



## INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF CLASS ROOM INTERACTION IN DEVELOPING SUDANESE SCHOOLS YOUNG LEARNERS' WRITING SKILLS

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aims at investigating the role of classroom interaction in developing Sudanese schools young learners' writing skills. The researchers have adopted the descriptive analytical method. Questionnaire has been used for collecting relevant data to the study. The study sample composed of (70) teachers at different Sudanese Universities, which were randomly selected. The results revealed that there are statistical significant differences among students. Learning grammar rules helps young learners in developing their writing skill. Moreover, wide English vocabulary helps young learners in expressing their views in writing a topic. The study has recommended that teachers should use more techniques to motivate the learners and make their writing lively and avoid rigidity in teaching grammar. Furthermore, Young learners should be encouraged by their teachers in providing simplified writing tasks so as to help them improve writing skills.

**Keywords:** Writing Skills, Focus on Process, Focus on text, Teaching Writing Skill

### Introduction

Many writers believe that English writing skill is very essential for second English learners, while others believe that English writing skill is dying out; this study is aimed at drawing attention of the students as well as teachers to use English writing skill effectively. The reasons go beyond the importance of English writing skill for second language learners. Firstly, teaching English writing skill for Sudanese school young learners. Secondly the importance of English writing skill as foundation for Sudanese school young learners' future careers to write various professional forms such as business documents including business reports, letters and emails. Moreover, in academic field, English writing skill is regarded as the most influential skills. In this study, the researchers discover variety teaching English writing skill techniques that are important for second language researcher uses a scientific approach to help the Sudanese school young learners' good command achieve English language writing skill. The researcher also shows the key elements of writing skill. Such as punctuation, spelling and the correct grammar are essential.

### Aims and Scope of the Study

This study aims at investigating the role of classroom interaction in developing Sudanese schools young learners' writing skills. The scope of the study is limited to English language teachers in the Sudan. There are (70) English language teachers at different Sudanese universities.

### Literature Review

#### Writing Skills

Writing in a foreign language represents the greatest challenge to the students at all stages, particularly essay writing because in this activity, writing is usually extended and therefore, it becomes more demanding than in the case of writing short a paragraph.

Anderson (2001) states "There is no doubt that writing is the most difficult skill for L2 learners to



master” The difficulties appear not only in generating and organizing ideas, but also in translating these ideas into notions into legible text”. Yet, it is very necessary to look into the dynamics of writing and its teaching, as writing is a skill that not only is tested in every valid language examination, but also a skill that learners should possess and demonstrate in academic contexts.

In academic field, English writing skill is regarded as the most influential skills. Writing includes numerous considerations and choices to be made regarding “higher level skills” such as content, structure and organization, and “lower level skills”, such as punctuation, choice of appropriate vocabulary themes and grammatical structure.

Writing skill must be practiced and learned through experience. By putting together concepts and sowing problems, the writer engages in “a two-way interactions between continuously developing knowledge and continuously developing text.” (Bereiter & Scardania,1987: 12).

Indeed, academic writing demands continuous effort and practice in composing, developing and analyzing ideas. Compared to students writing in their native language [L1], however, students writing in their [ L2 ] have to also acquire proficiency in the use of the language as well as writing strategies, techniques and skills, the students want to write close to error-free texts and they enroll in English skills courses in order to develop their skills which includes writing.

The ability to write is not naturally acquired skill. It is learned or transmitted as a set of practices in formal instructional settings or other environments. Writing skill must be practiced and learned through experiences. Cimoz (1999) argues that “Writing also includes composing which implies the ability either to tell or retell pieces of information in the form of narratives or description, or to transform information into new text as in expository or argumentative writing.” The writer thought that writing is the act of composing thought, which can create problems for the students, especially for those writing in a second language [ L2 ], in academic contexts.

According to the writer mentioned above formulating, new ideas can be difficult because it involves transforming information. Writing constitutes the graphical, representation of language; it is the symbolic presentation of the sounds produced in a language (Carter,1997).

The writer argues that there is a close link between each letter and the sound associated with it in a particular language. Lynn Holaday (in Stephen T Chudi, 1997-35) points out “the way to become a better writer is to write” Most of the students are still not able to write a correct paragraph using the basic structures of English language, they have learnt. However, why do students still find difficulties in writing when their teachers exert more efforts to assist their students to achieve good results? The answer to this question is not easy but it includes the possibility of difficulty assigned with learning writing for non-native speakers around the globe not just Sudanese students.

