institutions is conducted in English.

Knowledge of fluent spoken and written English is indispensable for all good jobs in public and private sector. All the good daily newspapers are published in English, which are comparable to dailies around the world. Whereas, the standard of Urdu dailies is too low. In other words, the mind set, approach and analysis of English newspapers readers are entirely different from those of Urdu newspaper readers.

Owing to these circumstances English is inevitable for success in Pakistan. It is our heritage and we have to accept it because it is so deeply rooted in our minds and souls. Language is constant natural process of evolution, dependent upon the sociopolitical circumstances. As different people interact and merge, they influence each other, thereby bringing change. English people had ruled us and even now they and their language are dominant in the world so we have to accept it. Today English is the leading language of this planet and is a key to the world of knowledge. It is a route to the wider and bigger world. No other language is in a position to challenge it in the near future.

1.3 The Language Skills an Overview

Language learning is divided into four skill areas i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing. All the four skills are of great importance in the world of applied linguistics. We use listening and speaking in oral communication and reading and writing on written communication. One who transmits a message uses the spoken or written form in order to communicate his ideas. The receiver of the message utilizes the listening or reading skills to decipher the message. Hence, we can classify these four skills in two categories or better identification and understanding: -

(a) Speaking

Writing are active or productive skills.

(b) Reading

Listening are passive or receptive skills

The former two require the correct use of vocabulary items i.e. the right word in the right place, the ability to recall words spontaneously, grammatical accuracy and fluency in producing correct rhythm, stress and intonation. The latter two require the ability to recognize vocabulary items, acquaintance with main grammatical patterns and skill of assimilating rapidly what is heard or read.

All the four skills are well integrated and can never exist in isolation. In order to achieve spoken or written fluency, all four skills should be given an equal importance. However

writing skills should be given particular consideration because it is a highly complex activity and regarded as the most difficult language skill to acquire. It is the most used skill in Pakistan. Most of the communication in Pakistan is in written form. Moreover the development of communicative competence in writing is a slow and arduous process. Langan (2001) investigated that, “For almost everyone, competent writing comes from plain hard work – from determination, sweat, and head-on battle” (p.13).

1.4 Syllabus of English in Pakistan

Syllabus of English in Pakistan though mostly consists of reading and writing activities. But even then these skills are very weak. It is because in a traditional language class teacher is the sole speaker. Students are just at the listening end. There is very little teacher student interaction and nil among the students. Most of the learning is just a parrot work and the creativity on the part of the students is almost zero. They just reproduce the things put forth by the teacher. They do not feel the need to use their own minds. They take teacher’s comments as something sacred and never tamper with them. The traditional manner of teaching is quite dull and never changing or varying. Lack of variety in the lessons discourages the student’s involvement. No conscious attempt is made by the teacher to cheer up the class, neither by generating tasks nor by preparing visuals or other teaching aids. The teaching method for every aspect of a text is the same lecture or grammar translation method without taking into account the manner of teaching and the fact that whether it is a piece of poetry, prose, drama, novel, essay or a short story. The teacher does not attempt to create an interest by now and then questions. In the same way there is no interaction among the students either which must be there in any socio-linguistic situation.

Another stumbling block in learning English is that the courses are not arranged properly. One is supposed to study English literature first even before learning the language itself. From the beginning the course lacks the basic requirement of learning spoken English - no audio or visual aids are used and neither is conversation skills taught.

The teachers who teach courses are not good at English themselves. Their means of communication with students is either in Urdu or other regional languages and they use no rules or regulations when they teach a language. In this regard the government should take some concrete measures to improve English language teaching. For example, speaking in English must be made compulsory. In fact, even a system of imposing a nominal fine on anyone who does not talk in the language should be introduced. Other than that, teachers should be selected on merit and it should be ensured that they have the skills to teach the language effectively to others.

The obsolete and thoroughly out of date content of the teaching course should be changed and newer, more interesting, material should be included on the English syllabus, especially for class VI to X. Students can also be assigned weekly topics to write on and deliver presentations once a week.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

Academic abilities in the educational system of Pakistan are closely linked with proficiency

in writing. If a student is good at writing he will make good grades otherwise he will stay low in the order of merit. And unfortunately most of the students are not very proficient to communicate ably in writing. Their writings are ill conceived and lack logic, clear and disciplined thinking. Textbooks are dull and boring just filled with contrived and emotionless language with no visual at all. They fail to attract student attention and arouse their curiosity. Majority of the texts are meant to enable the students to master some grammar rules with no communicative objective. Slobodina (1995) sums up the situation aptly, “Most students entering our institute after high school are false beginners with no motivation to learn English. There is no way to inspire them to use the traditional, dry-as-dust textbooks filled with her Majesty’s grammar” (p.40). The interaction between the teacher and the students is almost absent. In most of the cases teacher dominates the class with no student’s participation. The teaching goal is merely rote learning with no practical communications or exchange of ideas. This very fact provoked me to introduce authentic materials, which are interesting, lively and inspiring. Authentic materials will arouse the curiosity in the students and will activate their minds. There will be a lot of inspiration and motivation for them to try and hone their writing skills.

1.6 Hypothesis

Authentic materials if exploited prudently will bring about smart, clever and immaculate writing skills at secondary level.

1.7 Objectives of the Research

The objectives of the research are: -

- (a) To improve the writing skills.
- (b) To arouse the element of curiosity.
- (c) To make them more motivated to learn the language skills.
- (d) To bring something of the everyday world into the classroom and to remove the monotony of the contrived texts.
- (e) To make them feel as the users of the language rather than a mere learners.
- (f) To give them awareness about the usefulness of authentic materials e.g. newspaper art weather reports, horoscope etc.
- (g) To bring the native culture and traditions in the classroom.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to the F.G Boys Model High School F-8/1 Islamabad. Four classes, two of ninth and two of tenth were observed. Questionnaire was got filled from the teachers of the school. One group of mixed ability students from class X was taught two lessons from the textbook. One test was given before and one after the teaching of each lesson. Results were compared and conclusions were drawn.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

“True ease in writing comes from art not chance,
As those move easiest who have learned to dance”.

(Pope)

The ability to write is not something innate. Rather it can be learned and practiced. It does not come naturally as does walking. It is a cantankerous and dicey linguistic code. It needs a lot of hard work on the part of the learner. Writing is a highly complex process, it is recursive rather than linear in nature, it needs some pre-writing activities, than drafting, redrafting and revision. It is as difficult for the natives as for the nonnative. Because writers must balance multiple issues like content, purpose, audience, organization, spelling, vocabulary, mechanics and punctuation. Writing is particularly difficult for the foreign learners because they need to demonstrate with skill all the above elements in a new language. Moreover, for past many years writing has been taught keeping in mind the product-oriented approach rather than the process.

The emphasis was on grammar and punctuation instead of content and organization of ideas. Instead of pressing for the expression of ideas, students were told to master grammar rules and mechanics of writing. Writing helps the students discover what they want to say. This is a creative process, creativity is the ability to bring something new into existence, we sit down to write with a definite idea in mind but as we progress new ideas develop. Writing is a key to success; indeed effective writing leads to effective learning. It is interesting and enjoyable.

2.1 What is Writing?

Writing in the strict sense of the word is derived from speech, and is, in fact, an imperfect visual representation of it, for such purpose as communication at a distance and the keeping of records. Writing is the only conventional device for recording sounds. Writing can be fun, students or learners should not worry about the perfection of the sentences and the logical development of ideas. In real writing situations when people write unplanned without revising or editing their writings such as, formal letters, educational or some meetings notes, instructions, and the examination papers. In fact, there is a place for both programmed and spontaneous writing. In this way both the teachers and the students will find the writing classes more enjoying rather than dull and boring. The students will be more motivated to learn and the teachers will enjoy their teaching. The students will wait for the teacher to come in the class instead of waiting him to go out.

Writing is something, which has an aim, purpose and meaning to convey. It is not just a grammatical exercise and a sequence of sentences. “The ultimate meaning of the word writing, which is to use orthography in order to construct grammatically-correct sentences which communicate meaning to the readers” (Jones, et al., 1999, p.6). There are different approaches involve in the teaching of writing. There was the traditional product-oriented approach that remained in command of the situation for decades. It laid emphasis on the

product i.e. the written texts.” The belief was that if we identified model texts written by accomplished/competent writers and gave these to students to read, they would, by osmosis, imbibe all the qualities of good writing and become good writers themselves. Unfortunately this approach did not work for many students and they continued to write poorly” (Oluwadiya, 1992, p.12). In this approach the teacher remains attentive to form instead of content. Here syntax, grammar, mechanics and organization are more important. The process-oriented one replaced the traditional product-oriented approach. In it whole the process of writing was to be explored and exploited. This approach was meant to find out how the skilled writers write, what is their thought process before picking pen in their fingers. Smith, quoted in Oluwadiya (1992), states that “for the competent writers writing is a nonlinear, recursive, and generative process that involves several steps or stages, which are pre-writing, composing/writing, and re-writing-steps or stages that compete with each other for the writers attention” (p.12). This is true for both the natives and the non-natives. A native’s student writer goes through the same ordeal, as does a non-native. He will have to go pass all the steps and stages, writing, revising and rewriting to give birth to a well shaped and ordered products. Then comes the modern approach, the chemistry of both, the product and the process. It stresses three things:

1. People write to communicate with readers.
2. People write to accomplish specific purpose.
3. Writing is a complex process.

As the act of writing is a communicative one. Writers must be wary of their audience, purpose and meaning. He need not be much bothered about form or style. The modern approach is based on research into how good writers write. Zamel, quoted in Habelman and Wiriyaichitria (1990) has described how good native writers of English write. Following are some of her findings:

- “1. Writers discover meaning through writing. Writing is a process of extending and refining an initial idea.
2. Writers often go back over what they have written before moving onward again. Writing is recursive process.
3. The flow of ideas of unskilled writers is often blocked by too much attention to form” (p.37).

This is what writing is all about. These are some of the approaches so far tested for the purpose of good communication. New approaches will keep on coming as the time goes by. Nothing is final in this world. Everything improves itself with the passage of time. Where their human factor is involved there is always room for improvement. The theories on writing development will keep on coming and will be improved upon by the posterities. One should not restrict oneself to anyone of them, all approaches to writing overlap, the teacher should not be devoted to one, and he should be eclectic, drawing from all the sources available to him. He should take into account all the factors involved in good writing and this will bring about a balanced approach to the teaching of writing skills.

2.2 History of Writing

History, in the life of a nation, is as if a brain and the nation who forgets her history, deprived herself of her very brain. History in fact is the mother of all sciences. Everything in the world, from the speck of dust to the mountains has a history of its own. How it came into being? How it developed? What is the cause of its creation and what is the reason of its existence in this world of colour and fragrance? Same is true in case of writing. It has the history of its own. Why it was felt necessary to write the things down and keep records? Spoken form of language was already in existence then why it becomes mandatory to write. It is a painful act and need a lot of time, money and energy to execute it. Why not speak a few words, in few seconds, consuming few calories to make the message or aim clear to others? But with the growth of man it does become necessary to write.

