

Using Authentic Matrials In Teaching Writing
Dr.Sabrina BAGHZOU
Université de Khenchela

Abstract

Our study intends to investigate the effect, the use of authentic materials, could have on learners' performance in writing. We hypothesized that using authentic materials in teaching the writing skill had a positive effect on learners' achievement. To test our hypothesis an experiment was conducted. The participants were first year students of English at the University of Biskra. Sixty students out of two hundred sixty students (260) registered in the first year participated in this research. The participants were randomly assigned to two groups: a control group and an experimental one. A pretest was conducted for both groups under the same conditions. Then, during three months, the experimental group did a set of writing activities based on some authentic materials such as newspapers' articles, songs and movies whereas the control group was not exposed to authentic materials and followed the traditional way in teaching writing. At the end, a post-test was conducted and the results of both groups were compared. The results indicated that the use of authentic materials had a positive effect in improving students' performance in writing.

Keywords: Exposure, Authentic, Materials, Teaching, Writing, English, Foreign Language, Learners, T-Test

الملخص : تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى التحقيق في استعمال المواد الأصلية في تدريس الكتابة لمتعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية و تأثيره على آدائهم. قامت هذه الدراسة على الفرضية بأن استعمال المواد الأصلية في تدريس الكتابة له تأثير إيجابي على تحصيل الطلبة، ولاختبار هذه الفرضية قمنا بتجربة. المشاركون في هذه التجربة هم ستون طالبا من بين مئتين و ستين طالبا مسجلا في السنة الأولى بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة بسكرة. قسم الطلبة عشوائيا إلى مجموعتين: المجموعة الشاهدة والمجموعة التجريبية. و بعد ذلك قمنا بإجراء فحص قبلي لكلا المجموعتين في نفس الظروف، و لمدة ثلاثة أشهر قامت المجموعة التجريبية بأنشطة كتابية مبنية على استعمال المواد الأصلية مثل مقالات الصحف والأغاني والأفلام في حين أن المجموعة الشاهدة لم تعرض إلى مثل هذه الماد

وبقيت تدرس الكتابة بالطريقة التقليدية. وفي النهاية قمنا بإجراء فحص بعدي لكلا المجموعتين في نفس الظروف، ثم جمعت البيانات وقمنا بمقارنة النتائج. أشارت النتائج إلى أن استعمال المواد الأصلية كان له تأثير إيجابي في تحسين أداء الطلبة في الكتابة. **الكلمات المفتاحية:** التعرض-المواد الأصلية-تدريس- الكتابة- المتعلمين- اللغة الإنجليزية- لغة أجنبية

1. Introduction

From my modest experience as a student and as a teacher in the department of English at the University of Biskra, I noticed that the students of English, especially first and second year students, faced serious problems in writing. Their ideas were to a certain extent much more clear when expressed orally, but when they came to express in written, they ended up lacking: understanding, coherence and efficiency in conveying the message. Thus, we asked ourselves the following question: why did students find it difficult to write a correct and coherent piece of writing?

Hence, if these students were loaded with the necessary vocabulary, grammar rules, spelling, punctuation and writing techniques; and taught the strategies of writing will they achieve higher performance? We also believe that the writing problem lie in the way of teaching the writing skill .

The learners of a second/ foreign language are generally exposed to the target language in the formal context of the classroom; they get the language from the designed pedagogical materials, mainly textbooks. These materials are supposed to bring the necessary language input. The largest drawback of this educational material is its inability to maintain students' interest due to the lack of its entertainment value and stimulation.

Since the primary concern of ESL/EFL teachers is how to enhance students' target language proficiency, especially language skills mainly writing. They thought to exploit authentic materials in order to achieve this goal.

