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The Use of Games in Teaching Descriptive Text Writing:

The Case of 4 th grade pupils at Abu Der El Ghifari middle school Beni-Thour-Ouargla

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Dedication

I dedicate this humble work, from the depth of my heart, to:

The sunshine of my life, my mother & my father

My sisters and brothers, who encouraged me throughout this whole work,

*Ahmed, **khelifa**, Fatima, Randa,Aymen, Manal, Meriem and especially Abdel-kader*

My family, with special gratitude to my brothers in law and my sisters in law

My nephews Yahia, Mohamed, Moayed, Mohamed,and Abdel El-rahman

My nieces Belkiss, Zahra, and Ansam

*My best friends, especially **Khaoula** for her contribution and patient during the difficult circumstances*

Nadjat Abidli

Dedication

I dedicate this work to:

My dear parents

My brothers and sisters

Houssem, Mehdi, Rawan, Mayssoune, and Abdel Rahim

My husband ISMAIL and his family

All my family Degha

My friends

Khaoula Degha

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List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language
ESL: English as a Second Language
FL: Foreign Language
OSSACOMPT: Opinion, Size, Shape, Age, Color, Origin, Material, Purpose.
Q: Question
S: Student
T: Teacher
TEFL: Teaching English as a Foreign Language

List of Tables

Tables	**pages**
Table 01. Types of writing. Hedge…….....08	
Table 02. First sessions' results…….32	
Table 03: Second sessions' results……..33	
Table 04. Third sessions' results…….....34	
Table 05. Forth sessions' results…….34	
Table 06. Pre-test results…….35	
Table 07. Post-test results……36	
Table 08. Comparison of the pre-test and post-test results……..39	
Table09: Teachers' academic qualifications and teaching years ……...……42	

List of Figures

Tables	**pages**
Figure 01. A process model of writing instruction. Hyland……	11
Figure 02. Model Based Approach. White……	15
Figure 03. One group pre-test and post-test design……..	27
Figure 05. The pre-test and pos-test results comparison……..	37
Figure 06. The comparison of the five criterion results …….	38

Table of Contents

Dedication	**I**
Acknowledgements	**III**
List of Abbreviations	**IV**
List of Tables	**V**
List of Figures	**VI**
Table of Contents	**VII**
Abstract	**IX**
General Introduction	**01**
1. Background of the Study	02
2. Statement of the Problem	02
3. Objectives of the Study	03
4. Research Question and Hypothesis	03
5. Methodology	03
6. The Significance of the Study	03
7. Organization of the Study	04
Chapter One: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework	**05**
I. General Concept of writing	05
Introduction	06
1.1. Definition of Writing	06
1.2. Types of Writing	07
1.2.1. Personal writing	07
1.2.2. Study writing	07
1.2.3. Public writing	07
1.2.4. Creative writing	07
1.2.5. Social Writing	08
1.2.6. Institutional Writing	08

1.3. The Importance of Writing	08
1.4. Difficulties of Writing	09
1.5. The Process of Writing	09
1.5.1. Prewriting	10
1.5.2. Organising (outlining)	10
1.5.3. Writing Draft (Drafting)	10
1.5.4. Revising/ Editing	10
1.5.5. Publishing	10
1.6. The Teaching of Writing in an EFL classroom	11
Conclusion	11
II. The Teaching of Descriptive Writing	**12**
Introduction	13
1.7. Definition of Descriptive Text	13
1.8.The Generic Structure of Descriptive Text	13
1. 9. Significant Lexico-grammatical Features of Descriptive Text	14
1.10.Approaches to Teaching Descriptive Writing	14
Conclusion	15
III. Games in Language Teaching and Learning	**16**
Introduction	17
1.11. Definitions and Characteristics of Games	17
1.12. Types of Games	18
1.13. Value of Using Games	20
1.14. Disadvantage of Using Games	21
1.15. Teachers' Perceptions Towards Games	22
1.16. Games as a Teaching Tool of Descriptive Writing in FL Classrooms	22
1.16.1 Games Selection in Teaching Descriptive Writing.	23
1.16.2. Examples of Descriptive Writing Games	23

Conclusion	24
Chapter Two: Research Methodology	**25**
Introduction	26
2. Research Design & Instruments	26
2.1. Population and Sampling	26
2.2. Research Instruments	27
2.2.1.The Quasi-experiment	27
a. Warm- up	27
b. Test Design	28
1. Pre-test and Post-test	28
2. Rating Scale	28
c. The Treatment Sessions	28
1. Game One (scrambled words)	29
2. Game Two (Guessing)	29
d. Classroom Observation	30
2.2.2 Teachers' Interview	30
Administration and Description of the Teacher's Interview	30
Chapter Three: Results and Discussion	31
3.1 The Quasi-experiment Analysis	32
3.1.1 Classroom Observation Results and Interpretation	32
a. Session One	32
b. Session Two	33
c. Session Three	33
d. Session Four	34
3.1.2 Pre-test and Post- test Analysis and Interpretation	35
a. Pre-test Results	35
b. Post-test Results	36
c. Comparison between Pre-test &Post-test Scores and Interpretation	37

d. Statistical Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test's Results by Means of T-test	39
e. Hypothesis Testing	41
3. 2 Teacher's Interview Analysis and Discussion	42
3. 3 Validity and Reliability	47
Conclusion	48
General conclusion	49
Limitations of the Study	51
Pedagogical Implications	51
Bibliography	52
Appendices	54
Appendix A: Sample of Students" Pre-Test and post-test	55
Appendix B:Lesson Plan	56
Appendix C: Sample of Teacher' Interview	58
Appendix D: Brown's Rating Scale	59
الملخص	60
Résumé	60

Abstract

This study sought to investigate the effectiveness of using games in teaching descriptive text writing as well as its influence on students' motivation in learning such skills. To measure the given hypotheses, we opted for quasi-experimental design in which one group of 27 fourth grade pupils at Abu Der El Ghifari middle school Beni Thour Ouargla was exposed to sessions of pre test, training, and post-test. On the other hand, we administered an interview for two teachers who teach the same grade in the school. Results confirmed the predictions at all levels considered: discipline, domain and methodology broadly defined. The obtained results revealed the great influence of games in enhancing students' descriptive text writing in addition to a noticeable change in the classroom atmosphere and students motivation.

Key Terms: Games, Descriptive text, Writing Skills, Effectiveness, Motivation

General Introduction

Background of the Study

Statement of the Problem

Objectives of the Study

Research Question and Hypothesis

Methodology

The Significance of the Study

Organization of the Study

Key Terms

Background to the Study

In education, teachers focus on the four skills as a main concern in the teaching-learning process. In spite of its complexity, writing plays a vital role as a multifunctional skill in humans' life since it is considered as a medium of communicating their thoughts. However, writing is the humans' record of their communication utilizing signs or symbols that represent their spoken words (McMillan Encyclopedia, 1986).

In the light of modern world, students need writing skills to undertake a wide range of tasks; thus, it is seen as the core of any mastery of language. Nevertheless, they may face difficulties and burden in writing an assignment, doing exercises, and answering correctly in tests and exams. Teachers as well struggle in teaching the multiple types of writing, especially the teaching of descriptive text writing, that present a problem in fourth-grade middle school classes. This dilemma is mainly on account of students' lexicon and grammar deficiency. However, they cannot be exposed to serious learning circumstances during the whole school year. Concerning this root cause, and to master this ability, teachers tend to be more creative by adopting new techniques and methods taking into consideration that each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. Fortunately, the Gaming strategy is one of the new ways of teaching which needs investigation especially in writing descriptive texts.

Statement of the Problem

As well as writing is an important skill, it is a complex process which requires awareness of lexis, punctuation, grammar, spelling, usage of word, and cultural knowledge. However, students face difficulties in learning all those aspects of language competence. Teachers as well face a challenge to present and to teach this skill using different strategies. To examine this issue, games are regarded as practical tools to increase teaching-learning writing.

To what extent the use of games in teaching descriptive text may improve students' writing skill?

Objectives of the Study

Through the present research, we aim at examining the use of games in teaching to improve students' writing skill. Moreover, the study aims at investigating students' attitudes towards the application of games in their learning especially writing a descriptive text.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. Can the use of games in teaching descriptive text improve fourth grade middle school pupils' English descriptive text writing skill?

2. To what extent the use of games motivate fourth grade middle school pupils in English language to write descriptive texts?

To answer the research questions we formulate the following hypotheses:

1. The use of games in teaching descriptive texts will improve fourth grade middle school pupils' descriptive text writing.

2. The use of games will highly motivate them to write descriptive texts.

Research Methodology

This study is conducted on 27 fourth grade middle school pupils at Abu Der El Ghifari middle school Beni Thour Ouargla. In order to answer the research questions we opted for experimental design with one group pretest, treatment, and post test. In addition to that, we designed interview for teachers. This methodology aims to collect data on the effect of using games in teaching writing skills.

The Significance of the Study

The value of this study is threefold. First, it raises awareness on the importance of games in education generally and on its effectiveness in teaching descriptive writing particularly. Second, more gaming strategies will be included, as a writing technique, by teachers in their classes to improve students' writing performance, since this strategy of teaching is rarely

implemented in Algerian educational programs. Finally, thus this research tackles a modern issue; it is difficult sometimes, for a researcher, to be provided with recourses, what makes this study a valuable resource for more similar future studies.

Organization of the Study

This study contains three chapters. The first part is devoted to a review of related literature. It is divided into three parts. The first part focuses on general concept of writing comprising its general definition in addition to its types. Also, the process of writing was highlighted in this study besides the importance of writing in education and difficulties that students face in the performance of this skill. The last point is teaching of writing in an EFL classroom. The second discusses the teaching descriptive writing which is composed of the definition and the generic structure of descriptive text. Furthermore, it describes the significant lexico-grammatical features of descriptive text without neglecting its teaching approaches. The third presents games as a teaching tool of descriptive writing in FL classrooms. It points out its definition, types, value, disadvantages, selection principles, and the teachers' perception towards games in addition to descriptive writing examples. The second chapter presents the methodology and data collection. It describes methods and tools used in the analysis and interpretation of the findings. The third chapter includes the main findings and results. The study ends with a general conclusion, recommendations, and limitations of the study.

