Flipped Learning for ESL Writing in a Sudanese School

Limia Ali Mohamed Abdelrahman
Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, 50605 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia aroosalremal@hotmail.com

Dorothy DeWitt
Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, 50605 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia dorothy@um.edu.my

Norlidah Alias
Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, 50605 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia drnorlidah@um.edu.my

Mohd Nazri Abdul Rahman
Faculty of Education, University of Malaya, 50605 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia mohdnazri_ar@um.edu.my

ABSTRACT
Sudanese students seem to lack proficiency in writing English. In addition, teachers continue to use traditional, teacher-centered methods in teaching English as a second language (ESL). The flipped learning (FL) approach where video lectures are assigned as online homework before class, followed by learning activities during class, might be able to address the issue of the lack of proficiency in writing. A module for teaching English paragraph-writing using FL for Sudanese students in Secondary Year 1 was developed. The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of this module on students' writing proficiency and their satisfaction with the module. An exploratory-implementation study was conducted with 28 student volunteers in two groups, in which only one group used the module. The analysis of data collected from tests, focus group interviews and online interactions indicated that there was improvement in the students' writing proficiency, and satisfaction, based on their engagement and interaction, with the module. In future, further studies can be done to determine if the module which used the FL approach, could be implemented on a larger scale in Sudan, and extended for other topics in ESL in other countries.

Keywords: Flipped; ESL writing; Satisfaction; Engagement; Interaction

INTRODUCTION
English language proficiency is necessary for economic, educational, and political reasons (McKay, 2005). Writing in English is important not only in the classroom, but for encounters in real-life situations. In addition, writing proficiency seems to be positively related to learning (Ellis, Taylor & Drury, 2005; Manchón & Roca de Larios, 2007). Teachers are able to identify errors and diagnose the extent of students' understanding of the subject through students' writing (Krause, 2001; Maclellan, 2004).

The need to master English as a second language (ESL) is crucial for Sudan as she opens to the outside world. However, Sudanese students' proficiency in English is still below expectation and is a cause of concern (Ministry of Education (MOE), 2012). Studies report that the majority of the Sudanese ESL learners might not be competent in communicating, specifically when writing (Alwasilah, 2006; Hajana, 2006; Makki, 2005; Nur, 2012). Unfortunately, even graduates from Sudanese universities face difficulties in communicating in English (Yong, 2012).

In Sudan, Arabic is the first language, while other Sudanese dialects are used for communication. ESL is taught only from Grade 5 in the basic, or primary school. This means that English is taught after the child has attended two years of pre-school, and completed half of the eight years of basic education (Arora, 2003). The lack of ESL writing proficiency might be because learners have not had sufficient preparation (Al-Khsawneh, 2010; Makki, 2005). This problem has been noted by the government who attributed it to the lack of effective methods for teaching ESL writing skills at both the basic and secondary schools (Minister of Education, 2012).

Teaching writing to ESL learners is challenging (Adas & Bkir, 2013). Research seem to indicate that passive learning experiences and the inefficient traditional teaching practices contribute to the lack of writing skills (Mack, 2012; Philips, 2012). The ESL learner has little opportunity to communicate in English in authentic real-world situations as they only use English in school (Sarwar, 2000). Further, the passive teaching methods in

Sudanese schools provides little opportunity for students to experience authentic ESL learning experiences (Alhaj, 2005; Munhal, 2009). Makki (2005) attributes the lack of attention to ESL writing skill by both the teachers and the learners in the Sudanese context to the traditional methods of teaching writing. Hence, students lack of confidence in communicating in English in situations outside school.

In teaching ESL, a product-based approach, which relies on the practice of students' memorizing grammatical structures, vocabulary, and specific written texts for passing their examinations is employed (Cronje, 2006; Makki, 2005; Nur, 2012). While it is undeniable that grammatical and lexical knowledge is important for ESL writing proficiency, these formal lessons develop declarative knowledge rather than a practical approach for writing (Ferris, 2004; Morris & Cobb, 2003; Nassaji and Fotos, 2004). In addition, most Sudanese students are given exposure to a model of writing by the teacher, which may be taken from the textbook, and are then asked to model exactly to produce a writing composition as the final product (Makki, 2005; Alwasilah, 2006; Baffoka, 2012).

The poor performance of students in writing ESL might be attributed to the deficiencies in the current Sudanese Integrated Curriculum for ESL (Saeed, 2012). The resource for implementing the English language curriculum in schools is a series of six textbooks known as the Sudan Practical Integrated National English (SPINE), which was developed by the MOE with the support of the British Council Khartoum (Arora, 2003). These textbooks are used for teaching English at both the basic and secondary levels. However, there has been some contradictions on the suitability of these textbooks as some studies have identified the curriculum used as a reason for the low ESL writing proficiency among Sudanese students (Abdalla, 2000; Alwasilah, 2004; Cronje, 2006; Mohammed, 1999; Nur, 2012). Hence, other learning resources may be required to improve writing.

