Reasons behind the Poor Performance of Preparatory Year Students' at Imam Saud University in Writing Skill

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Abstract

This study aims to find the logical reasons for the Preparatory Year Program students' poor performance in writing skills for the course that has been delivered by the PYP department during one semester of study at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia. A controlled group approach was employed in a view that to enable the researcher to pin down where the problems lie within a short period. Instructors were given a questionnaire. It was used as a research instrument. The study sample consists of 15 instructors who teach the English language to PYP students at King Faisal University. SPSS was used to analyze the data obtained. The major findings include: One term is not enough to present and practice using the material. Instructors are not using suitable methodologies to improve writing skills as well as the preparatory year program at King Faisal University does not provide an effective plan to improve students writing skills. It emphasizes on doing practice for the writing skills. The researcher recommends that the Instructors must pay more attention to their pedagogical application.

Keywords: reasons; poor performance; Preparatory Year Program

1. Introduction

This study aims to investigate the preparatory year program at King Faisal University in Saudi Arabia. It investigates the students' poor performance in writing skills in the course that has been delivered by the English Department during one semester.

The type of English, which is intended for the study is an intensive English course. The materials that are granted for the course are designed to prepare Saudi students to study at universities.

The study will have a proud record of achievement in international exams. This program prepares students who travel abroad to continue their studies outside the country. The preparatory year program consists of multinational English teaching and some bilingual teachers. Those Instructors represent a multicultural teaching staff at King Faisal University. Inevitably, they give support to the development of the curriculum and the students' mentorship. They contribute to improving the English language skills of Saudi students and scholars. Consequently, this opportunity provides development to university and college professors, allowing them to gain some valuable teaching methodologies to transfer them to their countries, especially bilingual teachers. On the other hand, students are expected to be exposed to a wide variety of cultural backgrounds and teaching styles. Accordingly, this approach prepares Saudi students with high English language proficiency and will be able to have invaluable chances for admission to and succeed at competitive universities by providing a high quality, dynamic and challenging program in which they learn in a cooperative environment under the guidance of highly qualified and dedicated staff.

During this current Preparatory year program, the students study twenty hours per week for one academic semester. The current instructors are usually keen

to provide additional support and guidance to students outside classrooms on their request.

2. Statement of the Problem

This study is yielded as an observation throughout five years of teaching English at Saudi universities in which the researcher has observed that a great number of students fail in writing skills and most of the Preparatory year program students lack mastering the writing skills.

Writing skill is considered as a major area where students experience difficulties even though it occupies a central place in Saudi universities curricular. Such problems or failure could be greatly and effectively minimized by employing experts in the field of writing skills with the view of ameliorating if not completely eliminating the problems.

This poor performance is very fundamental and crucial. The researcher has assumed that the students' failure in writing due to the short period of teaching and poor pedagogical methods.

3. Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study is to highlight the students' performance in writing skills throughout one semester at Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University. The study aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. To encourage learners to improve writing skill performance during the semester.

2. To propose an effective teaching methodology to teach the course of writing skills.

3. To encourage learners to improve their writing skill performance during the semester.

4. Questions of the Study

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent does provide more practice for material help in gaining positive results at the end of the semester?

2. What type of pedagogical framework can be recommended for teaching writing skills?

3. Does the period of one semester enable instructors to teach the course of writing perfectly?

5. Hypotheses

To answer the research questions, the researcher hypothesized the following:

1. Providing more practice for material help gaining positive results at the end of the semester.

2. Suitable materials as a pedagogy can help improve students' writing skills.

3. The period of one semester (twelve weeks) program does not enable instructors to teach the course of writing perfectly.

6. Significance of the Study

The study is expected to help Saudi students in general as well as students at King Faisal University in particular. By the end of this study, teachers are expected to improve the quality of teaching techniques. This study will help the Saudi government to save much money, by stop students from rushing outside the country searching for high teaching quality.

7. Scope of the study

This study is intended to cover some of the Preparatory year program students at King Faisal University. The university has other sections like Arts studies and Islamic studies section. It is beyond the capacity of this paper to cover and investigate the problem in all colleges at King Faisal University.

8. Literature Review

It provides a theoretical background of the study. It consists of three parts, the first part: the historical background about the English Language Preparatory Year Programme, review about writing skills, and related previous study.

8.1 Overview about the PYP

Preparatory year program aims to improve the level of English comprehension and spoken ability by existing academics. This is accomplished through the strategic plans of certified international native English speaking teachers. Usually, educators join a multinational staff at universities where they aid in the development of curriculum and student mentorship and otherwise seek to improve the English language skills of Saudi students and scholars. Consequently, this opportunity lends itself to university and college professors, allowing them to gain some valuable teaching in other countries.

8.2   Attendance, Delay and Apology

Every student must register as a regular student that means attending all lectures, practical lessons and performing homework and assignments. The student is withdrawn from the course if his/her absence rate exceeds 15% of the total lectures and practical lessons. Students are not allowed to enter the final exam.

 Students have the right to delay or apologize for attending lectures, but this must not exceed the duration of the study in the program: five academic quarters; except for health college students.

If the student does not come back after the period which the department granted to him/her at the beginning of the second academic term they add his/her registration documents of the preparatory year program to the exceptional cases. The student has no right to withdraw from any of the courses of the preparatory year program throughout the study in the college.

8.3 Course Equation

The student may apply for some courses equation after his/her admission to the preparatory year program according to the following condition:

If the student had studied these courses at the university or known college before and his/her grade in each course not less than very good it will be easy for him/her to join Imam students.

8.4 Dismissal from Preparatory year program

The students can be dismissed from the preparatory year program of the university in the following cases:

·   If he/she has got a grade deprived two times (being absent for six lectures) in the same course without considering his/her level in other academic courses.

·   If he/she did not finish all the courses of the preparatory year during a maximum period of five academic quarters.

·   If he/she got a GPA of less than 1.5 out of 5 after studying two academic quarters in the program.

·   If he/she got a cumulative GPA of less than 2. Out of 5. at the end of the program.

8.5 Changing the PYP System from Full Academic Year to One Semester

In view of this point, the system in the preparatory year program has been changed in its content and duration. These changes are made to ensure that the quality of learning and management of institutions are equivalent to the highest international standard.

When the system was applied in the preparatory year program for the first time, it was of a long duration (two semesters: seven months) and within one year to cover the four skills. Recently, that system has been changed to the current one. That is one semester, equivalent to three months and a half. This is because the purpose is

to equip the students with knowledge that enables them to acquire certain skills from a variety of subjects.Most of the Saudi students kept complaining about the seven months because they argued they had already learned these courses in advance when they were at secondary schools and it is just a matter of repetition. They suggested a period of three months.