People invented writing when they first felt the need to communicate ideas in more permanent form than in speech. Few people question the value of writing. Indeed effective writing leads to effective learning. It is interesting and enjoyable. A Greek historian Herodotus remarked 'We are all less convinced by what we hear than by what we see'. The dawn of writing can probably have its causes rooted into any such reasons for sure. Writing did not strictly start with words but rather it started as disfigured or altered pictures. The pictures made on grounds, rocks, metals and woods, by pre-historic man, show an initiative into the formation of writing. All this process developed in different stages. The gestures of the hands were unconsciously copied by movement of the tongue, lips and mouth; and when the man was unable to go on gesturing with his hands because of their other uses, the mouth gestures continued without them. Greek and Latin finally came up with alphabets out of these signs. Written language gained importance when knowledge accumulated, commercial dealings and education spreaded. Hence a genius invented the alphabet and started the art of writing. The theory was that the spoken words vanish, the written words abide but Socrates did not believe in this theory of the superiority of written language. Indeed, he was an enemy of writing. It was his philosophy that wisdom and knowledge could not be taught through books but only by means of dialectics. However the Chinese opinion was quite different. The Chinese philosophers believe that dialectics was the worst form of education. It was their staunch belief that knowledge could be preserved and taught only in writing. The Chinese devised a script – the pictograms - compound symbols standing for ideas. There are also phonograms, which represent sounds. Before the invention of the alphabets, the ancient system of writing was the hieroglyphic on Egypt, cuneiform in Sumeria, Babylonia, Syria and Persia. These systems are similar to the signs, which are pictographic, ideographic and phonographic.

2.3 Purpose of Writing

“Writing is goal directed-we do not write without a purpose. However, writing is also exploratory, as we do not always know exactly what it is that we want to say” says White quoted by Saxenian (1998, p.30).

Everything written carries a purpose and aim in it. Even exploration itself is a purpose. There are so many other purposes for which people write. It may be entertainment, information,

persuasion, education or simply exploration of one's own mind and heart. Leki (1991) puts the same thing in the words "part of the rhetorical context and part of the content of the student writing is determined by who the audience of the writing is and what the purpose of the writing is. Assignments that direct students to write for the general public or for anyone who might be interested tend to be much more difficult to write than assignments in which students have an idea why they are writing and who will be reading their writing. Are they writing to entertain someone? To inform someone? To persuade someone? Simply to explore their own thoughts? Depending on the answer the content of the writing will be quite different" (p.9).

Aim and purpose is a must before putting pen on paper. However it is not always easy to determine the purpose. Teachers should come up and help student find the purpose of writing through questioning consulting and correcting and should enable the students work out the purpose for themselves. If they write with a clear purpose in mind it will be much easier for them. They will be able to explore their thought process in particular directions. They will be more committed and will expand their mental horizons. Saxenian (1998) asserts, "In order to write a precise thesis statement and a coherent final draft, students must know their purpose (i.e. dominant idea). Yet, it is unreasonable to expect students to be absolutely clear about their purpose at the onset of writing. They like many other writers need the time to discover their exact purpose in the process of writing" (p.30).

A teacher should have a clear purpose on his mind while teaching writing to his students. It is difficult to write in a foreign language but it becomes even more difficult for a student if he does not have a clear and well-defined reason or purpose to communicate. Nowadays teaching writing does not mean asking students do some grammar work; neither does it stand for exploiting foreign texts with not much useful knowledge. In the prevailing circumstances students are interested in what they know about rather what they are interested to communicate to others and what they think a reader should know. Leki (1991) aptly sums up the situation, "for the most part writing is easiest to do and is likely to have the highest quality when the writer is committed intellectually to expressing something meaningful through writing. In order to do this, writers must try to place themselves into the mind of the future reader to try to predict the problems the reader may have in understanding a text. It is extremely difficult to do this when the writer has only a vague idea who the reader is. So writing teachers are now trying to develop assignments in which there is a real audience for the students to accommodate and some real purpose for the writing" (p.9).

There may be several kinds, reasons and purposes for a writing assignment. An ELT teacher must be conscious of the purpose of training he is imparting to his students. He must be wary and cautious of the fact why will his students ever write any thing in English? The students should also know the purpose of writing. Are they going to write a job application? Are they setting their pen to write a letter of appreciation to someone? Is it a letter of information or an application for a visa or admission to some university? The important thing is what is going to be the purpose and use of that particular writing exercise. In this way the students will be more willing to write. They will exert more energy and mind power in it and consider their work as something important in itself.

2.4 What Involves in the Writing Process?

“In many ways, writing a composition is similar to shaping a clay pot. We do not start by putting the glaze on a lump of clay and fining it; rather, we start with a somewhat foggy notion of what we wish to create and continuously reassess our initial vision in terms of what turns out. Sometimes we may destroy what we have started and begin anew, but it is not until we have a shape with which we are happy that we glaze and fire it. So too with composition. We should not work on the finishing editorial touches until we have form that says what we mean and holds the contents we desire” (Dixon, 1986, p.3). Everything goes through an evolutionary phase before coming into final shape. There is a great deal of thinking and hard work behind every creation. First, there is a search for an idea, then thinking and working on it, then comes shaping and reshaping it and in the end comes the final product. So goes to writing, there is a great deal of intense and active thinking and labour work behind a finished piece of writing. Langan (2001) says, “It is frustrating to discover how much of a challenge it is to transfer thoughts and feelings from one’s head onto a sheet of paper” (p.13). It is in fact the hard work put behind a piece of work, which attracts readers. There must be a clear thinking behind a piece of writing. In the words of Langan (2001), “If you don’t think clearly, you won’t write clearly” (p.3).

There are some recent advances and paradigm shifts in the writing pedagogy, which has totally changed the concept of writing composition. Connor (1987) aptly sums up the matter, “The past decade has witnessed a major paradigm shift in composition theory and research. The emphasis moved from the product to the process of writing. Accordingly, to Hairton (1982), “the product-centered, traditional paradigm stressed expository writing, made style the most important element in writing, and maintained that the writing process is linear, determined by the writers before they start to write.

The process-centered paradigm, on the other hand, focuses on writing processes; teaches strategies for invention and discovery; considers audience, purpose, and context of writing; emphasizes recursiveness in the writing process; and distinguishes between aims and modes of discourse (e.g. expressive, expository, persuasive, and description, narration, evaluation, classification”(p.677). Langan (2001), split the writing process into a series of four logical, easily followed steps and claimed that together with practical advice about prewriting and revision, will give a cutting edge to writing. The steps are as under:

- “1. Discover a clearly stated point, or thesis.
2. Provide logical, detailed support for your thesis.
3. Organize and connect your supporting material.
4. Revise and edit so that your sentences are effective and error-free” (p.4).

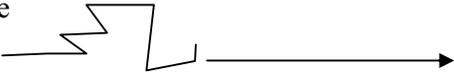
Writing process is journey through a forest, which does not go straight. One has to make his way through bushes and thorns. That will, for sure, not on a straight line or course but will turn sharply left and then right repeatedly. It is a process of discovery. Langan (2001) describes the process, “In addition to believing that writing is a natural gift, many people

falsely believe that writing should flow in a simple, straight line from the writers head onto the written page. But writing is seldom an easy, one-step journey in which a finished paper comes out in a first draft. The truth is that writing is a process of discovery involving a series of steps, and those steps are very often a zigzag journey. Look at the following illustrations of the writing process:

Seldom the case

Starting point  Finished paper

Usually the case

Starting point  Finished paper” (p.13).

“The vital question that guided these researcher’s investigations was “How does the competent writers write?” These researchers all found that for the competent writer, writing is nonlinear, recursive, and generative process that involves several steps or stages, which are prewriting, composing/writing, and rewriting-steps or stages that compete with each other the writers attention” (Smith, 1982, cited in Oluwadia, 1992, p.12).

Scholars such as Stratta et al. (1973), and Zamel (1983 and 1987) cited in Oluwadia (1992) have found that, “competent ESL student writers go through the same stages or steps as competent native-English speakers when they write” (p.12).

In the product-oriented approach which dominated the world of writing for decades, and has now replaced by process-oriented approach, it was believed that, “ The product-oriented approach focused on the product- the written text and often asked such questions as “ What does the writer write?” The belief was that if we identified model texts written by accomplished/competent writers and gave these to students to read, they would, by osmosis, imbibe all the qualities of good writing and become good writers themselves. Unfortunately, this approach did not work for many students and they continued to write poorly” (p.12).

2.5 Problems in the Writing Process

Writing is an involved and zigzag journey with so many problems in the process. Different approaches and methods have been applied to cater these problems but even then these persist. Model or product-centered approach had been in practice for decades. Then there was a paradigm shift to process-centered approach, then modern, and modern is now replaced by interactional approach but the process problems still exist, perhaps owing to the complex and unbearably difficult nature of writing. “The writing classroom can be source of frustration to both language learners and their teachers. Required by the convention of written English to express themselves at a far more precise level of grammatical accuracy and rhetorical organization in their written expression than in their spoken language, many students become confused, distressed, or even bored with the demands of their writing assignments. Confronted with a variety of instructional methods, teachers must decide which will work best for their students. They must also decide on the kinds of feedback that will have a

positive impact on students writing development and motivate them towards written communication” (Pica, 1986, p.6).

The two famous and much talked about approaches for the development of writing skills, a model approach and a process approach, are in fact based on their author’s creeds and experiences with writing instructions, instead of any practical and in the field evidence of success with language learners. Some of the flaws, observed by scholarly Pica (1986) are:

“The learner engages in processes of creative construction (Dulay and Burt, 1974) and hypothesis testing (Corder 1976) in developing a second language. As a result, “errors” are an inevitable outcome of the language-learning process.

- Target- (second-or foreign) language input must be made comprehensible to the learner in order for the development process to occur (Krashen 1981, 1982).
- Feedback in the target language plays an important role in language learning (Krashen and Slinger 1975, Vigil and Oller 1976)” (p.6).

Pica (1986) in fact calls for an eclectic and interactional approach to language writing. As all the approaches experimented so far in the field of writing pedagogy contain flaws and errors along with the qualities and merits of their own. A learner of writing should quench his thirst by drinking deep from all the fountains available, rather than restricting himself with any one of these.

“Despite their deficiencies, however, both models and process approaches do have merits. It is clear to anyone who has ever worked with language learners that the goal of models approach – in producing target rhetorical structures, grammar, and lexicon -- is essential to effective writing. In following a process approach, teachers give their students opportunities to review, clarify, and reorganize what they have written on their own, away from their teacher’s well-meaning but often intrusive intervention”(Pica, 1986, p.7).

In models approach, despite being open to model sentences, paragraphs and essays of capable writer, it is not possible for the learners to learn all at once.

“A models approach overlooks the fact that students of writing in a second language are also language learners, and that their skills for manipulating grammatical markers, organizing, paragraphs, and combining are not learned all at once, through imitating written models. Rather, these skills must be discovered slowly, through the learner’s active testing of hypothesis about how the rules and patterns in the new language function to communicate meaning” (Pica, 1986, p.7).

