

# Introduction

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0-Background:

The study of writing has become part of the main stream in applied linguistics. Reasons for this change are : the increased need of languages learners to read and write in the target language ; the enhanced interdisciplinary approach to studying second language acquisition through educational ,rhetorical and anthropological methods; and new trends in linguistics(Connor, 1996,p5).

The impact of a target language culture on the learners of English language has long been treated in terms of values, behaviors, attitudes and the sociolinguistic conventions for language use. In other words, target language culture teaching/learning was concerned with the little (c) culture (i.e., the daily life aspects, including the beliefs and values, of a particular group of people) and the big (C) culture (i.e., anything related to literature, fine arts, history, politics, etc.) in addition to the socio cultural context of language production. Nevertheless, there is another dimension of culture that has been neglected until recently manifested in the cross-cultural variation in the use of rhetorical features and stylistic patterns There are two reasons why the specifics of culture influence on writing were disregarded; first, the long dominance of the Audio-lingual Method where language was considered primary in its spoken form and secondary in the written one. Second, the devotion of transfer studies (contrastive analysis, error analysis and interlanguage analysis) to the study of language components in isolation which made them incapable of uncovering the native culture influence on students' target language writing.

Different cultures often have very different modes of organization and other conventions of written discourse .likewise, speakers of different languages relying on their diverse patterns of thought and unique perceptions of the world. For this reason, when relying on their first language writing knowledge, non-native English speakers may use rhetorical conventions and textual features that makes sense in their native language but they are alien to the English writing tradition. While some researchers argue that the writing problems of L2 learners

encounter are attributed to L2 writing difficulties rather than transfer of L1 writing strategies and modes of texts organization.

This present study is aimed at better understanding the differences in such context and to address these differences in writing pedagogy. Although a number of researchers have written and spoken about the writing problems of Arab students in the past, cultural interpretation has not been sufficiently addressed. The purpose of this study is to add to the body of knowledge concerning the influence of Arabic L1 and Muslim culture on L2 English writing. Failure to understand the writing techniques of a foreign language may result in uncontrollable rhetorical overlaps, ambiguity and distortion of the written text. According to Connor(2002:493), for example, maintains the contrastive rhetoric shows that language and writing are cultural phenomena in the sense that each language has its own rhetorical techniques, and linguistics and rhetorical patterns of the L1 interfere with the writing techniques of the L2.

In general, written communication in terms of contrastive rhetoric(CR) has been the focal point of many researchers(Atkinson, 2004; Canagarajah, 2002; Kubota 2004 ,among others) who point out that the analysis of a written text is relatively new research area.It appeared over the past thirty years based on sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, applied linguistics, cognitive psychology and Artificialintelligence research, all of which will pertain to the concept of textual variation which is one of the principal concerns of this study. For the most part, a lot of Sudanese ESL writers, in particular those at university level, lack English writing abilities because their exposure to English Western writing traditions is very limited. Thus, they find themselves faced with English writing problems at different levels such as stating the topic sentences plainly , an expression of the main ideas, evidence to support the main ideas and so on. What they may be good at is grammar-based writing and mostly a sentence-level transfer to English. ESL writers need to be acquainted with the rhetorical techniques that will complement and reinforce these linguistics aspects so as to meet the expectations of the native English speakers

## **1.1 Statement of the research problem:**

The researcher has been an ESL teacher for more than 10 years in Sudanese schools, universities and training centers. In these years of experiences I have observed many problems on the language of ESL Learners, but only one took the researcher attention entirely and repeatedly: the inability of ESL students to respond to questions directly in writing and speaking. For instance, in one of the researcher speaking classes, where learners usually prepare a discussion topic and have the learners to exchange their ideas, opinions on that particular topic. When the discussion starts, most learners start stating their opinion "plainly" in a more Arabic-like style; either they exaggerate the answer or the extend till the answer seems "off-point" and moreover, their use of body language is inappropriate to what they say i.e don't convey any emotions or feelings of what they are saying and more interestingly when they state their opinions they do not provide any explanation, evidence statistics, etc nothing to support their ideas. Sometimes it becomes hard to know what is their opinions and then you have to figure it out from the context. This problem appeared more seriously in the writing of students when the researcher started teaching college composition for college students. Despite the effort in teaching the techniques of writing throughout the semester, the writing of 200 students or more was very disappointing in terms of the effort was made throughout the semester. Except for very few learners, most of the writings was characterized by been very Arabic-like style lacks topic sentences, supporting ideas, no clear argument no coherence ,nor cohesion in paragraphing; two or three ideas exist in a paragraph and regard the other writing details, punctuation, capitalization and more importantly the sense of Sudanese /Arabic style more vividly.

This study investigates some difficulties that Sudanese ESL writers encounters due to differences in writing techniques between English & Arabic .It will explore whether observed students writing performance is attributed to rhetoric variations or not. In other words, the study will examine these students' English writing problems which are believed to be related to a wide range of cross-linguistic and cultural differences at both the paragraph and textual levels. bearing in mind,some attempts need to be made to investigate Sudanese

ESL writers confusion of expository techniques of Arabic with those of written English discourse patterns.

### **1-3 Research objectives:**

This study aims to reach the following objectives:

- 1- To investigate whether the transfer of Arabic rhetorical techniques into English writing have negative impact on Sudanese's EFL students' expository writing.
- 2- To draw attention to the negative impact of L1 rhetorical techniques' transfer among Sudanese ESL students.
- 3- To highlight the importance of cohesive devices in the process of writing.

### **1-4-Research Questions:**

In this study the following research questions are addressed:

- 1-To what extent does the transfer of Arabic rhetorical techniques into English writing have negative impact on Sudanese's EFL students' expository writing performance?
- 2- To what extent does the lack of cohesion devices characterize Sudanese ESL student's expository writing performance?
- 3-To what extent does the lack of coherence devices characterize Sudanese ESL student's expository writing performance.
- 4-To what extent do Sudanese EFL students face logical organization problems in writing?

### **1-5-Research Hypotheses:**

- 1- The transfer of Arabic rhetorical techniques into English writing have a negative impact on Sudanese's ESL students' expository writing performance.

- 2- Lack of cohesion characterizes Sudanese ESL students' writing performance.
- 3- Lack of cohesive devices characterizes Sudanese ESL students' writing performance.
- 4- Sudanese EFL students face logical organization problems in writing.

## **1-6-Research Methodology:**

The researcher will use a descriptive analytic method. The data will be collected through two instruments: Teachers' questionnaire and Students' English expository text which was evaluated by an analytic scoring method. The Subjects consist of One hundred Sudanese ESL teachers and ninety ESL students majoring in English from fifteen English departments of Sudanese Universities.

## **1-7 Significance of the research:**

Although there are many studies in the field of writing ,but there are very few studies that address the problem from intercultural point of view as the present study does. Therefore, its significance comes from the fact that it covers various cross-linguistics and cross cultural factors that influence L2 writing. Also,the study investigates un explored areas in the Sudanese Students weakness in achieving communicative competence in Writing English.

## **1-8- Limitation of the research:**

This study is limited to Sudanese Universities that are located in Khartoum ,Capital of Sudan .The duration of the study in terms of time is limited to the period of 2014 to 2017. The Subject of the study are Sudanese Students majoring in English and teachers of English language in tertiary education.

# **CHAPTER TWO**

## **Literature Review**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter will cover the nature of writing and also provides some background of contrastive rhetoric. Also, the researcher will discuss the relation between cohesion and coherence in details. By the end of the chapter the researcher will discuss previous studies on the area of contrastive rhetoric , then the study highlights how these studies are related to the current study.

### **2.1 The Nature of EFL Writing**

Writing is one of the four skills commonly accepted goals of learning a foreign language, but often a skill that falls through. It is not uncommon to see learners with years of foreign language instruction experience have considerable difficulty when they have to write for communication in the target language. Arab students who go to English speaking countries for advanced studies typically go through some initial difficulty in writing academic papers, though they may have scored high in the TOEFL/IELTS test. This situation appears quite common with foreign language learners. The reason for this common failure is certainly multifaceted, but the fact that students have not received sufficient or appropriate training probably lies at the heart of the problem.

Kaplan (1982) holds that there are two types of writing in a language class; writing without composing” and “writing through composing.” The two types of activities serve different purposes: the former is designed to reinforce grammatical structures; whereas the second teaches students to inform, relate, persuade, etc. Scott (1995) also differentiates writing as a supportive skill and writing as creation of meaning. The former consists of copying, taking notes, writing lists, and filling in blanks, while the latter involves creating meaning through the arrangement of words, sentences, and paragraphs. The second type of writing includes writing letters, journals, reports, academic essays, and fiction. It is the second type of writing that is largely missing in many foreign language classes.

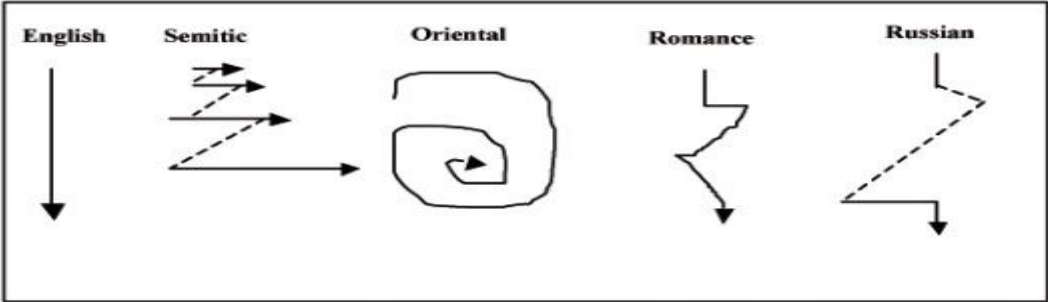
Research in the past few decades has indicated that writing, both as a cognitive activity and a communicative skill, goes far beyond lexicon and grammatical knowledge to involve many complex processes and require special treatment and needs to be taught and nurtured for its own right. Language teachers need to be informed of current research and research-supported approaches to second/foreign language writing so that they will be better prepared to teach writing(Connor,1996).

### **2.3- Contrastive rhetoric**

In his controversial publication, entitled -Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education, Kaplan(1966) noted that the writing problems

of ESL students are not only a byproduct of transferring structural patterns from their native language, but are also due to transfer of rhetorical strategies. According to Kaplan, when such rhetorical strategies, brought in from the native culture, do not match audience expectations in the target culture, the ensuing writing fails to logically convey the message to the intended audience, namely, native speakers of the target language. Kaplan claimed that the reason for such failure in communication is that rhetorical structure, as well as the —logic (in the popular, rather than the logician’s sense of the word) upon which it is based, is culturally bound (1966, p. 2). In other words, he believed that as children acquire their native language, they also acquire culturally acceptable forms of reasoning and rhetorical expression, which differ from culture to culture. Kaplan categorized the student writing that he analyzed into five distinguishable rhetoric’s or cultural thought patterns, namely English, Romance, Russian, Oriental, and Semitic based on differences in paragraph development. He visually represented his findings of cross-cultural variation in logic and writing with the following diagrams (Figure 1), which later became known as the -doodle diagrams.

Figure 1. Kaplan’s rhetorical structures





According to the author, English writing follows a linear pattern of development that starts with a topic sentence followed by details that progressively support the main topic in a deductive fashion; Romance writing diverges from the main topic in the form of quasi-linear digressions; Oriental writing employs an indirect approach distinguished by inconclusive spiral progression of ideas; partial parallelism and subordination are the salient features of Russian writing. Kaplan claimed that as a Semitic language, Arabic —is based on a complex series of parallel constructions, both positive and negative (1966, p. 6) as contrasted to the linear nature of the English expository paragraph.

#### **2-4- Areas of contrastive rhetoric:**

Connor (1996) identified four major areas of research in contrastive rhetoric which are:

1. Research in contrastive text linguistics: research in this domain emphasizes linguistic devices comparisons. This domain is best exemplified by the work of Hind (1983, 1984, 1987, and 1990).
2. Studies of writing as a cultural activity: this domain is concerned with the study of L1 developmental writings and how a given culture is embedded in the writings of its members. Then findings in one culture could be compared with others. Purves (1988) is an example in this domain.

3. Classroom-based research: this domain deals with research based on classroom observations of process writing. This is done usually through observing different cultures as they deal with each other in collaborative projects in addition to their individual products. An example of this Area is Nelson and Murphy (1992).

4. Genre-specific research: this area deals with professional and academic writings like the research article (RA).

## **2.5 Contrastive to Intercultural**

In a later development in the field and after the criticism to the theory of rhetoric described as been static, Connor(2004) argued for new definition and new name as intercultural instead as Contrastive “the study of written discourse between and among individuals with different cultural backgrounds” (Connor, 2011, p. 1). IR examines the influences of first language, culture, and education on the production of texts with the aim of advancing cross-cultural communication research as well as informing writers, editors, translators, and language and composition teachers and learners, among other users and producers of text. So, the new term “intercultural rhetoric” to describe the current scope of cultural influences in writing and to denote the direction the field needs to go. In that sense, rhetoric helps examine the accommodation readers, writers, and speakers exhibit in communication. Furthermore, the term intercultural rhetoric was expected to suggest that no rhetorical tradition is pure but that everything

exists between cultures. In other words, intercultural rhetoric studies may include both cross-cultural and intercultural studies. In addition, intercultural studies are sensitive to context and consider influences both due to inter-person and inter-culture influences. (Connor 2004)

## **2.6- Criticisms of and Advances in Contrastive Rhetoric**

Contrastive rhetoric has also acquired many critics. Scholars have criticized Kaplan for reducing rhetoric to merely structural elements and not recognizing that rhetoric is multidimensional. Spack (1997), who works with ESL students in the U.S., was concerned about the practice of labeling students by their L1 backgrounds, and Zamel (1997) disapproved of the tendency of contrastive rhetoric to view cultures as “discrete, discontinuous, and predictable.” Scollon,(1997) , criticized contrastive rhetoric research for being too focused on texts and for neglecting oral influences on literacy, and thus being unable adequately to consider EFL situations like the one in Hong Kong (Scollon, 1997). Both Spack and Zamel invoke changing definitions of culture which juxtapose the forces of heterogeneity and homogeneity and seriously question the latter. This is not surprising, for the whole concept of culture has been intensely interrogated in applied linguistics with relevance to a field such as contrastive rhetoric in the last few years.

Traditional contrastive rhetoric has often viewed ESL students as members of separate, identifiable cultural groups and, as pointed out by Tannen (1985), therefore is susceptible to the same critical judgments which

are currently directed at any research on cross- cultural communication. Thus, Tannen(1985) notes that “some people object to any research documenting cross- cultural differences, which they see as buttressing stereotypes and hence exacerbating discrimination” . She goes on to argue, however, that to ignore cultural differences leads to misinterpretation and “hence discrimination of another sort.” (p. 212)However, although contrastive rhetoric has often defined national cultures in the “received” mode, researchers in contrastive rhetoric have certainly not interpreted all differences in L2 writing as stemming from first language or interference from the national culture. Instead, they have explained such differences in written communication as often stemming from multiple sources including L1,national culture, L1 educational background, disciplinary culture, genre characteristics, and mismatched expectations between readers and writers. Contrastive rhetoric is thus in a position similar to that of intercultural research on spoken language or intercultural pragmatics analysis. In this regard, Sarangi (1994) suggests the term “intercultural” to refer to migrants’ fluid identities. He recommends that we consider language proficiency, native culture, and interlocutors’ mutual accommodation or lack thereof in explaining miscommunication between native and non - native speakers in immigrant language situations.

A related question deals with an ideological problem regarding which norms and standards should be taught, since teaching norms invokes the danger of perpetuating established power hierarchies. This has been

raised as an issue in postmodern discussion about discourse and the teaching of writing (Kubota, 1999; Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). The discussion has been in the forefront in contrastive rhetoric; recent critics of contrastive rhetoric have blamed contrastive rhetoricians for teaching students to write for native English - speaker expectations instead of expressing their own native lingual and cultural identities. In addition, critics have deemed Kaplan for being ethnocentric and for “alleged insensitivity to cultural differences” (Connor, 2002, p. 493) and for “dismissing linguistic and cultural differences in writing among different languages, e.g., lumping Chinese, Thai, and Korean speakers in one Oriental group” (Kassabgy, Ibrahim, & Aydelott, 2004) thus limiting the writer to merely a one-dimensional product of his or her regional culture. Some have concluded that contrastive suggests a cultural dichotomy between West and non-Western cultures, which seems to champion the superiority of Western writing (Connor, 2002, p. 493). The current traditional pedagogical approach to teaching U.S. Western rhetorical style has also been criticized because it may be viewed as superior to other rhetorical traditions (Matsuda, 1997, p. 46).

