



Sudan University for Science & Technology

College of Graduate Studies

College of Languages



**Investigating Mechanical Writing Problems Among English
Language Learners' at Khartoum State**

A Case Study of Basic Schools

**دراسة مشكلات الكتابة الميكانيكية بين طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية في
ولاية الخرطوم**

دراسة حالة مدرسة أساس

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family.

Acknowledgements

First, I thank Allah the Almighty for giving me all the help and determination to complete my thesis. I am also thankful for my Supervisor, Dr. Ayman Hamad Alneel for the expert advice and guidance he was giving me throughout this study. My words of thanks are also to the administration of Sudan University of Science and Technology (SUST) for kindly availing the opportunity to pursue my higher education. Special words of gratitude are also due to the teachers and students at Zaid bin Thabit Basic School who helped me to carry out the test prepared to collect data for this study. My final affectionate acknowledgements are to my family for their exceptional assistance, patience, and encouragement without which it could have been much more difficult for me to achieve this work.

Abstract

This study aims to investigate mechanical writing problems of EFL learners at the basic level. The study also investigates the factors behind the common errors that basic students have with mechanical writing. In order to collect the research data, a test was prepared. The results of the test proved that EFL learners had some mechanical writing problems. The test results showed that the cause of mechanical writing problems refer to syllabus itself and ways that are taught were not effective and that the syllabus does not provide enough exercises on Mechanical writing. The study also found that some teachers did not give the ample time for practicing the mechanical writing skills and that teaching activities on mechanical writing were not enough to enable the EFL students to develop their writing skill in spelling, capitalization and punctuation. Finally, this study recommends that the letters s, p, and c should be taught through contexts. It also recommends that the students must be made aware that these letters represent a significant part of their mechanical problems. The EFL learners should be provided with effective syllabuses that cover the problematic areas basic level students have with these letters. EFL Teachers should motivate the students to take part in extensive reading to solve their problems with the letters s, p, and c in English language.

مستخلص البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة لمعرفة ميكانيكية الكتابة لدى دارسي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية. كما تهدف إلى التعرف على العوامل التي تتسبب في الأخطاء الشائعة بين طلاب مرحلة الأساس في الكتابة. ولجمع المعلومات، تم اعداد اختبار لمعرفة مشاكل الكتابة الميكانيكية في الإملاء والترقيم والتهجى في اللغة الإنجليزية. أظهرت نتيجة الإختبار أن سبب مشاكل الكتابة الميكانيكية تعود إلى المنهج نفسه وطرق تدريسه التي تعتبر غير فاعلة. كما أظهرت أن المنهج لا يقدم تمارين كافية حول الكتابة الميكانيكية. وأظهرت الدراسة أيضاً أن بعض المدرسين لا يعطون الاهتمام الكافي لممارسة ميكانيكية الكتابة وأن الأنشطة التدريسية للكتابة الميكانيكية غير كافية لتمكين طلاب الإنجليزية في مرحلة الأساس من تطوير مهارة الكتابة الميكانيكية في التهجى واستخدام الحرف الغليظ وعلامات الترقيم. وأخيراً، أوصت الدراسة بضرورة تدريس الأحرف s, p, c في المضمون النصي، كما أوصت بضرورة تفهيم طلاب الأساس هذه الأحرف تمثل جزءاً كبيراً في إشكالات الكتابة الميكانيكية لديهم. توصلت الدراسة أيضاً إلى ضرورة تقديم مناهج فاعلة لتدريس اللغة الإنجليزية بحيث تغطي على إشكالات طلاب مرحلة الأساس مع هذه الأحرف. كما أوصت مدرسي اللغة الإنجليزية بضرورة تشجيع الدارسين للمشاركة في القراءة المكثفة حتى يتمكنوا من حل إشكالاتهم مع أحرف في الإنجليزية.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Chapter one

Introduction

1.0 Background

The mechanical writing problems represent a challenge for learners of English as a second language. Beginning learners of English, in particular, exhibit exceedingly many of these problems. These mechanical writing problems involve spelling capitalization and punctuation which represent a challenge for basic school students learning English as a second language. Khansir (2003) stated that mechanical writing problems are quite common among the learners of English as a second language. The problems related to writing accurate spelling by students who are learning English as a second language are diverse. As for the spelling problems, Al-zuoud (2013) mentioned that writing accurate spelling adds to the quality of overall writing texts by arousing the readers' interest in the text. Al-zuoud classified these spelling mistakes into four types: (1) insertion (2) substitution (3) omission and (4) transposition. Students of English language in basic schools, in particular, have a lot of problems in these areas. Pikulski (2004) clearly show that school EFL programs do not consider spelling problems to help students to solve their writing difficulties. This study investigates the spelling mistakes made by sixth Grade students of who are learning English as a second language.

Concerning capitalization and punctuation problems among ESL learners, Al-Buainain (2006) declared that students are weak in writing mechanics as their written texts involve a lot of punctuation errors. Beginning learners of English, in particular, exhibit exceedingly many of these problems abilities involve the learner's capability to write a word correctly.