More research is required to determine models of instruction which can enhance the teaching of ESL writing (Keshta & Harb, 2013). Baffoka (2012) claimed that technology-enriched and innovative teaching practices can contribute to the improvement of ESL students' proficiency. Hence, the flipped learning (FL) model may be a solution for improving writing. There has been some studies on FL in English writing, but more studies are required to investigate the use of this model in secondary schools for improving ESL writing (Flumerfelt, & Green, 2013). Further, there does not seem to be any study on FL in Sudanese schools.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether an instructional module developed with the FL model could improve Sudanese students' paragraph-writing skills in ESL. The research questions are: What are the effects of FL on Secondary 1 Sudanese students' achievement in ESL paragraph-writing in a Sudanese Secondary School in Qatar? and What are the students' satisfaction with FL through their engagement and interaction ?

This study is significant to teachers in Sudanese schools to determine the effects of FL, and how it can be implemented in schools for active learning beyond using the textbooks alone. Researchers will benefit from the determining whether FL could solve the problems of ESL learning in Sudanese schools. In addition, policy makers could use these findings to plan teacher-training and the implementation of the new ESL curriculum for the improvement of instructional practices in Sudanese schools. Further, this study may help curriculum planners to consider the technology to be integrated in teaching.

BLENDED AND FLIPPED LEARNING
Technology may be used to overcome the problem of passive teaching by providing rich and interactive learning environments. Students' are able to seek and build new knowledge from information gathered on the internet for learning at anytime and anywhere (Fu, 2013). The teacher should be a facilitator to promote active learning in order to be relevant to the current social, cultural and individual changes in learning (DeWitt, 2010). Hence, learning writing can be more process-based with student-centered approaches.

Technology can promote the quality of the teaching and learning experience, which is no longer confined to a traditional classroom (Roblyer & Doering, 2013). The learning experience is enhanced through interactions with the content, peers and the teacher, both in and out of the classroom (DeWitt, 2010; Moore, 2013).

Students should be given the opportunity to use technology to improve learning (Almusharaf & Hassan, 2012). However, while technology may add value to the students' learning experiences, new and innovative models of instruction with technology are required (Rogers, 2002). Even though technology is pervasively used among students in many activities, its use in teaching and learning in Sudanese schools is relatively low (Ali, 2010). Hence, this study is important to determine whether an instructional module using FL could be implemented (Rogers, 2002).

A blended-learning approach may be more suitable for teachers used to working in traditional classrooms but want to use digital technologies for teaching (Motteram & Sharma, 2009). Blended learning assumes the continued use of face-to-face teaching for the learning experience, but enriches it with technology (Marsh, 2012). However, suitable activities need to be designed (Motteram & Sharma, 2009).

FL is a blended-learning model (Milman, 2012). The usual classroom is flipped as students watch, listen to, interact with video lessons outside the classroom in their own time, and then use class time for engaging activities facilitated by the instructor (Love, Hodge, Grandegenett & Swift, 2013; Sams & Bergmann, 2007). Class work is done prior to class, while homework is done in the classroom (Pierce, 2013). This frees the class time and provides opportunity for active learning (Bergmann & Sams, 2012). At the same time, the learning environment can be enriched with creative learning activities that enhance students' learning and develop their skills (Keshta & Harb, 2013).

This means that there is a possibility that FL may be used to address the problem of having a passive learning experience and the use of traditional teacher-centered approach in teaching ESL in Sudanese schools. In addition, this approach may enable a process-based approach to assessment and instruction, rather than the traditional product-based approach. The teacher can then focus on the development of ESL writing skills during class time as technology and FL enables teaching to extend outside the classroom.

There still seems to be little research on the FL model of instruction (Johnson & Renner, 2012; Strayer, 2007). FL may be suitable for certain subjects such as science (Ruddick, 2012; Snowden, 2012; Torkelson, 2012) and mathematics (Clark, 2013; Schwakl, 2013; Strayer, 2007; Snowden, 2012). However, there are also some studies for English instruction (Baranovic, 2013; Snowden, 2012). In addition, most of these studies seem to be done ofr higher education (Baranovic, 2013; Pierce & Fox, 2012; Ruddick, 2012; Strayer, 2007; Zappe, Leicht, Messner, Litzinger Lee, 2009). However, research seems to suggest that FL can support students' active and meaningful learning through the building of social skills in group activities and interactions with effective use of technology (Strayer, 2007). Most of these studies show that FL improved achievement and satisfaction (Baranovic, 2013; Clark, 2013; Pierce & Fox, 2012; Ruddick, 2012; Schwakl, 2013; Torkelson, 2012; Wang, Han, & Yang, 2015). On the other hand, some studies show that students' satisfaction was lower with FL (Johnson & Renner, 2012; Strayer, 2007). Hence, there needs to be more research on the implementation of FL in secondary schools, and specifically for English writing.

Implementation of FL has been done using video lectures followed by group work, project work (Strayer, 2007), or quizzes (Zappe et al., 2009). Online assignments may be used and class-time was spent on problem solving activities (Ruddick, 2012). It is also noted that students preferred videos created by their own teacher, and to be a maximum length of 15 minutes (Torkelson, 2012). In addition, interaction with the content and should be varied with more structured and less open-ended activities (Strayer, 2007). These guidelines were taken into consideration in developing the module for this study.