#### **Writing Connect with Other Skills**

Myles (2002) points out the difficult situation in which a writer can find him or herself. “The writer is a lonely figure cut off from the stimulus and corrective of listeners. He must be a predicator of reactions and act on his predictions. He writes with one hand tied behind his back, being robbed of gesture. He is robbed too of the tone of his voice and the aid of clues the environment provides.” Writing is the most essential as one can be able to express in written form and there by more novel ideas from his mind.

It is noticed that in academic field, English writing skill plays influential role compared to other skills, so attention should be paid to study for Sudanese secondary school English language learners have great tendency to be good listeners, readers, speakers and writers in English foreign language. These students need careful attention towards these skills, however, the general command of students’ language is reported to be poor, namely in writing skill.



### Teaching Writing Skill

Writing is the most important activity in learning a language. Wiseman (1999) demonstrates “Writing depends on other skills, unless a person acquainted with the letters of a particular language and its pronunciation, he cannot be able to write clearly and in accurate manner. As mentioned above writing skill linked with listening and speaking skills when the English learner master the two communicative skills, he will indeed master writing. In teaching writing skill some techniques are to be followed and these techniques should be imported to the learners of EFL. The students should know using capital and small letters while writing as well as legibility and clarity in writing

### Approach of Teaching Writing Skill

Approach is “Self-evident in nature. It tells what is to be taught in the class. Hence, it is higher than the method. It is at first priority on the part of the teacher and then he can proceed towards applying the method.

Simi (1994) claims that method and approach work together to fulfill the aim of education still than we can differentiate them. Method is a procedure applied in the process of education.

The writer points out three important aspects which need in teaching namely “What, why and how of the subject, matter or content. What aspect deals with the proper approach and how aspect with the method of teaching and why aspect is fulfilled by the various instructional objectives given on the text or content. The objectives which are deliberately made before will hence answer the question of “why” in teaching a particular content or subject matter.

However most secondary school students find it difficult to write essays free of errors of various types. Therefore, teaching of essay writing need to anticipate certain common types of errors. They may also find other types of errors which can be revealed by analyzing the written products or essays of the students. These are the conventions which are usually followed by the teachers of writing when analyzing students’ errors.

### Focus on Accuracy

Accuracy refers to ability of the learners to produce grammatically correct sentences. The learners should not only know correct grammatical rules of the language also able to speak and write accurately. (According to Dr. Shilpi Rishi Srivastava – Dept of humanities -55- [www.newmanpublication.com](http://www.newmanpublication.com).)

### Focus on text

The writer thought at some specific features of academic text including, text types, rhetorical purpose, register and linguistic accuracy, while many of these features may seem obvious, often the students especially those just entering tertiary education, find it far from straight forward to know exactly what is expected.

For ease of reference in discussing text types, we continue to use these labels, but we emphasize that you cannot assume that knowledge of what to expect in a certain text type is shared by students. The essay for example, may contain different elements depending on whether it is framed as a critical review, a discussion, a personal response or and exposition.

Our implicit knowledge of what to expect from text types in response to certain prompts, such as discuss, critically evaluate, compare and contrast informs the judgments. The text types vary in response to the function that the text performs, which is not always reflected in the descriptive term applied to it (Hinkel, 2004).

In Sudanese secondary school the researcher thought probably the most commonly labeled text type is the essay as most students will have been taught a basic essay outline. Introduction, body and conclusion at school. This linear structure represents a particular preference of Anglo-American academic writing. (Reid, 1984) that students from other cultures may need to be made aware of the writer points out the alternative



title of argument essay, highlights one of the reasons for the pre-eminence of this text type in academic writing. It has evolved as a vehicle for synthesis, opinion, and theory, all of which imply argument of different sorts and which help to account for disparate nature of what is known as an essay.

#### Focus on Purpose

The researcher found out a variety of reasons that they can aid to critical thinking, understanding and memory, to extend students' learning beyond lectures and other formal meetings to improve students' communication skills, and to train students as future professionals in particular disciplines. This range of reasons for writing may not be so apparent to students who may see writing as mainly an assessment.

#### In order to apply way of focus on purpose students should follow the activity below :

Ask students to brainstorm individually all the types of writing, they have done in the last few weeks (e.g. Shopping lists, text messages, notes on lectures, experimental results, birthday cards, poetry). In small groups have students put the different types of writing into some form of classification. You might want to suggest functional classification such as memory aids, social communication, learning about, for assessment, some forms of writing will fall into more than one category.