The notion of authenticity has emerged in 1970's with the development of new method "Communicative language teaching" as a rejection of previous methods and approaches of teaching and learning. It focuses on real world communication which expresses the need to equip students with skills required for real performance. So, authenticity has come to life to provide students with materials as available in the real world without making any change. Moreover, authentic brings all what is new

and origin source of materials such as newspapers, video, radio and internet as a natural language. Authentic materials / Texts found as a window of new techniques in learning specially the target language.

The notion of authenticity has been much discussed and defined with many researchers and scholars. Morrow as one of those who discussed the term gives a definition to it as follow: is "a stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to carry a real message of some sort ". (Quoted in Field 2008: 270).

Martinez (2002), defines authentic materials as the materials which are prepared for native speakers and not designed to be used for teaching purposes. Kilickaya (2004) has another definition for authentic materials, which is "exposure to real language and use in its own community." Nowadays, preparing students for real life situations is of utmost concern for English language teachers, especially in EFL classes.

Henceforth, we can say that authentic language is roughly known as that language used by native speakers when speaking to other native speakers; and so authentic materials are those that have been designed for native users with no pedagogical intentions in the mind of the author, materials not specifically produced to be used for teaching, including texts, audio and video materials namely: books, newspapers, magazines, pictures, videos, films, tapes, ... etc.

Larsen-Freeman (2000: 129) states that one of the characteristics of communicative language teaching is using authentic materials. Communicative language teaching approach changes the view of syllabus designers toward English subjects, from just a language to be learned like other subjects in the school, to a very important tool of communication inside and outside the classroom. Hence, the syllabus designers are advised to take into account the learners' needs and provide them with the chance, to be able to communicate the learned language in real situations outside the school walls. Recently, using authentic materials in teaching English language in ESL classes, gained much attention from teachers. Furthermore, (Kilickaya, 2004) states that nowadays there are a lot of voices suggesting that English language presented to the learners in the classroom, should be authentic in order to enhance learners' learning process. There are many references to authentic materials in ELT literature. Debates are still raging on why they should or not be included in lessons, and how they are to be used or best exploited. Reading such literature, it is clear that those authors who support the use of authentic material have one idea in common: 'exposure', or in other words, the benefit students get from being exposed to the language in authentic materials. Actually there are a lot of

linguists, who encourage the use of authentic materials in teaching because of their positive effects on learners. According to Carter & Nunan (2001: 68) authentic materials are the kind of "texts" that are not designed for "teaching" hand, using less authentic materials with our learners, may lead to less practice in the real world. According to Hedge (2000) the notion of authenticity, came to the surface in association with communicative approach in language teaching in the 1970-s. Defining authenticity is not an easy matter. Therefore, there are various differences among writers, regarding the definition of this term. According to Tatsuki (2006) "authenticity, is taken as being synonymous with genuineness, realness, truthfulness, validity, reliability... of materials." Furthermore, MacDonald et al. (2006) state that —if a correspondence occurs between the texts used by teachers in the classrooms and kinds of texts used in the real world, in this case, these texts can be regarded authentic. Mishan (2005), states that there are three approaches which are regarded as the basis for the term authenticity in language teaching. These are communicative, materials-focused and humanistic approaches. Communicative approach: in this approach, the focus is on communication from both sides - the learning process and the teaching methods.

1. Materials-focused approach: the learning in this approach is text-centered.
2. Humanistic approach: this approach emphasizes the unity of learners' feelings and the learning process.

Otte (2006: 56) believes that learners need to "practice using authentic language themselves, in order to be better prepared to deal with authentic language in the real world." According to Brown and Eskenzai (2004), by using textbooks alone, learners will not be exposed to the real language, as it is used in the real world.

Furthermore, Mishan (2005:18) preferred to set some criteria for authenticity rather than defining the term. According to her "Authenticity is a factor of the:

- Provenance and authorship of the text.
- Original communicative and socio-cultural purpose of the text.
- Original context (e.g., its source, socio-cultural context) of the text.
- Learning activity engendered by the text.
- Learners ' perceptions of and attitudes to, the text and the activity pertaining to it.