Chapter One: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

I. General Concept of writing

Introduction

1.1. Definition of Writing

1.2. Types of Writing

1.2.1 Personal writing

1.2.2 Study writing

1.2.3 Public writing

1.2.4 Creative writing

1.2.5 Social writing

1.2.6 Institutional writing

1.3. The Importance of Writing

1.4. Difficulties of Writing

1.5. The Process of Writing

1.5.1. Prewriting

1.5.2. Organising (outlining)

1.5.3. Writing Draft (Drafting)

1.5.4. Revising/ Editing

1.5.5. Publishing

1.6. The Teaching of Writing in an EFL Classroom

Conclusion

Introduction

Writing is one of the most important skills in the EFL teaching-learning process and it is regarded as a main part in learner' success. The need to write in different tasks either in the classroom or in daily life made learners and teachers increasingly call for enhancing these skills. This chapter discusses the review of literature on writing. It does not cover all what is about the writing skill. It rather tries to review some of its aspects, especially the ones which are relevant to the nature of the topic under the study in this dissertation. This comprise six interrelated sections that spot light writing skills definitions, present its types, highlights its importance; discuss the main learners' difficulties, deals with the process of writing, and finally shed light its teaching in EFL classes.

1.1 Definition of Writing

Writing is a fundamental productive skill in education and a main tool for students to be learned, especially in ESL or EFL settings. It allows them to express their feelings and ideas in an organized way to convey an understandable meaning or message. It is conceived as a medium of communication represented in graphics such as letter that express some meaning. Hence, Byrne defines writing as*"…a sequence of sentences arranged in a particular order and linked together in a certain way"* (1988: 1).Hyland (1996) considered writing among the most important skills that should be mastered and developed by second language students, and he linked the qualification of teaching writing to the expertise. Also, he added that the most difficult challenge we take in second language learning is learning how to write. (ibid)

Generally, writing is a language means of communication and a process that sets for representing a language by using a particular set of symbols. Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, (2000) argued that "*Writing is the production of the written words that result in a text but the text must be read and comprehended in order for communication to take place*"(p.142).

Basically, writing as one of the four language skills means producing a message on a piece of paper or the other area in different forms such as simple sentences to elaborate stories or essays, and so on. Writing also is represented by a set of symbols or letters which are written on a given surface (Collin, 2003). That is to say, writing is a way of producing a written piece of any language which is addressed to readers. It is an essential skill in EFL and ESL classrooms because it is needed in examinations and tests. It is a crucial skill in the mastery of any language, but not sufficient, because language competence require the other four skills.

1.2 Types of Writing

Types of writing vary in life according to the purpose. It can be done inside and outside the professional world. According to Tricia Hedge (2005, p86-87), types of writing include six categories:

1.2.1 Personal writing

Personal writing is writing for your own entertainment and personal use on your life themes. For instance, it may be in a form of diaries, journals, shopping lists, and so on, expressed with the first language or with English in EFL contexts.

1.2.2 Study writing

This type of writing is carried out for academic and educational purposes. It is seen through the different tasks that students fulfill in the classroom such as writing an essay, answering an exercise, and so on.

1.2.3 Public writing

Public writing includes writings of members of organizations or institutions on special occasions. It occurs in various kinds such as letterforms.

1.2.4 Creative writing

As its name suggest, creative writing includes all writing which is done by a person and shared with other people such as poems, drama, stories, and rhymes. It has great importance

on self and social development as on building self esteem.

1.2.5 Social writing

It is represented by all kinds of social relationships between people such as family and friends. This type is seen in our daily life in different settings represented in emails, letters, notes of congratulations, and so on.

1.2.6 Institutional writing

Institutional writing is related to professional settings and varies according to needs for any specialized context where every profession has its own specialized text such as academic papers and agenda.

To explain more, Hedge's (ibid) figure presents the types of writing:

Personal writing	Public writing	Creative writing
diaries journals shopping lists reminders for oneself packing lists recipes	letters of __enquiry __complaint __request form filling applications (for memberships)	poems stories rhymes drama songs autobiography
Social writing	**Study writing**	**Institutional writing**
letters invitations notes __of condolence __of thanks __of congratulation emails telephone messages instructions __to friends __to family	making notes while reading taking notes from lectures making a card index summaries synopses reviews reports of __experiments __workshops __visits essays &bibliographies	Agendas minutes memoranda reports reviews contracts business letters public notices advertisements emails posters instructions speeches applications curriculum vitae specifications note-making (doctors and other professionals)

Table 01. Types of Writing (Hedge, 2005:87)

1.3 The Importance of Writing

Nowadays, no one can deny that writing skill plays vital social and educational functions. Mastering writing skill is seen for EFL learners as the core of their success, and being able to

write is the main supportive tool for them. Lazarton (2001)(as cited in Chellal,2015, P.10) stated that "*The ability to write is synonymous with knowing that language since writing is a basic means of human communication"* (p.103). EFL learners need it to express themselves by explaining what is going in their minds through ideas, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, and so on. Writing skill helps them to improve their communication skills because it is a way to converse and communicate via emails, letters, messages, and so on. Furthermore, English writing skills serve as a record for students' future careers; it raises their chance of getting a job in later life. Also, it gives them more confidence in their life to become good writers of English.

1.4 Difficulties of Writing

Writing seems to be the most difficult skill to acquire in a foreign language. According to Hedge (2005), students struggle with writing in many areas where unfamiliarity of language itself is the main cause of the difficulties. Starting with the first area, Students usually struggle to differentiate all forms of writing, because each type has a distinctive form. In addition to that, EFL students may face problems in organizing paragraph structure and discourse organization because they do not master the writing aspects including cohesive devices, punctuation, and capitalization. They should know how sentences are arranged in a paragraph semantically and grammatically. Hence, find problems in how to use accuracy and fluency at the same time. Moreover, students may encounter problems in the limited choice of words, because of the context where English is whether a second or foreign language. Finally, one of the main difficulties of writing for EFL learners is the lack of motivation; however, it serves as a starting point for them to write.

1.5 The Process of Writing

Writing is a complex combination of skills and difficult to be learned. The process of

writing involves a series of steps to follow in producing a successful finished piece of writing. According to Hyland (2003) and Hedge (2005), writing is a recursive rather than a linear process. This process requires different stages.

1.5.1 Prewriting

This is an important stage in writing that starts by selecting a topic. It includes collecting ideas and information by making a list of words phrases and sentences. Brainstorming is essential in that stage.

1.5.2 Organizing (outlining)

The second stage in the writing process is to organize the work in the form of an outline. It is the step in which the writer organizes his/ her ideas in logical order taking into consideration the importance of each information. In this step, some information can be omitted or added.

1.5.3 Writing Draft (Drafting)

Once the work is planned, the next step is to draft or write down the ideas based on the previous outline. In this stage the writer tries to write correct sentences without checking the mistakes.

1.5.4 Revising/ Editing

Revising stage deals with reading what have been written in the draft. This allows checking all types of mistakes and organizing the work to be more successful. In the editing stage, the writer tries to make changes in the revised draft to assure the text coherence. This gives the text new strong version.

1.5.5 Publishing

The last stage is to rewrite the last version. It represents the final product of the written text which would address readers.

Figure 01 presents the process of writing according to Hyland (2003: 11) .

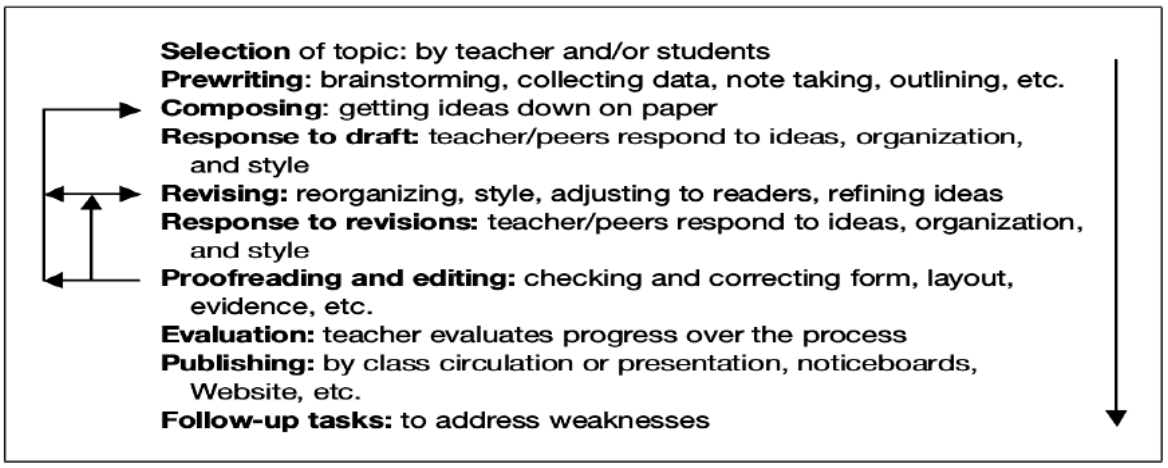

Figure01: A process model of writing instruction (Hyland, 2003:11)

1.6 The Teaching of Writing in an EFL classroom

English nowadays becomes the language of the world. It is involved almost in all domains. Mastering the basic skills, especially writing, in English started to be the goal for many foreign students. Writing skill is considered as a challenging part in EFL learning. It is a tool that gives those students the opportunity to overcome several school tasks which are important for their study and their future life. You must have some ability that allows you to express yourself in writing; otherwise, you will not pass the course (Brown, 2007). Teachers, as well, try to use different methods and techniques to reach a good writing performance.

Although it is difficult to be learned, writing can be facilitated in different ways. In EFL classrooms teaching writing focuses not only on accuracy but also on fluency. Teachers try to teach writing, not for the sake of making the students able to write at the end of the unit, but they teach them to get experiences in writing and became autonomous writers.

Conclusion

From all what has been said before, writing skill is very important for EFL learners in their studies and in their daily life. As a result, it requires many sorts of knowledge taking into consideration its main components especially its process. Researchers, each time, define it differently according to the context and to its purposes. However, Learners try to improve it taking into account its complexity and importance.

