

The Impact of Using Pictures and Other Graphic Devices to Improve EFL Learners' L2 Writing Skill

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Abstract

The goal of the study was to investigate the impact of using pictures and other graphic devices to improve the writing skill of the EFL learners of the study in a language institute in Bandar Abbas. To this purpose and as an experimental method of research, two groups of learners were chosen to participate in the experiment. The population of the study was composed of two intermediate groups of EFL learners in Shokouh Language Institute in Bandar Abbas. All of the language learners, male and female ($n = 42$), made up the study population. After taking the Oxford Placement Test and drawing the result, 6 subjects whose scores fell too far from the mean were excluded from the study. The other remaining 36 ones made up the subjects of the study and were classified into two groups. The first 18 ones were randomly selected and made up the experimental group (EG) and the other 18 ones made up the control group (CG). In order to maximize the validity and reliability of the results of the study, three types of instruments were used: a placement test, pre and posttests of writing and interview to seek the attitudes of the EFL learners. Results revealed that the subjects in the EG outperformed the ones in the CG. This supports the effect of the use of pictures in the L2 writing class.

Keywords: pictures, teaching, writing, foreign language

INTRODUCTION

Visual devices are the process of establishing an association between a language and an image through the use of schematic drawings or pictures (Boers, Lind Stromberg, Littlemore, Stengers, & Eyckmans, 2008). Words are believed to entail both sensory and meaning features and both types of information can be processed and represented in human memory (Craik & Lockhart, 1972). Inclusion of pictorials in the instruction, therefore, is expected to prompt activation of the sensory attributes of the target items and in turn facilitate their retention and recall.

Using pictures and other graphic devices have had basic effect on language teaching and learning. Its use can be observed in teaching writing, vocabulary, reading and topic discussion. Reid (1987) has elaborated four main perceptual learning modalities: visual

learning (reading and studying charts), auditory learning (listening to lectures or audio tapes), kinesthetic learning (total physical involvement with a learning situation) and tactile learning (“hands-on learning”, building models or doing laboratory experiments).

Teaching writing for academic purposes usually falls under one of the following four models of organization: rhetorical pattern (form), function, process, and content. As Shin (1986) discussed, pattern centered approaches or writing with enough regard to form require the students to analyze and practice a variety of rhetorical or organizational patterns such as process analysis, classification, comparison and contrast, cause and effect and so on. The assumption for teaching and presenting these forms has been that once the student writers assimilate the rhetorical framework, they will be able to use the same patterns appropriately in future for university courses. Chastain (1988) has defined cognition as stressing the role of the mind in processing the information acquired. It states that learning is the perception, acquisition, and storage of knowledge in such a way that it becomes an active part of the individual's cognition structure. She adds that cognitive interpretation of learning assigns a central and dominant role to the mental processes that are subject to the individual's control. The individual's knowledge does not consist of conditioned behavior but of assimilated information within her cognitive resources that makes her behavior possible to control it.

Experimental research in this area has found that the effectiveness of pictorial elucidation depends on a number of factors such as the quality of the image, transparency of the figurative usage, the stage of the instructional process at which images are introduced, cognitive style of the learners and learning objectives. Boers et al (2008) report the results of three case studies where pictorials were used to elucidate the literal senses of the target words with the purpose of helping the students interpret and remember their figurative meanings. The variables examined were the stage of the instruction process at which pictorials are presented, the cognitive style of the learners and learning goals (receptive vs. productive knowledge). The time at which pictorials were introduced in the instruction process was found to have an impact on the mnemonic effectiveness of pictorial elucidation.

This paper tries to present the information about the design of the study by asking the questions and suggesting the hypothesis. It moreover focused on the objectives and goals of the study and it finally presented the definition of the important key terms and ideas. The next part will offer a comprehensive and complete discussion of the ideas and studies on the use of graphic devices in language teaching in general and teaching vocabularies in particular.

Many second-language teaching materials either ignore teaching writing effectively or do no more than getting the students produce a few simple forms on the sentence level. A similar observation has been made by Lennon (1998) who noted that teaching and learning writing has been considered something of peripheral importance. Not the required attention is given to it or in some cases teaching it is delayed to the extent that it can be taken as a forgotten skill. In the process of writing, though there are many

skills and abilities that the learners have to master if they mean to produce an acceptable piece of writing. In case they face any deficiency in this regard, they will face obstacles to improve in the skill as efficiently as possible.