Many changes have taken place in the study of contrastive rhetoric., Lover (1988) stated both the difference and my case. In the years since that article first appeared, I have been accused of reductionism – of trying to reduce the whole of linguistics to this single issue” (p. 9). He then concedes this was not his intent; however, he has become more convinced that his notion has

validity. He claims that in his experience, ESL students write texts that are structured differently than those of native English speakers. He simply was attempting to define the differences . He asserts that the important differences in his study did not occur at the syntactic level, a linguistic level, but at what Kaplan classified as the “rhetorical level; i.e., at the level of organization of the whole text” (p. 10). This has led critics to conclude that Kaplan was reducing written rhetoric to be structural and only culturally influenced.

Connor (1996, 1997, 2002) and Hinds (1987) observed that the theoretical framework on which Kaplan (1966) justified his study was based on the theory of linguistic relativity which came under strong attack and was almost proven void (the weak version has reclaimed grounds recently as Hunt & Agnoly (1991) claim). The theory is also called the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis of linguistic relativity. This hypothesis had two versions: a strong and a weak one. The strong version stipulates that language controls thoughts and perceptions of reality; and thus, different languages dictate thoughts in different ways. The assumption of the strong version had been proven wrong by psychologists and linguists. To apply the assumption on Chinese versus English, for example, the Chinese people’s thoughts should move indirectly and move in circles as was reflected in their paragraph writing. By contrast, since English speakers develop their writing in a direct manner their thought must have been direct and to-the-point. The strong version, therefore, was found to be void by psychologists and linguists (e.g.

Pinker, 1994; Fishman, 1977; and Clark and Clark, 1977). The weaker version, however, suggests that language merely influences thought rather than controlling it. Many found this version was hard to prove. However, Connor (1996) cited a study by Hunt and Agnoly (1991) in which they suggested that the weak version should be seen as a stance of language performance rather than language competence. The two researchers observed that every language is translatable but with some loss. They provided the counterfactual expression in English (if/then structure) as an example; the structure is absent in Chinese. They observed that since the expression is not available in Chinese, then its absence in Chinese English writings is justified; therefore, language does actually influence thought. Also, Cmejrkova (1996) contends that though there is not enough evidence of strong influence of language on thought, it kept surfacing in the literature every now and then. Hinds (1983) criticized CR for lumping different languages under one group such as oriental as if they were one while in fact they were not. He also thought that if one really wanted to see the movements of certain language group writers, he/she should analyze the writings in their L1 not their L2 for L2 production could be influenced by various factors other than L1. Hinds, thus, became the first researcher who shifted the field from focusing on L2 production in the late sixties and throughout the seventies to the focus on L1 production as real representation of certain written traditions of a given language. Another critic (Matalene, 1985) thought that the study was ethnocentric because it seems to prefer the

English written tradition over other languages and cultural written traditions. Raimes (1991) thought that Kaplan should have considered transfer as a positive strategy rather than a negative one.

## **2.7. Rhetorical Influences**

Instead of merely viewing rhetoric as culturally influenced, Matsuda (2001), in response to Ying's 2000 article "On the Origins of Contrastive Rhetoric," addresses the issue of contrastive rhetoric as a synthesis of "three intellectual traditions, including contrastive analysis, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, and the then-emerging field of composition and rhetoric" (p. 260). In his original article, Ying contends, contrary to previous scholars' claims, that "[t]he Sapir-Whorf view of language as a causal determination is not compatible with Kaplan's position that rhetoric is evolved out of culture" (Ying, 2001, p. 265). Matsuda then asserts that the contrastive rhetoric hypothesis is affirmed by (but not originated from) the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, which claims that language influences thought. Matsuda reasons that the theory ultimately extended the discussion of linguistic elements beyond grammar and thought, and into the realm of culture (p. 258).

According to Matsuda (1997), influences affecting rhetoric are culture, linguistic constraints (language), and education (p. 47). The linguistic explanation claims that linguistic factors are what influence a writer's rhetorical strategies and that we need to teach the syntax of the language to students for them to be able to produce rhetorically effective



texts (p. 48). The cultural explanation of contrastive rhetoric claims that cultural factors influence a writer's rhetorical strategies (p. 48).

### **2.7.1-The educational explanation**

The educational explanation argues that the texts produced are the result of the education a given student received in the L1 culture (p. 48), and the writer is seen as a static “writing machine” (p. 48) in which he or she receives input from education and mechanically produces rhetoric in the form that instructors seek, according to what was taught to the student. “L2 writing is expected to signify the reader's [educational and cultural] context, not the writer's. That is, the L2 writer is writing from the context with which he or she is familiar (e.g. the U.S. academic discourse community). The L2 text in this model is placed in the reader's context, from which the writer is excluded” (p. 50). Thus, the L2 writer is writing from a line of thought that contradicts that of the reader – the U.S. composition instructor (Kaplan, 1966, p. 4). These three theories Matsuda discusses are not “mutually exclusive...at this point, little evidence exists to support the view that any one of them is most salient”(Matsuda, 1997, p. 48), and he classifies them “static” (p. 47).

In addition to being influenced by culture, language, and education, rhetoric is also influenced by innate personality, gender, economic stability or instability, pleasant or stressful life circumstances at the time, fear, happiness and so forth (Gudykunst et. al, 1996, p. 518; Connor, Nagelhout,

& Rozycki, 2008, p. 81). Scholars agree that “many people in CR agree that language/ culture/ educational contexts and individual differences, the socio-historic moment, economic conditions, and many other things...play roles in shaping any given written text”(Connor, Nagelhout, & Rozycki , p. 284). It is also imperative to consider that although rhetorical strategies may be influenced by language, culture, education, and other personal influences, they alone do not solely determine the outcome of the message. Rhetoric reflects a complex process that the writer goes through, involving the situation and the audience, as he or she respond to the context of the writing assignment (Connor, 2011, p. 29; Matsuda, 1997, p. 52). One must take into consideration many other factors. Writing, in part, is the process of the writer deciding how to respond to the context of writing (Matsuda, 1997, p.52).

## **2.8.The Influence of Arab Culture**

Arabic-English studies can be traced to the late 1950s where the fundamental aim was to anticipate learning difficulties through contrasting languages on different levels: phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic and lexical, relying basically on structural linguistics (Mukattash, 2001). By the end of the 1980s, with the shift of contrastive studies towards an examination of communicative competence, texts and communication strategies, discussion broadened to include cultural influences on Arabic written discourse. More recently, there has been increased interest in the influence of Islam, ancient Arab civilization and Standard Arabic on

Arabs' thought patterns, their rhetorical choices and the process of learning an additional language, English.

Al-Khatib (2001; cited in Abu Rass, 2011) for instance investigated the way Arabs write personal letters in English. He found that their writing reflects a culture-specific tendency to include questions about the addressee's health, family and personal life which is something unusual for a native English speaker to do. Abu Rass (2011) refers to the great influence of Islam on Arab culture. She stresses that "Moslems usually accept principles covered in the Qura'n as Divine truth and reject others that differ from the Qura'nic principles and teachings, which embrace all aspects of life" (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 207). As a result, Arab students never question the ultimate truth and have no room for doubt expecting their audience to be in complete agreement.

In a similar matter, Feghali (1997) argues that "social life in the Arab region is characterized by 'situation-centeredness', in which loyalty to one's extended family and larger 'in-group'," takes precedence as opposed to "U.S. Americans' self-reliant and 'individual-centered' approach to life" (p. 352). This sort of collectiveness is demonstrated in learners' writings in the use of pronouns such as "we" and "us". Similarly, Smith (2005) examined the influence of audience and context on Arab and Chinese students' rhetorical choices by assigning them to write two letters: one for a home country professor, the other for an American professor. Smith (2005) found that Arab students' writing demonstrates 'solidarity' - which Feghali

(1997) refers to as collectiveness - using “we” and “their” to show their group orientation and unity with their classmates. Furthermore, there was evidence of religious influence in terms of constant reference to God. In fact , one of the study participants commented: “In Arabic, you can relate everything back to God —In English you shouldn’t do that, but in Arabic, you can do anything” (Smith, 2005, p. 90). According to Abu Rass (2011) religious expressions appear mainly on the top of letters using expressions like "in the name of God, the beneficent, and the merciful", in addition to others, such as "God willing", to express the desire for something good to happen in the future.

This Arab culture/language influence on Arab learners’ English writing persists even at an advanced level. Al-Qahtani (2006) examined differences between research article introductions written by Arab scholars and those by American native English speakers using the CARS model (Create A Research Space). Through his analysis of Arab authors’ introductions, he found some cultural/religious sentences which do not reflect any of the CARS model moves and which are irrelevant to the topic discussed in the article. These sentences are classified in Al -Qahtani’s(2006) words into three categories:

*“The first is the Islamic opening statements that are required in many contexts particularly formal speeches, letters, acknowledgements, etc. The second is the use of the Holy Qur’an and the prophet (peace be upon him)*

*sayings within the text. And the third is the inclusion of acknowledgements and prayers for the helpers at the end of the introduction. “(pp. 78-79)*

Another typical feature of Arabic discourse which has been discussed frequently is repetition as a persuasive tool. In this matter, Feghali (1997) argues that repetition is the most effective argumentation strategy: “repeated words, phrases and rhythms move others to belief, rather than the “quasilogical” style of Western logic, where interlocutors use ideas to persuade” (p. 361). Koch (1983) sees that frequent use of repetition or what s he calls ‘presentation’ is a “corollary to the cultural centrality of the lughah (the Arabic language) in Arab-Islamic society” (p. 47). Lahlali (2012), for his part, highlights that repetition is an ideological tool to reinforce one’s thoughts, and a strategy that can have a persuasive and emotional impact on the audience.

## **2.9. English versus Arabic composition**

In the coming paragraphs, the researcher will compare and contrast the writing of composition in Arabic and English.

### **2.9.1-Direct and Indirect Main Idea**

Literature shows that Western and Arabic rhetoric are distinguished in terms of direct and indirect communication styles (Zaharna, 1995, Nelson, Al Batal & El Bakary, 2002, ). In many cultures, conveying a direct main idea, evidenced by a clear thesis statement, is not important. Writing is

evaluated for what it does not express and for what it leaves up to be interpreted by the reader. It is not the responsibility of the writer to explicitly state the main idea (Ramanathan & Atkinson, 1999). Direct communication, as evidenced by common expressions like, "Don't beat around the bush" (Zaharna, 1995, p. 243) and "Get to the point" (p. 243) is one of the Western communication styles' defining characteristics (p. 243), and this is demonstrated in writing by conveying a clear thesis statement. Indirectness, however, is a defining characteristic of Arabic rhetorical communication (Nelson, AlBatal & El Bakary, 2002, ).

### **2.9.2 Western cultural assumptions**

Ramanathan and Kaplan (1996) point out five Western cultural assumptions that students from many cultures often struggle with in understanding and utilizing. One of the cultural assumptions that they address is that the essay must have a clear thesis statement that the reader does not have to attempt to find. This concept causes problems for many Arab students, because a teacher may automatically assume that the "thesis-driven" model is universal. However, this is not relevant in Arabic rhetoric, and many students have trouble understanding and utilizing the thesis-driven strategy even after being taught it. There is a rhetorical structure designed to foster connection with the audience through a poetic message, not tell the audience a direct message, and instructors may not address the differences to the students.

Zaharna (1995) also specifically points out that in Western rhetoric, the "burden of meaning" falls on the person giving the message to accurately and thoroughly convey it. Arabic rhetoric, though, tends to place more emphasis on the context of the message than the message itself: "The listener must understand contextual clues in order to grasp the full meaning of the message" (p. 242). This requires more involvement on the part of the audience since the audience must decipher what the person giving the message actually wants to convey within the context of the writing. It is unnecessary for the writer to be specific because the details of the message are in the context. The "burden of meaning" falls on the reader. There is greater involvement on the part of the receiver, and this, in turn, creates more of an importance on style of language and building emotional rapport with the audience (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 173). The following is an excerpt of an essay written by an Egyptian student for an intermediate-level composition class that was part of an intensive ESL program. The essay prompt was "What was the most frightening experience you ever had?":

*The thing that makes me frightened to think about is death. I don't like it because it takes one of my best friends and when I begin to think if one of my family died, what would happen to me. I love my father, my mother, and my brother and I can't imagine my situation in this case. Really I don't know what I'd do. And really I worry about my father and mother because they are becoming old. And I can't do anything to save them. I am just studying to keep them happy. And if I knew the way to keep them happy and alive forever, I'd do it and I'd like to give them my life on a gold tray. I feel afraid when I think about this problem. And I don't know how to solve it. I am just praying to God*

*and asking him for a good, long, happy life for my parents (Johnstone, 1989, p. 140). In this excerpt, the student did not state his or her most frightening experience, like the prompt asked. The student did not use the word “experience” nor wrote about a specific one in his or her life. This is an example of not directly addressing the prompt.*

In summary, teachers may find an indirect main idea in an essay written by a native Arabic-speaking student. The student may not utilize the word given in the prompt by the teacher and therefore, the student’s essay may not elicit a clear thesis statement. Therefore, the teacher may have to attempt to find the main idea, which can lead to confusion on the teacher’s part. In addition, a native Arabic-speaking student may not directly address the prompt, which is also an example of indirectness.

### **2.9.3 Development in Body Paragraphs: Elaboration**

A direct main idea lends itself to what scholars have classified as a “linear” (Zaharna, 1995, p. 243) writing structure, whereas an indirect main idea lends itself to a “non-linear” or “circular” (Zaharna, 1995, p. 243) structure. Western rhetoric employs a linear structure of writing, and Arabic rhetoric, non-linear or circular (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 206). In Western rhetoric, paragraph development is done by first introducing the topic and providing information. This is the premise of the argument. The thought pattern is done by conveying a direct main idea – a thesis statement – after the introduction providing the premise, followed by examples to support the main idea, elaborating on those examples with illustrations in the body paragraphs, and



then summarizing the main points in the conclusion. Each idea stems from the argument, which was built off of the premise, and the ideas build off of one another in a “linear” (Kaplan, 1966, p. 17) manner. This gives the reader a sense forward movement.

Arabic rhetoric, however, employs a model of elaboration different to that of Western rhetoric – one that stresses the manner in which the words are conveyed. This is done in the paragraph development through restatement of the initial idea or information from the introduction, followed by the use of many adjectives and adverbs relating to the main idea (Zaharna, 1995, p. 244; Flaitz, 2003, p. 168). This is because the Qur’an illustrates ideas in this manner. The goal of developing an argument in the paragraph development in Western rhetoric is to use a “syllogistic demonstrative logic” (Johnstone, 1989, p. 152) whereas Middle Easterners use a “presentational” (p. 152) mode of persuasion. In Arabic rhetoric, ideas do not build off of one another to relate back to a thesis statement. Presenting different perspectives and examples in paragraph support in a linear manner does not exist in Arabic prose (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 207). Instead of using illustrations supporting specific examples that lead back to the thesis statement, one may find an initial idea restated, followed by a string of descriptive words and phrases, and the conclusion must introduce a new idea. Native Arabic-speaking students may introduce an idea, then restate it, and then describe an argument multiple times in their body paragraphs. The body paragraphs may not contain specific examples relating

to the main idea with elaboration on those examples and instead, contain adjectives and adverbs relating to the main idea, which is the argument (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 208). To a Western instructor, the ideas may seem disorganized with no focus (Zaharna, 1995, p. 245; Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 212; Flaitz, 2003, p. 168; Thomson- Panos & Thomas- Ruzic, 1983, p. 615). "In the Arabic culture, there is a strong emphasis on the form of poetic expression than upon the content of the message. Arabs pay far more attention to impressiveness... and they are swayed more by words than by ideas" (Moujtahid, 1996, p. 7).

Much of the previous research done on Arabic rhetoric by Western scholars falsely labels it as disorganized, "characterized by a general vagueness of thought which stems from overemphasis on the symbol at the expense of the meaning... [and that] Arabic writers [are] confused, coming to the same point two or three times from different angles" (Hatim, 1997, p. 161). This has been characterized by Western and Arab scholars alike as "exaggeration" (Abu Rass, 2011, p. 207) or "over-assertion" (Johnstone Koch, 1990, p. 216; Thompson-Panos & Thomas- Ruzic, 1983, p. 619; Abu Rass, 2011, p. 208).