II. The Teaching of Descriptive Writing

Introduction

1.7 Definition of Descriptive text

1.8 The Generic Structure of Descriptive Text

1.9 Significant Lexico-grammatical features of Descriptive Text

1.10 Approaches to Teaching Descriptive Writing

Conclusion

Introduction

Descriptive text is a type of writing which consists of descriptions of the characteristics of a topic to gives the reader the opportunity to create an image of the topic. In this chapter, the first section presents a definition of the descriptive text with its generic structure and its lexico-grammatical features. Also, it is provided with the approaches to these types of writing.

1.7 Definition of Descriptive Text

Description focuses on stimulating the imagination to paint a picture. In the light of this principle, a Descriptive text is a text which says a person, place, mood, situation, and event, and so on, is like. According to Anderson and Anderson, the descriptive text describes a particular person, place, or things. It aims at creating a clear image of the object and transmitting feelings and experiences in an obvious way. Warriner(1982) claims that what appeal directly to the sense by giving a clear picture of the object is the core of the descriptive paragraph. Overall, a descriptive text is presented by giving a vivid and detailed description of the topic which raises readers' interest. It is also presenting the features of the topic using specific words and verbs without including personal opinions.

From all the definitions above-mentioned, descriptive text is a type of writing that matches the power of words and verbs in activating senses to create a vivid image of the object (person, place, event …). It is a crucial skill that EFL learners have to master.

1.8 The Generic Structure of Descriptive Text

Bamanti and Oktaviani 2011 (as cited in Widyastanti 2019) present the generic structure of the descriptive text in two main parts: Identification, which introduces and identifies the object to be described (place, person, event, animal, object...), and Description, which describes the features and characteristics of the character by giving detailed information (forms, colors, or anything related to it.).

1.8 Significant Lexico-grammatical Features of Descriptive Text

The descriptive text has some lexico-grammatical features. First, the focus on specific participants which are, usually, well described in this type of writings in organized sequences. The attributive and identifying process is used to describe perfectly the sequence of time. Epithets and classifiers in the nominal group are often used to describe something meticulously. That is to say, epithets, frequently, are used to indicate some quality of an object. Finally, Hyland (2003:214) suggests the use of present simple as the dominant tense in the descriptive text, because it presents the features in terms of facts. Finally, it normally uses adjectives and compound adjectives, and action verbs and linking verbs.

1.9 Approaches to Teaching Descriptive Writing

The most common approaches in teaching descriptive writing are the product and the process approach. The main focus of the teachers in the product approach is to reach the final product in the writing process. That is to say, they emphasize lexical and grammatical correctness more than the content itself. The writing tasks of a product-oriented approach were usually imitations or copy models provided by the teachers or the textbooks. White (1998) views the model-based approach as follows:

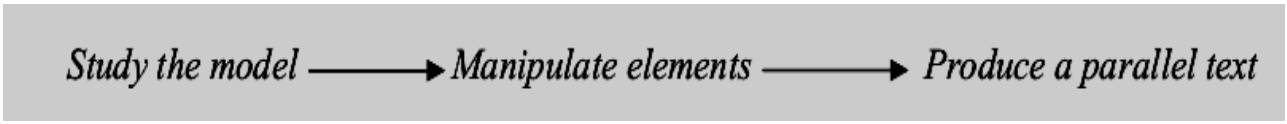

Figure2. Model Based Approach**.** (White 1998: 46)

On the other hand, the process approach shifts from the previous approach which focuses on the final product to the writing as a process itself and as a starting point. That is to say, it gives the students the opportunity to start writing from the first draft to the final product. This approach gives students time to collect and to generate their ideas as it helps them to work in a planned way. Murray (as cited in Hamadouche, 2010, P.20) stated that:

> The process-oriented approach refers to a teaching approach that focuses on the process a writer engages in when constructing meaning. This teaching approach concludes with editing as a final stage in text creation, rather than an initial one as a product-oriented approach. The process-oriented approach may include identified stages of the writing process such as prewriting, writing, and re-writing. Once the rough draft has been created, it is polished into subsequent drafts with the assistance of peer and teacher conferencing (1992: 16)

Conclusion

To sum up, descriptive writing is a type of writings that needs evolvement using new ways that entail raising awareness of its structure and features. To write this type properly teachers use different approaches among which the process and the product approaches are widely used. However, the teaching of descriptive writing depends also on raising learners' awareness of the generic structure and linguistic features of this type.

III. Games in Language Teaching and Learning

Introduction

1.11 Games (Definitions and Characteristics)

1.12 Types of Games

1.13 Value of Games

1.14 Disadvantage of Using Games

1.15 Teachers' Perceptions towards Games

1.16 Games as a Teaching Tool of Descriptive Writing in FL Classrooms

1.16.1 Games Selection in Teaching Descriptive Writing.

1.16.2 Examples of descriptive writing games

Conclusion

Introduction

Many scholars agree on the effectiveness of using games in facilitating teaching and enhancing learning. Researchers like Wright, Betteridge & Buckby (1984), and El-Shamy (2001) highlighted the importance of using games in education, how it create optimal learning atmosphere, and how it motivates both learners and teachers.

Language learning is a strenuous work where Learners need to be motivated and involved with things they care about to sustain their interest and work, however; games provide a method of helping the learners to experience language instead of merely study it(Wright et al.,ibid). This means that teachers must create a fun and an active atmosphere using games and activities, what will, for instant, encourage learners to improve their learning level and for delivering specified learning outcomes.

This chapter will investigate game types and values in addition to Teachers' Perceptions towards games and its uses in Language Teaching and Learning. Also, it will explain how teachers select games in teaching descriptive writing and how this strategy improves students' ability in writing descriptive texts. But first, this chapter will start discussing what is meant by game and what its characteristics are.

1.11 Games (Definitions and Characteristics)

El-Shamy (as cited in Darfilal, 2014, p.11) divides the history of the game into two main periods. Before the 19th century, games supported physical activities associated with occasions such as religious rituals, celebrations, and festivals. After the 19th century, and in order to suit American tastes, who hate wasting time, European people tried to adjust a number of their games to begin constructing their "educational instruction". Whereupon, games began to be improved by new games materials, games techniques, and games approaches for best learning and education life. Game applications continued developing until when it reached the value of being utilized in the teaching and learning domain.

El-Shamy (2001) defines the game as the competitive activity controlled by rules within a specific context, where players meet a challenge to reach an objective and win. Wright et al "…have taken the word 'game' to mean an activity which is entertaining and engaging, often challenging, and an activity in which the learners play and usually interact with others"(1984,p.1). Salen and Zimmerman (2003), present the game as "A system in which players engage in an artificial conflict, defined by rules, that results in a quantifiable outcome" (p.96). All researchers' definitions turn on the fact that a game is a method or activity that includes players, who follow certain rules, interact with each other, and make challenges and goals. But what is most important that they amuse and enjoy it. Likewise, games can be introduced as mental or physical competitions managed depending on rules that control its participants in an artificial context.

1.12 Types of Games

Games classifications differ from source to another and from researcher to another one. Its categories usually overlap that is why it is difficult to be identified under standardized classifications. According to Hadfield (2003) "there are two types of games: competitive games, in which players or teams race to be first to reach the goal, and cooperative games, in which players or teams work together towards a common goal" (p.8). Furthermore, he divided games into linguistic games and communicative games. Linguistic games focus on accuracy such as producing a correct structure, whereas; communicative games focus on information exchanges such as filling in the chart. Hadfield classified games into many other categories:

1. Information gap games: Here Student A has some information and Student B. must acquire this information in order to complete the task and win.

2. Ordering games: for example ordering words to combine sentences, sorting pictures, arranging sentences, sequencing events in a narrative, or even arranging the players themselves!

3. Guessing games: in these games the first player guesses the information gesticulated by the second player.

4. Search games: here every one is involved. In these games everyone within the class has a key word that must be collected to fill in a questionnaire or to solve a problem.

5. Matching games: These games involve matching identical pairs of cards or pictures, where players should take pictures or cards from a selection to be matched by their partner's same selection.

6. Exchanging and collecting games: based on the 'barter' principle, Players have certain ideas, objectives, or cards which they will exchange for others so as to complete a collection.

7. Combining games: during which players are arranged in groups acting on certain information like families or people spending holidays together.

8. Memory games*:* seeing how much information can the player remember.

9. Labeling games: following the same principle of matching, players here match labels and pictures.

10. Board games: is a tabletop games include pieces moved or placed on a pre-marked surface or "board" in line with a collection of rules.

11. Role play games: usually in these kind, players act different real life role such as practicing real dialogues.

Hadfield (ibid) added another variation of games which is reinforcement games and choice games, under which the previous types of games are included but with slight differences.

A further list may involve:

A. Listening games*:* a decent way to remove student's boring in listening sessions is to use listening games to keep up their attention and interest.

B. Speaking games: teachers struggle usually to makes their students speak. Smart ones tend to use this kind which may include conversation and role plays.

C. Experiential games: its focus is on experiencing rather than winning.

D. Kinetic games.

Another categorization of games mentioned by McCallum (1980) includes Structure games, Vocabulary games, Number games, Spelling games, Conversation games, Writing games, and Role Play and Dramatics.

The last but not the least types that have a great influence on learning foreign languages, in general, are video games. Video games are electronic manipulation of images that can be played on computers, cell phones, or televisions, systematized by rules of interaction. It involves online video games, offline video games, computer games, mobile games, (ibid) arcade games, console games, handheld games, CD-ROM-based games, and so on.

1.13 Value of Using Games

Majority of teacher struggle to kip their students focused and motivated during the whole session, what makes games as the first valuable choice to overcome this issue. For Wright et al, "Games also help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful" (ibid, p.2). Whereas, El-Shamy adds that Games develop repetition, reinforcement, retention, and transference (ibid). Generally, games are effective tools which help students to memorize better, engage effectively, interact actively, practice language, break the class routine, increase their learning achievements, and finally assess their achievement.

Constantinescu (2012) (as cited in Gozcu, E. & Caganaga, C., K, .2016, pp.128-129) presents some advantages of games as in the following:

1. "Games build up learners' English repertoire in a familiar and comfortable environment (even for students who may have special needs), where they feel confident.
2. Games increase motivation and desire for self-improvement.

