Using Cartoon for Promoting the Expression of Past Time Frame in Writing among Primary School Students (Action Research)

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Abstract

This study examines the effectiveness of visual media–based language instruction in improving students' mastery of expressing past time frame in English. The research addresses the challenges students face in distinguishing between the different forms that express the past time frame. The research problem lies in the possibility of expressing past events in English by using different tenses in such a way that differs from Arabic where past is only expressed by using the past tense. By contrast, English permits using three past tenses which differ only in their aspect: past simple, past perfect, past continuous. Further, even the present perfect can be used to describe the past in English. Against this background, the objectives of the study include evaluating the impact of a language education program based on visual media on students' understanding and application of the different forms of past time, as well as identifying the effectiveness of using cartoons to facilitate understanding and use of tenses that express past in English. To this end, the research procedures include the application of pre– and post–test assessments to measure students' proficiency before and after the implementation of the program. Specifically, students are asked to write a paragraph on their last vacation and prominence is placed on how they express the different past events. The program includes displaying cartoon clips illustrating the different forms that express the past time frame and providing a comprehensive explanation of the use and formation of the tenses that express past. The results indicate a significant improvement in students' proficiency in the post test after the application of the program, with an enhanced ability to employ the appropriate tense in their writings to express past events in accordance with the context, and convey chronology accurately.

Key Words: Past time frame- past tenses- cartoons- tense- aspect

1. Introduction:

Among the approximately 6,500 languages spoken in the world today, English is the second most widely spoken language in the world as it is the language of business, commerce, scientific research, technology, etc. Consequently, mastering the English language has become a crucial requirement for educational advancement, job opportunities, and career progression. Therefore, EFL learners and teachers focus on developing the four language skills, particularly productive writing and speaking skills. Writing, being a reflective activity, necessitates sufficient time for contemplating specific subjects and analyzing prior knowledge. Writing enables individuals to express themselves effectively and properly communicate their ideas and emotions. Moreover, practicing writing will help the learners to answer the questions accurately in exams. Writing also helps in building report writing skills and helps in improving learner's presentation skills. The enhancement of writing skills not only benefits students in this specific domain but also contributes to overall skill improvement in the English language.

Learning L2, unlike the first language (L1), is not easy. Therefore, English language learners (ELL) need more practice and hard work to acquire the language. While learning English, ELLs face various problems in learning the basic skills of the English language. Out of these four basic skills, an ELL faces more challenges in developing the writing skill. The form of students' writing should be well-organized. Therefore, it can be easily understood by the reader. Dealing with the writing skill, many students often make errors in their writing. Among these errors, we choose the students' problem in expressing the past time frame because of its multiple forms and the confusion between these forms that may include present tenses. So, we will address the concept of the past time frame.

When discussing the expression of time in the verb phrase, it is necessary to distinguish between grammatical forms and the real-world notion of time. Although there are only two tense forms of verbs in English, namely the present tense form and the past tense form, they do not necessarily refer to present time and past time, respectively. For example, some present tenses express future and past time frame. A tense is actually a combination of both time and aspect. Tense is used to refer to a point in time. This point is either before the moment of speaking (past), at the same time as the moment (present) of speaking, or after the moment of speaking (future). While tense refers to a location in time, aspect refers to the "fabric of time". There are three ways to express aspect in English, namely: simple, progressive and perfect but perfect can occur with either simple or progressive.

The core of our study is how to express past time frame and how to differentiate among the different tenses that serve this function. Specifically, the four main tenses that we will address in our study and that are appropriate for the students to whom we will apply this study are the present perfect, the past simple, the past continuous, and the past perfect. As well known, the past simple tense is used to describe completed actions or events that happened at a specific point in the past while the present perfect tense is used to describe actions or events that started in the past and have a connection to the present. The past continuous tense is used to describe actions that were ongoing or in progress at a specific point in the past, or temporal interruption in the past while the past perfect tense is used to indicate temporal sequence, that is, an action or event happened before another action or event in the past.

As a result of the variety of tenses that express past events in English, students get confused as to which tense they should use and how to use it. Students may use the wrong tense which isn't suitable to a given situation. Not only might they misapply tenses, but they also might mix between two tenses structures. The main reason behind this confusion is that the mother tongue of these students, which is Arabic, has one form for the past, unlike the English language, which contains more than one different way of expressing the

past, as we have mentioned above. The difference between the two languages is huge. All these differences clearly create confusion for the students and make them hesitate and make mistakes. But the awareness of the details of each tense and the practice could make things under control as we say practice makes perfect.