Our learners have difficulties to master writing since they have had little experience to practice it in combination with these components. The traditional methods for teaching writing emphasized writing on a given topic which is introduced by the teacher. The activities were undertaken without resort to the context of teaching, or writing for a purpose. Moreover, little was done to make writing a meaningful and concrete activity. The approach of writing on a solid title looks to be boring and monotonous on the part of the teacher and the learner. The activity is neither natural nor demanding. It is subject to a lot of mismatch between the given topic and the writing. The traditional writing activity ignores the context of the activity.

The teaching procedures of using visual aids may be used extensively just as a facilitative device to help the learners feel more relaxed when they decide to write on a topic. It moreover assists them to limit their topics and write on the ideas which are concrete and observable. Since the result of the study can help teachers to employ more suitable teaching strategies, it is worth carrying out the research. Moreover, the result of the study will remove one of the basic problems of the EFL learners in Iran which is developing their writing skill and overcoming their weaknesses in writing.

THIS STUDY

One important principle that establishes a strong framework for the study is using visual devices in order to facilitate writing acquisition of EFL learners. Using pictures makes direct association between the word and ideas and its external, concrete manifestation. Pictorial device is a process of stimulating an association between a language and an image through the use of schematic drawings or pictures. Boers et al (2008) as a principle believe that learning writing entail both sensory and meaning features and both types of information can be processed and represented in human memory (Craik & Lockhart, 1972). Inclusion of pictorials in the instruction, therefore, is expected to prompt activation of the sensory attributes of the target items and in turn facilitate their retention and recall. The benefits of effective use of pictures and other visual devices have been found to be useful to the learners when pictures preceded verbal input and were used to stimulate active cognitive involvement of the learners when learners are asked to use pictorial clues to hypothesize about the figurative meaning of the target words and less prominent when images are presented together with verbal explanations. Overall, pictorial elucidation could be an effective mnemonic technique for the purpose of retention of word meaning and writing purposes especially for learners who are high imagers (i.e. individuals whose cognitive style shows a predisposition for thinking in mental pictures).

The first objective is proving and supporting the effective use of graphic devices and pictures as facilitative devices in the course of teaching the learners to write descriptive writings. It moreover aims at supporting the idea that using pictures and other graphic

devices can motivate the learners to write with motivation and lengthier pieces of writings.

To carry out the study, first the following two questions are raised:

- 1) To what extent can pictures and other graphic devices improve the writing ability of the EFL learners?
- 2) What is the attitude of the EFL learners on the use of pictures and other graphics?

METHOD

The goal of the study was to investigate the impact of using pictures and other graphic devices to improve the writing skill of the EFL learners of the study in a language institute in Bandar Abbas. To this purpose and as an experimental method of research, two groups of learners were chosen to participate in the experiment. To meet the qualities of a true experimental method, the researcher had to meet certain qualities: sampling and randomization, instrumentation, pre and post testing, data analysis procedures and analysis of the achieved data. This chapter presents the information about each part separately.

Participants

The population of the study was composed of two intermediate groups of EFL learners in Shokouh Language Institute in Bandar Abbas. All of the language learners, male and female of about 42, made up the study population. To ensure the homogeneity of the subjects, Oxford Placement Test was used for this purpose. After taking the test and drawing the result, 6 subjects whose scores fell too far from the mean were excluded from the study. The other remaining 36 ones made up the subjects of the study and were classified into two groups. The first 18 ones were randomly selected and made up the experimental group (EG) and the other 18 ones made up the control group (CG). They aged from 15 to 21. Since these learners had already studied in the same institute and received almost the same type of instruction for several terms, with the same material, they were taken to be similar in English knowledge on writing. However, the placement test put them into unified and homogeneous groups.

Instrumentation

For this study three types of instruments were used. In order to maximize the validity and reliability of the results of the study, it was decided to utilize more than one method of gathering data, something that according to chosen, Manion & Morision (2000) is defined as triangulation technique. They defined triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behavior. Other researchers have also emphasized on the importance of triangulation that promotes the reliability of data, for instance they believed that a study's validity is much more

enhanced when the result is supported by data collected from a number of different instruments.

The first instrument was using Oxford Placement test as a device to homogenize the population of the study. It is a test of grammar, vocabulary and short reading activities and appear in multiple-choice forms. This gives a high reliability to the scoring of the tests.

The second instrument was implementing two pre and posttests of writing to determine the initial level of the subjects of the study. The pretest was taken before the experiment started and the posttest after it had come to an end. The topic of both pre and posttests were the same for both groups. For the pretest, both groups were asked to write a 90-word paragraph on the topic below:

-What are the most important goals because of which you study English? Explain your reasons in not less than 90 words.