8.6 The placement Test

The placement test is a requirement for PYP students.It is meant to examine to what extent do the students obtain the basic skills and touch certain areas that need much focus. However, there is no much attention given to sort out the obstacles and challenges that stand in their way. Instead, the authorities who are keen to establish a platform for student's performance ignore doing something towards the students `weak results.It is just a matter of requirements.

8.7 Time Table

The time table for the PYP is quite suitable. Students start lectures from 7:30 am to 12:30 pm. usually from 7:30 to 11:30 is an English lecturer, but from 11:30 to 12:30 the students usually have other lectures such as Islamic, Arabic, Math and health studies.

Usually, lectures from 7:30 to 8:30 are on listening and speaking skills than from 8:30 to 9:30 on reading and writing skills.Then they have a break for 30 minutes. Finally from 10:00 am to 11:30 am they start doing games.

The researcher made some changes to the above-mentioned schedule to give writing skill more emphasis and more practice: From 7:30 am to 8:00 am speaking skill. Then from 8:00 am to 9:30 am writing skills. Then a break time followed by a reading class from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. The last 30 minutes are usually for doing the games.

8.8 Writing Essays

An essay is a piece of academic writing generally between 500 and 5000 words long. The word 'essay' originally meant a first attempt or practice, which perhaps suggests some kind of provisional exploration. Essays are an intellectual exploration of a topic, involving looking at different arguments and evidence and developing the writer's perspective (Pollard, L. 2008).

The points are developed in more depth and the language may be a little less concise. Typically, it will consist of several paragraphs that are not separated by subheadings or broken up by bullet points (unlike in a report). Sometimes an essay looks more like the preferred format of some journal articles (ibid).

The purpose of writing an academic essay is to provide written evidence of students' ability to research a topic, weigh arguments, organizing thoughts, express these thoughts in a logical, coherent and critical manner, and reach conclusions which follow from the evidence and the arguments you put forward. There will be a constraint on the number of words you can use so, inevitably, you need to be selective about the content (ibid).

8.9   Stages of Essay Writing

Pre-writing– understanding the ideas of others, generating ideas, collecting information: note-making, brainstorming (accessing tacit knowledge), 'journaling', free writing Planning– organizing and focusing ideas: mind-

mapping or clustering (graphic organizing techniques), listing, outline planning (Elbow, P., 1998).

·   Drafting – writing initial drafts: focusing on the development, organization, and elaboration of ideas.

·   Reflecting– letting work sit? thinking, coming back to it later.

·   Peer or tutor reviewing– feedback from others (peer-reviewers will need guidance on how to offer helpful feedback), whether offered in class or informally.

·   Revising/additional research, idea generation– acting on feedback; further developing and clarifying ideas, structuring the text.

·   Editing and proofreading– focusing attention on the surface features of the text, including linguistic accuracy, layout, footnotes, and references; polishing.

Most preparatory year program students understand the ideas but their problem is how to organize these ideas. Moreover, when they start writing the final draft lots of mistakes appear like grammar and spelling mistakes and so on. Their standard is the same so it is not a good idea to get feedback from their peers.

8.10   Teaching Writing Process

The writing process involves teaching preparatory year program students about the stages involved in writing; i.e. the process. The aim is to help the students to see each stage as being important and to dedicate time to each of them. The teacher's role is to guide the students through the stages one uses when writing. The stages are:

·   Brainstorming and noting down any ideas connected to the topic. Decide from the brainstormed list which ideas are the most relevant to the topic, task or title. Deciding which order to put those ideas in. This can be done in the form of a plan or a mind map.

·   Preparation of the first draft; the focus at this stage is the organization of the piece of writing. This doesn't mean that grammar and accuracy are not important; it just means that they are not the focus at this stage. Revision and editing of drafts will focus initially on content, relevance, and organization. Then move onto correcting grammar, punctuation, vocabulary, and linkers. (Gunning ham, S., 2005)

The final stage is the production of a finished piece of work.

To raise awareness, teachers can brainstorm the steps with their students. Teachers can guide their students through the stages by:

(1) Brainstorming: write the topic/title on the board and invite students to say anything at all connected to the topic. Anything and everything is acceptable at this stage; accept all ideas and comments.

(2) Go through the brainstormed items and decide which are the most relevant to the topic and the most interesting. This can be done as a whole class, in groups or in pairs. If you do this as a whole class, all the students' essays will have the same content. If you choose to do it in groups or pairs, essays will have different content.

(3) From the list of chosen items, students decide how the comments will be organized. Different students or groups of students might choose different ways of organizing ideas.

(4) Students write the first draft of their piece of work. Tell the students that they should think about the content and how it relates to the title, organizing their ideas into paragraphs and about how the paragraphs hang together.

(5) In the same lesson, in later lessons, or for homework, students can revise their first drafts, improving on the content and organization.

(6) When they have a good second draft, i.e. the content, relevance, and organization satisfy them, they can move onto improving the language. During this stage, students can review their own work or the work of their classmates.

(7) Finally, students can copy out their essays, in a clean, final version.

(Haines, S. 2006)

  There are various ways to organize the working; initially, it is best if you do the stages together as a whole class. Later and when the students are used to process writing, you can start working as a whole class and then the students can work together in pairs or groups. Some stages can also be done for homework. The teacher's role throughout is to provide ideas, guidance, and feedback. You will also need to encourage students to edit their own work and to incorporate your feedback. (Harmer, 2004)

The researcher guides and supports the preparatory year program in their writing through the use of different processes and stages.They move from planning their work to drafting it and then on to editing, re-drafting, and proofreading. This allows the students to focus on different aspects of writing at different times. At the planning stage, they focus on developing their ideas and organizing them.

At the drafting stage, they focus on finding the language to express themselves and at the editing, re-drafting, and proofreading stages they focus

on evaluating, looking at strengths and weakness of their ideas, and the organization of their writing and the accuracy of their language. But, they do not like homework. Saudi PYP students are the laziest students through round the world to do homework and all of the work must be done in front of the teachers inside the classroom.

8.11 Learning Styles

Learning styles are how a learner naturally prefers to take in, process and remember information and skills. Our learning style influences how we like to learn and how we learn best.Experts have suggested several different ways of classifying learning styles.They are related to physical sense we prefer to use to learn, our way of interacting with other people and our style of thinking: There are numbers of learning styles :

· visual learners do their best by watching and looking.

· Auditory learners learn best through listening and hearing.

· Kinesthetic learners learn best through being physical while moving or toughing things.

· Group learners learn best through working with others.

· Individual learner does his/her best through working alone.

· Reflective learner does best when given time to consider the choice.

· Impulsive learner learns best when he /she can respond immediately.

· Analytic learner does the best when he/she is given the opportunity to analyze things.

· Autonomous learner likes to decide what he/she learns and how to learn. (Sprat, M., 2011)

From this description, we can see that how learners with different learning styles learn in different ways, we must consider that learners may not fall exactly into one category of learning style as they may have several styles. It`s also true that different cultures may use some learning styles more than others and that learners may change or develop their learning styles.