In order to be able to solve the problem of students in expressing the past, we use a learning strategy based on cartoons, as with the recent developments in the field of learning English as a foreign language and with the change in the level of thinking of contemporary students. Accordingly, cartoons have become one of the important sources from which children obtain a large amount of information. Therefore, we exploit these cartoons to make it an attractive and enjoyable educational environment for students. Watching English cartoons can enhance students' listening skills, expand their vocabulary, and improve general language comprehension. Students are visual learners as vision plays an important role in the process of learning and understanding language, and also makes information easier to remember. These cartoons create a real language environment because it is more appropriate for students to understand language from the environment as something closely related to their everyday life or situations that have

occurred in the past to apply to their real life.

The strategy of teaching students the difference between past tense forms through cartoons is applied through several procedures and are mentioned in order. These procedures include preparing short cartoon clips that contain extracts that express the past time frame in its various forms, and then we display them to the students on display screens while ensuring clarity of sound and image, ensuring good listening and a clear vision. After showing the cartoon clip, we stop to explain how past events are expressed and why they are expressed differently. After that, students are asked to write a paragraph on their past vacation to give them the opportunity to employ the knowledge they have acquired from the videos. In this way, we can use and apply this educational strategy using cartoons and get the most out of it.

We choose to apply these procedures to preparatory school students, especially second grade students, because their curriculum includes the past time frame in its various forms, in addition to the importance of developing writing skills among students in this stage. preparatory school students are the most suitable for our research, as they are in a transitional stage. They are not young like primary school students, who will find it difficult to learn all the past tense forms at once, and they are not old like high school students,

who must already be proficient in these skills. In preparatory school, past is usually used in speaking and writing. Therefore, students must be trained to understand how to express past time frame, enabling them to express events that actually occurred in the past correctly and clearly. In addition, learning the past frame in its various forms in the preparatory school is an essential step in building a strong foundation for the English language, and paves the way for understanding other tenses. Therefore, our role is to make it easier for them to understand the differences between these forms and when to use each form.

2. The Theoretical Framework

Our study is mainly based on the distinction between two linguistic concepts: tense and aspect. The interaction between these two concepts gives rise to multiplicity of tenses that belong to the same time frame, but differ contextually. This means that not all tenses that denote the same time domain can be used interchangeably. So first we must know that the term time and time do not have the same semantic meaning, as Estling Vannestål (2015) claims that tense and time aren't always equal in meaning. As the past tense can be used for present time while the present tense can be used when talking about past time. The verb often describes what is happening or what someone is doing, and in English the verb varies in different forms according to when something happens. The change of form is called tense and tense refers

to different forms of verbs through different combinations. Time and tense don't always mean the same thing. The past tense can be used for the present frame when a person expresses politeness. In the English language, the past and the present are the only two tenses that express real times because the present expresses something that is already happening now and the past has happened a long time ago, while the future is not considered real because it can happen or not. In many languages, including English, aspect is a central category of grammar, whether tense is used or not, where tense is used to express different temporal meanings. Time relates to the event itself while aspect expresses the temporal structure by the event. The two concepts of tense and aspect fall under the umbrella term, which is time, as they are the two main components in determining time. Binnick (2012) claims that aspect concerns the temporal structure of events or states; it is the way in which time is construed within the situation described by the verb. He believes that tense and aspect are major components of the temporal system of a language, as tense shapes how events are located in time and aspect shapes how their temporal structure is represented in discourse. Similalrly, Giorgi and Pianesi (1997) think that tense refers to the temporal location of a situation relative to the time of speaking, while aspect refers to the internal temporal structure of the situations such as their duration, completion, or ongoingness. As such, tense and aspect interact with each other in complex ways to convey distinctions in

temporal meaning, and to help in how events are interpreted and understood in discourse. This reveals the variety of temporal meanings encoded in language and reflects the dynamic nature of human experience. Moreover, Jufrizal (2019) states that the English tenses are a combination of aspects and tenses in sentences, and the verb tense and aspect are not the same, so the terms past, present and future are the tenses, while the continuous and perfect are the aspects.

Bache (2008) discusses the basic tense system, describing it as simple and clear, consisting of three options: past, present, and future. He emphasizes the equality between the three tenses and considers the future tense to be a fundamental time like the other tenses. In the same vein, Comrie (1985) states that tense is the grammatical expression to indicate time, and most often three basic categories are used: past, present, and future and denote the time of occurrence, emphasis, completion, or evaluation in relation to the speech time. Aspect, on the other hand, describes the temporal nature of a situation, such as whether it occurs at a single point in time or over a continuous time range. Tense and aspect are considered complementary systems, both expressing temporal relationships, although they can overlap. Tense refers to the temporal location of an action or state, while aspect refers to its internal temporal structure. Tregidgo (1974) considers that tense primarily concerns time, while aspect relates to the action's nature–whether it's complete or incomplete, single or repeated, regular or irregular, momentary or

lasting. Dahl (1985) says that time relates to when the event occurs, while the aspect relates to how the event is viewed or determined. The event can have aspects such as continuous, simple, complete, and complete continuous.

