

SINGLE NATIONAL CURRICULUM (2020) AND ITS PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION IN CLASSROOMS: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE WRITING SKILL AND THEIR ALIGNMENT WITH THE TEACHING PRACTICES AT PRIMARY LEVEL

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to analyse the student learning outcomes (SLOs) outlined in the ‘Single National Curriculum’ and its practical implementation in classrooms at primary level in Pakistan. The study is further aimed at finding out the alignment of student learning outcomes with classroom practices. For this purpose, the qualitative method of research has been adopted. The alignment of SLOs with classroom practices was checked through observation and document analysis. The results of the study showed that the alignment of student learning outcomes and activities related to the skill of writing in the exercises with that of teaching practices found missing to a greater extent. The study will contribute to understand the importance of SLOs and activities of writing skill in the exercises and their alignment with the teaching practices. It will further enrich the knowledge and facilitate the teachers, heads of institutions and authorities concerned to implement ‘Single National Curriculum’ in classroom effectively to improve learning of English at primary level in Punjab, Pakistan.

Keywords: student learning outcomes; single national curriculum; alignment; teaching practice; writing skill.

1. Introduction

According to Candlin (1984), curriculum is concerned with making general statements about language learning, learning purpose, experience, evaluation, and the role and relationships of teachers and learners. Therefore, the curriculum is a process according to the point of view of Dewey (1902) that starts with a child’s present experiences and gradually widens to cover the whole organized body of knowledge which is typically studied.

Curriculum is the way to attain the educational objectives and it is a reflection of society. In the present age of artificial intelligence, education of children has become a great challenge when they have a lot of informal learning through society, electronic, social media, and so on. To meet these requirements, the society looks towards formal education that works on the guidelines set in the curriculum. In the past, though the focus was on primary education in policies but in practical situation primary education has always been ignored by the governments at federal as well as provincial levels in

Pakistan. Curriculum development is a continuous process. To achieve the goal of social requirements, the curriculum at primary level was improved gradually from 1998 to 2020 as the curriculum developers feel that primary education is the base for higher education. The aim of primary education is not just to enable the students just to read and write rather to improve critical thinking, meaningful understanding of concepts, creativity in writing and development of cognitive skills. Curriculum at primary level should be learner centered and must contain the development of social and religious character. To foster the social needs, there was the requirement of a national curriculum at primary level that must contain the learning outcomes which may enable the students of public sector schools to compete with the students of elite private schools in Pakistan.

‘Single National Curriculum’ is a curriculum having single vision with the concept of education for all based on a planned series of syllabus containing students learning outcomes similar for all types of educational institutions in Pakistan. Keeping in view the diverse situation of Pakistan, the government of Pakistan decided to prepare and implement ‘Single National Curriculum’ in 2020 in Pakistan. The reason behind this was that there were four different types of schools working in Pakistan i.e. elite schools, private schools, public sector schools and madrisas, and every type of these schools had different types of syllabi. As a result, of this varied systems of education, there was no harmony in education at the national level. Students having degrees from public sector institutions, lower middle class private schools and madrisas are not able to compete with the students from elite private schools. According to Fazil, Ali and Shahnawaz (2022), Single National Curriculum should be implemented to reduce discrimination, to increase social literacy, social cohesion, national integration, provide equity in education, for the holistic development in children and to get similarity in content to achieve equality throughout the country. Therefore, the current study aims to find out how SNC may be implemented effectively to eliminate these inequalities.

According to Adam (2004), learning outcomes are statements in written form of what the successful learner is to be capable of attaining at the completion of course, unit of module. Learning outcomes play an important role to set goals and attainment of these goals through teaching material. SLOs are statements in written form which show the expectation of students related to the process of learning. Learning outcomes calculate whether students achieve competencies in their learning (Weinert, 2001). So, the statements which tell the students what to expect regarding the attainment of knowledge, understanding and capability to perform in practical life through the process of learning are called student learning outcomes (ECTS Users’ Guide, 2005).

In this context, the present study investigates the alignment of student learning outcomes and the activities with the classroom practices with reference to the skill of writing for Grade-V.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is:

- To evaluate teaching practice of teachers with regard to the students learning outcomes at primary level in Punjab, Pakistan.