In the process-oriented approach learners do have a chance to review, resee, rethink and reorganize what they have written on their own and bring about some improvement. But even then it lacks a valuable feedback from the teachers as Pica (1986) tells, “A process approach, in placing the task of revision on the students themselves, does not meet their needs for feedback from more informed sources and focuses instead on the writer’s potential for self-correction as a means of achieving success in writing” (p.7).

In the same way Zamel (1987) points out, “Recent survey of writing instruction, however, seem to indicate that process research is not informing and transforming pedagogy” (p.699).

It is generally observed that findings and results of the studies of writing instructions are not being practically applied in the field and that there is general lack of awareness about these studies. For instance, it has come to the notice of all concerned that most instruction follows a very traditional model, consisting of models and drills, with just examples when students are exposed to practical writing. Applebee (1984) quoted in Zamel (1987) explains the process, “who examined in depth the writing development of high school students, four of whom were ESL students, found that curricula were based upon a mechanistic philosophy of teaching and learning, that the most frequent types of writing assigned were low-level tasks, and that the primary role played by the teacher was that of examiner” (p.700).

Anyhow if the research and study of looking into writing related problems remained in progress these problems will come to the minimum. The writing techniques will develop for sure, as the time goes by. This investigation as to what the students do and what the teachers do, and how the two interact, will finally come to the fore.

2.6 The Writing Skills

Language exists in two forms i.e. spoken and written. Spoken although is old in years - as old as the man is - but is not permanent and long lasting. Writing is young in days but is permanent, more reliable and a more carefully carved process.

Waseem (1999) says, “ written communication is a more permanent record of our language use, the writer is usually more careful about his choice of words and structures than he would be when speaking” (p. 10-11).

Written record can be kept for years while the spoken vanished just after it leaves the lips. A written piece of work is useful for many generations to come where as spoken is good only for those who listened to it. People invented writing when they first felt the need to communicate ideas in more permanent and better form. The language tragedy confronting our nation is unfortunate. Even after doing masters, one is not well versed and fluent in English language skills particularly the writing skills. As it is the most used and useful of all the language skills and is of key importance in Pakistani context, as most of the work in public and private sector is in written form, for such purposes as communication at a distance and the keeping of records.

Although the importance of other three skills cannot be denied, they are equally important but are not utilized much in Pakistan. In Pakistan English is an official language and is almost limited to written work in offices and educational institutions. The researcher found most of the written stuff i.e. the answer scripts, the general official correspondence etc badly written and found most of the people blank and confused before a clean white paper. Most of the people found themselves unable to write a few correct and communicative sentences. Majority of the students just reproduce the already written materials on their term papers through parrot work, they are unable produce something original. “It is frightening to sit down before a blank sheet of paper and know that an hour later; nothing on it may be worth

keeping. It is frustrating to discover how much of a challenge it is to transfer thoughts and feelings from one's head onto a sheet of paper" (Langan, 2001, p-13). How can the writing skills be developed? This is the question? There is no tailor-made panacea but there are several ways and means, out of those the researcher picked authentic materials. Authentic materials contain a lot of motivating energy and arouse students' interest. It is a great source of bringing the lively outside world into the classroom and rid them of the continued, inexpressive and emotionless textbook language. In the new approach, the purpose of teaching is not merely knowledge about the language but communicative skills for everyday life.

2.7 The Sub-skills of Writing

2.7.1 Descriptive Writing

This sub-skill of writing is used to describe something. It may be a book we read, a beautiful landscape we visited, an aeroplane we traveled by or the fellow passengers we traveled with. These descriptions are often based on our personal taste or opinions. Our ideas, feelings and experiences are mostly painted by colours inside our mind set and not provoked by things outside it. In other words our perception of things is often influenced by subjective factors. Our choice of adjectives makes clear to the reader our way of thinking or behaving towards the things we are describing. Description of an object normally consists of its qualities and the physical features it possess. But it will not be a photographic picture, it will be more selective. In descriptions the writer gleans only those features, which support the theme. For example, in description of a flower the writer will describe its beauty and freshness, not the thorns or some of the withered petals. One is suppose to be specific in descriptions of things not general because it will paint a vague picture. For example, if someone says, rose is beautiful. It does not tell much. But if someone says that the colour of the rose is red and its delicate petals are loaded with dew, then it gives some meanings.

2.7.2 Narrative Writing

Narrative means a written or spoken story or account of something. For example, he narrated his adventures in central Europe. It is part of our daily lives. Narrative usually occurs in the past tense. People tell each other about their life happenings. They tell each other what they did in childhood and how they spent their youth. How they spent their college and university life? Narrative also involves description. In other words, all types of writing help each other completion. For example, in a novel, the author narrates the events, and describes its consequences.

2.7.3 Expository Writing

In expository writing, a writer expresses facts and ideas. This sub-skill of writing concerns itself with educational field. Words like explain, justify, compare and contrast, give reasons for, etc. are found in term question papers, normally at the end of each question. This involves sharp and well-honed expository writing skills. In other words it is a type of writing, which explains, expands, defines, exemplifies or justifies a viewpoint.

Moreover, there are different skills in expository writing, which the writer may apply. These are:-

Definition

Classification

Comparison and contrast

Analogy

Cause and effect

and so on.

2.8 Strategies for Improving Writing Skills

“We are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master” (Hemingway, cited in Borstein, 1989, p.60). It is generally believed that writing in a foreign language is a very difficult and a very slower process than learning other language skills. The main reason for this is that the writer is away from the readers in terms of time and space, and so has to work out effective communication with his readers only in his imagination. This requires a big chunk of physical and mental energy on the part of the writer. How the writing skills can be improved? This is the problem and a vital question. There are several techniques and strategies to do this. These may be pictures, reading authentic texts, using other language skills, practical writing, control writing, organization of ideas, Radio and TV programmes.

“All ESL writing teachers can find a valuable resource in pictures: drawings, photographs, posters, slides, cartoons, magazine advertisements, diagrams, graphs, tables, charts and maps. Pictures bring the outside world into the classroom in a vividly concrete way. So a picture is a valuable resource as it provides:

1. a shared experience in the classrooms;
2. a need for common language forms to use in the classroom;
3. a variety of tasks;
4. a focus of interest for students” (Raimes, 1999, p.495-496).

Reading is another useful writing aid. Raimes (1999) points out, “A short story, a newspaper column, an advertisement, a letter, a magazine article, a poem, or a piece of students writing can work the same way as a picture to provide shared content in the classroom. However, readings can do far more in the teaching of writing than simply provide subject matter for discussion and for composition topics. When our students read, they engage actively with the new language and culture. The more our students read, the more they become familiar with the vocabulary, idioms, sentence patterns, organizational flow, and cultural assumptions of native speakers of the language” (p.518).

The other three-language skills i.e. speaking, reading and listening can also be used to improve writing skills. The students can speak with their teacher and with each other. In this

way they will be able to listen to each other. They can write down whatever they listen from each other and can also read each other's writings and further improve and modify their written works. Raimes (1999) explains the same phenomenon, "If we want our language learning classes to come as close as possible to real-life communicative situations, then we have to organize activities that let students use all the language skills. In order to do these students should speak (not just repeat) and speak not only to the teacher but also to each other. This means, then, that students will also listen to each other-really listen-once the classroom talk is not restricted to patterns like, "Is she running? Yes she is." With listening comes comprehending what the speaker is saying. The listener can then react by writing down for reader his version of the information he has just heard. So we can get chains of language activity in the classroom.

Such as this one:

- Student 1 speaks while student 2 listens.
- Student 2 writes
- Student 3 reads what student 2 wrote and responds.
- Student 1 checks that 2 and 3 understand" (p.536).

Writing can also be improved by doing practical writing like form filling, letter writing, invitations and instruction etc. Raimes (1999) puts it in the words, "This practical writing has both a clear purpose and a specific audience. Much of this everyday writing is, "writing to get things done." Upon arrival in the country, we might soon find it necessary to write a letter: reply to an invitation, an apology, an inquiry, a complaint, a letter of thanks, congratulations, or sympathy. If our students experiments with these practical writing tasks in the classroom they will be not only practicing writing in the new language but also learning about the conventions of the new culture" (p.550).

And the most effective way of improving writing skills is authentic materials, like newspaper editorials, columns, advertisements, films, cartoons, TV and Radio programmes. These energize the students, arouse their sense of curiosity and set their minds thinking. Alexandrescu (1995) very aptly put forth the matter, "It is generally accepted that the text books we use in Romanian high schools can't possibly energize all students. Even worse, they can't inspire real motivation to learn a foreign language in spite of the new curriculum. But now that satellite TV programs have invaded Eastern Europe, both teachers and learners can come to grips with English. After several years of experimentation, we see video as a middle way to fill the gap between passive classroom learning and live communication. Children can work in small groups recreating scenes they viewed at home. The students are given simple narrating techniques, specific and general questions like: "what would you do if you were-----?" "How do you imagine the end of the film without----?" Can you comment on the title?" Cartoons can be of a great place to start" (p.44).

2.9 Importance of Authentic Materials

There are various ways, means and techniques involved in teaching writing. Authentic

materials are one of those but are very interesting, absorbing and motivating. It is diverse in nature and has a variety of things to offer. It has become popular for last decade or so and is a very impressive technique. Demitrescu (2000) puts, “In the course of last ten years, the use of authentic materials has become increasingly popular in learning situations that range from traditional intensive ESL to language training for professionals. Authentic materials, when appropriately selected and implemented, can be used to develop tasks that depart from formulaic language learning and provide a bridge between the linguistic skills of learners and their professional knowledge goals. Such materials, in their various formats, can provide a wealth of linguistic and conceptual content to learners who are focused on specific applications for their linguistic skills” (p.2).

Change and variety is something very important for human development and upbringing. This universe of ours is the best example of it. God has created it in plenty. No two things are exactly alike in form, shape or quality. There are thousands of leaves on a single tree but all are different in form or shape. So variety is something loved by God. Same is true for our classroom teaching situations there must be a variety of material and techniques for teaching. As Gerber (1990) says, “Most ambitious English teachers try to vary this approach in order to sustain the people’s attention and to make the text come alive” (p.49).

Authentic materials can serve this purpose very well. There is a great variety of materials available in newspapers, broadcasts, magazines etc in the form of advertisements, cartoons, bulletins, horoscopes, weather reports etc. If these are exploited appropriately these can be of great help to improve students writing skills. Authentic materials can be even more useful to those learners who intend to go to a foreign country for higher education. Such materials will acquaint them not only with the language but also with the culture and value system of the country concerned.

Advertisement in newspapers and magazines are the most read and exciting materials. These have variety and diversity and are very attractive to readers from any field of life. Wierus (1990) says, “Advertisements in illustrated magazines—so popular with readers throughout the worlds—provide much fun and may arouse a great deal of interest and excitement amongst learners of English” (p.48).

Same is true in the case of cartoons, crossword puzzles, horoscope and weather reports etc.

