

## ***Improving EFL Learners' Written Production Through Authentic Materials***

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### **Abstract :**

This study sought to examine the effectiveness of using authentic materials in written expression classes in order to improve the use of contextual vocabulary and idioms at the Section of English in Biskra University. In order to collect data, the researchers used an intervention strategy that consisted of a pre-test, a treatment, and a post-test with a sample of 22 second year students. In addition, an interview was designed for 5 teachers of written expression to elicit their attitudes towards the use of authentic materials in teaching written expression. The researchers believe that there are many sources and types of authentic materials such as magazines which may help learners to study and employ appropriately vocabulary and idioms. The results show that the learners' use of contextual vocabulary and idioms has been increased, and that teachers of the course prefer to use authentic materials and agree that these latter are effective to teach vocabulary and idioms in written expression courses.

**Key Terms:** authentic materials, written expression classes, intervention strategy, attitudes towards the use of authentic materials

### **المُلخَص :**

حاولت هذه الدراسة إبراز أهمية المادة الأصلية لتدريس التعبير الكتابي من خلال استعمال المفردات والحكم في شعبة الانجليزية في جامعة بسكرة. لجمع المعلومات استعمل الباحثان إستراتيجية تدخلية شملت امتحانا قبليا ومعالجة و امتحانا بعديا مع مجموعة 22 طالبا من السنة الثانية بالإضافة إلى حوارات مع 5 أساتذة لنفس المادة لمعرفة وجهات نظرهم. يرى الباحثان أن للمادة الأصلية مصادر وأنواع عديدة كالمجلات مثلا التي تمكن الطلبة من استعمال المفردات والحكم و التي بدورها تنمي قدراتهم الكتابية. لقد بينت النتائج المحصل عليها المزيد من التحكم في آليات الكتابة من طرف الطلبة ورغبة الأساتذة في إدراج المفردات والحكم في تدريس التعبير الكتابي.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** المادة الأصلية ، التعبير الكتابي ، المفردات والحكم ، إستراتيجية تدخلية ، التحكم في آليات الكتابة من طرف الطلبة.

**Introduction**

Writing is one of the most challenging skills in EFL classes. It requires much efforts and time to be mastered. Students at the university level are supposed to learn more about paragraphs. Many aspects of paragraph writing such as coherence, grammar, and vocabulary are important and must be taught contextually. Teaching aspects of paragraph writing through authentic materials is an important aspect to be taken into account in order to make paragraph writing more contextual for various communicative situations. One of the important components in paragraphs is the contextual use of vocabulary and idioms which will be discussed in the present study.

**1. Literature Review**

Many studies have been conducted on the relationship between authentic materials and writing. In Islamabad, a study investigated how pupils, as foreign language learners of English (EFL learners), were using authentic materials to improve their compositions at the elementary level (Mirza, 2011). One important result of this study was that learning to write compositions through authentic materials for beginners may be effective if they are selected appropriately; and that learners at this stage are not aware of the cultural elements and the complex structures of the English language which may lead them to stop learning anything about writing.

At a tertiary level, Rahman (2013) examined the effectiveness of authentic materials in writing activities. This researcher chose to carry out his studies in four universities of Dhaka. As a result, his studies focused much more on a higher level of education. In Rahman's studies, adults showed more responses than beginners; that is, the university is an appropriate level at which researchers may reach interesting results. Therefore, many recent investigations have given more importance to the use of authentic materials in the written expression classes.

Masood (2013), a Pakistani researcher, conducted a study on the efficacy of authentic materials to enhance writing skills at the level of secondary schools. He studied experimentally the use of authentic materials for the sake of helping Pakistani learners to achieve better writing production. Due to many religious and historical considerations or rather restrictions, Pakistani learners are not able to solve their problems in writing, and they find writing in English a very hard task because of the cultural differences between their Mother Tongue and English.

The use of authentic texts and adapted texts is a controversial issue in many studies. In Sweden, Daskalos and Ling (2005) proved that authentic texts and adapted texts influence a set of learning abilities and motivation. These two researchers conducted their studies at the level of Swedish upper secondary schools and they supported their studies with measuring attitudes of both students and teachers towards these texts. According to Daskalos and Ling (2005), students prefer to read authentic texts which make them more motivated and eager to write.

In an article, Thuy (2009) discusses teaching EFL writing in Vietnam. He claims that English texts written by native speakers are useful to familiarize Vietnamese learners with direct writing style. Also, Crossley *et al* (2007) present an exploratory study which identifies similarities and differences between simplified versions and authentic texts, and shows that researchers in Second Language (L2) classes support the use of authentic texts because they exhibit great cohesion.