In King Faisal University, preparatory year students have different learning styles which oblige the instructor to use different activities that match with theirs. For example, listening activities followed by a reading activity followed by group work followed by mingling (which need students to move for a while from their seats) followed by exercise. This sometimes has a negative implication on their writing because writing needs much time to practice and then to master. It is sometimes difficult for the teacher to match the learners' styles. Across several lessons, instructors try their best to accommodate some of the learners' styles of learning in a lesson.

8.12 Learning Strategies

These are the ways that learners choose and use to learn the language. They include ways to help themselves identify what they need to learn the process, remember, and use the new language. Using the right strategy at the right time can help us learn the language better, and help to make us more able to learn without depending on the teacher i.e. to become more independent or autonomous learner (Scrivener, J., 2005)

Some examples of learning strategies are:-

· Repeating new words in your head until you remember them.

· Experimenting /taking risks by using just learned a language in conversations.

· Asking the teacher or others to give you feedback on your language use.

· Deciding to use a foreign language as much as possible.

· Recording yourself speaking, then judging and correcting your pronunciation.

· Asking the speaker to repeat what he/she has said

· Deciding what area of vocabulary you need to learn and then learning it

· Thinking about how to memorize all the new words you meet in each lesson.

· Decide to write each new vocabulary in a separate card and display it on your fridge

· Paraphrasing.

Different learners use different strategies. The expert thinks that different strategies that learners use must successfully depend on their character and learning style.This means there are no best strategies.But using strategies definitely makes learning more successful and that learner can be trained to use strategies (ibid)

Preparatory year students had learned English at school through learning lots of grammar and have been successful in this way. Then they found themselves in a class where the teaching is done only through communicative activities. Activities where the students communicated with each other in speaking or writing. They felt that they were not learning at the beginning, but later, they preferred it because they realized that by improving their speaking they improved their writing.

Learning strategies helped them improve their writing skills a lot, like some of them preferred to repeat the new words until they were able to recall them. Others decided to use the foreign language as much as possible while other students preferred to do games and practice how to memorize all the new words that they had come across in each new lesson. Most of the students preferred to write each new vocabulary in a separate card and displayed it in their room.

Using these ways helped them and reflected positively on their writing production and performance. This is because they succeeded in getting rid of the four types of mistakes which were mentioned before. This solution is approved by (Spratt, M., 2011).

8.13 How PYP learners cope with the writing problems

Concerning spelling mistakes, PYP students had notebooks to record all the new words that they had in each unit in their lessons. By the end of each unit they had a quiz which included spelling, and practicing spelling was one of

the main goals of the quiz. Each book had ten units that mean by the end they should have ten quizzes which are quite enough to revise, practice and improve spelling.

Grammatical and usage mistakes are acceptable if you are just started learning a new language. They play very important role in our daily life because grammatical and usage errors can change the meaning of the sentence and create bad impression (Creme, 2008).

Speaking classes with native speakers helped PYP learners a lot; they assumed that English is the language whose grammar and usage, they wish to improve by continuous practice.

All PYP students marked the grammar points that they need to focus on at least a few days before the lesson on their text books' exercises to practice. While some other students practiced online activities and quizzes which helped them a lot.

About punctuation mistakes, it was scheduled from the researcher to brought daily simple writing activates. Each activity concentrated on one point: for example Sunday the concentration was on commas only .Then Monday the concentration on 'how' and 'when'. They should use the apostrophes and so on. By the end of the week there were a punctuation quiz to assess who understood those rules and who were not. Of course the answers were varied, but the majority was in the top of the list and very few who were not absorbed the punctuation rules.

8.14 PYP as Teenagers

PYP teenagers starting to keep still for long periods but still need to move not like children who need to move all the time. Their concentration is developing, beginning to learn in abstract ways i.e. through thinking as well

as experiencing, they start to begin to control and plan their behavior.They may worry about what others think of them. They are sometimes aware of themselves and their actions.They pay attention to the meaning and form. During this period they begin to increase their experience of life.The cognitive skills generally believe to be developed at age 15 . Here the motivation is varied considerably and may not be fixed.

8.15 Previous Study

The researcher explores a lot in some Saudi universities and through web sites to find if there are studies carried out in the same area. He found a study with the following details:

·   Title: Developing writing skills (practical remedy of common writing problems among students of writing skill course at the preparatory year program.

· Date: March 2012

·   Place: Najran University KSA

·   Main question: How to Improve Writing skill course among pyp students at Najran university

·   Methodology: 60 students were given different tasks in writing (phrases- sentences –paragraphs)

·   Main findings: Writing classes must witness more practice than delivering lectures.

 Instructors must pay more attention to their pedagogical applications. Already the instructors used all of the techniques but the students didn't apply the whole techniques.

The similarities are Both of the studies in the same area, Saudi Arabia. Both of the studies present Saudi Arab students writing skill mistakes as well as the type of students both of them are PYP students. The first one highlights the problems while the second one shows the remedy. Both of the studies help and assist EFL /ESL learners and teachers and the teaching process and reduce the problem later on.

9. Methodology

The researcher uses the qualitative and quantitative analysis to conduct the study. The tool which is used for data collection is teacher's questionnaire. The number of the teachers who participated in the study was the full number of the 15 instructors at the two sections. Thus, teachers' sample size was chosen with a percentage of 100%. Tables and figures will be used to analyze the data, followed by descriptions and interpretations of the results.

The following tables give more information about the sample of the PYP teachers in this study:

Table (1): Academic Institutions

	Frequency	Percent
Khartoum university	5	33.3%
Omdurman Islamic university	3	20%
Al-jazera university	2	1303%
Juba university	5	33.3%
Total	15	100%

Table (2): Gender

	frequency	Percent
Male	9	60%
Female	6	40%
Total	15	100%

Table (3): Qualification

	frequency	Percent
Diploma	1	6.7%
Bachelor	2	13.3%
Post graduate diploma	1	6.7%
Master	11	73.3%
Total	15	100%

Table (4): Experience

	frequency	Percent
(1-5)	5	33.3%
(6-10)	8	53.3%
(11-15)	2	13.3%
Total	15	100%

9.1 Teachers' Questionnaire

Table (5): Reliability index (α) for each of the questionnaire dimensions

Questionnaire's dimensions	α
Teacher's factors	-0.615
Student's factors	0.582
University's factors & student's test results	-0.360
All dimensions of questionnaire	-0.441

9.2 Analysis of Teachers' Questionnaire

This instrument was designed for the preparatory year teachers. It contained two parts. The first part dealt with biographical information. The second part, on the other hand, stated the factors that affect the learning processes in writing skills. These factors were divided into three factors: Teachers factors, students' factors, and the university's factors. This method of collecting data was meant mainly to obtain the teachers` views and opinions about the currently used syllabus. It was expected to investigate the students' performances and teaching techniques for writing skills. The Likert scale had been used to analyze and came out with results from this instrument. The statements in the questionnaire were structured on five points of Linker's scale of strongly agree, agree, uncertainly, disagree, strongly disagree. The teachers were instructed to tick appropriately against each statement.

