

The Impact of Using Source-based Writing Activities on EFL Secondary Stage Students' Frequency of Errors

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ABSTRACT

Title: The impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL secondary stage students' frequency of errors

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The present study attempted to investigate the impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL secondary stage students' frequency of errors; for the purpose of identifying whether the rate of committing errors has or has not reduced after using source-based writing activities. The study, also, aimed at figuring out the most common errors committed by (70) students at the first year of the secondary stage in the academic year 2020/2021 during the first semester via analyzing types of errors found in their writings. Before the experiment, the two groups answered the pre-writing test. Then, with the experimental group, different sources were used during teaching writing, while the control group was taught using the traditional activities for writing. After (13) sessions of instruction, the same writing test was administered as a post-test in order to measure the impact of using sources on students' frequency of errors. The

instrument used for this study was the participants' written paragraphs in the writing test; students were required to write different genres of paragraphs (narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative) during the writing test. The paragraphs were collected to be analyzed (total of (6) texts per student). All the errors in these texts were identified and classified into different categories. After that, a table of frequency was formed to list the number of the most repeated errors committed by the two groups (page 21). There were (9) frequent errors that EFL first-year secondary stage students committed with a high rate of frequency, namely; (1) sentence mis-ordering. (2) verb tense, (3) subject-verb agreement, (4) prepositions, (5) pronoun error, (6) spelling, (7) punctuation, (8) inaccurate expressions, (9) word choice. The results of the post-writing-test indicated that the mean of errors frequencies in the experimental group has reduced to reach (14.69) after using source-based writing activities. Unlike the mean of error frequencies in the control group that still with a high rate of frequency (22.86). According to the reached findings, some recommendations for further research were suggested and some pedagogical implications which might assist EFL teachers during teaching writing for secondary school students were provided.

Key words:

Frequency of errors/ Error analysis/ Source-based writing activities

Introduction:

English is a language that is widely used around the world. It is considered being the main language of communication, business, and trade. The English language has four main skills; among them, writing is of major importance because it is widely used in the educational and work fields; basically, students' success is measured by their competency in writing. Ananda, Gani, and Sahardin (2014) highlighted the significance of writing by stating its benefits in order to communicate messages clearly with others.

Despite the significance of writing, learning to write without errors in a foreign language seems to be a challenging task even for native writers because reducing error frequencies considered to be an essential sign for improving students' writing (Atmaca, 2016). Khatter (2019), Reyes, (2019), Ewie, Williams (2017), Atmaca (2016), Al-Khasawneh (2014), and Theodore(2013) agreed that writing is the most difficult skill for both native and non-native students because acquiring it demands making a balance between different elements such as content, organization, grammar, purpose, audience, vocabulary, and mechanics. Being proficient at writing requires being proficient at all the language systems; vocabulary, grammar, coherence/ cohesion devices, and thinking strategies to facilitate generating ideas effectively on a paper (Mustafa & Mohammadi, 2020; AlTameemy, 2019; Nuruzzaman, Islam,& Shuchi, 2018; Wahyuni, 2014).

Throughout the previous literature, it becomes clear that EFL students commit a lot of errors during English language classrooms, in general, and during writing classrooms, in particular. This highlights the importance of (EA) error analysis which is defined as analyzing the written texts in a trial to identify the most frequent errors and classify them into classifications; it focuses on two main parts: the theoretical and the practical part (Terzioğlu & Bostanci, 2020) .

Khansir (2013), Mustafa, and Mohammadi (2020) agreed that error analysis provides a clear picture of students' linguistic development and it shows the signals of the learning process. Also, it clarifies, for the teachers, the effectiveness of the used teaching materials and

techniques and according to this teacher modifies or changes the used method or techniques. Furthermore, Terzioğlu and Bostanci (2020) added that error analysis highlights the items that teachers need to concentrate on in order to prompt students' writing skills. Also, it determines the types of errors committed by the students and explains the reasons for committing them (Waelath, Boonsuk, Ambele & Jeharsae, 2019; Sermsook, Liannimitr & Pochakorn, 2017).

The occurrence of errors during writing tasks might frustrate both teachers and students and in order to overcome this problem teachers have to help students to gain much self-confidence during writing tasks and make them understand that errors occurrence is indispensable in order to learn and gain the right knowledge. Despite the frequency of errors in the EFL students' English compositions, little research has been conducted in this field, thus this study comes as a trial to investigate this area.

Statement of the Problem

Throughout reviewing the previous literature, it becomes clear that EFL students repeat committing errors during writing tasks. Thus, there is a need to use untraditional writing activities, such as source-based writing activities, and investigate its impact on students' frequencies of errors.

In order to tackle this problem, the current study tried to answer the following main question:

- What is the impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL secondary stage students' frequency of errors?

This main question was branched out into the following sub-questions:

- What are the most common writing errors committed by EFL first-year secondary stage students?
- How frequently do these errors occur in the first year secondary stage students' written paragraphs?
- Is there a statistically significant difference between the mean frequency of errors of the experimental group students who use the source-based writing activities and that of their control group peers who do not receive such activities?

Hypotheses of the study

- There is no statistically significant difference in the frequencies of errors produced by the control and experimental groups in the post-implementation of writing performance test (after using source-based writing activities).
- There is no statistically significant difference in the frequencies of errors produced by the experimental group in the pre and post-implementation of writing performance test (after using source-based writing activities).

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL secondary stage students' frequency of errors. In addition, this study aimed at identifying the most frequent errors that first-year secondary stage students commit in order to use proper writing activities that would reduce committing them.

Significance of the study

The current study may contribute in:

- Helping EFL first-year secondary stage students to be aware of the errors that they commit while writing English paragraphs in order to avoid committing these errors in the future.
- Helping EFL teachers to be aware of their students' most common writing errors in order to pay more attention to these types of errors during teaching.
- Drawing the attention of teachers to use the suggested treatment (source-based writing activities) to reduce students' writing errors.
- Drawing the attention of curriculum designers and specialists to employ the suggested treatment (source-based writing activities) in the newly designed curricula of writing.

Delimitations of the study

- A sample of (70) EFL first-year secondary stage students, from Azza Zidan experimental language school- Fayoum governorate.

- Nine types of errors namely; (1) sentence mis-ordering. (2) verb tense, (3) subject-verb agreement, (4) prepositions, (5) pronoun error, (6) spelling, (7) punctuation, (8) inaccurate expressions, (9) word choice. The selection of these errors is based on the identification and classifications of the students' most frequented errors in pre- test implementation.

Definition of Terms

1. Source- based writing activities

- Wilkinson (as cited in Sejati, 2015) defined sources as the materials that are used by teachers during the teaching process to support in explaining the skill for the students, so they can understand what the teacher has explained to them easily.