Westerners may often feel that people from the Middle East exaggerate their ideas. Moujtahid (1996) addresses common expressions in English and compares them to what a Middle Easterner would say. For example, the equivalence to "thank you" in English is, in Arabic, "May Allah increase your well-being" (p. 2). In the West, one might also say to a friend

or relative, "Get well," but someone from the Middle East would say, "May there be upon you nothing but health if Allah wills" (p. 2). This is very ordinary to speakers of Arabic but quite exaggerated to speakers of English. Furthermore, as a general rule in Middle Eastern culture, every phrase of courtesy must be returned with a more elaborate phrase than the previous one. For example, someone from the Middle East may say, "May your day be prosperous." To that, another might reply, "May your day be prosperous and blessed" (p. 3). Abu Rass (2011), however, veers slightly away from the notion that Arabic rhetoric is driven by mainly emotional appeal through elaborate, poetic words. He discusses Arabic's persuasive strategy with reference to a study that Al-Khatib (1994) conducted. According to Al-Khatib's study, Arabic rhetorical persuasion is based on three major modes: establishing a premise of trustworthiness, argumentation, and finally, appeal to emotions. First, persuaders try to convince the audience by asserting their trustworthy and reliability. Second, they attempt to persuade others by argument providing opinion and supporting it by giving convincing reasons. Third, persuaders may appeal to the audience emotionally.

It is usually used through the use of religion and religious devices and the use of proverbs and wisdoms. Religious devices mean the use of some Qura'nic verses. The use of proverbs and wisdoms refers to the sayings and lines of the verse. Al-Khatib's study reveals that these three modes work together (p. 208). Johnstone Koch (1983) tells a story that illustrates well the use of Arabic style of elaboration of the main idea in Arabic discourse. She

had received a call from someone who had heard about her work on Middle Eastern persuasive discourse. The caller first introduced himself with an Arab name, gave background information, and began by discussing his research that was related to hers. She was about to give him her standard reply: "[H]is work sounded interesting, [she] was glad he had called, and [she] would be glad to..." (p. 47). However, before she was able to do so, he again gave his background information and told her how his work was similar to hers. Before the conversation ended, he has rephrased his initial background story and described his research several times. Thus, elaboration in native Arabic-speaking students' essays may not be shown in examples but by stating an initial idea, followed by elaboration with many descriptive words and phrases, then restating the initial idea again and elaborating again, then introducing a new idea in the conclusion, taking the reader in various directions.

As the written message is intended to mirror the language of the Qur'an, we see that the Qur'an has many examples of elaboration in which the main idea is described many times or restated again. In the following passage, we see that "He is God" is immediately rephrased in a different way: "There is no God but He." In addition, instead of elaborating on specific examples of God demonstrating certain characteristics, we see many different adjectives describing who God is. Finally, a new idea is introduced: "All that is in the heavens and the earth magnifies Him."

In summary, paragraph development is done through restating an idea in various forms in the body paragraphs and then attributing many different adjectives or adverbs to the idea. This can cause a Western instructor to believe that the main idea is not developed because the student is not providing specific examples and discussing those examples and instead, providing a restated idea at the beginning of the paragraphs, followed by a string of description.

Instructors may see this in varying forms. Paragraph Connection: Transition words and phrases vs. parallelism As previously stated, in Western writing, a main idea should be conveyed in a direct thesis statement. The thesis is then developed into smaller supporting ideas with examples in the body paragraphs, ending with a concluding paragraph, summarizing the main idea.

The paragraph development should relate back to the larger main idea, and each paragraph should lead into the next with transition words and phrases connecting the paragraphs together (Bennett, 1998, p. 12; Kaplan, 1966, p. 4), creating a linear structure in which the reader feels like the ideas are moving forward. Transition words and phrases are typically used to connect the body paragraphs together, and these are markers of what researchers classify as cohesion on the macro level. Many agree that this type of cohesion is related to linking whole ideas and paragraphs, whereas on the micro level, it is connecting sentences and phrases (Hamid Ahmed,

2010, p. 214). A macro cohesive strategy used in Western writing “stresses beginnings and ends of events, is object-oriented rather than people-oriented” (Zaharna, 1995, p.244), and stresses importance on the message conveyed.

One major point is followed by a second point, a third, and so forth. Ideas are presented sequentially, they build on one another, and they all relate back to the main idea (Bennett, 1998, p. 12; Kaplan, 1966, p. 4). Conversely, an essay may have the reverse procedure in which it begins with examples and the examples relate to a thesis statement at the end instead of the beginning (Kaplan, 1966, p. 5). These two types of development are called deductive or “top-down” (p. 6) reasoning and inductive or “bottom-up” (p.6). Narrative writing often takes a bottom up structural approach.

Linking paragraphs together using transition words and phrases is what would be considered a characteristic of a coherent essay by Western instructors’ standards (Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 212). In Western school systems, this model has been established as an indication of clear writing and critical thinking; however, it is actually a rare form of discourse associated primarily with Western culture (Bennett, 1998, p. 12). As observed by Hamid Ahmed (2010), “A number of research papers from the Arab world have spotlighted students’ coherence problems in English writing. For example, Arab students’ written texts revealed that repetition, parallelism, sentence length, lack of variation and misuse of certain cohesive devices are

major [reasons for] incoherence and textual deviation” (Hamid Ahmed, 2010, p. 212). This occurs with native Arabic-speaking students because they have learned to connect paragraphs differently.

Arabic rhetorical structure is characterized by “repetitive parallels and rhythmic balance” (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 171). The syntax of the language and overall structure of a written message strives for a balanced rhythmic coordination between its parts (Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 173; Flaitz, 2003, p. 168 This is called parallelism (Kaplan, 1966, p. 7; Connor & Kaplan, 1987, p. 171). At the sentence level, parallelism is demonstrated in the linking of parts of sentences by sharing the same grammatical structure between those parts, thus creating a balance. An example of this in English is the parallel structure, not only/ but also. What comes after not only and but also are phrases of the same grammatical structure to create balance to the message, for example: I not only like pizza but also enjoy pasta. What comes after not only and but also is a present tensed verb followed by a noun, creating a balance between the parts of the sentence .

## **2.10- Influence of Islam**

Al-Khatib (1994) cites Abdulati (1975) who claims that "the authenticity of the Qura'n for Moslems is beyond doubt" (12). Moslems usually accept principles covered in the Qura'n as Divine truth and reject others that differ from the Qura'nic principles and teachings, which embrace all aspects of life. Feghali (1997) cites Glisenan (1983) who claims that

swearing oaths on the Qura`n and the Prophet Muhammad are part of the Arabic discourse. "Belief in God has direct and ultimate control of all that happens" (Nydell, 1987, 34).

Abu Rass (1994) indicated that the Arabic culture is highly influenced by Islam, which is based on the main principle of unity of belief in God and the prophet Muhammad. As a result, Arab students have the tendency to use dichotomy: solutions to problems are black or white, right or wrong. In other words, there is no room for doubt or compromise. Questioning the norms or the ultimate truth is rare in the Arabic culture. The writer assumes that the reader is in complete agreement with him because of cultural consensus.

Supporting the argument is done by quotations of verses from the Qura`n, the holy book, and sayings of Prophet Muhammad (Ahadeeth) as well as citing of prominent leaders or Islamic scholars (Abu Rass, 1994). "Repeated words, phrases and rhythms move others to belief, rather than the "quasilogical" style of Western logic, where interlocutors use ideas to persuade" (Feghali, 1997. 361).

Johnstone (as cited in Feghali, 1997)) suggests that persuasion is most often employed in cultural settings "in which religion is central, settings in which truth is brought to light rather than created out of human rationality" (p. 151). Therefore, Arabic speaking students of English tend to copy verses from the Qura`n to convince their readers because they believe that the text is infallible in content and literary style. As a result of following the style of



the Qura`n, presenting different perspectives for argumentation doesn't exist in the Arabic prose. Students are not expected to challenge what is socially validated, especially if it is mentioned in the Qura`n. For example, male and female segregation should not be questioned because it is mentioned explicitly in the Qura`n. Using rich and expressive language is another characteristic of elaboration among Arabic speakers (Feghali, 1997).

In addition, exaggeration and assertion are other two rhetorical patterns of the Arab communicative style. So Arabic speaking tends to exaggerate and over-assert things to be believed and understood. Feghali cited Adelman & Lustig (1981) who conducted a survey among Saudi Arabian and American managers to identify elaborateness. The responses of that survey show that American managers believed that their Saudi counterparts had problems in expressing their ideas in a clear concise way. The findings of the above cited research show that American managers perceived the Saudi managers had difficulty in displaying objectivity in decision-making.

Al-Khatib (1994) claims that persuasion in Arabic is structural and rule-governed. It is based on three major modes: trustworthiness, argumentation and appeal to emotions. These modes are based on reason and emotions. First, persuaders try to convince the audience by asserting their trustworthy and reliability. Second, they attempt to persuade others by argument providing opinion and supporting it by giving convincing reasons. Third, persuaders may appeal to the audience emotionally. It is usually used

through the use of religion and religious devices and the use of proverbs and wisdoms. Religious devices mean the use of some Qura'nic verses. The use of proverbs and wisdoms refers to the sayings and lines of the verse. Al-Khatib's study reveals that these three modes work together.

### **2.11-Cohesion & coherence:**

In the 1960s and 1970s, writing researchers shifted their focus of attention away from sentence structure toward discourse analysis, an analysis of texts that extends beyond the sentence level and takes into account the communicative constraints of the situation. The 1970s and 1980s saw discourse analysis embraced by many linguists, psychologists, and composition specialists around the world. Pioneers in this field include linguists Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan in England, linguist Nils Enkvist in Finland, psycholinguist Teun van Dijk in the Netherlands, and three scholars from the United States: linguist Robert de Beaugrande, applied linguist and contrastive rhetorician John Hinds, and composition expert Stephen Witte (Connor, 1996). Among these linguists, the most influential of the resulting textual analysis techniques has been those developed by Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan in *Cohesion in English* (1976), which will be discussed in the following section firstly, then a brief discussion of the contribution of other linguistics in the field.

## 2.12. Definition of coherence

Attempts to define coherence can be traced to the 19th century, when the predominant emphasis was put on sentence connections and paragraph structure. Bain (1890), for example, defined coherence in terms of between-sentence connections that create tightly-structured and autonomous paragraphs, which are then linked together into a large text by transition devices. However, such conceptions construe coherence narrowly in terms of sentence-level connectedness and paragraph unity rather than discourse unity.

Phelps (1985) described coherence as “the experience of meaningfulness corrected with successful integration during reading, which the reader projects back into the text as a quality of wholeness in its meaning.” De Beaugrande & Dressler (1981) posited that coherence is based on “a continuity of sense among the knowledge activated by the expressions of the text” (p.84). Brown & Yule (1983) also viewed coherence as related to the reader’s interpretation of linguistic messages. Halliday and Hassan (1976) define text as semantic unit, usually larger than a sentence, although not necessary so, cohesion, in their definition, is created when a specific lexical item in a text must be interpreted through reference to a previous item in the text. Cohesion requires two elements: occurrence of a reference and a tie to it in another utterance. The interpretation of the element being on the prior element in the text: When the interpretation of any item in the discourse

requires reference to some other, item in the discourse, there is cohesion (p.11). Connor (1996) defines cohesion as “the use of explicit linguistic devices to signal relations between sentences and parts of texts.” These cohesive devices are phrases or words that help the reader associate previous statements with subsequent ones.

### **2.13.Halliday and Hasan’s Cohesion in English**

Known as cohesion theory (Carrell, 1982), Halliday and Hasan’s work has been widely cited and used as a foundation or a seminal text. For Halliday and Hasan, cohesion is a semantic relation between an element in the text and some other element that is crucial to the interpretation of the text (1976, p.8). For text to have texture, Halliday and Hasan’s term for coherence, the text must include ties that link its parts together because it is these ties that form cohesive relations between sentences and elements in sentences, thus contributing to the coherence of the text (Liu & Braine, 2005). Halliday and Hasan defined such a tie as —the term for one occurrence of a pair of cohesively related items. (1976, p.3). In other words, no single element can be cohesive by itself since grammatical and lexical devices become cohesive only when they are interpreted in relation to some other element in the text. Halliday and Hasan divided cohesion into grammatical and lexical cohesion. Grammatical cohesion includes devices such as reference, substitution, ellipsis and conjunction, whereas lexical cohesion is divided into reiteration (repetition, synonymy, among others) and

collocation (co-occurrence of lexical items). What follows is a concise overview of Halliday and Hasan's grammatical and lexical cohesive ties.

## 2.14. Grammatical cohesion.

(1) **Reference:** Reference cohesion occurs when one item in a text points to another element for its interpretation. For example,

There is a pen on the desk. Go get it.

(2) **Substitution:** Substitution is a grammatical relation, and it is the replacement of one element by another, as in —

My axe is too blunt. I must get a sharper one|| or

Who painted the wall? – I did, or Do you think she is married? – Yes. I think so.

(3) **Ellipsis:** If substitution replaces one element with another, —ellipsis is the omission of an item|| (1976, p.89), or a deletion of a word, phrase, clause, or —something left unsaid|| (1976, p.142). For example, in

a. You think George already knows? – I think everybody does.

b. Joan bought some bread, and Lily some potatoes.

(4) **Conjunction:** The conjunctive elements are cohesive not in themselves, but they are cohesive —by virtue of their specific meanings|| (1976, p.226).

See the following:

examples.

a. John left his apartment after he ate breakfast.

b. Jean lost a lot of weight. Consequently, she feels better.

## **2.15. Lexical cohesion.**

(1) **Reiteration:** Reiteration refers to the repeated use of a lexical item, or the use of a synonymous lexical item. Halliday and Hasan (1976) wrote: I turned to the ascent of the peak. The ascent/climb/task/thing is perfectly easy. (p.279)

(2) **Collocation:** Collocation refers to the habitual co-occurrence of individual lexical items. It covers any instance in which there is —any pair of lexical items that stand to each other in some recognizable lexico-semantic (word meaning) relation (1976, p.285). The following examples illustrate this point: You cannot smoke inside the building. You can smoke outside.

The above cohesive ties identified by Halliday and Hasan as available in the English language help to ensure cohesion in a given text. Cohesion, perceived as the grammatical and lexical relationship within a text, has been accepted as a useful tool for discourse analysis; but because coherence is about deeper-level semantic relations (Canagarajah, 2002), coherence is still quite understandably not fully understood in the same way by all linguists even today (Dontcheva-Navratilova & Povolna, 2009).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) simply treat cohesion as a linguistic property contributing to coherence (Carrell, 1982), but they do not explicitly discuss the link between cohesion and coherence.

## **2.16. Criticism of Cohesion of English:**

While it is difficult to overestimate the importance of Halliday and Hasan's research in bringing text cohesion to the foreground of text analysis, Some of their claims did not avoid criticism. For instance, Halliday and Hasan's Premise that cohesion contributes to textual coherence was disputed by Carrell (1982). She explained that in her view, text cohesion is not necessarily a textual Property that is manifested by means of grammatical or lexical connective ties, but rather that cohesion is an outcome of coherence when readers of text are able to derive the connectivity of ideas from their knowledge of the world (and text schema).Carrell further reported that when readers are able to connect text's ideas without relying on explicit cohesion devices, explicit cohesive ties are not needed to unify text's ideas (as in Carrell's example, The picnic was ruined. No one remembered to bring a corkscrew(p. 484)). And onther A well-known but extreme example from Enkvist's study (as cited in Reinhart, 1980) clearly demonstrates this point:

“I bought a Ford. The car in which President Wilson rode down the Champs Elysees was black. Black English has been widely discussed”. The discussions between the presidents ended last week. A week has seven days.

Every day I feed my cat. Cats have four legs. The cat is on the mat. Mat has three letters.” (p.170). From the text, we see that —a Ford (=car) and the car in which President is linked lexically but not referentially. Although EFL students may not produce a text like this, this example may be used to prove a point: —a text consisting of lexical links only will not be cohesive (Reinhart, 1980, p.170).

Although Halliday and Hasan (1976) did not consider issues of language pedagogy in their research, Carrell (1982) further explained that in teaching L2 writing and composition to NNSs, cohesive devices should play a secondary role to instruction on organizing the flow of ideas .