STUDENTS' SATISFACTION
In this study, satisfaction is measured through students' engagement and interaction (Dziuban, Moskal, & Hartman, 2005) (see Figure 1). Engagement results in increased achievement, positive behaviors, and creates a social environment with interactivity among students, both in and outside the classroom (Taylor & Parsons, 2011). There are three types of engagement: social engagement, which is interest, the sense of belonging and participation in the learning environment; cognitive engagement, which refers to doing tasks on time, and responding to challenges in learning; and behavioral engagement, which refers to attendance rate, as well as willingness to learn difficult tasks (Willms, Friesen, & Milton, 2009; Reeves, 2013).

There are three types of interaction in the learning environments: teacher-learner, learner-learner, and learner-content interactions (Moore, 1989). Moore (2013) stated that the learner who expects moderate or high level of interaction in his learning environment, might be very dissatisfied if experiences no learning interactions. Interactions can be on the basis of time and location of the learners, and can be used for group interactions and collaboration in both face-to-face and online learning environments (Ellis, Gibbs & Rein, 1991). This may be helpful in understanding exchange of information and writing in groups when learners meet, both at the same or at different times and locations.
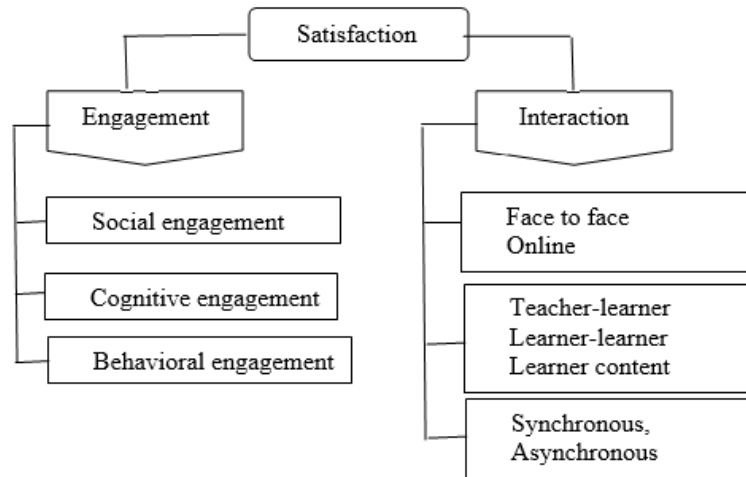
Figure 1. Concept of satisfaction

METHODOLOGY
This is an exploratory-implementation study to investigate the effects of FL in a secondary one class of Sudanese students who have just started to acquire basic ESL writing skills (DeWitt, Alias and Siraj, 2014). A module was developed for teaching paragraph-writing for ESL using the FL approach (the PW module), and implemented with a group of students. A second group of students was taught using the traditional method. Pre and post tests were used to determine students' performance in the two groups. A focus group interview was used to gather information on students' satisfaction with the PW module. In addition, student's writing and discussions on the online platform were observed and analysed.

The context of the study
This study is conducted in a Sudanese secondary school in Qatar. This school is one of the Schools of Sudanese Community Abroad (SCA) found in Asia and Africa. SCA schools provide a link to the Sudanese education and culture for children of expatriates. The Sudanese students attending SCA schools have less difficulties integrating into the social and cultural context of the society when they return to Sudan for higher education.

Despite the different locations of these schools, the learning environment in SCA schools is similar to schools in Sudan. The curriculum used is the government-approved curriculum and the teachers are Sudanese: some hired by the school from the MOE in Sudan, while others are expatriates. The students prepare for the national basic and secondary certificates assessments after completing basic and secondary schools, similar to students in Sudan. In addition, these assessment is centralized with the examination papers prepared in Sudan.

A SCA school was selected for this study as it is believed that the teachers and students in this type of school may be more receptive to the possibility of implementing the FL**.** In this study, a SCA secondary school for girls in the State of Qatar with an enrolment of 250 Sudanese students was selected. There are two secondary one and secondary two each, and three classes of secondary three. The school uses the SPINE textbooks as a resource for teaching ESL. This school is considered a typical Sudanese school in terms of infrastructure, where children of Sudanese expatriates working in Qatar are enrolled.

The sample
There are two secondary one classes with 30 students each. One of the classes was randomly selected for the intervention with the PW module, while in the other class, the traditional approach was used. The sample consisted of student volunteers from the two classes who had their parents' permission to participate in the study. One of the classes was randomly selected for the intervention. The 14 volunteers from each class were of mixed ESL proficiency. After the intervention, six students were identified from the intervention group for the focus group interview.

Secondary one students were selected for the study as they had the required prior knowledge and skills for writing after learning English for four years at the basic level.