For the purpose of the current study, the researcher developed the following operational definition:

Source-based writing activities are the teaching activities presented by the teacher and used by the students to facilitate acquiring writing skill. This happens by extracting the main ideas from the given input presented by the source, deriving the meaning through a comprehensive mental process, translating it into written codes(letters) and integrating the extracted message with their thoughts to finally write a well-developed paragraph (output) using their own words and expressions.

1.1. Picture sources

- Donn(as cited in Jumba, 2016) defined pictures as the tool that could be seen while the language is being learned to provide a better explanation. In addition, Sharon (as cited in Suryani, 2016) defined pictures as a flat visual representation of an object, person, or view and its main purpose is to draw attention to or emphasize a certain thing.

For the purpose of the current study, the researcher developed the following operational definition:

Picture sources are visual representations of people or places that are used during descriptive writing tasks to activate students' generative

thinking and improve the quality and quantity of their descriptive written pieces.

1.2. Sequenced-pictures sources

→ Sequenced-pictures source is a number of connected pictures that form a series of events or sequences. (Yunus, as cited in Ramadhani, 2017; Arifah, as cited in IKA, 2014).

For the purpose of the current study, the researcher developed the following operational definition:

Sequenced-pictures sources are visual representations of a process or solutions that are used during expository writing tasks in order to activate students' generative thinking and improve the quality and quantity of their expository written pieces.

1.3. Video sources

→ Video is a recording that contains audio-visual material used to show some movements or actions. (Sejati, 2015).

For the purpose of the current study, the researcher developed the following operational definition:

Video sources are visual and aural representations of sequenced events that are used during narrative writing tasks to activate students' generative thinking and improve the quality and quantity of their narrative written pieces.

1.4. Text sources

The researcher defined text sources as any type of written texts that are used during argumentative writing tasks in order to interest students, engage their minds, and help them to generate ideas relevant to the writing topics.

2. Error analysis

- In general, "Error Analysis involves identifying incorrect language forms produced both in speaking and writing" (Phetongkam , 2013, P.96).
- Crystal (as cited in Waelateh, Boonsuk, Ambele, Jeharsae, 2019) agreed with Richards and Schmidt (as cited in Mungungu, 2010) in defining error analysis as the process of examining and analysis of the errors made by foreign language learners.

→ It is a number of procedures that helps in identifying, describing, explaining learners' errors; and justifying reasons for its occurrence (Dulay, Burt & Krashen as cited in Rahmayanti, 2019; Karim, Mohamed, Ismail, Shahed, Rahman and Haque, 2018; Ellis & Barkhuizen as cited in Amiri & Puteh, 2017; Richards & Schmidt as cited in Mungungu, 2010).

For the purpose of the current study, the researcher developed the following operational definition:

Error analysis is the study of EFL students' writing errors before and after using the suggested treatment "source-based writing activities" to figure out whether the rate of errors frequencies has reduced or not

3. Frequency of errors

The researcher defined frequency of errors as the process of repeating the same linguistic errors during foreign language writing tasks.

Review of Literature

Writing plays a significant role in students' academic and social life because they can achieve the intended academic outcomes and successfully communicate with others using it. Ahamed (2016) and Sawalmeh (2013) pointed out that Arab students' achievement is shown out through their writings.

Writing is a difficult skill as it needs to make a balance between various items such as content, organization, grammar, mechanics (Al-Zahrani, 2018). Considering all these elements during writing leads most of EFL students to commit errors during writing. Othman, Phuket (2015), Dan, Duc, and Chau (2017) affirmed that most EFL students commit errors during composing away from the long period of studying English and, Rao (2018) confirmed that by stating that committing errors in the EFL classrooms is an indispensable action during the learning process.

Anyango (2018), Al-Khasawneh (2014), and Sawalmeh (2013) stated that error analysis is the study of the unacceptable language forms generated by EFL students and this helps the teacher and researchers to suggest appropriate treatment for these errors. Error analysis was first used by Stephen Pit Corder in the late of 1970s and from that

time till now it became a very common approach for describing foreign language errors (Anyango, 2018; Al-Khresheh, 2016). Error analysis is different from error correction because error analysis is concerned with identifying the errors, classifying them, and justifying the reasons for committing them, while error correction is concerned with editing or modifying errors to finally provide beneficial feedback (Hamzah, 2012).

Error and Mistake

Throughout the previous literature, it has been argued that an error and a mistake are not the same (Khatter, 2019). Most EFL teachers cannot differentiate between them although they are completely different. According to Brown (as cited in Ewie&, Williams, 2017) and Wahyuni (2014), the word “mistake” refers to the students' failure to use a known structure correctly and it often happens due to students' ignorance or misunderstanding, while the word “error is a systematic deviation from the norm or set of norms and it cannot be self-corrected; unlike the mistake which can be self-corrected by the writer easily and quickly.

Another point of view illustrated the difference between error and mistake by stating that if students usually utilize the language item correctly but they get it wrong one time then it is a mistake, but when the students use the same vocabulary wrongly or when they unconsciously misuse the language structure as a result of improper learning then they are certainly making errors (Nuruzzaman, Islam & Shuchi, 2018; Alsaahafi, 2017; Al-Khresheh, 2016; Murad& Kalil, 2015; Theodore, 2013).

Significance of Errors analysis

Students will not learn successfully until they commit errors and make good use of them. Error analysis, as Mustafa, Mohammadi (2020), Nuruzzaman, Islam, Shuchi (2018) Alsaahafi (2017), Othman, Phuket (2015), Ellis as cited in Ananda, Gani, Sahardin (2014) and Mungungu (2010) mentioned, presents a clear picture of how EFL students' writing performance develops and it shows evidence of whether students got the idea of what has been explained or not

In addition, error analysis trains teachers to identify and classify students' errors in order to suggest appropriate correction techniques later; thus, it is the best choice to enhance students' linguistic competency. Abdullah, Yunus, Hashim (2019), Lee (2019), Rao (2018), Silalahi (2015), Sawalmeh (2013) and Phettongkam (2013) agreed that students' error analysis plays a significant role in helping EFL teachers modify their teaching materials, assessments and methods. Moreover, Rahmayanti (2019), Sermsook, Liamnimitr and Pochakorn (2017) added that error analysis gives explanations about the occurrence of these errors in order to accurately reduce them. Furthermore, Zheng and Park (2013) clarified that committing error enrich the practical and theoretical aspects; theoretically, it helps in investigating the language learning process and practically it suggests proper treatments to reduce the occurrence of these errors.

EFL Writing and Frequency of Errors Sources

Rahmayanti (2019), Al-Sahafi (2017), Phettongkam (2013), Mungungu (2010), Al-Buainain (2009), and Al-Buainain (2007) agreed on the following as the main sources of frequency of errors:

1- Interference Errors:

Richards (as cited in Othman & Phuket, 2015) stated that this usually happens because of students' mother language. It occurs when the students use their mother tongue to express their ideas in the second language. It is also called Interlingual errors.