1.2 Research Question

1. How far the teaching practices and students learning outcomes align with each other?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Curriculum

Curriculum as stated by Candlin (1984), belongs to general statements regarding language learning, its purpose, process, assessment, and the role of the students and teachers in this process as well as their relationship. Rug (1927) described curriculum as a sequence of experiences that are as true to life as possible for the learner, and which enable them to develop skills necessary to navigate and manage real-life situations.

Taba (1962) asserted that a curriculum typically includes a statement of aims and specific objectives, which involve the process of selecting and organizing the content, and which imply a particular process of teaching and learning. It must also incorporate a program of testing and evaluation in order to measure the results. Tanner and Tanner (1995) opine that curriculum involves the reconstruction of knowledge and experiences which help learners use their intelligence to gain control over subsequent knowledge and experiences. It was also defined as the intended outcome of instruction and also emphasized that curriculum is actually a document which is used as a starting point for planning instruction.

2.2. Single National Curriculum

One nation and one curriculum is public representing initiative taken by newly elected govt. in 2018 to universalize educational system in Pakistan. This move towards uniformity and integration addresses the longstanding need for equal educational opportunities in both public and private sectors. The current government of Pakistan has made commendable efforts to achieve this vision through the recently launched SNC. The SNC is the result of collaboration between public and private stakeholders, aiming to meet the basic educational needs of all students and ensure equitable educational opportunities throughout the nation.

Fazilet.al (2022) recommended that Single National Curriculum should be implemented to reduce discrimination, to increase social literacy, social cohesion, national integration, provide equity in education, for the holistic development in children and to get similarity in content to get equality throughout the country. Abbas et. al (2022), conducted a study on the expected challenges, merits and demerits of Single National Curriculum and concluded that there are advantages and disadvantages of the process of implementation of single national curriculum in Pakistan. It is a good move for the solution of socioeconomic problems in Pakistan. Shoukatet. al (2021) conducted a research on the implementation of the single national curriculum at primary level and discussed teacher's expectations and concerns regarding SNC. He concluded that through the implementation of SNC, educational inequality will be reduced and national unity will be improved. As far the teacher's worries regarding the implementation of SNC is concerned, lack of resources, lack of capacity and competence among teachers, and resistance from different stakeholders hinders the implementation of SNC at primary level.

2.3. Student Learning Outcomes

According to Adam (2004), at the completion of course/unit of module, what the successful student is to be able to achieve is called SLOs which are the statements in written form. So, the student learning outcomes are a plan of action for an academic course that students will achieve successfully at the end of academic year. This success can only be materialized if this plan is communicated successfully on the paper.

Mahajan and Singh (2017) discussed about the 5 major benefits of learning outcomes.

- i. Learners clearly know beforehand what they are going to achieve at end of this course, enable them to choose appropriate program which remove their risk of the wastage of time and unnecessary stress, and what should they achieve.
- ii. Learning outcomes help teachers to plan their lesson, teach that lesson by preparing and selecting teaching material and strategies accordingly to save time.
- iii. Learning outcomes make mapping of assessment clear and easy, possibility of midway correction, make students well prepared in the class, help measuring material effectiveness and allocation of marks for question papers.
- iv. It helps the advisor to decide WHAT to teach and HOW to teach.
- v. Accreditation agencies get help through learning outcomes to assess whether the goals of the institution has been achieved by the course or not, help to know the structure of the course and the process of the evaluation of learners.

Adeyemi (2008) concluded that the teachers having more than twelve years teaching experience showed good results to achieve the learning outcomes as compared to the teachers having less experience. The researcher recommended that experienced teachers should be encouraged by the authorities. Akiret. al. (2012) found that there is difference in performance between the students whose learning was objective based with those whose learning was not learning outcome based. Student taught based on learning outcome showed better results.

Aziz (2012) elaborated the purposes of learning outcomes as under:

- i. Learning outcomes inform learners what knowledge and skills they will acquire through the course they are studying;
- ii. They create a connection between degree, program of study and course;
- iii. At the each level of curricula, they show the development of skills and knowledge;
- iv. They convey particular standards of educational performance;
- v. For the purpose of assessing the learning and teaching, learning outcomes provide a structure; and
- vi. They communicate the design of curriculum and pedagogic practice.

2.4. Observation

According to Cogan (1973, p.134), the term observation means a process in which a person takes cautious, scrutiny of event in a systematic way and instructional interactions. Day (1990) justifies by saying that whereas there are many approaches which help in understanding and appreciating, a general, the second language classroom process, and, in particular, the role of teacher in it, the most effective way, in this regards, is observation. According to Day (cited in Richards & Nunan, 1990), the observation should be systematic and guided, if it needs to critically affect the professional development of the teacher.