Moreover, in the Department of English and Linguistics at Kenyatta University, Kenya, Maroko (2010) studied the relationship between authentic materials and writing not in academic settings, but in workplaces. In his paper, he classified authentic materials into categories and discussed the implications of authentic texts in classrooms to improve functional writing in workplaces. Writing in English is important in academic settings as well as in workplaces where there are different needs and purposes. Thus, learners need to be exposed to specific, technical, and authentic texts to enhance their performances in writing.

In addition, Tanti and Yusuf investigated the use of authentic materials in writing procedural text in English classes of a vocational school in Kuningan, Indonesia (2010). They designed a quasi-experimental study for two classes of eleventh graders at school. Students were encouraged to produce different types of texts by their teachers through the use of authentic materials.

The core of teaching writing is to produce good pieces of writing; and to be able to communicate effectively and appropriately through the written form of language. In EFL classes, learners face many problems when they write. One of these problems is the poor vocabulary in paragraphs. The mastery of writing paragraphs is one of the most important fundamentals in written expression courses which have to be real and authentic in its forms and purposes. In this study,

we tried to investigate the use of authentic texts in writing to improve learners' vocabulary and use of idioms in paragraphs at the section of English in Biskra University.

### **1.1 Types of Writing**

According to Barber *et al* (2006, pp.7-9), there are three major types of writing. These types reflect a variety of criteria such as the different objectives under which the written discourses take place.

#### **1.1.1 Functional writing**

Functional writing is a type of writing that is needed in workplaces. Students learn a specific, technical, and written language to meet their jobs and careers' requirements. This type of writing can be seen in job applications, business letters, and reports.

#### **1.1.2 Narrative writing**

Narrative writing is a type of writing that allows students to express their inner views and ideas. The writer tells readers about a story that can be either real or imaginary. Some examples of this type are fictional stories and diaries which are totally subjective.

#### **1.1.3 Expository writing**

Unlike the second type, expository writing is more objective and is based on consistent steps of research. Students develop arguments to reach conclusions; they rely much more on the credibility and the relevance of the information.

#### **1.1.4 Journal writing**

Barber *et al* (2006, pp.43-50) suggest another classification of writing types that is based on the form, the aim, and the time allotted. Journal writing is an informal writing through which students save information and thoughts, or take notes from lectures. Students use their own words and styles freely, and all standards that are related to the form such as the grammatical rules and the orthography are neglected.

#### **1.1.5 Collaborative writing**

The aim of this type of writing is to create an interaction between readers and writers which derives from the communicative view. Students write and discuss their writing activities and projects into small groups that enable them to mediate their personal abilities to the needs of the group. Collaborative writing encourages students to share ideas, so that the written product is a combination of different ideas.

### **1.2 Approaches to Writing**

There have been many approaches to teach and learn writing. Each of the following approaches has its own principles. Kroll (1994, pp. 12-16) has discussed some of these approaches as follows:

### **1.2.1 Controlled Composition approach**

This approach had its roots in Charles Fries' oral approach, the precursor of the audio-lingual method of second language teaching. Writing is regarded as reinforcement for oral habits by which students give much importance to imitation; that is, learning to write is a matter of a habit formation for the sake of promoting fluency in writing.

### **1.2.2 Current-Traditional rhetoric**

This approach is a bridge between controlled and free writing which regards an awareness of ESL students' needs to produce extended written discourses. The focus is given to both paragraph elements (topic sentence, supporting sentences, and concluding sentence) and various options of its developments (exemplification, comparison, and so on). According to this approach, students produce pieces of writing after they are supported with the analysis of a model, and the application of the structural knowledge to an original piece of writing.

### **1.2.3 The Process approach**

The process approach is described as recursive, complex, and non-linear process. Students generate and reformulate their ideas following certain steps. These steps are getting started, drafting, revising, and editing. Also, Khan (2012, pp.58-59) has discussed the above approach in addition to other approaches. The Process Approach helps students to write through different stages of composing. The purpose of this approach is to display familiarity, expertise, and intelligence.

### **1.2.4 The Product approach**

The main target of this approach is to make students process writing as a product; all that matters is the final product. According to this approach, the teacher is central; in other words, the teacher is the active participant in the instruction who provides the students with the appropriate vocabulary, grammatical rules, and mechanics to write their compositions.

### **1.2.5 The Genre approach**

The genre approach is also called English for Specific Purposes Approach which means different types of writing (Tangpermpoon, 2008, p. 6). Those types differ from each and one another in terms of

the purpose and the structure; thus, each type has its particular purpose and its particular context.