It depends upon the teachers how they adapt authentic materials for use in different classroom situations, depending upon the student’s age and language proficiency. Source and purpose of the material is least important. What is important is the adaptation of the materials as per semantics, lexical, syntactic and discourse elements of the original texts.

2.10 Authentic Materials in an EFL Classroom

“The use of authentic materials in the language classroom presents instructors with several challenges. One such challenge is development of effective research skills required to manage the vast amount of information available in written, spoken, or multimedia format. An additional challenge is the selection of the material most appropriate to the objectives of curriculum, a course, or even a single task. A third challenge is the implementation of

materials and the subsequent demands of flexibility and adaptation of instruction that may not be confined to a traditional classroom setting” (Dumitrescu, 2001, p.1).

Anyhow authentic materials are really very interesting and stimulating. Raise a sense of curiosity in the students and bring in the lively outer landscape into the learning situation. These materials are taken from the real life, as oppose to the material specially designed and constructed for the sake of language teaching. In day to day life we come across both written and spoken forms of language very often. It is available in the newspapers, TV and Radio. It is also available in so many other forms and shapes like songs, advertisements, road signs and banners. And now it is also available on the Internet. It can be used to best advantage in the EFL classroom. Merino and Massi (1998) explain this phenomenon in words, “The use of the news processing in the classroom is just one aspect of the changes in technology that is presently taking place. Undoubtedly, TV news and press, together with the impact of e-mail communication and internet availability influence both teachers and learners in deep and profound ways” (p.16).

In fact exploiting authentic materials entails great art and skill on the part of teacher. It needs an extraordinary effort to coordinate it with text material.” Adapting original materials for language teaching is an incredibly subtle process-half art, half science. Clearly, the kind and degree of adapting depends on the age and language level of the students. In an effort to simplify text, it is easy to slip into the error of talking down to the reader” (Darain, 2001, p.2).

Authentic materials, although difficult to adapt, make the learning enjoyable, meaningful and relevant. Students will also get the knowledge of the culture, values and traditions of the country where the target language is spoken. “A wide range of studies has shown that using content familiar to students, rather than unfamiliar content, can influence student comprehension of second language” (Post and Rathet, 1996, p.12).

Newspapers are full of an enormous amount of information and text materials. These are indeed the universities in print. The teacher with the help of his experience, skill and ability will have to choose from it the most appropriate material in accordance with the student’s knowledge of the target language.

Having looked into the problems or hurdles of using authentic materials for the cause of teaching. Despite all this, the teacher should be able to handle and overcome these difficulties and should bring the outside world into EFL classroom. Plenty of authentic written language is available. He can explore and exploit the vast treasury of newspapers, magazines, books, letters, forms, bills, internet, CNN, BBC and so on. The vast repertoire of newspapers and magazines, if explored prudently can offer a great deal. There is a long list to offer: -

| | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Cartoons | book reviews |
| Feature articles | news reports |
| Letters | editorial comments |
| Recipes | advertisements |

Horoscopes TV and Radio programmes

Weather reports news reports

Sports news problem pages

and many other.

2.11 How to Exploit Authentic Materials

Now the problem is how this material can be exploited in the EFL classroom is going to be the next venture. How can a teacher generate activities for different language skills and particularly writing skills?

2.11.1 Cartoons

Cartoons are available in plenty in any newspaper or magazine. These are very interesting and good enough to generate any activity for any of the language skills. But our concern here is writing skills. And cartoons have a big scope to provide writing activities. The usefulness of visual aids in language teaching has been universally recognized. “A picture is worth a thousand words” implies that the visual channel of transmitting information is superior to the auditory” (Rijavec, 1991, p.50)

From another viewpoint “if a picture succeeds in conveying the correct meaning, we might wonder what the role of the accompanying verbal equipment is” (Rijavec, 1991, p.50).

Cartoons cuttings pasted on the hard board can be distributed in the class. The students, either in pairs or groups can ponder over these and decide what is happening and write the full account of that.

2.11.2 Advertisements

Advertisements are the most effective tool to produce writing activities in an EFL classroom. It is also the most interesting and attractive material. Teacher can ask the students what they are going to do after the completion of their education. He can tell some of the profession and then distribute some job advertisements in the class after making some groups. The students will find the occupations of their choice advertised in the newspaper applications can be exchanged among groups along with the advertisements. The students will check each other applications and then write a letter of approval and disapproval to the candidate keeping in view all the requirements of job in the advertisement. There is a great appeal for students in advertisements as most of the students think of their future career and are always interested to discuss different jobs and services for them and each other. Wierus (1990) says, “What makes advertisements attractive is their universal appeal, range of colours, the lettering of the text, the layout and their course form” (p.48).

Advertisements give birth to expectations and motivations among the students. Set them in motion and curious to do something and something good so that they may get a good job. Santoz (1996) very aptly remarks, “It created a lot of expectorations and triggered students interest and motivations to carry out a number of assignments they might not have completed

so willingly under the usual circumstances. The teaching setting eliminated a lot of constraints and allowed pupils to use language more authentically. I never imagined how far a classified ad might take me. I learned an unforgettable lesson on the potential of authentic materials as well as on the unpredictability and joy of language teaching” (p.67).

2.11.3 Weather Reports

Weather reports and forecasts can be exploited for writing activities to great effect. Students can be tasked to write a weather report of the past week keeping in view the weather reports published in the newspapers. In this way they will be able to practice the simple past tense. For the simple present tense they can be asked to write on today’s weather. To check their abilities of comparison and contrast, the teacher can ask them to compare the today’s’ and yesterday’s weather.

2.11.4 The TV Programmes

The TV programmes can generate a great variety of activities as there are so many subjects like sports, politics, economics, films, dramas, celebrities and dignitaries are entail there. For the activity, the teacher can provide the class with a copy of TV programme page. They will be able to produce a great deal of writing. They can also write on their favourite programmes. They can write a report on different matches like cricket, football, hockey etc.

2.11.5 Horoscope

Horoscope can be used to give students writing practice. Copies of horoscopes from newspapers and magazines can be distributed in the class. The students can be asked to determine their star according to the dates given on the top of each as per their date of birth. They can be asked to write whether the predictions made in the horoscope were correct or not. The students can compare the predictions of each other’s stars and tell each other in writing what was predicted and what actually happened to them.

2.11.6 TV and Radio News Bulletins

TV and Radio bulletins hold great promise to generate writing activities. News offers a whole range of interesting possibilities to increase and improve learner’s command on language skills. BBC and CNN offer so many lively programmes to inform us what is going on across the globe. These bulletins can come out with so many writing actives. The teacher can ask the students to write on themes as under:

How you like the CNN bulletins?

Is CNN covering all the world events truthfully?

What is the idea behind this report?

How BBC covers world events?

Does the background Material justify the events?

Compare and contrast CNN and BBC approach to world reporting?

Maniro and Massi (1998) says in this regard, “undoubtedly, TV news and press, together with the impact of e-mail communication and internet availability influence both teachers and learners in deep and profound ways” (p.16).

Authentic materials, of course, hold great promise for those who are in process of learning and improving writing skills. The use of authentic materials creates a lot of interest in the learners and they do not feel bored and tired. There comes a big part of charming and attractive outside world into the classroom. Authentic materials reduce the dullness of specially contrived text material. It makes significant contributions toward meeting the learning objective of a programme. Authentic materials are varied and very flexible in nature, which allow free play to the students and never restrict them at a place.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection

This study was destined to walk off for improving writing skills by bringing into play authentic materials. This chapter will come up with the description of the design of research study, the methodology employed and the strategy use for the collection of data during the course of this study.

Keeping in view the main research question, the researcher worked within the bounds of quantitative research. Quantitative research is an operation or procedure carried out under controlled conditions to discover an unknown effect or law, to test or establish a hypothesis, or to illustrate a known law.

3.2 Context of Study

The study was conducted in Federal Government Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad. There were some reasons behind the selection of this school for the purpose of this research. The first and most important was to have permission from the authorities concerned, as one of my friends was serving in Federal directorate of education as an assistant director; therefore it was easy to get permission for experimental teaching in any of the F.G.Schools. He very kindly got me the permission from the principal of school. Secondly it was very close to where I was living. The environment was relax and conducive.

3.3 Sampling

“Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals represent the larger group from which they are selected. The individuals selected comprise a sample and the larger group is referred to as a population. The purpose of sampling is to gain information about a population; rarely is a study conducted that includes the total population of interest as subjects” (Gay, 2003 p.111). The group or individuals out of which sample is selected is called population. It is defined by Gay (2001) as, “The population is the group of interest of the researcher, the group to which she or he would like the results of the study to be generalizable” (p.112).

Ten students from 10th were selected through the method of random sampling keeping in view “Mixed ability” criterion to ascertain true results of research.

3.4 Conducting the Research

On first visit of the school the researcher called on the principal of the school in the principal office. Introduced himself, his work and his plans to the head of the institution. Initially he was a bit reluctant, as it was the third week of January and the researcher was to experiment with the Matriculation students for a month. He informed the researcher that it was a very precious time for matriculation students as they are going to be examined in the first week of March and currently they were going through the revision phase.

The researcher told him that he would take only the English periods and would benefit the students in their revision work. As the research was to teach few English textbook lessons with the help of authentic materials so there was not harm in it. He very kindly agreed and allowed the researcher to do the business. The researcher started with the few class observations to watch the practical teaching situations. Taught two textbook lessons with the help of authentic materials to a group of ten students of 10th class. Questionnaires were got filled from the teachers. The time period to do all this was one month.

3.5 Strategies for Data Collection

Various data collection techniques were employed by the researcher during the course of the study. As the research was based on experimental research design and observations methodology involving quantitative method. The researcher had to gather information regarding his research problem not only from what people said but also from actions, reactions and behaviour. He had to become an attentive observer, emphatic listener and a neutral analyst to come up to the requirements of the study. While in the field, the researcher collected data through class observations, practical teaching to a group of students and through a teacher's questionnaire.

3.6 Classroom Observations

Four classroom situations were observed to watch the practical teaching situations. Two sections of 9th class and two of 10th were observed. After having taken the day's schedule of English periods from the voice principal office the researcher went to class 10th A, as it was the first in the day's schedule. There was some time left, the researcher waited outside, the class teacher arrived soon, the researcher told him about his motive and he very happily agreed to let the researcher observe the class. In fact he himself was a student, doing his PhD in Education from the National University of Modern Languages. He proved very kind and helpful for researcher in his research study in the school. He took whole the task in his hands. The researcher's job was just to inform him of his days schedule and rest was his responsibility. The other teachers were a bit apprehensive but with his help the researcher managed to create an environment of trust and support. Then the researcher conducted three other classroom observations.

3.6.1 Classroom Observation No 1

Class: X A

Teacher: Mr Abdul Raqeeb

Students: 32

Total Time: 35 minutes.