Richard (2020) states that verbal tense concerns with how events are located, perceived and referred to along a timeline of past, present and future. Aspect concerns the way in which a verbal act is experienced or considered. Verb tense and aspect are treated as complementary ways of encoding time. They relate the already described event to time in the past, present or future. However, tense differs from aspect in showing temporal reference, while aspect shows how the action or state of action is perceived or seen as occurring or taking place. Time, tension and aspect are interrelated concepts. There are two kinds of aspect in English: the perfect and the progressive. in English grammar, aspect is a verb form that indicates time–related characteristics, such as completion, duration, or repetition of an action. The two primary aspects in English are the perfect and the progressive. The perfect aspect describes events occurring in the past but linked to a later time. The progressive aspect usually describes an event that takes place during a limited time period. Both aspects [perfect and progressive] are treated as part of the tense system in English. While tense is the position of the state or action in time, that is, whether it is in the past, present or future, aspect is the extension of the state or action in time, that is, whether it is unitary (perfective), continuous (imperfective) or repeated (habitual). Hatav

(1997) concludes that tense and aspect form a dynamic system within language, allowing speakers to manipulate temporal reference and highlight specific aspects of events for communicative purposes.

The variability of past tense forms in English allows for flexibility and creativity in expression, as speakers can choose from a range of options to convey past events. As a result, English learners often struggle with knowing when to use past tense forms like simple past, past continuous, past perfect and present perfect, and deciding which one fits best depending on the time and story they're talking about as David Crystal (2017) explains that students get confused when talking about things that happened in the past because they don't fully understand how to use different past tenses, especially when more than one past tense could work grammatically, but each has a slightly different meaning. Similarly, David Nunan (1990) explains that students find it hard to talk about past events because they don't have enough exposure to real language use and don't get many chances to practice talking meaningfully about things that happened in the past, which makes it hard for them to tell stories convincingly. He also mentions that students struggle to talk about past events because they're often taught grammar rules without learning how to use them in real conversations, which means they memorize rules without understanding how they work in stories and conversations. The existence of differences between the mother tongue and the foreign language is one of the most important reasons why students face

problems in expressing the past, as these differences can lead to difficulties and errors because learners have a tendency to transfer linguistic habits from their mother tongue to the foreign language. This passive transmission is called interference. In Arabic linguistics, there is no significant change in the types of tenses as there are only two types of aspects, imperfect aspects and perfect aspects, where the imperfect indicates continuous or incomplete actions and the perfect aspects indicates completed actions. Therefore, the past is expressed in the Arabic language only in one way, which makes students generalize this fact while learning the English language. In line with this, Nick C. Ellis (2008) claims that L2 learners' acquisition of past tense forms in English is influenced by transfer from the native language. Susan M. Gass and Larry Selinker (2008) argue that the transfer of linguistic structures from the mother tongue to the second language is a common phenomenon in second language acquisition, shaping the development of learners' interlanguage communication and influencing their proficiency levels.

Therefore, our role as teachers is to inform students of the difference between the two languages, their mother tongue, Arabic, and their foreign language, English, in expressing the past. Moreover, we must explain the use of each past tense and explain to students the subtle differences between them so that they can distinguish between them. The use of each of the four past tenses varies, namely the simple past, the past continuous, the past perfect, and the present perfect. In addition, each of them is used to convey a specific situation in a specific way. Marianne Celce Murcia (1999), the past simple tense is characterized by its role in expressing completed actions or stating that occurred at a definite point in the past, providing a clear temporal reference within discourse. It's used also to narrate events, recount experiences, and describe past habits or routines. Moreover, it's used with the Imaginative conditional. According to Jack, D. & Kirn, E. (2002), the simple past tense is classified into two types. They are the simple past in regular verb and the simple past in irregular verb including past tense of the verb be. Regular past tense verbs in English end in –ed, while irregular ones have different forms, showing how historical phonological and morphological patterns change in the English language. Richard Bailey (1992) thinks that the irregularity of past tense forms in English reflects the historical layering of linguistic influences, which have resulted in a variety of past tense patterns. the past tense system in English reflects both inherited Germanic patterns and the influence of contact with other languages, resulting in complex forms and functions. The past continuous tense, also known as the past progressive, is used to describe actions or events that were ongoing or in progress at a specific point in the past, providing a sense of continuity or duration. According to Heather Jones (2006), the past continuous tense, also known as the past progressive tense, refers to a continuing action or state that was happening at some point in the past providing a sense of