The role teachers can play to solve students' mechanical writing problems with regard to spelling, punctuation, and capitalization should not be ignored. Teachers' strategies to develop their lesson plans should focus on the activities that help students to write correctly. The teachers' use of spelling and punctuation strategies for these beginning learners should largely focus on helping their students to be good at writing skills in these three areas. Such strategies might consist of doing more practices in spelling, punctuation and capitalization to get a better understanding of related writing rules. This investigation is a case study of Zaid bin Thabit Quranic School, which is a basic school located in Khartoum. The study attempts to investigate the writing problems basic school students face with regard to spelling, punctuation and capitalization.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

This study investigated the writing problems that are common among beginning learners of English as a second language in Khartoum State. Accordingly, the written texts of these EFL students were considered. The spelling errors as well as punctuation errors all constituted a very important part of this study. To state the problem of the study precisely, the mechanical writing problems of basic school students were specifically investigated. Aspects related to mechanical writing are quite obvious among learners of English as a second language. These writing problems may be specifically classified into spelling, punctuation and capitalization errors. Basic School learners' understanding of writing rules related to spelling, punctuation and capitalization is not adequately practice to help learners write correctly.

Problems faced in these areas are so many:

- 1- Some pupils are not aware of correct spelling errors.
- 2- Most of them could not apply capitalization rules in their writing.
- 3- Although most of the pupils writing have many punctuation errors.

1.2 Questions of the Study:

For investigating the problem of this study, the researcher attempts to provide answers for the following questions: -

1. To what extent are Sudanese basic school students aware of correct spelling errors?
2. What is the extent to which the writing of basic school students is free from punctuation errors?
3. To what extent can Sudanese basic school implement capitalization rules in their writing?

1.3 Hypotheses the Study:

The hypotheses, which the study will seek to test, are stated as follows:

1. Sudanese basic school students are not aware of correct spelling errors
2. The writing of basic school students consists of many punctuation errors.
3. Sudanese basic school can implement capitalization rules accurately in their writing.

As the teacher of English language for a number of years, the researcher comes across some areas of difficulties that the pupils faced in using correct spelling, capitalization and punctuation at Zaid bin Thabit Quranic School. As foreign language, thus the researcher is trying to contribute in finding solution to some problems.

1.4 The Objectives of the study:

The researcher intends to investigate the following problems:

- 1- Identify the problems that encounter some pupils in writing.
- 2- As for spelling mistakes the researcher intends to present spelling strategies to the school Children to help them write correctly.
- 3- To enable pupils to practice more reading in order to make their writing good.
- 4- Help the pupils to use the correct punctuation when writing sentences or paragraph.
- 5- Provide the pupils with some techniques of writing.

1.5 Significance of the Study:

The ideology for the importance of investigating the rules of mechanical writing has been stated by many concerned EFL teachers. Mohammad and Hazarika (2016) argued that EFL students face many problems when they come to impede the writing rules. The rules that these two researchers addressed in their research were related to capitalization, punctuation, spelling, etc. The same issues have been raised by Khan (2011) who stated that the writing problems were so many but he also referred to the most challenging as phoneme clusters, spellings.

This study is a significant attempt in promoting the implementation of writing rules of spelling, punctuation and capitalization among basic school students who are learning English as a second language. It was also beneficial to the students and EFL teachers as well to help them engage in useful class and home tutorials that can help them write correctly. Moreover, this research provided recommendations on how to teach the spelling and punctuation rules to beginning

learners. From the perspective of students, the learners who participated in the study as test takers also benefited from this study by understanding a great deal about punctuation and spelling rules.

The importance of this study could be expressed through the fact that these pupils will.

1. To help learners to become good writers of English sentences and paragraphs in the future .
2. To promote the writing skill of basic school students to produce high quality writing such as essay, reports and letters.

1.6 The Scope of the Study:

This study was conducted at Zaid bin Thabit Quranic School who participated by taking a test on paragraph writing. These pupils were all at grade 7. The school has one branch with 8 classes. The teaching of English language starts at level 5 to help students understand the alphabets before they are presented with basic vocabulary items in levels 5 and 6. English is taught for 3 periods every week and each period lasts 45 minutes. There are about 400 students at this school. The age group of the students at grade 7 ranges between 11 and 13 years of age. Almost all students at this school are from Sudan.

1.7 Methodology:

The methodology of this research applies test-taking to collect data from the subjects of the study. The test was given to level 7 students who all took part in this test by writing a paragraph that was required to be correct in terms of spelling, capitalization and punctuation.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the test results.

1.8 Limits of the studies:

Most previous study researches were concentrated mainly on spelling, punctuation that is why the present study will cover the mechanical problems that hinder Sudanese basic student in writing paragraphs essays or report.

The data necessary to conduct the study will be collected from enrolled students in the from basic school specially grade seventh students of Zaid Ibn Thabit Quranic school in the academic year 2016.