After the experiment came to an end and the treatment was exercised for the EG, the post test was taken using the topic below for both groups:

-How do you prefer to travel? In your car or by bus? Which do you prefer? Why? Explain and give your reasons not below 120 words.

Rating Policy

Since scoring writing tests are threatened by subjectivity of the scorer (Heaton, 1988; Ebam, 1989; Hamp-Lyone and Henning, 1991), to reduce this deficiency, the researcher asked two independent raters to give their judgments on the tests. The raters were experienced colleagues who had taught writing for more than five years. Therefore, any writing was rated by three scorers: two colleagues and the researcher herself.

To achieve more information about the rating policy of subjective tasks, we can observe the idea. The scorer does not separate the components of the writing task by classifying them into the areas of form, structure, choice of vocabulary, organization, clarity and so on. Holistic scoring calls for the reader to rate overall writing proficiency on a single rating scale. In other words, it evaluates the whole text, not sum of its part. Although the method suffers from some pitfalls, if applied correctly and cautiously, it can prove valid and reliable indication of scoring procedure of compositions.

One recent method of scaling writing as introduced by Hamp-Lyons and Henning (1991) is incorporating a multiple-trait scoring procedure. In this method, the priority of scoring is given to six categories of communicative quality, linguistic accuracy, organization, argumentation, interestingness, referencing, and linguistic appropriacy. The analysis is applied to determine 1) the differences in writing ability of sample members, 2) the comparative difficulties of scalar categories, 3) the comparative size of the intervals of the latent ability-difficulty continuum circumscribed by scale score steps assigned to performance denoted by the associated ability descriptors, and 4) the probabilities of assignment of each of the score levels (Hamp-Lyone and Henning,

1991). This method of scoring benefits from the obvious advantage that it taps both the construct validity and reliability of the scoring procedure. The impression method of marking entails one or more markers awarding a single mark (= multiple marking) based on the total impression of the compositions as a whole. As it is possible for the composition to appeal to a certain reader but not to another, it is largely a matter of luck whether a single examiner likes a pieces of writing or not. There is no doubt regarding the crucial role of writing skill for Iranian EFL learners since the learners need to deal with English writing in their lives, for example as a project assignment, or writing occupational request. The Iranian EFL learners, who are not instructed in terms of the writing skill, are often lag behind their language-majority peers in dealing with writing assignments and this issue influences their progress in their majors, since this gap remains with them throughout their lives (Pishkar, 2015). Impression marks must be based on impression only, and the whole procedure will fail as soon as the examiner begins to reconsider marks and or analyze the compositions. This is faster, and if any composition is scored by three or four scorers, the scores are found to be more reliable than the scores awarded by one analytic marker. This method is obviously preferable if enough scorers are available and cooperate. This is the marking method used for this study.

The impression method was used for this study as it was necessary to focus on writing as a whole. It consists of an attempt to view the writing and its components as a whole, not as distinct and isolated parts. Such a procedure is suited to the classroom situation where the learners try to produce a piece of writing in group or in pairs. To score the writings of the subjects both for the pre and posttest, three experienced scorers put their judgments on the writings and mark them using impression method. The same scoring procedure was repeated for the posttest too. See appendix for the given marks by the three scorers (Pishkar, 2015).

The third instrument was using interview as a device to seek the attitude of the learners of the study on the use of graphic devices in the writing class. The goal of including interview as a device was seeking the attitudes of the study subjects. To this purpose, the following four questions were designed based on the ideas of colleagues and the researcher's experience. After modifying the questions, the participants were asked to given their responses to the following four ones:

1. Did you enjoy using graphics and other devices provided for you in the writing class?
2. Did you notice any basic differences between this approach used in your language class and the ones you had experienced before?

Design of the study

The researcher tried to meet the necessary conditions for this kind of study. According to Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen (2010), a quantitative research uses objective measurement to gather numeric data that are used to answer questions or test

predetermined hypotheses. It generally requires a well-controlled setting. Richards and Schmidt (2002) discuss that experimental method is an approach to educational research in which an idea or hypothesis is tested or verified by setting up situations in which the relationship between different participants or variables can be determined. The plan for conducting an experimental study manipulating dependent study, started with two pre-inter groups of EFL learners in a language institute in Bandar Abbas. By inserting relevant training hints regarding learners' VAK strategies and by incorporating of autonomy in learning and the students' sensory learning strategies in their courses, the syllabus designers can make the learning process easier and more interesting. And learners through using their special strategies can overcome their learning difficulties. As a result, EFL teachers with relevant training motives which were inserted in appropriate parts of a course book can improve their teaching activities (Pishkar, 2013). The present quantitative research used numeric data for analyzing and answering the research questions. The dependent variable in the study was the effect of using graphs and other visual devices as facilitative tools on the writing skill of the learners, and the independent variable was the use of visual devices of the study.