2- Intralingual Errors

Intralingual errors occur because of students' inadequate knowledge in one language; usually the second language (Al-Khresheh, 2016). This kind of error is not affected by the mother tongue; it happens because of improper methods of teaching or because of students' incompetency in the second language (Sawalmeh, 2013). Rahmayanti (2019) indicated that these errors have three classifications namely; overgeneralization errors, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules.

3- Developmental Errors

Developmental errors reflect students' proficiency in the foreign language. It often occurs when the students' ability does not reach the understanding of particular grammar rules so they will attempt to build up their own rules.

- 4- Al-Buainain (2007) added a fourth source of errors under the title of "others" and this source involves any errors committed by EFL learners and do not fit under any other categories.

Errors frequency is considered to be a type of error fossilization. Richards and Schmidt (as cited in Al-Jamal, 2017, p. 3) defined error fossilization as "the process which occurs when incorrect linguistic features become a permanent part of the way a person speaks or writes a language". In addition, Vázquez (as cited in Reyes, 2019) indicated that error fossilization usually occurs due to some psychological factors such as weak linguistic attention or paying more concern towards the content than the form.

Classification of EFL Writing Errors

Errors classifications are various; Richard and Platt (as cited in Phetongkam , 2013) and Ferris (as cited in Darus, Maasum, Stapa, Omar & Ab Aziz, 2007) classified writing errors into 1) Grammar or structure errors, 2) Lexical errors, and 3) Style errors. Here is the classification of each type of error in detail

1- Grammar errors:

Well-structured grammar is an indispensable element in order to produce well-composed pieces (Sadiah& Royani, 2019). Atashian and Al-Bahri (2018) mentioned that grammar is considered to be the main obstacle that faces EFL students, especially secondary stage students. Rahmayanti (2019) classified grammar errors as the following: omission of grammatical morphemes, double marking of semantic features, use of irregular rules, use of wrong word forms, alternating use of two or more forms, and disordering.

2- Lexical errors:

Lexical errors are the most frequent ones in the EFL classrooms and it is also considered to be the most irritating ones because it hinders

comprehensive communication (Hamdi, 2016). These errors can be exemplified in inaccurate word choice, wrong word-formation, or even inaccurate expressions.

3- Style errors:

Style errors are the ones that appear in the final production of the sentence, they appear in punctuation, capitalization or sentence structure errors. Though they appear to be simple, they might hinder comprehension if used improperly.

Approaches to error analysis

Ewie, Williams (2017) and Mungungu (2010) pointed out that there are four approaches for analyzing errors namely; contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH), Error analysis, Interlanguage analysis (IA) and the Contrastive rhetoric (CR).

Firstly, the contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) focuses on the comparison between two languages. It, also, examines the effect of the first on a second language and whether it facilitates or hinders acquiring it. Also, it focuses on the comparison of the linguistic items between the two languages. Al-Khresheh (2016) clarified that the main criticism of this approach is that interlingual interference from the first language is not the only reason for the occurrence of errors in second language acquisition. Secondly, contrastive rhetoric is the study of how the students' L1 culture affects acquiring L2. Thirdly, interlanguage is the language produced by EFL students during the process of learning the language. Interlanguage means two things: the student's system at a single point in time in learning the L2 and the range of interlocking systems that characterize the development of students L2 over time. Finally, error analysis (EA) is the approach that focuses on analyzing errors committed in one language only, particularly the second language. Rana, Sohail, Naz (2016) , Ananda, Gani and Sahardin (2014) stated that error analysis is the development of contrastive analysis which is established as a trial to understand the nature of students' errors during learning language. It was found that (CA) was unable to predict students' errors and this shortcoming led to the birth of (EA).

The process of error analysis

The process of error analysis involves four main steps which are: a collection of the written works, identification, description and explanation of errors (Anyango, 2018). Firstly, the teacher starts by collecting the written pieces from his students, secondly, he starts reading the written texts to identify what is right and what is wrong through underlying the incorrect items, after that he describes the types of errors to classify them under different categories (such as grammar errors, mechanics errors, lexical errors ...), finally he explains the main reasons for committing these errors from a practical point of view (Amiri & Puteh, 2017). Terzioğlu, Bostanci (2020), Sermsook, Liamnimitr, Pochakorn (2017) and Alshafi (2017) on the other hand, added "evaluation of errors" as a fifth step for the process of error analysis.

Challenges of error analysis

Alshafi (2017) summarized a number of limitations for applying error analysis in the EFL learning contexts. Firstly, it is known that error analysis concentrates only on students' errors and this is completely frustrating as this provides an incomplete picture of the learning process because it ignores what students can do and highlights what they cannot do Mungungu (2010). In addition, it is also argued that students might avoid using some of the second language forms, structures or vocabularies and error analysis cannot account for this avoidance; it only focuses on what the student produces. Another criticism includes the disability to determine the main source or cause of the error because such errors happen due to different factors that differ from one student to another.

Source based-writing activities

Wilkinson (as cited in Sejati, 2015) defined sources as the materials that are used by teachers during the teaching process to assist in delivering the skill for the students, so they can understand what the teacher has explained to them easily. Sources can be a single picture, sequenced pictures, videos or texts.

Writing, as a productive skill, requires creativity, imagination, and critical thinking; thus, teachers have to use various materials that

attract the students' interest and evoke them to work hard in order to acquire the target skill. Using sources is the best choice to stimulate learners' creativity, imagination and critical thinking as using them in the educational context creates a stress-free learning context and makes it more interesting for acquiring the writing skill.

The importance of these sources in language teaching and learning has been extensively acknowledged. The use of different teaching materials (pictures, videos, and different kinds of texts...), as instructional sources, is considered to be a proper solution that stimulates acquiring foreign language more easily because students become more independent with the help of good teaching material (Ahmed, 2017). These materials allow more time in the EFL classrooms to focus on the students- centred approach rather than the teacher-centred-approach. Unlike, the traditional learning environment in which students feel very bored and as a result, they lose their motivation towards acquiring the skill. Thus, it is vital for the teacher to provide teaching aids that facilitate the teaching and learning process and stimulate students' desires towards learning.

Singh, Mei, Abdullah, Othman, and Mostafa (2017) emphasized that using educational sources is one of the best ways to improve students writing performance because this engages students in classroom discussion and creates a motivating atmosphere for learning so that they would feel totally enthusiastic towards completing their paragraphs. Unlike the traditional writing tasks in which students are required to write about topics that they have not been exposed to formerly, and this makes them commit a lot of errors in addition to suffering from mental blocks because they have no ideas to write and do not know the correct way of using linguistic items. Using different sources such as videos, pictures and texts gives learners brief ideas about these unfamiliar topics; leading them to support their paragraphs with relevant details about these topics in an easy way and making them avoid committing errors because their concentration will be on the language structure, rather than the content.