1.9 Definitions of Terms:

Because of their significance for this study, the following terms were frequently used in this study: -

1.9.1 Zaid bin Thabit Quranic Basic School:

This is a basic school located in Khartoum State. It was established in 1988 to educate both boys and girls. The school consists of 8 classes.

1.9.2 Cohesion means "holding together "or "linking" the different parts not only of the sentence but also of the whole message.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review and Previous Studies

Chapter two

Literature Review and Previous studies

2.0 Introduction:

This chapter consists of two parts. The first one deals with the review of some literature related to the study, while the second one deals with some previous studies related to the field of the study. The chapter reviews the literature as followed:

2.1 Definition of Writing as General:

In general writing has been defined both formally and functionally. It is defined formally to show its physical representation as the recording of human communication using signs or symbol to represent the spoken word (McMillan) Encyclopedia, 1986:1517) this definition manifests writing as only visible representation of human language. The functional definition of writing sets up writing as communicative event. Peter (1986:169) for example, views writing as a curiously solitary form of communication addressing an absent and often unknown reader. Similarly, Coner (1996:71) maintains that “writing is an opportunity to explore one’s thinking” spoken form can also be described as a form of writing if the speaker is using a script.

Generally speaking, in order to be involved in the field of writing skills, EFL learners have to have mastery of the basic language skills (reading ,writing ,speaking and listening). If the learner masters these skills, he/she will be able to use this knowledge in different communicative tasks including writing.

Kroll (1990:22) argues that language users are often involved in using a combination of skills. A participant in a conversation, for example, is involved in

the conversation with both the speaking and the listening skills. Kroll states that if we seriously consider the writing skills, we can identify a great number of sub-skills which will help not only the writer but also the speaker.

According to Hammer (2001:16), it is the teachers responsibility to ensure that all the four language skills are practiced in the classroom. It can be highly claimed that the focus on the four skills lead to further practice in other language skills. The principle of integration of the fours skills is, therefore, thought to be important.

2.2 Writing Style:

ALSamani (2007:25) states that there are three kinds of writing, (1) formal writing, (2) informal writing and (3) colloquial writing. Formal writing, according to ALSamani, is often used in textbooks, magazines, and the like while informal writing is used for ordinary everyday familiar writing. As for colloquial writing, he heavily argues that it is just a form of every speech.

2.3 Purposes of Writing:

Before writers are engaged in writing, it is important that they know what type of writing they intend to carry out. One reason for that is that the purpose of writing determines the type of writing and its content. A writer who intends to narrate a story, for example, does not use the same type of writing that is used by a writer who intends to describe someone or something. These two writing purposes (i.e. description and narration) may, however, overlap with each other. Below is a brief description about these two writing purposes.

2.3.1 Description:

The US annotated packet for grade 7 writing curriculum states that writing for description purposes may consist of describing people, places, objects, or events using suitable descriptive details. This curricular guide further state that an effective description should contain “sufficient and varied elaboration of details to communicate a sense of the subject being described”. Accordingly, the descriptive specifics that writers can use when describing a person, an object or an event, often consists of what the sensory inputs tells them through their sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste.

2.3.2 Narration:

Brazos (2015) affirmed that one of the main purposes in writing stories is to persuade readers through meaningful description of the events of the story so that they can understand and enjoy it. So another writing purpose is writing with the objective of narrating a story. Newman (1995) argues that the structure of the story is follows a different pattern from a regular argumentative writing. Accordingly, these two writing purposes cannot be the same. One way in which the two writing purposes may overlap, however, is that writing for a narrative purpose also requires an actual description of what is going on in a play, which entails that description key role in telling a story since the descriptive details allow the reader to visualize the story.

2.3.3 Exposition:

Another writing purpose is to writing for exposition reasons. To expose is simply to explain something in details sometimes by giving illustration, directions, etc. Exposition covers a lot of writing, and writers use many patterns to develop their exposition paragraphs. The reading Language curriculum for California public

schools (1997) state that expository texts involve a wide range of classic and contemporary literature such as magazines, newspapers, online information and the like.

2.3.4 Persuasion:

Texts can also be written for the purpose of persuading the reader. Clay (1979, 1993) stated that beginning writers, especially children, try to relate their experiences in writing using “invented spelling”. So as they begin to write short stories, they develop new language patterns even though they sometimes explore the spelling pattern of the words.

Whatever the writing purpose is, a text should be accurately written in terms of the considerations set forth by Al-zuoud (2013) in terms of insertion, substitution, omission and transposition which are important spelling matters.

It is also important to notice that a good deal of writing in the English language classroom is undertaken as an aid to learning, for example, to consolidate the learning of new structures or vocabulary or to help students remember new items of language. In this context, the role of writing is a bit different from its role in any other subject, it allows students to see how they are progressing and to get feedback from the teacher, and it allows teacher to monitor and diagnose problems. Much of this writing is at the sentence level. Ron White (1990) refers to this task as "sentence level reinforcement exercise".

Even though successful writing requires more than the ability to produce clear and correct sentences, it is extremely essential that the all sorts of texts should have correctly spelled sentences and paragraphs.