continuity or duration. It can convey interrupted actions or actions that were happening simultaneously with another event in the past. The past continuous tense is formed by combining the past continuous tense of to be (i.e., was/were) with the present participle (–ing form) of the main verb, showing actions that were in progress at a given time. The past perfect talks about something that happened before another past event. That is, the past perfect tense is used to show which of two past events happened first, making it clear which one came before the other. In this regard, Hughes & McCarthy, (1998) find that there are many types of contexts in which past perfect verb phrases occur. The past perfect tense is used to show which of two past events happened first, making it clear which one came before the other. the past perfect tense is often used with the simple past tense to create complex narratives or to establish a clear chronological order of events in storytelling. And it's also used in expressing hypothetical or unreal situations like wishes. As well as, it is used in back shifting in which a present tense in direct speech is changed to a past tense in reported speech and it can also be used in free indirect style in which the use of past perfect takes the perspective of a third person's voice rather than the narrator. the past perfect tense is formed using the past tense of the auxiliary verb 'to have' (had) and the past participle of the main verb, serving to express actions or states that were completed before a specified point in the past. The present perfect tense is used to connect past events to the present,

showing how things in the past still affect us now, emphasizing the connection between past events and their present consequences. Comrie (1975) states that the present perfect tense can be used to convey several meanings. the present perfect tense is used to connect past events to the present, showing how things in the past still affect us now, emphasizing the connection between past events and their present consequences. the present perfect tense is often used to describe experiences, accomplishments, or changes that have occurred in a person's life up to the present moment, highlighting their ongoing significance. the present perfect tense can also express recently completed actions. the present perfect tense is formed using the present tense of the auxiliary verb 'to have' (have/has) and the past participle of the main verb.

Nieto (2002) says that students' difficulties in talking about the past demonstrate the need for teachers to clearly explain how to use past tenses, include activities that help students practice storytelling, and provide feedback to help them speak accurately and fluently. Therefore, we prepared this program in the hope of developing students' accurate use of past tenses.

3.Methods of Research

3.1 Hypotheses

The research procedures we follow in this study are as follows. First, we postulate two main hypotheses on which the whole research is based. We assume that students face challenges in expressing past events and

in using various forms of past tenses due to many factors, such as interference from the mother tongue, as the Arabic language has one form for the past tense, unlike the English language, which contains many different forms of the past tenses which differ in their usage, and also due to a lack of understanding of grammatical rules. We also assume that our program, which relies primarily on the use of visual media, such as cartoons, to distinguish between the different forms of past tenses, will greatly help students to use these tenses correctly and to be aware of the specific usage of each tense and the differences between them in meaning. Using cartoons can enhance students' acquisition and mastery of past tenses by providing engaging and visually stimulating materials that facilitate comprehension, retention, and application of grammatical structures. Cartoons provide contextual narratives and visual representations of past events, reinforcing meaningful connections between linguistic forms and real-world situations, thus promoting more effective learning outcomes.

3.2 Pre-test

With regard to the research methods and tools, we apply a pre-test and post-test assessment. The pre-test stage holds significant importance in research studies focusing on language learning, such as the development of past tense usage in English. Here are some reasons. The pre-test serves as a baseline assessment of participants' current proficiency levels and understanding of the target language structure. It provides researchers with essential information about participants' starting points before any intervention or educational program. By conducting pre-testing, researchers can identify gaps, misconceptions, and areas of difficulty in participants' language skills. This helps in identifying the specific needs of the learners and designing the intervention program accordingly to meet those needs effectively. The pre-test allows researchers to assess the effectiveness of the intervention program by comparing participants' performance before and after the intervention. This enables researchers to measure learning gains and determine whether the intervention has led to improvements in past tense usage proficiency.

The pre-test stage in our study involves several key steps to establish a baseline for students' proficiency levels. Firstly, we select a sample of second year of preparatory school students to implement the program on them. Second, a pre-test is administered to assess students' current knowledge of how to express the past time frame in English. This test involves writing a paragraph entitled "Your last vacation," taking into account the correct use of various past tense forms. The purpose of the pre-test is to identify areas of difficulty in students' understanding and expressing past in English, when to use each tense and what its correct formation is and this will assist in designing the intervention program.