### **1.3 Authentic Materials**

Authentic materials are defined by different researchers in different terms. The term “authentic” means real and genuine. Peacock (1997) defines them as “materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purposes in the language community” (cited in Berardo, 2006, p.61). According to this definition, people do not design authentic materials to reach teaching and learning objectives; yet, they use them as a part of their everyday life. Mirza (2011, p.8) agrees that authentic materials are those aspects of language that occur naturally in native speaker’s context.

Wallace (1994) points out that authentic materials are not written to be exploited in schools and educational centers, but they are real life texts (cited in Rahman, 2013, p.3). Although authentic materials do not represent school-oriented language, they are used as teaching materials in schools and universities. In addition, Harmer (1991) views authentic materials as “materials which are designed for native speakers; they are real texts; designed not for language students, but for the speakers of the language” (cited in Tamo, 2009, p. 75). Harmer’s definition of authentic materials shed light on authentic materials’ functions as social and communicative products.

In few words, we deduce that authentic materials are commonly viewed as materials produced by English speaking societies to fulfill many communicative and social functions. They are not produced to teach with, but they are means that carry out the socio-cultural dimensions of the English language.

#### **1.3.1 The Common Sources of Authentic Materials**

There is a wide range of authentic materials’ sources which are used for various functions in different forms of interactions; so that, we have chosen the most common ones. Some researchers claim that authentic materials’ sources are newspapers, magazines, TV programs, movies, songs, and literature (Berardo, 2006, p.62). Some of those materials are used to provide printed and immediate information such as newspapers and TV programmes. Others are used for entertainment and joy; this can be seen in movies and songs.

#### **1.3.2 Advantages of Authentic Materials’ Use**

A group of researchers and teachers argue that authentic materials are beneficial thanks to a number of reasons. Firstly, the use of authentic materials increases learners’ motivation. Masood (2013,

p.44) states that authentic materials are meant to “create a lot of interest in the learners and they do not feel bored”. Bringing materials from the outside world into the classroom breaks the school-oriented language’ routine and promotes learners’ motivation through a variety of materials: newspapers, magazines, videos, movies, and so on, they are “attractive” and they are stimulating within classrooms (ibid).

Secondly, authentic materials can provide readers with cultural messages (Daskalos and Ling, 2005, p.12). Authentic materials present cultural elements that exist in the society which undertake cultural and lexical elements (p.13-14). They bridge the gap between the classroom and the external world (Ianiro, 2007, p.1). In different terms, authentic materials exhibit many cultural insights; and as it is commonly viewed, the linguistic forms and resources are inseparable from their language culture. Lantolf (1999) shows that culture is “a systematic network which allow us to understand, develop, and communicate our knowledge and beliefs about the world” (cited in Hyland, 2004, p.36). Thirdly, authentic materials can provide learners with original and real discourses (Tamo, 2009, p.75). Exposure to real-life language means that the input contains more than linguistic information. Authentic materials are appropriate learning tools because they reflect real world interactions.

Moreover, authentic materials have a wide range of uses and objectives. Tamo (2009, p. 76) argues that the same piece of material can be used differently in various tasks. For instance, a video about Amish people who live in Pennsylvania (USA) can be used to develop a debate among learners in oral expression classes; it can be also used as a “lead-in” to read a text about people’s ways of life, or it can be used to make learners express their opinions and attitudes through argumentative paragraphs. Authentic materials are rich in vocabulary that is useful to achieve many objectives. In few words, a single authentic material can be exploited differently depending on the task and the instructive objectives.

### **1.3.3 Disadvantages of Authentic Materials’ Use**

Despite the fact that authentic materials have many advantages, they also show several deficits. Below are some of the most common ones which seem to be important in language teaching.

Authentic materials show a very complex vocabulary. When we use authentic materials such as newspapers, we notice that they are full of vocabulary that is rarely used by EFL learners. The vocabulary might not help students to fulfill their needs, and it is considered to be

irrelevant. According to Daskalos and Ling (2005, p.14), “students who read a simplified version tend to be more productive simply because they understand it”. Students encounter difficulties in understanding lexis and idioms which hinder their production; yet, when they use simplified texts, they produce better.

In addition, authentic materials lose their value because of the time framework. Some periodicals and news are outdated rapidly (Tamo, 2009, p.76). They express immediate information which loses its importance within the society after a short time. This can be seen in daily newspapers and TV news in which the purpose is to inform people about the most recent political, economic, social, and intellectual daily life. In a short period of time, periodicals become useless in society. We might conclude that outdated materials are less preferable in learning.