In a whole class discussion, narrow the focus to academic writing activities such as notes made on reading or in lectures, essay drafts and laboratory reports. Discuss the purposes of the different types of academic writing students have done. Ask students to consider the different audiences, the specific purpose of this form of writing, the kind of language, information and evidence, they need to draw upon. Extend the discussion to include other types of writing students will do in the future.

#### Focus on Process

The process approaches focus primarily on what writers do as they write rather than on textual features, but depending on the writer's immediate task. These approaches may also consider text features. The process approach includes different stages, which can be combined with other aspect of teaching writing.

Not all writers move through the stages included in process approaches. Some stages may be helpful and others superfluous to any given writing task. Stages of writing process can happen in various orders at different points. Lectures can help clarify students' misconceptions about writing by explicitly teaching the stages of the writing processes.

#### Role of the Teacher

Simi (1994) states that English writing skill teachers should know the difficulties which may face their students in the process of teaching in order to assist them to achieve their goals.

It is true that non-native speakers are more likely to commit errors. English teachers are indeed facing the challenge of adopting and developing a wide range of methods to accomplish effective teaching of English writing.

This of course, is not an easy task. A lot of students in Sudan continue to fail to master the basis of the English writing even after long years of formal educations. Teachers of English language feel satisfied to have students who speak and write English correctly. This has been the ambition of all EFL teachers.

Students in governmental or non-governmental schools in Sudan start learning English from primary schools and by the end of secondary schools, the students have spent more than eight years and that their vocabulary repertoire is expected to be massive, their knowledge of grammar rules and the mechanics of writing is satisfying, most of the students are still not able to write a correct paragraph using the basic structures of English language which they have learnt. However, why do students still find difficulties in English when their teachers do their best to help them to achieve good results?

Teachers of writing skill in Sudanese secondary schools difficulties in encouraging their students where they developed their English vocabulary to use it correctly in conveying various textual meaning. Translation is regarded as a serious problem that is facing teachers of writing skill in Sudanese school as



most of the students translate the text ideas to their mother tongue.

Sudanese teachers are to find methods to activate in a meaningful way the passive knowledge the students possess in terms of writing skill. As well as to help the students become more proficient while working to eliminate some of their common errors. A better understanding of the [L1 ] influence in the process of EFL. Anderson (2001) argues that any academic writers must meet four major conditions:

- A. The conventions of the language.
- B. He must learn to control the structure of the language so that what he writes is comprehensible to his reader.
- C. He must learn the graphic systems of foreign language.
- D. He must learn to select from among possible combinations of words and phrases those which will convey the nuances, he has in mind in the register which is most appropriate.

#### Methodology of the Study

The researchers have drawn the sample for this study exclusively from Sudanese teachers of English from various universities who responded to questionnaire. A sample of (70) teachers was randomly selected for the questionnaire.

#### Tools of the Study

The researchers have used questionnaire as a tool to collect the information of this paper. The questionnaire which was given to the Sudanese English teachers whom were selected randomly.

The researchers have adopted the descriptive analytical and quantitative methods as well as a questionnaire as a tool in the collection of relevant data and information in pursuing this paper. Population of this study is drawn exclusively from English language teachers in the Sudan. The population is English language teachers at Sudanese universities. A sample of (70) teachers was randomly selected for the questionnaire.

#### Results and Discussion:

The researchers have used the questionnaire as a tool in the collection of data relevant to this study. The researcher has designed a questionnaire to investigate the hypothesis " Teachers play an effective role to develop Sudanese school young learners' writing skills through classroom interaction.". The tables below are going to illustrate what has been stated earlier.