Classroom observation has been recognised as a valid approach for structuring observed teaching behaviors. This technique helps a properly trained individual, adhering to specified protocols to observe, to record and to analyse the instructions systematically to help achieving a level of consensus among various observers (Ober et al., 1971).

It has been the endeavour of the teacher trainers to create classroom observation tools keeping two main purposes in mind: first, to enhance teachers' instructional practices and second, to trainers with an equipped teacher specialized technical language to characterize teaching behaviors within second language context (Fanselow, 1977, cited in Ellis, 1994).

A very important advantage of present day observations lies in their aim to facilitate the growth of the teacher. According to Gebhard et al. (1996), teacher development entails the empowerment of the teachers to judge and assess their teaching independently. It is a skill which can last even after the teacher trainer's presence ends (cited in Richards & Numan, 1990).

According to Cogan (1973), the result of inadequate records of classroom instruction can be drastic and the absence of a stable data-base for their efforts leaves the teachers and supervisors enmeshed in unproductive discussion regarding the actual occurrences during instructional sessions. This deficiency hampers the progress and leads to debates about the accuracy of the instructional process.

As a result, there arises the need for observational data facilitating the ability for engaging in pandering upon the observed lesson after the session is over, McNergney and Carrier (1981) assert that in the follow up of the observational session, the observer must systematize the data and prepare it for the teacher who is observed. A pivotal responsibility of the observer, in this regards, is to create a data summary that aligns with the development objectives determined for the teacher. Likewise Cartwright and Cartwright (1974) stressed the significance of observational data, handing that an observation without proper documentation can be represented inaccurately because of the observer's memory limitations regarding specific details. Resultantly, it can be stated that, when the lesson's purpose centres on development, maintaining the record of the observed lesson becomes inevitable.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research method. To check the practical implementation of SNC in classroom, the method of observation was adopted. Observation can be used as a main method of data collection to know the academic activities in real situation (Morrow 2009) i.e., classroom. The observation was tried in this research to find out how the SLOs of writing skill outlined in 'Single National Curriculum' are in practice in the classrooms.

For the purpose of observation, 28 schools of public sector were selected in Sahiwal division. Sahiwal division comprises on three districts i.e. district Sahiwal (consisting of two tehsils, tehsil Sahiwal and Tehsil Chichawatni), district Okara (consisting of Tehsil Okara, Tehsil Depalpur, Tehsil RenalaKhurd) and district Pakpattan (consisting of tehsil Pakpattan, and Tehsil Arifwala). From every district, 8 schools (while from Okaradistrict 12 schools) of both boys and girls were selected. 4 schools from one tehsil of boys and girls, two from urban areas and two from rural areas of the both boys and girls are selected randomly.

Table 1 Description of Cities and Schools for Observation

Sr. No.	Name of City	No. of Schools Urban	No. of Schools Rural	Total
1	Sahiwal	2	2	4
2	Chichawatni	2	2	4
3	Pakpattan	2	2	4
4	Arifwala	2	2	4
5	Okara	2	2	4
6	RenalaKhurd	2	2	4
7	Depalpur	2	2	4
Total	7	14	14	28

Source: Mushtaq (n. d.)

To observe classroom practice two checklists (one related to the SLOs and practice of the activities of writing skill in classroom and one related to the overall attitude of the teacher related to the classroom practice) were prepared which was derived from the frameworks presented by Rahmawati (2018), by Weninger (2018) and from SLOs for a doctoral study (Mushtaq, n. d.) from which this present study has been extracted.

4. Results and Description

4.1. Description of the Results of Alignment between SLOs and Classroom Practice

The study is related to analysis of the alignment of the teaching practices and students learning outcomes. It was observed that majority of the teachers didn't see learning outcomes of writing skill before starting to teach or before giving instruction related to the performance of activity. Similarly, it was observed that majority of the teachers didn't have lesson plan in written form to follow while teaching in classroom. There were a few teachers who started the lesson or activity with the help of the previous knowledge of the students and announced the topic or activity they were going to perform in the class. There are learning outcomes given at the end of every unit of the book of Grade-V on the basis of which activities are framed so that it may become easy for the teacher to conduct that activity. It was observed that majority of the teachers didn't see learning outcomes before giving instructions or conducting the writing activities. To make learning outcomes effective, there is a portion of 'Teaching Point' at the end of every page as footer containing directions for the teachers to conduct activities. Activities of every skill in the footer of every page are numbered as 'A) Oral Communication', 'B) Reading and Critical Thinking', 'C) Language Focus', 'D) Writing'. Therefore, directions for the teachers related to the skill of writing are given as footer of the page on which activities of writing are given. It was observed that majority of the teachers ignored the directions given in 'Teaching Point' completely or partially during classroom practice. However, there was a certain number, about one third, of the teachers who instructed according to the directions given at the end of the page.