As we stated earlier, authentic materials involve cultural messages. Though the cultural content might be important to teach English, it builds bias due to its difficulty without its context which is the English language community (Tamo, 2009, p.76). The cultural differences between the English society and the other societies lead to confusion and misunderstanding; that is, EFL learners who are living in their societies are unaware of the whole English cultural system because they have not been exposed enough to it. Exposure to the English culture through authentic materials might cause problems.

#### **1.3.4 The Importance of Using Authentic Materials in Written Expression Activities**

Like the other skills, written expression activities should be authentic and contextual. The use of authentic materials in written expression activities and practices is beneficial and important. Routman (2000) has described an authentic perspective on the writing instruction which focuses on “how we use writing in our lives” (cited in Lidvall, 2008, p.4); hence, EFL teachers exploit a variety of activities and authentic texts to make their learners discover the importance of the writing skill outside the classroom.

Authentic materials such as newspapers, magazines, and recipes can be brought to written expression activities in order to give learners more opportunities to have new ideas about what is happening in the English speaking countries and as such materials are rich of vocabulary that can be used by learners. According to Berardo (2006, p.64), “one of the aims of authentic materials is to help the student react in the same way L1 speakers react in their L1”; that is, authentic



materials are used to make learners produce similar structures. In written expression activities, some learners write in English the same way they write in Arabic. Using authentic materials in EFL written expression activities makes learners equipped with authentic ideas and contextual vocabulary which make learners acquire more communicative skills in writing.

Crossley *et al* (2007) point out that one crucial idea in Krashen's input hypothesis (1981, 1985) is that authentic materials have a great communicative importance (p. 17). Authentic materials are beneficial and important to regard the appropriate use of the original linguistic structures, ideas, vocabulary, and communicative skills that are needed in writing.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 The Overall Method**

The overall method of this research is quasi-experimental. The participants were chosen randomly (19 females and 3 males). In this study, a t-test was designed and used to compare two sets of scores obtained from the same group; that is, the scores of the pre-test and the post-test were compared after the treatment.

The present research adapted both quantitative and qualitative methods. On the one hand, we obtained the numerical data from the pre-test and the post-test; then, we calculated the numbers in order to get percentages, and each single percentage represented one participant. Both the pre-test and the post-test percentages were displayed through a bar graph which was devoted to each participant followed by another bar graph that presented the whole percentage of students' results in both tests. On the other hand, we designed an interview for five teachers of written expression. These teachers were from Mohamed Kheider University of Biskra. The interview contained six (6) questions which were a combination of yes/ no and wh- questions.

### **2.2 Population and Sampling**

The target population of the current study is the second year students of English at Biskra University (449 students). The choice of this population was due to many reasons. First, the second year students are supposed to have certain knowledge of paragraph writing. First year students are taught to learn writing at the sentential level; so that, they do not have the sufficient knowledge of how to write a

paragraph; and the third year students are taught to write essays where there is not too much focus on paragraphs. The sample contained 22 participants (73, 33 %) who were chosen randomly from group seven (The academic year 2015/2016). The course of written expression was taught twice a week; that is, each group had two sessions per week: Sunday: from 11:20- to 12:50, and Tuesday: from 09:40- to 11:10. The teacher of written expression gave us an opportunity to teach the students in question the four lessons of the treatment.

### **2.3 Data Collection Methods**

In this research, two data collection methods were used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. These are put as follows:

#### **2.3.1 The pre-test and the post-test**

The pre-test and the post-test were used to get students' scores before and after the treatment. Firstly, the 22 students went through a pre-test. Secondly, they were exposed to a treatment which contained four lessons. Thirdly, the same students went through a post-test in order to see the significance of the treatment. The pre-test and the post-test were done as follows:

The pre-test was composed of two sections. The first section was a table that contained 20 elements of vocabulary. This vocabulary was divided into 08 elements: noun phrases and nouns and 08 idiomatic vocabularies that were selected from *Hot English Magazine*. Each 04 elements of vocabulary were supported with a general idea about the context in which they appeared. The second section consisted in an instruction that told students to write a descriptive paragraph about English lifestyle. Students were exposed to the pre-test on the 31th of January 2016.

The pre-test was followed by a treatment which contained four lessons and lasted four weeks. From the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February 2016 to the 23<sup>st</sup> of March 2016, lessons were taught once a week. These lessons involved all the vocabulary and the idioms that were presented in the pre-test. These were constructed and explained in their context as it was presented in different issues from *Hot English Magazine*. During the four lessons, students did not attend regularly. There were many absentees, and thus the number of students attending the lessons was different from one session to another. After the treatment, students had a post-test on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2016. The students were asked to write the same paragraph by using the same vocabulary that was presented in the pre-test; that is, each student wrote a descriptive paragraph

about the English people lifestyle by using the presented vocabulary and idioms in its original context.

