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The Effectiveness of Creative Writing for Students at Elementary Level: A Case Study

* Ghulam Mujtaba Yasir, Assistant Professor

** Sadia Gondal, Assistant Professor

*** Dr. Afsheen Salahuddin

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Abstract

Writing is one of the productive skills which sometime seems difficult to acquire to the learners. There are many approaches to teach writing. Creative writing is one approach of teaching writing which has become more familiar in recent era. In our country many schools of Urdu and English medium are implementing this approach now-a-days to teach writing in the elementary level. This aim of this study is to find out the effectiveness of creative writing in language learning. Now a days there is too much attention of teachers on making students to be creative writer. This study explores the difficulties of creative writing which the Pre O level students consistently face while writing and the effectiveness of creative writing for students. To collect the data the researcher visited Beacon house School located in Valencia Lahore. The researcher provided questionnaires having 15 questions to 40 students of that institute in order to collect information and data from them. The researcher also interviewed 4 students from that institute to collect more data and information which are missing or inadequate in the questionnaire. The collected data explore that creative writing classes are important and influential for learners and they want these kinds of activities to improve their learning skills. The students face many hindrances and problems while writing. The findings showed that students of both medium like Creative writing classes and it influences their language learning. Therefore, it can be said that Creative writing can be used as an effective language learning tool.

Keywords: Creative Writing, Difficulties, Effectiveness

Research Background

One of the most gainful abilities in language instructing is composing aptitudes on the grounds that the author creates words by himself. Exploratory writing is a method for composing that goes beyond limits of ordinary expert, scholastic, or specialized types of writing, ordinarily recognized by an accentuation on story create, character improvement and the utilization of artistic figures or with different customs of verse and poetics. On account of the detachment of the definition, it is workable for composing; for example, include stories to be viewed as experimental writing, despite the fact that they fall under news coverage, in light of the fact that the substance of highlights is explicitly centered on story and character advancement. Both anecdotal and non-anecdotal works fall into this classification, including such structures as books, histories, short stories, and sonnets.

Creativity in writing can be thought of as any pure writing. Right now composing is an increasingly present and procedure arranged name for what has been customarily called writing, including the assortment of its kinds. These kinds of writing activities are usually accessible to authors from the secondary school level right through higher secondary school or above level college/university and grown-up training. Project like these are related with the English offices in the particular institutes, however the thought of this program has been tested right now increasingly experimental writing programs have spun off into their own area of expertise. Most Experimental writing degrees for students in different institutes are bachelor of Expressive arts degrees (BEA), some keep on pursuing Ace of Expressive arts in exploratory writing, the terminal degree in the field.

Usually, creative writers choose to focus on verses or novels and usually they go with plays or short poems. So, we try to build such procedure in terms of the focus to make their skills and techniques solid, including literature classes, educational classes and laboratory classes.

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*   Department of English, Ghazi University, DG Khan, Pakistan
**   Department of Humanities, Social Sciences and Modern Languages, University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan
*** Faculty at Beaconhouse National University, Lahore Pakistan

To teach and learn English as foreign language there is unsatisfactory conditions in schools. Trainers and teachers always choose mother tongue to clarify courses to make learning easier for students. Many teachers believe that teaching English is to explain the textbook content to students and to provide them with ready-mixed responses. The students concentrate on storing and reproducing the selected response from the text. The students seemed to have a lot of difficulties in writing, as they are not able to cope with the situation, coordinate ideas, and use words.

Most school children should not systematically write themselves as adult students do in school. Students are more organized and planned by their respective teachers to do different types of write practice. Some students can understand the language, but most students are facing the issue of conveying their thoughts. The main reason or issue is the absence of English's sufficient inventory and written imagination. The more vocabulary the student learn and trust the language, the more they will have chances to enhance their skills with the help of creative writing.

Statement of the Problem:

The main aim of this research is to explore the effectiveness of creative writing for Pre O level students of Beacon house School Valencia campus Lahore and the aim is to point out what are the serious difficulties which the pre O level students of Beacon house school Valencia town Lahore face in creative writing. The study also focuses on the strategies which the students follow to develop and improve their creative writing skills. There are many Students who like creative writing too much and also there are many students they like route learning as creative writing is difficult for them.

Research objectives:

Objectives of the research are as follows.
1.   To point out the difficulties which Pre O level students usually face while creative writing.
2.   To know about how effective the Pre O level Students in their creative writing about any topic or answering to any question.
3.   How effective creative writing for pre O level students.

Research Questions:

This research deals with these following questions;
1)   Which are the areas in creative writing the Pre O level students mostly face difficulties?
2)   How pre O level students of Beacon house School Valencia Lahore improve their Creative writing skill?
3)   How much effective creative writing is for students?

Literature Review

The main goal of this portion is to study and examine articles, journals, and other research papers related to your study. In this regard the researcher read many articles, research paper and journals. Here the researcher has produced the material obtained through the study of the importance of literature and related field of this study. Firstly the researcher starts its discussion of literature with communication skills. The discussion begins with a discussion of different kinds of language skills. Moreover the researcher moves to discuss the difficulties of creative writing which the learners face in language learning and also discusses the usefulness of creative writing for learners in language learning.

Reasons for Teaching Writing:

Renowned scholar Adas and Bakir (2013) said that, "Students don't write very often, and the rest of what they write is restricted to classrooms. The most important factor for writing activities is the need for students to be active personally to make the learning experience of great value".

Many researchers conducted investigations on the viewpoint of the student towards educational writing and the researchers discovered that they thought educational writing important as it is a point of departure to publish their research and a source of let others judge their interests. Usually, when we talk about writing it has always been considered and thought of as unique task. In recent era a clear and aesthetic writing instructions are those which enable learners to think it as a difficult process comprises of different types of tasks that finally result in the product. English as target Language and English as a Foreign Language (EFL), one of the most important skills needed is the ability to write academic document.

Writing Approaches:

There are various theories to experiment the writing abilities in the context the question is to select the most accurate method for learners, it depends on the trainers who need to make it clear either they aim

to show students focus of process rather than product. Even if they wish the students to go through various stories, essays or either they aim to give confidence to students while writing by their own creativity and imagination. The method and material theories have been so influential in writing practices in language learning period among these different types of approaches. The approach to the material keeps an eye on writing finished material rather than the process of writing itself. In comparison, writing phase approach should be aware of different stages through which each writing activities move. According to Chris Tribble (1996), however, genre methods have become adherent over the past ten years. Creative writing is one more writing approach which is dominant in language learning period for almost decades. This involves creative activities like story writing, making poetries and play writing that facilitate successful self-discovery learning.