Although the use of authentic materials in the classroom has become general practice during the previous 30 years, the issue of authenticity has been one of the most debatable aspects in the ground. However, the need or usefulness of authentic materials has been increasingly recognized especially in non-native countries.

Empirical studies have demonstrated the positive effects of utilizing authentic texts by language learners. For example, some researches show that using authentic materials leads to oral language development (Bacon & Finneman, 1990; Miller, 2005; Otte, 2006; Thanajaro, 2000). Moreover, some other studies have confirmed that using authentic materials has great influence on developing reading comprehension by presenting new words and expressions to students (Bacon & Finneman, 1990; Berardo, 2006). Harmer (1991) points out that these are only authentic materials which actually develop students' listening and reading skills. Furthermore, Allen et al. (1988, as cited in Baird, 2004) mentions that developing students' strategies in comprehending authentic texts will lead to developing their writing proficiency in the target language learning. According to Omaggio Hadley (1993) and Rogers and Medley (1988), if students are to develop a functional proficiency in the language and to use the language communicatively in the real world, they must begin to encounter the language of that world in the classroom. Also, learners need opportunities to practice using the language to cope with everyday situations they might encounter outside the classroom.

The visual and oral authentic characters of these the authentic materials give students a rich and varied context in which they learn the target language.

The motivation for this research came from a personal belief that the use of different sorts of authentic materials in the language classroom, especially in teaching writing, can offer the opportunity for students to explore and foster their language acquisition. Moreover, the use of authentic materials seems to be more interesting, as they attract the learners' attention and offer them an incomparable variety of topics, vocabulary and expressions.

Furthermore, to exploit one remarkable fact with our students today, it is that most of them grew up with television, and had the habit of gaining knowledge about the world from T.V screen via satellites, Internet, newspapers and magazines. Therefore, we believe that it makes sense to take advantage of these authentic sources to teach foreign languages.

We hypothesize that using different authentic materials in teaching writing has a positive impact on the learners' performance.

Throughout our research we try to answer the following questions:

- a- Does the exposure of learners to different authentic materials affect their performance in the writing skill positively?
- b- Would the authentic materials play a facilitating role in the second/ foreign language acquisition?

The main goal of our study is to investigate the effects that the use of authentic materials have on learners' performance in writing. The subject of our investigation would be the first year students at the department of English at Biskra University.

Another aim of this study is to extend our understanding of the issue of using different authentic materials in teaching writing, and to find a way to make writing easier to learn for the foreign language learners.

In addition, we want to explore the different possibilities the use of different authentic materials can offer to the English learner in the classroom.

Moreover, we aim at attracting teachers' attention to this issue knowing that most of them appear to be hesitant to use authentic materials in their writing classrooms, because the latter seem more difficult than the usual pedagogical materials such as the textbooks in terms of vocabulary items, sentence construction, and cultural background knowledge; and because they require more time to be prepared.

We also hope to bring a little contribution to the field of language teaching by demonstrating the different ways and the different purposes in which the authentic materials could be used to teach writing in the language classroom, and to help teachers to exploit these materials at their best.

Nonetheless, we should not deny the importance of the educational materials in the learning process, and we may think of authentic materials as being an additional or complementary source of language input.

2. Research Methodology and Design:

2.1. Choice of the Method:

There are methods and designs to conduct research; including research in education, the choice of the most suitable method is the job of the researcher , and it depends on many factor like the nature of the issue, the aim of the study, the targeted objectives, the kind of the data needed, and of course the sample involved.

This study investigates the effects of authentic materials on learners' performance in writing. In order to test our hypothesis we opted for the experimental method.

The experiment is a means of collecting evidence to show the effect of one variable upon another, and is carried out to reveal cause and effect relationship between these variables; this relationship means that any change in the dependent variable is due to the influence of the independent variable.