### **2.3.2 The Interview**

We designed a semi-structured interview for five teachers of written expression. It was made up of six questions which aimed primarily at knowing if these teachers used magazines as an aspect of authentic materials to teach contextual vocabulary and idioms in written expression at Biskra University. The use of the interview was considered to be an appropriate data collection method because it offered an opportunity to elicit teachers' attitudes towards the use of authentic materials and magazines in written expression classes.

### **2.4 Data Analysis Procedures**

The first section was based on the pre-test and the post-test scores and percentages; hence, the quantitative results were analysed by the use of tables and graphic presentations. The pre-test and the post-test 'scores and percentages were put in separate tables; however, in the graphic presentations, the researchers introduced the pre-test and the post-test' percentages that represented each participant.

The second section relied more on the qualitative data which were gathered from the interviews. The interview's results were analysed with the help of the detailed description of each interviewee's answer (Content Analysis).

#### **2.4.1 Analysis of the pre-test results**

The following table shows the scores that were obtained from the pre-test. It includes three main aspects about the students: the students 'names, scores, and percentages. It indicates clearly that the scores vary from one student to another. Therefore, we may classify the students' scores into the following groups:

**Group One:** (00 – 4, 5) represents 11 student.

**Group Two:** (05 -7, 5) represents 10 student.

**Group Three:** (08-10) represents 01 student.

**Table 01:** The students' scores in the pre-test.

Students' Names	Scores/ 10	Percentages %
<b>1 .AHLEM</b>	02,5/10	25
<b>2 .HALIMA</b>	03/10	30
<b>3. HANANE</b>	02/10	20
<b>4. NOUR EL HOUDA</b>	0,5/10	5
<b>5. BASMA</b>	04,5/10	45
<b>6. FAIZA</b>	06/10	60
<b>7. SARA</b>	04,5/10	45
<b>8. SALIMA</b>	05,5/10	55
<b>9. RABIAA</b>	05/10	50
<b>10. AMIRA</b>	0,5/10	5
<b>11. MANEL</b>	0 ,5/10	5
<b>12. DJIHANE</b>	01/10	10
<b>13. RIMA</b>	06,5/10	65
<b>14. BADREDDINE</b>	05,5/10	55
<b>15. MOUNA</b>	02,5/10	25
<b>16. ROUMAISSA</b>	03,5/10	35
<b>17. MADJDA</b>	08,5/10	85
<b>18. SARAH</b>	06,5/10	65
<b>19. KHADIJA</b>	05,5/10	55
<b>20. MILOUD</b>	06/10	60
<b>21. NIDHAL</b>	5,5 /10	55
<b>22. KHADIJA</b>	6,5/10	65

#### 2.4.2 Analysis of the post- test results

The following table presents the obtained scores of the post test after the treatment. The same as the above table, it includes the students' names, their marks and percentages. Table 02 displays students' marks of the post-test. It shows students' names, marks, and percentages which are categorised into three groups as follows:

**Group One:** (00-4, 5): represents 08 students.

**Group Two:** (05-7, 5): represents 13 students.

**Group Three:** (08-10): represents only one student.

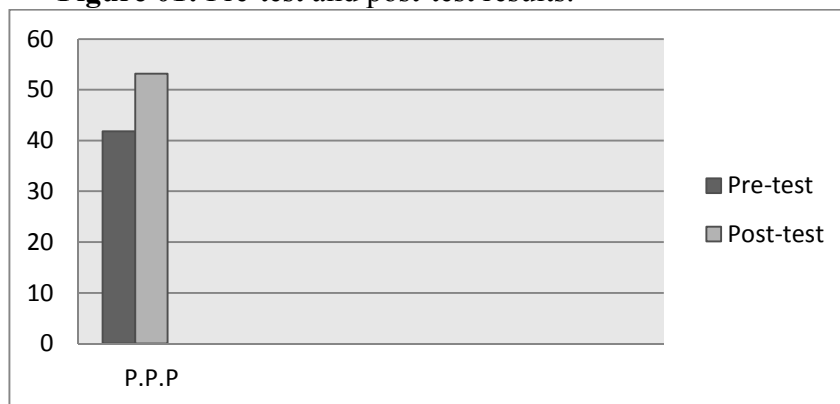
**Table 02:** The students' scores in the post-test.