Procedure

The data of the study was based on the pre and post writing scores that were offered by three independent raters on the writings that were produced by the subjects in the two groups.

Data Analysis

In order to examine the research hypotheses, the researcher used both descriptive and inferential statistics and used an independent T test to analyze the difference between the means of the two groups regarding their score on the pre and posttests. The data of the study was a combination of the pre and posttest scores. The other parameter is using coefficient of correlation in order to estimate inter-rater reliability.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

The tables below present some descriptive data about the means and standard deviation of each test and scorer separately. Each table shows the mean scores of the three scorers separately. For instance, table 1 shows the scores offered by three scorers to the CG. As it can be seen, the mean score given by the first scorer is 16.45 and it changes to 15.45 by the second scorer and finally it remains almost unchanged by the third scorer: 15.33. In other words, the scores and the means are very close and it probably benefit from a very high reliability. The total mean of the pretest for CG is 15.74.

Table 1. Pretests for CG

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Scorer 1	18	16.4500	1.41793	.31706
Scorer 2	18	15.4500	1.37793	.30811
Scorer 3	18	15.3300	1.30182	.29110
Total	54	15.74		

On the other hand, table 2 tells us if we can discover any kind of relationship between the three mean scores. As it can be seen in the table, there is no clear relationship here: Sig= 1.000>.05.

Table 2. Anova for pretest CG

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.000	2	.000	.000	1.000
Within Groups	106.475	57	1.868		
Total	106.475	59			

In the same way, table 3 presents the information about the scores offered by three scorers for the pretest of the EG. As it can be seen, the mean scores are closely related and with very small difference in fractions. They are all around 15.78 and the total mean score for the pretest is estimated to be 15.76. The standard deviation of the three means is near unity and center around 1.22, and or 1.01. All indicate that the subjects have been very homogeneous in their level and performance for the pretest of the EG.

Table 3. Pretests for EG

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Scorer 1	18	15.7875	1.22010	.27282
Scorer 2	18	15.7875	1.01396	.22673
Scorer 3	18	15.7125	1.11295	.24886
Total	54	15.7625	1.10029	.14205

The next table is a demonstration of the relationship between the mean scores of the three groups. As it can be seen there is no meaningful relationship between the three means. Sig= .971>.05 at 2 degree of freedom.

Table 4. Anova for Pretest EG

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.075	2	.038	.030	.971
Within Groups	71.353	57	1.252		
Total	71.428	59			

Table 5. Posttest for CG

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Scorer 1	18	16.3000	1.41095	.31550
Scorer 2	18	16.1750	1.43751	.32144
Scorer 3	18	16.1125	1.32157	.29551
Total	54	16.1958	1.36938	.17679

The next following tables demonstrate the information about the posttest for both CG and EG. Table 5 presents the scores of posttest for CG by three scorers. As it can be seen, the mean score by the first scorer is 16.30 and it changes to 16.17 for the second scorer and finally it remains almost unchanged by the third scorer: 16.11. On the other hand, the total mean score for post CG is estimated to be 16.19. The low standard deviations reveal the close homogeneity of the scorers and the marks granted by them.

Table 6. Anova for posttest CG

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.365	2	.182	.094	.910
Within Groups	110.272	57	1.935		
Total	110.636	59			

Table 6 is a demonstration of the relationship between the posttest of CG. As it can be seen in the table, there is no meaningful relationship between the scores of the three groups. Sig= .910 >.05.

Table 7. Posttest for EG

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Scorer 1	18	17.0500	1.03428	.23127
Scorer 2	18	17.0875	1.02043	.22818
Scorer 3	18	17.3000	.80541	.18010
Total	54	17.1458	.94923	.12255

Moreover, table 7 demonstrates the data offered by three scorers for the posttest of the EG. As it can be seen, the mean scores are closely related and with very small difference in fractions. They are all around 17 with small differences between them. The first rater has scored 17.05, and the total mean score for the posttest is estimated to be 17.14. The standard deviation of the three means is near unity and center around 1.22, and or 1.01. All indicate that the subjects have been homogeneous in their level and performance for the pretest.