All writing tasks in the classroom, therefore, should involve clear goals of writing accurately spelled and punctuated sentences and paragraphs.

Despite the purpose the students have in their minds when starting to write a text, the English language teacher has a very important role to play in the classroom to help the learners to write accurately. Fillmore & Snow (2000) believe that teachers play an important role in supporting their students to write accurately. When teaching children to read and write in school, teachers have to help them engage in activities that may ensure real classroom learning. This entails that teachers should design the classroom environment in a way that can maximize language-learning.

All tasks presented by the teacher should help students solve their writing difficulties with spelling and other writing aspects such as punctuation and sentence cohesion. It is the language teachers' role to solve students' problems in these areas.

2.4 Aspects of Writing:

Writing is skill through which we convey ideas, give instructions, set out legal agreements, etc. Like other skills, it has to be learnt. When learning how to write, many aspects have to be considered.

Some the writing aspects that can help students master the rules of mechanical writing consist of learning about sentence cohesion, sentence clarity and mastering functional phrases which helps learners to write automatically without mistakes. Below is a short description of each.

2.4.1 Functional Phrases:

Every language has special phrases which can be used for a particular purpose. Accordingly if a writer is writing a text like a letter, it is usually good to start by referring to a previous letter, further assistance, or the like. Likewise, there are special phrases writers can use at the end of your letter. One example is : " if you

have any further questions”, “please do not hesitate to contact us” and the like. Letters may also include recommendation to the recipient.

When writer include these phrases in their letters, it is important that these special phrases are accurately used and written because these functional phrases act as signals to the reader and make the written message clearer to the reader.

2.4.2 Sentence clarity:

Sentence simplicity and clarity are important considerations to put in mind when writing to an unknown reader. Since it is sometimes difficult to write in a foreign language, an important rule is that the writer should limit the amount of technical jargons. The common rule here is to keep the style as simple as possible so that the readers will not have any difficulty understanding the message.

2.4.3 Sentence Cohesion:

Cohesion means "holding together "or "linking" the different parts not only of the sentence but also of the whole message. It is important to ensure that the sections of the text are connected and linked with each other. One way to do this is to use the linking words in sentences and paragraphs. These linking words are grammatically referred to as connections, conjunctions, coordinators or connectors.

2.4.5 Organization:

All written documents need to be well organized. This means that they should be properly structured with idea presented in a logical sequence. Paragraphs should also be in a logical order and should be connected to the each other. Long texts should have headings or sub-heading. The layout of the text is also importance. Even though the layout differs from a language to another, there is convention among text writers about the layout of the various texts whether they are letters or reports.

2.4.6 Punctuation:

Definition of punctuation:

There are several definitions for the word punctuation, and the most important one is that of Launch man (2010)

He defines punctuation marks as follows:

"A code using in writing that is often necessary for meaning and for emphasis the code originated in attempts to capture, in text the various stops, pauses, and inflections of speech. Today it is logical in application. Both writers and readers need to understand it and pay attention to it"

Mallett (2008, p.262) states that " punctuation refers to marks which serve as boundary markers in writing and which contribute to making meaning clear".

Punctuation also means making boundaries and relationship between different part of a written texts, it creates coherence in the long piece of writing by assisting the reader in seeing the grammatical structure of

The sentences for instance, commas, colon and semi colon indicate the clause and phrase structure within the sentence. Signal to the reader how a piece of writing can

Be read aloud by using such marks as exclamation marks, and quotation marks.

The function of punctuation is to help make clear the meaning of printed or written language. Robert F, Will son, JR (1980,P.279) state that. To some degree punctuation symbolize the pause in oral speech, but it does so crudely and artificially it is still to read a sentence will attention to its meaning, and punctuate the pauses you hear in your own voice. But correct punctuation has also come to reflect the grammatical structures of sentences, as well as the particular convention of age, therefore, a comma does not always a

Drop or pause in the speaking voice, and the various mark of punctuation do not consistently distinguish among the various subtle drops that our voices so naturally perform, like most other conventional patterns of behavior.

The practice of writers has been codified into a number of rules or principles of punctuation. These rules or principles govern a very lay number of typical situation in writing. Punctuation, then is more than a series of rules : it offer one more way of clarifying expression, even in the many situations where one has a choice – for example to include a comma or leave it out.

Punctuations show the construction of a sentence. In fact, they help the reader to read the sentences smoothly and make the meaning clear. Every sentence should include at least a capital letter at the start, and a full stop, exclamation mark or question mark at the end. Without this basic system, the sentence is incomplete and inappropriate.

2.4.7 The basic marks of punctuation:

- The comma,
- The full stop.
- The exclamation mark !
- The question mark ?
- The semi colon ;
- The colon :
- The apostrophe
- Quotation marks " "
- hyphen -
- Brackets () or []
- The slash /

Comma,:

Using comma effectively can be quite difficult, students often feel confused about where to put commas, in that writing, one of the reason for this is that convention for their use depending on the writer and the context.