#### Teachers' Questionnaire

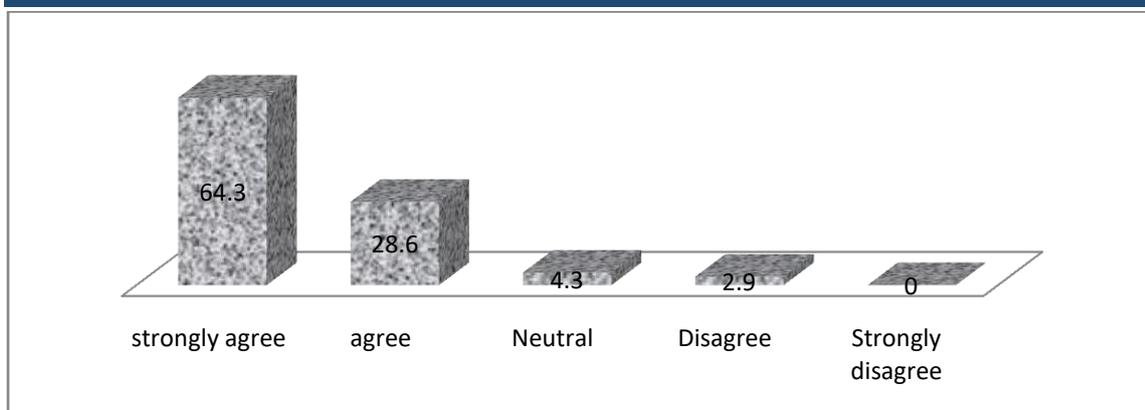
This item tries to elicit information from the teachers concerning their views about the teachers play an effective role to develop Sudanese school young learners' writing skills through classroom interaction.

#### Statement No (1) Learning grammar rules helps young learners in developing their writing skill.

Table No 4.1: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (1)

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>64.3</b>
<b>Agree</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28.6</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4.3</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: The researcher from applied study, 2015



**Figure 4.1: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (1)**

Source: The researcher from applied study, Excel Package, 2015

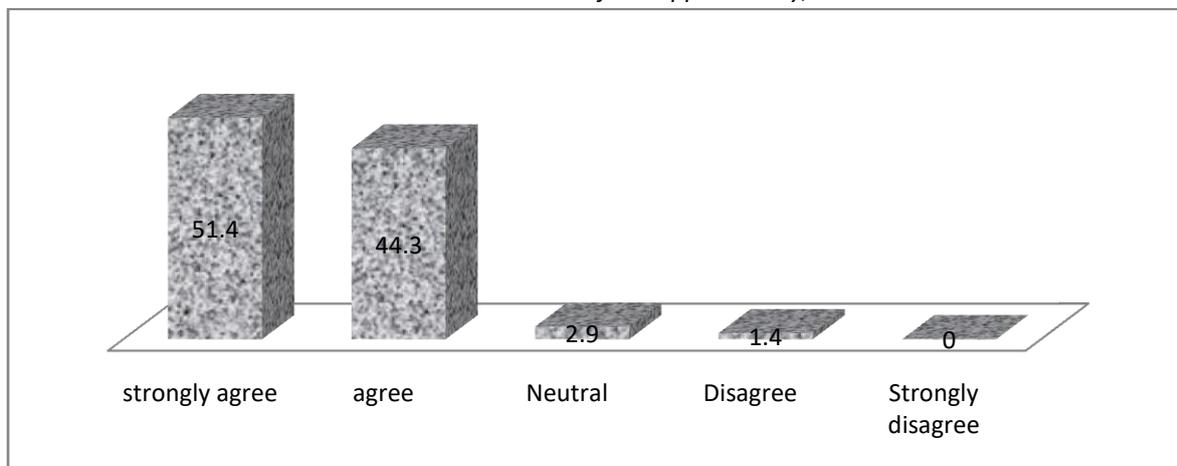
It is clear from the table No (4.1) and figure No (4.1) that there are (45) of the respondents with percentage (64.3%) are strongly agreed with “learning grammar rules helps young learners in developing their writing skill”. there are (20) of the respondents with percentage (28.6%) agreed. There are (3) of the respondents with percentage (4.3%) are neutral, only (2) of the respondents with percentage (2.9%) see that learning grammar rules doesn’t help young learners in developing their writing skill. This indicates that learning grammar rules helps young learners in developing their writing skill.

**Statement No (2) Wide English vocabulary helps young learners in expressing their views in writing a topic.**

**Table 4.2: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (2)**

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>51.4</b>
<b>agree</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>44.3</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: The researcher from applied study, 2015



**Figure 4.2: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (2)**

Source: The researcher from applied study, Excel Package, 2015

It is clear from the table No (4.2) and figure No (4.2) that there are (36) of the respondents with percentage



(51.4%) are strongly agreed with “wide English vocabulary helps young learners in expressing their views in writing a topic” there are (31) of the respondents with percentage (44.3%) agreed, there are (2) of the respondents with percentage (2.9%) are neutral, there is only (1) of the respondents with percentage (1.4%) disagreed to that.