ESL Paragraph-Writing (EWP) Module using the FLM
The instructional module developed for ESL paragraph-writing using FL (PW module) consists of four lessons for four weeks. The module was designed to provide the knowledge and skills required to write descriptive paragraphs in English.
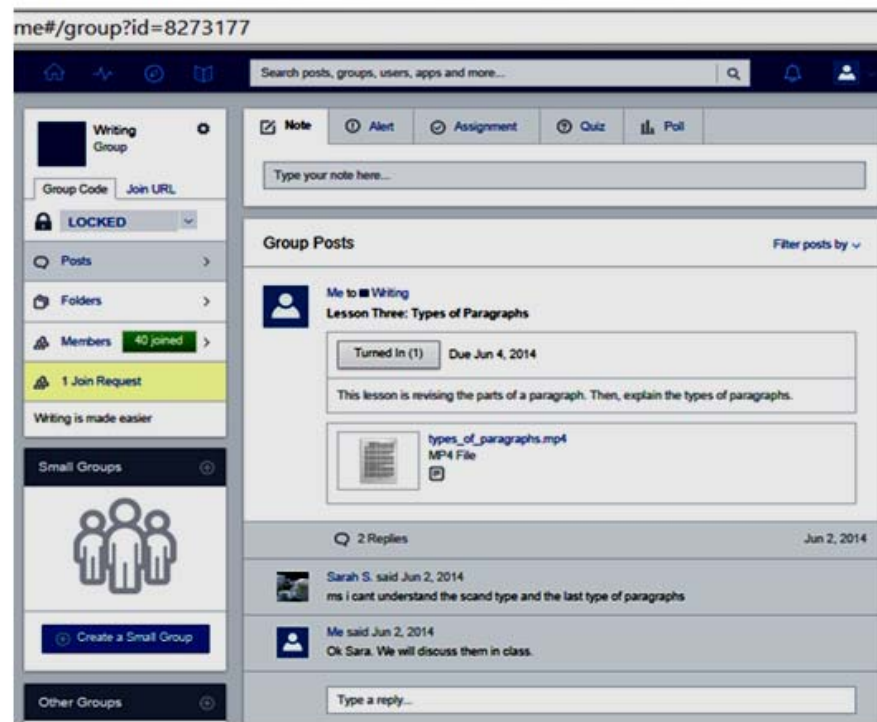

Figure 2. The learning management system "Edmodo"

Each lesson comprises of two modes of instruction: the online instruction, which had one instructional video per lesson, and a weekly face-to-face instruction of 40 minutes in the classroom lesson. The learning management system, "Edmodo", was used as the platform for the online learning environment (see Figure 2). Videos of 10-minute duration, accompanied by questions, were posted to encourage students to reflect upon the knowledge and skills learnt from the videos. The face-to-face instruction in class used discussions and questions, exercises and quizzes, individual and group writing tasks on worksheets and hand-outs.

Data collection and analysis
The instruments used for collecting data consist of a pre-test, post-test, and an interview protocol for the focus group interview. The pre-test assessed the students' ability to write a 100-word descriptive paragraph on their best friend and the post-test was a similar task for writing a descriptive paragraph on their favourite person. These tests were validated by two experienced teachers for use in the study.

Both groups of students in the two classes were given a pre-test to evaluate their paragraph-writing proficiency before the PW module was implemented. The module was implemented for four weeks, after which a post test on writing was given for both groups. The students' writing compositions were assessed by two expert teachers with more than 10 years' experience, based on a rubric. The assessment scores between the two assessors were compared and moderated to ensure inter-rater reliability was maintained (Seliger & Shohamy, 2000). The pretest and post-tests scores were analysed using t-tests to determine whether there was any significance difference in students' achievement before and after the intervention.

After the intervention, data was gathered through a focus-group interviews with 6 students, and through postings on the online forum on their experience with the PW module. Focus group interviews are useful for determining attitudes in a non-threatening environment as students would be more willing to share their feelings (Naimie, Chin, Dewitt, Akma & Mohajer, 2013). Participants were interviewed in Arabic, their first language, and the interview was audio recorded. Later, the interview was transcribed and translated into the English language. The transcript of the interview and online communications were transcribed and directed content analysis was carried out on the categories for engagement and interaction as the theory on engagement and interaction has been

determined (DeWitt et al., 2013; Dziuban et al., 2005; Ellis et al., 1991; Reeves, 2013; Willms, Friesen and Milton, 2009). The data from the transcripts were coded and categorised.

Findings
Effectiveness of the Module
The results of the independent-samples t-test indicate that the pre-tests scores in paragraph-writing was not significantly different between both groups, where t(19.288)=1.520, p >.145 (see Table 1). However, there was a significant difference between both groups in the post-test scores for the intervention group, where t (16.409) =2.977, p <.009. It is apparent that the post test scores for paragraph-writing in the intervention group was higher (Mean =11.14, S.D.= 4.975), compared to the non-intervention group (Mean = 6.93, S.D.= 1.817). When tested for equality of variances using Levene's test, the test was significant (p=0.001), with unequal variances for the non-intervention and the intervention group (Meier, Brudney & Bohte, 2009).