Student learning outcomes clearly focus on conceptual clarification regarding certain concepts that lead to perform activities. These requirements are clearly defined in the student learning outcomes. For this purpose, there are some particular ways to define the terms. 'Read Me' is a part of activity at the start of almost every writing exercise containing definition of the term teacher is going to instruct. For example, first learning outcome of Unit-6 is to 'identify narrative paragraph to note differences' which is aligned with the definition given in the exercise of the same chapter 'a narrative paragraph

retells an event. It has a beginning, middle and ending'. It was observed that about half of the teachers defined the terms as given in the 'Read Me' section while half of the teachers were those who ignored to define the term given in this section and started the activity directly. Similarly, learning outcomes require defining certain concepts and ideas by the teacher so that student may comprehend them. For example, the first learning outcome of Unit-7 is to 'identify the elements of a story: plot, beginning, middle and the end of a story with conflict and resolution; human, animal, imaginary characters and their roles; setting'. The definition of all these terms or parts of story are not given in the book and teacher has to define it by his/her own. But it was observed that majority of the teachers didn't define these ideas or concepts. However, it was also observed that some teachers not only defined but exemplified them also. There were certain activities which are based on the concepts already presented in previous chapters. Majority of the teachers didn't relate it to previous activity already done by the students or didn't relate it to the previous knowledge of the students.

Alignment of teaching practice with student learning outcomes can also be checked by the way activities are performed in the classroom. For example, the second learning outcome of second unit is to 'analyse and use conjunctions e.g. and, but, or, because, transitional words, e.g. for example, for instance, therefore and sequence markers, e.g. first(ly), second(ly), then, next,' was to be aligned by conducting the activity given in the exercise but it was observed that it was not practiced in the classroom in true letter and spirit. It was observed that majority of the teachers couldn't conduct the activities in classroom. However, there are a certain number of teachers who not only performed these activities well but also added something more from their side. Though language focus is separate portion in every chapter but in writing, there are certain grammatical items that are focused in student learning outcomes. For example, first learning outcome of Unit-3 focuses on grammar as 'recognise and use more action verbs from an extended environment including other academic subjects in speech and writing' which was not aligned in the classroom practice by the teachers. Students learning outcomes related to the development of vocabulary such as 'use appropriate vocabulary and tenses to write a simple paragraph by giving a physical description and character traits/characteristics of person/object/place, moving from general to specific'. This learning outcome is to be practiced by the teacher in the classroom as it is not directly aligned with the activities given in the exercise of this book but it was observed that the teacher also didn't observe this learning outcome. Focus on spellings, capitalisation and punctuation is one of the major elements of the SLOs of Grade-V book. It was to be practiced by the teachers with the help of different activities but it was observed that majority of the teachers, though checked the written work of the students and highlighted the mistakes also, didn't corrected them. However, there are some teachers who not only checked and highlighted but also corrected the mistakes of spellings, capitalisation and punctuations. Similarly, none of the teachers asked the students to revise for improvement of their written work.

Among the learning outcomes of English book Grade-V, various types of informal writing have also been included, for example, different types of greetings through cards, invitations such as birthday invitation, farewells to friends and family, expression of gratitude and apologies, acknowledgements, liking and disliking. It has been observed that teachers with the help of material given in the exercises of the book tried to practice these activities in the classroom but a certain number of teachers couldn't do these activities perfectly. Though majority of them didn't conduct these activities well, there is certain number of teachers who performed these activities well with the help of examples. Various types of writing such as descriptive, narrative, expository have been introduced in the learning outcomes at primary level. For this purpose, there are activities related to the description of a person, place or thing, narration of some event or story and expression through facts having main idea with supporting detail. Though classroom practice shows that the paragraph writing by the teachers has

been conducted as classroom activity, it has been observed that majority of the teachers failed either to convey to the students the type of writing to be written or techniques of writing due to which majority of the students cannot produce required content. Creative writing is one of the main learning outcomes of every unit of English Book-V. For this purpose, various activities have been given for gradual development of creative writing. It has been observed that in some schools, creative writing was not conducted completely whereas in majority of the remaining schools, if it was conducted, it was conducted without any guidance which resulted in poor production of content by the students.