The data were collected to obtain teachers' views and opinions about students' progress in writing skill.

9.3 Teachers' Factors Dimension

Table (6) the period of twelve weeks is enough to teach the course perfectly

Response	Frequency(N)	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	0	0
Uncertainly	1	7%
Disagree	5	33%
Strongly disagree	9	60 %
Total	15	100%
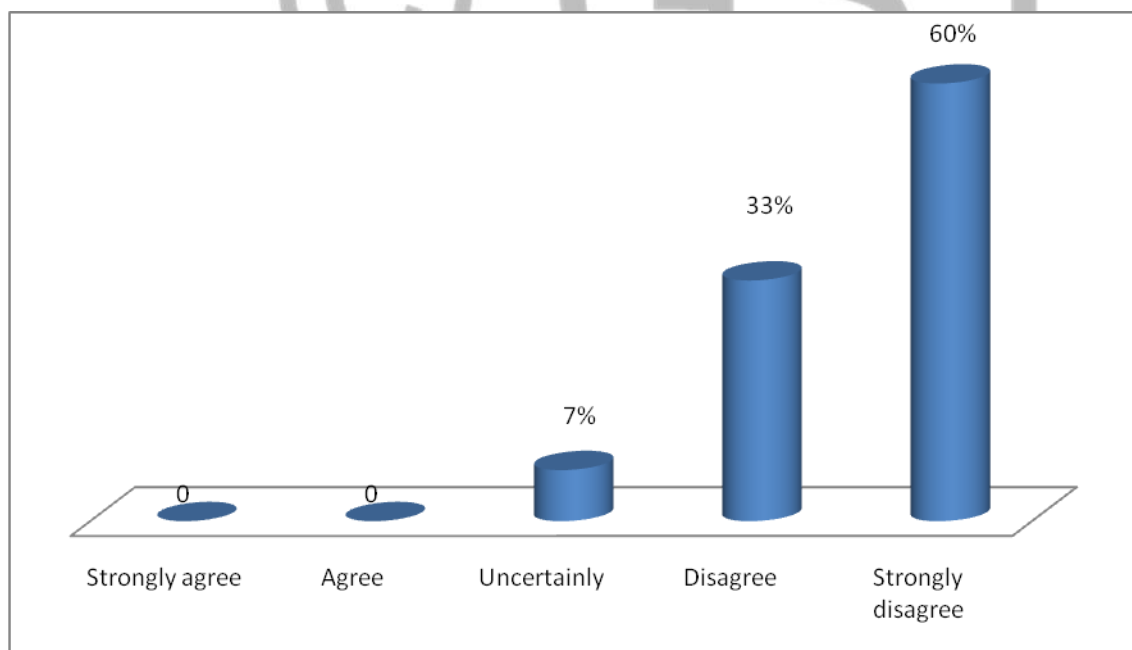
Chart (1): The period of twelve weeks is enough to teach the course perfectly.

Chart (1) shows teachers' views on whether a period of twelve weeks (one term /three months) is enough to teach the writing skill course perfectly. The results indicate that 60 % of the respondents strongly disagree, and 33% of them disagree upon that period of twelve weeks is enough.

On the other hand, 15% of the respondents were uncertain about that statement. The final results indicate that 93 % of the teachers have the same point that the period is not enough for teaching the skill.

Table (7): The students of (PYP) use the correct forms of language when they are writing

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0
Agree	0	0
Uncertainly	1	7%
Disagree	5	33%
Strongly disagree	9	60%
Total	15	100%
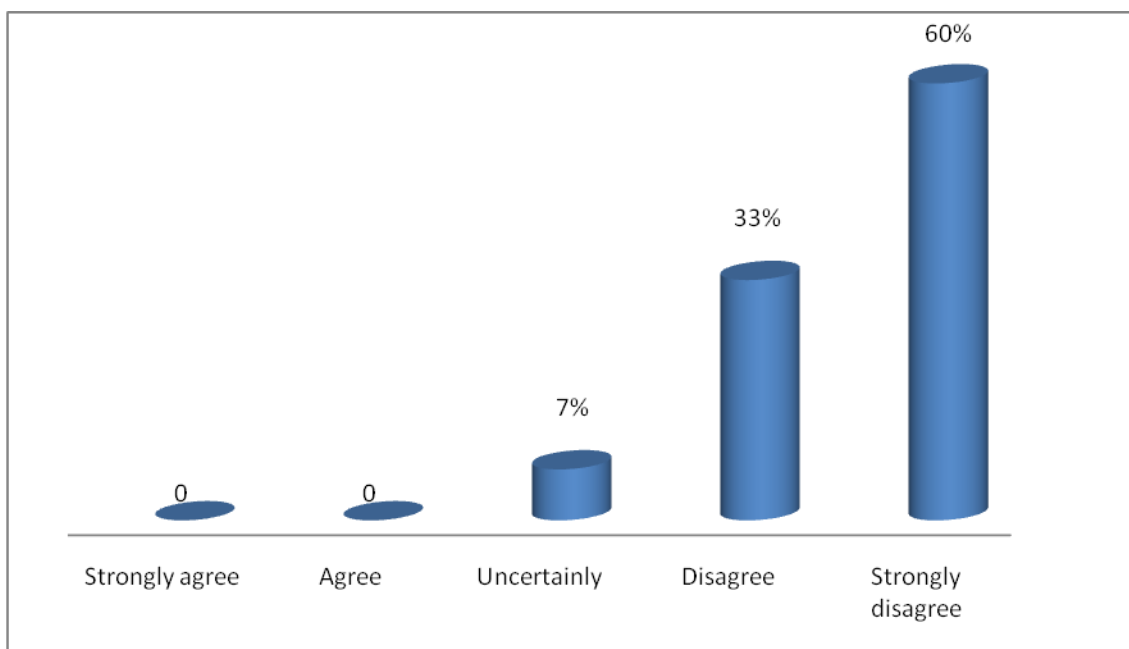
Chart (2): The students of (PYP) use the correct forms of language when they are writing.

Chart (2) shows the results of the students of the preparatory year program use the correct forms of language when they write. The results indicate that 60 % of the respondents strongly disagree, and 33% of them disagree. Only 7% of the participants agree with students' use of correct forms of language when they write. The final result points out that 93% of the respondents share that the students of (PYP) do not use the correct forms of language when they write compared only with 7% who do not have the same opinion.