School: F.G. Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad

When the researcher reach the class, there was a bit of time i.e. a break between the periods, he waited outside the class. Soon a man with gray beard arrived. He was a teacher of English, the researcher kept standing and let him enter the class, then the researcher went up to the

door and asked his permission to get in the class, he very cordially welcomed the researcher and the monitor ordered the class to stand up, the researcher told them to please sit down. The researcher told Mr Abdul Raqeeb of his purpose of visiting the class. He felt no odd and promised the researcher his full support. This perhaps was, firstly due to his good nature, and secondly because he himself was a research student and was doing his PhD in Education from the National University of Modern Languages Islamabad.

The General Atmosphere

The general atmosphere in the class was very good. The classroom was airy with window on both front and rear walls, white washed, cleaned and spacious enough to accommodate 32 students. Chairs and tables were in excellent condition and were not fixed. White board was in good shape but a bit low for the rear benches. There were spacious lawns, although not green, both in front and rear of the classroom.

The Teacher

Teacher Mr Abdul Raqeeb was a very nice person, well educated, decent and a down to earth person. He was M.A, M.Ed and was doing his PhD in Education from the National University of Modern Languages. He took great interest in the researcher's research project and extended every help possible. But his way of teaching was very traditional. There was no modern touch in it. It was perhaps due to the system in vogue in our schools. He was sitting in the chair in front of class and taught a textbook lesson with usual grammar translation method. He asked few students to read the text, he told the meaning of the difficult words and translated the text into Urdu. There was no writing practice exercise, no use of A-V, aids, and authentic materials or even of the white board.

The Students

The students were the passive listeners. They were not the active participants in the class activity. Most of them were without English textbook. All of them were not very attentive. Anyhow they were obedient and full of respect for their teacher. Most of the time they stood up to answer a question by the teacher. They stood up in respect when the researcher enters the class. Only few out of the class asked some questions from the teacher during the lesson. They were well dressed all the same and wearing neat and clean uniform. On an enquiry by the researcher about study beyond Matric most of them were enthusiastic to go for higher education.

Learning and Teaching Process

The process of learning and teaching was restricted to textbook. Grammar translation method was applied. Meanings of difficult words were told and the sentences were translated into Urdu. He narrated an Urdu sentence: -

“Murgha subah sawairay aazan daita hai---*the cock crows early in the morning*”.

And asked the class to translate it into English but the class was unable to do so. There was a word “ASLEEP” in the text, the teacher ask the class, what it is by grammar. The students did

not know. The teacher told them that it is an “Adjective”. The teacher did not pay much attention to pronunciation. Anyhow when a student asked the meaning of “Better” pronouncing it as “Bitter” he corrected him that the word is “Better” not “Bitter” but he did not pay attention to many other pronunciation related mistakes. There was no writing exercise and no use of any helping materials. But he tried to make the lesson interesting by quoting some incidents from his experience. He told them about Japanese he met somewhere. In this way he gained the attention of the class and succeeded in reducing the boredom of the text to some extent.

Lesson Planning

The lesson planning was totally absent. There was an abstract and traditional start of the lesson. The teacher was sitting in the chair in front of the class and asked the students to open their books. Few students read the text one by one and the teacher told the meaning of the difficult words and translated it into Urdu. The students asked the questions as they wished during the lesson. No time consideration, it started with the start of the period and finished all of a sudden as the bell for the next period rang.

Techniques and Strategies

The technique applied to teach the lesson was grammar translation. The strategy used during the lesson was to ask the student to read the lesson. Meanings of the difficult words were told in Urdu and the text was translated into Urdu after that. The teacher also enquired the meaning of some difficult words from the students during the lesson. The students told the meaning of some of the words and the rest teacher told himself.

3.6.2 Classroom Observation No 2

Class: IX A

Teacher: Mr Muhammad Saeed

Students: 51

Total Time: 35 Minutes

School: F.G. Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad

The next period of English was in class IX A, Mr Abdul Raqeeb and the researcher went straight to the class which was just close to class X A. The teacher was yet to arrive. We awaited him at the door and soon he arrived. Mr Abdul Raqeeb introduced the researcher to the teacher and told him of the researcher’s presence and purpose in the school. His name was Mr Muhammad Saeed. He let the researcher observe the class after some initial hesitation.

The General Atmosphere

This classroom was small in size and was a bit over crowded. The aisles were too small for the teacher and the students to walk up and down freely. Windows and doors were not freshly painted. Panes were also broken and in very bad shape. Walls were white washed perhaps in too distant a past and were asking for a fresh coat. Fans were not working as it was winter

and off season for their services but were looking good enough to do the talking when required to do so. Chairs and desk, although old in age but good to do the service and were not fixed. Chalkboard was cemented and was part of the wall. It was broad and wide and was in sight of whole the class. Anyhow, it was open from both front and rear side and there was free passage of air.

The Teacher

The teacher Mr Muhammad Saeed was a traditional style of a teacher. Initially he was a bit reluctant to give an observation of the class but he quickly understood the motive behind and let the researcher observe the class. As it was the end of the year and the annual examination was expected after a month. So there was a preparation going on as per examination paper setting. They were doing paragraph translations from English into Urdu from a book of grammar. The teacher translated one paragraph into Urdu and then asked the students to come up one by one and dictate the difficult words to the class with their meanings from the next few paragraphs, which were to be translated in the next few days. He helped them in correcting pronunciation and told meanings where the students were not able to tell. As a whole it was a traditional teaching exercise.

The Students

Here again the students were passive listeners. They listen quietly to what their teacher said. There was not even a single question asked by the students. Then teacher named a few to come up and dictate difficult words. They do come up but only when pointed out by the teacher. No one volunteer himself for the business. They did like a computer what their teacher commanded them to do. Although one of them was really brilliant. He indeed was a prodigy. His pronunciation was excellent and he was very confident. Later on when enquired by the researcher as to how he learnt pronunciation. He replied that he learnt it at his own from teachers, parents, friends and media. It's a passion with him. He also told that he always topped his class and even school most of the times. The researcher picked few students from this class for a writing exercise. All stopped after writing few lines but he kept on writing until stopped. He wrote more than two pages of excellent English in a very short period of time and was willing to write more. The rest were ordinary and were not willing to perform.

The Learning and Teaching Process

The learning / teaching process was limited to specially contrived material only. Grammar translation method was applied. Paragraph written in English was translated into Urdu. Meanings of difficult words were told. Few students were invited in front of the class to dictate the difficult words from among the next few paragraphs. The teacher helped the students in pronunciation. There was no writing activity or any other supportive material. Even the teacher did not try to make the lesson a bit interesting by quoting something from his experience. He did not cheer up the class or appreciated the student for his good work.

The Lesson Planning

The lesson was not planned. There was no warm up. No cheering up of the class or few good

words to get their attention. He started translating the paragraph straight away. There was no question from the class. Helping material was also not there.

Techniques and Strategies

The method or techniques applied was translation method. The strategy used was reading the text by the teacher himself, meaning of difficult words were dictated and then came the Urdu translation of the paragraph. There was no recapitulation and answer / question session in the end. All was over as the paragraph exhausted.

3.6.3 Classroom Observation No 3

Class: IX C

Teacher: Shafqat Ali Janjua

Students: 48

Time Period: 35 Minutes

School: F.G. Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad

The General Atmosphere

It was a spacious classroom. Bigger than all the rest. Although the number of students were just a little less than IX A. There was a big vacant space behind where the researcher sat. Fresh air was going across freely. It was much easier to breathe here as there was no suffocation at all. All the rest was asking for a lot to do. The furniture was asking for a complete overhaul and a fresh coat of paint. Walls were white washed but in too olden days. A fresh coat would have been a great favour to them. Black board was in good shape and at a reasonable height for the teacher to write anywhere he likes and for the backbenchers to sight. Sufficient light was available and fans were in good condition although not working, as it was wintry weather. Doors were in good condition but some windows were broken with some panes completely missing. Floor was in good condition. Front and rear of the classroom was wide open to vast play grounds with tall and green trees all around.

The Teacher

The teacher Mr Shafqat Ali was a nice fellow but his way of teaching was conventional. He taught Past Tense in a traditional style. Nevertheless he did not resist much about the researcher's entry into the class. The researcher sat behind the class. The teacher told the class that he is going to teach them the Past Tense. He wrote different sentences on the black board and told them about use of verb form, position of subject and object, use of helping verbs etc in the past tense. Then he told the different kinds of past tense. Then he wrote mixed sentences on the black board and asked the student to differentiate the sentences as per the different kinds of past tense. The students were not involved much in the lesson and the teacher was dominant as a whole.

The Students

The students were just the docile listeners. They almost sat through quietly throughout the period and did not participate in the lesson. The teacher asked a few questions from them and then pointed out the students then they answer the question.

They were smartly dressed all the same, in their school uniform, looking very smart in Navy blue pull over and grey pants. Their hairs were combed and shoe polished, proffering elegant look. There should not be any doubt about their abilities as they were the victims of the system. They were taught to behave in such a fashion right from the beginning. They were obedient and full of respect for their teachers and elders. They stood up as the researcher entered the class. They were a bit apprehensive as to what the researcher was doing sitting on the backbench. Perhaps this was the first chance they were seeing a man entering the classroom holding a file with some papers in his hand, sitting behind and observing the lesson.

Learning and Teaching Process

It was all restricted to traditional approach through which the past tense was taught. Different grammatical items were discussed in a traditional manner. Teacher was dominant through out and the students were subservient. They never asked any question. Answered only when asked by the teacher. No helping material was used. There was no writing exercise either.

Lesson Planning

Lesson planning was altogether missing. The teacher just announced the topic. Immediately after his arrival in the class he started to teach. This went on until the bell rang to finish the period.

Techniques and Strategies

The method was grammar translation method. The strategy used was defining the past and kinds of past tense. The use of grammatical forms, reciting few sentences in Urdu and then translating them in English. All the four kinds of past tense were taught separately. Then the teacher wrote few mixed sentences on the black board involving all kinds and asking the students to identify them according to the tense.

3.6.4 Classroom Observation No 4

Class: X B

Teacher: Mr Zahid Hussain

Students: 40

Time Period: 35 Minutes

School: F.G. Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad

It was the fourth and the last class for the researcher to observe. Mr Abdul Raqeeb and the researcher went to the class. We met Mr Zahid in the corridor coming to take the class and

request him for the observation of the teaching situation in his class. He was not ready in any case to let the researcher in. Mr Abdul Raqeeb tried hard to persuade him but he remained adamant. But we did not lose heart and continued to plead our case with him. Finally, he granted the request and told the researcher to come up tomorrow at the same time. We thanked him for the favour he did and left to come back the next.

The Teacher

Mr Zahid Hussain was the most reluctant teacher to let the researcher observe the class. We have to work hard on him. But he was a good teacher in the traditional classroom. He was a man of qualities. The researcher always found him sitting alone in the staff room marking the class tests or preparing his lecture. He was a quiet person and loves to stay away from the crowd. The researcher saw the teachers basking and chatting in groups outside in the lawn but never Mr Zahid doing the same. He was immersed in the business.