Table 1: Independent-samples *t*-test for pretest and post test scores between two groups

Outcomes	Non-intervention		Intervention		Mean Diff.	n	95% CI of the Difference	p	t	df	Cohen's d
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.							
Pre-test	7.14	2.07	9.00	4.076	1.857	14	.698, 4.412	0.145	1.52	19.288	−
Post-test	6.93	1.817	11.14	4.975	4.214	14	1.220, 7.209	0.009	2.977	16.409	1.239

*p 0.05

The findings also indicate that there was a significant difference in the post-test scores between both groups, where t(16.409) =2.977, p <.009. The absolute value of Cohen's d is 1.239, indicating large effect sizes. Cohen (1988) defined d as the standardised difference between two group means. The effect sizes are categorised as "small" if the d=0.2, "medium" if the d=0.5 and "large" if the d=0.8. Thus, EPW module seem to be effective in developing paragraph-writing skill of students in the intervention group.

In this study, external validity due to interaction between the students in the intervention and non-intervention group, was reduced with the use of the online platform, "Edmodo", as only the students in the intervention group were provided a password to log-in to access the materials and discussions on the online platform "Edmodo". In addition, the intervention group was informed that they were not to share or discuss their class information and activities with the other group.

The effectiveness of the module is supported with evidence from the focus group interview and the online discussion. Student A said: "This really helped to improve my English writing skill. After this experience, I realized that writing is a very important." The effectiveness was attributed to the online video lessons which enabled better understanding. Student D stated, "I found that I can understand better from the online video lesson than from reading the textbook." This might also be because of the availability of these videos. Student A noted, "The online lessons can be watched anytime and anywhere." The students gained knowledge and skills as evidenced by student C: "We are more aware about grammar, mechanics, types of paragraphs, and other aspects. We are also able to evaluate each others' writing." Student B noted, "Before my experience with the module, I paid little attention to writing in English. I only focus on completing the number of words required to finish a writing assignment." Student C said, "I got the full marks in the English mid-term exam. I attribute this to my learning experience with the PW module." Generally, the students agreed that this module was beneficial and improved their performance.

Hence, it was concluded that the students did improve in their writing and also perceived that FL was effective for learning paragraph writing in ESL.

Students' Satisfaction
Engagement
The students were engaged socially. The students' social interactions had increased as Student C noted "the class is more active and interactive with this method." The social interactions were stimulating and engaging. Student H indicated, "I really consider it as a very exciting and interesting experience." The online video lessons prior to class time may have contributed to the increase in classroom interaction as Student C shares, "I interact more in class because I come to class with background knowledge on the new lesson." The participants felt that they were able to share what they learned from the video lesson better. Student C added "We are more cooperative and we share on the lesson." Student D concluded "I feel that we become closer than before." The researcher

also observed that the students were excited and willing to share their knowledge during class time as compared to the non-intervention group. Hence, there was social engagement with the use of the PW module.

There was cognitive engagement as students responded to the challenges in learning and completed the tasks (Willms, Friesen and Milton, 2009). Student A shared, "My teacher and I were able to detect my weaknesses in the English language. This is a result of having enough class time to work together. Thus, I work hard to overcome my problems." Students were satisfied with their performance in writing at the end of the intervention. Student D stated "I am happy because finally I can write a paragraph in English with minimum mistakes" and Student B, "I am sure now that I can write a complete paragraph with few mistakes." Moreover, observations showed that the students were enthusiastic in responding to teachers' questions during class as they were actively thinking and cognitively engaged when using the module.

The students were behaviourally engaged as they were positive towards using the PW module. They showed more confidence in learning writing. Student B shared, "Before using the module, English was the most difficult subject in school. I don't write because I am weak in English. Now, I am completely changed. I am more confident in using and writing English, even outside school." In addition, Student G reported "Before my experience with the module, English language is very difficult to learn. Now, it's changed." Similarly, student H stated in the online forum "Learning English has becomes much easier." The students were able to take responsibility of their own learning even when the teacher was not available. In her online response, student G stated "Now writing becomes much easier than before, and we are able to assess our own work. Previously, we waited for the teacher's corrections to decide how we performed."

Finally, all participants were positive about having the online lessons as they had built their prior knowledge before class. In addition, they performed better in their learning activities during class time and seemed more confident in learning paragraph-writing.

Interaction
There was teacher-learner interactions. The students believed that their teacher was paying more attention to them with the use of the module. Student D stated "With the module, homework is done in class and we had the chance for the teacher to answer our questions." In the online forum Student G also wrote "It is really a great idea to come the next day to class and do the homework with the help of the teacher and the other students. So, the class time becomes enough for completing our tasks." The students were satisfied by the role played by the teacher during the lesson as compared to the traditional process of delivering lectures had been replaced with more interactive group work and discussions. Student D, said,

> "With the traditional teaching, the teachers explain the lesson in class and then assign homework for us to do at home. Unfortunately, at this point we face many difficulties in doing the homework by ourselves. Moreover, when we come the next day to seek help from the teacher, we are faced with the limited class time. The teacher won't be able to discuss the difficult points with us as she has to start a new lesson."

Hence, this indicates that there was more interaction with the teacher in the classroom as Student C says, they "and work together to complete the tasks."

There was learner-learner interactions as students interacted actively in the classroom, and online (Moore, 1989). However, the researcher observed that there were fewer online interactions as students only answered the teacher's questions directly without any further discussion. This might be due to the language barrier as students lack the communication skill. Despite this, the researcher observed that shy students in class responded to questions in the online forum. This was mentioned by student C, "The shy students in the class also participated in the online discussions."