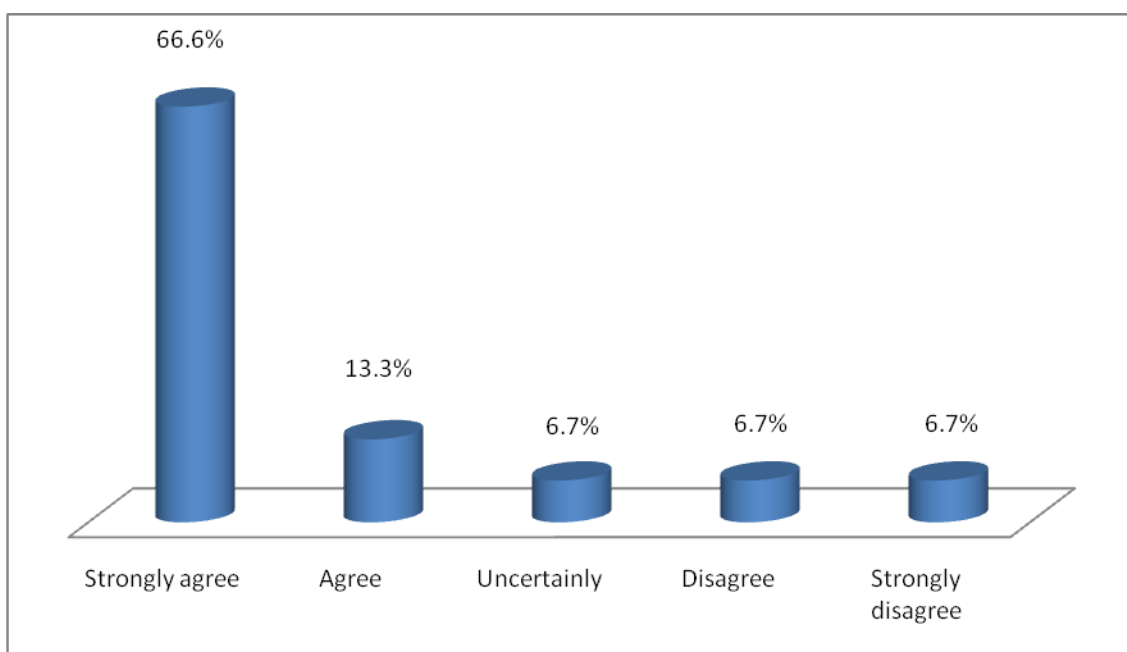*Table (8): Poor results in writing skill are because of the old fashion teaching style used by the PYP teachers.*

Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	10	66.6%
Agree	2	13.3%
Uncertainly	1	6.7%
Disagree	1	6.7%
Strongly disagree	1	6.7%
Total	15	100%

Chart (3): Poor results in writing skill are because of the old fashion teaching style used by the PYP teachers

In response to the question (3), chart (3) shows that 66% of the respondents strongly agree, and 13.3% of them agree that the students' poor results in writing skills are due to the old method of teaching

used by PYP teachers. On the other hand, 20% of the teachers either disagree, strongly disagree or uncertain about this statement. The conclusion revealed that the majority of the respondents (80%) provide their confirmation about this statement, compared to only 20 % who don't have the same point that students' poor results in writing is a result of old fashion teaching style.

10. Students' Factors Dimension

Table (9): The students learn intensively at preparatory year program.

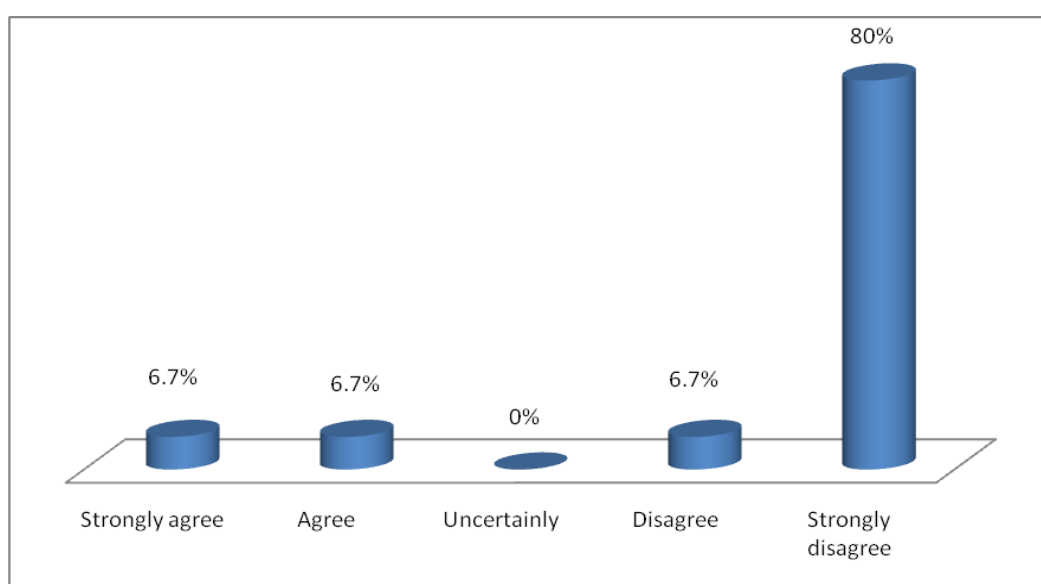| Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	6.7%
Agree	1	6.7%
Uncertainly	0	0%
Disagree	1	6.7%
Strongly disagree	12	80%
Total	15	100%

Chart (4): The students learn intensively at preparatory year program.

Concerning the statement "students learn intensively at preparatory year program", the results from the chart (4) show that 80% of the respondents strongly disagree; besides 6.7% of them agree with this statement. Only 13.4 % of the respondents either strongly agree or agree. The conclusion of the analysis shows that the majority of the respondents (80 %) have the same point of view that the students do not learn intensively at the preparatory year program, compared with a few numbers of teachers who do not have the same point.

Table (10): The program of preparatory year satisfies the Saudi   learners` needs in writing skill.