Table 8. Anova for posttest EG

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.727	2	.364	.395	.675
Within Groups	52.434	57	.920		
Total	53.161	59			

Table 8 displays the relationship between the posttest for EG presented by three independent scorers. As it can be seen in the table, there is no meaningful relationship between the scores of the three groups. Sig= .675 >.05.

Inferential Data: Inter-rater Reliability

The tables below demonstrate the information about the inter-rater reliability. The statistical parameter was using Pearson coefficient of correlation. The information reveals if the relationship between the marks presented by three different scorers have the required reliability. It is important for the marks to be interrelated and dependable if the three scorers interpret the writing tasks almost similarly.

Table 9 presents the required information about the correlation of pretests for CG. The table shows if any kind of relationship can be observed between the marks given by three different raters. In fact, the table is a display of inter-rater reliability.

As it shows, there is high reliability between the scores of pretest presented by scorer 1, 2, and 3, when they are .941, and .964 respectively. The relative significance for the two-tailed test is calculated to be Sig=.000 that shows perfect and complete correlation between the pretest of scorer 1, 2 and 3. On the whole, the data shows that the scores presented by three markers enjoy high correlation.

Table 9. Correlations for CG pretest

		Pretest for control group: scorer 1	Pretest for control group: scorer 2	Pretest for control group: scorer 3
Pretest for control group: scorer 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.941**	.964**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
Pretest for control group: scorer 2	Pearson Correlation	.941**	1	.954**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
Pretest for control group: scorer 3	Pearson Correlation	.964**	.954**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	

Table 10 is a presentation of data belonging to pretest of EG. The same as the scores for CG, here also the scores display high correlation between different scorers. In fact, the pretest correlation for the first and second scorer is 11 and it is .922 for the first scorer and the third. In the same way, there can be observed high correlation between the first, second and third scorer when the relevant significance is .000 that is the perfect correlation between and among the EG pretests. Sig= .000<.05.

Table 10. Correlations for EG pretest

		Pretest for experimental group: scorer 1	Pretest for experimental group: scorer 2	Pretest for experimental group: scorer 3
Pretest for experimental group: scorer 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.911**	.922**
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000	.000
Pretest for experimental group: scorer 2	Pearson Correlation	.911**	1	.928**
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000		.000
Pretest for experimental group: scorer 3	Pearson Correlation	.922**	.928**	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	.000	

On the other hand, table 11 presents the coefficient correlation of posttests for CG. The table shows if any kind of relationship can be observed between the marks given by three different raters.

As the table shows, there is high reliability between the scores of pretest presented by the three scorers when they are .951, and .971 respectively. The relative significance for the two-tailed test is calculated to be Sig=.000 that shows perfect and complete correlation between the pretest of scorer 1 and scorer 2 and 3. On the whole, the data shows that the scores of the posttest for CG presented by three markers enjoy high correlation.

Table 11. Correlations for CG posttest

		Posttest for control group: scorer 1	Posttest for control group: scorer 2	Posttest for control group: scorer 3
Posttest for control group: scorer 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.951**	.971**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
Posttest for control group: scorer 2	Pearson Correlation	.951**	1	.959**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
Posttest for control group: scorer 3	Pearson Correlation	.971**	.959**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	

Table 12 is a presentation of data belonging to posttest of EG. The given scores display perfect correlation presented by different raters. As a matter of fact, the posttest correlation for the first and second scorer is .706 and it is .716 between the first scorer and the third. In the same way, we can see high and perfect correlation between the first, second and third scorer when the relevant significance is .001 for the first and second rater and it is .000 between the first and third rater. In fact, the coefficient of

correlation for the three scorers is assumed to be very high. Sig= .001<.05 and Sig=.000< .05.

Table 12. Correlations for EG posttest

		Posttest for experimental group: scorer 1	Posttest for experimental group: scorer 2	Posttest for experimental group: scorer 3
Posttest for experimental group: scorer 1	Pearson Correlation	1	.706**	.716**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.000
Posttest for experimental group: scorer 2	Pearson Correlation	.706**	1	.643**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.002
Posttest for experimental group: scorer 3	Pearson Correlation	.716**	.643**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.002	

As it can be concluded here, most of the participants in the EG express their positive attitudes towards the approach being used. The responses to the first question revealed that the participants thought that they strongly needed pictures for their writing class.