The General Atmosphere

It was the most tidy of the four classrooms; the researcher observed the teaching situation in. The chairs and the desks were properly arranged. There were two wide and straight aisles. The floor was shining. There was a clean white board. Marker, pointer and board cleaner were available. Walls were white washed properly. Enough light was available and fans were in good shape but were off, due to winter season. It could be expected that these will work well when required. Air was crossing; as the space was wide open both in front and behind the classroom. Perhaps the school administration was looking after only this classroom. It was a model in that school.

The Students

The students were also comparatively better than the previous three classes the researcher observed. Their response was very good. They were very obedient and stood up as Mr Zahid and the researcher entered the class. It was the end of the year and the revision work was in progress. Mr Zahid asked some students to come one by one in front of the class on his call and teach one tense each for the purpose and himself stood on one side to watch and facilitate the proceedings. He pointed out the students to come up and deliver from everywhere in the classroom. They were all willing and volunteer even the back benchers.

As far their dress, they were smartly clad in Navy blue pull over and grey pants. It was cleaned and pressed. Anyhow whole the teaching process was traditional and teacher controlled. There was no volunteer and independent students' involvement at all. They always waited for a teacher's call to do anything.

Learning and Teaching Process

It was restricted to the revision of tenses. The teacher stood aside and pointed out the student to come in front of the class and teach one tense each. They did so. The teacher helped and facilitated them from distance. But it was all in traditional manner. There was not much participation from sitting students. They were merely flaccid viewers. Only those students come in front and teach who were asked to do so. The rest of the class sat silently. There was

no helping fabric to support the teaching stuff.

Lesson Planning

There was no lesson planning or time consideration. The teacher turned up in the class, stood aside and called the students one by one in front of the class and asked them to revise one tense each. There was no warm up or getting the students ready for the purpose of teaching. The lesson was not finished a few minutes before the stipulated time. There was an abrupt end to it with no revision or recapitulation in the end or any answer/question session.

Techniques and Strategies

The strategy applied was calling the students one by one to revise a tense. The teacher helped and assisted the students all the while. There was not any general teacher / student communication. No group or pair works either.

3.7 The Experimental Teaching

After the class observations the researcher chosen to do some experimental teaching by teaching a group of ten students of mixed ability from class X A, picked with the help of class teacher Mr Abdul Raqeeb.

Participants:

Farhad Jadoon

Syed Irfan Tasneem

Saad Malik

Yaseen Abbasi

Saad Saleem

Mirza Asim Baig

Rizwan Matloob

Muhammad Haris Zaman

Waseem Akhtar

Khan Sher Zaman Khan

Lessons tested for writing skills:

Humour

Newspaper

As it was the end of the year the class had already finished with their textbook and revision work was going on. The researcher took an entrance test of each lesson before teaching it with the help of authentic materials. The researcher selected the lessons keeping in view the students interest and with whom they come across almost daily and have a good idea about

these. A comprehensive lesson plans were prepared for each of the lesson supporting with concerned authentic materials and in the end with different writing exercises for the improvement of writing skills. The researcher practiced these lesson plans for a week each before practically teaching it in the classroom to the students. The exercises and activities at the end of the lesson plans were prepared keeping in view the students interest. After having entrance test, each of the lessons was taught for a week with the help of authentic materials according to the lesson plans with writing activities at the end of each lesson. The students took keen interest and enjoyed use of authentic materials during the course of teaching. At the end of each lesson an exit test was given to determine the results of the experiment. The students showed a great deal of improvement in their writing skills.

3.8 The Teachers Questionnaire

Total eight teachers were chosen for the purpose. The names are as under:-

Mr Zahid Hussain (TGT)

Mr Shafqat Ali (TGT)

Mr Muhammad Saeed (TGT)

Mr Abdul Raqeeb (TGT)

Mr Masood Malik (TGT)

Mr Irshad Ahmed (TGT)

Mr Akber Khan (TGT)

Mr Tahir Yaqoob (TGT)

**CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS**

4.1 Data Analysis

During the course of his research the researcher carried out an experimental study at Federal Government Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad for the length of one month at secondary level students. The data collected was meticulously analyzed. The overall results are being described through statistical diagrams. A group of ten students of mixed ability were picked from class X with the help of class teacher. Two lessons were taught with the help of authentic materials. The names of the participants are as under:-

- (a) Farhad Jadoon
- (b) Syed Irfan Tasneem
- (c) Saad Malik
- (d) Yaseen Abbasi
- (e) Saad Saleem
- (f) Mirza Aasim Baig
- (g) Rizwan Matloob
- (h) Muhammad Haris Zaman
- (i) Waseem Akhter
- (j) Khan Sher Zaman Khan

The analysis of the result of the each of the ten students participated is being submitted below.

(a) Farhad Jadoon

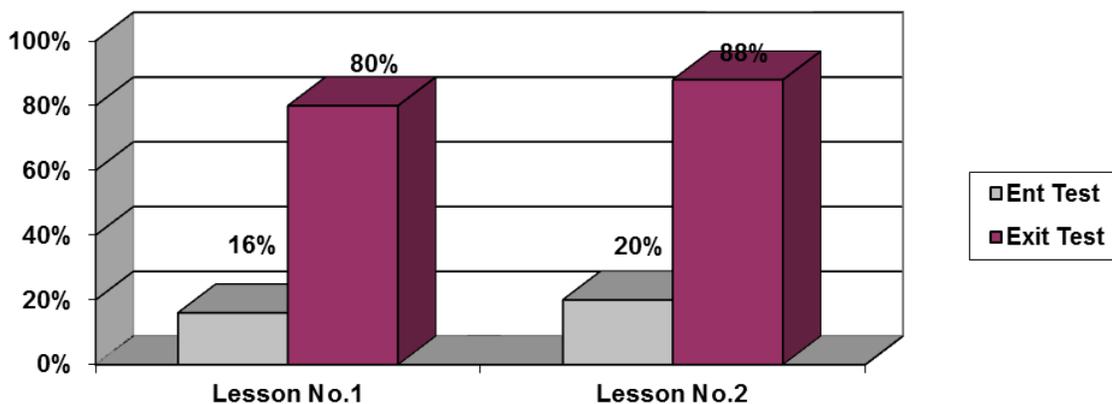


Fig 4.2

Analysis of Figure 4.2

The student showed an obvious improvement in exit tests as compare to the entrance tests. He scored 16% and 20% marks in the entrance tests. While his scores in the exit tests are much higher in which he scored 80% and 88% marks respectively.

(b) Syed Irfan Tasneem

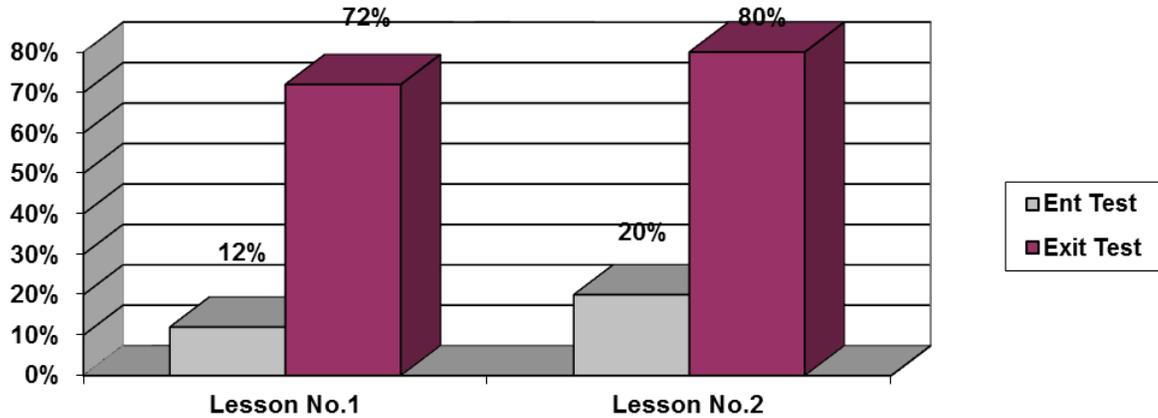


Fig No 4.3

Analysis of Figure 4.3

There is a tremendous improvement in the results of exit tests than those of entrance tests. The students obtained 12% and 20% marks in entrance tests. While scores in the exit ones are better a great deal where he got 72% and 80% marks.

(c) Saad Malik

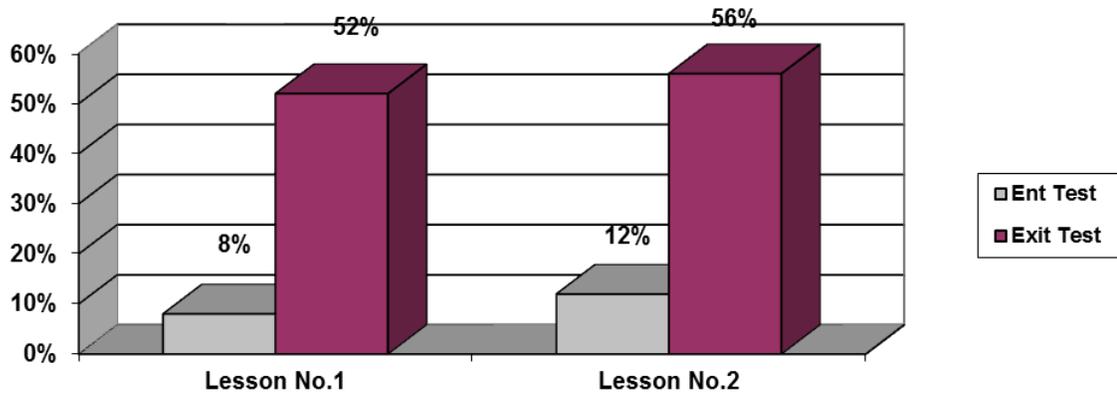


Fig 4.4

Analysis of Figure 4.4

This student although scored low as a whole but displayed considerable upward trend in exit tests with respect to entrance tests. He got 8% and 12 % marks in entrance tests and 52% and 56 % in exit tests.

(c) Yaseen Abbasi

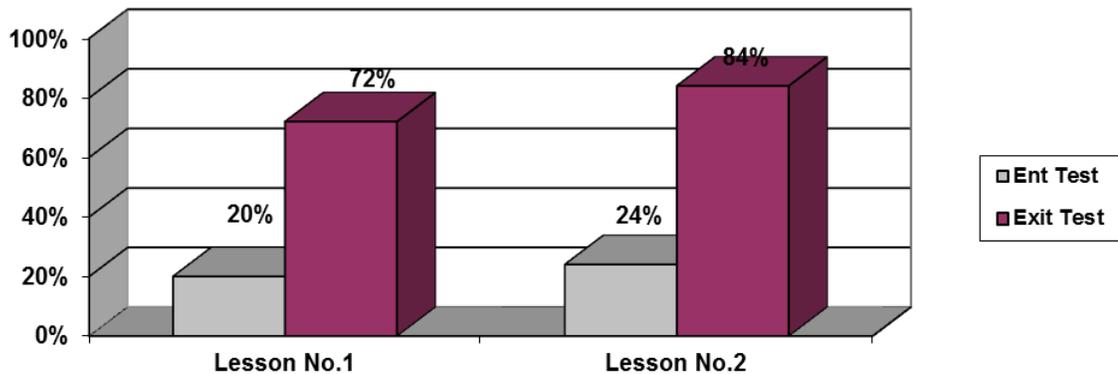


Fig 4.5

Analysis of Figure 4.5

The student demonstrated marked progress in both the exit tests as compared to entrance tests. He scored 20% and 24% marks in entrance and 72 % and 84 % marks in exit tests.