Brown & Yule (1983) provide an extensive discussion and review of literature on cohesion, taking a special look at Halliday and Hassan’s discussion. Although they generally agree with Halliday & Hassan, they disagree in certain areas and on certain terms. Brown & Yule distinguish between reference & co-reference; in contrast to Halliday & Hassan. Halliday & Hassan define reference as the evoking of an entity by the speaker through the use of a lexical item in a text. For them, the reference entail lexical item is only an option that can help to create cohesion if it is repeated. A reference to an entity which creates the cohesive ties between one the text. In fact, reference is only cohesive when the interpretation relies on the recall of prior text for understanding. Brown & Yule use two terms for this notion—reference to an entity being the evoking or naming of that entity in the text,



and co-reference being the subsequent naming or evoking of the entity by the speaker. They argue for the expanding identity of this entity, which are enlarged embroidered upon and contextualized as they are subsequently referred.

This idea of reference to mental representation rather than that to the entity leads into further disagreement with Halliday & Hassan about endophoric & exospheric reference which they say is not. They make this distinction because they say that exospheric reference is linked to entities present in the environment and not to the text; therefore they don't create cohesive links within the text. Brown & Yule(1983) argue that all reference, be it endophoric or exophoric, serve to build a mental representation of the entity to which the both the speaker and audiences refer; thus both types create cohesion. Brown & Yule(1983) also disagree with Hassan's notion that a series of utterances must exhibit cohesive ties in order to be identified as a coherent text. They state that it's possible to have two utterances identified as a unified text even though they contain the obvious surface ties" (Crice, 1975, 1878).

Schiffrin(1987) agrees with Brown and Yule's view of cohesion and coherence. Although cohesion's devices appear in the surface structures and can be recognized as specific units, their real importance lies in their "reflection" of the underlying semantic relations(p.9).Listeners interpret any given text based on the many things, including the clues to structure provided by cohesive devices. She asserts" cohesive devices do not

themselves create meaning; they are clues used by speakers and hearers to find the meanings which underlies the surface utterances (p.9). The other item she includes for interpreting meaning are pragmatic inferences, background information and context. She makes four basic assumptions underlies this analysis as well;

1-Language always occurs in context

2-Language is context sensitive.

3-Language is communicative.

4-Language is designed for communication.

Beaugrande & Dresser(1981), in contrast to Holiday and Hassan provide specific criteria for identifying a text as cohesive, coherent as whole. They require that a text meet seven criteria, which have been divided into two categories, one text-centered and one user-centred.

The text centered criteria are two cohesion & coherence .The other criteria are based on languages uses perception and are related to the intentionality, acceptability, informativeness, situationality and intertextuality of a given text. They propose three regulative principle are the efficiency of the device, the effectiveness of device and the appropriateness of the device. This support the concept of emerging text. It

begins as a coherent through linguistics choices based on the constitutive and regulative principles which define a text.

### **2.17. Relation between Cohesion and Coherence:**

Researchers have investigated the relationship between the lexical cohesion of student writing and overall quality or coherence. Among these studies, Witte and Faigley's (1981) pioneering research on college students' writing demonstrated a relationship between cohesion and coherence. Corroborating Witte and Faigley's findings, McCulley (1985) concluded that cohesion is a sub-element of coherence. In contrast, Tierney and Mosenthal (1983) found no relationship between cohesion and coherence in the twelfth graders' essays. Moreover, Reinhart (1980) asserted that Halliday and Hasan's lexical repetition is not what makes a text cohesive.

First, Widdowson (1973) makes cohesion and coherence become popular as a pair. Apart from the theory claimed by Widdowson (1973), there are still various points of view about the relationship between cohesion and coherence. For example, researchers in the field of applied linguistics have traditionally attempted to define cohesive devices in English as providing the basis for coherent texts. Besides these, a direct correlation between cohesion and coherence is also asserted by Fitzgerald (1990) & Chau (1999). Fitzgerald (1990) examines the relationship between cohesion and coherence in children's writing and describes this relationship as (1) varies according to

text content; (2) does not vary according to quality of writing; and (3) does not vary according to the students' grade level.

However, there have been no consistent agreements about the positive or negative effects on the relationship between cohesion and coherence. Contrary to Fitzgerald(1990) & Chau (1999), Carrell (1982) criticizes the concept of cohesion as a measure of coherence of a text. Oller (1994) also identifies that cohesion is not necessarily connected with coherence based on the analysis of the following examples from Enkvist (1990):

*My car is black. Black English was a controversial subject in the seventies. At seventy most people have retired. To retire means “to put new tires on a vehicle.” Some vehicles such as hovercraft have no wheels. Wheels go round. The text in this example has plenty of lexical cohesion (lexical repetition), but it is difficult to imagine any consistent plausible text world (Enkvist 1990; & Oller 1994).*

In terms of the effect of cohesion on the quality of writing, Al- Jarf (2001) found that Arab EFL learners couldn't opt for the correct choices of cohesive ties due to the insufficient knowledge about cohesion. She investigated the use of cohesive ties and found that conjunctions were the easiest to use, but reference was very difficult. Guthrie (2008) recommended conducting more research focusing on more students groups and the use of cohesion. Khalil (1989) contended that Arab students overused lexical reiteration of the same item and the frequency of other lexical and grammatical cohesive ties dropped. Therefore, the quality of writing was poorly evaluated in terms of both cohesion and coherence. He also found that Arab students overused reference. Therefore, he recommends that students should be given more

instruction about the importance of cohesion on the quality of writing as a whole.

LI Shuang- mei (2009) argued that giving direct instruction to the students about cohesion is important to improve the writing abilities because students had problems with reference, conjunctions, etc. Other researchers found that applying cohesion improves the quality of writing (Jin, 2001, LI Shuang- me, 2009; Liu & Braine, 2005; Song & Xia, 2002; ZHOU Xin- hong, 2007) . SONG & Xia (2002) compared the cohesive features of good and poor writings as revealed in the compositions of English non- major Chinese students. They found that the cohesive device positively affecting the assessment of the compositions was lexical cohesion, and the second one was grammatical cohesion followed by reference. Zhou Xin- hong (2007) examined the application of the theory of cohesion to the teaching of Chinese EFL learners by opting for a control group and an experimental group. He examined the frequencies of cohesive ties and their effect on the quality of writing and found that cohesion improved the quality of writing. He found that the reference items and lexical reiteration of the two groups dropped slightly. It is noteworthy that what added to the quality of the writing was the use of conjunctions, mostly additive and enhancement. Other researchers such as Liu & Braine (2005) investigated the use of cohesive devices in the writing of undergraduate students and found that students used three types of which lexical devices were the mostly used followed by reference and conjunctions. This finding is in line with that of previous

studies (Zhang, 2000) . The least frequently used tie was the demonstrative reference. The quality of writing was affected by the total number of cohesive ties and the errors committed in using reference and lexis.

However, some researchers found that cohesion doesn't affect the quality of writing (Castro, 2004; Chen, 2008; Jafarpur, 1991, Zhang, 2000) . JO- Ling Chen (2008) examined college student's use of cohesive devices and the relationship between the devices and the quality of writing. He found that lexical devices had the highest percentage of use followed by reference and then conjunctions. However, his study revealed that overusing cohesive devices negatively affected the quality of writing. Zhang (2000) studied cohesion employment by Chinese English majors and found that cohesion is not related to good or poor writing, but agreed with other researchers that lexical collocations add to the good quality of writing (Jafarpur, 1991; Zhang, 2000) .

Zhang (2000) also indicated that the EFL students preferred to use the same lexicon instead of using a synonym or a collocation. Therefore, applying the theory of cohesion to the teaching of writing forces the students to search for collocations, synonyms and antonyms to look for a variety of cohesive devices that may add to the quality of writing. However, it should be emphasized that some researchers like (Zhang, 2000) included all the cohesive ties which were improperly or correctly used when investigating cohesive ties in relation to the writing quality. Yusun Kang (2005) conducted

a study on the non- native learners' choices of cohesive devices and found that the mother tongue affects the type of cohesive tie the EFL students chose. He found that Korean students opted for the demonstrative reference and repetition in writing more than any other tie. Guthrie (2008) found that English language learners of a Spanish origin didn't employ substitution and ellipsis, rather, they used the additive and temporal ties; at the lexical level, the participants opted for lexical repetition such as synonyms and total repetition.

Hadley (1987) conducted an experiment with a goal to test the understanding of twelve anaphoric pronouns, which were embedded in passages of continuous text by 151 primary school children from three year levels, in a suburban primary school, set in a moderately high social economic area. Results showed a significant relationship between the comprehension of the selected anaphoric personal items and ability in reading, as measured by a standardized test. Connor (1984a) examines cohesion and coherence in ESL learners' writing compared with the writing of native English speakers. Altogether six essays on argumentative tasks were analyzed using the cohesion theory of Halliday & Hasan (1976). The results of the study show that to be cohesive, an ESL essay did not need to be coherent. Enkvist (1985) suggests that total coherence requires cohesion not only on the textual surface but on the semantic level as well. In semantic terms, a text is coherent if its sentences conform to the picture of a single possible world in the experience or imagination of the receiver. Kintsch &

van Dijk (1978) argue that the semantic structure of texts can be described both at the local micro-level and at a more global macro-level. A model for text comprehension based on this notion accounts for the formation of a coherent semantic text base in terms of cyclical process constrained by limitations of working memory.

Not surprisingly, issues of cohesion and coherence are still under debate. Nevertheless, the above discussions have revealed that coherence is distinct from and broader than cohesion, and that cohesion, defined in terms of a set of linguistic features, is viewed as only one of the factors that create coherence in a text. Therefore, in the construction of text, the establishment of cohesive relations is a necessary component, but it is not the whole story. Researchers have noted that cohesive texts are not necessarily also coherent texts (Connor, 1996). Since texture or coherence involves much more than merely cohesion, it deserves much more attention.

### **2.18. Writing situation in Sudan:**

EFL writing situation in Sudan can be traced back to the early days of the colonial era(1898), during which considerable attention had been attached to the teaching of English at different educational levels. That is to say, Sudanese EFL writers were exposed to English rhetorical techniques of writing, and encouraged to write free guided compositions. A great deal emphasis was laid on English literature and composition studies which made Sudanese EFL writers familiar with the basic Western rhetorical traditions



of writing along with other skills of language—namely oral fluency. At that period, most schools, including intermediate and secondary ones, relied heavily on reading and composition textbooks mostly donated by the British. Therefore, when Sudanese EFL writers entered the tertiary level, they did not encounter serious problems of writing in English. (Mohammed, p34)

The general standard of English writing among Sudanese EFL learners from the 1930s up to the end of the 1960s was up to the expectations as opposed to the deterioration that resulted from Arabization of the secondary curriculum in 1965, after the 21<sup>st</sup> October 1964 political change which ended the first military regime in Sudan. Indeed, in 1937 (Sandell, 1982:2). The Sudan education department reviewed Sudanese students' standard in English, and compared it with those recognized elsewhere and accordingly, a special version of Cambridge School Certificate was suggested. In addition, new English syllabi were directed toward reading and composition courses which were intended to deal with sentences of extreme complexity. Focus was also put on the "Art of Essay" writing which reviewed notions such as (1) arrangement (2) beginning, middle and end (3) style, (4) balance and rhythm, (5) illustration and colour, (6) descriptive writing and (7) types of essays (ibid).

In 1948, attempts were made to revive English Language in the intermediate schools, especially following the appointment of John Bright as the Head of English Section at Bahkat al-Ruda institute. Prior to his

appointment, EFL writing had been taught by using West's oral composition, which according to him, proved to be ineffective, because the main emphasis was on the vocabulary. rights' anther argument was that while the learners were expected to be spending a lot of time enhancing their writing performance, the idea of writing individuals printed capital and small letters in which they were involved had little influence on writing. Therefore , it was decided to solve that setback by suggesting a new model of writing based on Marian Richardson's script which was largely applied in British schools(Sandel, 1982:30).

The Arabiczation movement in the secondary level in 1965 had placed an enormous impact on the standard of English writing in Sudan. Therefore, since 1970 on wards,ELT status in Sudan had witnessed a series of dramatic changes due to unstable, unplanned and extemporaneous educational policies. Most importantly, it was thought that the process of Arabiczation in higher education in 1990 in which Arabic replaced English as a medium of instruction in some tertiary institutions would enable Sudanese EFL learners to understand the college subjects and ,then, gain a better knowledge.

As Mugadam states "The Arabicization of school education was an answer to the national feelings and enthusiasm following October revolution in 1964 (Hurries). In other words, Arabicization of education was merely a political and national issue rather than educational or linguistic. This national

political feeling led to the replacement of English with Arabic as a medium of instruction at university level in 1990. Recognizing the important role of English in the academic life of students, the Ministry of High education decided that English should be taught as a university required subject to all undergraduate students. Accordingly, specialized units were established in all universities throughout Sudan to teach English, mainly ESP. (Mugdaam.P 130)

## **2.19. Previous studies**

In this part of chapter 2, the researcher will cover the related case studies in the area of rhetoric studies and by the end of the chapter the researcher will highlight how these studies are related to the current study.

### **\*Deficiency of English Composition writing in the Sudanese third year Higher Secondary school at Khartoum' (Karadawi:1994).**

This study investigated the composition writing problems by analyzing the written composition of the third year students. The sample of study consisted of eighty students (male and female), whom were asked to a composition in English. The study concluded that:

- 1- More than 60% of the students are weak in paragraphing.

2- Students are unaware of the correct use of punctuation.

The research attributed this deficiency to inadequate teaching methods. Moreover, the research analysis the composition materials of NILE Course, book SIX, as a text being used by the third year students; he reported that this materials is inadequate to train the students in writing. This study is similar to the present study in that: both studies are comparing writing problems encounter by Sudanese students.

**\*A study of written performance of first year students of Khartoum University.(Farahat)**

The study investigated the field of error analysis, the researcher investigated the grammatical errors in the writing of first year students, faculty of Arts, University of Khartoum.

The data of the study is collected from the final examinations of compositions in 1991. 2640 grammatical errors was identified: articles, copula errors, adverbs, a and adjectives errors. Farahat concluded that the major learning strategies employed by the students represent the omission of grammatical formative “articles”, the past tense marker ‘ed’; wrong selection and wrong addition. The study also showed that students committed errors a result of mother tongue interference, and generalization, simplification.

**\*“Foreign learners Cohesion devices: An analysis and Evaluation of foreign learners’ knowledge of cohesion devices”.(Gubair:1995)**

This study investigated the students performance in the use of cohesive devices in English and the errors committed by students when using these devices and lack of knowledge about using. The population of the study was the fourth year university students. The researcher concluded that the students have problems in cohesion usage; and instead they used a compensatory communicative strategies such as: avoiding the use of specific linkers, and also they rely on the techniques of their mother tongue, i.e transfer of writing habits of Arabic into English.

**\*Analysis of lexical errors of the written production of Sudanese students at University of Khartoum” (Ibrahim: 1995).**

The study investigated the lexical errors in the writing production of the second year English students, Faculty of Arts, University of Khartoum. The sample of the study was taken from the final examinations. The study showed that spelling is the major problem that students suffer from. The researcher contributed this problem to the complexity of English Spelling System and the lack of students training in that particular area.

**\*Difficulties in Writing Composition and Assessment of Composition Examinations at Dongola University.(Elnour:2010)**

This study investigated the problems writing and assessing compositions at University of Dogola. The sample was the students of the first year. The data of the study was collected through Teachers' questionnaire and students writing test. The study concluded that's students could not write satisfactory composition due to linguistics and cognitive problems. Also a majority of teachers agreed that composition materials were insufficient to improve writing skills. The findings indicate that students inability of writing resulted from combination of several factors (shortage of vocabulary, grammatical structures).

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter discusses the methodology of the research. It provides a detailed description of the participants and the materials used in obtaining the required data. In addition it reports on the measuring tools and their validity and reliability .

### **3.1 Methods**

The researcher used a descriptive analytic method. The data was collected through two instruments: Teachers' questionnaire and Students English expository text which was evaluated by an analytic scoring method.

### **3.2 Participants**

One hundred were English language and linguistics teachers in fifteen educational institutions (universities, colleges and training centres) as shown in Table 3.1 below, and ninety were Sudanese graduate and undergraduate students studying for degrees in English and Translation, and a post-graduate diploma degree in English language in 15 Sudanese universities: as shown in Table 3.2 below.