In conclusion, there was interaction among the students both online and face to face, with more interactions occurring face to face in the classroom.

There was learner-content interaction as students were engaged with the video lessons (Moore, 1989). Students reflected their satisfaction with the videos compared to the textbook. Student D "I can understand better from the online lesson than reading the textbook. The content in the video lessons is totally different from the textbook. The textbook is in black and white, which is very boring. The videos are more interesting."

Students preferred watching the videos created by their class teacher rather than from other sources. Student B said, "One of the videos contains only music and the lesson content. I didn't like it. I like to have the video

lessons explained by our teacher with her voice." In addition, Student A noted "It may be good to watch a lesson delivered by a native speaker, however, I feel it is more suitable if we have it with our teacher's voice."

In general, the students were satisfied as they interacted with the EPW module, with the teacher, and among themselves. Student G responded "I am very satisfied with my learning experience with flipped learning." In addition, Student A suggests, "I would like to continue learning with this method. I really prefer if it can be used in all the other school subjects." Student G also wrote in the online forum "I hope that all the teachers of the other subjects implement this method of teaching."

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The PW module seems to be effective in improving Sudanese students writing. This indicates that FL could have contributed to the improvement in students' achievement (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Pierce & Fox, 2012; Ruddick, 2012). These students, as non-native speakers, improved in their writing with the use of FL (Baranovic, 2013). However, it is not known if there might be other contributory factors besides FL (Clark, 2013).

The students were satisfied with the PW module as they were engaged and were actively interacting (Dziuban, Moskal, and Hartman, 2005). Students were engaged with FL approach. Besides the social engagement which improved the sense of community among the learners, the students were cognitively and behaviourally engaged as they responded to the challenges in the leaning activities (Schwakl, 2013; Taylor & Parsons, 2011). This is consistent with other studies which indicated that FL engaged learners (Pierce & Fox, 2012; Zape et al., 2009).

Student interactions with each other, the teacher and the content had increased with FL (Moore, 1989). This finding was similar to other studies (Snowden 2012; Schwakl, 2013; Torkelson, 2012), and contradicts Strayer's (2007) findings that students are unsettled while doing the activities. This might be due to the structured presentation of content and activities before class in the PW module (Strayer, 2007). In addition, students were more engaged and interacted better when their teachers produced their videos (Torkelson, 2012).

There was more teacher-learner interactions with the FL as the teacher could give more attention to the students and attend to their learning needs (Snowden, 2012). However, some studies indicate that students were not satisfied with teachers' techniques for implementing the FL (Johnson and Renner, 2012). Hence, FL may not be suitable for every student and teacher, in every context. In addition, parents of these students may also need to be convinced that viewing online videos at home could be beneficial for learning.

Hence, further studies is required to investigate whether Sudanese learners in different contexts might find the FL beneficial for learning, and the guidelines and support that are required for teachers to effectively implement the FL approach. Finally, students seemed to prefer the FL approach. Further studies could be done to determine if teachers might use the flipped learning model in teaching other subjects (Pierce & Fox (2012).

There are several limitations in this study and its findings cannot be generalized to all Secondary one students in Sudan. The current study only focused on writing descriptive paragraphs and did not include other communicative skills which may be required for the writing process. In addition, this is an exploratory implementation study with a small sample of students, and was only conducted for a period of one month. The study also did not take into account teachers perceptions, which may be important.

Hence, further studies should be conducted in other Sudanese schools to determine if the FL would have similar results. In addition, the module could be used for teaching other components in ESL, and conducted in other countries like Malaysia, to determine if it was effective. A more rigorous study with a larger sample could be used to determine whether FL could be effective for learning ESL writing.

The PW module may be a solution for addressing the issue of a passive learning experience in a traditional teacher-centered approach in learning paragraph writing among ESL learners as it seems to be effective in improving student writing proficiency, as well as satisfaction.

REFERENCES
Adas, D. & Bakir, A. (2013). Writing difficulties and new solutions: Blended learning as an approach to improve writing abilities. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 3*(9), 254 - 266.

Alhaj, M. D. (2005). The Problem of Fluency in Spoken English Among Students Majoring in English in Sudanese Universities. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Khartoum, Sudan.

Ali, A. M. (2010). *The Degree of utilization of Educational Technology in Teaching in General and Higher Educational Institutions in Gadarif State, Sudan.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Khartoum, Sudan.

Al-Khasawneh, F. M. (2010). Writing for academic purposes: problems faced by Arab postgraduate students of the College of Business. *ESP World, 9*(2), 1-23.

Almusharaf, M. M. & Hassan, H. I. (2012). The basics of designing e-curriculum for Sudanese secondary schools. *Al-Gazira Journal of Education and Humanities, 9*(2).

Alwasilah, A. C. (2006). From local to global: reinventing local literature through English writing classes. *TEFLIN (The Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language in Indonesia) Journal, 17*(1), 11-24.

Arora, G. L. (2003). *Sudan basic education sub-sector study: Analysis of curriculum and suggestions for national curriculum framework.* Khartoum, Sudan: UNESCO.