3.3 The Proposed Program

Having applied the pre-test and detected students' mistakes, our program is implemented to achieve improvement in the use of different forms of the past tense

through cartoons. In this context, several steps are followed in our program. The first step includes identifying the deficiencies and weaknesses in students' expression of past and identifying their needs in order to work on developing and improving them in our program so that at the end of the program they will be able to use the different forms of past accurately. The second step involves selecting cartoons that are attractive, age-appropriate, relevant to learners' interests, and have clear stories and diverse contexts to provide ample opportunities to practice different forms of the past tense. The third step involves starting the program by introducing the learners to the different forms of the past tense, including regular and irregular verbs, the rules of verb conjugation, and the use of each tense by using examples from cartoons to illustrate these uses in real-life situations. We show the cartoon clip and then focus on the sentences in which the past tense is used and explain the tenses through them. The fourth step involves preparing application and practice activities alongside the cartoons, such as flashcards, objective and essay questions, and discussion questions. By following these steps, the program can effectively utilize cartoons as a valuable tool to improve learners' use of different past tense forms. Through engaging and interactive learning experiences, learners can develop a deeper understanding of past tense structures and enhance their language skills in meaningful contexts.

Links of the videos we used:

https://youtu.be/WDg85KdxFHU?feature=shared

https://youtu.be/wtMUy_3NGl4?feature=shared

https://youtu.be/idgwMrYhLj0?si=up4XX_tFCVp8Iz5-

https://youtu.be/K0ACblFmyWg?si=y_mP03RgJh4B1fnl

https://youtu.be/0_lrUe7sAAc?si=gnMnawuy-BLz0oC6

https://youtu.be/AyoAYLyaifw?si=PTzG8XMvE47RBQRk

https://youtu.be/-TrE6VdtgLE?si=aKkcTdCBuUa4f0Xn

3.4 Post-test

The post-test holds significant importance in research studies focusing on language learning, such as the development of past tense usage in English. Here are some reasons. Post-test allows researchers to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention program by evaluating the learning outcomes of participants after they have received instruction and practice. It provides insights into the extent to which participants acquire and apply the targeted language skills. By comparing post-test scores with pre-test scores, researchers can measure the progress and improvement made by participants over the course of the intervention. This helps determine the effectiveness of the intervention program in promoting language development and achieving learning goals related to past tense mastery. The post-testing phase verifies the effectiveness of the specific

educational strategies, materials, and methodologies used during the intervention. It allows researchers to identify aspects of the intervention that contributed significantly to learning outcomes.

To apply the post–test effectively to evaluate the effect of the intervention program on the participants' ability to write about past events using different forms of the past tense in the English language, we considered the following. We ensure that post–test tasks align with the objectives and content of the pre–test. Since the pre–test assessed the use and expression of past in writing about past events by writing a paragraph titled "Your last vacation," the post–test should also include the same writing task, allowing for a direct comparison between the results of the pre–test and post–test. We give the necessary instructions, including the length of the paragraph and the use of a variety of past tense forms, such as the simple past, past continuous, past perfect, and present perfect to convey their experiences accurately. We ensure that the post–test is conducted under conditions similar to those of the pre–test to ensure the accuracy of the results. Finally, we analyze the results from the post–test to determine the effectiveness of the intervention program in enhancing participants' ability to write about past vacation experiences using appropriate past tense forms.

4. Research Results

4.1 Pre-test Results

Pre-test results reveal patterns that indicate areas in which students struggle with past tenses. Common findings include a tendency to use the simple past tense, even when other past tenses would be more appropriate. Furthermore, the results show challenges in recognizing irregular past tense forms and understanding the nuances between the past tenses. In addition, the pretest results identify difficulties in understanding the temporal relationships conveyed by different past tenses, such as the difference between simple past for completed actions, present perfect for actions with relevance to the present, past continuous for ongoing actions and past perfect for indicating to the first action which occurred before another action. This highlights the importance of providing practice activities and explanations that help students internalize these patterns and exceptions. they need targeted instruction on distinguishing between different past tenses and understanding exactly when to use each. Here are some samples of students' writings:

Name:

Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last week, I went to the Pyramids with my family. we arrived at eleven in the morning. First, we rode camels and I raced with my Brother. While my Father rode the camel, my sister and I went to see the Sphinx. After we took some pictures we went to eat Pizza. I was great day.

Name:

Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last weekend, I wake up early because i planned to go hiking. i never went hiking before, so i felt a bit nervous. I forget my water bottle at home. we walked for about an hour when we saw a beautiful waterfall. It was a perfect day. and i was glad that I decided to try something new.

Name: روحي أيمن مصطفى

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last summer, I visited the Zoo with my friends. We saw a lot of animals. While we watched the monkeys, they swung from tree to tree. We also watched a seal show, where the seals balanced balls on their noses. By the time we lift, we saw all the animals and then went for ice cream. I wish I visited the pyramids, too

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Name: كريم أحمد

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last Vacation, I went to the beach with my family. While I swam in the sea, I saw some bright-colored Fish. I also played volleyball. At sunset, I built a sand castel with my sister. I forgot my sunscreen at home, but I didn't get a sun burn. I found a seashell and it was beautiful.