Product- oriented Approach:

A well-established instructional technique is the product-based writing method to encourage the participants to imitate a portion of experimental text, mostly dedicated to those in the initial period of learning a language. This method is one of the more popular as well as conventional method followed by trainers of English as foreign language. According to scholars in this method the text is established as well as grammatically accurate which determines fruitful learning in product-focused methods.

Process-oriented Approach:

With regard to process-oriented methods, understanding the creating and articulating ideas in writing is critical. This method needs learners to understand the stages to create a successful task. Process-oriented method is considered criteria of generating meaning based on a lot of processes. Writing in systematic method deals mainly with language skills, like developing or planning instead of the knowledge of linguistic factors, suppose, knowing grammatical structure and textual. The author in process-oriented method goes through various stages with different views in creating a piece of writing, although a standard template is defined which involves four phases: pre-writing, writing, editing, revising, and in the end creating an end feature. Obviously, composing is much difficult rather than that. Different Phases of writing like these can be completed in an innovative way. Usually in these phases the author moves forward or loops backward. Suppose, the author may think about going again to writing first and shows desire to re-editing of the work he has done after making few changing and re-correcting.

Creative Writing:

It is a way of writing in which the author takes independence and tries to create his own thoughts and feelings about something. It is an aspect that refers to conceptual activities like creating poetries, fiction and games. Usually, it determines of creating texts possess an accurate instead merely educational, functional and practical intent.

Most often our focus goes about fictions, plays or poetries, it may also contains writing plays and screen-writing, content to be described or explanatory nonfiction like essays related to personal matter or related to journalism. 'Such texts, though not limited to these genres, take the form of poems and stories most of the time.

Creative Writing in Teaching English:

Alan Maley (2012) contrasts the main characteristics of creative writing with the characteristics of expository writing in his articles creative writing for students and teachers as he assumes these two styles of writing are in contrast to each other.

Writing of the expository mostly related to instrument in delivering truth values and is based on a systematic method placed on the outside. This scope varies from grammatical and lexical perfection to unique limitations of the genre. The main objective and purpose of writing creatively is rational and coherent and with the aim of providing material to the reader as unambiguously as possible.

In other point of view creative writing deals with esthetic factors. When he goes on to explain, he adds that creative writing always continues by pushing language rules to break point, seeing where it goes until linguistic knowledge decreases through the pressure of creativity.

Research Methodology

This work was carried out using mixed approaches, as it merged both quantitative and qualitative methods. This is more quantitative because the researcher uses questionnaire to collect numerical data from the pre O level students of Beacon house schools Valencia Lahore. Quantitative investigation is the one in which the collected information are represented using descriptive statistics. Quantitative

study is supervised, numerical and result-based which represents the truth value and that are usually beyond of the researcher observation. In this study the students were provided questionnaires by the researcher in order to collect primary information about the difficulties which the pre O level students face in creative writing and the usefulness of creative writing for students. The collected data has been interpreted and evaluated through numerical instruments. Therefore this study falls within this category.

The participants of this study consist of 40 students. They are Pre O level students who studies at Beacon house School Valencia Town campus Lahore. Of these, 20 are male students, and 20 are female students. Students are all engaged with all communication competencies. During their lessons, students practice certain writing activities like paragraph writing, explaining objects, and story writing etc., these kinds of practices are recommended for them. In this research, questionnaire was used as data collection instrument. To conduct the survey, the participants were given questionnaires. The imprinted questionnaire types were distributed among the participants and the researcher made all the questions understandable. So Questionnaire is main tool for data collection in this research. Another means of this research gathering information is interview. The questionnaire contains 15 questions of multiple choices, using the five choices liker scale.

Findings and Analysis

In this section the researchers present the analysis, discussion and interpretation of the findings and collected information from the both data collection tools. To show the outcomes the researcher has taken the help of charts and tables.

Findings of the Questionnaires:

It has been shown in above portion that the researcher used questionnaires to collect data from the pre O level students of Beacon house School Valencia Lahore about the difficulties which they face in creative writing and the information were also required to know about the usefulness of creative writing for pre O level students.

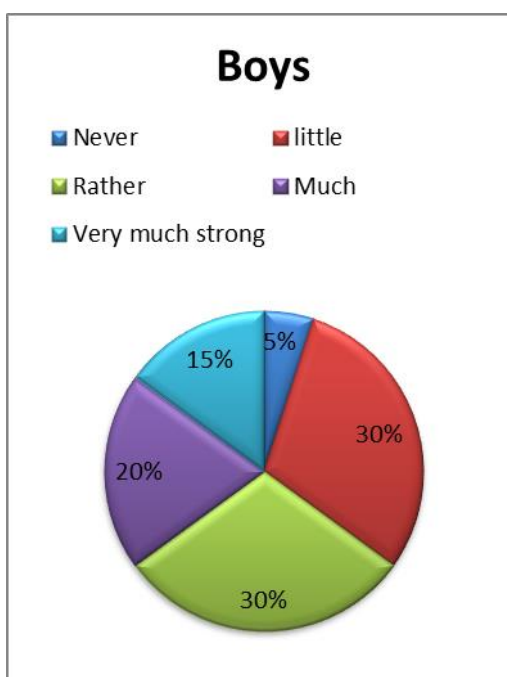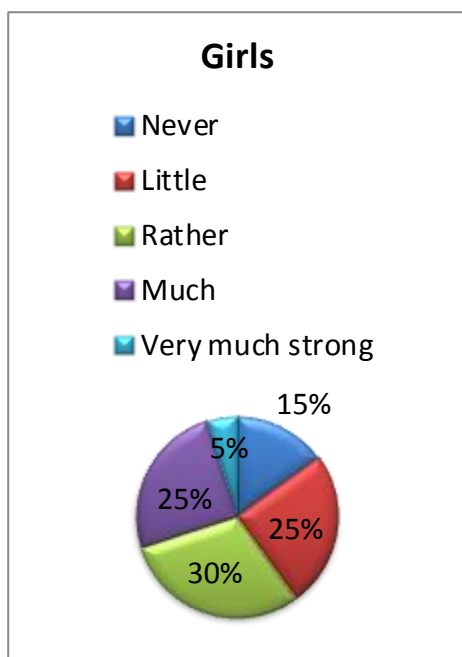**Q.** Feel comfortable and confident about the ability to write.