Example

So she set to work, and very soon finished of the cake.

Full stop:

Full stops signal the end of the sentence, they indicate that the writer has completed one complete thought or idea. A full stop can come at the end of a simple or a complex sentence.

Example:

Emily finished her book.

The exclamation mark:

An exclamation mark is usually used after an expression that indicates strong feeling or emotion.

Example:

Oh, this is impardonable !

The question mark:

A question mark is used after a direct question but not after an indirect question.

Example:

What will I do if my brother is there?

The semi colon:

A semi colon is used between the main clauses of compound sentence when they are not joined by one of the coordinating conjunctions.

Example:

Robert Gorham states that the humanist dismisses what he dislike calling it romamtic ; the liberal lay calling it fascist ; the convervative , by calling it communistic.

Apostrophe:

The apostrophe, sometimes called an inverted has two main uses.

The apostrophe indicates possession or ownership.

For example: the girl's dress was red.

Another use of the apostrophe is to indicate where the letter is omitted: For example :We 're going to read a book.

Quotation or speech marks ("")

Quotation or speech marks are used to :

1-To mark out speech.

2-When quoting someone else's speech

Double quotation marks are used to enclose a direct quotation in dialogue and in reproducing short passage from other writers.

Example:

"I have no relish for the country" , says Sydney Smith. "It is a kind of a healthy grave".

Hyphen (-)

The hyphen is used to link words together

For example

- sub-part
- week-end
- gender-neutral
- second-class post
- non-verbal

Brackets [.....]

Brackets always come in pairs () and are used to make an a side, or a point which is not part of the main flow of a sentence. If you remove the words between the brackets, the sentence should still make sense.

Slash (/)

Many people use the slash instead of *or* and *etc* .There is, however a modern convention in gender-neutral writing to use "s/he".

Slashes are important symbol in web-addresses (URLs).

2.5 The Process of Writing:

The writing process is a term used in teaching. In 1972 Donald M. Murray published a brief manifesto titled "Teach writing as process Not Product "a phrase which became a rallying cry for many

Writing teachers. Ten years later ,in 1982, Maxine Harison argued that the teaching of writing had undergone "paradigm shift in moving from a focus on written products to writing process".

For many years, it was assumed that the writing process generally operated in some variation of three to five "stages". It is known as recursive process.

2.5.1 Prewriting :

1-Prewriting involves all the activities the writer does before he/she starts to write a draft of the document. It includes thinking, taking-notes, talking to others, brainstorming, outlining and gathering information.

2-Although prewriting is the first activity you engage in, generating ideas is an activity that occurs throughout the writing process.

2.5.2 Drafting :

1- Drafting occurs when writers put ideas into sentences and paragraphs. Here they concentrate upon fully explaining and supporting their ideas. Here they can also begin to connect your ideas. The processes of thinking and planning by writers often change continuously. the words they select usually suggest additional ideas and implications.

Text writers are advised not to pay attention to such thing as spelling at this stage.

3-The stage of drafting tends to be writer's-centered, as the writer is telling himself and what s/he knows and thinks about the topic.

2.5.3 Revising:

1-Revision is key to effective documents. Here the writer of the text thinks more deeply about the readers' needs and expectations. The document becomes reader-centered. How much support will each idea need to convince the readers? Which terms should be defined for these particular readers? Is the organization of the text effective? Do readers need to know X before they can understand Y?

2-At this stage the writer also refines the prose, makes each sentence as concise and accurate as possible. Connections between ideas is also made explicit and clear.

2.5.4 Editing :

1-Editing means checking for such things as grammar, mechanics and spelling. The last thing the text-writer does before printing the document is to spell-check the text s/he has written.

2- The writer of the text is also advised not to start editing the writing until the other steps in the writing process are complete.

2.6 Functions of Writing:

Speech and writing are communication practices, which are subject to physical conditions of visual and auditory senses as to interpretation of the resulting differences. There are two schools of thought about the functions of writing. Some linguists emphasize the qualitative aspect of the spoken language such as the communicative role that writing allows. There are also some who conceive of writing as a gradual expansion of speech. This group highlight the diversity of written language uses in different socio-cultural setting.

Five function in particular stand out to distinguishing writing from speech:

1-The mnemonic function.

2-The distancing function.

3-The reification function.

4-The social control function.

5-The aesthetic function.

This refers to the amount of information that can be stored by means of writing and retrieved from written records. This clearly excels the capacity of individual remembrance and accumulation of knowledge on a large scale. Individuals with oral capabilities are often said to have a memory that surpasses the memory of the literate people.

2.7 The Importance of Writing:

Writing has many different purposes, these purposes can be classified into different type, according to the kind of study, by different researchers. Here the researcher chooses , Hedge's classification of the purposes of writing into three main types.

1-academic purposes.

2-technical purposes.

3-enemerd purposes.

According to Hedge(1988 p,8) students need to write and to practice various forms and foundation, throughout producing written. They need time in the classroom for writing, the teachers' task is to select or design activities

Which support them through the process of producing a piece of writing. The skills that writer need include:

1-getting the grammar right.