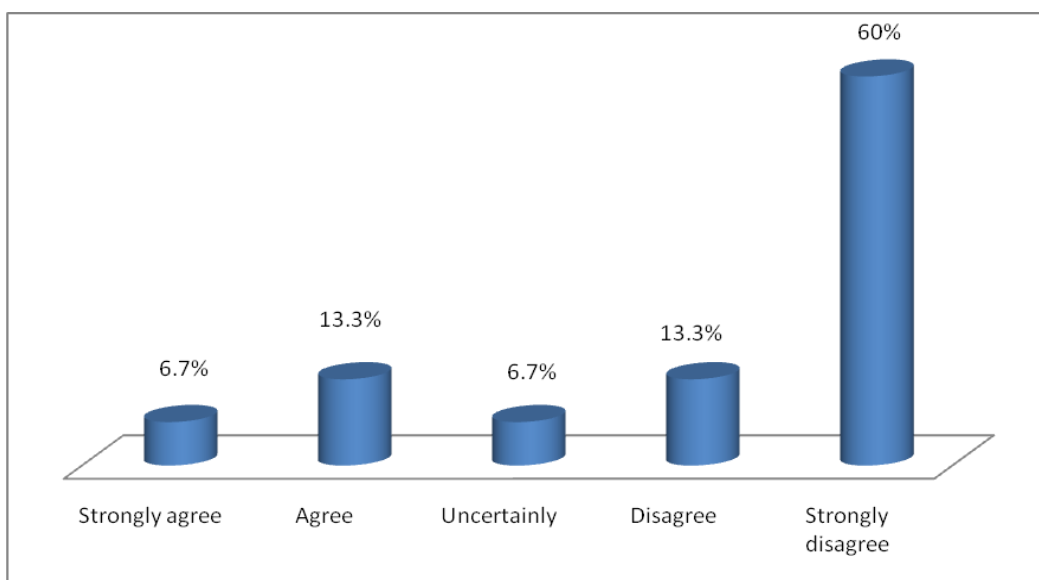| Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	6.7 %
Agree	2	13.3 %
Uncertainly	1	6.7 %
Disagree	2	13.3 %
Strongly disagree	9	60 %
Total	15	100 %

Chart (5): The program of preparatory year satisfies the Saudi learners`
needs in writing skill.

For the statement 'The program of preparatory year satisfies the Saudi learner's needs in writing skill chart (5) show that 60% of the respondents strongly disagree, and 13.3% of them disagree, while only 26.7 % either strongly agree, agree or uncertain. It can be concluded that the majority of the respondents (73.3 %) have the view that the program (preparatory year system) does not satisfy the Saudi learners' needs in writing skills.

Table (11): The dosage that the students have is quite enough to enhance the
Students` writing skills

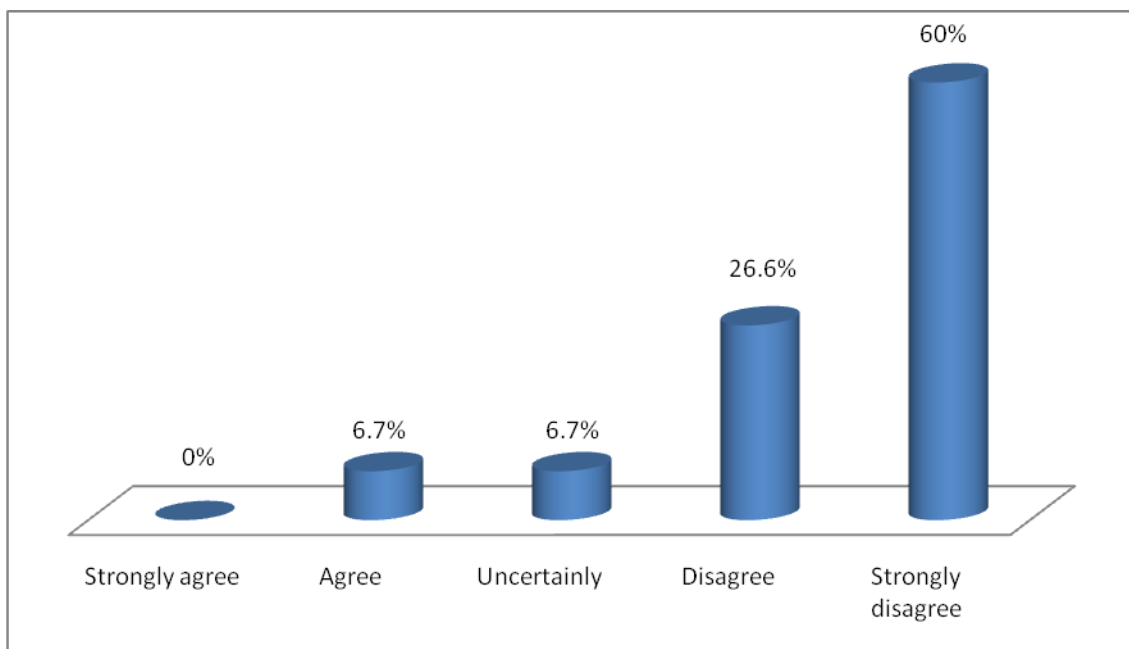| Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0%
Agree	1	6.7%
Uncertainly	1	6.7%
Disagree	4	26.7%
Strongly disagree	9	60%
Total	15	100%

Chart (6): The dosage that the students have is quite enough to enhance the Students` writing skills

Chart (6) shows the dosage that the students have is not enough to enhance their writing skills. The results indicate that 60% of the respondents strongly disagree, and 26.6 % of them disagree. While only 13.4 % of them either agree or uncertain. The final results indicate that the great majority of the respondents (86.6%) think that the dosage that the students have in the preparatory year program is not quite enough to enhance the students' writing skills.

Table (12): Preparatory year program encourages students to improve writing skill.

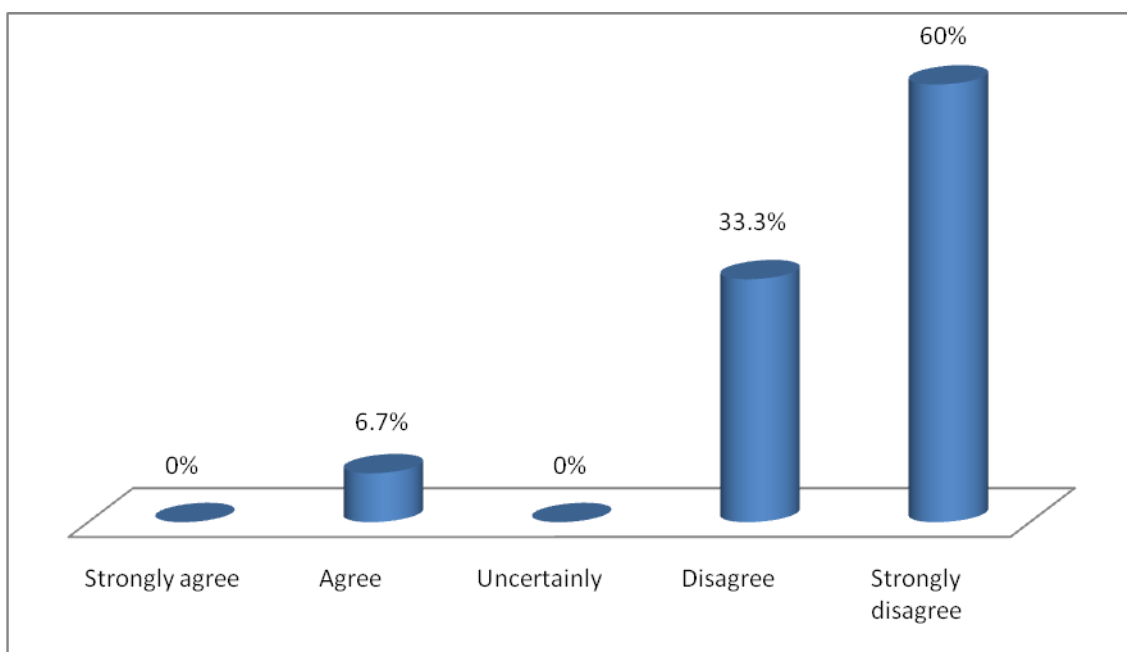| Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0%
Agree	1	6.7%
Uncertainly	0	0 %
Disagree	5	33.3 %
Strongly disagree	9	60%
Total	15	100%

Chart (7): Preparatory year program encourages students to improve writing skill.