Table 1 reveals that a total of 33.5% of girls and boys students feel a little comfortable while writing. Among them 35% girls and 35% are boys. In comparison, 22% feel much comfortable while writing and 30% rather comfortable in writing. Just 10 percent of all the students are very comfortable while writing.
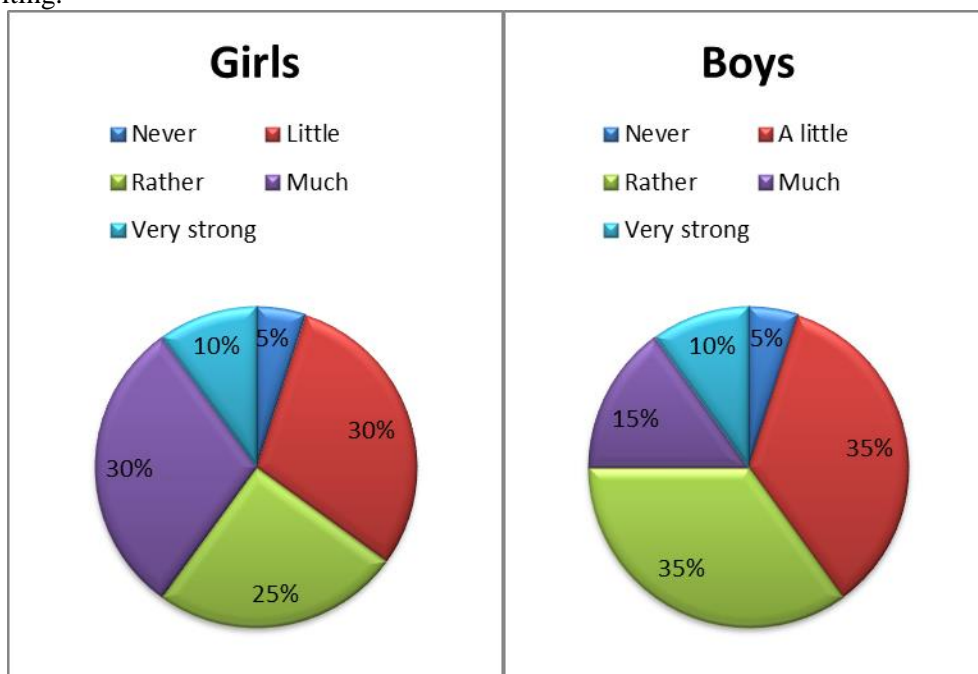
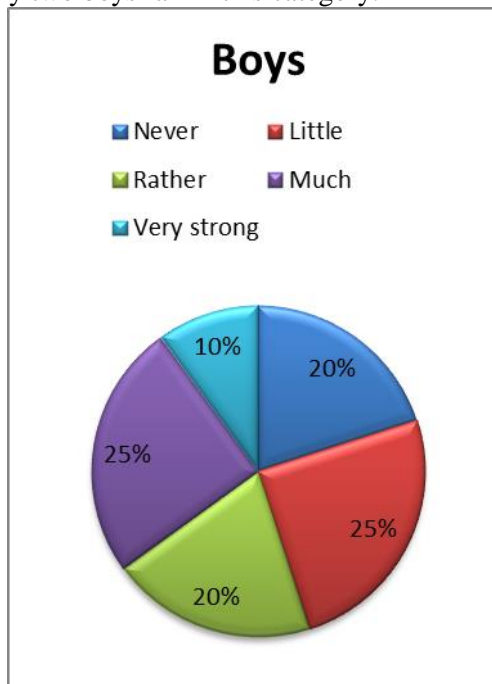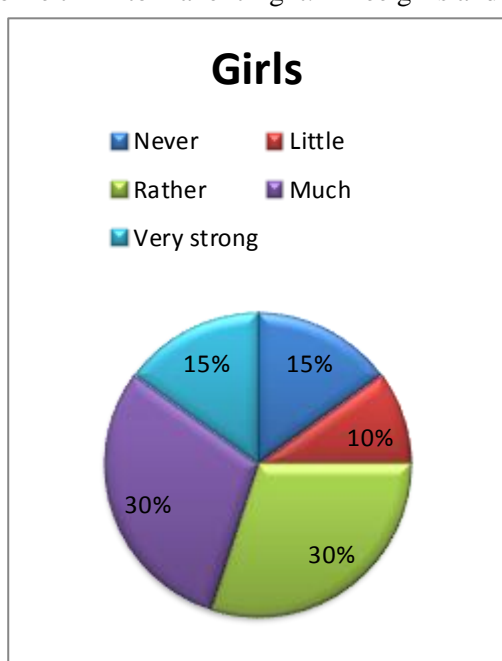**Q2.** Effectively and cleanly plan a large writing assignment.

According to Table 2, 10% of total students are never effective in planning a large writing assignment. Three girl students and one boy fall in this category. Secondly 27% of all students are little effective and 29% of all students are rather effective in planning a large number of assignment.

Among all, 24% students are much effective and only 10% of all are very strong in planning a large writing assignment.

Girls

- Never
- Little
- Rather
- Much
- Very much strong

15% 5% 25% 25% 30%

Boys

- Never
- little
- Rather
- Much
- Very much strong

5% 15% 30% 20% 30%

Q3. Write first drafts without stopping to correct or rethink

According to table 4, 17.5 percent of all students never and 17.5 percent of all students little write first draft with no stop or rethink to make it right. 5 girls and 9 boys fall in this category. 25 percent of all students rather and 27.5 percent of all students much compose draft with no stop or re think to make it right. In the end 12.5 percent of all are very strong in writing draft first with no stop or re think to make it right. Three girls and only two boys fall in this category.

Girls

- Never
- Little
- Rather
- Much
- Very strong

15% 15% 10% 30% 30%

Boys

- Never
- Little
- Rather
- Much
- Very strong

10% 20% 25% 25% 20%

**Q4.** **Accurately gives value to facts and concepts of other people**

According to table 4, 5 percent of all students never and 10 percent of all are little accurately giving credits to facts and thoughts of other people. 4 girls and 2 boys fall in this category. 35 percent of all rather and 32.5 percent much accurate in giving credits to facts and thoughts of different people.