2-having arrange of vocabulary.

3-punctuating meaningful.

4-using the convincing of layout correctly.

5-spelling accurately.

6-using arrange of sentence structures.

7-linking ideas and information across sentences to

Develop a topic.

8-developing and organizing the content clearly and Convincingly.

It is also possible to build up a check list of the form (letters, essays, reports) and the functions (narrative, description, comparison and contrast) of written text and to show students how the feature and organization of these different written products differ from one another. In setting and making work, teachers and students can focus on one or on a number of the general skills, but ideally within the context of a whole text.

2.8 Spelling:

According to Lansbury (1900, cited in Susan (2011) "English spelling is consistent, in consistency" that means our system of spelling is extremely complex, and inconsistent (for one thing the Latin alphabet had fewer letters than English sound). Sounds can be spelt in several ways, letters can represent several sounds, and most spelling "rules" have many exceptions.

AL Zuoud (2013) states that writing accurate spelling adds to the quality of overall writing texts by arousing the readers' interest in the text.

The spelling abilities involve the learner's capability to write a word correctly. Al Zuoud (2013) stated that writing accurate spelling adds to the quality of overall writing texts by arousing the readers' interest

In texts, the problems related to writing and spelling accurately by students who are learning English as a second language are diverse. AL Zuoud classified these spelling mistakes into four types (1) insertion (2) substitution (3) omission (4) transposition.

Students of English language in basic school, in particular

2.8.1 Spelling and pronunciation:

It is very important when learning; spell a word to say it aloud, so that the mind links the sound of the word with the look of the word on paper and the feeling of writing down. Here are some suggestions on how one can make pronunciation help spelling. However, if one comes across a word you are not sure how to spell it, it is often a good idea to break it up into syllables or sounds. A syllable is a part of word pronunciation as a simple sound. It can form a complete word and it usually consists of a vowel sound with or without consonants, when you spell the word up into these separate sounds, and say them slowly and clearly you will often find that you feel more confident about the spelling then right.

2.9 Capitalization:

It is impossible to give rules that will cover every conceivable problem in capitalization, Actually, what is capitalized is mostly a matter of editorial style and preference rather than a matter of generally accept rule. The convention of capitalization, helps both writers and readers recognize the beginning of the sentences and names of the people, places and things (W.Rose& P-Y. Mary, 1985, p.621).In addition, although there is a clearly recognized rule requiring capitalization of proper-nouns and adjectives, opinions differ concerning what a proper-noun is. First we should define term used when discussing capitalization : Full caps means that every letters in an expression is capital LIKE THIS.

Cap & lc mean that the principle words of an expression are capitalized. Like this caps and small caps refer to a particular fant of type containing small capital letters instead of lower case letters- Elements in a document such as headings, title and caption may be capitalized in either.

2.9.1 Summary of Capital Letters Capitalized:

According to (Olson et, all 2004) capitalization as follow

- The first word of a sentence or fragment.
- The name of a day or month.
- The name of a language.
- A word expressing a connection with a place.
- The name of nationality or ethnic group.
- A proper name.
- The name of historical period.
- The name of a holiday.
- A significant religious term.
- The first word, and each significant word, of a title.

- The first word of a direct quotation which is a sentence.
- A brand name.
- A Roman numeral.
- The pronoun I.

2.10 The previous studies:

The following paragraph review previous studies in writing skills, a number of studies have been carried out about writing problems in general among these studies is Siefaddin Bokhari's Study.

2.10.1 Siefaddin Bokhari (2013):

Illustrated Punctuation and Spelling Errors in the Written English composition of Sudanese Secondary schools Students. The tool of the study was the model Secondary school in Khartoum state

The following were the major finding of the study:

Finding:

1-English punctuations are difficult because the syllabus do not make emphasis on teaching them.

2-Spelling is difficult because students are not motivated by their teachers to practice spelling drills.

3-The students make spelling errors because they lack extensive reading and spelling strategies.

4-Punctuation errors occur because they were not given enough time and drills in the class rooms.

5-The students several spelling errors according to mother tongue interference.

In the light of the finding of this research, it might be appropriate to suggest the following recommendation :

1-punctuation and spelling should be taught as part of reading or writing lesson.

2-teachers should motivate the students towards extensive reading for better.

3-spelling and punctuation should be given enough time inside the class room.

4-students should be taught spelling strategies in order to improve spelling skills.

5-there should be emphasis on the exercise of punctuation and spelling.

6- students must be made aware about spelling and punctuation of their problems.

b)-Investigating Writing problems facing Sudanese pupils-A case study of 8th grade basic level pupils.

The tools of data gathering were composition, test and questionnaire, both of them for students so as to identify the area of the problems .So, after computing the data statistically, the researcher carried out the following as main finding:

1-pupils in the basic level are not fully aware of the principle of writing skill clearly.

2-English teachers need more course to improve their teaching.

3-the number of English period are not enough to carry out writing and other communicative tasks.