**Table (3.1): Sample of the Study: Teachers by institution**

| No.   | University                                 | No. of teachers |
|-------|--|-----------------|
| 1     | Khartoum University                        | 9               |
| 2     | Bahary University                          | 8               |
| 3     | Sudan University of Science & Technology   | 11              |
| 4     | Omdurman Islamic University                | 10              |
| 5     | Sudan College for Girls                    | 8               |
| 6     | Al-Neelain University                      | 12              |
| 7     | Sudan International University             | 7               |
| 8     | Al-Zaeem al-Azhari                         | 13              |
| 9     | University of Medical Science & Technology | 8               |
| 10    | International University Of Africa         | 10              |
| 11    | Future University                          | 7               |
| 12    | Elmanhal college                           | 8               |
| 13    | Canadian Sudanese College                  | 9               |
| 14    | National University                        | 10              |
| 15    | Ibin Sinna University                      | 9               |
| Total | 15   | 109             |

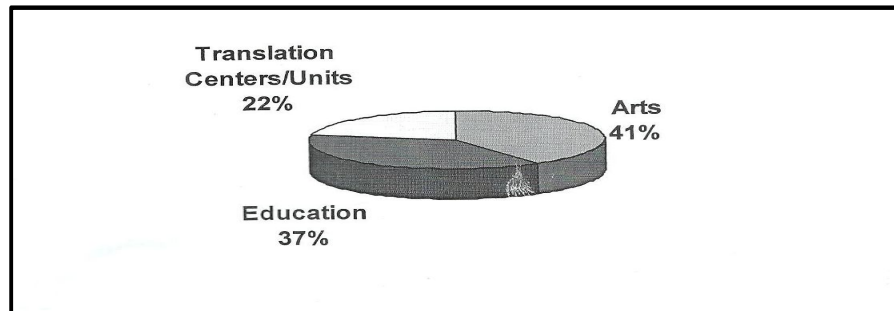
**Table (3.2): Sample of the Study: Students by institution**

| No.   | University                               | No. of students | %     | %     |
|-------|--|-----------------|-------|-------|
| 1     | Khartoum University                      | 30              | 17.8  | 18.2  |
| 2     | Bahary University                        | 63              | 37.3  | 37.3  |
| 3     | Sudan university of science & Technology | 25              | 14.8  | 19.1  |
| 4     | Sudan Interational University            | 33              | 19.5  | 15.4  |
| 5     | Omdurman Islamic University              | 18              | 10.6  | 10.0  |
| 6     | Sudan college for girls                  | 18              | 10.6  | 10.0  |
| 7     | al-Neelain university                    | 25              | 14.8  | 15.4  |
| Total | 7  | 169             | 100.0 | 100.0 |



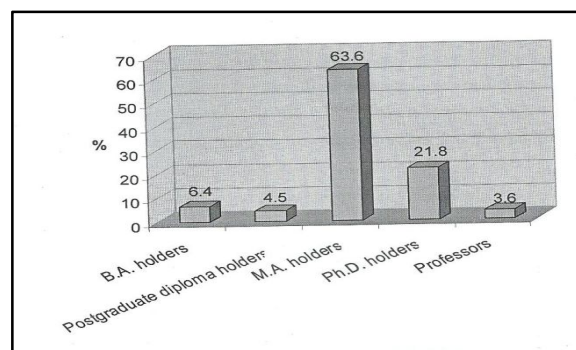
The students were drawn from the faculties of Arts (41%), Education (37%), and translation Centers (22%) of the respective universities as shown in Figure 3.3 below:

**Figure (3.1): Characteristics of the Sample (students) According to Faculties and Centers**



As stated earlier, the participants of the study also consist of one hundred and nine English language and linguistics teachers at fifteen Sudanese universities who took part in answering the questionnaire of the research . As illustrated in Figure 3.2 below, 6.4% of the teachers were B.A. holders, 4.5% were post-graduate diploma holders, 63.6% were M.A. holders, 21.8% were Ph.D. holders, and 3.6% were professors. It appears that the majority of the English language and linguistics teachers in most Sudanese universities are M.A. holders.

**Figure (3.2): Characteristics of the Respondents of the Questionnaire by qualification**



### **3.4 Instruments**

The data for this study was collected through two instruments: an English expository writing test and a questionnaire. The test was given to the students, while the questionnaire was administered to the teachers. Below is an explanation of the procedures of data collection.

#### **3.4.1 The Teachers' Questionnaire**

The goal of the questionnaire was to find out Sudanese English language university teachers' evaluative perceptions about the problematic areas that Sudanese advanced EFL writers encounter in writing in terms of the contrastive rhetoric. The researcher designed a 54-item questionnaire (see appendix A). The questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section, deals with the teachers' opinions on Arabic interference problems in Sudanese EFL graduate students' writing. The second section is concerned with logical organizational problems that Sudanese EFL writers face in writing. The third section focuses on the areas of coherence difficulties in Sudanese students' EFL writing. The fourth section intends to examine on the problems of achieving cohesion in Sudanese EFL writing.

#### **3.4.2 The Writing Test**

To carry out this test, the researcher, first, contacted the teachers of English, in the target universities (see Table 3.2) to secure their students' consent to take part in the test. all the teachers agreed to offer one of their instructional lectures to the researcher to administer a 2-hour English expository writing test..

Having succeeded in obtaining teachers'and students' agreement, the researcher went to each of the target universities to conduct the test on a previously planned

schedule. Before the commencement of the test, each teacher introduced the researcher to his/her students urging them to participate in the test as honestly as possible as it touches an area that seems to be challenging for many Sudanese EFL learners at university level.

The testees were asked to write a 250-word English essay on one of the following topic:

*1-The importance of English in today's world.*

*2-life in city versus rural*

*3- University life.*

*4- the consequences of the recent global economic crisis on people's life*

*5- the impact of swine flu on individual's movement.*

### **4.3 The Scoring Criterion for the Writing Test**

To gain more reliable and valid information about the students' written essays, an experienced ELT inter-rater was requested to take part in the scoring procedures of the essays to avoid subjective evaluation.. As far as the scoring method is concerned, each essay was divided into four components each with subcomponents. Also, a total of 100 scores were assigned for each student's essay. As such, Arabic interference problems received 30 scores, logical organization problems received 20 scores, cohesion problems received 30 scores, and coherence problems received 20 scores. Students were grouped in 3 groups randomly(A,Band C). to avoid confusion of names .The scores of these four components were based on the following writing criteria:

**A- Arabic interference problems:** in evaluating this component, a set of writing features were considered:

- 1- Too long introduction.
- 2- Absence of capitalization.
- 3- Arabic prepositions' usage.(compared to English preposition usage)
- 4- Unnecessary repetition.
- 5- Figurative language usage, which includes: exaggeration, embellishment, simile, metonymy, proverbs, and emotional tone.

**B- Logical organization problems:** in this regard, the following writing elements were evaluated:

- 1- Introduction has a clear topic sentence.
- 2- Introduction contains a controlling idea of the whole topic.
- 3- Supporting evidence.
- 4- Each paragraph has one controlling idea.
- 5- Inconsistent paragraphs.
- 6- Random shift of ideas.
- 7- Unclear conclusion.

**C- Cohesion problems:** in assessing this component, the following writing aspects were taken into account:

1- Grammatical cohesion, which incorporates:

- References: personal reference (personal pronouns, personal determiners & relative pronouns).
- Substitution: (nominal, verbal, clausal substitutions).
- Ellipsis: (nominal, verbal, clausal ellipses).
- Conjunctions: (additive, causal, temporal and adversative conjunctions).

2- Lexical cohesion, which includes:

- Repetition, synonymy, antonym and hyponymy.

**D- Coherence problems:** in evaluating this component, the two raters examined the following writing aspects:

1- Verb-noun agreement.

2- Appropriate use of subordinates.

3- Appropriate use of commas and semicolons.

4- Use of transitional expressions.

5- unnecessary repetition.

6- Consistent parallelism.

7- Literal translation.

The essays were scored independently as well as analytically by the researcher and the inter-rater. Then, the two scores were averaged for a single score (see Appendix C). Theoretically, this type of scoring method (i.e. analytic scoring) seems to be more relevant to the current study as it evaluates a number of EFL writing features, such as organization, coherence, cohesion, punctuation and so on. More importantly, what differentiates this scoring method from the holistic one is that instead of examining the whole text with a single score, the raters can focus on different dimensions and assign each a different score. Zimmaro (2004:2), for example, contends that analytic scoring is preferred over holistic scales by many writing experts for a number of reasons. First, it gives more reliable diagnostic information about learners' writing abilities.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Teachers' Questionnaire**

Validity is based on the assumption that an instrument is valid if it measures what it is intended to measure. That is to say, validity pertains to the accuracy and precision of a measure. However, a measure or test might look reliable yet might not look valid. It is sometimes assumed (Meadows & Billington, 2005: 13) that validity is more essential than reliability, because there is not point in measuring something reliable unless one is aware of what he/she is measuring.

Given the importance of validation procedures in this study, three types of validity (i.e. face, content and construct) were used. The face validity is concerned with how a measure looks. In other words, it relates to its design, reasonableness, and workability.

In terms of the content validity, the jury members commented that the questionnaire has covered all the aspects of the research questions and hypotheses in a systematically relevant fashion. As for the construct validity, the

jury members also reported that there is a consistency between the theoretical notions and the intended measuring device.

Having collected the questionnaire from the jury, substantial modifications were made. Following these observations and modifications, forty five items of the questionnaire were found to be relevant to the study. Consequently, a total of one hundred and fifty questionnaires (the final draft) were distributed to the target teachers (see Appendix B), and one hundred and nine questionnaires were returned.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Writing Test**

As for the reliability of the writing test, as mentioned earlier in 4.5, let us begin with a brief explanation of the concept itself. Generally, reliability pertains to the extent to which a test scale indicates consistent results, if the measurements are repeated several times. Setzer and He (2009) add that if a given test produces widely discrepant scores for the same testee on separate test administrations, and the testee does not change significantly on the measured attribute, therefore the scores on the test are not reliable. Nevertheless, the researcher seems to favor Meadows and Bilington's (2005) view that reliability can be perceived as an instance of the absence of error when the test is administered.

There are four different ways of evaluating reliability: test-retest, interconsistency, split half, and inter-rater reliabilities. Of these ways, the inter-rater reliability seems to be more relevant to the current study. In essence, inter-rater reliability is a statistical procedure which examines the level of agreement between two independent raters who are scoring the same test based on identical assessment criteria.

### **3.8 Summary**

This chapter described the methodology used in the present research. Thus, it focused on the description of the participants, instruments, and procedures followed in data collection process. It also tests the validity and reliability of the instruments employed in gathering the information of the research.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter is concerned with data analysis, results, and interpretations of the results on the basis of the research questions and hypotheses. In discussing these results, statistical figures in terms of frequencies and percentages will be reported for each variable of the study.

#### 4.1 . Data Analysis

A descriptive statistical analysis of the first hypothesis will be provided along with other relevant interpretational details, especially randomly chosen excerpts of the students' written test.

#### Hypothesis One

**Transfer of Arabic rhetorical techniques into English writing has a negative impact on Sudanese EFL students' English expository writing performance.**

In discussing the results of this hypothesis, elements of the following Table: (4.1 and 4.2) will be dealt with simultaneously as they revolve around the same issue: the former pertains to the results of the students' written test, while the latter is pertinent to the opinions of some Sudanese EFL university teachers (English and linguistics) on the impact of Arabic interference on the target students' English writing abilities.

**Table (4.1): Writing test results based on Arabic interference problems**

| No. | Dimension                 | Frequencies & percentages of existing instances |       |
|-----|---------------------------|---|-------|
| 1   | Too long introduction     | 61  | 55.5% |
| 2   | Absence of capitalization | 94  | 85.5% |
| 3   | Arabic performance usage  | 86  | 78.2% |
| 4   | Unnecessary repetition    | 106   | 95.4% |
| 5   | Exaggeration              | 65  | 59.1% |
| 6   | Embellishment             | 74  | 67.4% |
| 7   | Simile                    | 50  | 45.4% |
| 8   | Metonymy                  | 34  | 30.9% |
| 9   | Proverbs                  | 10  | 9.1%  |
| 10  | Emotional tone            | 78  | 70.8% |

**Table (4.2): Teachers' opinions on the students' Arabic interference problems in English writing**

| No. | Item  | Strongly agree | Agree | No opinion | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Chi-value |
|-----|---|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1.  | English and Arabic have different writing habits.   | 63.6%          | 35.5% | -          | 0.9%     | -                 | 65.1*     |
| 2.  | Different writing habits of both English and Arabic affect Sudanese English writing performance.  | 36.4%          | 55.5% | 1.80%      | 6.4%     | -                 | 85.4*     |
| 3.  | There are similarities between English and Arabic in terms of writing process.  | 27.3%          | 66.4% | 6.40%      | -        | -                 | 61.2*     |
|     |   | 30             | 73    | 7          |          |                   |           |
| 4.  | Due to unawareness of linguistic and cultural differences between English and Arabic, most Sudanese EFL learners encounter writing problems in English. | 31.8%          | 55.5% | 4.50%      | 6.4%     | 1.80%             | 118*      |
|     |   | 35             | 61    | 5          | 7        | 1                 |           |
| 5.  | In teaching, I tend to discuss the relationship between the related aspects of culture and language.  | 21.8%          | 61.8% | 10.0%      | 4.5%     | 1.80%             | 133*      |
|     |   | 24             | 68    | 11         | 5        | 2                 |           |
| 6.  | A large number of Sudanese EFL learners transfer negatively Arabic rhetorical strategies into their English writing.                                    | 32.7%          | 53.6% | 6.40%      | 7.3%     | -                 | 67.8*     |
|     |   | 36             | 59    | 7          | 8        |                   |           |
| 7.  | Sudanese EFL learners transfer positively Arabic rhetorical strategies into their English writing.  | -              | -     | 28.2%      | 23.6%    | 48.2%             | 11.3*     |
|     |   |                |       | 31         | 53       | 26                |           |
| 8.  | Arabic writing habits such as exaggeration, overstatement and generalization influence Sudanese English writing negatively.                             | 20.9%          | 1.8%  | 18.2%      | 8.2%     | 0.90%             | 83.6*     |
|     |   | 23             | 57    | 20         | 9        | 1                 |           |
| 9.  | Arabic writing features such as embellishment, simile and metonymy affect the way   | 10.9%          | 55.5% | 18.2%      | 15.5%    | -                 | 55.6*     |
|     |   | 12             | 61    | 20         | 17       |                   |           |
| 10. | A lot of Sudanese EFL learners tend to use flowery expressions in their English writing.  | 19.1%          | 42.7% | 18.2%      | 17.3     | 2.70%             | 45.5*     |
|     |   | 21             | 47    | 20         | 19       | 3                 |           |
| 11. | The Majority of the Sudanese EFL students use unrelated parallel structures excessively when writing in English.  | 17.3%          | 33.6% | 22.7%      | 23.6%    | 2.70%             | 28.2*     |
|     |   | 19             | 37    | 25         | 26       | 3                 |           |

Percentages of strongly agree and agree have been merged as a single positive response, whereas percentages of strongly disagree and disagree have also been merged as a single negative response.

Table 4.1 above shows that 95.4% of the students used instances of unnecessary repetition in writing an English expository text. They tended to repeat conjunctions such as 'and', 'also' and 'or' as the following excerpts selected randomly from the students' English writing test indicate.

1- In university life there are interact between the students because they come from **different** parts of the country **and** there will be **different** tribes **and** **different** customs **and** traditions and they learn from others (C18).

2- When we turn to the culture as a level of living, we find that most of people have well acquainted of other cultures **and** have an interaction, **and** that comes through media **and** Internet, so they opening to the world, **and** this lead to development by followed the others successful economic policy, which lead to high living (B8).

3- So in this context, I will shed light to different dimensions of university life. For example I will focus on the academic **side of university life**, cultural **side of university life**, and the social dimension **of university life** (A13).

It is natural and common in Arabic writing techniques to repeat expressions, ideas and words in one sentence as a mean of assertion. So, it can be concluded that such a problem of English writing behavior may be related to cultural peculiarity of Arabic writing system. So, as examples (1) and (2) show, the students unintentionally used the Arabic conjunction (و) (wa), which means 'and' in English several times in the same sentence, which sounds monotonous and unacceptable in English writing style, i.e. in English writing, one has to be specific, brief and meaningful.