Regarding the statement 'preparatory year program encourages learners to improve writing skill,' both table (4.7) and chart (4.7) show that 60 % of the respondents strongly disagree, and 33.3% of them disagree, while only 6.7 % of the participants agree to this item. In conclusion, the results indicate that

the great majority of the respondents (93.3 %) have the point that the preparatory year program does not encourage students to improve writing skills.

Table (13): The students of (PYP) write confidently in English.

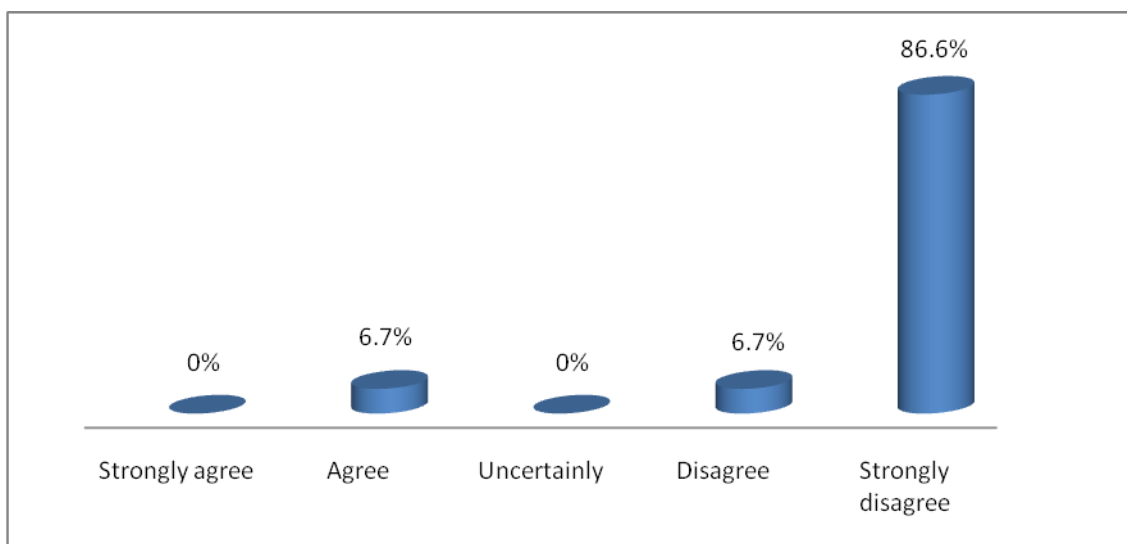| Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	0	0%
Agree	1	6.7%
Uncertainly	0	0%
Disagree	1	6.7%
Strongly disagree	13	86.6%
Total	15	100%

Chart (8): *The students of (PYP) write confidently in English.*

According to the statistical results presented in table (8) and chart (4.8), which deal with the statement "the students of (PYP) write confidently in English", the results indicate that 86.6% of the respondents strongly disagree and 6.7 % of them agree. Only 6.7% of the teachers responded: "agree". The final results

point out that the majority of the respondent's share that the students of preparatory year program do not write confidently in English.

11. University Factors Dimension

Table (14): The preparatory year provides an effective program to Saudi students at king Faisal University .

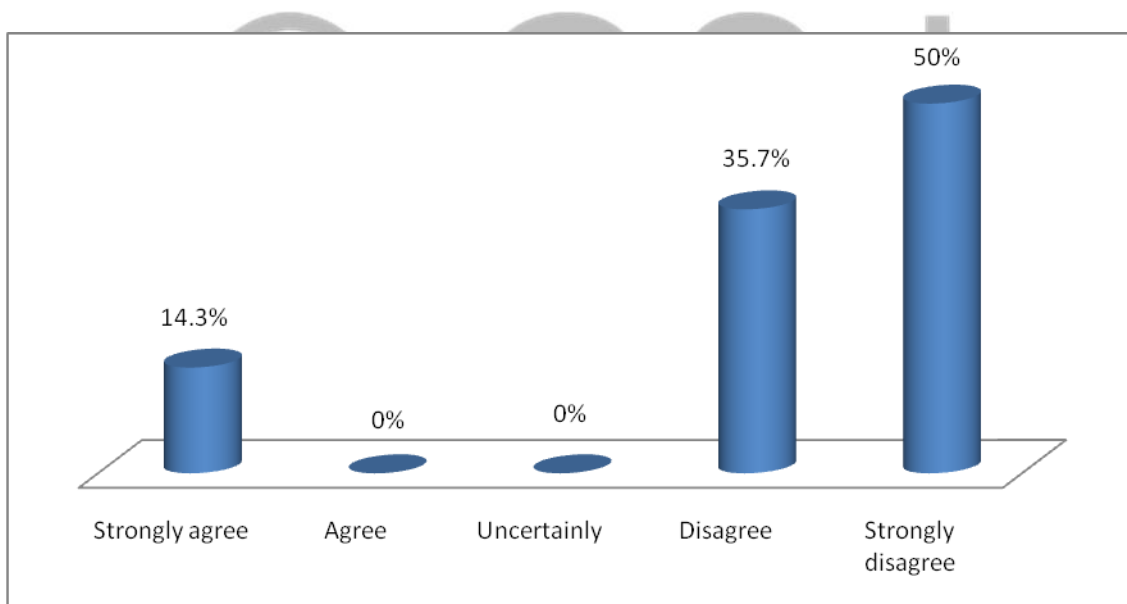| Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	1	14.3%
Agree	0	0%
Uncertainly	0	0%
Disagree	5	35.7%
Strongly disagree	8	50%
Total	15	100%

Chart (9): The preparatory year provides an effective program to Saudi students at King Faisal University .

The table and the chart above show if the (PYP) provides an effective program for Saudi students at King Faisal University or not. The result of data analysis for this item reveals that 50% of the respondents strongly disagree

with this item. It is also found that 35.7 % of them disagree with the same item. Only (14.3 %) of respondents respond to the statement "strongly agree". It is quite obvious that respondents have a consensus point of view about this item, since; the majority of them (85.7 %) think that the preparatory year does not provide an effective program for Saudi students at King Faisal University.

Table (15): Poor results in writing skill are because of the poor syllabus design.