Simply, reducing students' errors and encouraging them to be engaged in the writing tasks could not be achieved without creating a

stress-free learning context and staying away from the traditional types of activities. Thus, if the teacher uses attractive sources during writing tasks, students will commit fewer errors.

Frequency of Errors and Source based-writing activities

Using educational sources during writing tasks engages students in the writing task and makes them commit fewer errors. Sources are expected to reduce the students' writing errors because writing with the help of the provided source enriches students' minds with proper content to write, thus their concentration would only be on the grammatical and lexical quality of their writing. Unlike the traditional writing tasks in which students' minds become completely blocked because of problems related to generating relevant content and writing an-error-free paragraphs; as a result, students feel distracted to pay attention to all these items and they commit errors.

Using different sources during writing tasks will help students to avoid such confusion and focus their concentration on the grammatical and lexical quality of their writing. Chamba, Reinoso and Rengifo (2019) confirmed this by stating that using sources during writing tasks has positive effects on EFL students because it helps them produce better language; this means that the produced written language would be free of errors because the main focus will be on the quality of the written piece away from the content that students have already derived from the source.

Method

1- Study participants:

The participants were native Arabic speakers who learn English as a foreign language. They were about (70) students at the first-year secondary stage from Azza Zidan experimental language school, Fayoum governorate. They were all in the same age group and they have studied English for at least 9 years before joining this stage.

The reason for choosing first-year secondary stage students was due to the fact that most of them are about to join the higher education (university stage) after two years; therefore, their English writing has

to be enhanced, using the suggested teaching activities, before enrolling this stage.

2- Data collection and analysis

A corpus of (6) texts, written by (70) EFL first-year secondary stage students, were collected and analyzed for the current study. These students were asked to write about (6) different paragraphs (of different genres; narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative), after that these written texts were collected from them and analyzed to calculate their frequency of errors. Errors were analyzed following Corder's (1967) model (as cited in Zheng and Park (2013). According to Corder the process of error analysis involves four steps namely; collection, identification, description/classification and explanation of errors. These are the study procedures that were followed.

3- Instruments:

The instrument used for this study was participants' written paragraphs in the English language; (6) paragraphs (of different genres; narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative) were collected from the students (total of (6) texts per student) throughout one semester (1st semester) and they were analyzed to determine the most frequent errors and whether their number has reduced after using the suggested treatment (source-based writing activities) or not.

3.1. Construction of the test

The writing performance test (Appendix"B") aimed at assessing students' writing performance and investigating their frequency of errors. The test was used as a pre and post one. For constructing the test the researcher:

- Reviewed previous literature related to testing writing performance of adolescent EFL students.
- Reviewed some international tests designed to test the writing performance of EFL students. These tests are like the ILETS and TOEFL tests.
- Re-examined the training program, its objectives and activities to identify the skills included.

3.2. Objectives of the writing test

This test was used as a pre-test to identify students' writing performance and to ensure that the two groups are at the same level. This pre-test was also used as a post-test to measure the experimental group students' writing performance and to investigate the impact of using source-based writing activities on reducing students' frequency of errors.

3.3. Instructions of the test

Test instructions were clear and simple so that students can understand them easily. The instructions asked students to read each question carefully before starting to answer. The time assigned for the test is (120) minutes. The total mark assigned for the test is (175) marks.

3.4. Content of the test

The test comes into two parts:

Part one: is composed of four questions to assess students' ability to write in different genres (narrative- descriptive- expository and argumentative paragraphs). Students were asked to complete a certain paragraph with one of its main components, namely; (introduction, supporting details, or conclusion) using their own words.

Part two: is composed of two questions to assess students' ability to write whole text composition of different writing genres (narrative-descriptive- expository and argumentative paragraphs).

3.5. Validity of the test

To ensure the validity of the pre- posttest, the researcher submitted it to a group of EFL specialists (Appendix"A") to judge its items concerning the following:

1. Suitability of the test items to students' level.
2. Suitability of each test item to measure the skill it is designed for.
3. Suitability of the test as a whole to its intended goal (assessing writing performance).
4. Clarity of the test instructions and statements.

Some modifications were done according to the suggestions of the jury members. For example, three of them suggested changing the title of all question items into a simpler and briefer language so as to fit the students' level. Another group of jury members suggested changing the writing topic of the third question to another one that is more suitable for the participants' levels.

3.6. Reliability of the test

In order to establish the reliability of the writing performance test of the current study, a pilot test was administered to a randomly selected sample of (30) students from Azza Zidan experimental language school, Fayoum governorate. This pilot test was administered one week before implementing the proposed training program by the date of (17/10/2020). Two raters (the researcher and another rater) calculated the students' frequency of errors. Each rater gave a score, then a mean score was given. Cronbach's Alfa formula was used to estimate the writing test reliability. The reliability of the test was found to be (0.962); which is a high level of reliability.

Table (1)
The reliability of the writing test using Cronbach's Alfa

M	Writing performance skills	Reliability
1	Topic sentence	0.709
2	Supporting details	0.811
3	Concluding sentence	0.798
4	Setting a beginning, middle and an end to the text	0.815
5	Transition words	0.777
6	Grammatical skills	0.761
7	Word choice skills	0.681
	Total	0.962

3.7. Internal consistency of the test

The internal consistency of the test was measured by calculating the correlation between the marks of the writing skills and the total mark

obtained from the pilot test. The researcher used SPSS analysis, version (21), and the correlations were as the following:

Writing performance skills	Correlation with total
Topic sentence	0.691**
Supporting details	0.856**
Concluding sentence	0.759**
Setting a beginning, middle and an end to the text	0.969**
Transition words	0.983**
Grammatical skills	0.971**
Word choice skills	0.977**
Writing mechanics	0.969**

*The sign (**) means that the skill is significant at (0.01)*

It was clear from the above table that the correlation between writing skills and the total mark of the writing test (of the pilot study) ranged from (0.691: 0.983) and all these correlations are statistically significant at (0.01). This shows the internal reliability of the writing performance test.

3.8. Timing of the test

After piloting the pre—posttest, the researcher specified the time needed for answering the test by adding the time taken by the first student finishing the test and the time taken by the last one, and dividing the whole time by two. The average time needed for answering the test was (120) minutes.

4- Findings and Discussion

4.1. Statistical analysis

In this section, the researcher presents the results of the study. The results are displayed in a way that provides answers for the study questions; namely:

- What is the impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL secondary stage students' frequency of errors?

- What are the most common writing errors committed by EFL first-year secondary stage students?
- How frequently do writing errors occur in the first year secondary stage students' written paragraphs?
- Is there a statistically significant difference between the mean frequency of errors of the experimental group students who use the source-based writing activities and that of their control group peers who do not receive such activities?