(d) Saad Saleem

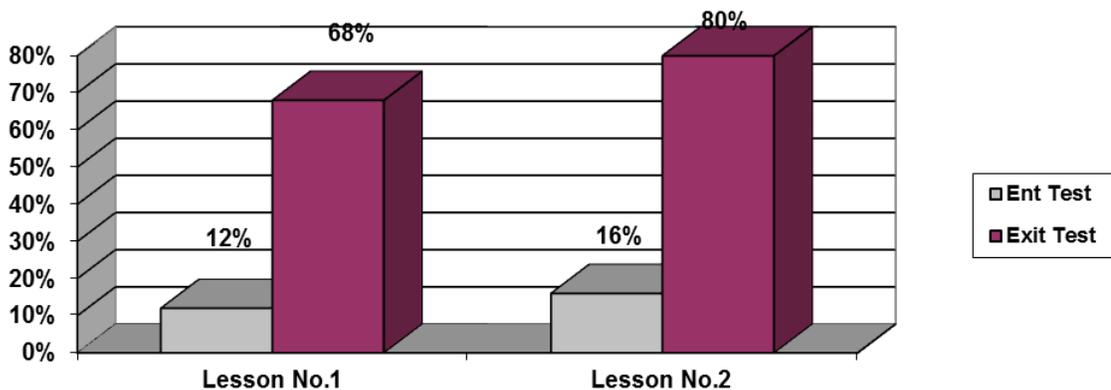


Fig 4.6

Analysis of Figure 4.6

Once again, the vertical trend in the exit tests is quite clearly indicated in this figure as well. There are 12% and 16% marks in entrance while 68% and 80% marks are in exit tests

respectively.

(f) Mirza Aasim Baig

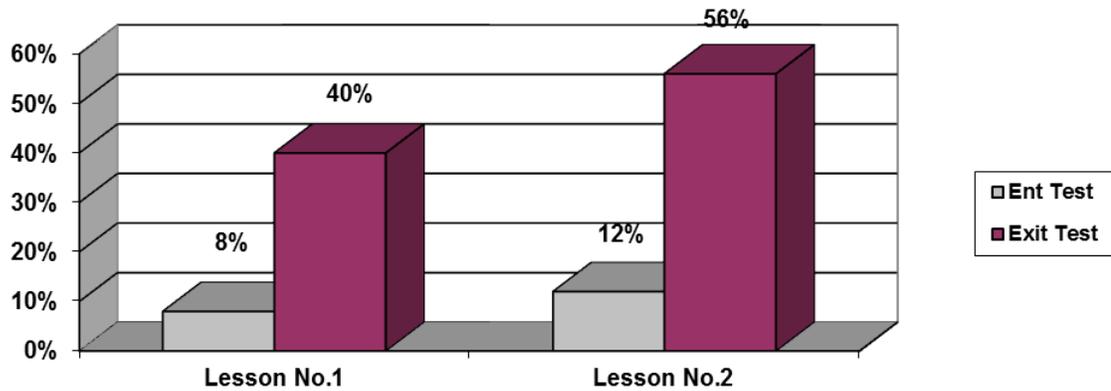


Fig 4.7

Analysis of Figure 4.7

There is a visible difference of scores in entrance and exit tests. Scores in both the entrance tests are 10% and 12%. Whereas in exit tests these are 40% and 56% respectively. So there is considerable improvement here.

(g) Rizwan Matloob

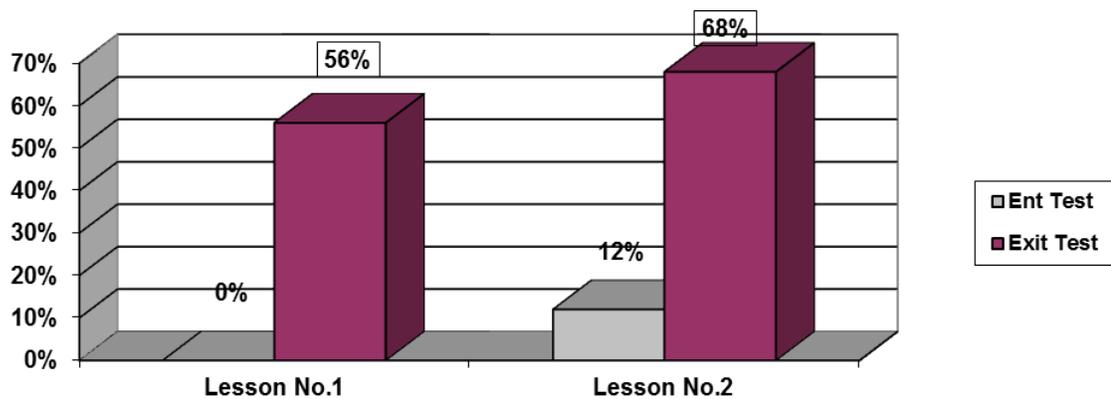


Fig 4.8

Analysis of Figure 4.8

The scoring rate, in case of this student, is also clearly much higher in the exit tests than that of entrance ones. He scored 0% and 12 % in the entrance and 56% and 68% in the exit test respectively.

(h) Muhammad Haris Zaman

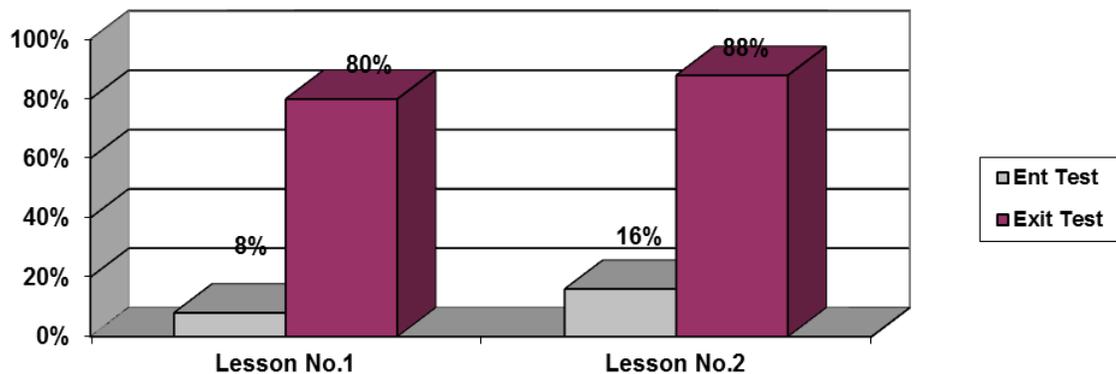


Fig 4.9

Analysis of Figure 4.9

In this case also the difference between the exit and entrance tests scores is tremendous. The scoring in entrance tests is 8% and 16% and in the exit ones is 80% and 88% respectively.

(i) Waseem Akhter

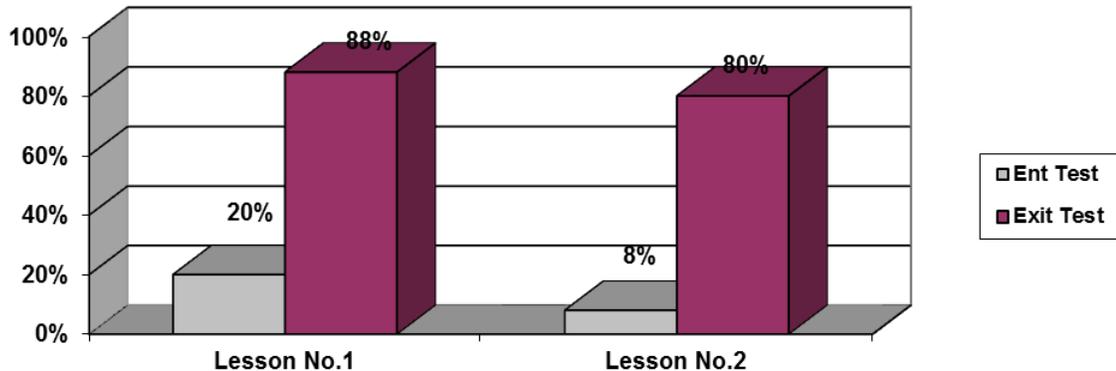


Fig 4.10

Analysis of Figure 4.10

Once again the graphs of the exit tests are high above the entrance ones. The student scored 20% and 8% in entrance tests and 88% and 80% in exit test respectively.

(j) Khan Sher Zaman Khan

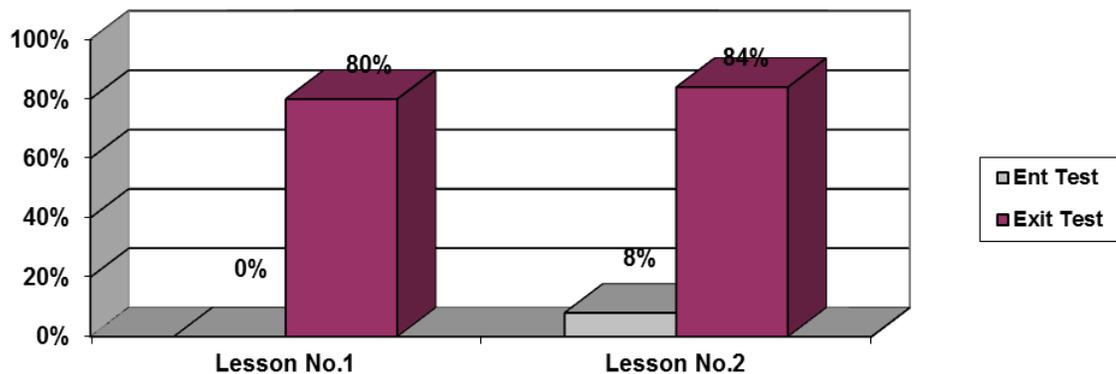


Fig 4.11

Analysis of Figure 4.11

The performance in the exit tests is much higher than the entrance tests. The score in entrance is 0% and 8%. While in the exit tests it is 80% and 84% respectively.