Baffoka, M. B. (2012). Changing teachers' views about teaching and learning: A pre-requisite for improving ELT and student proficiency in English in Sudanese universities. *Time for Change: Developing English Language Teaching at Tertiary Level in Sudan*, 53-61.

Baranovic, K. (2013). *Flipping the first-year compostion classroom: slouching toward the pedagogically hip.* (Unpublished master thesis). Southeast Missouri State University, Missouri.

Bedri, A. (2012). Summer pre-sessional courses at Ahfad University for Women (Khartoum, Sudan). *Time for change: Developing English Language Teaching at Tertiary Level in Sudan* (pp. 16-20). Khartoum: Garnet Education.

Bergmann, J. & Sams A. (2012). *Flip Your Classroom: Talk to Every Student in Every Class Every Day.* Alexandria, VA: ISTE and Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Clark, K. R. (2013). *Examining the effects of the flipped model of instruction on srudent engagement and performance in the secondary mathematics classroom: An action research study.* (Published doctoral dissertation). Capella University Minneapolis.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.

Cronje, J. C. (2006). Pretoria to Khartoum: How we taught an internet-based Masters' programme across national, religious, cultural and linguistic barriers. *Educational Technology and Society, 9*(1), 276-288.

Dewitt, D. (2010). *Development of a collaborative mlearning module on nutrition for Form 2 students.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Malaya, Malaysia.

DeWitt, D., Alias, N., Chin, H. L., & Naimie, Z. (2013). Content Analysis. In S. Siraj, N. Alias, D. DeWitt & Z. Hussin, *Design and Developmental Research: Emergent Trends in Educational Research* (pp. 38-49). Kuala Lumpur: Pearson Malaysia.

DeWitt, D., Alias, N., Siraj, S. (2014). The design and development of a Collaborative mLearning prototype for Malaysian secondary school science. *Educational Technology Research and Development, 62*(4), 461-480.

Dziuban, C., Moskal, P. & Hartman, J. (2005). Higher education, blended learning and the generations: Knowledge is power-no more. In J. B. Moore, *Elements of quality online education: Engaging communities* (pp. 85-100). Needham: MA: Sloan Consortium.

Ellis, C. A., Gibbs, S. J. & Rein, G. (1991). Groupware: some issues and experiences. *Communications of the ACM, 34*(1), 39-58.

Ellis, R., Taylor, C., & Drury, H. (2005). Evaluating writing instruction through an investigation of students' experiences of learning through writing. *Instructional Science, 33*(1), 49-71.

Ferris, D. R. (2004). The "Grammar Correction" debate in L2 writing: Where are we, and where do we go from here? (and what do we do in the meantime...?). *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*(1), 49-62.

Flumerfelt, S., & Green, G. (2013). Using lean in the flipped classroom for at risk students. *Educational Technology & Society, 16* (1), 356–366.

Fu, J. S. (2013). ICT in education: a critical literature review and its implications. *International Journal of Education and Development using Information Communication Technology (IJEDICT), 9*(1), 112-125.

Keshta, A. S. & Harb, I. I. (2013). The effectiveness of a blended learning program on developing Palestinian tenth graders' English writing skills. *Education Journal, 2*(6), 208 - 221

Hajana, O. H. (2006). *The relationship between grammatical competence and writing quality.* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Khartoum, Sudan.

Johnson, L. W., & Renner, J. D. (2012). *Effect of the flipped classroom model on a secondary computer applications course: student and teacher perceptions, questions and student achievement.* (Doctoral dissertation). University of Louisville, Kentucky.

Keshta, A. S. & Harb, I. I. (2013). The effectiveness of a blended learning program on developing Palestinian tenth graders' English writing skills. *Education Journal, 2*(6), 208-221.

Krause, K. (2001). The university essay writing experience: A pathway for academic integration during transition. *Higher Education Research & Development, 20*(2), 147-168.

Love, B., Hodge, A., Grandgenett, N., & Swift, A. W. (2013). Student learning and perceptions in a flipped linear algebra course. *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology*, 1-8.

Mack, L. (2012). Towards ELT-based co-operation between tertiary-level institutes and employers. *Time for Change: Developing English Language Teaching at Tertiary Level in Sudan*, 26-31.

Maclellan, E. (2004). How reflective is the academic essay? *Studies in Higher Education, 29*(1), 75-89.

Makki, F. A. (2005). *An error analysis study on expressive literary writing of Sudanese secondary students in Khartoum State.* (Unpublished master's thesis). University of Khartoum, Sudan.

Manchón, R. & Roca de Larios, J. (2007). Writing-to-learn in instructed language learning contexts. In E. A. Jorda, *Intercultural language use and language learning* (pp. 101-121). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

Marsh, D. (2012). *Blended Learning: Creating Learning Opportunities for Language Learners.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

McKay, S. L. (2005). Teaching the pragmatics of English as an International Language. *Guidelines, 27*(1), 3-9.

Meier, K. J., Brudney, J. L., & Bohte, J. (2009). Applied Statistics for Public and Nonprofit Administration. 7th Ed. New York: Wadsworth Cengage Learning

Milman, N. B. (2012). The flipped classroom strategy: What is it and how can it best be used. *Distance Learning*, 85-87.