4.1.1. Groups equivalence (Results of the pre-testing):

A comparison was made between the results of the control and experimental groups after implementing the pre-writing-test to identify the rate of error frequencies for each group. The comparison revealed no significant difference between experimental and control groups' frequencies. The frequencies of errors of the two groups, during the pre-writing-test, are displayed in the table below.

Errors	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T-Value	Sig.
Grammatical errors	<i>Experimental</i>	35	12.91	2.58	0.6	Non Sig.
	<i>Control</i>	35	13.29	2.53		
Writing mechanics errors	<i>Experimental</i>	35	6.57	1.82	0.35	Non Sig.
	<i>Control</i>	35	6.43	1.60		
Lexical errors	<i>Experimental</i>	35	4.60	1.42	0.31	Non Sig.
	<i>Control</i>	35	4.49	1.70		
Total	<i>Experimental</i>	35	24.09	3.62	0.14	Non Sig.
	<i>Control</i>	35	24.20	3.26		

It becomes clear from table (3) that the results of the calculated t-value is less than the values given in statistical tables for each writing error and for the total sum. And this shows that there was no statistically significant difference between the error frequencies of the control and experimental group in the pre-writing test, for each writing error and for the total sum. These results affirmed that the two groups are equivalent from the beginning.

4.1.2. Most frequent errors in students' writings

Table (4)
The number of the most frequent errors between students of the control and experimental group (pre-test)

Classification	Item No	Type of Error	No. of Error in the pre-test of the two groups	
Grammatical errors	1	Sentence mis-ordering	185	(control: 91 -experimental 94)
	2	Plural suffix-s	60	-
	3	Verb tense	234	(control: 113 -experimental 121)
	4	Subject verb agreement	195	(control: 115 -experimental 80)
	5	Pronoun error	121	(control: 56 –experimental:65)
	6	Singular/plural	100	-
	7	Adverb	65	-
	8	Adjectives	77	-
	9	Prepositions	182	(control: 90 -experimental: 92)
Writing mechanics	10	Spelling	265	(control: 130 – experimental:135)
	11	Punctuation	190	(control: 95 – experimental: 95)
Lexical errors	12	Inaccurate expressions	172	(control: 86- experimental:86)
	13	Word choice	146	(control: 71 – experimental: 75)
	14	Articles	98	-

As shown in table (4) above it becomes clear that the most frequent errors that students of the control and experimental groups committed are: sentence mis-ordering, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, pronoun error, prepositions, spelling, punctuation, inaccurate expressions, and word choice.

4.1.3. Results of the hypotheses:

Results of the first hypothesis stated that:

“There is a statistically significant difference in the frequencies of errors produced by the control and experimental groups in the post-implementation of writing performance test (after using source- based writing activities)”.

For testing the first hypothesis, the researcher calculated (t) value to find out the difference between error frequencies of the control and experimental group in the post-implementation of the writing test.

The table below (5) shows the t-value and its significance in the control and experimental groups' post-writing-test.

Group	N	Mean	St. dv.	Df	T-Value in Table		T-Value	Sig.	Effect size (d)
					0.05	0.01			
<i>Experimental</i>	35	14.69	3.08	68	1.99	2.64	9.30	0.01	2.26
<i>Control</i>	35	22.86	4.19						

Table (5) shows that the mean of error frequencies of the experimental group during the-post writing test was (14.69), which is lower than that obtained by the control group (22.86). The calculated t-value was (9.30), which is higher than the values given in statistical tables at (0.05) significance level (1.99) and at (0.01) level (2.64) at (68) degree of freedom. So, there was a statistically significant difference at 0.01 level, in favor of the experimental group. The effect size was (2.26), which affirms the large impact of using source-based writing activities on reducing participants' frequencies of errors. That is, the first hypothesis of the study was rejected. Reducing experimental group students' frequencies of errors is illustrated in the figure below.

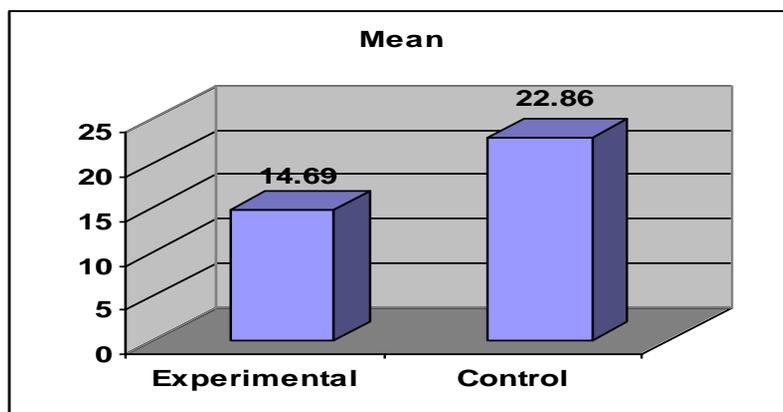


Figure (1) the result of testing the first hypothesis

In addition, the researcher measured the t-value of errors frequencies to differentiate between the rate of frequencies in the control and experimental groups during the post-implementation of the writing test; the obtained data was as the following:

Writing performance skills	Group	N	Mean	St. dv.	T-Value	Sig.	Effect size (d)
Grammatical errors	<i>Experimental</i>	35	8.03	2.20	7.39	0.01	1.79
	<i>Control</i>	35	12.37	2.69			
Mechanical errors	<i>Experimental</i>	35	3.54	1.56	6.33	0.01	1.53
	<i>Control</i>	35	6.03	1.72			
Lexical errors	<i>Experimental</i>	35	3.11	1.59	3.75	0.01	0.91
	<i>Control</i>	35	4.46	1.40			

Table (6) shows that the calculated t-value was higher than the values given in the statistical table. It, also, shows that the effect size was higher than (0.08) for each frequency of error and this proved that there was a statistically significant difference in the frequencies of errors produced by the control and experimental groups in the post-implementation of the writing performance test (after using source-based writing activities) in favor of the experimental group. The rate of error frequencies of the control and experimental group is illustrated in the figure below.