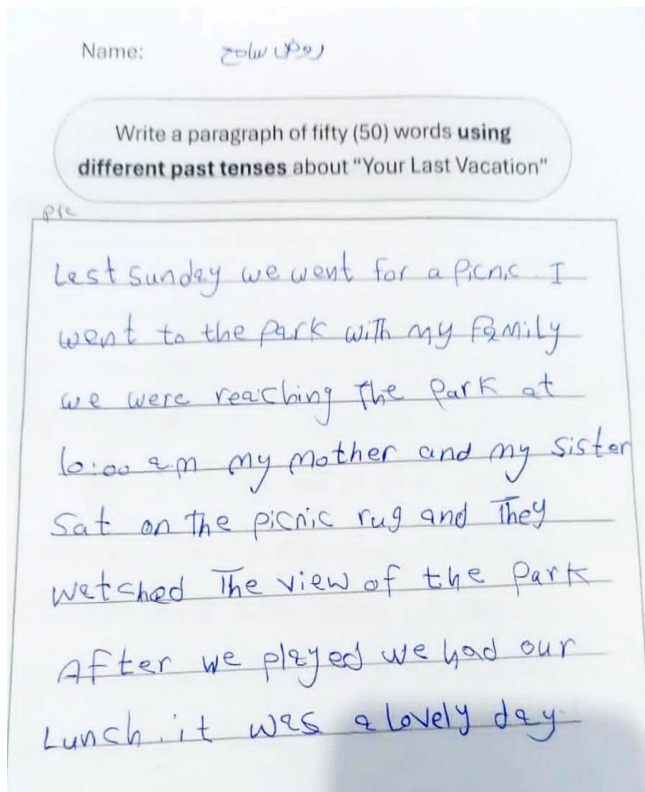**Name:** بلال احمد محمد

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last month, I went to the theme park with my family. We played with the roller coaster. The chidren's screams got louder when I was in the haunted House. We ate lots of delicious food that mom just prepared at home. When I tried the ride that turns us upside down, I screamed loudly. We took a lot of photos. We ate cotton candy and lollipops that we bought before.

It was a very beautiful day and we had lots of fun.

Name: بلال أيمن محمد

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

In my last vacation I went to Alex with my family we played volleball we collected seashells. We swam in the waves. we ate seafood At the sunset I sat on the beach and watched the waves. if we had more time, i would visit qaitbay citadel. it was Perfect day at beach Filled with Fun.

Name: روضه نسب (handwritten)

Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last Sunday we went for a picnic. I went to the park with my family we were reaching the park at 10:00 am my mother and my sister sat on the picnic rug and they watched the view of the park after we played we had our lunch. it was a lovely day

We can divide the students' errors that appeared in the pre-test results into three categories as follows. In the first category, errors in the past continuous tense are evident. Students mistakenly used the simple past, which implies a completed action, instead of the past continuous to describe prolonged verbs. For instance, "While I swam in the sea, I saw some bright-colored fish" should be "While I was swimming in the sea, I saw some bright-colored fish" because the original sentence uses the simple past "swam," which implies a completed action. However, "was swimming" in the corrected version indicates an ongoing action in the past that was interrupted by another action, which is seeing the fish. Similarly, "While my father rode the camel, my sisters and I went to see the Sphinx." should be "While my father was riding the camel, my sisters and I went to see the Sphinx" and "We walked for about an hour when we saw a beautiful waterfall" have to be "We were walking for about an hour when we saw a beautiful waterfall" as in the original sentences, the use of "rode" and "walked" suggest a completed action. However, "was riding" and "were walking" in the correction indicate that the action of riding and walking were ongoing when other actions (going to see the Sphinx and seeing the waterfall) occurred. Additionally, "While we watched the monkeys, they swung from tree to tree" should be "While we were watching the monkeys, they were swinging from tree to tree" and "My mother and my sisters sat on the Picnic rug and they watched the view of the park" should be replaced by "My mother and my sisters were sitting on the Picnic rug and they were watching the view of the park" to accurately depict the simultaneous and parallel actions that last for a while at a specific moment in the past. Other examples include "At sunset, I built a sandcastle" which should be "At sunset, I was building a sandcastle", " where the seals balanced balls on their noses" which must be "where the seals were balancing balls on their noses" and " I screamed loudly" ought to be "I was screaming loudly" to indicate the ongoing nature of the actions which took a long time in the past. Further, "The children's screams got louder when I was in the haunted House" should be "The children's screams were getting louder when I was in the haunted House" to set the background information and describe ongoing actions that were occurring at a specific point in the past. This background helps paint a vivid picture for the reader. On

the other hand, students used the past continuous tense, which is typically used to express actions continuing over a long period of time in the past, with the instantaneous verbs as they used "We were reaching the park at 10:00 a.m." instead of "We reached the park at 10:00 a.m."