4.12 *The Data at a Glance*

| S NO | NAME | LESSON NO 1 | | | | LESSON NO 2 | | | |
|------|--------|-------------|-----|-----------|-----|-------------|-----|-----------|-----|
| | | ENT TEST | | EXIT TEST | | ENT TEST | | EXIT TEST | |
| 1 | FARHAD | 4/25 | 16% | 20/25 | 80% | 5/25 | 20% | 22/25 | 88% |
| 2 | IRFAN | 3/25 | 12% | 18/25 | 72% | 5/25 | 20% | 20/25 | 80% |
| 3 | SAAD | 2/25 | 8% | 13/25 | 52% | 3/25 | 12% | 14/25 | 56% |
| 4 | YASEEN | 5/25 | 20% | 18/25 | 72% | 6/25 | 24% | 21/25 | 84% |
| 5 | SALEEM | 3/25 | 12% | 17/25 | 68% | 4/25 | 16% | 20/25 | 80% |
| 6 | AASIM | 2/25 | 8% | 10/25 | 40% | 3/25 | 12% | 14/25 | 56% |
| 7 | RIZWAN | 0/25 | 0% | 14/25 | 56% | 3/25 | 12% | 17/25 | 68% |
| 8 | HARIS | 2/25 | 8% | 20/25 | 80% | 4/25 | 16% | 22/25 | 88% |
| 9 | WASEEM | 5/25 | 20% | 22/25 | 88% | 2/25 | 8% | 20/25 | 80% |
| 10 | SHER | 0/25 | 0% | 20/25 | 80% | 2/25 | 8% | 21/25 | 84% |

Table 4.12

The performance of each of the ten students has been thoroughly analyzed one by one from figure 4.2 to figure 4.11 with the help of graphs. A collective table of performance of all the ten students is given at the table 4.12.

4.13 Analysis of the Teachers' Questionnaire

While at school, during the course of the research, the researcher got filled a questionnaire from the teachers of English. The questions asked were about the language skills in general and about writing skills and authentic materials in particular. The analysis of the questionnaire is being submitted in the tables below.

| TABLE 1 | |
|-----------------|----|
| Total Teachers | 8 |
| Total Questions | 10 |

| TABLE 2 | |
|---|-------|
| Which skill, in your opinion, should be given more importance in the classroom? | |
| Listening | 25% |
| Speaking | 62.5% |
| Reading | 37.5% |
| Writing | 37.5% |

Analysis of Table 2

The most important skill in their opinion is speaking followed by reading and writing skills.

| TABLE 3 | |
|---|-------|
| Do you use any other material in your class while teaching English? | |
| Yes | 87.5% |
| No | 12.5% |

Analysis of Table 3

Here the percentage in favour of 'yes' is substantially higher. 87.5% teachers ticked 'Yes'. While during class observation the researcher saw no such thing.

| TABLE 4 | |
|--|-------|
| Is the textbook enough to teach English? | |
| Yes | 12.5% |
| No | 87.5% |

Analysis of Table 4

87.5% teachers opined that the textbook of English being taught at secondary level is not enough for the enhancement of language skills.

| TABLE 5 | |
|---|-------|
| What do you means by authentic materials? | |
| True Answer | 0% |
| Partially True | 62.5% |
| Wrong | 37.5% |

Analysis of Table 5

Majority of the teachers do not know as to what the authentic materials really are? No one was able to give a true answer to the question. Some were partially true and some totally wrong.

| TABLE 6 | |
|---|-------|
| Have you ever used authentic materials in your classroom? | |
| Yes | 12.5% |
| No | 24% |
| To some extent | 62.5% |

Analysis of Table 6

The percentage of teachers using authentic materials in the classroom is very low. Only 12.5% are using authentic materials, 24% are not using whereas 62.5% are using it to some extent.

| TABLE 7 | |
|--|-------|
| Would authentic materials make the learning interesting? | |
| Yes | 62.5% |
| No | 0% |
| To some extent | 37.5% |

Analysis of Table 7

62.5% teachers favoured the use of authentic materials and thought that it will make the learning process of English language interesting. Interestingly none said no to this question.

| TABLE 8 | |
|---|-------|
| Do you advise your students to go to library and read Newspapers to hone their language skills? | |
| Yes | 62.5% |
| No | 12.5% |
| To some extent | 25% |

Analysis of Table 8

Most teachers told that they ask their students to go to library and read Newspapers so that they may bring about enhancement in their language skills. Their percentage is 62.5%. 12.5% said 'No' and 25% ticked 'To some extent'.

| TABLE 9 | |
|--|-----|
| How do you explain the difficult words/concepts? | |
| By giving their meanings in English | 25% |
| By giving their meanings in Urdu | 75% |
| By means of AV Aids | 0% |
| By means of Pictures | 0% |

Analysis of Table 9

There are 75% teachers who explain the difficult words/concepts by translating them into Urdu. Only 25% said that they translate difficult words/concepts in English. There is no one who uses AV aids or pictures.

| TABLE 10 | |
|--|-------|
| Do your students feel happy or afraid of to write something? | |
| Always happy | 0% |
| Always afraid of | 0% |
| Often afraid of | 25% |
| Never afraid of | 12.5% |
| Never happy | 0% |
| Often happy | 62.5% |

Analysis of Table 10

Majority of the teachers i.e. 62.5% opined that their student often feel happy to write something in English. 25% said that often they found their students afraid of writing. Whereas 12.5% are of the opinion that their students are never afraid of writing something.

| TABLE 11 | |
|---|-------|
| Which of the following techniques do you apply in your class for developing writing skills? | |
| Children literature | 0% |
| Authentic materials | 12.5% |
| Simplified version of novels | 0% |
| Stories | 75% |

Analysis of Table 11

75% teachers ticked stories as a technique for developing writing skills. Only 12.5% went in favour of authentic materials as a technique for developing writing skills. There is one teacher who never ticked anything. He said he 'Never' ever used any of the mentioned techniques for the enhancement of writing skills.

MODEL LESSON PLAN NO 1

| | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| Teacher | : | Asif Masood |
| Level | : | Matric |
| Age Group | : | 15-16 years |
| Strength | : | 10 |
| Time | : | 35 Minutes |
| Date | : | 25-01-2003 |
| Institution | : | F G Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad |
| Topic | : | Humour |
| Objective | : | Supporting textbook with authentic materials for developing writing skills. |
| Time Period | : | One week |
| Teaching Aids: | | Cuttings of jokes, cartoons, articles, Markers, and the Whiteboard. |

Pre-reading**Estimated Time: 5 Minutes**

- (a) Students previous knowledge about humour was checked and general interest was aroused.
- (b) Motivated students by giving them some credible reasons for reading it.
- (c) For language preparation some jokes were shared.

While-Reading**Estimated Time: 20 Minutes**

- (a) Cuttings of jokes, cartoons, and articles were distributed in the class. Students were allowed to do some group work on them. Then some students read the jokes and articles one by one, the teacher corrected pronunciation mistakes. Jokes and articles were interesting and amusing and there were some laughter and amusement in the class.
- (b) Then there was text reading aimed to help the readers to:-

- (i) Clarify the context of the text e.g. difficult words and literary terms like, sarcasm, exaggeration, anecdote etc.
- (ii) Understand the structure of the text.
- (iii) Know about the writing process. Tips on the writing process were given in detail.
- (iv) Get the writer's aim

Follow-Up**Estimated Time: 10 Minutes****Writing Activities****Activity -1**

Write some of your favourite jokes.

Activity-2

Write a short amusing story.

Activity-3

Write a short note on cartoons.

MODEL LESSON PLAN NO 2

| | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| Teacher | : | Asif Masood |
| Level | : | Matric |
| Age Group | : | 15-16 years |
| Strength | : | 10 |
| Time | : | 35 Minutes |
| Date | : | 03-02-2003 |
| Institution | : | F G Boys Model School F-8/3 Islamabad |
| Topic | : | Newspaper |
| Objective | : | Supporting textbook with authentic materials for developing writing skills. |
| Time Period | : | One week |
| Teaching Aids: | | Two English Newspapers i.e. Dawn and The News, cuttings of different parts of Newspapers, Markers and Whiteboard. |

Pre-reading**Estimated Time: 5 Minutes**

- (a) Students knowledge held previously about Newspapers was checked and their interest was aroused.
- (b) Informed students about the good things a Newspaper can offer them.
- (c) For language preparation some headlines from a Newspaper were read and discussed.

While-Reading**Estimated Time: 20 Minutes**

- (a) Cuttings of front-page headlines, city page headlines, some business news excerpts, a letter to the editor, an editorial and some sports news were offered for the group work.
- (b) The teacher help the students understand the language of different news items. The students asked some questions and the teacher answered them.
- (c) Then there was the general reading of the text aimed to help the students to;
 - (i) Understand the writer's purpose.
 - (ii) Understand the structure of the text.
 - (iii) Clarify the contents of the text e.g. difficult words, Newspaper terms, and particular Newspaper language.

Follow-Up**Estimated Time: 10 Minutes****Writing Activities****Activity -1**

Write a thirty-word note on the main parts of a Newspaper.

Activity-2

Write a short note on editorial page.

Activity-3

Offer your comments on sports page of your favourite Newspaper.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

It was an interesting and creative experience. The researcher enjoyed every bit and piece of this process. And find all the students and the teachers taking a lot of interest, as it was something new for them. Most of them were wonder struck. They never experienced such a thing in their lives before. They asked a lot of questions and the utility of authentic materials and its effects in the classroom. It aroused a great deal of interest in them and stirred their creative faculties. There was a flood of information in every piece of material used i.e. cartoons, advertisements, weather reports, horoscopes etc. They find it easy to write after having a deep and keen look at these pieces/excerpts of authentic materials. These set their minds working and planning on a variety of topics. It was easy for them to choose the topic of their interest. They got rid of dull and dry textbook material. The classroom becomes a happy place to them. They were not restricted to write in a particular direction. Authentic materials were full of meanings and everyone draw their own from it as per their mindset.

5.2 Findings

The study strengthened the researcher's belief in the use of authentic materials in the classroom for developing writing skills and revealed the following.

1. The textbooks of secondary level lack spontaneity, interest and scope to raise the motivation level of the students.
2. These are devoid of real life communication and are both dull and dry.
3. The textbooks used are full of a specially contrived material, which is not enough to make the students cope with the functional role of language.
4. The teaching methodology applied is both discouraging and boring.
5. The teachers used the traditional lecture and grammar translation method.
6. There is also a lack of teacher training for language teaching.
7. Students' participation during the lesson is almost zero.
8. They are unable to produce a piece of written work or speak a few meaningful sentences.
9. Students do not activate their mind to think, observe and depict their original ideas in the form of words.
10. Teachers never endeavour to devise activities to help improve students writing skills.

5.3 Recommendations

On the basis of research, the researcher recommends the following for developing writing

skills at secondary level.

1. The textbook should be supplemented with appropriate authentic materials to make them more stimulating and inspiring to the students.
2. Authentic material is a useful and ideal starting point in the classroom.
3. It holds great promise for learners who direct their attention on practical language use.
4. Teachers should use authentic materials in classrooms to arouse students' interest.
5. Students should be encouraged to participate in the class activities.
6. Teachers should be given adequate training to make them teach language in an effective manner and style.
7. Students plus points should be debated and the weak areas should be neglected. In this way they will be encouraged and will be able to write better in the days to come.
8. There should be some creative writing activities in the textbooks.
9. Writing skills should be emphasized upon as these are the most feared skills among students and most of them are hesitant to take on a writing assignment.
10. Rote learning and copying should be discouraged and original ideas original ideas should be appreciated.

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