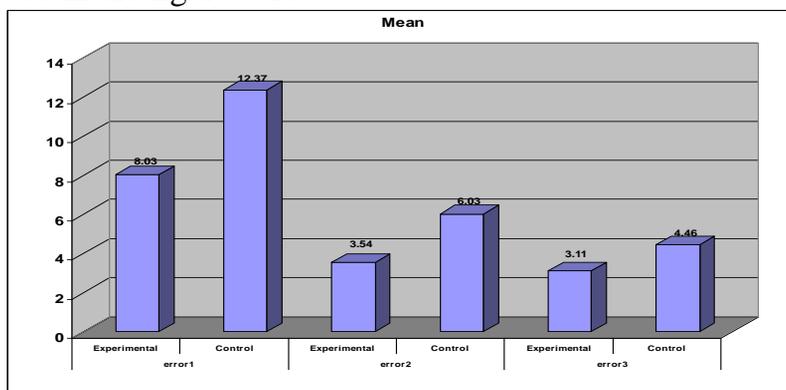


Figure (2) frequencies of errors in the control and experimental group

The following table (7) indicates the difference between the averages of errors frequencies in two groups for each writing error (in the post-test):

	Control		Experimental	
	No. of Error	Average	No. of Error	Average
Sentence mis-ordering	89	2.5	49	1.4
Verb tense	113	3.2	86	2.5
Subject verb agreement	79	2.3	53	1.5
Prepositions	86	2.5	59	1.7
Pronoun error	66	1.9	34	0.97
Spelling	121	3.5	67	1.9
Punctuation	90	2.6	57	1.6
Inaccurate expressions	85	2.4	61	1.8
Word choice	71	2.02	48	1.7
Average	800	22.8	514	14.6

Testing the Second hypothesis:

The Second hypothesis stated that:

“There is a statistically significant difference in the frequencies of errors produced by the experimental group in the pre and post-implementation of writing performance test (after using source-based writing activities)”.

For testing the second hypothesis, the researcher calculated (t) value to find out the difference between errors frequencies of the experimental group in the pre and post-implementation of the writing test. The table below (8) shows the t-value and its significance in the pre and post-implementation of the writing performance test.

Att.	N	Mean	St. dv.	Df	T-Value in Table		T-Value	Sig.	Effect size (d)
					0.05	0.01			
<i>Pre</i>	35	24.09	3.62	34	2.02	2.70	10.99	0.01	3.77
<i>Post</i>	35	14.69	3.08						

Table (8) shows that the experimental group frequencies of errors in the post-writing test were (14.69), which is lower than that obtained by the pre-test (24.09). The calculated t-value was (10.99), which is higher than the values given in statistical tables at (0.05) significance level (2.02) and at (0.01) level (2.70) at (34) degree of freedom. So, there was a statistically significant difference at (0.01) level, in favor of the post-implementation of the writing test. The effect size was (3.77), and this affirms the large impact of using source-based writing activities on reducing experimental group participants' frequencies of errors. That is, the second hypothesis of the study was rejected. Reducing experimental group students' frequencies of errors is illustrated in the figure below.

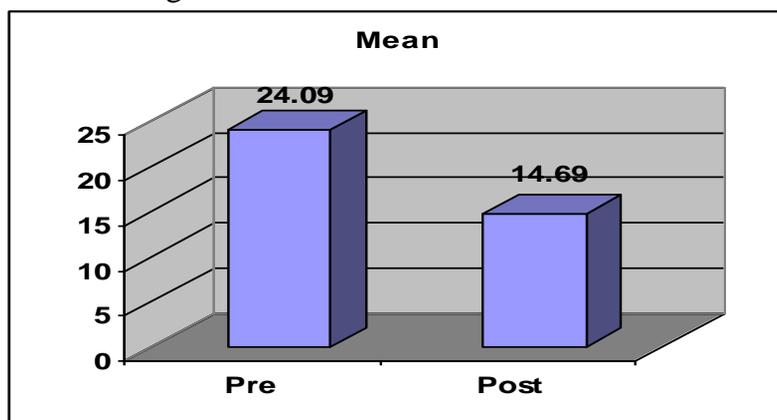


Figure (3) the result of testing the second hypothesis

In addition, the researcher measured the t-value of errors frequencies to differentiate between the rate of error frequencies in the pre and post writing test of the experimental group the obtained data was as the following:

Writing performance skills	Att.	N	Mean	St. dv.	T-Value	Sig.	Effect size (d)
Grammatical errors	Pre	35	12.91	2.58	7.85	0.01	2.69

Table (9)
Results (of frequencies of errors) obtained by the experimental group in the pre and post implementation of the writing performance test

Writing performance skills	Att.	N	Mean	St. dv.	T-Value	Sig.	Effect size (d)
	<i>Post</i>	35	8.03	2.20			
Mechanical errors	<i>Pre</i>	35	6.57	1.82	7.48	0.01	2.57
	<i>Post</i>	35	3.54	1.56			
Lexical errors	<i>Pre</i>	35	4.60	1.42	4.02	0.01	1.38
	<i>Post</i>	35	3.11	1.59			

Table (9) shows that the calculated the t-value was higher than the values given in the statistical table. It, also, shows that the effect size was higher than (0.08) for each type of error and this proved that there was a statistically significant difference in the frequencies of errors produced by the experimental groups in the pre and post-implementation of writing performance test (after using source-based writing activities)". The following shape indicates that:

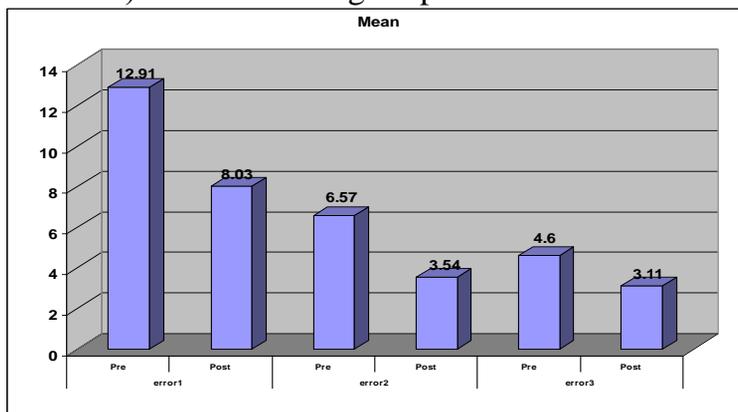


Figure (4) frequencies of errors in the experimental group pre-post writing test

Below a comparison in table (10) between the averages of error frequencies during the pre and post-test of the experimental group, it becomes clear that using the suggested treatment (source-based writing activities) during teaching writing reduces students' frequency of errors. Using such kinds of activities reduces students' frequencies of errors in the following items: sentence mis-ordering, verb tense,

subject-verb agreement, prepositions, pronoun error, spelling, punctuation, inaccurate expressions, and word choice.