The independent variable (I.V) has levels, conditions, or treatment. the experimenter may manipulate conditions or measures and assign subjects to conditions, supposed to be the cause.

The dependent variable (D.V) measured by the experimenter is the effect or result.

In this study the independent variable is the use of authentic materials in teaching writing, we test the effectiveness of these aids in improving students' level in writing and diminishing their mistakes mainly: examine students' reaction to them and their sufficiency. The dependent variable is the development of students' performance. We focused on grammatical accuracy and other mistakes related to vocabulary punctuation and spelling.

2.2. The Investigated Population and Sampling

2.2.1. Students

The present study makes use of the pretest– posttest control design, which explains the need for two samples or two groups; an experimental group and a control group. The subjects will be randomly assigned to each group to guarantee every individual in the population an equal chance of being chosen.

The samples will be drawn according to a table of random numbers from the population of the first year students of the English department at the University of Biskra. Thirty students are assigned to the control group, and thirty students are assigned to the experimental group; to receive the experimental treatment, which makes a total number of sixty students out of two hundred sixty (260) students registered in the first year.

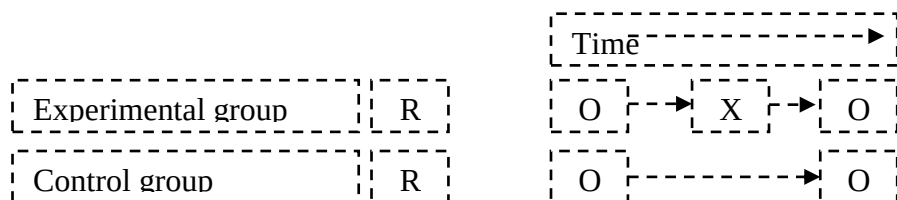


Figure 1: the design of pretest - posttest control group

R: random assignment of subjects to groups of treatment.

X: Exposure of a group to an experimental variable.

O: Observation or test.

2.2.2. Teachers:

The total number of teachers teaching in the department of English at the University of Biskra is 25 teachers and it includes:

- a- **Permanent teachers:** officially recruited teachers. These are (12)
- b- **Part-time teachers:** teachers which are not necessarily permanent teachers in other institutions. These are (13)

Given the number of teachers is 25 and among these teachers only seven (07) of them are teaching writing, no sampling has been made; the whole population was taken as respondents.

2.3.Data Gathering Tools

To get the necessary data about the progress of students' writing after the exposure to authentic materials, we relied on learners' written productions and the scores they got before and after the experimental treatment. We made use of a pre-test for the two groups before the experimental treatment under the same conditions, then it was followed by a post-test, after that a T-test was conducted to provide evidence for treatment's effect, hence to prove our hypothesis.

In addition to tests, we made use of questionnaires directed to both teachers and students to have more information about their opinions, attitudes and personal perceptions.

We also made use of observation grids during the experiment to observe the learners while performing the designed activities.

2.4. Procedure

In order to test our hypothesis, to prove its truth or the reverse, an experiment was designed and applied with an experimental group and a control one. Both groups received a pretest -a written test. The test was administered in a 45-minute session, under the same conditions for both groups. Then, during a period of three months, the experimental group received instruction and practiced writing based on some authentic materials. Activities related to each material were carried out, in about 24 sessions (twice to three times per week), lasting 30 to 45 minutes per session. Meanwhile, the control group used no authentic materials. At the end of the period, a posttest was assigned to both groups again under the same conditions.

The analysis of the data obtained by testing included comparison between pretest and posttest means between groups and within each group to measure average amount of gains from pretest to posttest. A comparison of posttest results was also made to see whether the experimental treatment was effective.

2.4.1. The pretest

The students in both groups, experimental and control group were asked to write about the reasons that led them to choose to study English. After correcting their productions and comparing the, we concluded that the two groups made similar mistakes and nearly in the same portion. As a result, we can say that the two groups had the same level.