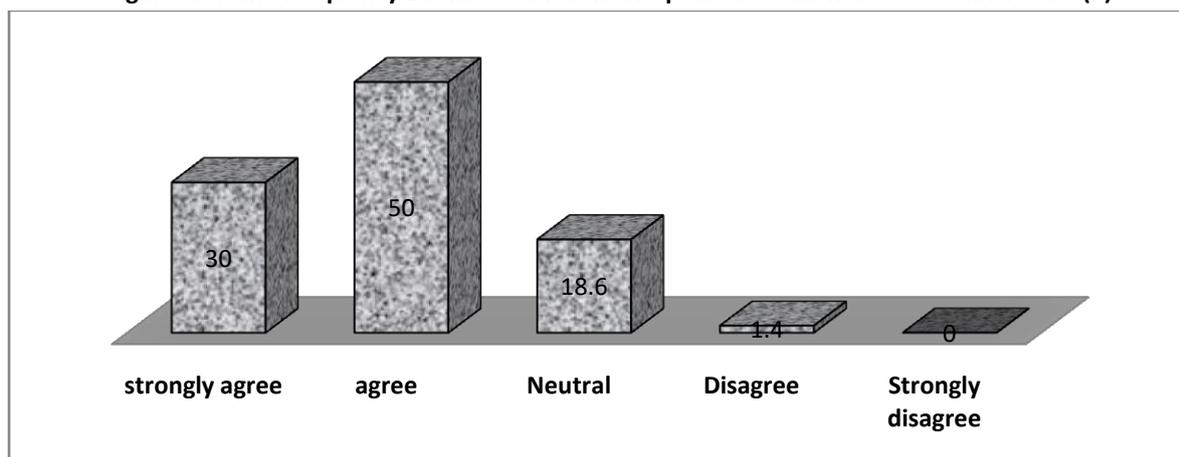
**Statement No (3) Using Space in Writing helps Young Learners in Clarifying Their Views in Writing Topic**

**Table 4.3: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (3)**

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>30.0</b>
<b>agree</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50.0</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18.6</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: The researcher from applied study, 2015

**Figure 4.3: The Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (3)**



Source: The researcher from applied study, Excel Package, 2015

It is clear from the table No (4.3) and figure No (4.3) that there are (21) of the respondents with percentage (30%) are strongly agreed with “using space in writing helps young learners in clarifying their views in writing topic” there are (35) of the respondents with percentage (50%) agreed, there are (13) of the respondents with percentage (18.6%) are neutral. There is only (1) of the respondents with percentage (1.4%) disagreed to that.

**Statement No (4) Using Punctuation Marks help Young Learners in Stating Their Views in Writing topic**

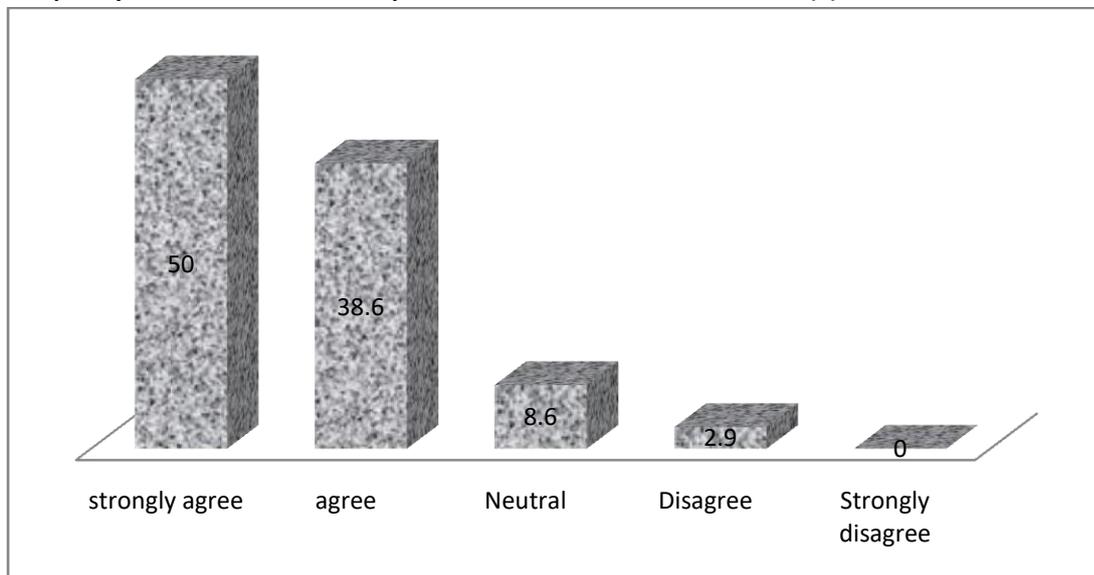
**Table 4.4: Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (4)**