In the end 17.5 percent of all participants are strong in accurately giving credits to facts and thoughts of different people. 4 girls and 3 boys fall in this category.
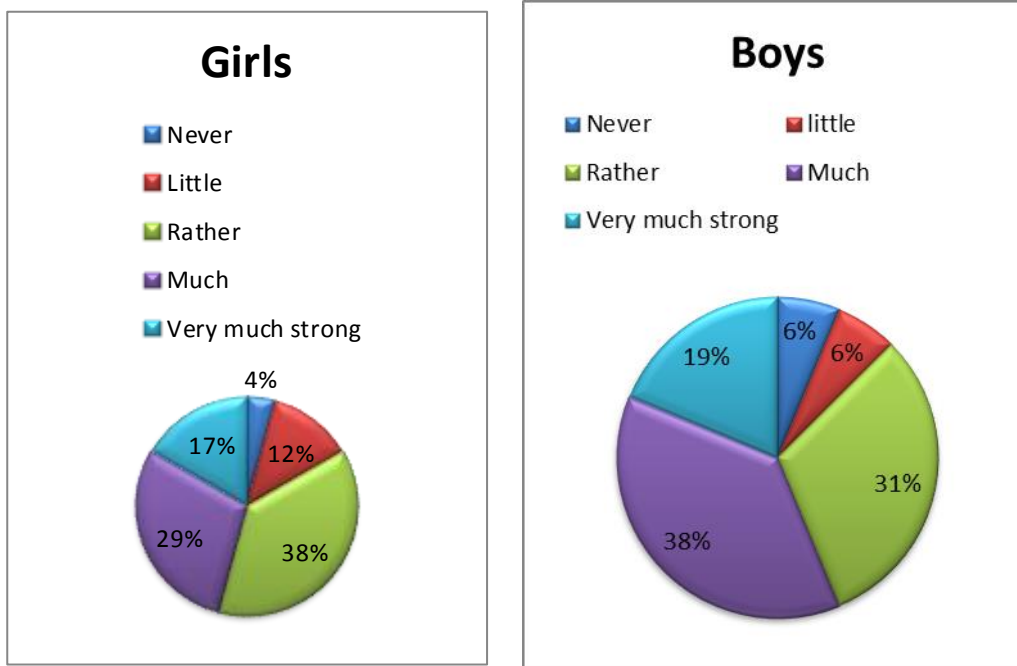

Q5. Make effective and acceptable paragraph and sentences using accurate, correct and valid spelling, punctuation and grammar.

According to the table 5, 7.5 percent of all students are never effective in writing sentences and text by using correct spelling, accurate grammar and valid punctuation. 2 girls and only 1 boy fall in this category. 15 percent of all students are little effective in writing sentences and text by using correct spelling, accurate grammar and valid punctuation. Two boys and four girls fall in this category. Further, 33.5 percent of all students are much and 34 percent of all students are rather effective in writing sentences and text by using correct spelling, accurate grammar and valid punctuation. 13 girls and 14 boys fall between these two categories. In the end 10 percent of all students are very much effective in writing texts and sentences by using correct spelling, accurate grammar and valid punctuation, only one girl and 3 boys fall in this category.
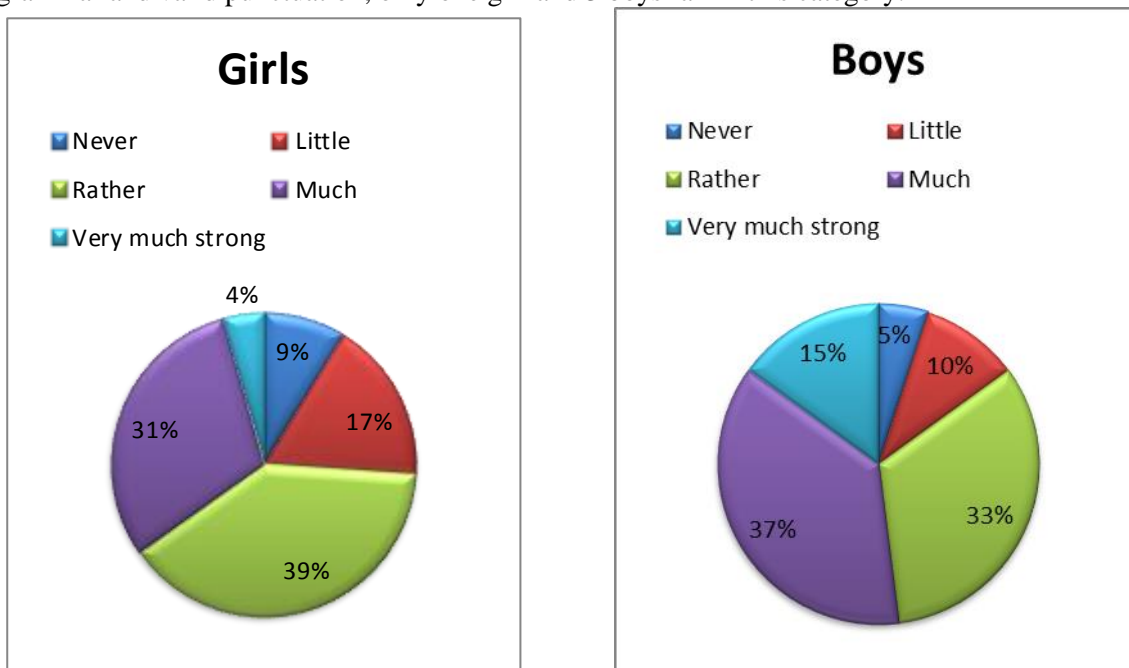
Q6. Enjoying writing