2.4.2. The experiment

2.4.3. Materials Selection

The authentic materials used in the experiment were carefully selected in the basis of their availability taking into consideration students' level, interest and motivation. They were also selected to insure a variety in terms of language (British and American), topics (topics of general interest, and topics related to youth's life) and variety of information (news, casual conversation, lyrics ...etc).

For the written material, our choice was the newspaper's article instead of other literary materials such as poems, extracts from novels and short stories, which are part of the students' instructional curriculum. For the listening material, the choice was in favor of songs instead of audiotaped dialogues or radio programs; due to the motivational value comported in songs and the positive atmosphere they provide for learning. Finally, for the video material, we opted for the movie instead of news broadcast, a documentary or an interview; again in response to students' interest and motivation.

All the above-mentioned materials were selected with regard to the institutional context and according to availability.

The tasks and activities that accompanied the materials were selected according to these latter and according to the aims and objectives in terms of developing the different writing skills. The following types of tasks were included: note taking, gap filling, multiple choice and answering questions, besides oral discussions, The purpose of these activities was not to test but rather to develop students' language. Special emphasis was placed on the feedback procedure.

2.4.4. Implementation

The materials were implemented according to an experimental program of instruction that was carried out in 24 sessions over nine weeks, twice to three times per week. Each session lasted from 30 to 45 minutes according to the material used. The session was distributed between the exposure to the materials, the performance of the related activities and giving feedback. The exposure to the materials and the activities consisted of three basic stages: prospective activities, simultaneous activities, and retrospective activities.

1. Reading Activities

For authentic written texts, the activities were distributed along pre-reading, reading and post-reading activities:

a- Pre-reading Activities

This preparatory step contained a set of activities that are considered to warm-up the learners and provide the adequate context to approach the text, comprehend it and reconstruct meaning. It could also activate or recall the necessary background information related to the topic. It included short discussions about the theme of the text, question/answer as well as identification of the text type.

b- Reading Activities

Learners read for specific information. Accordingly, the reading activities were designed to check learners 'comprehension of the text and may include:

- Memory tests: where the learners had a limited time to read the text, cover it and then answer related questions.
- Check understanding: students completed sentences with information from the text.
- Vocabulary hunt and vocabulary questions.
- Grammar activities.
- Thinking carefully: answering questions using the text.

c- Post-reading Activities

These activities were generally paragraph-writing, summary-writing or writing comments. Summaries and comments provided the teacher with valuable information on the learners' understanding of, and reaction to what they have read.

2. Listening Activities

Listening activities were divided into three basic stages; pre-listening, listening and post-listening activities, each of which had a clear aim and function.

a- Pre-listening Activities

They provided the context necessary for activating the language needed for the process of comprehension and the background knowledge related to the topic. It also helped to raise learners' expectations and motivation. An example of these activities was brainstorming and discussions or question/answer. The duration of these activities varied between five to fifteen minutes.

b- Listening Activities:

These activities were formulated in a way so as not to distract the listeners while they were focusing on listening. For example, they could

be textual; they included information/word gap- filling, short responses such as true/false sentences, etc.

c- Post-listening Activities

They offered a natural opportunity to link listening with another language skill. As they usually led to writing, they had to take into account the limitations of memory and should not require learners to focus on memorizing a large number of details. They included question/answer, paragraph-writing, writing short stories ...etc.

3. Viewing Activities

As outlined before the activities that accompanied the material were of equal importance, and the design of these activities remained the task of the teacher.