As for the teachers' responses to this problem, 72.7% of them argue that the Arabic writing habit of repetition appears to be one of the most evident problems that face most Sudanese EFL students when writing an English expository text in English.

The findings of the study also show that absence of capitalization (85.5%) was found to be one of the major challenges that Sudanese EFL students encountered in their English writing. More precisely, only 15% of the target students were able to use capitalization correctly. Indeed, proper usage of capitalization plays a key role in written English discourse. Nevertheless, it can be argued that since Arabic writing lacks capitalization, it is possible that these students might have been influenced by this characteristic phenomenon and hence, they did not value the importance of using capital letters in their English writing. As a whole, it is worth noting that the target students did not only face difficulties in using capital letters, but also lack an adequate knowledge of employing other punctuation marks, especially commas, semicolons, periods, and colons.

### **Emotional tone**

As far as the emotional tone is concerned, it was observed that 70.8% of the students had attempted to be more impressionistic in presenting their ideas thinking that it would nudge their readers' appetite for accepting or appreciating what they have written. The following extract shows an instance of personal emotion in the students' English writing test:

*7- And the disadvantage of living in big cities may be extended the advantages. The most important one is that I feel as if those who live in cities are not Muslim for if you greet any he/she looks for you with strange look.*

As can be seen in the above example, this student tends to create a strong emotional sense while stating one of the characteristics of those who live in big cities. However, the reality is that to be effectively understood in written communication, one needs various techniques including emotional mode. Yet, imposing your own culture-based personal feelings on others would lead to misinterpretation of the intended meaning, because in most cases, emotional modes are derived from cultural norms and religious beliefs.

The findings of the study also indicate that 59.1% of the students inclined toward exaggeration, while 67.4% of them inclined toward embellishment so as to beautify their written discourse.. To explore some areas of exaggeration and embellishment in the students' written work, let us consider the following excerpts:

8- *The first day in university I had that feeling of entering a holy place but messy in the same time, because politician seniors shouting everywhere taking their flags and posters calling for thinking I have never heard. Rights, voting, union and constitutional amendments. All these things was very new for me and frightened, therefore I went home with a heavy load wondering what that life? The university is a place where you can taste different spices, views, and opinions (B27).*

9- *To sum up living in big cities is a two-edged weapon. If used well it give its fruits otherwise it will be harmful.*

10- *At day time the shining sun bits their skins with high temperature, at night no shelters they have to protect them from cold weather .*

The above examples indicate that the students used exaggerated and colorful statements (i.e. the underlined ones) to express themselves in written English. However, to someone who is unfamiliar with Arabic rhetoric, this

glamorized language seems to be hyperbolic. In the point of view of Arabic native speakers, such colorful expressions are perceived natural, because throughout history, Arab writers have been interested in using an eloquent language, particularly when describing qualities such as hospitality, bravery, honor, dignity and so on. Thus, as stated earlier, these exaggeration and embellishments -based cultural values which had been inherited since the pre-Islamic era are also still favored by most of today's Arab writers including Sudanese EFL students.

As for the exaggeration and embellishment, the results of the questionnaire reveal that only 8.92% of the teachers disagree with the notion that an Arabic writing technique of exaggeration tends to influence Sudanese EFL graduate students' English writing. Moreover, nearly 62% of the respondents think that Arabic flowery style of writing would undermine the students' English writing performance. Accordingly, what can be said here is that the students' writing test results appear to be congruent with the teachers' opinions on the difficulties that encounter the target students when writing an English expository text.

### **Figurative language**

In respect of the figurative language usage, the findings indicate that 45.4% of the students used the Arabic rhetorical technique of 'simile'. While 30.9% of them attempted to use Arabic metonymy in their English expository texts. Below are some instances of Arabic simile transfer into the students' English writing:

*11- So communication its not an easy as we imagine its very broad bridge between the nations, so a man with different culture he is completely different*

*from other because he know, how to deal with other in civilize way without injuring his feeling (C16).*

*12- If citizen is from roral, he will waite the end week to go home, so as to get rid of living in this great prison (B16).*

*13- Life in a big city give you imagination you live in a paradise (A52).*

*14- So within short time big city turn to a bee cell, that will raised crime level and occurring, unsafety even when people are inside their houses, big number of homeless beggars of men, women other than the her borns (B4).*

*15- so I can say that life in big city is the sword with two faces. Either to enjoy it and take it is value or to be destroyed by the life in city (A23).*

What can be noticed from these extracts is that despite of some spelling and grammar errors, Sudanese EFL students tend to employ Arabic aspects of simile and metonymy in their English writing. The first student (C16), for instance, used the word "bridge" to refer to the complex nature of communication between the different nations, which looks incorrect in English. At the same time, the student also exhibited an instance of Arabic simile: by using the phrase ;without' injuring his feelings', which seems well in Arabic writing meaning that while dealing with different cultures, one has to consider other people's norms, beliefs and attitudes (i.e. feelings). However, in English, it is strange to use such an expression, because feelings as an abstract entity cannot be injured. Similarly, the other four students (B16, A52, B4 and A36) used some cases of Arabic simile and antonym: a prison, a paradise, a bee cell, and a sword with two faces respectively. Yet, of these instances, simile instances seem to surpass metonymy ones. This can be referred to the fact that images of simile are often more present in Arabic contexts in the sense that many Arab poets and writers of the past were overwhelmingly impressed by the discoursal patterns of simile in shaping ideas

implicitly in particular milieus such as using lion to denote a conduct of bravery, deer to pertain to a sweetheart, an ostrich to relate to cowardice, etc.

Finally, the findings of this part of the study show that only 9.1% of the students were found to have used Arabic proverbs in their English writing.

### 4.3 Logical Organization Problems

#### Hypothesis Two

*Sudanese EFL students face logical organization problems in writing an English expository text.*

To examine this hypothesis, statistical results of Tables 4.4 and 4.5 below will be taken into account.

**Table (4.3): English writing test's result based on logical organization problems**

| N | Item  | Frequencies | Yes % | Frequencies | No % |
|---|---|-------------|-------|-------------|------|
| 1 | Introduction has a clear topic sentence                     | 77          | 70.0  | 33          | 30.0 |
| 2 | Introduction contains a controlling idea of the whole topic | 56          | 50.9  | 54          | 49.1 |
| 3 | Supporting evidence is clear                                | 69          | 62.7  | 41          | 37.3 |
| 4 | Each paragraph has one controlling idea                     | 23          | 20.9  | 87          | 79.1 |
| 5 | Inconsistent paragraphs                                     | 83          | 75.5  | 27          | 24.5 |
| 6 | Random shift of ideas                                       | 86          | 78.2  | 24          | 21.8 |
| 7 | Unclear conclusion  | 77          | 70.0  | 33          | 30.0 |



**Table (4.4): Teachers' opinions on the students' logical organization problems in English writing**

| No. | Item   | Strongly agree | Agree | No opinion | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Chi-value |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 12. | Many Sudanese EFL learners encounter serious problems in producing a well-organized written text in English.                                     | 50.9%          | 43.6% | 1.8%       | 3.6%     | -                 | 88.5*     |
|     |  | 56             | 48    | 2          | 4        |                   |           |
| 13. | Sudanese EFL learners usually find it difficult to write a meaningful topic sentence.  | 30.9%          | 51.8% | 4.5%       | 12.7%    | -                 | 58.2*     |
|     |  | 34             | 57    | 5          | 14       |                   |           |
| 14. | When Sudanese EFL learners engage in English writing, their introductions seem to be too long.   | 16.4%          | 36.4% | 22.7%      | 23.6%    | 0.9%              | 36.6*     |
|     |  | 18             | 40    | 25         | 26       | 1                 |           |
| 15. | The opening paragraph of most Sudanese EFL learners fails to include the controlling idea of the whole topic.                                    | 29.1%          | 46.4% | 11.8%      | 10.9%    | 1.8%              | 69.2*     |
|     |  | 32             | 51    | 13         | 12       | 2                 |           |
| 16. | When writing a paragraph in English, most Sudanese EFL learners' topic sentences lack supporting evidence.                                       | 31.8%          | 45.5% | 10.0%      | 11.8%    | 0.9%              | 72.5*     |
|     |  | 35             | 50    | 11         | 13       | 1                 |           |
| 17. | Sudanese EFL learners usually include more than one central idea in one English paragraph.   | 25.5%          | 47.3% | 15.5%      | 11.8%    | -                 | 33.5*     |
|     |  | 28             | 52    | 17         | 13       |                   |           |
| 18. | A great number of Sudanese EFL writers shift randomly from one idea to another, making the whole text sounds inconsistent.                       | 25.5%          | 58.2% | 8.2%       | 7.3%     | 0.9%              | 118.5*    |
|     |  | 28             | 64    | 9          | 8        | 1                 |           |
| 19. | When writing in English, most Sudanese EFL writers concentrate on mechanics and grammar rather than on writing as a process of different stages. | 17.3%          | 55.5% | 10.9%      | 16.4%    | -                 | 55.5*     |
|     |  | 19             | 61    | 12         | 18       |                   |           |
| 20. | A lot of Sudanese EFL writers find it difficult to make a clear conclusion.  | 15.5%          | 49.1% | 11.8%      | 20.9%    | 2.7%              | 67.8*     |
|     |  | 17             | 54    | 13         | 23       | 3                 |           |

As shown in Table 4.4, the majority of the students (70.0%) were able to state clearly a topic sentence in their introductory paragraph. In other words, only 30% of their essays were found to be without clear topic sentences.

As presented in Table 4.5, almost 83% of the respondents agree that Sudanese EFL students usually find it difficult to write a meaningful topic sentence when composing an English expository text. Given this, it would be fair to say that this difficulty seems to have made the students to write too long introductory paragraphs when engaging in English writing.

Moving on to the problem of a controlling idea of the whole text in the students' written essays, the findings reveal that nearly half (49.1%) of the students could not be able to provide the controlling idea of the whole composition as can be seen in the above extracts (C16, B14, and B27) in which the students violated the concept of overall controlling idea by having a group of ideas in one paragraph. Indeed, without a clear controlling idea of the whole text, readers will become distracted for it would be hard to differentiate which of the provided ideas is the central one. As can be seen in the following extracts from students essays:

*18- I'm very glad to address you this morning to tell you about the title above mentioned which is very important for the human being nowadays (C16).*

*19- I chose this topic because it's has a big influence in my life. I worked for Arab Authority for agriculture and development for five months and half, and when this crisis happened, the organization was obliged to dismiss some of employees and I was one of them (B14).*

*20- I was so excited the moment that the investigators announced that we should put the pens downs at the last session of the Sudanese secondary certificate. I could say it was a moment of highly mixed feelings, delight, fear, hesitation, and hope (B27).*

It was realized that 79% of the students' essays examined, included more than one controlling idea. That is, only few of their essays were met the requirements of a central idea in the development of an English paragraph. Moreover, the results of the teachers' questionnaire also show that approximately 76% of the target teachers believe that the opening paragraphs of most Sudanese EFL graduate students fail to include the central idea of the whole text. This opinion, of course, supports the students' writing test results, which have been discussed above that the students seem to lack a better understanding of the role of a controlling idea in English writing.

What has been noticed in the students' English writing test is that it is very difficult to identify the main central idea in their paragraphs as they include a series of thoughts almost on equal basis, i.e. each paragraph tends to describe more than one or two point of view.

One of the apparent results of the study is that most of the students have produced inconsistent paragraphs. In other words, only 25% of them were found to have written meaningful paragraphs in English and accordingly, it can be argued that such inconsistent instances of paragraph organization may be attributed to their misunderstanding of the essence of a paragraph in English writing. Most of them did not care about the logical sequence of the paragraphs: they only put emphasis on the quantity of the paragraphs. 63% of them were able to develop the topic sentence of the paragraph by employing various rhetorical strategies of paragraph expansion such as exemplification, elaboration, inductive/deductive methods, analogies, and so forth. Nevertheless, although most of the students succeeded in providing supporting information when developing the paragraphs, many of them appeared to have problems of random

shift of ideas. To illustrate this claim, the following extracts taken randomly from the students' English writing test:

*21- WHO has distributed a regular circular to announce about this disease. So that the government should take action, the Sudanese economy has influenced by this disease. Many cases have diagnosed in Khartoum and other States. To some extent they have faught some cases. Any way, it isn't the first time for RVF to appear in Sudan. It is appeared in early seventies. Swine Flu if we look at the dictionary, swine means disgust, it is something filthy and dirty. They have launched the name recently for the pig. The first case has announced in Mexico then Cuba then some of South American countries (A1).*

*22- But the disadvantages of the life in the cities it depend on few points as discipline of children out of schools and related with bad street boies, and corruption, watching bad cunal (shops) in TV and feed the socity by bad habits and traditional of ather community and the educational, economic, cultural, religion crisis that effected the forgen world.*

*Therefore, air pollution of industrial ereas in the cities is also disadvantages of living in big cities and interference religones, and traditional and habits is effected each ather from time to time. also it changing generation dynamically and also people of cities they cannot help each other because their life depend on individual*

In common sense, the rhetorical technique of ideas' consistency is considered to be fundamental in the organization of any written text. Yet, the above examples show that the students exhibited problems of random shift of ideas while writing their English expository texts. As for the first student (A1), she/he started the paragraph with the WHO's warning against the disease without specifying what type of disease is. Then, the writer abruptly slipped into the point of Sudanese economy's influence due to this disease, also without giving any

details on the way it has been affected. Moving into the phrase 'they have fought (fought) some cases', one may wonder what the pronoun 'they' refers to: to WHO authority, or the government officials, or Khartoum State authorities. Moreover, just before the end of the paragraph, the writer managed to define the disease. In fact, it would have been better if such a definition had been provided in the beginning of the paragraph, because it would make the reader feel that the ideas are united and understandable.

Similarly, indicators of a random shift of ideas can be seen in the second student's (C3) extract. For example, apart from many grammatical errors, the student started the paragraph by listing disadvantages of living in a big city, but his/her random arrangement of ideas made the whole paragraph look vague, especially when the words education, religion, economy, and cultures have been considered as a negative aspects. That is to say, no one would imagine that these aspects can turn to be disadvantages of living in a big city. Further more, the student started the second paragraph by a rhetorical pattern of cause: an adverbial conjunctive 'therefore'. Apparently, it seems that this conjunctive has been misused as there is no an explicit relationship between this paragraph and its predecessor, i.e. the air pollution is a result of already mentioned factors in the previous paragraph. Nevertheless, those factors have nothing to do with the air pollution. Moreover, it is also very difficult to predict what the student means by "also it changing generation dynamically and also people of cities .....)". So, the pronoun 'it' does not make any sense as it may refer to the air pollution, or a big city, or interaction of religions, or even the tradition. Broadly speaking, it can be argued that Sudanese EFL graduate students faced difficulties in presenting their ideas consistently, the reason why readers may get confused as the ideas seem to be fragmented in their sequential order.

## **Unclear conclusion**

The final problem of logical organization to be investigated is an 'unclear conclusion'. A clear conclusion also plays an essential role in one's written text's meaning. In other words, a clear conclusion will speak for itself, because it will encourage the reader to be satisfied with the overall meaning of the text. Relatively, the findings of the results indicate that 70% of the students encountered difficulties when concluding their essays. Also, as table 4.5 shows, 65% of the teachers think that a lot of Sudanese EFL students find it difficult to make a clear conclusion.

*23- The topic is very interesting but we lack time and it is my first day as a teacher in my school so I stop here (A12).*

*24- University life is different in tier attention and way of study (A20).*

*25- Big city's advantages reflects its disadvantages for example, technology waste time (B12).*

*26- In conclusion I can say, it is the responsibility of parents to take care of their children to live a better life, not only to imitate others but to teach them about the culture. An if you work hard, life is not difficult in the city, with your many (may be he/she mean money) you can overcome all types or kind of difficulties that would face you. If you are a hard worker or prise person you can end up a thief or a street boy/girl. And there many of them in big cities (C1).*

## **4.4 Cohesion Problems**

### **Hypothesis Three**

***Lack of cohesion knowledge characterizes Sudanese EFL students' English expository writing*** To discuss this hypothesis, the following two Tables will be considered.