According to table 6, 7.5% of all students never enjoy while writing and same number of students enjoys little while writing. Three girls and 3 boys fall in this category. Moreover 15% students in total rather and 35% in total enjoy writing much. Eventually 35% in total students very much strongly enjoy while writing.
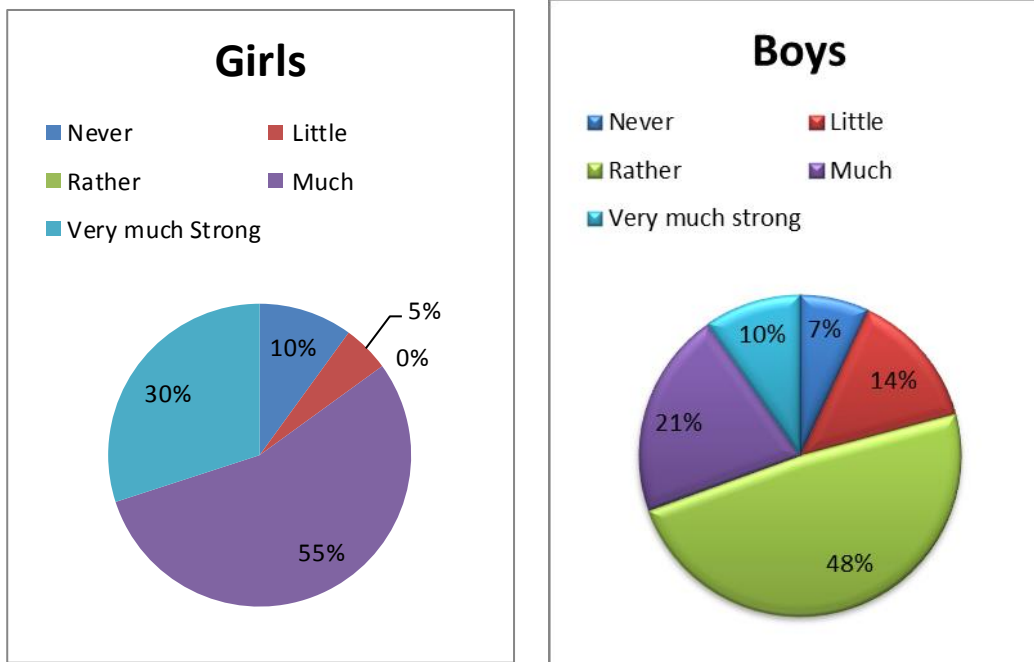

Q7. Pay equal focus to both the languages (e.g. vocabulary, spelling, grammar) and the contents (e.g. organization, concepts).

Above table 7 shows evidence, 10 percent of all students never pay equal focus to both the languages (e.g. vocabulary, spelling, and grammar) and the contents (e.g. organization, concepts). Two girls and two boys fall in this category. Moreover, 15% of all students little and 32.5% of all students rather pay approximate attention to both the languages (e.g. vocabulary, spelling, and grammar) and the contents (e.g. organization, concepts). Nine girls and ten boys fall between these categories. At the last 27 percent of all students much and 15.5 percent of all students very strong in giving approximate focus to both the languages (e.g. vocabulary, spelling and grammar) and the contents (e.g. organization and concepts). Eight boys and nine girls fall between these two categories.
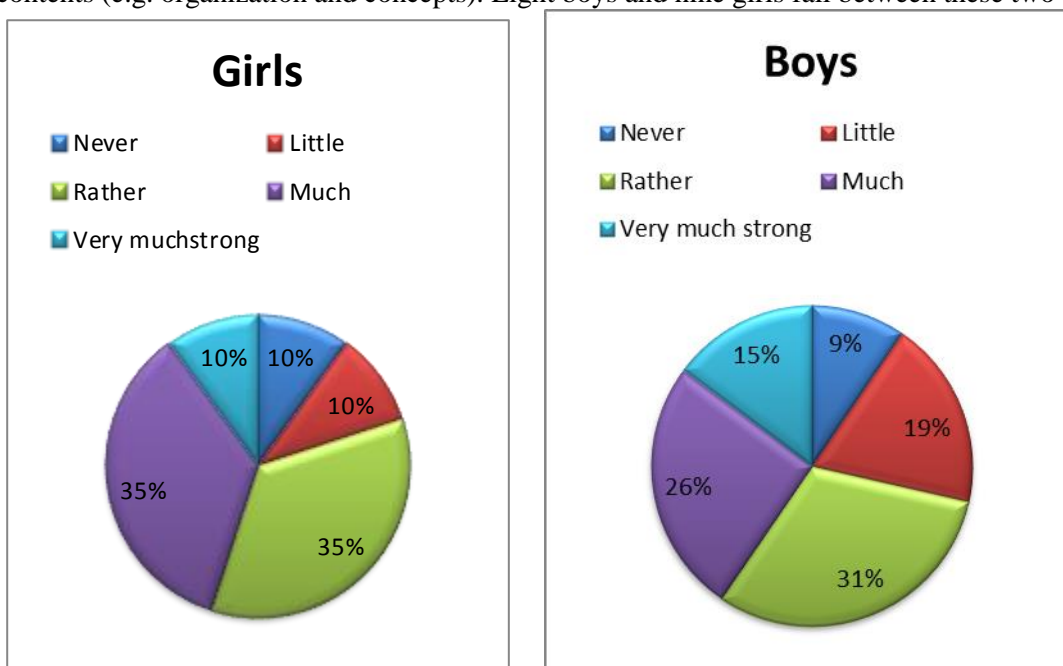
Q8.   About an interesting topic, create a number of words freely, fairly and quickly without being stuck

Table 8 shows that among both female and male students, 5% of all the students never about an interesting topic, create a number of words freely, fairly and quickly without being stuck. Only one girl and one boy fall in this category and 22.2% of all the students little about an interesting topic, create a number of words freely, fairly and quickly without being stuck or stop. Four girls and five boys fall in this category. Moreover, 30% of all students rather and 28.3% of all students much about an interesting topic, create a number of words freely, fairly and quickly without being stuck or stop, twelve girls and eleven boys fall between these two categories. In the end only 15% of all students are very much strong about an interesting topic; create a number of words freely, fairly and quickly without being stop. Three boys and three girls fall in this category.
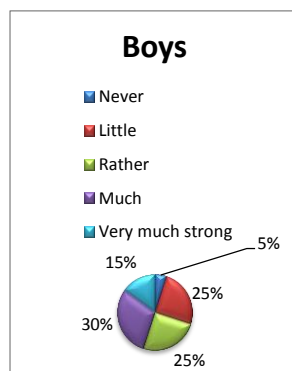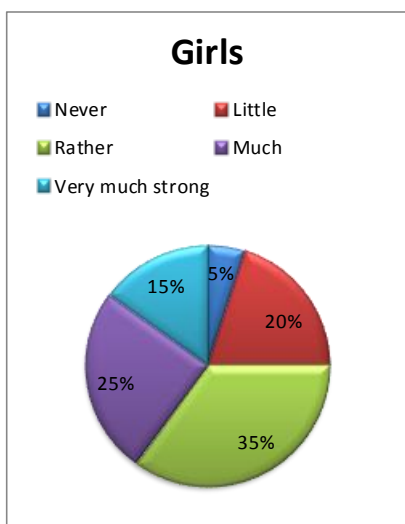