For authentic videos, the exposure was gained through viewing and listening which gave opportunity for the practice of the listening skill. On the other hand, the activities designed to accompany the material allowed the practice of the speaking, reading and writing skills. They were composed of three basic stages.

a- Pre-viewing Activities

This stage was introductory and consisted of activities intended to provide the context for the viewing material as well as the background knowledge related to the topic. They engaged the learners' interest in what they would do and prepare them to do it successfully. They included warm-up discussions, introduction of new vocabulary. The duration of this stage could vary between ten to fifteen minutes.

b- Viewing Activities

While viewing the teacher manipulated the material through play, pause and rewind or replay for purposes of re-view or re-examination. The relevant tasks here could vary between note takings, checking information, ordering events ...etc.

c- Post-viewing Activities

This stage was made of follow-up activities ranging from discussion of the theme to general comprehension questions, highlight of key vocabulary, and at the end writing a short story or a paragraph.

After 24 sessions of experimentation that was carried out according to a programme of instruction using three kinds of authentic materials: newspaper's articles, songs and movies. For each material a set of activities were implemented to suit a set of goals and objectives. The sessions were divided into three stages: exposure to the authentic material, performance of related tasks and giving feedback. The activities were divided into three steps: prospective activities, simultaneous

activities and retrospective activities. At the end of the experimentation period, a posttest was conducted.

2.4.5. The posttest

The students in both groups were set to write a paragraph about a topic of their choice. The students were given a set of topic to choose one to write about. After that, a discussion about the chosen topic was conducted and then the students were set to write their drafts. While the students were writing, the teacher turned around to see whether anyone needed help.

2.5. Results and Discussion

After comparing the scores of both groups in the post-test, the findings show that students' writing has significantly improved due to the use of authentic materials in writing. Each time authentic materials were exploited through some activities in order to make students concentrate on a specific element when they write: like grammar, punctuation or vocabulary, for example.

Students paid more attention to their mistakes and tried to avoid their previous ones, especially with the use of tenses, articles, preposition, punctuation and the choice of vocabulary.

Students also ceased to use capitalization randomly. They also learned to use the dictionary each time they feel the need to, either to check the meaning of a word or to check the spelling.

Each time authentic materials were used the students learned a large amount of new vocabulary, which they may use later in their writings. They also gave the students the opportunity to contrast lot of words.

The students also learned that the best way to write well was to write simple and short sentences, well structured and well organized in which the words are carefully selected.

The use of authentic materials helped the students to conceive writing in a different way. Instead of being a difficult and rigid task, it changed to be interesting and pleasurable.

To validate our assumption, the appropriate testing and statistical procedure is the **t-test** which is considered to be the most suitable test to compare two means. To calculate the **t** value, the following formula needs to be applied:

$$t_{N_1 + N_2} = \frac{(\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2) \sqrt{(N_1 + N_2 - 2) N_1 N_2}}{\sqrt{(N_1 S_1^2 + N_2 S_2^2) (N_1 + N_2)}}$$

$$= \frac{(10.70 - 9.75) \sqrt{(30 + 30 - 2) 30 \times 30}}{\sqrt{(30 \times 1.83^2 + 30 \times 2.18^2) (30 + 30)}} = \frac{0.95 \sqrt{58 \times 900}}{\sqrt{(100.46 + 142.57) (60)}}$$

$$= \frac{0.95 \times 228.47}{\sqrt{243.03 \times 60}} = \frac{217.04}{120.75} = 1.79$$

t=1.79

Degree of Freedom

Following (J. D. Brown 1995:167), “the degree of freedom (df) for the t-test of independent means is the first sample size minus one plus the second sample size minus one”. It helps to find the critical value for “ t ”.

$$df = (N_1 - 1) + (N_2 - 1)$$

$$= (30 - 1) + (30 - 1) = 58$$

$$df = 58$$

Alpha Decision Level

“The language researcher should once again set the alpha decision level in advance. The level may be at $\alpha < .05$ or at the more conservative $\alpha < .01$, if the decisions must be more sure” (Brown 1995:159). In this statistical test, we decided to set alpha at $\alpha < .05$ which means only 05% chance of error can be tolerated. The test is directional (tailed) because there is a theoretical reason and a sound logic to expect one mean to be higher than the other.