Students' Names	Marks	Percentages %
<b>1 .AHLAM</b>	04,5/10	45
<b>2 .HALIMA</b>	05/10	50
<b>3. HANANE</b>	06,5/10	65
<b>4. NOUR EL-HOUDA</b>	04,5/10	45
<b>5. BESMA</b>	06,5/10	65
<b>6. FAIZA</b>	06/10	60
<b>7. SARA</b>	04,5/10	45
<b>8. SALIMA</b>	07/10	70
<b>9. RABIAA</b>	05/10	50
<b>10. AMIRA</b>	01,5/10	15
<b>11. MANEL</b>	03/10	30
<b>12. JDIHANE</b>	02,5/10	25
<b>13. RIMA</b>	06,5/10	65
<b>14. BAREDDINE</b>	05,5/10	55
<b>15. MOUNA</b>	03,5/10	35
<b>16. ROUMAISSA</b>	04,5/10	45
<b>17. MADJDA</b>	09/10	90
<b>18. SARAH</b>	06/10	60
<b>19. KHDIIJA</b>	07/10	70
<b>20. MILOUD</b>	06,5/10	65
<b>21. NIDHAL</b>	05,5/10	55
<b>22. KHADIJA</b>	06,5 /10	65

### 2.4.3 Comparison between the pre-test and the post-test results

The percentages of the pre-test and the post- test were calculated to make the following comparisons (figure 01).

**Figure 01:** Pre-test and post-test results.



The results of the post- test show that there is a significant difference (11, 37%). Students who belong to group two are larger in number; that is, in the pre-test, students who obtain marks from 05 to 7, 5 are ten (10); however, in the post-test, students who obtain marks from 05 to 7, 5 are thirteen (13). There is less number of students who get less than 4, 5. In the pre-test, group one' students who obtain marks from 00 to 4, 5 are eleven (11) students; whereas, there are eight (08) students in the pre-test. Students who obtain the same marks in the pre-test and the post-test are seven (07); yet, students whose marks have increased are fifteen (15).

### 2.4.4 Discussion of the pre-test and the post-test's results

Before indulging in the treatment, a pre-test was administered in order to evaluate the participants' use of vocabulary and idioms and after the treatment, a post-test was implemented in order to find out the significance of the treatment. The pre-test (41, 81%) and the post-test (53, 18%) reveal that students understand new vocabulary in its context through magazines which are considered as an authentic material: (41, 81%, 53, 18%). The appropriate use of vocabulary and idioms has been improved by (11, 37%). The percentage of students' marks who have improved is (68, 19%); whereas, there is (31, 81%) students whose marks of the pre-test are similar to the post-test's marks. Despite the fact that there is a limited number of vocabulary and idioms in the treatment lessons, the post-test' results indicate that students are able to use appropriately contextual vocabulary and

idioms in their paragraphs and written productions when they are taught with authentic materials.

### 2.4. 5 Description of the interview's results

This section deals with the description and the analysis of the interview. It states different pieces of information about the interviewees, including teachers' names, the date, and the channel of saving. The interview is analysed according to content analysis

This interview is composed of six questions that address five written expression teachers at Biskra University. Some of these teachers preferred to answer the interview questions in a written form and the rest preferred to make recorded interviews. The following table shows the teachers' names, the date, and the way that the interview is saved:

**Table 06:** The interviewees' general information

T's N	Teachers' names	The date/ The time		W/R
T1	S. Said	April 10 <sup>th</sup> ,2016	11:02h	W
T2	S. Hanane	April 11 <sup>th</sup> ,2016	09:57h	R
T3	H.Salma	April 12 <sup>th</sup> ,2016	08:48h	W
T4	H. Lamdjed	April 13 <sup>th</sup> ,2016	11:09h	R
T5	H. Nachwa	April 14 <sup>th</sup> ,2016	09:55h	R

This interview gives detailed information about the teachers' names, the date, time of each interview, and how this interview is saved. The interviews lasted one week: from April 10<sup>th</sup> to April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. There were two teachers: T1 and T2 who preferred to write down the interview's answers; however, three teachers: T2, T4, and T5 preferred to save the answers through the sound recorder in order to gain time and effort.