Table (10)
Comparison between the averages of error frequencies in the pre and post-test of the experimental group:

	Pre- test		Post-test	
	No. of Error	Average	No. of Error	Average
Sentence mis-ordering	94	2.7	49	1.4
Verb tense	121	3.5	86	2.5
Subject verb agreement	80	2.3	53	1.5
Prepositions	92	2.6	59	1.7
Pronoun error	65	1.8	34	0.97
Spelling	135	3.8	67	1.9
Punctuation	95	2.7	57	1.6
Inaccurate expressions	86	2.5	61	1.8
Word choice	75	2.1	48	1.7
Average	843	24.09	514	14.6

4.2. Discussion

The present study aimed at investigating the impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL secondary stage students' frequency of errors. The results of the study indicated that the rate of error frequencies of the experimental group is less than the rate of the control group. Thus, the significant enhancement that occurred in the experimental group was probably due to the influence of teaching students according to the source-based writing activities program. Utilizing these sources (whether one picture, sequenced pictures, videos or texts) enhanced the quality and quantity of students' writing and reduced their frequencies of errors.

The results of the study revealed that students' most frequent errors are represented in items like sentence mis-ordering, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, prepositions, pronoun error, spelling, punctuation inaccurate expressions, and word choice. These results come in line with the previous results such as (Nuruzzaman, Islam, Shuchi, 2018; Seitova, 2016; Murad, 2015; Sawalmeh, 2013)

who stated that EFL students' writing errors are many but the most frequent errors occur in the previous linguistic items.

Also, the results of the current study affirmed the results of Anwar and Ahmed (2016) who declared that the traditional activities used in teaching writing do not result in any improvement in students' writing performance and the students' learning of the writing skills depends on the teachers' approaches to teach the writing skills, thus he has to select the most appropriate activities, approaches and techniques that best suit their needs and levels. And this was the main goal that the current study has achieved.

The study of Anh (2019) displayed the most common errors that EFL students commit during writing tasks and they are represented in lack of vocabulary, the limited knowledge of grammar. Anah affirmed that these errors are affected by various factors such as the used materials, the teaching methods and presented activities thus; developing the previously mentioned factors positively affects students' writing. This is totally consistent with the results of the current study that showed that EFL first-year secondary stage students' most common writing errors are (9) errors and lack of vocabulary and the limited knowledge of grammar are two of them; teachers' updated method of teaching and enjoyable activities help in reducing these types of errors.

Also, the results proved that using source-based writing activities helps students to choose proper and expressive vocabularies that suit the content of their paragraph and it also helps them to use accurate grammar with few or no errors. This is in accordance with the results reached by other researchers such as Sianna, Ramlah and Salasiah (2018) who stated that using sources such as (videos) before writing tasks helped students to decide upon the most appropriate words that best express their content and to use the correct grammatical structure that represents the tense of their written texts.

Furthermore, the results also showed that using source-based writing activities helped students to use correct writing mechanics, thus the written sentences become clearer and meaningful; there is no ambiguity in the sentences. This is consistent with the results reached

by other researchers such as Habibi, Salleh and Singh (2015) who confirmed that text sources improve students' use of writing mechanics (i.e. punctuation, capitalization and spelling).

The results of the current study go in line with Navidinia , Ozhan and Younesi (2019) who affirmed that the experimental group outperformed the control group after using pictures as a teaching source during writing classrooms, students of the experimental group could write more words, had fewer grammatical errors and used more cohesive devices compared to the control one in the post-test.

Moreover, the results of the current study go in line with the results of Baso (2016) who confirmed that using sequenced- pictures as a source during teaching writing enriches students' mind with various ideas to be written in addition to reducing their frequencies of committing errors especially in the errors related to grammar and word choice.

In addition, the results are inconsistent with Singh, Jageer, Razak and Ravinthar (2017) who stated that focusing on writing stages during writing reduces students' writing errors. This highlights the importance of using source-based writing activities that mainly focuses on the main stages of writing in a trial to produce a well-developed written copy at the end.

From the results above it becomes obvious that using source-based writing activities has a positive impact on students' frequencies of errors. In other words, using source-based writing activities during English writing classes reduces students' frequency of errors and improves their writing performance.

Based on the previous analysis of data, it could be concluded that the proposed program (source-based writing activities) was effective in reducing students' frequency of errors. This enhancement could be attributed to the study program with its activities that provided students with beneficial and comprehensive instruction on how to use different sources during writing tasks. Thus, reducing students' frequencies of errors during writing tasks could be attributed to the following:

- Source-based writing activities created a stress-free learning environment that duplicates students' concentration during writing and decreases the times of committing errors.
- The activities' main focus was to encounter students with various sources like texts, videos, and pictures and this encouraged them to write freely and accurately most of the time.
- The feedback after each activity was not only the responsibility of the teacher, but it was also the responsibility of the students themselves as well. Peers feedback helped a lot to increase students' awareness and lessen the times of repeating the common errors.
- The evaluation procedures followed in the study program helped students gain insights into their strengths and weaknesses.

From the discussion presented above, it becomes clear that the findings of the current study provide clear evidence about the positive impact of the program based on source-based writing activities in reducing EFL first-year secondary stage students' frequencies of errors. Thus, the researcher proved that the study program (source-based writing activities) made clear progress in the quality and quantity of students' written production.

Recommendations for Improving the Teaching of English and Students' Writing

English language teachers should utilize better approaches, activities and methods during teaching writing in order to improve students' writing skills. They should provide students with several useful writing activities and techniques that would assist in promoting their English writing sub-skills. Additionally, they should select the most enjoyable and attractive ways for teaching to create stress-free learning contexts for students to participate in the class activities. In order to achieve this, teachers must be well-trained in identifying students' writing errors and they must have the ability to use effective teaching strategies and activities that best treat these linguistic deficiencies. Also, they must focus on the techniques that highly

concentrate on the writing process and students- centered-approach to help students self-edit their writings and avoid committing errors. Furthermore, teachers should expose their students to authentic writing tasks that will help them expand their vocabulary and write well-organized, reasonably cohesive essays.

Finally, the researcher recommends studying the following:

- Investigating the impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL students' speaking errors.
- Investigating the impact of using source-based writing activities on FEL students of the other stages: primary, preparatory and higher stages.
- Investigating the impact of using source-based writing activities on FEL students' writing fluency.

Conclusion

The current study aimed at investigating the impact of using source-based writing activities on EFL secondary stage students' frequency of errors. The findings of the present study revealed that the students committed several writing errors represented in the following items: sentence mis-ordering, verb tense, subject-verb agreement, prepositions, pronoun error, spelling, punctuation, inaccurate expressions, and word choice. Thus, first-year secondary stage students faced different problems during using the basic rules of the English language. In addition, this study shed light on the importance of Error Analysis in order to identify the writing errors, pay attention to these errors during teaching writing and enable teachers to choose the most proper techniques during teaching writing. Finally, the findings of the current study provide clear evidence about the positive impact of source-based writing activities on enhancing EFL first-year secondary stage students' writing performance and reducing their frequency of errors.