3. Challenge and competition are key factors for any game and students pay more attention to completing the task.

4. Interdisciplinary approach. Students use knowledge from other classes, too.

5. Games develop students' ability to observe.

6. Games have clear rules and objectives

7. Games develop critical thinking, problem solving, and imagination.

8. Games offer new and dynamic forms of teaching/ practicing which replace the traditional worksheets.

9. Games are adaptable for different levels of knowledge.

10. Educational games are easy to understand and use.

11. Educational games do not take long time to be played in the class.

12. There are many online educational games which are free of charge.

13. Immediate feedback both for the students and the teacher.

14. The results are more visible (sometimes both visual and acoustic) and have a stronger impact.

15. The working time is usually known from the beginning and it is respected.

16. Games facilitate collaborative learning but, in the same time, students may learn at their own speed and cognitive level.

17. Games may be used in the classroom as rewards for students."

1.14 Disadvantages of Using Games

Besides all the advantages of using games, there are some disadvantages. Games are considered by some teachers as a waste of learners' time. In other words, not all games work effectively as it is supposed. This is maybe due to learners' differences or to the absence of the perfect circumstances. For instance, learners' differences may propose problems not only with timing but also with the goal of the game itself, especially in big classes. Some students will respond to a certain type of game whereas some will interact with other types, this is a

matter of predilection. However, teenagers, usually, do not prefer to study with games and see themselves older than doing that. Regarding ideal circumstances, noise is also a major problem that is usually caused by either insufficient instruction of the game or by disorganization of students.

1.15 Teachers' Perceptions Towards Games

Concerning teachers' views on the use of games, only few researches conducted on this matter. Wang in his study on the effect of using communicative games in teaching and learning English has found that "...teachers generally appreciated the value of using games as language learning activities" (2010,p.134), wherein most of them agree that games are beneficial to them in making their lessons more interesting and their students more motivated. On the other hand, other teachers hold negative views on the use of games and prefer the traditional way of teaching which includes simple techniques such as memorizing, imitation, repetition, and so on. Teachers who focus on terminating the program, view games as a waste of time where they may face problems with its preparations, lack of materials, awkward physical environment of the classroom...etc.

1.16 Games as a Teaching Tool of Descriptive Writing in FL Classrooms

As we have seen previously, games hold a significant role in education as well as in developing good writing especially writing descriptive texts. Students in writing descriptive texts struggle mainly with vocabulary and grammatical structures (Fadholi, 2016). However, in many researches, it has been proved that games develop students' vocabulary and grammar knowledge. Sahar(2016) in her study on using games to teach vocabulary to young learners has found that "Games can help young learners to learn their vocabulary effectively"(p.124). Nowadays, many teachers in teaching descriptive writing incline towards presenting their lesson in funny ways where, for example, they use pictures or colored flashcards that include

descriptive information. Here students can work in pairs or groups to describe the subject. There are many games designed especially to develop students' descriptive writing. But what is important that teachers must be selective in using games.

1.16.1 Games Selection in Teaching Descriptive Writing

For Allen"A well-chosen game can help the students acquire words correctly and feel that certain words are important and necessary because without those words the objective of the game cannot be achieved" (1983, p. 10). Teachers in selecting games must take into consideration many factors, for example, the objective and the aim of the class, students' needs, students' differences, cultural knowledge, available materials, and so on. Constantinescu (2012) (as cited in Gozcu & Caganaga, ibid) stated that when choosing language games, teachers must consider that:

1) Games should have an aim. They are used to motivate students, not only for fun.

2) Games should focus on the use of language. By their means students have to learn, practice, or refresh language components.

3) The content should be appropriate. It should fit the curriculum, be correct from all points of view, and not promote wrong values (e.g. violence).

4) Games should be technically easy to use in the classroom.

5) Games should be in accordance with students' age and level of knowledge.

6) Games should keep all of the students interested.

7) It is advisable to use short games; otherwise, students may lose their interest.

1.16.2 Examples of Descriptive Writing Games

Posterior to the aforementioned basis for good selected games, a set of commonly used descriptive writing games in TEFL classroom courses would be covered in this section. Starting by the first game, Show Don't Tell is a multisensory funny game in which characters' descriptions are shown using adjectives, action verbs, adverbs, personification, metaphors,

and similes, instead of telling directly. This game is popular for its effectiveness in improving creative writing with more sensory details to create rich and thick descriptions. Secondly, Who am I or What am I is a guessing game which is widely used in teaching this type of writing where players are provided with pictures to describe the object or the opposite. It has nearly the same principles as the previous game. The third game is scramble language elements. This game is presented as scrambled sentences or scrambled words where players organize those elements to formulate a paragraph or a sentence. Crossword puzzle is a word game that consists of squares and blanks in which players have to guess the clues and cross the words vertically and horizontally to collect and create final descriptions. Dominoes and Pizza games as well are effective in teaching descriptive writing. Both games have the same principles where players write in each part a descriptive element until they complete the required description. Hadfield (ibid) added a number of classroom descriptive writing games: Home Sweet Home for describing houses and flats, My Home Town for describing a place, Lost Umbrellas for describing objects, Family Portrait for describing people-face, Wallflowers for describing people-clothes, Feeling for describing feelings, How Does It Feel for describing a sensual experience, and Put It Together for describing a scene.

Conclusion

As we have seen before, games are regarded as new effective strategies in teaching writing. However, many researchers proved its effectiveness in improving students' performance. In this chapter, we defined what games are and how they are categorized. Also, we have highlighted its value in education without neglecting its disadvantages. Further, we discussed teachers' perceptions towards the games use, followed by the principles of selecting games and some descriptive writing games. In the next chapters, we will present the methodological framework.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

Introduction

2. Research Design & Instruments

2.1 Population and Sampling

2.2 Research Instruments

2.2.1The Quasi-experiment

a. Warm- up

b. Test Design

1. Pre-test and Post-test

2. Rating Scale

c. The treatment Session

1. Game One (scrambled words)

2. Game Two (Guessing)

d. Classroom Observation

2.2.2 Teachers' Interview

Administration and Description of the Teacher's Interview

Introduction

To investigate the research hypothesis and to achieve its objectives, this chapter will present a clear description of the practical process starting by presenting its population and instruments of collecting information, moving to analysing the data and discussing the findings, and closing by interpretations of results and recommendations. However, it will provide evidence of the credibility and validity of the research conducted.

2. Research Design & Instruments

Regarding the objectives of the present research, a mixture of qualitative and quantitative method is used to carry out the study. Quantitatively, pupils were exposed to a quasi-experimental study including pre-test, training, and post-test. A structured interview, as qualitative method, was designed in order to get more details and supports to the variables hypothesized in this research.

2.1 Population and Sampling

The populations of the current study are fourth-grade pupils at Abu Der El Ghifari middle school Beni Thour Ouargla in addition to two fourth-grade English teachers out of three teachers of ^{4th} grade who teach there. Only one group out of four groups of the 4^{th} grade classes has been chosen randomly. Dornyei(2007) adds: "...random samples are almost always more representative than non-random samples"(p.97). This class incudes27 pupils composed of 16 girls and 11 boys aged between 14 and 18 years old.

The reason behind choosing these participants is that, first, in this stage students find many difficulties and tend to commit a lot of mistakes in writing. Second. The syllabus contains series of lessons that focus mainly on the descriptive writing which in turn found in task forms in their textbook. Moreover, the students seemed excited and welcomed the use of games in their learning. Teachers as well were helpful and accepted to take a part of in study.

2.2 Research Instruments

To identify the effect of games on teaching and learning descriptive text writing, two main instruments were opted: Quasi –experiment and structured interview.

2.2.1 Quasi –experiment

In the Quasi –experiment, students were exposed to a warm-up, pre-test, training sessions, and pos-test. First, the pre-test which is an initial measurement of the pupils' writing ability before the training sessions take place. Second, the training session where the pupils receive a treatment in certain circumstances using descriptive writing games. Third, the post-test which is a final measurement of the effect of the treatment (games) on the pupils' writing performance and whether or not the training was successful. But before starting the experiment and as observers, we attended 2 sessions on descriptive writing with the treated population. This helped us to recognize the pupils' issues and needs in this type of writing in addition to what they have seen already about descriptive writing.

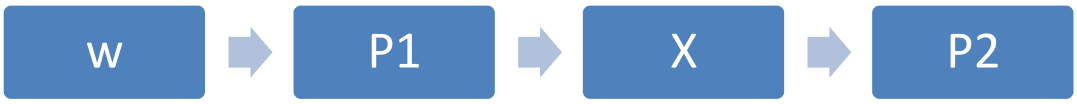

Figure 2. One group pre-test and post-test design

Warm-up: W **Pre-test: P1** **Treatment: X** **Post-test:P2**

a. Warm-up

Before the pre-test and as a warm-up, the pupils received a short revision in 20 minutes comprised, first, the generic structure of descriptive paragraph which contains identification and description. Second, the most important vocabulary or adjectives used to describe a character (personality and appearance) was presented clearly using real examples. Also, the use and the form of the present tense were highlighted. The teacher's revision was in a form of questions asking to monitor students' understanding and to activate their prior knowledge

where the students responded to her explanation.

b. Test Design

1. Pre-test and Post-test

To measure pupils' level and difficulties, accurately, in writing a descriptive paragraph, we designed an identical format of pre-test and post-test (See appendix A). However, a test "Validity refers to whether the test actually measures what is purports to measure" (Cohen, 2001, p. 525). The test was done at Abu Der El Ghifari middle school Beni Thour Ouargla on 27 fourth-grade pupils. Its duration was half an hour, where pupils were exposed to write a short paragraph of no more than six lines in which they describe any famous character they know. The aim of the pre-test is to get details on pupils' ability and level in writing descriptive paragraphs before using descriptive writing games; whereas, the post-test aimed at checking the effectiveness of using games in the classroom to improve pupils' writing ability.