**Table (4.5) Cohesive ties used by the students in English writing test**

| No.   | Grammatical cohesive ties | Frequencies | Percentages |
|-------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1     | Personal reference        | 615         | 15.92       |
| 2     | Demonstrative reference   | 368         | 9.53        |
| 3     | Comparative reference     | 609         | 15.77       |
| 4     | Nominal substitution      | 226         | 5.85        |
| 5     | Verbal substitution       | 230         | 5.96        |
| 6     | Clausal substitution      | 185         | 4.79        |
| 7     | Nominal ellipsis          | 86          | 2.23        |
| 8     | Verbal ellipsis           | 115         | 2.98        |
| 9     | Clausal ellipsis          | 81          | 2.10        |
| 10    | Additive conjunctions     | 342         | 8.86        |
| 11    | Causal conjunctions       | 161         | 4.17        |
| 12    | Temporal conjunctions     | 105         | 2.72        |
| 13    | Adversative conjunctions  | 28          | 0.73        |
| No.   | Lexical cohesive ties     |             |             |
| 14    | Repetition                | 256         | 6.63        |
| 15    | Synonyms                  | 98          | 2.54        |
| 16    | Antonyms                  | 252         | 6.53        |
| 16    | Hyponyms                  | 105         | 2.72        |
| Total |                           | 3862        | 100.00      |

**Table (4.6): Teachers' opinions on the students' cohesion problems**

| No. | Item   | Strongly agree | Agree | No opinion | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Chi-value |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 21. | Cohesion is a very difficult task for most Sudanese EFL writers.   | 40.9%          | 53.6% | 0.9%       | 4.5%     | -                 | 91.2*     |
|     |  | 45             | 59    | 1          | 5        |                   |           |
| 22. | Many Sudanese EFL learners find it difficult in using referents when writing in English.                           | 19.1%          | 53.6% | 18.2%      | 9.1%     | -                 | 50.8*     |
|     |  | 21             | 59    | 20         | 10       |                   |           |
| 23. | I usually find it difficult to realize instances of substitution and ellipsis in Sudanese English writing.         | 16.4%          | 45.5% | 21.8%      | 16.4%    | -                 | 25.4*     |
|     |  | 18             | 50    | 24         | 18       |                   |           |
| 24. | The bulk of Sudanese EFL learners feel confused with the usage of English connectors.                              | 21.8%          | 60.9% | 9.1%       | 7.3%     | 0.9%              | 127.7*    |
|     |  | 24             | 67    | 10         | 8        | 1                 |           |
| 25. | Many Sudanese EFL learners overuse English connectors when writing in English.                                     | 16.4%          | 42.7% | 12.7%      | 27.3%    | 0.9%              | 55.0*     |
|     |  | 18             | 47    | 14         | 30       | 1                 |           |
| 26. | When writing in English, a considerable number of Sudanese EFL writers experience problems in using collocations.  | 30.0%          | 48.2% | 11.8%      | 8.2%     | 1.8%              | 78.7*     |
|     |  | 33             | 53    | 13         | 9        | 2                 |           |
| 27. | Most Sudanese EFL learners do not use lexical cohesion aspects such as repetition, synonymy, antonym and hyponymy. | 23.6%          | 50.0% | 12.7%      | 12.7%    | 0.9%              | 76.1*     |
|     |  | 26             | 55    | 14         | 14       | 1                 |           |
| 28. | General-specific and part-whole relations tend to be absent in most Sudanese English writing.                      | 16.4%          | 41.8% | 24.5%      | 13.6%    | 3.6%              | 45.0*     |
|     |  | 18             | 46    | 27         | 15       | 4                 |           |



#### 4.4.1 Grammatical Cohesion Problems

Grammatical cohesion problems which will be investigated in this study include reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction. Concerning the problems of reference cohesive ties, the results indicate that of the three references examined, the students seemed to have more problems in using demonstrative references. That is, only 9.53% of them were able to use this type of cohesive tie appropriately. In terms of personal and comparative references, the findings reveal that there were no significant differences in the use of these two references, i.e. in both cases nearly 16% of the students were found to have employed proper personal and comparative references. In general, these percentages show that the students lack proficiency in the use of reference cohesive ties despite the fact that references are assumed to be the most common ones as compared to other types of cohesive devices.

Below is an example of one of the target students' EFL writing technique indicating misuse of cohesive ties:

*27- University life require specific requirements needs more responsibility, and more attention for **their** study, and I think firstly the student need to prepare **himself** before enter the university in **their** secondary school must try to culture himself must learn how to read before go to the university the student must discover **himself his** ability, **their** choices mustn't be randomly just according to their degree in secondary school, simple because it effect **their** study and emotion in the university (A20).*

Apart from many grammatical errors, one can also add that the above example lacks a clear sequence of semantic relations due to misuse of some cohesive devices. As a result of this misuse, it is apparent that reader may find it difficult to follow the flow of ideas with ease. For instance, the first pronoun 'their', it is not known if it has been used as a cataphoric reference to refer to the

student. Thus, if it is so, the noun 'student' should have been used in plural (i.e. students), but what is bizarre here is that the noun 'student' has been used in singular. In general, the writer randomly used pronouns such as "their", "himself" and "his" without paying consideration to identification of the antecedents.

As shown in Table 4.7, the teachers' questionnaire results show that almost 73% of the respondents agree that a lot of Sudanese EFL students are unaware of most English cohesive ties. Interestingly enough, their standpoint appears to be consistent with the outcome of the results of the students' writing test analysis.

In regard to substitution cohesive ties, as demonstrated in Table 4.6, there are no significant differences in the use of correct substitutions.

Typically, the three types (nominal, verbal & clausal) seem to be similar in percentages: nearly 6% of the students were found to be able to use these substitutions adequately in their written English texts. Yet, compared to reference cohesive ties, the findings signal that the students seemed to have a low level of proficiency in the use of substitutions.

Table 4.6 also shows that there are very few occurrences of elliptic instances in the students' English writing test. That is, only 2% of the students were able to use nominal and clausal ellipses, whereas nearly 3% of them used verbal ellipsis. To discuss this problem in a more detailed way, the following samples extracted randomly from one of the target students' English writing test:

*28- Therefore, such people prefer living in big cities whereas recreation facilities are available. Putting in mind, the Western country or specially the londonian ones, services are expensive to a variety of reasons (B6).*

*29- Whatever it is, view differ. Some are fond of urban areas while other see the opposite aspect (B6).*

It can be noticed that there is evidence of ellipsis in the above samples: "**ones**" in the first sample and "**other**" in the second one.

Generally, the students' low usage of ellipses may either be attributed to the fact that they find it difficult to practice this stylistic characteristic in their English writing; or they may see it unnecessary to show instances of ellipsis and even substitution, but the latter prognosis is more probable. This in mind, some researchers (e.g. McCarthy, 1991) suggest that, to some extent, ellipsis is a writer's choice and not a compelling feature.

As for the conjunctions, the results indicate that there are significant differences between the four categories examined. More than 9% of the students' essays rated, included correct additive conjunctions, while only 4.17% of casual conjunctions were accurately employed by the students. Evidently, the logical connector 'and' was found to be the most used cohesive conjunction to the extent that sometimes a sense of redundancy or confusion is created. As mentioned earlier, this might confirm that these students seemed to have been influenced by Arabic rhetorical pattern (و) "wa", which is similar to 'and' in English. Moreover, Table 4.6 shows that the students appeared to have very little knowledge about the use of both temporal and adversative conjunctions. In other words, their EFL writing test's results provide that approximately 3% of them employed temporal conjunctions, while only 0.73% of them used adversative ones. To have a clear idea about this type of writing problem, let us examine the following two extracts taken from the students' English writing test:

30- So, during the time of university many things is going to face you as a students. **However**, you are actually going to meet new faces from different places, and **otherwise** you are also going to meet new cultures and traditions that you ever seen in your hall life (C10).

ad' 31- The term 'city' refers to a big town which has qualifications **rather** than others, such as Khartoum city (A25).

begins with this adversative (however) and the first sentence which begins with 'so', during the time of ....'). That is, one may fall into a trap that the student is going to offer a contrastive idea, but the reality is that the two sentences seem to incorporate the same idea: things a university student may face them. Furthermore, the same student tends to use the contrastive adversative 'otherwise', but still there is no tendency for a contrast between the two ideas or things. With regard to the second example, despite the fact that the student managed to use a correction adversative 'rather', but he/she failed to provide the other side of the picture: the reader may not, but actually, cannot be able to guess what the phrase "than others" stands for. So, it is clear that adversatives are assumed to be the most problematic area which has been noticed in the students' English writing performance test. That is, almost two in five students' essays rated, lacked most types of adversative conjunctions such as contrastive, correction and dismissal.

To sum up, of the four grammatical cohesive ties investigated, the results show that adversative conjunctions are the most daunting problems that faced the target students followed by ellipsis, substitutions and reference respectively.

#### **4.4.2 Lexical Cohesion Problems**

Lexical cohesion is thought to be necessary in written English discourse since it provides how lexical cohesive relations operate in the text structure. Thus, this section intends to shed light on the Sudanese EFL graduate students' ability in using lexical cohesion elements when composing an English expository text. Table 4.6 indicates that the target students experienced problems in the use of repetition and antonym cohesive ties: there are no significant differences in the use of these two categories. Comparatively, synonyms and hyponyms were

less used, that is, nearly 3% of the students were able to use these two cohesive ties. Of course, one can say that the students lack rich vocabulary, which enables them to use lexical items interchangeably in terms of semantic equivalents and opposites.

Moreover, the reason why most of the target students faced problems in the use of hyponyms is that, as noticed in their essays, most of them confused between inductive and deductive relations. In other words, many of them tended to start a paragraph th a part-whole sense and suddenly jump to a whole-part relation, which, no doubt, will affect readers' progression of ideas. Relatively, responses to the teachers' questionnaire show that many Sudanese EFL graduate students rarely use lexical cohesion items of repetition, synonymy, antonym and hyponymy. In addition, more than half of the teachers also claim that hyponymy-hyponymy relations appear to be absent in most Sudanese EFL writing contexts. So, once again it could be said that there is a consistency between the students' EFL writing results and the questionnaire results. In conclusion, the ratio of correctly used cohesive ties is very small compared to the number of words used by each student in the writing test, which indicates that the majority of the students lack a better understanding of cohesive elements.

## **4.5 Coherence Problems**

### **Hypothesis Five**

**Lack of coherence knowledge characterizes Sudanese EFL students' English expository writing performance.**

To thoroughly highlight the results of this hypothesis, interpretations of the following two Tables 4.8 and 4.9 will be taken into consideration.

**Table (4.8): Coherence aspects examined in the students' English writing test**

| No. | Coherence aspect                         | Frequencies | Percentages |
|-----|--|-------------|-------------|
| 1   | Verb-noun agreement                      | 328         | 17.88       |
| 2   | Appropriate use of subordinates          | 204         | 11.12       |
| 3   | Appropriate use of commas and semicolons | 388         | 21.16       |
| 4   | Use of transitional expressions          | 287         | 15.65       |
| 5   | Necessary repetition                     | 83          | 4.53        |
| 6   | consistent parallelism                   | 86          | 4.69        |
| 7   | Literal translation                      | 458         | 24.97       |
|     | Total                                    | 1834        | 100.00      |

**Table (4.9): Teachers' opinions on the students' coherence problems**

| No. | Item   | Strongly agree | Agree | No opinion | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Chi-value |
|-----|--|----------------|-------|------------|----------|-------------------|-----------|
| 29. | Sudanese English writing usually lacks verb and pronoun agreement.   | 21.8           | 59.1  | 5.5        | 12.7     | 0.9               | 118.8*    |
|     |  | 24             | 65    | 6          | 14       | 1                 |           |
| 30. | Sudanese EFL graduate students find it difficult to use subordinate clauses in English writing.                              | 21.8           | 59.1  | 10.9       | 8.2      | -                 | 72.8*     |
|     |  | 24             | 65    | 12         | 9        |                   |           |
| 31. | Most Sudanese EFL learners are unaware of transitional words and phrases in English writing.                                 | 26.4           | 56.4  | 9.1        | 8.2      | -                 | 66.9*     |
|     |  | 29             | 62    | 10         | 9        |                   |           |
| 32. | English expository texts written by Sudanese EFL graduate students often lack necessary repetition of key words and phrases. | 31.8           | 56.4  | 7.3        | 3.6      | 0.9               | 124.1*    |
|     |  | 35             | 62    | 8          | 4        | 1                 |           |
| 33. | Sudanese EFL graduate students often miss or misuse commas and semicolons when writing in English.                           | 22.7           | 38.2  | 26.4       | 7.3      | 5.5               | 41.4*     |
|     |  | 25             | 42    | 29         | 8        | 6                 |           |
| 34. | Most Sudanese EFL graduate students tend to translate when writing in English.   | 57.3           | 37.3  | 3.6        | 1.8      | -                 | 96.2*     |
|     |  | 63             | 41    | 4          | 2        |                   |           |
| 35. | Sudanese EFL written work usually lacks parallel constructions within sentences.   | 18.2           | 55.5  | 13.6       | 12.7     | -                 | 55.2*     |
|     |  | 20             | 61    | 15         | 14       |                   |           |
| 36. | Most Sudanese EFL learners have not been taught functions of coherence in English writing.                                   | 20.9           | 29.1  | 11.8       | 25.5     | 12.7              | 12.8*     |
|     |  | 23             | 32    | 13         | 28       | 14                |           |

\*indicates the results are significant at 5%

The above Table (4.8) shows that significant differences in terms of coherence aspects can be identified in the target students' English writing test. Apparently, of the seven coherence aspects examined, the results indicate that the students experienced great difficulties in dealing with both necessary repetition and consistent parallelism. Indeed, repeating the key words or phrases is

recommended in EFL expository writing, but when this repetition exceeds its usual limits, it becomes indifferent and boring. So, what has been observed in the writing test is that although most of them inclined toward too much repetition, only less than 5% of them were found to be able to repeat the key words or phrases. By the same token, the findings of the questionnaire also reveal that quite a significant number of the respondents (88.2%) agree that English expository essays written by Sudanese EFL students often lack necessary repetition of principal words and phrases.

As noted earlier (cf. 4.3.2), the students' unintentional instances of repetition can be referred to the interference of Arabic rhetorical techniques. For example, Conner (1996) asserts that an Arabic written text includes ideas that can be developed through patterns of repetition in the sense of co-reference of the theme repeated in sentence after sentence, in addition to repetition of words. Given the target students' L1 writing techniques impact, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to differentiate between cases of necessary and redundant repetitions, as a result of which the whole written prose may turn to be a heap of unrelated sentences and paragraphs and thus, creating a situation of tautology.

Evidence of poor parallelism was also seen in most of the students' written essays. That is, nearly 5% of them have succeeded in formulating consistent parallel structures within and between the sentences to give a rhythmic movement between ideas. In general, parallelism can be perceived as not so essential as other grammatical factors such as subject-verb agreement in English writing, but it helps writers handle their sentences in the process of composing. However, what has been noticed in the target students' written essay is that they lack elements with which writers normally introduce parallel clauses, i.e. such as 'not only .... but also, neither ... nor, either ... or, not ... but', etc. To illustrate



some cases of non-parallelism in the students' writing test, consider the following examples:

*32- I found myself in the last year very busy with researchers and projects, we become small group at the last year seeing students struggling in their academic work and leaving university because they failed in exam and subexam (B27).*

*33- Any way I enjoy myself in that time in my university and we worked a lot to succeed (A30).*

*34- Above of that there are a lot of factories which it leads to pollution which it made a lot of people search fresh air (A52).*

In the above examples, the students violated one of the basic notions of parallelism that the same word forms (e.g. verbs, adjectives, nouns) should be repeated in the same manner to give the same meaning. Nevertheless, what is evident in the three examples is that the students failed to follow the same tense pattern and consequently, a reader may feel a sense of disunity between the clauses. For instance, in the case of the first student (B27), he/she mentioned that last year he/she was busy with research and project, but the parallel clause is in the present simple tense, so there is a kind of illogical shift of tense, which causes incoherence. Similar poor parallel constructions can be noticed in the other two examples: 28 and 29. As for the findings of the questionnaire in this regard, it was found that more than 74% of the respondents believe that Sudanese EFL written discourse often lacks consistent parallel constructions within the sentences. Thus, there is also a strong correlation between the teachers' viewpoints and the findings of the students' English writing test.