### 2.4. 5. 1 Content Analysis

In content analysis, the researchers focused on the grouping of answers and their interpretation. The analysis of the interviews was based on the teachers' transcripts as follows:

**Item one: How long have taught written expression?**

**T1:** "I am a teacher of written expression for 5 years."

**T2:** "I am a teacher of written expression since 2008..... ammm... that is 8 years."

**T3:** "For me, I taught the module of written expression for 6 years."

**T4:** "I taught written expression for 3 years."

**T5:** "I have been ... teaching written expression for 14 years."

According to the answers, the first interviewee has taught written expression for 5 years. The second interviewee has taught this course for 8 years, and the third interviewee has taught it for 6 years. Unlike the third interviewee, the fourth interviewee has taught the course for three years. The fifth interviewee has taught it for 14 years which is a long period in comparison to the other interviewees.

**Item two: Are you a part- time or a full-time teacher?**

**T1:** "I am a full- time teacher."

**T2:** "Well....I am a full-time teacher."

**T3:** "I am a part-time teacher."

**T4:** "I'm a full-time teacher."

**T5:** "OK. I am a full- time teacher."

The interviewees are five teachers of written expression. The interviewees are divided into two groups. The first group contains 4 teachers who are full- time teachers; however, the second group contains 1 teacher who is a part-time teacher.

**Item three: Do your students introduce appropriate vocabulary to the context in their paragraphs? Why?**

**T1:** "When they are well guided, they do. Because when the teacher clarifies the instruction to his/ her students, they introduce a contextual vocabulary, otherwise it is a bit difficult. Sometimes, they do not introduce appropriate vocabulary because of the lack of practice in the real-life situations."

**T2:** "We can say that ...amm...they do not introduce appropriate vocabulary to the context. They have the problem of the misused vocabulary, some, even have the lack of the appropriate words, so, they don't have the language which is the problem they face in writing their paragraphs. Any text they are asked to write, they find a problem because of the lack of vocabulary. Sometimes, they use a dictionary but they don't use it in its real context. The main reason that I guess is the lack of reading....."

**T3:** "No, they don't. This is due to the lack of reading and the lack of real communications. A large number of students produce inappropriate vocabulary to the context."



**T4:** “In fact, concerning the level of my students, they suffer from the lack of vocabulary and how to arrange their ideas correctly and coherently, so if we can say, we do everything by ourselves and we try to push them to produce appropriate vocabulary through practice. The main reason behind that is the poor background in the language itself, maybe, I don’t know...., they don’t deserve to be members in this branch, they don’t read at all, i.e., this refers to the lack of reading ...”

**T5:** “Well ...amm... it depends, sometimes, they succeed in that, but the majority of them, especially those who have a low level or an average one, they are not able to. Generally, it is due to the lack of the knowledge of socio-cultural factors and the lack of practice. For me, they are not well-cultivated, they don’t have information about different topics and recent ones...so if they don’t have information, they can’t express or handle a topic, and this equals that their bank of vocabulary is very poor.”

The third question is composed of two parts: a yes/no question and a wh-question; hence, there are two types of answers. Firstly, there are 4 teachers who agree that their learners do not introduce appropriate ideas and vocabulary to the context in their paragraphs and productions; whereas, there is only 1 teacher who says that learners give appropriate ideas and vocabulary to the context when they are guided. Secondly, the teachers who agree that their learners do not have contextual vocabulary and ideas give several reasons such as the lack of reading, the lack of reading authentic sources, and the lack of information and culture.

**Item four: Have you ever used authentic materials to remedy the lack of vocabulary, idioms, and ideas? Why?**

**T1:** “sometimes I use them, authentic materials are good sources of vocabulary and idioms, but they are provocative in breach with the socio-cultural milieu of the learner, I mean that cultural differences might cause problems.”

**T2:** “yeah, normally authentic materials can be a solution, but it’s not the only solution. Authentic materials make real-life situations...for example, learners can learn from real-life contexts such as English or American movies, newspapers, written songs, TV Programmes... learners can gather vocabulary from these sources. I think that they can be a remedy...”

**T3:** “In fact, I use them carefully... I don’t use them so much because they take too much time. In Second year classes, we are supposed to

teach the structure of different paragraph' types, so....we do not give importance to the content."

**T4:** "I do this all the time because...first, I want my students to... amm...gather language structures from their original sources. Second, I would like them to learn the language in its authentic context, alright?. Third, an authentic source, if we can say, has special styles and the voice of the native speaker in terms of the language use which is the problem of many students' productions."

**T5:** "In written expression... amm, sincerely, no. I have been using that in oral expression classes. I have never thought about that because we don't have enough time to introduce new things in the programme of written expression courses. In fact, we miss the tone of the native speakers of English in our students' paragraphs and essays."

In written expression classes, many teachers use authentic materials in order to remedy the lack of vocabulary, ideas, and idioms. 3 teachers say that authentic materials can be a solution to the lack of vocabulary, idioms, and ideas; thus, they use movies, written songs, and newspapers' articles. Another teacher uses authentic materials to present new vocabulary and idioms; he sometimes uses them in written expression classes. Unlikely, only one (1) teacher does not use authentic materials at all.