3-the syllabus in the basic school does not include the English grammatical rules properly.

4-pupils in the basic level are not aware about rules of punctuation mark.

5-pupils also have difficulties in spelling.

6-pupils neglect preposition for example: I get at 6 o'clock, instead to –I get up.

I go school at 7 o'clock – instead I go to.

7-pupils have difficulties in join sentences together to make them very clear (cohesion and coherence).

8-pupils have difficulties in using vocabulary.

For example- I eat milk.

Instead to I drink milk.

2.10.2 Rania Alsir's Study:

Rania Alsir (2012) investigated writing problems facing Sudanese pupils. The population of the study includes two governmental basic schools in district of Khartoum, the population consists of (40) students and (20) teachers .The choice of the sample was done randomly and the investigation involve male and female, their responses exposed the difficulties they had in writing

Through this study the researcher shows the causes of this problems then she suggest some other solution to

Recommendation:

1-introducing material must depend on experienced teachers and new teachers especially in designing the educational books to improve learning English in general and writing skills in particular.

2-teachers at different levels must adopt modern techniques so as to improve the English language and writing skills.

3-the English teachers should be given training courses on the methodology of teaching writing skill.

4-experienced teachers should use their knowledge to show what should be done to develop e writing skill.

There are similarities between this study and the previous ones reported above. First, all researcher from the same environment considers problems that faced basic schools students. Second, some problems are common between most of the previous studies and the correct one such as students make spelling errors because they lack extensive reading.

On the other hand this study differs from the previous ones consider about in that it focuses on mechanical problems.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.0 Introduction:

This chapter specifies the methodology adopted in the present study to achieve its objectives. It describes the method, subject, research tools, validity and reliability to realize these goals.

3.1 Method:

The researcher used the descriptive analytical method to conduct this study. The data in the present study were analyzed by statistical package for social studies (spss)

3.2 Subject of the study:

The population of this studies was the seventh year students of Zaid bin Thabit Quranic Schools , basic schools.

3.3 Research Tools:

The researcher used a test as a tool to collect the data. It was a test of paragraph writing.

3.4 Validity and reliability of the test

To determine the reliability and validity of test that applied to pupils, 10 answer sheets were randomly selected, then the degrees of the pupils were recorded for each of the three dimensions of the test (spelling, punctuation and capitalization) and manipulated using the features of Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS), through Pearson Coefficient Factor Test (for the validity of the test) and Alpha Cronbach's (for the reliability of the test). The following tables illustrate the results of this procedure.

Table (3-1): Validity of the test:

Dimensions	Coefficient factor with Total
Spelling	0.79
Punctuation	0.93
Capitalization	0.91

As shown in Table 1, all the values of Pearson Coefficient Factor between the dimensions and with the total of the test are positive and greater than 0.20, which indicate good validity for all the dimensions of the test for answer the questions of the current study.

Table (3-2): Alpha Cronbach's Test for measuring the reliability of the test:

Dimensions	Cronbach's Alpha based On Standardized items	Cronbach's Alpha (Internal validity)
Spelling	0.84	0.92
Punctuation	0.87	0.93
Capitalization	0.91	0.95

According to findings in Table (2) Alpha reliability factor for spelling dimension = (Cronbach's Alpha based On Standardized items): 0.84, thus Internal validity = (Squire Radical of Alpha reliability factor) = 0.92.

Alpha reliability factor for punctuation dimension = (Cronbach's Alpha based On Standardized items): 0.87, thus Internal validity = (Square Root of Alpha reliability factor) = 0.93.

Alpha reliability factor for capitalization dimension = (Cronbach's Alpha based On Standardized items): 0.91, thus Internal validity = (Square Root of Alpha reliability factor) = 0.95.

As it has been evident from the data above the items of each dimensions of the test has attained high level of reliability and internal validity. Accordingly, it is valid to answer the questions of the current study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Analysis and Discussion of the results

Chapter Four

Data Analysis and Discussion of the results

4-0 Introduction:

This chapter discusses the data which has been collected from the test, the paragraph writing.

4-1 The Result of the Test:

The table below shows the students' performance in a test, it explains the total errors that the students had made in responding to the test, the table also explains the percentile of total errors in it.

4.1.1 Results:

Question (1): To what extent are Sudanese basic school pupils aware of correct spelling errors?

To answer this question, the researcher calculated the parentage of success and failure of the pupils in the dimension, then calculated the means total degree of pupils on the dimension and the following table illustrates the results of this procedure.

Table (4-1): shows the results of pupils in the test to know the extent of Sudanese basic school pupils awareness of correct spelling errors:

Degree	N	%
Failed	16	53.3%
Success	14	46.7%
Total	30	100.0%

The above table shows that the percentage of pupils who reported success in spelling dimension was (46.7%) while the percentage of the pupils who reported

failure in this dimensions was (53.3%), which reflect little awareness among Sudanese basic school pupils about correct spelling.