To align student learning outcomes with teaching practice and to make teaching effective there are some certain things which, though not mentioned in learning outcomes, contribute a lot for the attainment of learning outcomes of the students. Among these, first of all, is the use of whiteboard by the teachers for the clarification of concepts and direction of activities. It was observed that majority of the teachers used whiteboard to write definition or to give direction related to writing activities and a minority of teachers didn't use whiteboard.

As far the use of A.V. aids other than whiteboard is concerned, majority of the teachers were observed teaching without the use of audio visual aids. There was only one teacher found using audio visual aids while teaching in classroom. Brainstorming is a good technique to prepare the students for writing activity. It was observed that there were a few teachers who started their lesson with brainstorming technique. Teacher's movement in class and interaction with the students is an integral part for the successful completion of writing activities. Lack of interaction and movement in classroom by the majority of the teachers was observed. Some of the teachers, however, moved in the class and interacted with the students for the effective conduct of activity. Attitude of the majority of the teachers towards mistakes was found positive. Majority of the teachers checked the mistakes, highlighted them and some of them corrected them also but there was a majority of the teachers who didn't ask the students to revise their written work. Majority of the teachers gave homework to the students. So, the results of the observation show that classroom practice doesn't align with the student learning outcomes properly.

5. Discussion

5.1 Alignment of Student Learning Outcomes and Classroom Practices

The research question is related to the alignment of the teaching practices and students learning outcomes. The relationship of teaching and learning outcomes is very important as Mullens (1993) considers that effective teaching can be measured with the learning outcome of the students. To evaluate the effectiveness of this relationship, classroom observation is very important. "The term observation in general denotes those operations by which individuals make careful, systematic scrutiny of the events and interactions occurring during classroom instructions"(Cogan, 1973, p. 134). The first thing that needs to be observed in teaching practice is lesson plan as Mahajan and Singh (2017) are of the view that learning outcomes help teachers to plan their lesson, teach that lesson by preparing and selecting teaching material and strategies accordingly to save time. It was observed that to have lesson plan in written form while teaching is not in practice. Audio-visual aids strengthen the effects of teaching in classroom as Politzer (1970) utilised observation of classroom to develop a relationship between the use of visual aids and good teaching. During the classroom observation of this study, it was noticed that use of whiteboard as visual aid is also not practiced. However, no example of using visual aid other than whiteboard was found which shows that the importance of visual aids during classroom practice is not considered compulsory.



Brainstorming technique has vital role to prepare the learner to understand a new idea. For example, second SLO of Unit-5 demands to ‘Select and use some strategies, e.g. brainstorming, mind mapping or making outlines, etc. to gather and organise ideas for their own writing’ to be aligned with the activity given in the exercise through the use of the technique of brainstorming. But it was noticed that the technique of brainstorming was not used by teachers neither for the accomplishment of this activity nor any other activity of the book. However, majority of the teachers were observed announcing their topic before the start of activities. For the purpose of conceptual understanding regarding different terms and methodological knowledge that is based on SLOs to perform an activity, there is a need on the part of the teacher to develop competence in students as the competence aspects consist of real and conceptual knowledge, methodical knowledge, social and personal competences as well as media competence (Paechter & Maier, 2010; Paechter et al., 2010). It was observed that clarification of the terms comprehensively was not found in compliance with the required learning outcome. For example, the first SLO of Unit-7 is to ‘Identify the elements of a story: plot, beginning, middle and the end of a story with conflict and resolution; human, animal, imaginary characters and their roles; setting’. In actual classroom practice definition of what the story is and how to write a story without the conceptual clarification of the elements of story was found which may imply the lack of knowledge or preparation for classroom instruction. Similarly, there is a segment of ‘Read Me’ in the every portion of writing skill which contains the definition of the term. In actual classroom practice, reliance just on reading the definition of the term to start the activity was found. However, it was also observed that some teachers were well prepared and well equipped to define the terms given in the SLOs with the help of examples from real life and from classroom objects. Therefore, it may be said that the teaching practice doesn’t align with student learning outcomes completely.