Q9.   Develop clear sentences for readers on first reading

Table 9 shows the evidence that among girls and boys students 10% of all students never develop clear sentences for readers on first reading. Two girls and to boys fall in this category. Secondly, 15% of all the students can little develop clear sentences for readers, three girls and three boys fall in this category. Furthermore, 35% of all students rather and 25% of all students much develop clear sentences for readers, ten girls and 5 boys fall between these two categories. Lastly 15% of all students are very much strong in developing clear sentences for readers on first reading, five girls and only boy fall in this category.
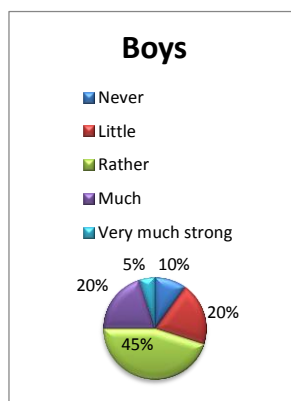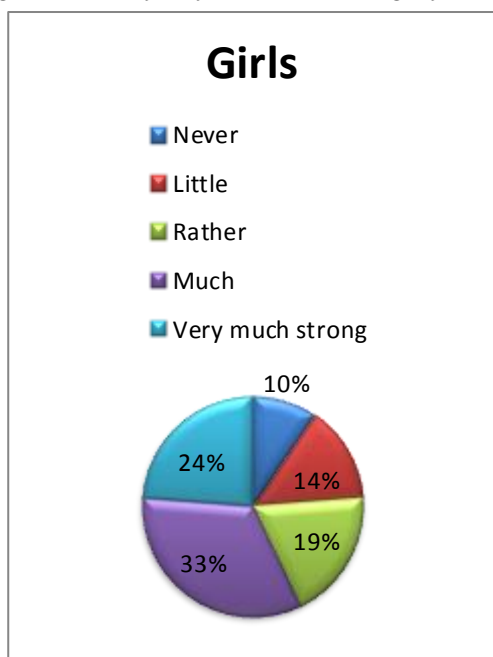
Q10.   Bring concepts and thoughts about an interesting topic

Table 10 shows evidence that among both girls and boy's students 2.5% of all students never bring concepts and thoughts about an interesting topic, only one girl falls in this category. Secondly, 27% of all students bring little and 35.5% of all students rather bring concepts and thoughts about an interesting topic, 12 girls and 11 boys fall between these two categories. Moreover 25% of all students bring much and 10% of all students can strongly bring concepts and thoughts about an interesting topic, seven girls and six boys fall between these two categories.
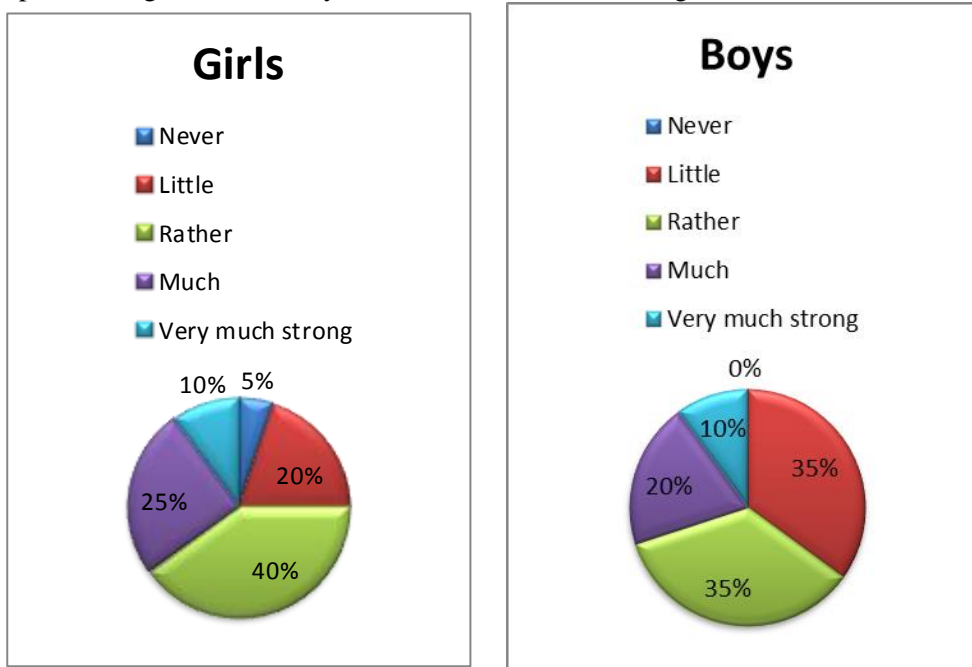
Q11.   Getting rid of various mistakes in punctuation, grammar, spelling etc.

According to table 11, 7% of all students never getting rid of various mistakes in punctuation, grammar spelling etc., two boys and only one girl fall in this category. 30% of all students little and 25% of all students rather getting rid of various mistakes in punctuation, grammar, spelling etc., thirteen girls and nine boys fall between these two categories. Moreover 33% of all students much and 5% of all students very much strongly getting rid of various mistakes in punctuation, grammar, spelling etc., six girls and nine girls fall between these categories. Below mentioned charts will also represent question no 14**.**
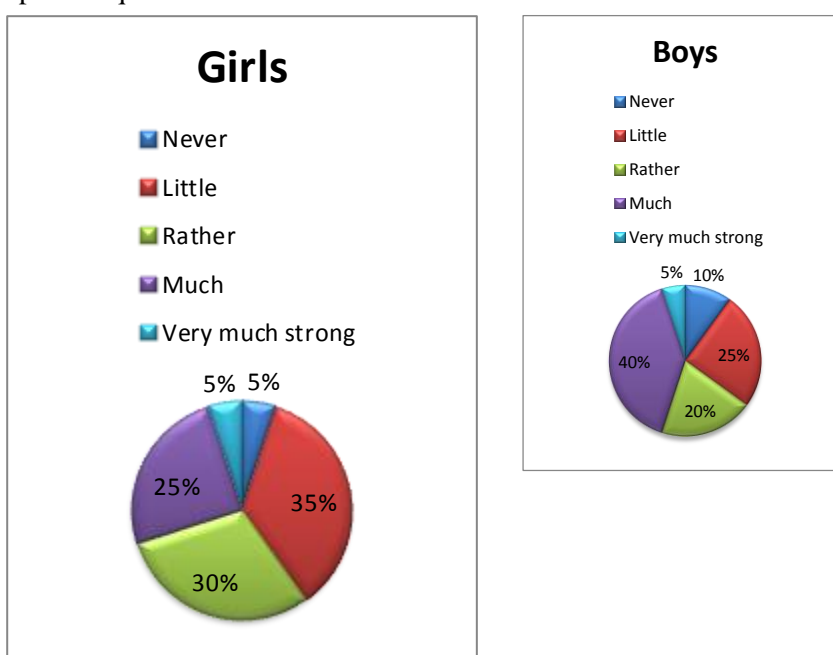
Q12. **Describe what comes in your mind and the elements that exist within the text**