2. Rating Scale

For a more reliable and valid assessment, an analytical rating scale has been chosen. Analytical scales are the best servers of the classroom evaluation of learning (Brown, 2010). Such scales rate writing on several criteria. Weigle stated that "Depending on the purpose of the writing assessment, scripts might be rated on such features as content, organization, cohesion, register, vocabulary, grammar, or mechanics" (2002. P114). Also, she presented Jacobs's et al (1981) scoring profile as the best known in assessing writing that contains five aspects: content (30 %), organization (20 %), vocabulary (20 %), language use (25 %), and mechanics (5%). However, Brown in 2007 as well provided an adequate scoring model which is widely used in assessing students' descriptive paragraph writing (See appendix D). This model was the most appropriate in correcting our sample tests.

c. Treatment Sessions

Taking into consideration what has been established theoretically and regarding the aim of the current study, two games were planned and scrutinized thoroughly to be presented later

on in four sessions (see appendix B). These games were designed depending on what the pupils received in the lessons of descriptive writing by their teachers. They have already received lessons on describing a person in the traditional way of teaching. Practically, the first three sessions were devoted to one game related to physical appearance descriptions and repeated three times with different characters and different descriptions. The second game was presented in one session covered personality descriptions of different famous characters. To ensure the credibility of the experiment and to show the researcher's objectivity, the games were presented by the teacher here self not the researcher

The aim of both games was to present the different structures of a sentence and paragraph form, the order of adjectives in English (OSSACOMP), the use of new vocabulary. However, the main purpose was to motivate the pupils to be engaged in the learning activities.

1. Game One (scrambled words)

In each session, and after sticking the famous character's picture on the board, the class was divided into groups to be provided, later on, with envelopes that contained scrambled words in order to be combined in a form of descriptive sentences which identify the character selected. In the end, collectively, a paragraph that describes the character was written as a model for the whole class. This game was presented as a competition where students were limited by time.

2. Game Two (matching)

In the last session of the training, the same groups were provided by short paragraphs that describes physical appearance plus personality. On the board there were many pictures, thus, each two characters were nearly the same. The pupils tried to much each paragraph with one of each two approximate pictures (see appendix B). As the previous game this game also repeated twice and played as a competition in a limited time.

d. Classroom Observation

Since the teacher introduced the games, we designed observation checklists based on which both teachers and learners were evaluated. This observation took place during the whole four sessions where the games were carried out. It aimed to determine the ongoing developments in the training in addition to the games effect on the classroom atmosphere including teachers' performance and students' reactions and interaction. Cohen, Manion, Morrison, view that "The distinctive feature of observation as a research process is that it offers an investigator the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations."(2011, p. 456)

2.2.2 Teachers' Interview

The second instruments in this work, is a teachers' interview which was designed to add clarifications and consolidations to the experimental findings. "Researchers need to establish their credibility with participants by asking relevant questions which are seen as meaningful by the participant and which are based on an understanding of the research subject." (Ritchie & Lewis. 2003, p.243)

Administration and Description of the teacher's interview

The interview was conducted with three teachers of fourth-grade at Abu Der El Ghifari middle school Beni Thour Ouargla. It is a semi-structured interview designed from twelve open-ended questions and divided into three main sections. The first section targeted background information of the teachers, whereas the second discuss their experiences and views. The last section entailed the assessment tools of their students in addition to further suggestions.

Chapter Three: Results and Discussion

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Quasi-experiment Analysis

3.1.1. Classroom Observation Results and Interpretation

a. Session One

b. Session Two

c. Session Three

d. Session Four

3.1.2 Pre-test and Post- test Analysis and Interpretation

a. Pre-test Results

b. Post-test Results

c. Comparison Between Pre-test & Post-test scores and Interpretation

d. Statistical Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test's Results by Means of T-test

e. Hypothesis Testing

3.2 Teacher's Interview Analysis and Discussion

3.3 Validity and Reliability

Conclusion

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The quasi-experiment

The discussion of the experimental results entailed an analysis of the classroom observation results in addition to the analysis of the two tests results.

3.1.1 Classroom Observation Results and Interpretation

In all the sessions, the teacher has presented the topic clearly at the beginning. Also, he used graphic organizers and figurative language in each correction.

a. Session One (describing Masha)

In the first session, each group was provided with flash cards contain scrambled words from which they formed sentences. Those sentences were descriptions of the hanging Neymer Di Silva picture on the board. From the observation, in the first 15 min we found that 55% of students were engaged and 45% were observing. However, students were asking the teacher on ambiguous words, discussing actively the task with little noise, and working collaboratively to organize the maximum number of sentences.

The possible number of formed sentences from the scrambled words is six. However, groups' results are as the following:

Table 02. First sessions' results

Groups Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Correct sentences	17%	50%	83%	17%	33%	67%
Wrong sentences	50%	17%	17%	17%	33%	33%
Total written sentences	4	4	6	2	4	6

After 15 minutes, the teacher began to correct the answers and announce the winner. Collectively, the teacher and his students started another stage of writing a typical paragraph

of those sentences that describes Masha.

b. Session Two (Describing Neymer Di-silva)

The same observations of the first session stages have been observed in this session in addition to a slight evolvement in students' performance where 70% were engaged and 30% were observing. However, there was more systematic interaction with each other and with their teacher as well. Also, students were faster in forming fuller and higher number of sentences, and faster in forming the typical paragraph on Masha.

The possible number of formed sentences from the scrambled words is six. However, groups' results are presented in table 03:

Groups / Answers	1	2	3	4	5	6
Correct sentences	33%	35%	100%	50%	67%	17%
Wrong sentences	17%	0%	0%	17%	33%	50%
Total written sentences	3	3	6	5	6	4

Table 03. Second sessions' results

Compared to the results of the first session, we noticed that there were achievements in the first five groups, while only the sixth group have had a slightly lower achievement.

c. Session Three (Describing Detective Konan)

In addition to the previous sessions' observations, only few mistakes, especially in ordering adjectives, were detected in an active answering process. Also, students were more aware of the sentence structures and paragraph format. However, 95% of the students participated, while 5% were observing.

The possible number of formed sentences from the scrambled words is nine. However, groups' results are as the following:

Groups Ansewrs	1	2	3	4	5	6
Correct sentences	56%	44%	78%	44%	67%	44%
Wrong sentences	22%	11%	0%	22%	0%	11%
Total written sentences	6	5	7	6	6	5

Table 04. Third sessions' results

In this third repetition of the scrambled words game, we observed an improvement in all groups' performance where fewer mistakes were omitted.

d. Session Four (Guess the picture)

Up to this stage, we found a remarkable development in students' participation, estimated at 100 percent. Even law achievers were using their best to engage in the activity, thought they used sometimes their mother tongue and their body language. Also, higher scores of correct answers were recorded in a shorter time.

This game was repeated twice. The results of the two activities are presented in the table 05:

Groups Guessed characters		1	2	3	4	5	6
1st time	Correct	50%	75%	100%	75%	100%	25%
	Wrong	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	75%
2nd time	Correct	100%	75%	100%	50%	75%	50%
	Wrong	0%	25%	0%	50%	25%	50%

Table 05. Fourth sessions' results

According to results, all groups have made a progress, especially the first group.

3.1.2 Pre-test and Post- test Analysis and Interpretations

a. Pre-test Results

In this stage we collected pupils 'descriptive paragraphs after asking them to describe a famous character or any other person they know. We assessed this pre test using the previous mentioned rating scale and its formula. The results of this test are presented in this table:

Students	Content(30)	Organization(20)	Grammar(20)	Vocabulary(15)	Mechanics(15)	Score
S1	3	2	2	1	2	53,75
S2	2	1	2	3	2	50
S3	2	1	2	2	1	41,25
S4	3	2	2	2	2	57,5
S5	2	2	3	3	1	55
S6	3	2	2	2	3	61,25
S7	2	1	1	2	1	36,25
S8	3	2	2	1	1	50
S9	3	3	1	2	2	57,5
S10	2	1	2	1	3	45
S11	1	1	1	1	1	25
S12	3	2	2	2	2	57,5
S13	1	1	2	1	2	33,75
S14	3	2	2	2	1	53,75
S15	2	2	2	3	2	53,75
S16	2	2	3	3	1	55
S17	3	4	3	4	3	83,75
S18	3	2	3	2	2	62,5
S19	3	2	1	2	1	48,75
S20	2	2	2	3	2	53,75
S21	2	2	2	2	2	50
S22	2	1	1	2	1	36,25
S23	3	2	3	2	2	62,5
S24	1	2	1	1	1	37,5
S25	3	2	2	2	2	57,5
S26	2	1	1	2	1	36,25
S27	1	1	1	1	1	25
Total	62	48	51	54	45	1340

average	49,62

Table 06. Pre-test results

From the table 06, it can be seen that the highest score in the pre test was 83.75, the lowest score was 25, and the average was42.87.

b. Post-test Results

After the training and after the post-test, we collected pupils' descriptive paragraphs to be assessed using the same previous rating scale. The results of the post-test are presented in the following table:

Students	Content(30)	Organization(20)	Grammar(20)	Vocabulary(15)	Mechanics(15)	Score
S1	3	3	2	3	2	66,25
S2	3	2	2	4	2	65
S3	2	3	2	2	2	55
S4	3	2	3	3	2	66,25
S5	3	2	3	3	3	70
S6	3	2	2	3	3	65
S7	2	2	3	2	1	51,25
S8	3	3	2	3	1	62,5
S9	3	3	2	3	2	66,25
S10	3	2	2	2	2	57,5
S11	2	1	1	2	1	36,25
S12	3	2	2	3	2	61,25
S13	2	1	2	1	2	41,25
S14	4	3	3	3	2	78,75
S15	3	3	3	2	1	63,75
S16	3	3	3	3	2	71,25
S17	4	4	3	4	3	91,25
S18	3	2	3	2	3	66,25
S19	3	2	1	2	2	50,25
S20	3	2	2	3	2	68,75
S21	2	2	2	4	2	57,5
S22	2	1	1	2	2	40
S23	4	3	3	4	3	86,25
S24	1	2	2	1	2	38,75

S25	4	3	2	2	2	70
S26	2	1	3	2	2	50
S27	2	2	2	2	1	46,25
Total	75	61	61	70	54	1642,75
Average	60,84					

Table 07. Post-test results

From the post –test results, it can be seen that the highest score was 91, 25, the lowest score was 36.25, and the average was 49.31.