Some researchers gave their opinion that there is relationship of student learning outcomes and teaching experience of the teachers ((Al-methen, 1983; Schuler, 1984; Waiching, 1994; Ijaiya, 2000). This relationship enables the teacher to direct and instruct the students for the conduct of activity in classroom as clear and perfect instructions contribute a lot not only to the successful completion of activity but also to achieve the learning outcome. But the practice was not found in compliance to instruct the students clearly and perfectly for the conduct of activity perhaps because of the lack of proper training in the subject of English. That’s why the teaching practice doesn’t align with the learning outcomes. For the purpose to guide the teacher for the conduct of activities in writing exercises ‘Teaching Point’ has been given. It clearly gives direction to the teachers how to teach as Mahajan and Singh (2017) discuss the advantages of learning outcomes that help the teacher to decide WHAT to teach and HOW to teach. However, it was observed that only a minor number of teachers gave instructions completely while a majority followed ‘Teaching Point’ partially while there are a certain number of teachers who ignored these directions completely. However, it may be implied that some of the teachers feel confused when someone is observing them while teaching as Williams (1989), for example, states that classroom observations generally cause considerable stress on the part of the teacher. Teacher’s movement and interaction in the classroom plays an important role for the achievement of learning outcomes because students need guidance from the teacher at every step for the improvement in writing. According to Flanders (1960), there is a point in curriculum when the instructor requires being direct to give direction to the students. But in actual practice, it is found missing to move to the students to guide, interact or improve the skill of writing. Some of the teachers were observed to move to the students to guide them, encourage them and correct them in time. This technique boosted the confidence level of the students, improved their performance in writing and resulted in the production of good content.

As the student learning outcomes of this portion focus on the improvement of writing skill as in the process of writing, students translate their ideas into discernible words, sentences and paragraphs and

inspect what has been planned or written for improvement (Chien, 2012; de Larios, Manchón, Murphy, &Marín, 2008). Preparation of the draft of writing and its practice in the classroom is one of the important areas that were focused in student learning outcomes. For example, the second SLO of Unit-3 indicates to 'Use appropriate vocabulary and tenses to write a simple paragraph by giving a physical description and character traits/characteristics of person/object/place, moving from general to specific'. Classroom practice is found unsatisfactory as far as the preparation of the draft of writing is concerned. According to Weinert (2001), Learning outcomes calculate whether students achieve competences in their learning, but in actual practice, students are usually left at their own risk after the initial instruction or direction and they are not facilitated to practice the skill of writing in the classroom. The improvement in writing can only be possible if editing of written draft of students is in practice because it is an effective input that may improve the output as Tsang (1988) considered inputs to education as the different strategies used in producing outputs. Similarly, the draft needs to be revised after editing for the purpose of improving writing proficiency of the learner. For example, Unit-11, second SLO states to 'revise written work for correct spelling and punctuation, pronoun-antecedent agreement, subject-verb agreement' and fourth SLO of Unit-13 asks to 'revise written work for layout, legibility and vocabulary'. These learning outcomes clearly show the importance of the revision of written work of the student. However, the classroom practice polls apart from the required criteria of learning outcomes. This shows the lack of alignment of learning outcomes with the actual practice going on in classroom. These classroom practices need to be observed to improve the current situation as Cogan (1973) pointed out that the objective of the observation of classroom is the analysis of serious problems in the teacher instructions.

Correct use of grammar to achieve student learning outcomes plays an important role to improve the skill of writing at elementary level. For this purpose practice of grammatical items such as conjunction, interjection, action verbs, transitional words, sequence markers etc. are key factors to improve the writing capability of the learners. Though correct use of grammar in speaking and writing is being practiced in the portion of 'Language Use' in the exercise of every unit, some of the important items, that needs especial focus, are included in the writing activities, for example, learning outcome to 'Analyse and use conjunctions e.g. and, but, or, because, transitional words, e.g. for example, for instance, therefore and sequence markers, e.g. first(ly), second(ly), then, next, etc', and 'analyse. Alignment of these learning outcomes with classroom practice is better as compared to other writing activities. Vocabulary building is another important learning outcome which is focused in some learning outcomes and activities of writing exercises. For example, second SLO of Unit-3, first SLO of Unit-4, second SLO of Unit-6 and fourth SLO of Unit-13 focus on the use and improvement of vocabulary items in the classroom with the combination of activities in the exercises. These learning outcomes are aligned with the classroom practice to a greater extent as majority of the teacher found practicing them in the classroom. Students were also found enjoying these activities and learning outcomes seem to be achieved to a greater extent through quality output as studies on student learning have pointed out the learning approach as an important area in deciding the quality of the learning outcome (Ramsden, 1985; Biggs, 1987a).