Some teachers use authentic sources in their classes, and others do not prefer to use them because of many reasons. Some teachers are against authentic materials' use all the time because of the insufficient time, the low level of students in written expression, the negative impact of the socio-cultural milieu, and the large number of students. We might conclude that teachers are in favour of authentic materials' use if there are some conditions such as extra sessions of written expression, the appropriate selection of these materials, and less number of students in each class.

**Item five: Have you ever used magazines to promote learners' vocabulary and ideas in written expression courses? Why?**

**T1:** "Sometimes, I use them to make my learners acquire new vocabulary and up-to-date ideas because they are useful in many topics that we suggest in written expression."

**T2:** "Yes, I do, but not all the time. I try to use magazines and newspapers' articles in addition to things related to literature such as short stories, poems, and novels... things like these are used to make learners acquire new vocabulary. Yes, we use magazines to serve the

objectives of the course and the level of learners in Grammar and vocabulary.”

**T3:** “No, I do not. It is due to the lack of time and the programme. We, as teachers, we are not free to teach whatever we think is appropriate, but if I have more sessions, I will use magazines in different tasks.”

**T4:** “well, I use them, I often did this, but the problem is that we do not find them easily to be frank with you. Simply, the time is so limited to finish the programme; also, the level of our students does not permit that we can deal with magazines... in fact, magazines are good tools to teach vocabulary and idioms in written expression, but their use in our classes is a bit difficult.”

**T5:** “No, I have never thought about that. I think that magazines are good sources of vocabulary. The use of magazines is difficult in our written expression classes in such conditions, well...the high number of students... do not permit the use of magazines. Another reason is that we do not have enough time to introduce new things. We follow a certain programme that we should finish by the end of the academic year...high number of students, but if I have enough time, I will use magazines to enrich learners’ bank of vocabulary.”

According to the fifth question’ answers, 2 teachers say that they use magazines as a solution to deal with the lack of vocabulary and ideas in written expression courses, and 1 teacher reveals that he sometimes uses them; nevertheless, 2 teachers do not use them due to the same reasons. In addition to these reasons, some teachers find a difficulty in finding magazines. In few words, magazines are useful in themselves, but teachers need some time and effort.

#### **Item six: How were the results?**

**T1:** “well, the results were satisfactory to some extent.”

**T2:** “The results were positive; I mean that they learnt new vocabulary and idioms, it depends on the choice of the text I use.”

**T3:** “I cannot say anything about the results because I did not use them, but I think that magazines are good sources of vocabulary and idioms that learners can use in their productions.”

**T4:** “the results were good so far if the teacher spends more time and effort.”

**T5:** “I have not used them; so that, I cannot describe the results, but I reckon that magazines contribute to the learner’s bank of vocabulary.”

The sixth question is the question that deals with the description of the obtained results when magazines are used. The teachers who

used magazines say that the results were satisfactory, good, and positive. Even the teachers who did not use them, they believe that the results of using magazines are good to enrich learners' vocabulary and ideas.

#### **2.4. 5. 2 Discussion of the interview's results**

In this interview, the interviewees gave different answers which have been carefully described. The answers reflect the interviewees' attitudes towards the use of magazines as an authentic material in written expression. These teachers agree that authentic materials are effective tools to teach vocabulary, idioms, and ideas. Magazines can be a solution to put an end to the lack of vocabulary and poor productions, but they are more beneficial if there are some conditions: the small number of groups, the magazines' appropriate selection, and the sufficient number of sessions. Teachers view authentic materials as good sources of vocabulary and idioms; however, they state that these materials consume time which is very limited in written expression sessions.

### **Conclusion**

The researchers examined the effectiveness of using magazines as authentic materials in improving learners' vocabulary and idioms through quantitative and qualitative methods. A pre-test and a post-test were used to gather numerical data and an interview was designed to collect the teachers' attitudes and opinions. The results of these research tools show that learners can use authentic materials in general, and magazines in particular to improve their use of vocabulary, idioms, and ideas in paragraphs and written productions.

The results of the pre-test and the post-test were displayed in tables and graphs for the sake of making comparisons; the students' improvement after the treatment was estimated by 11,37%. Teachers agreed that magazines are good sources of vocabulary if they have extra sessions, get magazines easily, and make students work into small groups, so that the problem is not in the magazines themselves, but rather in the conditions under which teachers are teaching written expression in Biskra University.

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