Table 12, shows evidence that among both girls and boys 5% of all students can never describe what comes in their mind and the elements that exist within the text. Only two boys come in this category. Secondly, 25% of all students can describe a little what comes in their mind and the elements that exist within the text, four boys and five girls fall in this category. Furthermore, 43% of all students rather, 20% of all students much and 7% of all students very much strongly describe what come in their mind and the elements that exist within the text. With combination fifteen girls and fourteen boys fall between these three categories
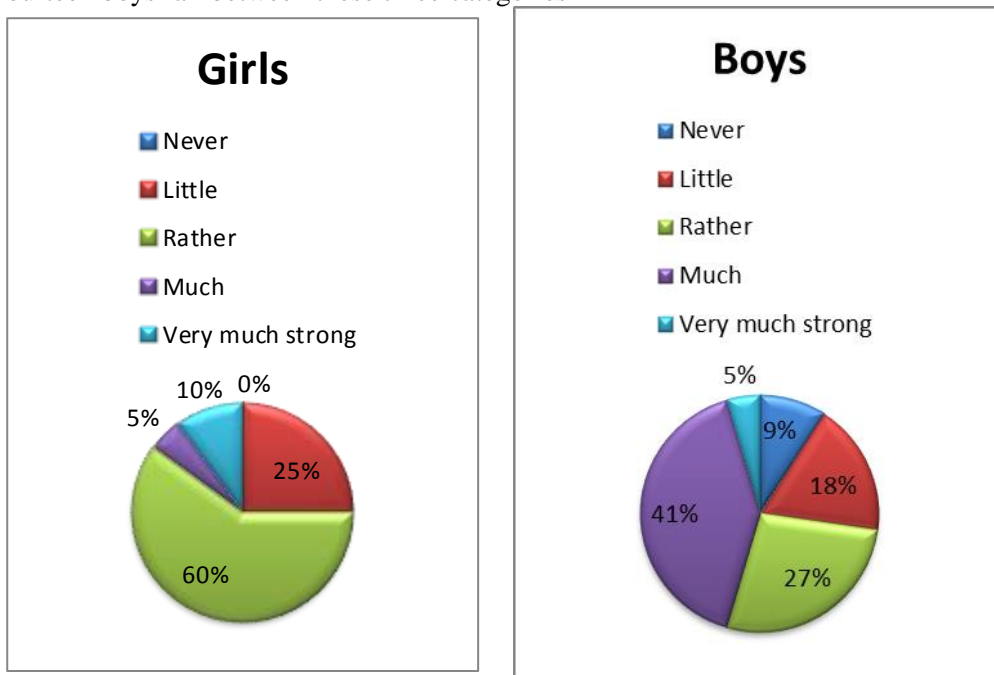

Q13. **Mention mistakes or errors in writing and point out the reasons**

Table 13, shows that among both girls and boys only 5% of all students can never mention mistakes or errors in writing and point out the reasons, only one girls and one boy fall in this category. Secondly 10% of all students can little mention mistakes and errors in writing and point out the reasons, three girls and only one boy fall in this category. Moreover, 25% of all students rather, 47% of all student much and 12.5% of all students very much strongly mention mistakes or errors within the writing and point out the reasons. Sixteen girls and eighteen boys fall within these three categories in combine.
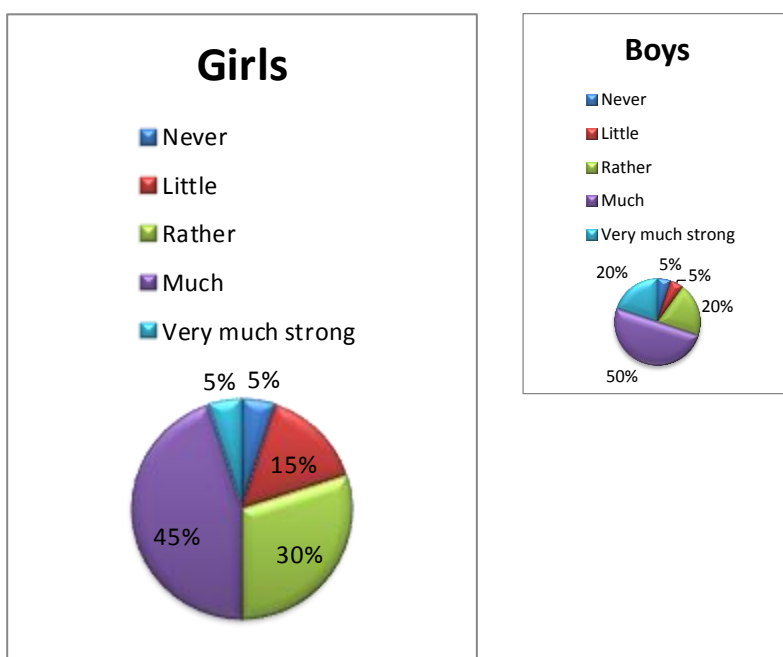
Q14.   Making different changes while writing