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Appendices
Appendix (A)
List of the jury members

NO	Name	Degree	Place
1	Prof. Asmaa Ghanim Ghaith	Professor Emerita of curricula and EFL instruction.	Ain Shams University
2	Prof. Awatef Ali Shoer	Professor Emerita of curricula and EFL instruction	Cairo university
3	Prof. Zainab Ali Mohammad El-Naggar	Professor Emerita of curricula and EFL instruction	Ain Shams University
4	Prof. Abdullah Ali Esmail	Professor of curricula and EFL instruction	Sohag University
5	Prof. Heba M. Mohamed	Professor of curricula and EFL instruction	Beni Suef University
6	Dr. Marwa Mourad Saleh	Associate Professor of curricula and EFL instruction	Fayoum University
7	Dr. Mona Ahmed Abdel-Tawab	Lecturer	Fayoum University

Appendix (B)

The final version of writing performance test

Writing performance test

Test Instructions:

Name: _____

Year: _____

Dear students, please read the following instructions carefully before you start answering the test:

1. Write your name and year in the space above.
2. Read each question carefully before you answer.
3. Answer all the questions.
4. Ask your teacher's help about any difficulty you find, if needed.
5. Total mark of the test is (175 marks).
6. Duration of the test is (120 minutes).

Instructions to the examiner

- The aim of this test is to assess students' ability to write different writing genres (narrative, descriptive, expository and argumentative texts).
- The test is divided into (2) parts.
- **Part one:** is designed to assess students' ability of writing different genres (narrative- descriptive- expository and argumentative paragraphs). They are asked to complete a certain paragraph with one of its main components, namely; (introduction, supporting details, or conclusion).
- **Part Two:** is designed to assess students' ability to write whole text composition of different writing genres (narrative- descriptive- expository and argumentative paragraphs).

Part one

1. Read and complete the following story about (A robbery tale) using your own words. **(10 Marks)**

Robbery is a distasteful deed that causes unlimited number of disasters around us; this was what happened to our neighbors last year. One day at 3.00 AM, I was sleeping in my bed, late, at night, directing my face toward the window of my room, enjoying the calm scene of streets. Suddenly, I saw a thief climbing the roof of our neighbors' home; he stood in front of their daughter's window trying to get inside her room. Then he _____

2. Read and complete the following paragraph about (My Sweet Home) using your own words. (5 Marks)

_____ . My home is located just behind the river and because of this fresh and cool air comes into our home. At evening we play in our wide yard. Our home also has a garden with many colorful flowers like rose and lily flowers. The home has three 3 main rooms; bedroom, living room, and a washroom. My mom cooks delicious foods in our kitchen and the delicious smell of the cooked food spreads out in home in a few minutes. Once in every month we have a picnic near our home because of the presence of natural harbors near about. Actually, I love my home and want to live here for my whole life.

3. Read and complete the following paragraph about (How to make a chocolate cake?) using your own words. (5 Marks)

Desserts are delicious sweet food that people prefer to have after their meals; ice cream, chocolate, pan cakes and donuts are the most popular desserts that most of us like. Chocolate cake is a favorite dessert for most of us and making it takes only five steps. Firstly, we bring _____

_____ .Finally, we have a delicious chocolate cake; eating it with a glass of milk would be a good idea that makes it more tasty.

4. Read and complete the following paragraph about (Are women equal to men at the workplace?) using your own words. (5 Marks)

People have different views about equality between women and men in the work place. Some of them think that women are less efficient than men in the work place, while others believe that women are more patient than men and this makes them more successful in the work place. In one hand, _____

_____ On the other hand, _____

_____ .To sum up, voting for or against equality between women and men in the work place is determined according to the proficiency and efficacy of each one of them.

Part two

1. Write about (Family birthday party) describing: (75 Marks)

- The person who had his/her birthday at that day (1st paragraph).
- The place of the celebration (2nd paragraph).
- How the party started and ended (3rd paragraph).

مستخلص الدراسة:

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلي الكشف عن اثر استخدام الأنشطة الكتابية المعتمدة علي المصادر علي نسبة تكرار الأخطاء لدي طلاب المرحلة الثانوية الاولي و هذا بغرض تحديد ما إذا كانت نسب الأخطاء الكتابية لديهم قلت أم لا بعد استخدام الأنشطة الكتابية المعتمدة علي المصادر. كما هدفت الدراسة ايضاً الي الكشف عن أكثر الأخطاء تكراراً بين (70) طالب من طلاب المرحلة الثانوية الاولي خلال النصف الأول من العام الدراسي 2021- 2020 و ذلك من خلال تحليل أنواع الأخطاء التي وجدت في كتاباتهم. قبل بدء استخدام برنامج الأنشطة الكتابية المعتمدة علي المصادر قامت كل من المجموعة التجريبية و المجموعة الضابطة بحل الأختبار القبلي للأداء الكتابي. بعد ذلك تم تدريس الكتابة بأستخدام المصادر المختلفة مع المجموعة التجريبية بينما درست المجموعة الضابطة الكتابة باستخدام الطريقة التقليدية. و بعد (13) جلسة تعليمية لتدريس الكتابة قامت المجموعة التجريبية و الضابطة بحل الاختبار البعدي للكتابة و ذلك بهدف قياس أثر استخدام برنامج الأنشطة الكتابية المعتمدة علي المصادر علي نسبة تكرار الأخطاء لدي طلاب المجموعتين. الأدوات المستخدمة في الدراسة الحالية هي كتابات الطلاب في الأختبار الكتابي حيث قام الطلاب بكتابة أنواع مختلفة من النصوص (السردى - الوصفى - الجدلي- التفسيري- "6" نصوص لكل طالب) . بعد ذلك تم تجميع كتابات الطلاب لتحليلها و تصنيفها. حيث تم إنشاء جدول لتوضيح أكثر الأخطاء تكراراً لدي الطلاب (صفحة 21). حيث وجد أن طلاب المرحلة الثانوية الأولى قاموا بتكرار نسب عالية من (9) انواع من الأخطاء و هي: التركيب الخاطي للجملة- أخطاء زمن الفعل- أخطاء الفعل والفاعل- أخطاء حروف الجر- أخطاء الضمائر- الأخطاء الهجائية- أخطاء علامات الترقيم- أخطاء التعابير الخاطئة و أخطاء أختيار الكلمات المناسبة. وأوضحت نتائج الاختبار البعدي للكتابة أن متوسط تكرار

الاحطاء في المجموعة التجريبية قد قل ليصل الي (14.69) علي عكس المجموعة الضابطة و التي مازال متوسط تكرار أخطائها عالياً (22.86). و بناءً علي ما تم التوصل إليه من نتائج تم اقتراح مجموعة من التوصيات للمزيد من البحث و مجموعة من المقترحات و التي من شأنها مساعدة المعلمين في تدريس الكتابة لطلاب المرحلة الثانوية.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

تكرار الأخطاء - الأنشطة الكتابية المعتمدة علي المصادر - تحليل الأخطاء