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>strongly agree</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>50.0</b>
<b>agree</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38.6</b>
<b>Neutral</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8.6</b>
<b>Disagree</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2.9</b>
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: The researcher from applied study, 2015



Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (4)



Source: The researcher from applied study, Excel Package, 2015

It is clear from the table No (4.4) and figure (4.4) that there are (35) of the respondents with percentage (50%) strongly agreed with “using punctuation marks helps young learners in stating their views in writing a topic”. There are (27) of the respondents with percentage (38.6%) agreed, also there are (6) of the respondents with percentage (8.6%) are neutral; while there are (2) of the respondents with percentage (2.9%) disagreed to that.

Statement No (5) Using indentation helps young learners in lying out their topic in writing

Table 4.5: Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (5)

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
strongly agree	13	18.6
agree	27	38.6
Neutral	23	32.9
Disagree	4	5.7
Strongly disagree	3	4.3
Total	70	100.0

Source: The researcher from applied study, 2015

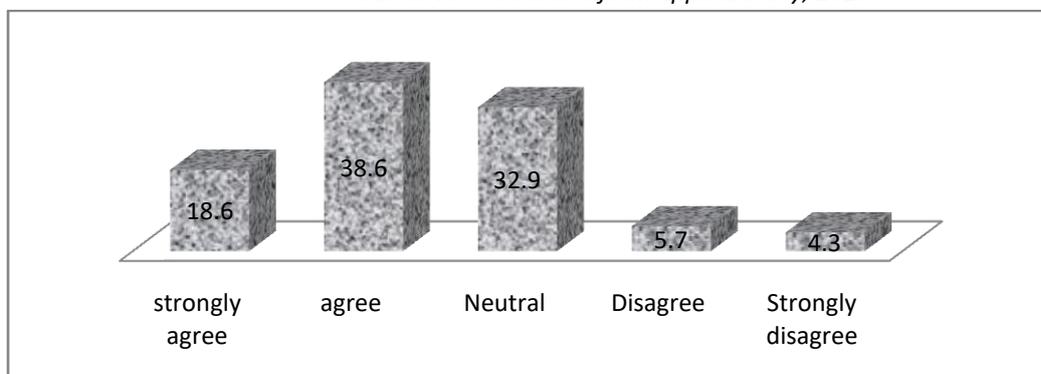


Figure 4.5: Frequency Distribution for the Respondents' Answers of Statement No. (5)

Source: The researcher from applied study, Excel Package, 2015



it is clear from the table No (4.5) and figure No (4.5) that there are (13) of the respondents with percentage (18.6%) strongly agreed with "using indentation helps young learners in laying out their topic in writing" there are (27) of the respondents with percentage(38.6%)agreed, there are(23) of the respondents with percentage (32.9%) are neutral, also there are (4) of the respondents with percentage (5.7%) disagreed, while there are (3) of the respondents with percentage (4.3%) strongly disagreed to that.

The data collection was analyzed in relation to the study hypothesis. The data was collected by questionnaire which had given to teachers who do not know why these took place.

Also analyzing the data collection from the questionnaire was given to teachers exclusively drawn from English language teachers in the Sudan. The population is English language teachers at some Sudanese universities. A sample of (70) teachers was randomly selected for the questionnaire.

The researcher has used the questionnaire as primary tool in the data collection relevant to this study. The researcher has designed questionnaire to identify the role of teachers who can play an effective role to develop Sudanese schools young learners' writing skills through classroom interaction. The marks obtained from the questionnaire for all participants were analyzed and compared statistically by using frequencies and percentages. The analysis showed that the highest percentage which is represented strongly agree and agree is estimated by (88%) in contrast to the percentage of strongly disagree and disagree which is estimated by lesser than this one (7.6%). Accordingly, this justifies that there is statistically significant difference among the respondents Teachers play an effective role to develop Sudanese schools young learners' writing skills through classroom interaction.

#### Report Discussion

After the comparing and calculation of the sub-hypotheses; we have found that the total number of the five sub-hypotheses percentage (96%+78%+80%+98%+88%) equal (88%) which represents negative respond justifies that the teachers play an effective role to develop Sudanese school young learners' writing skills through classroom interaction.

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