DISCUSSION

The goal of the present study was to expose the EFL learners of the study to graphic devices as a device to improve the writing ability of the EFL learners of the study. To this purpose, two groups of subjects studying in Shokouh Language Institute in Bandar Abbas participated in the study. Based on the results, the two pre and posttests presented the required data and showed the differences between the performances of the two groups. This section presents the detail of the data by discussing the drawn achievements, the study implications and suggestions for further research.

The goal of the study was to prove the accuracy of the following two hypotheses:

- 1) Using pictures and other visual aids implemented by the teacher in the writing class can promote the acquisition of EFL learners’ writing skill.
- 2) Using pictures and other visual aids implemented by the teacher in the writing class can lead to positive attitudes of the learners.

Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is proved to be correct. In other words, the data in the previous section proved the effect of using graphic devices to improve the writing skill of the learners. The difference between the mean scores of the pre and posttest proved that the EG improved more satisfactorily. Based on the total mean score for the pretest of the EG, it was estimated to be 15.76 while it increased to 17.14 for the posttest of the same group. However, the standard

deviation of the two groups did not change significantly. This is the criterion that signals homogeneity of the groups from pretest to posttest. In other words, the subjects' performance from pre to posttest approaches homogeneity. The standard error of measurement also decreased to 1.22 from 1.034. On the other hand, the estimated coefficient correlation of the two tests is estimated to be .941, with degree of significance of .000. The relevant correlation is not very high but somehow acceptable: $\text{sig} = .000 < .05$. The equation shows the perfect meaningful relationship between the two pre and posttests for the EG.

On the other hand, the second hypothesis is also verified. In other words, the subjects expressed their positive attitudes towards the use of pictures in the writing class. In other words, a great majority of the participants expressed their satisfaction about the used procedures in their language class. Table 4.13 reflects the attitudes of the participants and their degree of satisfaction on the use of pictures in the writing class.

CONCLUSION

The study could prove the positive effect of using pictures on the writing improvement of the subjects of the present study. In fact, it could be proved that the procedures employed by the teacher and exercised by the learners were effective enough to support the assumption that pictorial devices are useful and effective tools in the writing class and it can positively affect the performance of the learners. Considering the results of the two groups, it can be concluded that writing is a meaningful process that entails the active and meaningful participation of the learners in the teaching-learning processes. Data from this study showed that the difference in the mean score of the writing acquisition was statistically significant, because the EG showed a significantly higher amount of growth in writing compared to the CG. Paying attention to the active participation of the learners in the learning processes can have facilitative and meaningful effect on their cognitive learning. It was proved that cognitive language learning can facilitate the process of writing acquisition. Regarding the goal of the study, enough emphasis was given to the use of pictures and other graphic devices. The results supported the writing improvement of the EFL learners in the EG more than that of the CG.

The findings suggested that pictorial elucidation based on learner-generated drawings can promote acquisition of meaning and form of L2 writing. During teaching writing, the students performed better on the test of productive writing, and the scores on both the receptive and productive post-tests were higher when the students generated their own perceptions and understanding. Second language writing has revealed that words associated with actual objects or imagery techniques are learned more easily than those without. With multimedia applications or pictures, it is possible to provide extra additional opportunities for the learners to express themselves. It was concluded when the individual learner transitions into a meaningful and cognitive learning context, he was given a complete responsibility to deal with the problem posed to him, whether learning a single new word or getting him to make a novel sentence with the learned words.

The results of the study are in line with what Boers et al (2008) discovered with their own learners. They reported the results of their studies and suggest that pictorial elucidation could be an effective mnemonic technique for the purpose of retention of word meaning especially for learners who were high imagers and writing improvement (i.e. individuals whose cognitive style shows a predisposition for thinking in mental pictures). Verbal learners were also found to benefit from pictorial support when images accompanied propositionally presented information. Boers and his colleagues (Ibid) speculated that high-imagers tend to focus on images and pay less attention to linguistic form and the lexical composition of multi-word units, which impedes their ability to generate the target expressions.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The intent of this study has been to examine the impact of using pictures on the development of writing ability of the learners. Because the data were derived from a representative sample of learners in an EFL language institute, inferences could be made about the potential effects of the used procedure on larger populations of second language learners studying in higher educational EFL contexts. It is the goal of this section to suggest how findings from this research may be used to generate real-world applications in second language writing instruction.

It should be mentioned that the interactive communicative process involved in completing the task may not have been the sole source of increased writing skill among learners. The growth in writing may have been brought about by a range of other relevant contributing factors. Perhaps one reason for the increased growth in writing among learners was learners' meaningful participation in the activities and tasks they were supposed to do.

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