Table (4-2): One Sample T test to know the mean score of pupils degrees on spelling dimension:

Dimension	N	Mean	SD	Theoretical mean	T value	P value
Spelling	30	4.4	±2.8	5.0	-1.12	0.42

As shown in Table (4) The mean values of pupils degrees on spelling dimension in test was 2.4 ± 2.8 , which is slightly lower that the theoretical mean (5.0 pass degree) indicating that the level of pupils awareness of the correct spelling is low but not significantly lower than the pass degree ($P = 0.42 > 0.05$).

Accordingly, the answer of the first question is that the level of awareness of Sudanese basic school pupils of spelling error is relatively low.

Question (4-3): What is the extent to which the writing of Sudanese basic school pupils free of punctuation errors?

To answer this question, the researcher calculated the parentage of success and failure of the pupils in the dimension, then calculated the means total degree of pupils on the dimension and the following table illustrates the results of this procedure.

Table (4-4): shows the results of pupils in the test to know the extent of Sudanese basic school pupils punctuation errors:

Degree	N	%
Failed	25	83.3%
Success	5	16.7%
Total	30	100.0%

The above table shows that the percentage of pupils who reported success in punctuation dimension was (16.7%) while the percentage of the pupils who reported failure in this dimensions was (83.3%), which reflect many punctuation errors in writing among Sudanese basic school pupils.

Table (4-5): One Sample T test to know the mean score of pupils degrees on spelling dimension:

Dimension	N	Mean	SD	Theoretical mean	T value	P value
Punctuation	30	1.6	±2.9	5.0	-6.4	0.006

As shown in Table (6) The mean values of pupils degrees on punctuation dimension in test was 1.6 ± 2.9 , which is far lower that the theoretical mean (5.0 pass degree) indicating that there is many punctuation errors in writing pupils, significantly lower than the pass degree ($P = 0.006 > 0.05$).

Accordingly, the answer of the second question is that the writing of Sudanese basic school pupils characterized by many punctuation errors.

Question (3): To what extent can Sudanese basic school pupils implement capitalization rules in their writing?

To answer this question, the researcher calculated the parentage of success and failure of the pupils in the dimension, then calculated the means total degree of pupils on the dimension and the following table illustrates the results of this procedure.

Table (4-6): shows the results of pupils in the test to know the extent of Sudanese basic school pupils in writing capitalization rules:

Degree	N	%
Failed	26	86.7%
Success	4	13.3%
Total	30	100.0%

The above table shows that the percentage of pupils who reported success in capitalization rules dimension was (13.3%) while the percentage of the pupils who reported failure in this dimensions was (86.7%), which reflect poor implementation of capitalization rules in writing among Sudanese basic school pupils.

Table (4-7): One Sample T test to know the mean score of pupils degrees on capitalization rules:

Dimension	N	Mean	SD	Theoretical mean	T value	P value
Capitalization	30	1.2	±2.8	5.0	-7.3	0.005

As shown in Table (8) The mean values of pupils degrees on capitalization rules dimension in test was 1.2 ± 2.8 , which is far lower that the theoretical mean (5.0 pass degree) indicating that there is poor implementation if capitalization rules in writing of Sudanese basic school pupils, significantly lower than the pass degree ($P = 0.005 > 0.05$).

Accordingly, the answer of the third question is that there is poor implementation of capitalization rules in writing of Sudanese basic school pupils.

CHAPTER FIVE

**Conclusion, Recommendations and
Suggestion for Further studies**

Chapter five

Conclusion, Recommendations and Suggestion for Further studies

5-0 Introduction:

This chapter summaries the major findings and presents a list of recommendations.

5-1 Summary of Findings:

This study has investigated mechanical writing problems

Among English language learners' at Khartoum state, the tool of this study was a test, paragraph writing test on spelling ,punctuation and capitalization errors. The sample of the study was about thirty female students , the following were the major findings of the study.

5-2 Findings:

1-pupils in the basic level are not aware about rules of punctuation and capitalization.

2-As for spelling, pupils are not motivated by their teachers to practice spelling drills .However, they are not

Concentrated on pupils spelling mistakes.

3-Students make spelling errors because they lack extensive reading and spelling strategies.

4-It has also been found that the writing syllabus must encourage students to spell words and to use punctuation and capitalization correctly.

5-The number of English periods are not enough to carry out writing task and other communicative tasks.

6-English teachers need more courses to improve their teaching.

5.3 Recommendations:

Based on findings above, the following recommendations could be made:

- EFL teachers should be trained to master their roles in the writing classroom to deal with spelling strategies and the rules of punctuation and capitalization.
- Teachers must give students intensive spelling ,punctuation and capitalization practice with meaning full words.
- The design of the syllabus must consider the spelling, punctuation and capitalization rules.
- It is important for teacher to engage students in independent learning and encourage them to pronounce correctly. Referring them to the word etymology and the word morphology is also important for learning how to spell
- Punctuation spelling and capitalization should be taught as part of reading or writing lessons.

Teachers should motivate

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Appendix

Appendix (1)

Paragraph Writing test EntitleMarket

Appendix (2)

Paragraph Writing test about Market