In this stage and from comparing the results, we can see that there is an achievement in pupils' writing performance after teaching them using games. However, in the pre-test the highest score was 83, 75 whereas the highest post-test score was 91, 25. The lowest score of the pre-test (25) was lower than the post- test lowest score (36, 25).

c. Comparison between Pre-test & Post-test Scores and Interpretation

The pre-test and post-test results are translated in the figure 05:

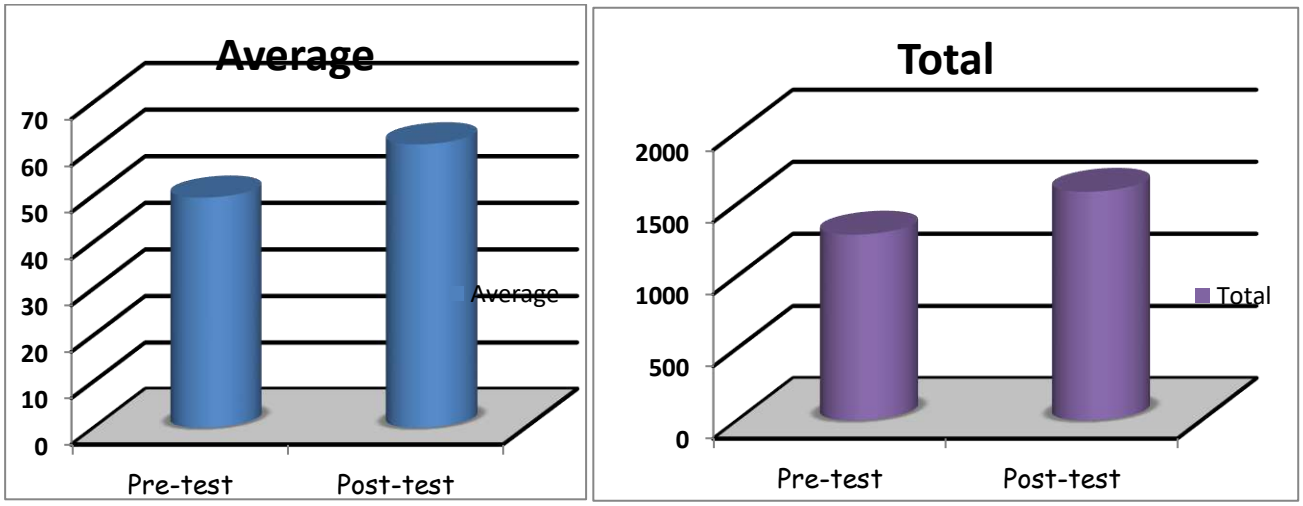

Figure 05. The pre-test and pos-test results comparison

From the above shapes of descriptive statists, it can be seen that there is a significant difference in students writing after teaching them using the games. Starting by comparing the scores of the two tests, all students score higher marks in the post-test especially the students numbered **14**, **23**, and **27** who have made a great improvement in their writings. Subsequently, a considerable higher value, in the post-test average and total scores, was recorded. However,

the overage of scores shifted from **49,62** to **60,84**, whereas the total of scores shifted from **1340** to **1642,75.**

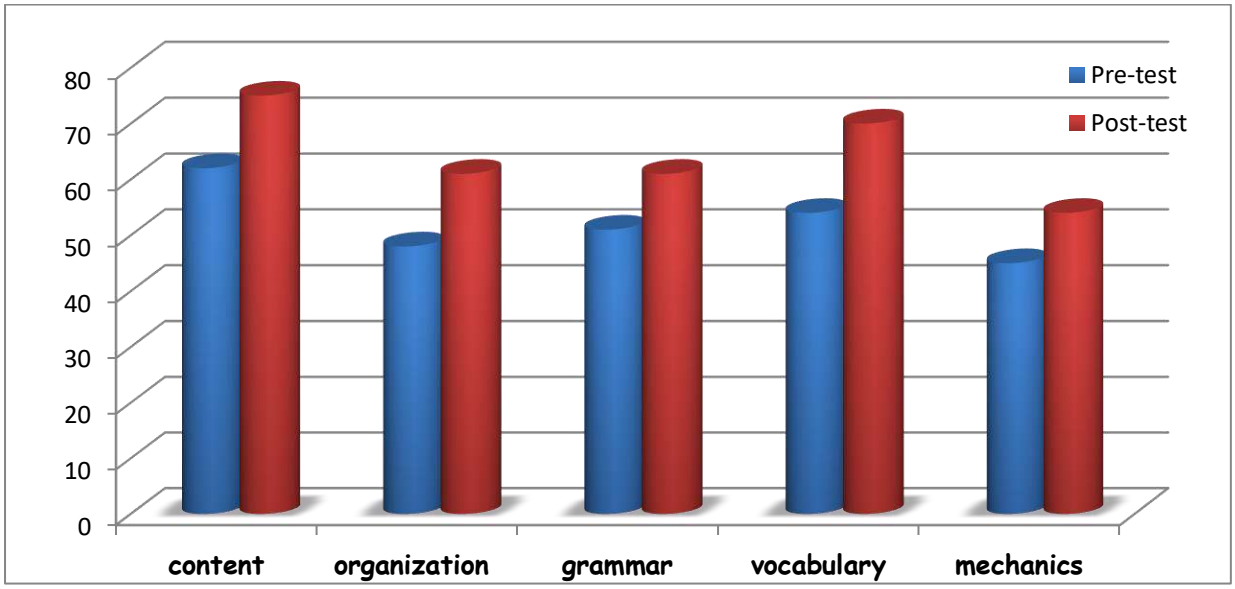

Figure 06. The comparison of the five criterion results

This figure indicates an improvement in all the five aspects on which the writing was assessed. In the foreground, a higher value was recorded in vocabulary scores of the post-test with a difference of 16 points followed by the content scores and the organization scores with a difference of 13 points. Mechanics scores and grammar scores had nearly the same difference, where the first recorded 10 points and the second recorded 9 points.

Students scored highly on content than on vocabulary where they used vocabulary to serve the content. However, consistency in using the other four aspects, especially vocabulary, made their topics clearer. Grammar, organization, and mechanics scores were at nearly the same level.

d. Statistical Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test's Results by Means of the T-test

The results of both pre-test and post-test were analysed using 'T-test'. This statistical procedure is used to measure the development of a sample affected by a variable. It involves calculations of the mean (M), the standard of deviation (SD_D), the standard of deviation from the mean of D (SDM), the t observation (t_o), the degree of freedom(df) at two significant levels, and finally testing the hypothesis using comparison between the t observation(t_o) and the t table(t_t). The process of the t-test is as the following:

- D is the difference between score of variable P1 and score of variable P2 and then

D = P1 – P2

D = 1340–1642,75= −190,75

The results are as the following:

Students N°	Pre test	Post test	Gain Score (D)	(D) 2
	P1	P2	P1−P2	
S1	53,75	66,25	−12,5	156,25
S2	50	65	−15	225
S3	41,25	55	−14	196
S4	57,5	66,25	−8,75	76,56
S5	55	70	-25	225
S6	61,25	65	−3,75	14,06
S7	36,25	51,25	-15	225
S8	50	62,5	−12,5	156,25
S9	57,5	66,25	-8,75	76,56
S10	45	57,5	-12,5	156,25
S11	25	36,25	−11,25	126,56
S12	57,5	61,25	−3,75	14,06
S13	33,75	41,25	−7,5	56,25
S14	53,75	78,75	-25	625
S15	53,75	63,75	−10	100
S16	55	71,25	−16,25	264,06
S17	83,75	91,25	-7,5	56,25

S18	62,5	66,25	-3,75	14,06
S19	48,75	50,25	−1,5	2,25
S20	53,75	68,75	-15	225
S21	50	57,5	-7	49
S22	36,25	40	−3,75	14,06
S23	62,5	86,25	-23,75	564,06
S24	37,5	38,75	−1,25	1,56
S25	57,5	70	-12,5	156,25
S26	36,25	50	-13,75	189,06
S27	25	46,25	-21,25	451,56
Total	1340	1642,75	−190,75	4415,97
Average	49,62	60,84	-7,06	212,26

Table 08. Comparison of the pre-test and post-test results

- Mean from differences (MD) is:

$$MD = \frac{\sum D}{N}$$

$$= \frac{-190,75}{27}$$

$$= -7,06$$

- Standard of Deviation (SD_D) from difference of variable P1 and P2 is:

$$SD_D = \sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2}{N^\circ}} - \sqrt{\frac{(\sum D)^2}{N^\circ}}$$

$$= \sqrt{\frac{4415,97}{27}} - \sqrt{\frac{(-190,75)}{27}}^2$$

$$= \sqrt{190,75} - \sqrt{(-7,06)^2}$$

$$= \sqrt{190,75 - 49,8436}$$

$$= 11,87$$

- The degree of freedom (df) is:

$$df = N - 1$$

$$= 27 - 1$$

$$= 26$$

- The standard of deviation from the mean of D(SDM) is:

$$SDM = \frac{SD}{\sqrt{N-1}}$$

$$= \frac{11,87}{\sqrt{27-1}}$$

$$= 2,33$$

- Determining to (t Observation), with formula:

$$t_o = \frac{MD}{SDm}$$

$$= \frac{-7,06}{2,33}$$

$$= -3,03$$

Here we come to the last step in the t test which entails the determination of the degree of freedom at different levels of significance. Based on the **t** distribution critical values table, the degree of freedom **(26)** at the significant level(α) of 5% is **2,05** and at the significant level of 1% is **2,77**. So, **2,05<3,03>2,77** and thence **3,03 (t_0) > 2,77(t_t)**.

As it is noticed **t_o > t_t** (t-table) subsequently there is a considerable difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test. However, in the post-test, pupils received higher scores than the pre-test results. This means that the use of games in teaching descriptive writing improves pupils' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs.

d. Hypothesis Testing

The final analysis was performed to confirm the aforementioned hypothesis is as the following:

H_0 (Null hypothesis): The use of games in teaching descriptive writing does not enhance pupils' ability to write descriptive paragraphs.

H_a (Alternative hypothesis): The use of games in teaching descriptive writing enhances pupils' ability to write descriptive paragraphs.

Depending on the hypotheses mentioned it is assumed that if:

$t_0 > t_t$: the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

$t_0 < t_t$: the null hypothesis accepted and the alternative hypothesis rejected.