In the second category, errors in the past perfect tense are notable. Students neglected using the past perfect to indicate the sequence of events in the past accurately. For example, "I forgot my sunscreen at home, but I didn't get a sunburn" should be replaced by "I had forgotten my sunscreen at home, but I didn't get a sunburn" to indicate that the action of forgetting sunscreen occurred before the realization occurred as the first action should be in the past perfect. Similarly, "By the time we left, we saw all the animals" should be "By the time we left, we had seen all the animals" to show that seeing the animals occurred before leaving, as the original sentence lacks the past perfect tense to show the sequence of events. Additionally, "I woke up early because I planned to go hiking" should be "I woke up early because I had planned to go hiking" because the past perfect tense is used in conjunction with the simple past tense to create complex narratives or to establish a clear chronological order of events in storytelling. "I was glad that I decided to try something new" should be "I was glad that I had decided to try something new" to indicate that the first action was making decision to try something new and to keep the chronological sequence of the events. Other examples include "After we played, we had our lunch"

which should be "After we had played, we had our lunch", "After we swam" which should be replaced by "After we had swum" and "After we took some pictures, we went to eat pizza" which should be "After we had taken some pictures, we went to eat pizza" because the word "after" actually tells you what happened first. For this reason, the first sentence should be in the past perfect. In addition, "If we had more time, I would visit Qaitbay Citadel." should be replaced by "If we had had more time, I would have visited Qaitbay Citadel" to express an unreal past event and its hypothetical consequence. Similarly, "I wish I visited the pyramids, too." should be "I wish I had visited the pyramids, too." to show the subjunctive mood.

Finally, errors in the present perfect tense are observed in the third category. Students failed to use the present perfect tense to indicate actions that have recently occurred or have relevance to the present moment. For example, "We ate lots of delicious food that mom prepared at home" should be "We ate lots of delicious food that mom has just prepared at home" to emphasize the recent completion of the food preparation. Similarly, "I never went hiking before, so I felt a bit nervous" should be "I have never hiked before, so I felt a bit nervous" to highlight the relevance of the past experience to the present moment of feeling nervous. "We ate the cotton candy and lollipops that we bought" should be "We ate the cotton candy and lollipops that we have bought" because the past perfect tense serves as the vehicle for conveying the subjunctive mood, particularly

in wishes regarding past events. The subjunctive mood is employed to express hypothetical or unreal situations like wishes.

4.2 Post–test Results

After implementing our program, which includes displaying cartoon clips illustrating various uses of the four tenses, namely the simple past tense, the past continuous tense, the past perfect tense, and the present perfect tense, along with thorough explanations of the uses and formation of each tense, students' engagement in the educational process has soared. The visual situations depicted in the clips have significantly facilitated students' understanding of the uses of each tense, making the learning experience both exciting and enjoyable.

After extensive training, we asked students to rewrite the paragraphs they wrote in the pre–test, which was entitled "Your Last Vacation". This exercise aimed to measure the extent of progress and improvement achieved after implementing the program. Students were asked to correct errors they had made in the pretest, providing a concrete measure of the effectiveness of the program in enhancing their understanding of usage and formation skills. Here are some samples of the post–test.

Name: قيس محمد

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last weekend, I woke up early because I had planned to go hiking. I have never hiked before, so i felt abit nervous. I forgot my water bottel at home. we were walking for about an hour when we saw a beautiful waterfall. It was a perfect day, and i was glad

Name: فيصل أحمد محمد

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last month, I went to the theme park with my family. We played with the roller Coaster. the chidren's screams were getting louder when I was in the haunted House. We ate lots of delicious food that mom has just prepared at home. whe I tried the ride that turns us upside down, I was screaming loudly. We took a lot of Photos. We ate the Cotton Candy and lollipops that we have bought before. it was a very beautiful day and we had lots of fun.

Name: سالم سعيد سالم

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last week, I went to the pyramids with my family. we arrived at eleven in the morning. First, we rode camels and I raced with my brother. while my father was riding the camel, my sister and I went to see the Sphinx. After we had ~~played~~ taken some pictures, we went to eat pizza It was great day.

..

Name: رحمة سالم سالم

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

Last summer, I visited the zoo with my friends. We saw a lot of animals. While we were watching the monkeys, they were swinging from tree to tree. We also watched a seal show, where the seals were balancing balls on their noses. By the time we left, we had seen all the animals and then went for ice cream. I wish I had visited the pyramids, too.