Table 14, shows that among all the girls and boys participants, 10% of all students never making different changes while writing, two girls and two boys come in this category. Secondly, 20% of all students little making different changes while writing, three girls and two boys fall in this category. Furthermore, 33% of all students rather where five girls and eight boys, 25% of all students much including seven girls and three boys, and 12% of all students are very much strongly making different changes while writing
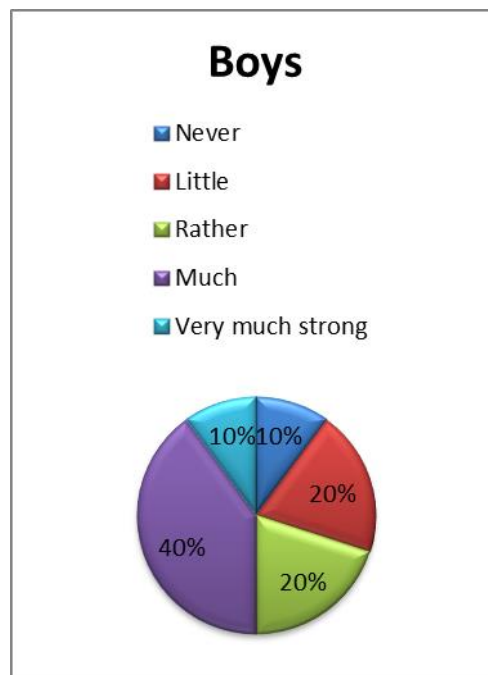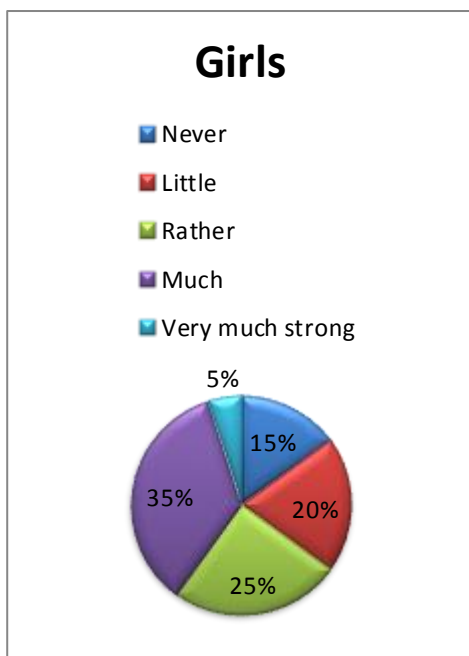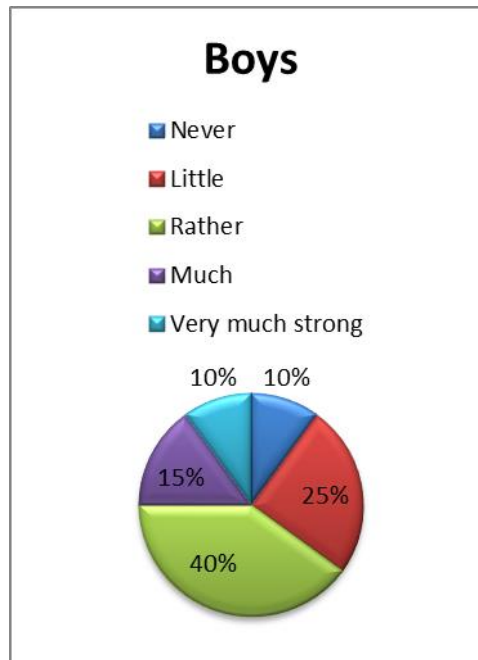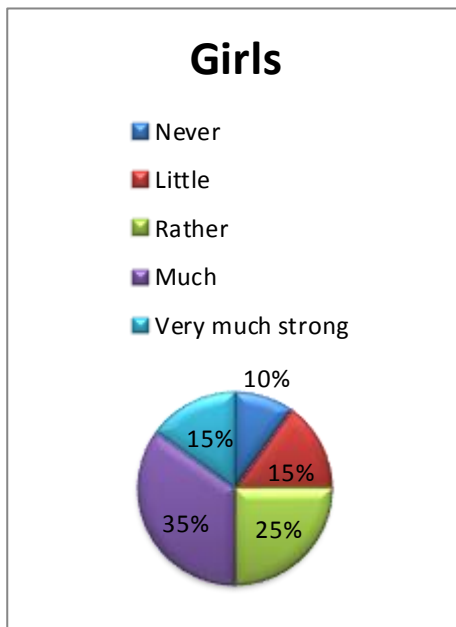
Q15.   Think as creative writer

According to data of table 15, 25% of all students never think as creative writer where 30% are girl and 20% are boys. Secondly, 28% of all students a little think as creative writer where 25% are girls and 30% are boys. Moreover 25% of all students rather and 15% of all much think as creative writer. Lastly, only 7% of all students very much strongly think as creative writer in language writing classroom.

Analysis of interview findings

The purpose of interview was to collect some extra information about students establishing requirements and problems of creative writing which were lacking and insufficient within printed form questionnaire. The most influential and important skill in the target language learning is always been writing. The main reason behind its importance is the strength of structures in grammar and word formation. This is the context where the students need ample of opportunities to build their abilities of writing. That's why students want related tasks and opportunities to enhance their writing and communicative abilities in educational circumstances. If the level and interest of students is recognized their abilities can be easily enhanced in less amount of time.

Based on the outcomes and findings of the study it is evident that Beacon house school students are willing to practices and tasks to enhance their creative writing. Students are curious about writing by their own abilities, knowledge and imagination instead of believing the instruction of the trainers and teacher. Interested in writing themselves using their imagination, rather than following instructions from the teachers. In addition, their intensions shows that they want to have extra writing activities that will help them to increase their skills and capabilities of creative writing.

The exploration of the data of the research proved the various intelligence level students studying in Beacon house school among them some students never, some of them a little, rather, much and very much strongly re correct and make revision their work to make it clearer, consistent and reorganize. Most of them enjoy writing although their writing is not totally correct and fair. Writing article, description writing, story writing, and also essay writing, is the hardest part of writing to them. Between them, some students decided to consider the most difficult part of writing the story for them. The aspect need to be emphasized is to bring ideas and insights that look difficult for them because of fewer opportunities. They all have various ideas few suggested to change the pattern and changes should be made to the pattern of writing development. Some of them said writing practices can be useful for them to improve their abilities of writing and some of them want various tasks, activities and proper guidelines that will be helpful for them to be a good creative writer. Among the students all said that they really want to improve their writing but unfortunately they are given less opportunities to bring new concepts and insights while writing about any text or topic in the school. Although they are given few opportunities but they want more support and encouragement from the teachers. All of the students are willing to improve their creative writing skills. They want encouragement to write creatively and also to think creatively, that is why they show desire to improve their creative writing skills.

Conclusion

The findings showed that pre O level students of Beacon house School Valencia Campus willing to have creative writing practice and they acknowledge that it is useful in language learning. Furthermore, they face various problems while writing and it is the main reason to say that creative writing is a useful factor for students in learning a target language. So, this kind of research was needed to discover and discuss the effective which creative writing do have for pre O level students and the difficulties the face they face while writing about any topic or answer to any question. This research, to some extent, will help the emerging and upcoming researcher in order to find out the information about the pre O level student's creative writing abilities, the effectiveness of creative writing for them, the difficulties they face in creative writing, what kind of strategies they use to improve their creative writing and how much effectively they can write about any topic.

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