From the results **$t_0 > t_t$** and **2,05<3,03>2,77,** so the **H_0** is rejected and the **H_a** is accepted**.**

As it is noticed **$t_o > t_t$** (t-table) subsequently there is a considerable difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test. However, in the post-test, pupils received higher scores than the pre-test results. This means that the use of games in teaching descriptive writing improves pupils' ability in writing descriptive paragraphs.

3.2 Teacher's interview analysis and discussion

Q1: What are your academic qualifications?

Q2: How many years have you been teaching English?

Teachers	Study degree	Numbers of years in teaching
01	Classical License	17 years
02	LMD License	7 years

Table09: teachers' academic qualifications and teaching years

The above table reflects the teachers' background information and experience in English. Both teachers are specializing in English with the former graduating in the classical system for one teacher and in the LMD system for the other. Also, they have different teaching periods in the field.

Q3: Do you follow a particular approach in teaching writing?

According to both teachers, there is no specific approach. Teachers tend to be eclectic in the choice of a certain approach. One of the teachers says "....there is not one specific approach, because writing is a style and it differs from learner to learner, and each time the teacher finds him/herself working with different approach.....". Writing for them involves more than one approach because the final goal of any piece of writing needs that.

Q4: How do you motivate your students to write?

According to teachers' responses, Motivation presents the dominant problem for them. They agree that motivation starts with enthusiastic teachers. However, creating a good atmosphere of writing is one of their main concerns. This comprises grouping the students to make them work collectively in order to reduce the boredom as well as breaking the routine using games and new materials, for example, visual aids such as colorful charts, videos, and pictures,. One of the teachers added that *"...rewarding pupils with small gifts and some additional marks or choosing different varieties and interesting topics are effective ways to encourage them".* On the other hand, the teacher emphasizes the importance of incentive words that give students a sense of accomplishment.

Q5: Are you interested in using new techniques in teaching writing? Clarify.

Generally, all the teachers' responses show that they are always interested in using new techniques in teaching writing. They see that using a new ways will motivate their pupils to write better what gives them the opportunity to get rid of the traditional way of teaching. One of the teachers say *".....Yes, Instead of merely use of traditional ways of teaching, we are in need always to find new techniques in teaching writing suits our students' styles of learning...".*

Q6: What are the difficulties your students, usually face in descriptive writing?

The interviewed teachers have nearly the same views. First, they present poor vocabulary in the top of their students' difficulties in writing a description. One of the teachers state *"... students struggle mainly with word choices because they do not have enough words and if they have they do not know how to use them".* Second, the students have problems in the structure of any piece of writing. Clearly, they do not organize their writing into an introduction, body, and conclusion. Finally, the students have problems with grammar, especially the use of tenses, and with spelling correct words form.

Q7: What kind of activities or techniques you find useful in teaching descriptive writing?

Concerning activities, both teachers use many ways of teaching descriptive texts and they use activities such as:

- Direct questions to describe a person or a place or whatever.
- Reordering the sentences to formulate a correct paragraph.
- Using pictures and flash cards.
- Matching tasks.
- Games.

Q8: Do you find games as a beneficial tool in teaching descriptive writing? Why?

The teachers' responses point out the fact that language learning games are effective tools in teaching descriptive writing. It helps their students to practice the topics comfortably since they cannot be serious all the time and since their students need to break the same routine. But the most important thing is that games stimulate the students' creativity and refresh their brains, indeed. One teacher states the following *"Middle school students are more children than adolescents where teaching descriptive writing is difficult for them. I get used to their nature and from time to time we play games in order to keep them focus, engaged, and enjoyed during the session"***.** On the other hand, the teachers relate games validity to its selection where the content and objectives of the lesson, time of the session, simple instructions of the game, and students' language level are taken into consideration.

Q9: What types of games do you find useful to teach descriptive writing?

Both teachers offer guessing games, matching games, ordering games, and picture design

games as the most useful types to teach descriptive writing. However, they link the selection of descriptive writing games to the focus and to the purpose of its uses as well as to the students' preferences. The further precise explanation of this is that teachers choose to spend time, maintaining the basic principles, on adjusting the game to make it suitable for the students' level and to the lesson's objectives. For instance, when the teachers try to enhance their students' vocabulary, as a part of descriptive writing teaching, they can use guessing games, matching games, or crossword games but they adjust it by adding rules or using different materials such as flashcards, pictures, and so on. One of the teachers added ordering scrambled language elements games and gap-filling games, but both teachers insist on the importance of the teachers' design of the games.

Q10: What are the difficulties you face usually when using games in classroom?

Both teachers consider the issue of time as the first difficulty they face in using games. One teacher state that *"... even before applying the game in the class, we must think of its setting because we are restricted by a program to finish"***.** The second difficulty is with class organization, where teachers, especially novice ones, suffer to control noisy students. In addition to that, luck of material and administration support is one of the obstacles, however many teachers get the games materials bay they own. Furthermore, finding an appropriate game takes time and energy. However, sometimes when teachers finish the game session, they discover that game selection or design was wrong from the beginning.

Q11: How do you assess your students writing? If you use a certain score mention it?

Both teachers do not follow a special score, but they put some basic points to assess the writing of pupils. First of all, they see if the piece of writing is related to the topic. Second, they see the organization of the writing taking into consideration the introduction, body, and conclusion. Finally, they check the word choice, grammar, and spelling mistakes. According

to one of the teachers *"...I regard the form including introduction, body and conclusion, the content, grammar, spelling ...."*

Q12: Can you suggest anything concerning the use of games in teaching descriptive writing?

The teachers suggest involving the use of games in teaching descriptive writing, even one game per two weeks, under some condition. Firstly, any teacher must know how his/her students want to learn, what they luck, what he/she is supposed to teach them. Hence, Novice teachers usually struggle when using this tool because they do not have sufficient experience. They should be aware first of how to deal with all the previously mentioned difficulties. Secondly, the game should be relevant to the content, flexible, and includes simple instructions. Therefore, teachers need to take into consideration when and how to use the game as well as how to select and adapt this game in the classroom. Finally, it is suggested to employ games as a tool for students' assessment.

Findings and Discussion

The interview findings show that both teachers came from different specialties this give them distinctive background information and knowledge. They have different long experiences in teaching English what reflect their great awareness of using games in teaching writing. Hence, they try to be eclectic in order to employ convenient approaches to teach writing with what suits the classroom environment. Teachers seek to motivate their students to write by adopting variety to the classroom; this comprises variety in the tools, in rewards, or in content, and flexible grouping.

Since both teachers are aware of the difficulties that their students face in writing, especially with vocabulary, they showed a great interest in using new techniques of teaching descriptive writing. Thus, they find games as effective tools in teaching this kind of writing.

The most distinguished reason for that is the games ability to stimulate students' creativity in addition to the fun atmosphere that the games add to the classroom in order to make them hyperactive and engaged. Teachers insist on the importance of game design or selection to what suits students' nature, and they have present guessing games, matching games, ordering games, picture design games, ordering scrambled language elements games, and gap-filling games as good examples to teach descriptive writing. Nevertheless, when teachers use games in their classes they straggle mainly with time frame, classroom control, and games selection.

Finally, teachers showed their needs to gaming strategy in teaching descriptive writing, and they suggest adding games as a tool of teaching and assessment at the same time. However, they gave some remarks on the use of games before and during its implementation.

3. 3 Validity and Reliability

Any successful research, in the first place, is constructed on two indispensable fundamentals: validity and reliability. First, validity is a question of appropriateness of the whole research methodology. Biggam stated that "Valid research is all about implementing your empirical work – from selection of an overall research strategy to the collection and analysis of your data – in a way that uses research approaches and techniques suited to each of these activities"(2008, P.99). Thereupon, a quasi-experimental design was conducted including pre-test, training sessions, and post-test in addition to a classroom observation to follow students' writing progress through the whole research execution. Also, a semi-structured interview was presented as additional assertion of the experimental results.

Even thought a research is valid it is not necessarily that it is reliable. "...reliable research focuses on the need for a record of evidence that you did indeed do the research reliable research focuses on the need for a record of evidence that you did indeed do the research" (ibid). However, reliability in this research tackled the issue of trustworthiness which was

achieved, either in the body of the dissertation or in the Appendices, via providing detailed evidences on the research site, research instruments, and the collected data (interview transcripts and experiment results) in addition to a random sampling.

Conclusion

The last two chapters discussed the research methodology starting with research design and instruments and moving to data analysis and interpretations. The analysis and the interpretations of both the experimental results and teachers' interviews enabled us to confirm the present research hypothesis, which investigates the effectiveness of games in teaching descriptive writing.

General Conclusion, Limitations of the Study, and Pedagogical Implications

General Conclusion

The current research primary purpose was intended to investigate the effectiveness of games on teaching writing, especially descriptive text writing, to 4th-grade middle school pupils. In this regard, we started a review of the literature that presents the main issues that are related to writing. In the first chapter, we reviewed the basic concepts of writing in general covering its definition, types, importance, difficulties, and process. Also, it covered reviewing descriptive text teaching starting with descriptive text definition, its generic structure, and its significant lexico-grammatical features and moving to its teaching in the classroom by highlighting the main approaches used. The second chapter shed light the implementation of games in teaching and learning including game definitions, characteristics, types, value, disadvantage, and teachers' perception towards its uses in addition to its being as a tool of teaching descriptive text, this implied some examples of descriptive writing games and game selection principles in teaching this kind of writing.

The second part tests the formed hypotheses including analysis and interpretation of the gathered data through an experimental design and a teachers' interview. After in-depth analysis, the results point towards confirming the hypotheses given. To begin with, both test results revealed a significant improvement in students' writing, and this is due to the effectiveness of the training sessions they received where games were adopted. Students in each session showed higher performance in terms of memorization, motivation, and interaction, what reflects the great physical and psychological influence of the proposed tool.

The interview results showed a high teachers' awareness of the use of language games; they spotlight its importance and effectiveness in their classes and on their students' learning. Games create fun, challenge, creativity, motivation, and inspiration in their classes. Besides, teachers mentioned that this method reduces their students' difficulties in writing. It is true that teachers' use of this tool is primarily based on educational purpose, what reflects their great responsibility in its implementation; because they are restricted with certain factors and

aspects of selecting the appropriate flexible game to what suit the students' nature. Hence, they highlight the importance of the regular use of games to avoid any negative effects of its both overuse and rarely use. Finally, the results obtained from both instruments used in the practical part led to confirm the formed hypotheses which imply the positive influence of games in teaching descriptive text writing.