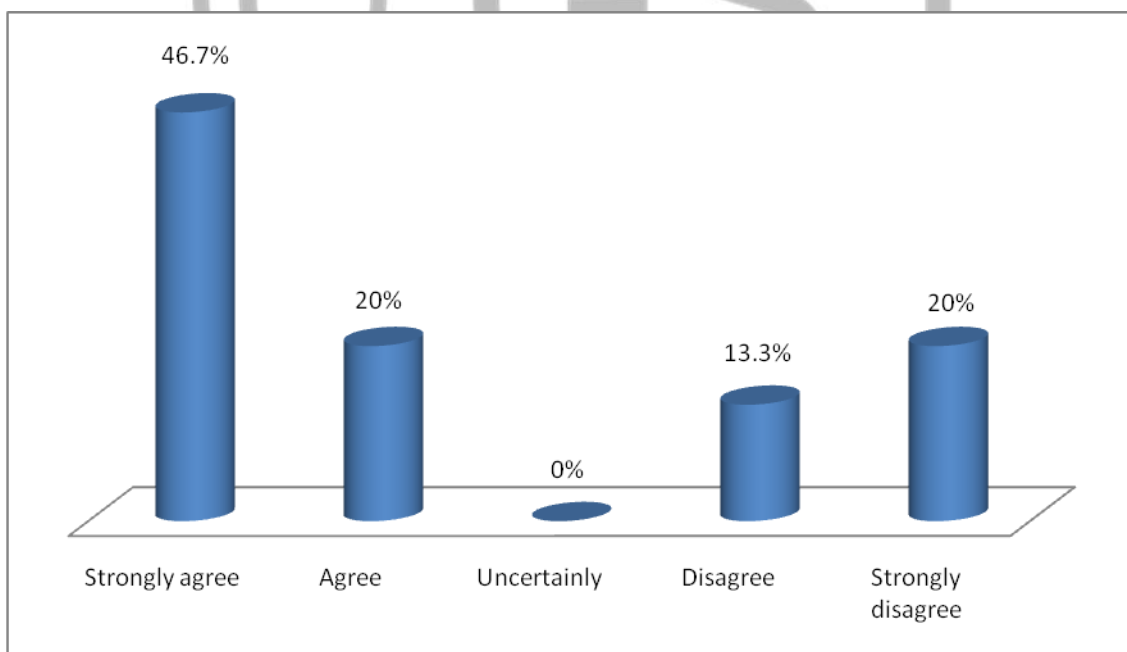| Response	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	7	46.7%
Agree	3	20%
Uncertainly	0	0%
Disagree	2	13.3%
Strongly disagree	3	20%
Total	15	100%

Chart (10): Poor results in writing skill are because of the poor syllabus design.

Concerning chart (10), it is found that 47.7% of the respondents strongly agree to the statement 'poor results in writing skill are because of the poor syllabus design'; 20 % of them are in agreement with the item. On the other hand, 13.3 % of the teachers who disagree with this statement and 20% strongly disagree. It is quite clear that respondents have different points of views about this item, it is realized that 67.7 % of the respondents agree that poor results in writing skill are due to the poor syllabus design, compared with only 32.3 % who disagree to this item.

12. Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

Hypothesis (1): Providing more practice for the material helps to gain positive results at the end of the semester.

The results obtained indicated that most of the teachers (73.3 %) think that they do not provide students with more practice. This can be attributed to syllabus and period. In addition to that, 93% of the respondents believe that the students of (PYP) do not use the correct forms of language when they write, because of teacher's method, compared with only 7% who do not believe in that.

Students during the first test found that they could not write perfectly. But when they started the new methodology that emphasizes practical work, positive changes were very clear then. Students started regular written tasks after discussing topics that are related to their real-life and interest. They learned from each other. The researcher encouraged pair work, group work, and peer correction techniques. Students decided that they benefited a lot from each other.

Hypothesis (2): Suitable materials as a pedagogy can help improve students writing skills.

The program doesn`t provide students with suitable material with more practice. The result of this paradigm reveals that the majority of the respondents (80%) provide their confirmation about the students' poor marks in writing is as a result of using unsuitable materials. In addition to that, the result indicates that the great majority of the respondents (93.3 %) think that the preparatory year program does not encourage learners with more practice to improve writing skills. Moreover, the result explains that 93.3 % of the respondents believe that the students of the preparatory year program do not write confidently in English. It is quite clear that poor results in writing skill course are as a result of the poor syllabus design.

Hypothesis (3): The period of one semester (twelve weeks) program does not enable instructors to teach the course of writing perfectly.

The results point out that 93 % of the teachers think the period for one term is not enough to train the students well for writing skills although the book "Keep Writing" is not full of practice. For that reason, the analysis shows that the majority of the respondents (80 %) think that the students do not learn intensively at the preparatory year program due to the short time given for writing skills.

13. The results

After the data has been analyzed, the researcher pins down the following findings:

1.   The period of one term in the PYP system (three months) is not enough to teach writing skills well.

2.   When students have exposure to and more time to work with language better results are usually gained at the end.

3.   PYP students' failure in the writing course is due to the old fashioned procedure and limited techniques adopted by university authorities.

The result confirmed that instructors can't cover the syllabus from cover to cover and at the same time train the students with different kinds of writing but by little changed students gain more benefits. It is very important to them to practice how to write an essay in the pre-writing stage, then while writing stage and post-writing stage more than just reading about these steps theoretically. So, having exposure to use the language through practice is one of the main elements to enhance students' writing skills.

Also, writing classes must witness more practice than delivering lectures besides instructors must pay more attention to their pedagogical application because as mentioned PYP instructors do not have prescribed methodology to teach writing. Unfortunately, they do not give students much time to practice.

Moreover, changing the system from full academic year (seven months) to one term (three months and a half) was not a wise idea because three months are not enough for teaching and presenting additional material.

14. Conclusion

According to the data and the limitation of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

·   Allocate extra hours and prepare supporting materials for students to practice writing skills.

·   Gradually release writing responsibilities to the students.

·   Guide students to select and use appropriate writing techniques.

·   Teach students to construct a sentence for fluency, meaning, and style.

·   Participate as a member of the community by writing and sharing their writings.

15. Recommendations

The previous conclusions draw the researcher's attention to recommend the following points:

1- Instructors must pay more attention to their pedagogical application.

2- Emphasis on doing practice for the four skills needs more investigation.

3- Research should investigate other skills in PYP in other Saudi universities.

18. Suggestion for Further Study

Based on collecting results, several suggestions are proposed for future

Researchers are interested in writing.

1-The results of this study cannot be largely generalized, thus future research should conduct a study on a large population in the Department of English at King Faisal University

2- It is suggested that future research in the area of writing should be examined in association with several variables. For example, the type of

activities they exercise and the use of technologies to develop students' writing skills.

Acknowledgments

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