Teaching of both formal and informal types of writing as learning outcome is essential to make a learner a successful writer as according to Spady (1994) outcome based education means clearly focusing on the development of the students and planning everything in an educational system around what is necessary for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. Usually students make more mistakes in informal types of writing because the focus in classroom writing is more on formal rather than informal writing. Informal writing has been given equal importance in Grade-V English textbook. Learning outcomes and activities in exercises related to

greetings, complementing others, invitation and farewells to friends and family, expression of gratitude, apologies, explanation of a point of view or opinion, expression of liking and disliking, approvals and disapprovals are given in the textbook of Grad-V. Activities based on the learning outcomes given in the book contain definitions, examples, pictures, speech bubbles etc. that make it quite easy for the students and teachers to understand and practice them. Akiret. al. (2012) found that there is difference in performance between the students whose learning was based on objective based with those whose learning was not based on learning outcome based. Therefore, it was observed that majority of the teachers conducted the activities related to informal writing effectively and the students were observed to be happy while doing these activities in the classroom. It is assumed that this type of classroom practice may enhance the knowledge and experience of the students related to real life situation. However, it was found otherwise in classroom practice of some schools.

Paragraph writing is a first step to write an essay with the help of which student may get proficiency in descriptive, narrative, argumentative or expository writing. If students are taught to write on some topic, they may produce some output but that output may not be correct. For the purpose of enabling the students to write a unified, well-structured and comprehensive paragraph, to teach the techniques of writing is very necessary. For this purpose, SLOs related to paragraph writing are given in Unit-1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 12. Definition and activities of different types of paragraphs, identification and highlighted examples of topic sentence, main idea and supporting detail have been given in the book. The application of these activities in classroom is not up to the mark and is not aligned with student learning outcomes.

The writing exercises of Grade-V English book are divided into 'Learning to Writing' and 'Creative Writing'. 'Learning to Write' mostly deals with formal and informal writing which focuses on academic and technical type of writing while, 'Creative Writing' deals with the type of writing in which students are trained to write on their own. According to Stein (1963), creativity is considered as the capability to produce original and unexpected work which is appropriate for a given goal. The learning outcome of this type of writing is in the form of the development of thought, expression and unique ideas in written form. Different types of writing activities are given for classroom practice, for example, descriptive writing to 'write a paragraph on 'Endangered Animals' in your notebook and write a few steps you can take to save them from being extinct', narrative writing to 'write any incident of your life when you treated somebody with kindness', argumentative writing to 'write what you want to be when you grow up so you can serve your country. Why do you want to do it?' and expository writing to 'write some ways to save your money and how you can use it' are given in the activities of creative writing. As far as the classroom practice of these activities is concerned, it was observed that students are not in practice of self-writing. The observation of their behaviour showed that this was something new and strange thing they were asked to do. However, it was also observed that classroom practice of creative writing in some schools was aligned with students learning outcomes.

6. Conclusion


The findings of the alignment of student learning outcomes with classroom practices show that in terms of the use of white board, announcement of the topic, definition of terms with the help of 'Read Me', positive attitude towards mistakes, checking and highlighting of mistakes, activities related to vocabulary building and informal writing were aligned with the learning outcomes. However, classroom practices of the use of audio visual aids other than whiteboard, instructions related to the conduct of different activities in general and according to 'Teaching point' given at the end of every page, description and explanation of concepts related to different techniques and parts of paragraph and story, teacher's interaction and provision of guidance for creative, correction, revision of written work were not found aligned with the learning outcomes outlined in SNC.


To sum up the whole discussion, it may be said that classroom practice with the majority of the students learning outcomes is not aligned. The attitude of the teachers towards teaching the subject is positive but there may lack of training due to which the classroom practice is not up to the mark. Learning environment, resources and academic background of the students may also be the reason behind this lack of alignment with the learning outcomes. The reasons behind this lack of alignment between SLOs and classroom practice may further be investigated.

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