Limitations of the study

As all researchers and with no doubt, we faced some difficulties limited our study. First, it was difficult to find a 4th grad middle school sampling and no teacher accepts disturbing his students' programme, only Mrs. ABBANI which considered our experiment as revision sessions. For instance, we were restricted to one group of 27 students which represents 25% of the total population. Also, we were limited by time which influenced our study continuum. Besides that, students' levels were imbalanced what makes it difficult to select a rating scale that covers each student's writing performance. However, this imbalance made it harder to choose games that suit all students' levels. Coronavirus as well presented a problem in collecting academic resources, especially books that took a long time to be found.

Pedagogical implications

The current study was designed, at the first place, to investigate the role of using games in teaching descriptive texts writing among 4th grad middle school students. Based on the findings, some recommendations can be formulated as the following: First, since this study revealed that games are effective in teaching descriptive writing, more gaming strategies must be implemented in middle schools courses. Second, such a strategy would help students to enhance not only the writing skills, but also other language skills such as reading, speaking, and listening, which are interrelated and affects each other. Third, gaming strategies take a long training sessions, the teacher must start early in his/her preparations. However, he/she must be aware of the good selection or planning of the game to what suits his students' status.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Sample of Students‟ Pre-Test and post-test

Name: ……..

In a paragraph of more than 4lines, describe the physical appearance and personality of someone’s you know.

……..……..……

……..……..……

……..……..…….

……..……..……

……..……..……..…

……..……..……

……..……

Appendix B

Games lessons Design

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">Prepared by: Abidli Nadjat_ Dagha Khaoula
Presented by: Hadda Abbani</td><td>Abu Der El Ghifari middle school Beni Thour Ouargla</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Goals:
1. Appropriate use and order of the adjectives
2. Correct use of the present simple
3. Adequate description of a person.
4. Convenient paragraph writing familiarity.
5. Avoid boredom in the learning & teaching process.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Level:4MS</td><td>Academic Year: 2019/2020</td></tr>
<tr><td>Timing</td><td colspan="2">Procedure:</td></tr>
<tr><td>50 min

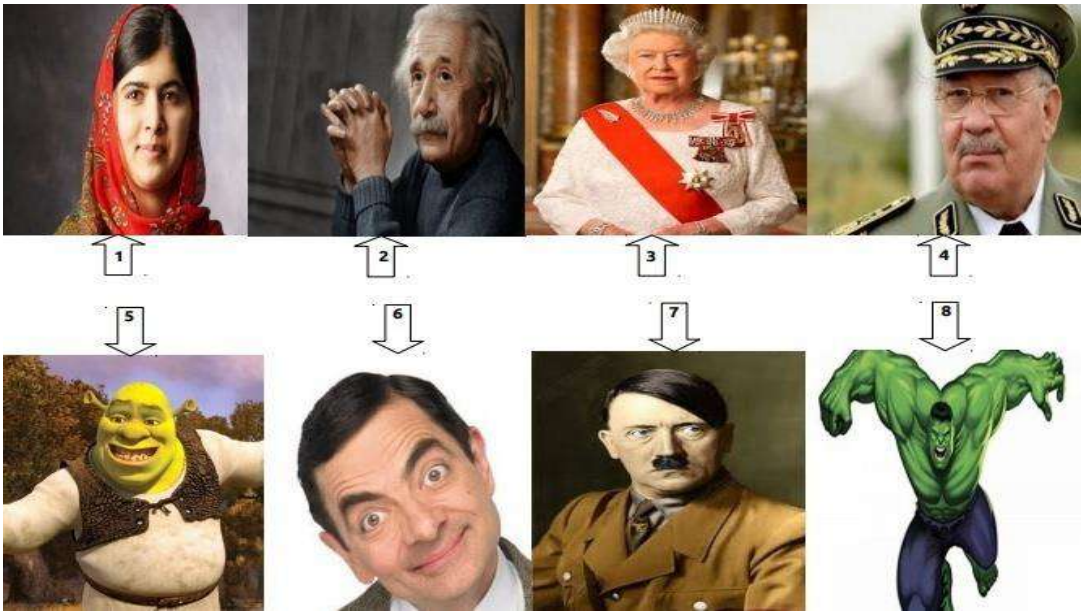
5min

15min

10 min

20min</td><td colspan="2"><u>Game 01: (flashcard game)</u>
• T divides his class into groups of four or five.
• Each group will be provided with flashcards that contains scrambled elements of sentences
• Ss try to combine sentences that describe the picture hanging on the white board.
• When they finish, the teacher dictates the correct answers with giving explanations with correcting the wrong ones and announce the winner.
Collectively, they form a short paragraph, from those scrambled sentences, that entails a topic sentence, physical appearance descriptions, and personality description.
Notice: This games was repeated three times
 </td></tr>
<tr><td>30min

05min</td><td colspan="2">• <u>Game 02: Who am I?</u> (guessing game) T Divides the class into groups of 4 or 5.
• Each group will be provided with long descriptive sentences</td></tr>
</table>

	• T sticks pictures of famous characters on the board with their names, where each two characters have approximate descriptions. 
15min	• Give students short descriptive paragraphs about those pictures without names.
10min	• Ss are supposed to read the paragraphs and guess through its physical appearance and personality descriptions the right described picture. • T corrects S's answers orally with explanation of ambiguous words. **Notice**: This game was repeated twice.

Appendix C

Teachers' interview

Dear teachers:

We gratefully invite you to be part of our research project. Our research thesis shed light the effectiveness of using games in teaching descriptive texts to improve students' writing skills. We would be so thankful to know your experiences and views concerning this issue.

Section One: Background Information

1. What are your academic qualifications?

2. How many years have you been teaching English?

Section Two: Teacher's Methodology

3. Do you follow a particular approach in teaching writing?

4. How do you motivate your students to write?

5. Are you interested in using new techniques in teaching writing? Clarify.

6. What are the difficulties your students, usually, face in descriptive writing?

7. What kind of activities or techniques you find useful in teaching descriptive writing?

8. Do you find games as a beneficial tool in teaching descriptive writing? Why?

9. What types of games do you consider useful to teach descriptive writing?

10. Do you face difficulties in using games in teaching writing in the class room? Exemplify.

Section Three: Assessment and suggestions

11. How do you assess your students' descriptive writing? If you use a certain score mention it?

12. Can you suggest any thing concerning the use of games in teaching descriptive writing?

Appendix D

Brown's Rating Scale

Aspect	Score	Performance Description	Weighting
Content (C) 30% -Topic -Details	4	The topic is complete and clear and the details are relating to the topic.	3x
	3	The topic is complete and clear but the details are almost relating to the topic.	
	2	The topic is complete and clear but the details are not relating to the topic.	
	1	The topic is not clear and the details are not relating to the topic.	
Organization (O) 20% -Identification -Description	4	Identification is complete and description is arranged with proper connectives.	2x
	3	Identification is almost complete and description is arranged with almost proper connectives.	
	2	Identification is not complete and descriptions are arranged with few misuse of connectives.	
	1	Identification is not complete and descriptions are arranged with misuse of proper connectives.	
Grammar (G) 20 % -Use present tense -Agreement	4	Very few grammatical or agreement inaccuracies.	2x
	3	Few grammatical or agreement inaccuracies but not affected on meaning.	
	2	Numerous grammatical or agreement inaccuracies.	
	1	Frequently grammatical or agreement inaccuracies.	
Vocabulary (V) 15 %	4	Effective choice of words and word forms.	1.5x
	3	Few misuse of vocabularies, word forms, but not change the meaning.	
	2	Limited range confusing words and word form.	
	1	Very poor knowledge of words, word forms, and not understandable.	
Mechanics (M) 15 % - Spelling - Punctuation - Capitalization	4	It uses correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	1.5x
	3	It has occasional errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	
	2	It has frequent errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	
	1	It is dominated by errors of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.	
$\text{Score} = \frac{3C + 2O + 2G + 1.5V + 1.5M}{40} x10$			

Résumé

Cette étude vise à démontrer l'importance de l'exploitation des jeux au service de la rédaction du texte descriptif, ainsi de son rôle efficace dans la motivation des apprenants dans l'acquisition de cette compétence de l'écriture. Pour vérifier les hypothèses posées, nous avons opté pour une approche quasi-expérimentale en faisant un premier test et une séance d'entraînement à l'école moyenne Abi Dhar El-Ghifari Beni Thour Ouargla, et un autre test auquel est soumise une classe de 4ème année moyenne composée de 27 apprenants au niveau d'Ouargla. Dans un autre côté, nous avons fait une interview de deux enseignants d'anglais dans le même établissement. Les résultats ont abouti à l'efficacité de ces jeux dans la rédaction du texte descriptif, plus sa contribution dans la motivation des apprenants, et la création d'une atmosphère passionnante de l'apprentissage.

Mots clé: Jeux, Texte Descriptif, Compétence de L'écriture, efficacité, Motivation

ملخص البحث

تهدف الدراسة إلى إظهار مدى أهمية توظيف الالعاب في تدريس كيفية كتابة نص وصفي، فضلا عن دورها الفعال في تحفيز الطلاب لاكتساب هذه المهارة ألا وهي الكتابة. لقياس الفرضيات المطروحة قمنا بتبنى المنهج شبه التجريبي حيث تم إجراء اختبار أولي و حصة توجيهية و اختبار آخر لقسم السنة الرابعة متوسط المتكون من 27 تلميذ على مستوى متوسطة أبي ذر الغيفاري ورقلة. من جهة أخرى تم استجواب أستاذين للغة الإنجليزية يدرسان نفس المستوى في نفس هذه المتوسطة. النتائج المتحصل عليها أظهرت مدى فاعلية الألعاب في تعزيز كتابة النص الوصفي بالإضافة الى مساهمتها في تحفيز التلاميذ وخلق جو أكثر تشويقا ومتعة للتعلم.

الكلمات المفتاحية : الألعاب ،النص الوصفي ،المهارات الكتابية ،الفعالية, التحفيز.