The third most frequent coherence problem which appeared in the students' writing analysis was tense and noun agreement. If one must say the

obvious, only 18% of the target students were found to be able to show verb-noun agreement symmetry in the English writing test. As such, it can be argued that although noun-verb agreement is one of the simplest phenomena of discourse, whether written or spoken, many Sudanese EFL graduate students failed to cope with this phenomenon.. In terms of the questionnaire's results, almost 81% of the teachers attribute Sudanese EFL graduate students' coherence problems in English writing to lack of tense and noun agreement. However, to prove these claims, let us consider some extracts from the students' English expository writing test:

36- *These town has advantage and disadvantage, from its advantage its very easy for the people to fulfill any of social scheme in limit period by assisting themselves, also the ideas of people who are living in the town is very good and assist in progressing and to be advanced in each field (C17)*

37- *People always lives in cities, towns, villages or even they are nomads moving from place to place.*

38- *although a big cities have several advantages it has many disadvantages, as a matter of fact cities inhabitants are suffering from accidents which kill tens of people on bus as a daily programme.*

Considering these samples, it appears that the students' biggest difficulty, the elephant in the dining room, of noun-verb agreement is mainly centered on the third person situations. However, besides that, it has been found that students encountered some difficulties in the relationship between verbs, pronouns and adjectives. Of course, in discussing some of the previous parts of the study, we have attributed the contributing reasons for the target students' English writing problems to the styles governing Arabic writing. Yet, what can be seen here is that apart from some instances of adjective-noun order of Arabic found in some

of the students' essays, there is no much Arabic interference. In the light of this, one could conclude that the students' inability of noun-verb agreement might be due to a lack of understanding the basic grammatical rules of English language. Another possible reason is that the students might consider such errors as trivial reflections of any written discourse, and therefore do not assign much attention to them, but in reality they are at the center of the text meaning they might stray a reader from understanding the major theme of the written text

As for the appropriate usage of subordination, the findings of the study indicate that most of the students did find it difficult to balance between the ideas of the main and subordinate clauses, which in terms led to incoherent set of sentences muddling up readers' minds. Generally speaking, the main focus here is to scrutinize the extent to which the target students have been able to maintain logical relationships that exist between the dependent clause and independent, because using incorrect subordinating conjunctions could detract from the sentence unity. Thus, the writing test results show that 11.12% of the students used subordination to specify the relative significance of parts of sentences. In other words, they chose the subordinating conjunctions that are relevant to the relationship (paratactic & hypotactic) between the two clauses. In terms of the questionnaire, the results indicate that 81% of the respondents agree that many Sudanese EFL learners exhibit problems when using subordinate clauses in English writing. To testify some areas of the target students' shortcomings in using logical subordination, consider the following excerpts:

39- **(Illogical)** *Although* people are different, they are in need of communication (A14).

**(Logical)** *Because* people are different, they are in need of communication (**shows reason or cause**)

41- **(Illogical)** *Though* several services are accessible, but problems are existing (B6).

**(Logical)** *Though* several services are accessible, problems are still exiting (**shows contrast**).

42- **(Illogical)** *Because* university life include all kind of the societies and collected in one place and you can introduce yourself with them (C15).

A part from subordinating conjunctions that signal contrast and cause relations, other subordinators were found to be very rare in the students' English writing test. In fact, most of the students have used coordinating conjunctions such ('and', 'but' and 'yet') instead of using subordinating conjunctions. This is, as stated earlier, because Arab EFL learners are influenced by an excessive use of coordinating conjunctions.

Another coherence problem that has been noticed in the students' English writing test is that most of them were not able to use transitional expressions to create coherence and consistency in their English writing. Therefore, the results indicate that only 15.65% of the students were able to employ correct transitional words in order to show relationships among ideas and sentences. At the same time, respondents (82.8%) of the questionnaire observe that most Sudanese EFL students are unaware of the role of transitional words and phrases in English writing. Again, there is congruence between two results (questionnaire and writing test) that the students exhibited poor command of transitional expressions in written English communication. To illustrate an example of absence of transitions in the students' English writing test, consider the following extract:

*43- The university is a place where you can taste different spice, views and options. And the only one thing that made me unhappy the first year that seniors used Barloum which means new student, and it has another meaning "silly", however the first year passed quickly and we moved to the second year with a lot of discontinued students the thing that made me confident to score high marks. I became popular and well known and knew more friends and we established small society involved in many occasions like welcoming new students or a cultural programme then life become sweet. Exams was a nightmare for the other but for me it was an entertainment.*

*Generally I knew how thing was going on in the university and what did I want to be in future. So I sticked to the library reading references in social science and politics beside my specialized study. Time was running quickly and suddenly I found myself in the last year very busy with researches and projects, we become small group at the last year seeing students struggling in their academic work and leaving university because they failed in exam and subexam, when I finished my studies successfully and the time of graduation come and I was hoppy and proud.*

Obviously, there is a lack of transitions between the sentences of the above extract. For example, after the first sentence in the first paragraph, the writer could have used a clarification transition (e.g. *that is, other words, that is to say*, etc.) to explain in what way the university life is different. Having done that, the writer could have also employed an emphasis transition (e.g. *in fact, indeed*, etc.) to link the second sentence's (in the first paragraph) idea to the previous one. Also, prior to the sentence 'I became popular', a result transition can be used to tell that due unpleasant incidents which took place in the first year, the writer turned to become unhappy. Moreover, the end of the first paragraph can be developed as a separate paragraph, and therefore to be preceded by a contrast transition. For the most part, in the remaining two paragraphs, there are only three transitions (and, so, and because) between the sentences. In reality, this number seems to be small compared to the total number words used in these two paragraphs. Based on these results, it can be said that Sudanese EFL graduate students face problems when using transitional expressions in English writing.

The appropriate use of commas and semicolons was also found to be one of the serious problems that Sudanese EFL graduate students encountered in their English writing. Only 21.16% of them used commas and semicolons properly. Again, this percentage indicates that the majority of the target students lack a better understanding of punctuation aspects in English writing, namely commas and semicolons, which would enhance their overall writing coherence, and therefore enable the readers to pursue the flow of ideas.

Broadly speaking, punctuation can be considered as an element of textual cohesion that plays an important role in determining the meaning of a text. Minelli (2005), for example, suggests that punctuation acts at the syntactical,

semantic and pragmatic levels, all of which are believed to attain both the cohesion and coherence (to some extent) of the text.

As reflected in Table 4.9, more than half of the respondents confirm that Sudanese EFL graduate students often miss or misuse commas and semicolons when writing in English. Considering this, one can also add that while rating the students' English writing test, it became evident that the students are unaware of most English punctuation marks. That is to say, in some occasions one cannot identify the controlling idea of a paragraph due to the random use of several sentences without using punctuation marks. For more details in this regard, consider the following examples taken from the students' writing test:

44- *On the other hand living in big cities has its advantages. As a mater of fact always big shopping centers are found in big cities (A2).*

45- *Secondly big cities associated with different crimes. In other words you can't live or even move savelly (A47).*

46- *In conclusion I can say, it's the responsibility of parents, to take care of children to live a better life, not only to imitate others but to teach them about the culture (C1).*

47- *The most important reason for this is to avoid pollution. First environmental pollution; where they can have fresh healthy air (A2).*

48- *In spite of this easy, and excellent standard of living, and high quality of life there are disadvantages: cities are crowded because of traffic number of cars and people (B13).*

As can be seen in the above examples, the students failed to use commas. Most importantly, after each of the underlined words, a comma should have been used to show parts of the sentences. Surprisingly, some commas were used redundantly by these students, especially in sample 42. In general, what has been noticed in the students' written is that semicolons were almost rare in addition to

the fact that most of them confused between the usage of commas and semicolons as shown in example 43.

### **Literal translation**

Finally, literal translation was also observed to be one of the students' areas of difficulty in terms of coherence attainment in English writing. Thus, the written test results reveal that nearly 25% of the students inclined toward literal translation when writing in English. It has been noticed that many of them although seemed to have reasonable English rhetorical techniques, but their ideas sound Arabic-oriented thinking. That is, most of them first form their ideas in Arabic and then translate them literally rather than semantically into English, which may fail to give a clear picture of the intended meaning. The following examples below show to what extent the target students have practiced literal translation techniques in their English writing.

*49- University life is a great life and all the students wishes to enjoy it because no egnorance there and all the students wants to be friends and works hardly so as to gain high marks and graduate (C18).*

*50- And it is bad if you are dismissed in the University for the Academic Problems. You will get yourself in between people who are educated and those are not educated this type can cause the problem for social life of society in general (A16).*

*51- In the university you can deal the political issues and you can explain your idea about these issues you must be a responsible about what you said and what you did. No one will help you if you send to prison if you arrested and no one will lost his academic future other than you (B29).*

Looking at the above examples, one could not believe his/her eyes that EFL learners at M.A. and postgraduate diploma levels majoring in English or translation would write such rambling pieces of English writing. So, this provides

that because of an insufficient command of English language, they are unable to demonstrate their thoughts in English. to compensate this gap, they tend to think first in Arabic and then translate what has been thought into English writing, which will negatively affect the overall coherence of the written text.

## **4.8 Summary**

This chapter attempts to provide interpretations of the research findings. In highlighting these results it became clear that the characteristic features of the target students' L1 aspects such as unnecessary repetition, exaggeration, embellishment among others seemed to have affected negatively the way in which Sudanese EFL graduate students write in English. Furthermore, in discussing the results of this chapter, it was found that the target students lack appropriate ways of achieving both cohesion and coherence in their English writing.



## Chapter Five

### Findings and Recommendations

#### 5.0 Summary of the study

This study aims to investigate Sudanese EFL students writing problems in terms of the contrastive rhetoric (CR) approach. The researcher used a descriptive analytic method. The data is collected through two instruments: Teachers' questionnaire and Students English expository text which were evaluated by an analytic scoring method. The Subjects consisted of one hundred teachers of English language and ninety ESL/EFL students from different Sudanese Universities majoring in English. The subjects consisted of female /male of different age groups . The subjects (Students) were asked to compose an essays in English .

#### 5.1-Findings:

1-In terms of Arabic interference problems, the responses show that almost 73% of the respondents agree that Arabic writing characteristics feature of repetition seems to be major difficulties that encounter many Sudanese EFL students.

2-. In this regard 83% of the respondents contented that Sudanese students often find it difficult to produce a meaningful topic sentence in English writing.

3- Approximately 76% of the respondents believe that introductory paragraphs of most Sudanese students lack the controlling idea of the whole text.

4-Almost 99% of the respondents of agree that Sudanese EFL students English writing difficulties are resulted from the differences in writing techniques between English and Arabic.

5-88% of the respondents of the questionnaire contented that Sudanese EFL students often find it difficult to produce a meaningful sentence in English.

6- 99% of the respondents suffer from the problem of inconsistency due to shift of thoughts in their writing.

7-70% of the students failed to draw a clear conclusion of their written English

8-nearly 25% of the students were inclined toward literal translation while composing an English essay.

9- The results further reveal that more than half of the Sudanese EFL university teachers attribute Sudanese EFL students problems failure to attain coherence in English to the fact that most of them have not been taught the ways of a achieving coherence in English.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The researcher offers the following recommendations hoping that teachers, Learners and syllabi designers find them useful:

- 1- Sudanese educational institutions need to place much attention on the major principles of English writing.
- 2- It's advisable that prior to the commencement of the scheduled programs), remedial classes on these two functions can be introduced.

- 3- English courses should be taught in all academic disciplines of Sudanese higher education institutions .i.e the essence of writing should be at the heart of the universities curricula..

#### **5.4 Suggestion for further studies**

- 1- Since the research findings show that Arabic interference problems have affected the overall performance of Sudanese EFL students in English writing, further studies that investigate the influence of Arabicization on Sudanese EFL students 'English proficiency is needed to see whether the policy of Arabicization at the Sudanese tertiary levels has affected negatively the overall performance of the students in English Language skills, particularly writing.

- 2-As in recent years many employers seem to be unsatisfied with the Sudanese University graduate' English writing performance in English, research studies investigating employers attitudes or requirements towards the graduates performances in English are needed so as to prepare competent EFL writers to the workplace.

- 3- Considerable attention should be paid to the issues of English anxiety(a psycholinguistic study) and its negative effects on the Sudanese EFL learners' English writing performance .i.e Future EFL researchers can examine the reasons behind the Sudanese EFL students' fear from involving in English writing tasks.

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# Appendixes

## Appendix (A)

### Teachers' questionnaire

#### Sudan University of Science & Technology

#### Graduate college

**Dear Colleagues,**

This questionnaire is part of my PHD. Research thesis in English Language, which I am currently pursuing at the University of Sudan of Science and Technology(SUST). Please answer each item of the questionnaire as accurately as possible by putting a tick( v ) in the column that suits your opinion. Your opinion will be dealt with confidentially for the research purpose only.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Omer Bashir Elsheikh

Sudan University of Science and Technology

Graduate College



## 1- L1 interference problems(Arabic)

| No | Item  | Strongly agree | Agree | Netural | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1  | English and Arabic have different writing habits  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 2  | Different writing habits of both English and Arabic affect Sudanses English Writing performance   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 3  | There are smillities between English and Arabic in terms of writing process   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 4  | Due to un awareness of linguistics and cultural differennces between English and Arabic, most Sudanses EFL learners encounter writing problems in English |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 5  | A large numer of Sudanses EFL learners transfer negetively Arabic rhetorical strategies into their English writing  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 6  | In Teaching, I tend to discuss the relationship between the related aspects of culture and language   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 7  | Arabic writing habits such as exaggration, overstatemtemnt and generalization influences Sudanses English writing negetively                              |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 8  | Arabic writing features such as embellishment, simile and metonymy affect the way Sudanese EFL learners write in English negetively.                      |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 9  | A lot of Sudanses EFL learners tend to use flowerly expressions in their English writing  |                |       |         |          |                   |

## 2- Organization of writing

| No | Item   | Strongly agree | Agree | Netural | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----|--|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 10 | Many Sudanse EFL learners encounter serious problems in producing a well-organized written text in English                 |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 11 | When Sudanese EFL learners engage in English writing, their introductions seem to be too long                              |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 12 | Sudanese EFL learners usually find it difficult to write topic sentence  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 13 | The opening paragraph of Sudanese EFL learners fails to include controlling idea   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 14 | When writing a paragraph in English, most Sudanese EFL learners' topic sentence lack supporting evidence                   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 15 | Sudanese EFL learners usually have more than one central idea in one Paragraph   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 16 | A great number of Sudanese EFL Writers shift randomly from , whole text sounds inconsistent                                |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 17 | When writing in English most Sudanese EFL writers concentrate on mechanics and grammar rather than on writing as a process |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 18 | A lot of Sudanese EFL writers find it difficult to make a clear conclusion   |                |       |         |          |                   |
|    |  |                |       |         |          |                   |

### 3-Cohesion problems

| No | Item  | Strongly agree | Agree | Netural | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 19 | Cohesion is a very difficut task for most Sudanse EFL writers   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 20 | Many Sudanese EFL learners find it difficult in using referents when writing in English                           |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 21 | I usually find it difficult to realize instances of substitution and ellipsis in Sudanse English writing          |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 22 | Many Sudanse EFL learners overuse English connectors when writing in English                                      |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 23 | When writing in English, a considerable number of Sudanse EFL learners experience problems in using collocations  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 24 | Most Sudanese EFL learners do not use lexical cohesion aspects such as repetition, synonymy, antonymy and hypoymy |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 25 | General-specific and part-whole relations tend to be absent in most Sudanese English writing                      |                |       |         |          |                   |

#### 4-Coherence problems

| No | Item  | Strongly agree | Agree | Netural | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|----|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 26 | Sudanese English writing usually lacks tense and pronoun agreement  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 27 | Sudanese English sentences often lack a coherent link due to absence of subordination and coordination  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 28 | Most Sudanese EFL learners are unaware of transitional words and phrases in English writing.  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 29 | English Paragraphs written by Sudanese EFL students usually lack arrangement of details in order (time-space-importance, comparison and contrast, reasoning, examples, cause and effect). |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 30 | Sudanese EFL writers usually find it difficult to draw a clear distinction between conceptive coherence and semantic coherence in English writing   |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 30 | Sudanese EFL written work as a whole often fails to make a sense of completeness  |                |       |         |          |                   |
| 31 | Most Sudanese EFL learners have not been taught functions of coherence in English writing   |                |       |         |          |                   |

**Sudan University of Science & Technology**

**Graduate college**

Writing test

Name : (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**IN NOT less than 250 words and NOT more than 300 words , write  
a composition on ONE of the following topics :**

*1-The importance of English in today's world.*

*2-life in city versus rural*

*3- University life.*

*4- the consequences of the recent global economic crisis on people's life*

*5- the impact of swine flu on individual's movement*

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