Minister of Education (2012). *English Language Curriculum Reform Programme.* Ministry of Eduaction, Sudan. Retrieved from: http://www.moe.gov.sd/

Mohammed, M. Y. (1999). *Paragraph writing awareness among sudanese preliminary students: The case of the medical students post arabicisation.* (Unpublished Master's Thesis), University of Khartoum, Sudan.

Moore, M. (1989). Three types of interaction. *American Journal of Distance Education, 3*(2), 1-6.

Moore, M. G. (2013). *Handbook of Distance Education* (3rd ed.). USA: Edwards Brothers, Inc.

Morris, L. & Cobb, T. (2003, May 7). *Vocabulary profiles as predictors of the academic performance of teaching English as a second language.* Retrieved from www.elsevier.com/locate/system: http://www.lextutor.ca/cv/vp_predictor.pdf

Motteram, G. & Sharma, P. (2009). Blending learning in a web 2.0 world. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies & Society, 7*(2), 83-96.

Munhal, E. A. (2009). *An Evaluation of Techniques and Strategies Adopted by BNS Secondary School Teachers to Develop Their Students' Oral Fluency in English Language.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation) University of Khartoum, Sudan.

Nassaji, H. & Fotos, S. (2004). Current developments in research on the teaching of grammar. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics, 24*(1), 126-145.

Nur, H. S. (2012). Time for change: Developing English Language teaching at tertiary level in Sudan. *Time for change: Developing English Language Teaching at Tertiary Level in Sudan* (pp. 9-11). Khartoum: Garnet Education.

Philips, T. (2012). What English do university students really need? *Time for change: Developing English Language Teaching at Tertiary Level in Sudan* (pp. 32-34). Khartoum: Garnet Education.

Pierce, R. (2013). Student performance in a flipped class module. *Society for Information Technology & Teacher Education International Conference* (pp. 942-954). Chesapeake: VA: AACE.

Pierce, R., & Fox, J. (2012). Vodcasts and active-learning exercises in a "flipped classroom" model of a renal pharmacotherapy module. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 76*(10).

Rabab'ah, G. (2003). Communicating problems facing Arab learners of English. *Journal of Language and Learning, 3*(1), 180-197.

Reeve, J. (2013). How students create motivationally supportive learning environments for themselves. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 105*(3), 579.

Reid, J. M. (1993). *Teaching ESL Writing.* Englewood Cliffs: Regents/Prentice Hall.

Roblyer, M. D. & Doering A. H. (2013). *Integrating educational technology into teaching.* U.S.A.: Pearson Education Inc.

Rogers, P. L. (2002). *Designing instruction for technology-enhanced learning.* U. K.: Idea Group Publishing.

Ruddick, K. W. (2012). *Improving chemical education from high school to college using a more hands-on approach.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Memphis).

Saeed, S. A. (2012, April 28). *English Language Curriculum Reform Project.* Retrieved May 6, 2013, from Ministry of Education, Sudan: http://www.moe.gov.sd/

Sarwar, Z. (2000). Project-based Learning. In L. T. Diaz-Rico, *Strategies for Teaching English Learners* (2nd ed., pp. 393-394). USA: Pearson Education, Inc.

Secondary Education Curriculum. (2014). Retrieved March 6, 2014, from National Center for Curriculum and Educational Research: http://www.nccer.edu.sd/rscmarticle.html?rscmid=35

Secretariat of Sudanese working, a. (n.d.). *The Sudanese schools.* Retrieved February 10, 2014, from Secretariat of Sudanese working abroad:
http://www.sswa.sd/ar/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=245&Itemid=239

Seliger, H. W. & Shohamy, E. (2000). *Second Language Research Methods.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Snowden, K. (2012). *Teacher Perceptions on the Flipped Classroom: Using Video Lectures Online to Replace In-class Traditional Lectures.* (Published master dissertation, University of North Texas).

Strayer, J. F. (2007). *The effects of the classroom flip on learning environment: A comparison of learning activity in a traditional classroom an a flip classroom that used an intelligent tutoring system.* (Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University).

Taylor, L. & Parsons, J. (2011). Improving student engagement. *Current Issues in Education, 14*(1), 1-32.

Torkelson, v. (2012). *The Flipped Classroom: Putting Learning Back int the Hands of Students.* (Publshed master dissertation, Saint Mary College of California).

Willms, J. D., Friesen, S., & Milton, P. (2009). *What did you do in school today? Transforming classrooms through social, academic and intellectual engagement (Firat National Report).* Toronto: Canadian Education Association.

Yong, T. J. (2012). English for the workplace: Giving students language skills for future employment. *Time for Change: Developing English Language Teaching at Tertiary Level in Sudan* (pp. 62-65). Khartoum: Garnet Education.

Zappe, S., Leicht, R., Messner, J., Litzinger, T., & Lee, H. (2009). Flipping the classroom to explore active learning in a large undergraduate course. *Proceedings of the 2009 American Society for Engineering Education Annual Conference and Exbition.*