Name: روان سالم حم

> Write a paragraph of fifty (50) words **using different past tenses** about "Your Last Vacation"

past

Last Sunday, went for a picnic I went to the park with my family. we reached the park at 10:00 am my mother and my sister were sitting on the picnic rug and they were watching the view of the park. After we had played, we had our lunch. it was a lovely day

The results of the post–test revealed significant progress in students' understanding and application of the tenses that denote past time frame. Through the use of visual aids and comprehensive explanations

provided in the program, students demonstrated high efficiency in distinguishing between the past simple tense, the past continuous tense, the past perfect, and the present perfect. Furthermore, their ability to effectively communicate chronology and convey precise meanings within their rewritten paragraphs demonstrated the effectiveness of the program in enhancing language proficiency.

After analyzing the corrected paragraphs submitted by the students, it was found that they succeeded in correcting the errors identified in the pre-test. Cases of misuse of tenses have been corrected, such as using the simple past instead of the past continuous to express events that continued during a specific period of time in the past, using the past continuous with immediate actions, not taking into account the chronological order of events, not putting the first event in the past perfect tense, and talking about past experiences and events that happened in the past and have relevance to the present, using the simple past instead of the present perfect. The students' reviews showed the use of appropriate tense to convey the precise meaning, which reflects their improved understanding and mastery of grammatical concepts.

Overall, the post-test results are a testament to the effectiveness of the program in enhancing students' language skills and promoting a deeper understanding of the use of tenses that express past time frame in narrative writing.

5 Interpretation of Results

The interpretation of the results from both the pre-test and post-test analyses offers valuable insights into students' proficiency with the expression of past events using the appropriate tenses and the effectiveness of the implemented program. Initially, the first hypothesis has been supported by the findings of the pre-test which revealed notable challenges among students in expressing past events and using various forms of past tenses. These challenges were attributed to factors such as interference from the mother tongue, particularly among Arabic-speaking students who are accustomed to a single form of past tense. Additionally, a lack of understanding of grammatical rules and limited practice further compounded students' difficulties in mastering past tenses, highlighting the need for targeted intervention and comprehensive instruction.

The second hypothesis has been supported by the results of the post-test, which showed significant progress in students' understanding and application of past tenses after implementing the program. By relying on visual media, such as animation, the program effectively addressed the challenges identified by providing engaging and interactive materials that made it easier for students to understand the nuances of tenses. The use of cartoons, which depicted tenses in real-life contexts, promoted a deeper awareness of the specific use of each tense and reinforced meaningful connections between linguistic forms and contextual narratives. These findings underscore the importance of

multimodal learning approaches in language teaching and highlight the role of the program in enhancing students' acquisition and mastery of past tenses.

Overall, the interpretation of the results aligns with both hypotheses, highlighting the effectiveness of the program in addressing students' challenges with past tenses and facilitating their development of accurate tense usage through engaging visual instruction. Through the program's use of visual media, students were able to overcome linguistic barriers and develop skills in using tense forms accurately. This highlights the effectiveness of targeted interventions in supporting students' language learning journey and emphasizes the role of engaging instructional approaches in facilitating effective language acquisition.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of this study highlight the challenges students face in mastering the expression of past events and the effectiveness of a visual media–based program in meeting these challenges. The pre–test revealed significant difficulties for students in expressing past events and using different forms of the past tense. However, post–test results showed significant progress in students' mastery of past tenses after implementing the program. Through engaging in visual instruction and comprehensive explanations, students develop a deeper awareness of the differences between tenses and improve their ability to convey chronology accurately.

These findings have important implications for language teaching and curriculum development. The success of the visual media–based program confirms the effectiveness of multimedia learning methods in language acquisition. Teachers and curriculum designers can make use of visual aids, such as animation and real–life scenarios, to enhance students' understanding and retention of grammatical structures. Furthermore, findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to address the specific challenges faced by language learners.

These results show recommendations for future research. Teachers should use visual media in language teaching to enhance students' mastery of using different tenses. In addition, curriculum developers should prioritize the inclusion of comprehensive explanations and practice activities to support students' understanding of grammatical concepts.

In addition to the use of visual media in language teaching, future research could explore the possibility of using interactive technologies, such as language learning apps and virtual reality simulations, to enhance students' understanding of past tenses. Furthermore, future studies could track the development of students who participated in visual media–based language programs. Tracking students' progress over long periods would provide valuable insights into the sustainability of learning outcomes and the effectiveness of educational interventions in supporting the continued development of language proficiency.

In addition, comparative studies can investigate the effectiveness of different teaching methods and materials in teaching past tenses. Comparing the results of visual media–based programs with traditional rule–based instruction would provide valuable insights into the relative effectiveness of different approaches in students' development.

Acknowledgement

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