Critical Value

Since alpha is set at $\alpha < .05$ for a one-tailed decision, $df = 58$ and the corresponding critical value for “ t ”, in Fisher and Yates’ table of critical values, is **1.69**, then we get $t_{obs} > t_{crit} (1.79 > 1.69)$.

5.7. Hypothesis Testing

Now, we have collected the necessary information for testing our hypothesis.

Statistical hypotheses: $H_0 : \overline{X}_E = \overline{X}_C$

$$H_1 : \overline{X}_E > \overline{X}_C$$

Alpha level: $\alpha < .05$, one-tailed (directional) decision.

Observed statistics $t_{obs} = 1.79$

Critical statistic: $t_{crit} = 1.69$

Degree of freedom: $df = 58$

Figure 2: Necessary information for hypothesis testing

Since the observed statistic is greater than the critical value ($1.79 > 1.69$), the null hypothesis is rejected. Having rejected the null hypothesis, then the alternative hypothesis H_1 is automatically accepted. This means that there is only 05% probability that the observed mean

difference: $\overline{X_E} > \overline{X_C}$ (10.60 > 9.33) occurred by chance, or a 95% probability that it was due to other than chance factors.

The interpretation of results should have two parts: significance and meaningfulness. The results revealed that the two means in the post-test are significantly different : $\overline{X_E} > \overline{X_C}$ (10.60 > 9.33). The null hypothesis H_0 is rejected at $P < .05$ which means that we are 95% sure that the relationship between the dependent variable “D” (writing test’ scores) and the independence variable “I.D” (exposure to authentic materials) did not occur by chance. It was due to the role of authentic materials which contributed in developing and improving experimental group subjects’ writing skill.

2.6. Students’ Reaction

The students were really motivated when we introduced the authentic materials in the writing course. The number of students who participated was significant, because most of them had intervened more than three times in one session, and the majority of their answers were correct. They were not hesitant when they were asked to answer a question, or when they asked questions.

Students enjoyed breaking the routine, and being in contact with the native-speakers through the authentic materials.

Besides the benefit in writing, the learners claimed that they also benefited from the spoken aspect of the language they found in songs and movies such as: native-speakers informal language, intonation and pronunciation of certain words in connected speech.

The authentic materials have also provided the students with the cultural aspects of English language speaking community to the wish to know them more.

During the sessions where songs were used students were extremely motivated, they participated actively, and they even tried to learn the songs by heart and sing them during the sessions, whereas for the movies, the students showed high concentration and participated actively in the related activities.

3. Conclusion

Our main aim through this study was to prove the positive effects of using authentic materials in teaching writing in the case of first year students in the department of English at Biskra University. The findings showed that students’ writing had significantly improved due to the use of authentic materials in writing. Each time authentic materials were exploited through some activities in order to make students concentrate

on a specific element when they write: like grammar, punctuation or vocabulary, for example.

Students paid more attention to their mistakes and tried to avoid their previous ones, especially with the use of tenses, articles, preposition, punctuation and the choice of vocabulary.

Students also ceased to use capitalization randomly. They also learned to use the dictionary each time they feel the need to, either to check the meaning of a word or to check the spelling.

Each time authentic materials were used the students learned a large amount of new vocabulary, which they may use later in their writings. They also gave the students the opportunity to contrast lot of words.

The students also learned that the best way to write well was to write simple and short sentences, well structured and well organized in which the words are carefully selected.

The use of authentic materials helped the students to conceive writing in a different way. Instead of being a difficult and rigid task, it changed to be interesting and attractive.

Moreover, the core idea of our research was: if a teacher wants to improve his students' level in writing, then he should make them obey to the three Rs: read, read, read.

Reading does not only concern papers such as books, magazines and newspapers. It is also viewing and listening. When a student watches a movie or listens to a song, surely he would store information, learn vocabulary, grasp expressions, and then he would reuse them in his writing. In other words, students also read through their eyes and ears.

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